

**DEALING WITH SHAME AND UNRESOLVED TRAUMA:  
RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL AND ITS IMPACT  
ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> GENERATION ADULTS**

By

**N. ROSALYN ING**

B.S.W., The University of British Columbia, 1988

M.Ed.(Admin), The University of British Columbia, 1990

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

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Educational Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

December 2000

© N. Rosalyn Ing, 2000



National Library  
of Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file* *Votre référence*

*Our file* *Notre référence*

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-61116-7

Canada

## ABSTRACT

'Indian' residential schools have been a part of Canada's history since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. This qualitative study presents the education of First Nations people from a different perspective. Using two Canadian policies of assimilation as a background, the shame and unresolved trauma associated with residential school education is examined. Ten 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation successful people whose parents endured residential schools from the 1920's to their closures in the early 1970s were purposely sampled; three are 2<sup>nd</sup> generation, and seven are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. The most significant aspect of the research is that all ten participants have graduated from university or are currently undergraduates, and their parents also earned degrees, making them excellent role models in post-secondary education. This intergenerational aspect of residential schools is rarely acknowledged. What was shared – what finding out meant, what are the intergenerational impacts, how the participants move on, and how society moves on in view of the findings – is documented. The impacts of residential school included fifteen categories: denial of First Nations (FN) identity, belief in lies/myths about FN people, shame, poor self esteem, family silent about past, communication difficulties, expectation to be judged negatively, controlling father, experience of racism, violence and physical abuse in family, sexual abuse, alcoholism, parents who value education, and university education. These impacts were carried into the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation with added consequences to twenty more for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and nine more impacts for the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. This study is useful for a better understanding of this form of education.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>DEDICATION .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>PREFACE .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
The Ghosts of History .....	ix
My experience .....	x
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Beginnings ... Saturday, May 06, 2000 .....	1
How did it all begin? .....	3
The need for the study .....	9
The rationale for the study .....	9
Overview of the study .....	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO: FIRST NATIONS COLONIZATION THROUGH</b>	
<b>EDUCATION IN CANADA .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Political climate and social conditions 1867-1920 .....	12
Definitions of terms used .....	13
Definitions of racism .....	14
Immigration in Canada after the 1867 Confederation .....	16
Early occupation .....	16
The National Policy 1878 .....	16
The Immigration Act 1869 .....	17
The assimilable and the non-assimilable .....	17
First Nations are Considered Assimilable .....	19
Anglo conformity and assimilation of immigrants .....	21
Predominant ideology .....	21
The role of schools .....	23
The use of textbooks .....	23
Effects on population .....	24
Settlement of the West and the Treaties with Indians .....	25
Politics of intimidation through starvation .....	25
The role of treaties .....	26
Reasons for amendments to policies .....	27

The Immigration Policy .....	27
The Canadian Indian Policy .....	28
Residential School formation – 1873 to the 1900’s .....	29
The missionaries and their attitudes .....	30
The doctrine of Aboriginal infantilism.....	31
Carrying out the plan.....	32
Seeking explanations .....	33
Theory of Cognitive Dissonance .....	33
The legacy of assimilation and colonization .....	34
The residential School.....	35
Summary .....	41
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>44</b>
The research design.....	44
Need for the study.....	46
Participants.....	48
Selection of participants .....	48
Data Collection Methods.....	50
The research questions .....	50
The position of the researcher .....	54
Participants.....	55
Data analysis .....	58
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF FINDING OUT .....</b>	<b>60</b>
Introduction .....	60
Parents share their experiences with their children.....	62
The 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation.....	63
The 3 <sup>rd</sup> generation .....	65
The Circumstances of finding out.....	70
Summary .....	70
“Through the eyes of their children”-The 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation.....	72
The 3 <sup>rd</sup> generation .....	75
Summary .....	79
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: THE INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACT.....</b>	<b>83</b>
Introduction .....	83
The 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation.....	83
The 3 <sup>rd</sup> generation .....	88
Summary .....	95
<b>CHAPTER 6: MOVING ON.....</b>	<b>99</b>
Introduction .....	99
The turning point .....	100
To account for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> generation.....	106
The 4 <sup>th</sup> generation children.....	107
Summary .....	107

Community .....	108
Summary .....	112
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN: HOW DOES SOCIETY MOVE ON?.....</b>	<b>114</b>
Society and the participants.....	114
Summary .....	118
The findings of the research.....	119
1 <sup>st</sup> generation .....	121
Comment .....	121
2 <sup>nd</sup> generational impacts .....	122
Comment .....	123
3 <sup>rd</sup> generational impacts.....	124
Comment .....	125
4 <sup>th</sup> generation.....	126
Comment .....	126
Moving On .....	126
Community .....	128
Comment .....	128
How does society move on? .....	129
Comment .....	130
The interview findings and the literature.....	133
Limitations of the research.....	137
Future research .....	138
Implications for education .....	141
Conclusions .....	144
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>APPENDIX A .....</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>APPENDIX B.....</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>APPENDIX C.....</b>	<b>154</b>

**LIST OF TABLES**

	<u>Page</u>
Table 1. Impacts Of Residential School .....	119
Table 2. Participants' Views on Moving On .....	127
Table 3. Participants' Views on Community .....	128
Table 4. Participants' Views on Society Moving On .....	129

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the Creator, who helped me reach my goal, I give you the glory and I thank you. Although my father, John Young, is in the spirit world, I thank him for his wisdom, role modeling, humbleness, and support. Your spirit lives on in all of us-your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Thank you to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Jean Barman, and the other committee members, Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, and Dr. Michael Marker, for their knowledge, encouragement, support, and for believing in me. I raise my hands to you. I appreciate the kind feedback for such a sensitive topic.

Thank you to my friends at the Longhouse, my colleagues, all the members of the First Nations community who offered me encouragement and support, and my family in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and North Dakota.

Special thanks to my husband, George, who became my research assistant. I appreciate your love and care while I was preoccupied. Thank you to my sons, Greg and Ted, for your unfailing confidence, love, and enlightenment; and finally, Nimkish, noo-sis-im, my inspiration and reason for doing this research.



## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all those who endured the residential schools. As little children we laughed, cried, played, and prayed together. Little did we know how much strength we drew from each other during the happy and sad times during our childhood years away from our loving families. This research is a testament to the strength of the human spirit. For the ten participants who shared their life stories, you are a part of this legacy. Walk proudly, you have earned the respect.

## PREFACE

### **The Ghosts of History**

Every Canadian will gain if we escape the impasse that breeds confrontation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people across barricades, real or symbolic. But the barricades will not fall until we understand how they were built.

Studying the past tells us who we are and where we came from. It often reveals a cache of secrets that some people are striving to keep hidden and others are striving to tell. In this case, it helps explain how the tensions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people came to be, and why they are so hard to resolve.

Canadians know little about the peaceful and co-operative relationship that grew up between First Peoples and the first European visitors in the early years of contact. They know even less about how it changed, over the centuries, into something less honourable ... we [should] examine that history ... for its ghosts haunt us still ("People to People, Nation to Nation," Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, p.4).

## **My experience**

My children think I haven't been affected. I kept my life from them. I wanted them to have their own life and not be tormented by mine. I wanted them to form their own opinions of the society we have. I still wanted them to be socially conscious of injustices and do something about them, but I knew they would see how their father and I tried to live to give them a good childhood so they would be safe and out-going. I wanted them to enjoy school. I was involved in their learning every step of the way. I may have been protective of them, especially against racism. If they mentioned kids called them derogatory names I went to the school and challenged the principal and teachers on it.

I suffer from feelings of inferiority at times because at residential school I was made to feel like nothing. No one cared when we cried from loneliness; we were told not to act like babies. I will never forget the feeling of loss when my three little sisters and I were separated from my older sister; we were taken to another school in the middle of the night; we woke up not knowing where we were; and my chain of security was cut. We cried for days, wanting our sister; and each day we were locked in the playroom and told to stay there until we stopped crying before we could go to classes. I still weep when I think of that experience.

My father believed education was the only way to change and he nurtured that in us. He supported us. He asked to see report cards. I think that's why today most of my family is thriving through education, including my two sons, nieces and

nephews. I am so proud of them. Despite the difficulties they encounter, the racism, sexism and harassment, they won't give up easily.

My grandparents did not attend residential school. My father and mother were the 1<sup>st</sup> generation to go; I went, too, and so did my brothers and sisters; we are the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation; one brother went for only six months. We have made it (succeeded) in spite of being First Nations because we are First Nations and strong in our identity. My nieces, nephews and sons are the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation to be affected, but unlike some others, are reaping the benefits of our enduring the residential school system. And my sons have a better life. They knew they could become whatever they wanted to be and do it. I am proud of the unique ways they have found to making a living. Most of all, my granddaughter (4<sup>th</sup> generation) is growing up with a healthy self-esteem and a love of learning.

I once was ashamed of my father, disowned him. The residential school made sure I could live out their indoctrination. I did. But it wasn't for long. I knew something was wrong. I was always angry. Then I assessed my life, and realized it was the schooling. I then started changing consciously; I was good enough; better than some white people I knew; and that helped. I remembered my grandparents' teachings. They were devout Anglicans, good Christians, not the kind at school, and I knew I couldn't lose their teachings. I wanted to be like them, praying, going to church, and acting out their compassion for others - that part the schools couldn't take because they weren't the ones who taught me those important things.

We, First Nations people, are taught "to consider carefully, the effects of our decisions on the seventh generation yet to come" (Hodgson, 1989, back cover). In

my family, from my grandparents' time to my granddaughter's grandchildren, we will come full circle; my granddaughter will be part of the 7<sup>th</sup> generation; and her journey will be very different from mine. She will reach her dreams.

Begin your journey. You can heal. The memories will always be there. But you can learn to soften the scars.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

**Beginnings ...** Saturday, May 06, 2000

Today I heard a distressed but brave lady speak to her ancestors through letter-writing as part of her healing journey. She was sharing her painful story at a conference called, ironically, "Learning Love." She falteringly but courageously read from her prepared script. She began by talking about her ancestor, Peter Brass, an Orkney Scot, who traveled to Canada and was called 'a pioneer' by a Priest historian; and this Orkney was this lady's great grandfather who married her Indian great-grandmother. As this soft-spoken lady reads, she cries. She reads some more. She cries some more. I am experiencing unresolved grief and deep sorrow. I begin to get a lump in my throat and my tears begin to well up. I am re-living painful memories of my past. I become a part of her poignant revelation as she is sharing her family's secrets of the past.

The past includes the story of her family who went to residential school in the Canadian Prairies and the way it sought its redemption from the shame of being labeled 'Indian' to thinking it could restore its dignity by denying their ancestry. I am a part of her sorrow, her deep pain of following a trail as it winds through a past that her family considered best left unspoken, and if unspoken, would then permit it the dignity to begin its restoration. In the end, her ancestors hoped the restoration should make future generations happier than the ancestors have been, since part of the healing for this generation of children was to NEVER know they were 'Indian'.

She profoundly questions, "Why did you deny yourself? By doing so, you have only added to the shame."

Her healing trail is a long journey to a country's dark history, Canada's history of residential schools. As the lady sits and reads, tears pouring down her cheeks, I wonder about the people who came to my ancestral lands from across the oceans seeking a new life, perhaps escaping from tyrannies of their past, could conceive of such an idea as separating children from their families. I feel pity for the kind of society they created. I write, "It is so pitifully sad that Canadian society can be so cruel, forcing people to deny their proud heritage and using children in the process."

I am reminded how in these residential schools that I attended, a culture of shame was taught. First, the school staff taught me to feel dirty. 'Dirty' meant your Cree heritage, including your parents and elders. 'Dirty' became shame; shame about being who I am; if I have shame, then my people have it too; 'shame' became ashamed; I learned the lesson well. I became ashamed of myself, and worse, I became ashamed of my parents, and their way of life, theirs and my Cree culture.

I know it is difficult for this lady to understand today why anyone could consider denying the self to 'fit in'. But this research will begin to explore some of the facts behind the history of residential schools and their creation and the connection of this denial of self to fit into a society to survive. Even those who did not attend have been affected in the most incomprehensible and profound ways. Perhaps, putting some of my thoughts in perspective may help this lady and others

who are affected by the history of residential schools. But it must begin with questions.

### How did it all begin?

Why did Canada pursue such a cruel, heartless, inhumane initiative under the Canadian Indian Policy? Why did it experiment and use young Indian children in such unthinkable ways to solve their Indian problem? In the culture of some of the English immigrants, it was acceptable and expected to send their young children to public [private, actually] schools to teach them the values of colonialism. The English taught the children in these upper-classes public schools how to be conquerors and rulers in the colonial expansion. Why did these new Canadians think that transporting education values for a select class group could succeed, when the underlying motive was, not to educate for elitism, but to vanquish a particular group? For this particular group, the First Nations people of Canada, it was unthinkable to separate children from families and when it was done, it meant cutting the heart out of their Nations.

My journey from this residential school education has been a journey of recovery, a journey to find the self, and to accept what I learned about myself. But most significantly, what I learned about my country and its early government and its Canadian Indian Policy was numbing, then anger; and finally anger fuelled my need to tell. It was not an easy journey. Someone once said to me, "Things come so easy for you, you're so lucky." I was irate as I replied, "Really, it's all been so hard for me, never has it been easy, and it was not through luck that I'm where I'm at today." Maybe that's what happens to people like me. I might have made it look



easy. But it was never my intention to do so. Actually, I have made it a life-long struggle to be a part of this country and it's always been difficult. My story has been one of over-coming the oppression that was first inflicted on my elders. My version of some history follows.

Manitoba is home territory to my ancestors; they were displaced from their lands because a railroad needed to be built by immigrants for expanding nationalism. Land was necessary in this expansion. In the Prairies, the Cree were hindering the expansion; so the government decided that starving the Cree was justified to get the land; the food supply was the buffalo, and they didn't vanish, as history textbooks (or historians) claim. The buffalo were systematically slaughtered in order to force the Cree into submission to sign treaties with the government. Many Cree died from starvation and smallpox. Those who dared to survive signed pieces of paper with an 'X' (Morris, 1991, pp.347-48) without understanding the 'legalese', let alone the language in which the treaties were written, as most could neither speak, read, nor write English. Treaty making is not the honourable process it is made out to be by some historians. But the Cree, and any other First Nations, were neither considered part of the Nation-building of this country, nor were they considered civilized. The image historians printed and preserved about my people was that we had no civilization, in fact, not even were we human, but sub-human. They distorted the way my ancestors lived in a most shameful and derogatory way that made me even feel ashamed when I learned history from all those who sought to destroy my culture.

My struggle is trying to restore some dignity to my life so others can benefit. And I have tried to do that by adding to the discourse of residential schools, since the truth is not contained in Canadian history texts. As one who attended three residential schools for eleven of my childhood years I can create some of the dialogue because Canadians today still do not have the true story of what their government has done to First Nations people.

Not only were buffalo systematically slaughtered causing many people to starve but those who survived were considered unfit to raise their children. And so began another shameful phase in the history of Canada, that of forcing First Nations to comply with the government policy of assimilation. Residential schools were designed to remove children from their families and brutal measures were used to round up children to effect this policy of assimilation. It has only been recently that Canadians have been forced to an accountability of what happened in the past to the children in these residential schools. In many cases, it is with reluctance, but confront it they must, either willingly or not.

Some Canadians express horror at newspaper accounts of court cases that have been initiated by some endurers of these schools as they seek justice for sexual abuse, physical violence, spiritual and emotional damage. Many citizens are helping by learning more about what happened. At least reading the newspapers gives some information, although much of it is sensationalized. And of course, many other Canadians view the residential school issue with detachment because it doesn't affect them. Others have no choice.

The Government and the Anglican Church of Canada were found to be “vicariously liable,” as stated in one of those news accounts, for the sexual abuse of one Floyd S. Mowatt at the St. George’s Residential School in Lytton. And now the Anglican congregation is beginning a long overdue soul-searching. At the core is the survival of the church as a ‘building,’ not the issue of sexually abused children who became psychologically damaged adults and are now justifiably seeking restitution. The very survival of the Anglican Church in Canada will be determined by whether human beings needs are considered more valuable than real estate. I pray that the outcome will change the congregation in ways that will explore the role of the church in the past and confront the issue with decency, if not honour, integrity, and compassion.

This is a good beginning for one Anglican who endured residential schools. I went to three of them, but moved four times; I left one year in grade seven to stay home to attend a ‘white’ school; but for eleven of my middle childhood years I spent existing and trying to survive in a residential school. My story is not unique, but writing about it is. I first began to write about residential schools in my Master’s degree program. I focused on the loss of child-rearing practices because of language loss of those who endured this education.

Language loss occurred because it was forbidden to speak Cree (or whatever language children spoke before going to the schools). Retribution was quick and painful if you didn’t speak English and most couldn’t. Soon fear for speaking the Cree language became an issue of survival or escaping punishment. It was easy to choose between learning the English language or escaping corporal punishment by

remaining silent. And speaking Cree became associated with pain. It was more expedient to conform as the system didn't allow for choice. Consequently, to speak even to your elders in the summer months away from the school was unthinkable. The elders only spoke Cree. You resisted because you were being educated for assimilation, not to follow the way of the elders. So if the elders tried to teach you lessons in the only language they knew and you resisted because it wasn't the way of the school, then many important ideas in the form of lessons did not get handed down. Furthermore, in a residential school setting, where there were rarely positive role models, how did one learn the tasks of parenting? Now we know that you have to experience growing up in a family to parent your own children.

I faced this dilemma of not being raised in a family when my first son was born. I desperately needed someone to guide me but no one I could trust was close by to ask. I started raising my own family under a cloud of fear and doubt in my ability to parent effectively. However, through sheer determination I overcame my ignorance by reading any books or articles on childcare that I could get my hands on. They were rare in the 1960s and Dr. B. Spock, Dr. Frances Ilg, and Dr. A. Gesell were my three sources of effective parenting that gave me confidence in myself to raise my baby to be happy and trusting.

This research for my Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree is a continuation of the study of residential schools and its effects on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations of those who first endured the schools. I am not the expert. But from having experienced it first-hand I think I can say that I know more about it in a completely different and deeper way than those researchers who study it from secondary sources. I

continually affirm my feelings of inadequacy to be a scholar in this field. I am so vulnerable because I am actually studying how I coped with my education in these schools.

I am grateful that these participants I was privileged to interview shared their stories with me, experiences that so resemble my fragile state whenever I try to make sense of it. Most of those I interviewed did not attend residential schools, only one did. Through her I am re-living the experiences all over again. The others, I am sorry they have to carry my pain for it has become theirs, like a legacy I detest to own, let alone pass on, for it seems like a curse. With this study I seek your forgiveness and pray that it will stop this pathetic legacy.

In a private conversation, my sister Doris said about healing from this experience of these schools,

We have to do something about it. We can't ignore what happened. We've passed this down to our children, like it's in our genes. Our parents' unhappiness and their inability to articulate their school experiences forced them into a culture of silence with us. We did the same to our children.

But it has more to do with what was done to us at these institutions than what we did and didn't do to our children. This research wishes to address the former through sharing my experiences and the latter through the participants sharing their experiences through the taped conversations we had. Their interviews will be the results of this study. Perhaps, through this effort, another generation of those whose parents and grandparents endured residential schools will understand and learn to forgive the society who made us become who we are, and all will be part of the healing. And my friend, who is mentioned at the beginning of this text,

will experience liberation. The shackles of the past will be replaced with consolation and peace; and vision will replace the shame associated with the choices her family was forced to make.

The following quote is part of Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech on May 10, 1994; it is appropriate for these times:

**The time for healing of the wounds has come.  
The time to build is upon us ...  
We pledge ourselves to liberate all our people  
from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation,  
suffering, gender and other discrimination ...  
There is no easy road to freedom ...  
None of us acting alone can achieve success.  
We must therefore act together as a united people,  
for reconciliation, for nation building,  
for the birth of a new world (1994, p.541).**

#### The need for the study

The purpose of this study is to discover and describe the intergenerational impacts of the education at residential schools on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation children of those who attended the schools. They are now adults, most have children (now 4<sup>th</sup> generation), and have succeeded in obtaining post-secondary education.

#### The rationale for the study

Research on residential schools has not focussed on this aspect of people's lives. Instead social pathologies such as suicide, alcohol and drug addictions and other mental health issues have been studied (McCormick, 1994; Anderson, 1993; and Herbert, 1994) and parenting effects (Ing, 1991) by First Nations researchers. I thought it important and necessary to tell another side of the residential school

story, focussing on those whose accomplishments include the ability to pursue and complete a university degree program.

### Overview of the study

Chapter one is the introduction and gives an example of the shame and unresolved trauma that appears to be intergenerational, the trauma a descendent of residential school endurers is currently experiencing as she seeks to heal. It sets the tone for the rest of the study.

Chapter two is an overview of what was happening in early Canadian society, between 1867-1920. It was a period of rapid expansion through European immigration and the period when residential schools were vigorously pursued. The purpose is to construct some views of that society to provide an understanding of the reasons behind the government's goal of assimilation for Indians under the Canadian Indian Policy and the theory of assimilation for European immigrants under the Canadian Immigration Policy. It will provide examples of how some developments later became entrenched in society, negating any chance for the planned assimilation of certain immigrants and deliberately marginalizing First Nations despite the government goal of their assimilation. For First Nations, residential schools virtually assured this. Several definitions of racism will be used to support the statements made regarding the immigrants and examples of Ponting (1986)'s indicators of colonization will be applied for the latter group. It includes a literature review in relation to the social construction of racism in Canada, how it impacted on First Nations people, and the creation of the residential school system.

It ends with a further literature review of residential schools written by First Nations scholars and authors.

Chapter three is the methodology. The research design is qualitative, using the case study approach. It includes the need for the study, participants and their selection, data collection methods, the position of the researcher, the research questions and how data was analyzed.

Chapter four begins the data analysis and includes the circumstances of participants finding out about their parents' experiences, learning some effects, and coming to understand them through it. Themes and emotions are extracted from the data.

Chapter five presents data on intergenerational effects. Themes and emotions, with appropriate quotes, continue to be used.

Chapter six presents how the participants 'move on' after the emotional task of dealing with how their parents coped with the enormously difficult tasks in their childhood. What helped them is presented as well.

Chapter seven consolidates the findings and asks, "How do we as a society move ahead in view of these challenges and outcomes?" It includes suggestions for further research and the implications for education. The conclusion presents a summary of the study.



## CHAPTER TWO:

### FIRST NATIONS COLONIZATION THROUGH EDUCATION IN CANADA

There has been a long history of racism and discrimination against ethnic minorities in English-speaking Canada, along with strong pressures for conformity to Anglo-Canadian ways (Palmer, 1984, p.22).

Indians are not in the same position as white men. As a rule they have no education and they were like children to a very great extent. They, therefore, required a great more protection than (sic) white men (Boyko, 1995, 183).

#### Political climate and social conditions 1867-1920

The above quotes indicate the general political and social climate in British Columbia and Canada in the period of 1867-1920. This period of history witnessed a large influx of immigrants from Europe and Asia at the same time that First Nations people were deteriorating rapidly from cultural and social displacement. To accommodate both groups special Canadian legislation was required. This chapter will examine the views of Canadians during this period as part of the comparison to be made with Canadian Immigration Policy and Canadian Indian Policy. The former policy was considered a theory of assimilation; the latter was referred to as a goal of assimilation. The role of racism and ethnic discrimination in the implementation of these policies will be discussed. A link will be established between the 19<sup>th</sup> Century ideas of race with the prevalent view of white supremacy. The chapter will also examine the role of the residential school system of education as the major tool of colonizing First Nations. At the outset, the definitions of terms used are made specific; and since racism plays a major role in the whole process, several definitions are given.

### Definitions of terms used

Colonization is used to indicate how a foreign power or nation superimposes its values and institutions upon another nation for exploitation.

First (1<sup>st</sup>) generation-this is what I call those who went to residential schools in the 1920-30s, such as my parents.

Second (2<sup>nd</sup>) generation-are my generation, including my siblings. Three of the participants are referred to as 2<sup>nd</sup> generation because their parents went.

Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) generation-includes seven of the participants; although they did not attend, their parent/s and grandparent/s did.

Moving one refers to the strength of the participants. Once they set their goal of reclaiming the self, they never looked back. For most, that means following in their parents' footsteps in education.

First Nations (personally preferred) is a definition used to identify the original inhabitants of this land, Canada. Indian is a term used in the Indian Act to identify those registered as Status Indians with the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa. Section 34(2) of the Constitution, defines who is an Aboriginal (Indian, Inuit and Metis peoples of Canada). Native Indian is a term that often defined a person of aboriginal ancestry. Whenever historical documents are quoted, the terms used will remain unchanged. Furthermore, to support the racial foundation notion of Canada, definitions such as cultural racism, Social Darwinism, colonization and indicators of colonialism will be used. But to fully understand the position of Canada in its immigration and Indian policies, it is necessary to look at several

definitions of racism to explain how its structuralized nature happened during this time frame of 1867-1920.

### Definitions of racism

First, Frideres (1985) defined racism as, “the doctrine that some races are innately superior or inferior to others”; this “indiscriminately includes religious sects, linguistic and cultural groups.” [This definition is later applied as to how a ‘pecking order’ of immigration was established]. He describes racism as a “virulent form of ethnocentrism.” Ethnocentrism is the belief that one’s own group is superior to others. It is based on the “assumption that organic, genetically transmitted differences between human groups are intrinsically related to [the] presence or absence of social, psychological or cultural traits of that group”; but there is also a “false assumption that human beings are naturally and permanently comprised of separate pure races and the physical, mental, and cultural qualities of each are determined by its supposed genetic constitution.” This, in turn, creates individual racism, “the belief by one individual about another’s racial inferiority.”

Racism becomes institutionalized when “the political, economic, and social institutions of a society operate to the detriment of a specific individual or group because of their alleged genetic make up.” Racism now becomes cultural in “the expression of the superiority of a socially defined race’s culture over that of another race.” Frideres further explains that racism is “derived from the social meanings attributed to the differences by society, NOT that groups are different BUT asserted that inequality is absolute and unconditional” (1985, p.1537). These ideas of who was superior and inferior were further fueled when in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century,

Darwin's theory of evolution was carried to the extreme when adapted and later applied to human societies, using white superiority as the basis of determining progress. It became known then as Social Darwinism. This fitted very well with the popular assumptions that prevailed at the time. The theory was offered, as Palmer (1985) explains, "English-speaking Canadians believed that the Anglo-Saxon peoples and British principles of government were the apex of biological evolution and that Canada's greatness depended on its Anglo-Saxon heritage" (p.1470). This self-proclaiming ideology of superiority spread from Europe to Canada, becoming the rationale for policies of assimilation of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants, and in turn, domination of First Nations people by the colonial powers. Second, in the Introduction of his book, Boyko (1995) describes the invidious effects of the two sides to racism:

Ethnic allegiance implies that those who belong to a particular ethnic group share common histories, traits and aspirations and that all those of other ethnic groups are outsiders to be seen as different and possibly dangerous. Social Darwinism ... implies that those enjoying status and influence owe their position partly to their biological superiority and that it is necessary to protect and enhance their power for the overall good of society (p.10).

Finally, The American college dictionary (1956) defines colonialism as "the policy of a nation seeking to extend or retain its authority over other poles or territories" (p.238). In, Arduous Journey: Canadian Indians and decolonization, Ponting (1986) expands this by applying more details to the indicators of colonialism as it describes how the First Nations people of Canada were colonized; first with a

Forced integration of the indigenous people into the dominant society on terms controlled by the dominant society; second, the colonizing powers carries out a policy that constrains, transforms, or destroys the culture [and economy]; third, racism as a system of domination (and a justifying ideology)

characterizes the society [Note: racism has to be present at the beginning]; and, fourth, the members of the colonized group are administered [that is, manipulated and managed] by the members of the dominant power”(p.85).

It is necessary to devote much space to these definitions because racism was reflected in the restrictive 1867-1920 Canadian Immigration and Indian policies and practices to non-whites, such as Chinese and Blacks, and by the treatment of First Nations people. The discussion will now shift to the immigration policy.

### **Immigration in Canada after the 1867 Confederation**

#### Early occupation

First Nations people occupied the land, which came to be called Canada, since ‘time immemorial’. In the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century, settlers to Canada were all from France. “Occupation” is usually dated from 1603. British colonials were expanding into other countries such as India, China, New Zealand and Australia and did not arrive in Canada until after the 1763 Conquest of Quebec by the British (Wilson, 1997 lecture). Canadian Confederation occurred in 1867.

#### The National Policy 1878

Whitaker (1991) writes that the federal government established a National Policy in 1878 designed to encourage the industrialization of Canada but it also led to the need for an expanded industrial labour force. Immigration and agriculture were the only subjects placed under concurrent provincial and federal jurisdiction in the British North American (BNA) Act 1867 because “it was assumed that settlement [from immigration] would be primarily on the land” (p.3). As a result, Western settlement became a priority in federal immigration policy for fifty years. A long

term effect of the National Policy was to break the link between immigration and agriculture, and in the short term, strengthen the link by building the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). In order for this industrial expansion to occur, this CPR link was vital and was designed to be the main instrument of immigration and settlement.

### The Immigration Act 1869

The federal government passed the first Immigration Act in 1869 giving them authority to deny entry to whomever they deemed undesirable (but at the same time wanting to attract and bring in the 'right people'). To maintain control over land, it passed the Dominion Lands Act in 1872. The two acts ensured the 'feds' had control over immigration and western settlement (Whitaker, p.4). What criteria were used to determine who was 'right and desirable' for immigration to Canada? The next section examines how racial hierarchy was established.

### The assimilable and the non-assimilable

A racial hierarchy became evident in Canada as racism was more and more reflected in Canada's restrictive policy in immigration. It put immigrants on a scale of who was preferable down to who should be excluded, that is, who was considered assimilable or non-assimilable. Social Darwinism provided the prime sense of belonging to a state whose main function was to protect and serve the Nation by promoting and enhancing the power of the dominant ethnic group (Boyko, 1995). Therefore, any action against ethnic minorities was justified because they had no rights or power within such a state (p.10). Discrimination was based on national origin. Groups were desirable based on how easily those members

conformed to British culture and physical characteristics. This meant that even those who conformed to, but didn't look white, were excluded.

### *Categories*

Palmer (1985) and Wilson (1997) state that Canada had categories of preferences for immigrants (a 'pecking order'). They were:

1) Preferred (by British and French): immigrants from Northern and Western Europe, especially Germans, Scandinavians, and Finns.

2) Acceptable but not Preferred: Eastern European-Slavs, such as Polish and Ukrainians, but not Balkans.

3) Non-Preferred: Southern Europe-Italians, Greeks, Portuguese, and Balkan Slavs (who were 'more swarthy, darker-looking'; also had a high rate of illiteracy), and Jews (although most came from Eastern Europe).

4) Non-Assimilable: Orientals (term used then), East Indians, Asians, South Asians, and Blacks. Note: People making policies (bureaucrats) were anxious to see Category 4 excluded altogether but this was around the National Policy period and the Chinese were needed to build the railways in the 1880-90's. The others were considered good workers, too (Wilson, lecture, September 11, 1997).

If the above categories reflected attitudes towards race at the time, where were First Nations to be included? The next section will focus on the federal government's attitude towards them and its plans to eradicate First Nations completely by stripping them of their language and culture through its goal of assimilation by converting them to Christianity through education.

## First Nations are Considered Assimilable

### *Why are First Nations different from immigrants?*

Boyko (1995) gives a succinct description of why the Native example is different from the other Canadian immigrants' position. He writes,

They did not come from elsewhere; could not be stopped through immigration or sent back; have survived an intentional, sustained, well-financed, and clearly executed program of cultural genocide ... using a more Canadian form ... death through bureaucracy (p.176).

At the time of Confederation 1867, several changes had already occurred in the lives of First Nations people. Some attempt was made in Canada West to establish residential and industrial Schools as a way of educating them (Miller, 1996, pp.66-67). The federal government accepted separate responsibility for them, and a provision in the BNA Act, Section 91(24), stated that "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" was set aside making Indians their 'wards'.

### *The Indian Act and Treaties*

In 1876 the Indian Act was passed; Boyko (1995) calls it "the most inherently racist pieces of legislation passed at any time by any government" because the "Act stripped Native people of their humanity by defining who was ... an Indian" (p.180).

In 1878-79, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald sent Edgar Dewdney west as Indian Commissioner to teach Indians farming. By this time the buffalo, their main food supply, had been systematically slaughtered, "and as a result Native people were experiencing" starvation. At the same time, Macdonald began the construction of the CPR, "and thereby promote white settlement" in the West, so "there was some urgency in settling the starving [Cree] Indians on reserves and training them



toward agricultural self-support" (Bull, 1991, p.11). "It was at this time that Canadian government entered into treaties with the Cree" (Boyko, 1995, p.178).

The Indian Act and the Treaties are pieces of legislation identifying the special relationship between the government and First Nations people. Treaties were not as honourable as history books depict, and from this speech made in 1873, the government's intention was clear: "Treaties may be made with them simply with a view to the extinction of their rights by agreeing to pay them a sum, and afterwards abandon them" (Boyko, p.177). Provisions of small tracts of Crown Land, called reserves, where Indians must reside, were set out in the Indian Act. Meanwhile, instead of abandonment, plans were being made to assimilate First Nations people and, in that way, make them disappear.

#### *Canadian Indian Policy*

"Extinction of the Indians as Indians is the ultimate end of the Canadian Indian Policy ... Cultural assimilation would result from education in residential schools" (Miller, 1996, pp.184-85). Ponting (1986) adds that, "If there has been a central pillar to Canadian Indian Policy, it has been the goal of assimilation" (p.25). Protection, assimilation, and Christianity became the main tools used for the absorption of Indians into the "body politic" (p.26), eventually expecting them to shed their languages, customs, and spiritual beliefs.

Colonialism was becoming more oppressive. The forced integration of First Nations "into the dominant society on terms controlled by the dominant society" (Ponting, 1986, p.85) was in process. From 1896 to 1905 the residential schools became the major tool of colonization of First Nations children in Canada. Fanon

(1968), a distinguished Algerian psychiatrist, wrote about Algeria's war for independence from France. His book, The wretched of the earth, is a classic diatribe against the white man, or the West. The situation of the original inhabitants of Canada at this stage is captured in this quote as Fanon attacks colonialism as being "not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it" (p.210). The mentality of subjugating people to get control over them [or their land] was targeting the children of those the government considered inferior. Offering them protection, assimilation, and Christianity would not change conditions for them.

The situation of the First Nations and their treatment under the Canadian Indian Policy will be continued in a later section; the discussion again shifts to the Immigration Policy between 1867-1920, and its theory of assimilation and the predominance of Anglo-conformity with respect to non-Anglo immigrants.

### **Anglo conformity and assimilation of immigrants**

#### Predominant ideology

The predominant ideology during the 'settlement' period from 1867-1920 was Anglo conformity; immigrants were expected to "renounce their ancestral culture and traditions" (Palmer, 1984, p. 21) to match the behaviour of Anglo-Canadians. Palmer discusses this Anglo-conformity as one of the three theories of assimilation that have characterized Canadian immigration policy. (The other two will not be

discussed-the “melting pot” theory and the current multiculturalism theory of integration).

During the late 1890’s many immigrants began to arrive in western Canada as land was newly opened up for farming and the immigration policy gave preference to farmers. Not all immigrants favoured farming however, as some ended up working in mines and on constructing the railway. It was assumed those immigrants who were neither British nor French would be assimilated into either French or English Canadian society (Palmer, 1984, P.25).

It was during this period that ethnic stereotyping began to develop and this played a key role in determining who had the job opportunities (ibid. pp.22-28), and “social climbing” was not tolerated. That is, if someone from Category 3, Non-Preferred, succeeded in making his [at that time only males were competitive] life better through learning or writing good English, or having a big house, and tried to apply for these opportunities, he was denied because he was “social climbing.”

Palmer mentions that few immigrants chose Quebec, but some Jews preferred to settle there. However, they became victims of anti-Semitism and “were depicted as exploiters.” Clearly, being white, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant (WASP) was an advantage. The “peasant” origins of the eastern, southern, and central Europeans and Asians were stressed, as well as their poverty and illiteracy; and they were referred to as “diseased, morally lax, politically corrupt and religiously deficient.” The last item was taken to mean all mainstream Protestants were OK. Asians, besides being denied the right to vote, were attacked and excluded from the labour unions because they were non-white and were willing to work for less wages, and,

as such, were accused of taking jobs away from the whites. Blacks were prevented from housing, employment and public services, such as being barred from hotels, restaurants, theatres and swimming pools (Palmer, 1985, p.1470).

### The role of schools

Schools, under provincial jurisdiction, became primary tools of assimilation using “racist themes” (Stanley, 1990, p.148). Textbooks became agents or the means of carrying out assimilation. Their contents were loaded with the current political and ideological definitions, explaining the British Empire was “the product of genetically based moral superiority” and describing “subject peoples as morally deficient Others”(p.148). These definitions were derogatory and responsible for setting up distinctions between citizens along racist lines, establishing a “we” against “other”; and young ‘whites’ as children were systematically socialized to develop racist attitudes.

### The use of textbooks

At the beginning, some texts used examples from white English, Asian and First Nations societies; however, by 1885, the latter two did not belong in the discourse as colonialism and “racism went hand in hand.” Furthermore, “expansion required the subjugation of the peoples already inhabiting the land” and it “was achieved at tremendous cost to aboriginal peoples” (Stanley, 1990, p.145).

Adams (1995) comments about the minority White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) population that “history glorifies. Other histories and cultures are considered to be and treated as caricatures” (p.98). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, cartoons were featured in colonial newspapers poking fun and insulting

immigrants; non-white immigrants, especially Blacks and Chinese, were particularly targeted; thereby creating hostility and animosity towards them.

### Effects on population

All of this socialization assumed the inferiority of those who were not Anglo-Saxon. Non-Anglo-Saxons, in turn, took this white superiority for granted, and did not question why they should conform to the 'fixed' values and institutions of the Anglo-Saxon society. A group's acceptance and desirability was determined by the degree to which their skin pigment conformed to Anglo-Saxon white. So, as indicated in the four categories of preferred or non-preferred immigrants, those who described themselves as Europeans, such as Italians or Greeks, were often discriminated against because they were darker-skinned than English or Germans. If cultural diversity surfaced, it was considered dangerous, and governments ensured that answers to this problem of social diversity would disappear with the theory of assimilation applied through the schools, churches and labour unions.

Palmer (1984) concludes that a vicious circle of discrimination developed as non-Anglo-Saxons were discriminated against because they were not considered assimilated, either culturally or socially, as skin pigment determined acceptance and was inculcated officially in schools. Assimilation proved difficult for most who were not WASP. In reality, they were not given the chance or the choice because of the discriminatory practices against them.

Meanwhile, another policy of assimilation, based on prejudice and discrimination, continued in the treaty-making process with First Nations people.

## **Settlement of the West and the Treaties with Indians**

### Politics of intimidation through starvation

The need to settle the prairies predominated during this time frame, 1867-1920, but in the meantime some agreement had to be arranged between the colonizing powers and the First Nations people for their land. Several prairie First Nations, such as the Ojibway, Saulteaux, and Plains Cree, were forced to surrender their territories when treaties were signed with the government between the years 1871-1876. According to Dickason (1992), "The government was not only justifying its creation of Manitoba, it was preparing the way for white settlement" (p.277). Ray (1996) adds that after Manitoba joined Confederation in 1871, it exerted pressure on the Cree, who were "interfering with the geological survey and blocking the construction of telegraph lines on their lands" (p.207) and, at the same time, were demanding compensation, or they would not allow settlement or use of their land. Part of the arrangement they were seeking was to include ways to help them adapt to agriculture since the buffalo had been decimated. Nies (1996) writes that between 1872-1874, thirty million buffalo were senselessly slaughtered "destroying the economic and cultural base of the Plains Indian nations" (p.279). Several skirmishes occurred during this period which historians referred to as "massacres." However, the most devastating situation facing the Cree was massive starvation and having to deal with losses from small-pox epidemics that ravaged many families, wiping-out whole communities.

This period of great suffering-emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and physically-for the First Nations people made them vulnerable. Unable to withstand

a foreign power that superimposed its values and institutions upon them they met with their exploiters to sign X's to treaties.

### The role of treaties

Treaties became the tool of the federal government to extinguish Indian land rights. Dickason (1992) explains treaty-making as the "final, once-and-for-all means of opening up Indian lands for settlement and development" and treaties are defined by her as a "compact or set of fundamental principles that formed the basis for all future negotiations between Indians and whites"(p.275). So, giving up their land, the Indians signed the treaties that relegated them to reserves. Amongst other things, the treaties helped them secure some rights to schooling. For example, Treaty 1 "promised schools ... ploughs and harrows" (p.278); and Treaty 3 mentions that "schools were to be established" (p.279). Moreover,

Indians expected whites to live up to their word ... treaties were a means by which they would be able to adapt to the demands of the contemporary world within the framework of their own traditions ... in return they agree to be loyal subjects to the Crown, respecting its laws and customs (p.275).

Ray (1996) adds that "Native elders knew that their children would have to gain a 'white man's' education to hold their own in the new economic order" (pp.235-6). However, what was being promised and contracted was quite different from the assurance that Indian parents were seeking for their children, that is, they would be schooled on the established reserves. Unknowingly to these elders,

The most draconian assimilation scheme the government imposed on Native people involved the use of schools. Assimilation through white education programs was a cornerstone of British colonial policy, largely as a result of the lobbying of the church groups (Ray, 1996, p.235).

Although there were some day schools, this assimilation would be carried out primarily in residential schools, the name used after industrial and boarding schools were amalgamated in 1923 (Miller, 1996, p.148). The colonizing agents were churches and their missionaries mandated by the federal government. Two foundations of the state, the church and government, colluded in this enforced assimilation through education. To accomplish this the Indian Act was duly amended.

### **Reasons for amendments to policies**

#### The Immigration Policy

The Immigration Policy was originally designed for assimilation of non-Anglo-Saxons immigrants. However, Whitaker (1991) writes that by 1905 a “growing backlash against foreign or alien immigrants developed among various elements of Canadian society” and “a withdrawal from the open door for immigrants of non-British origin” occurred. The new policy contained the belief that “racial (and class) origins were the determining factor” in the capability to be assimilable. Results of this “mass immigration spawned ... mass campaigns of ... racism” and the government “shared in these racist attitudes and reflected them” (p.8) in the policy.

In 1919, a “list of prohibited classes” such as “persons suffering from alcoholism” were added. It was still a way to practice “discrimination based on national origin” as “medical and character checks on entrants were often a means of ethnic discrimination” (p.11). The policy was duly amended in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century



to restrict or limit immigration and to make changes for whatever purpose labour power was required.

### The Canadian Indian Policy

In the same way, the Indian Act was amended. Each amendment was made to tighten the control over First Nations and step up the colonizing process and increased paternalism: in 1884 to ban Potlatch, Sun and Thirst Dances (cultural intrusion); in 1892 to establish and operate residential schools; in 1894 it now made attendance compulsory (forcing parents to send their children to these institutions); in 1924 it was amended to include responsibility to the Inuit, although the Act doesn't apply to them; and in 1927 it outlawed land claims and white lawyers representing Indians in these cases. Finally, in 1951 major amendments featured a winding down of these controls. However, in 1892 the controls were just beginning to include education of children at residential schools, even though, Bull (1991) writes

Treaties were signed in exchange for certain services, and education was ... one of the services to be provided ... it was not, and is not, free; it is a condition agreed upon between the Indian nations and the government. 'Her Majesty agrees to maintain schools for instruction ... whenever the Indians ... shall desire it' (p.29).

But the choice of place or type of school was not available to the First Nations people. Plans were underway without consultation or consideration for their desires.

## Residential School formation – 1873 to the 1900's

As young white children were being systematically socialized to develop racist attitudes in their classrooms, after treaties were made racist assumptions were specifically applied to Indians in government residential school policy. Before the legislation of 1892 some boarding and industrial schools were operating. Official plans were in process to assimilate, and in that way, make the government's 'wards' disappear as the

extinction of the Indians as Indians is the ultimate end of the Canadian Indian Policy ... end any need for Indian agents, farm instructors, financial assistance, residential schools and other programs. Cultural assimilation would result from education in residential schools, and would prove 'the means of wiping out the whole Indian establishment' (Miller, 1996, p.184-85).

Ponting (1986) explains that the evolution of Canadian Indian Policy is "relatively easy to follow" apart from few complications such as some "policies ... were often different in eastern Canada than ... the West" when "Prime Minister Macdonald ... commented that the 'wild nomads of the North-West could not be judged on the same basis as the Indians of Ontario'." Ponting points out that "several major goals ... can be isolated" (p.24).

One of the humanitarian goals of this policy was the protection of Indians from unscrupulous white Europeans who would try to sell Indian land; restricting Indians from the consumption of alcohol; and preventing the prostitution of Indian women. However, this policy, designed to protect, advance, and civilize, also fostered an air of paternalism and dependency that has been difficult to dispel. Protection of Indians was necessary, advancement was questionable since it meant "raising them to a scale of humanity," and assimilation meant Christianization, not

exactly a way to “be absorbed into the body politic” (Ponting, p.26), given the climate of societal attitudes during this period.

### The missionaries and their attitudes

Miller (1996) gives an overview of the assumptions of racial superiority by Euro-Canadians and their preoccupation with Social Darwinism as justification for this policy. He documents the influence of colonialists’ “attitudes and the spillover for the institutionalized racism that survived the United States Civil War, and the emancipation combined to influence Euro-Canadian society strongly into a racist manner” (p.185). Consequently, both Anglo-Saxon “bureaucrats and educators tended to assess Indian ways against the standard of their own society: Indian culture was defective because it was different” (p.185). Values were discredited; for example, Indians did not “feel the need of laying up stores or amassing wealth” (p.185) when Indians did in fact ‘lay up stores’ of food supplies to carry them through the winter, such as pemmican made from buffalo. Also, on the West Coast, instead of amassing wealth, it was shared with others through the Potlatch system. Both modes of storing were deliberately altered by Euro-Canadians.

Miller (1996) describes missionary teachers as subscribing “to the pervasive racism of Euro-Canadian society” as they “focused on specific features of Indians when it came down to discuss what sort of person they were trying to fashion in the residential schools” (p.186). Missionaries had the same attitudes as those in Indian Affairs who were judging people by Euro-Canadian standards.

### The doctrine of Aboriginal infantilism

The missionaries, however, as “church people” should have known better, but rather had “negative opinions about the worth of Native society” (ibid.), saying their ‘wards’ were incapable of looking after themselves. If one assumes they were speaking of children they might be justified, but Miller writes about “the missionary doctrine of Aboriginal infantilism” (p.186) that situated Indians quite low on the ‘civilization’ scale and meant missionaries were referring to adults. They measured Indians against Blacks and concluded that “Indians had innate virtues that others lacked ... tougher fibre than most coloured races ... slow to respond to his environment” and “capable of moral development” (p.187). Adults were considered incapable of raising their own children because “they do not love as whites understand it” (p.189), probably referring to what whites considered “permissiveness” since First Nations did not use corporal punishment or harsh discipline.

These were some examples of outright racism used to justify the removal of children, far from their parents, into residential schools. The prime motivation was their assimilation, a term that Chrisjohn (1997) refers to as “the operative euphemism for cultural genocide” (p.239). For their part the churches said their goal was Christianizing them. Ponting (1986) explains this:

In Canada, the civilization of the Indian is made synonymous with his Christianization ... the aboriginal religious and ceremonial practices are officially discouraged ... the Indian’s conversion ... to Christianity is the most important criterion for judging his fitness to assume an equal place in the white man’s society (p.27).

### Carrying out the plan

One of the first residential schools to be opened in this revised policy was Shingwauk Indian Residential School in Ontario in 1873. It became the model for other schools in that “a rigid work schedule, limited socialization, firm discipline and forced adherence to the teachers’ guidance character[ize]d school life” (Coates, 1984-85, p. 35). The founder, Edward F. Wilson, English Anglican missionary, shared the assumption that prevailed at the time, that people who share this different culture were somewhat inferior. He considered the older generation of Indian parents beyond redemption, referring to them as “the old unimprovable people.” He actually looked forward to the day when “the old people will die off” and “be replaced by their civilized children”(Nock, 1988, p.74). Leadership in government appeared to support the society’s intolerance; Wilson’s attitude was shared by the 1874 Indian Affairs Administrator, Duncan Campbell Scott, who said children “might relapse to the level of reserve life as soon as they came into contact with their parents.” (Nock, 74-75). Nock supports what Miller postulates as the “missionary doctrine of Aboriginal infantilism” (p.186).

This attitude of some of the missionaries created untold grief and pain for many residential school children because it was one of the ways that children were systematically exposed to what became their shame, ashamed of being who they were, ashamed to be known as an ‘Indian’. Ing (1991) attests that, as a result, children’s self-esteem was damaged. “Values, beliefs, and customs were not systematically taught to subsequent generations.” Respect was not internalized.

“What did become internalized is the inferiority and the feeling of shame associated with the devalued culture” (p.85-86).

### Seeking explanations

What can account for this attitude in these religious institutions? What explanation, besides the creation of a racist society, is sufficient to justify the actions of some of these missionaries and staff? I often used to wonder how any adult would want to treat children so cruelly when I was a student at these schools. Some staff were kind but they often did not intervene when they saw children being treated so cruelly. So in the end, one feels justified in broad-brushing them all as uncaring and uncivilized themselves.

### Theory of Cognitive Dissonance

There is a theory used in social psychology called Cognitive Dissonance (Festinger, 1957). It is hard-hitting but succinct and useful to describe how perhaps some of those missionaries rationalized their actions. It is not possible to deal with the whole theory but a general and brief explanation taken from Aronson (1988)'s work is presented:

We have a need to convince ourselves we are decent, reasonable people ... Suppose you performed an action that caused a great deal of harm ... real and ambiguous. Your cognition 'I am a decent, fair, and reasonable person' would be dissonant with your cognition "I have hurt another person" ... to reduce the dissonance ... maximize the culpability of the victim of your action ... convince yourself the victim deserved what he got (pp.116-117).

Aronson applies the theory to prejudice:

One determinant of prejudice in a person is a need for self-justification ... we derogate that person or group in order to justify our cruelty. If we can convince ourselves that a group is unworthy, subhuman, stupid, or immoral, it helps us to keep from feeling immoral if we enslave members of that group,

deprive them of a decent education, or murder them. We can continue to go to church and to feel like good Christians, because it isn't a fellow human we've hurt. Indeed, if we're skillful enough, we can even convince ourselves that the barbaric slaying of old men, women, and children is a Christian virtue-as the crusaders did when ... they butchered European Jews ... Again ... this form of self-justification serves to intensify subsequent brutality (p.253).

This may be a harsh judgment on the actions of those people who either sexually, physically, emotionally, or spiritually abused Indian children at residential schools.

It is hard to accept that I was thought of as 'sub-human', and it is only one explanation for what happened in the past. But unfortunately, some of these missionaries were part of that group of Canadians of that era who were systematically socialized to develop racist attitudes.

#### The legacy of assimilation and colonization

These racist attitudes became practices in society amongst both non-Anglo-Saxons and the original inhabitants of Canada. "There has been a long history of racism and discrimination against ethnic minorities in ... Canada ... along with strong pressures for conformity to Anglo-Canadian ways" (Palmer, 1984, p.22) is one of the quotes used at the beginning of this chapter. The immigrants who were unassimilable eventually became accepted as they remained visible in society.

Under the guise of protection the 'Indians' were isolated on reserves and residential schools; even when they mingled with other citizens to use services, they remained 'invisible'. The immigrants assimilated as best they could and conformed to Anglo-Saxons ways, but Indians were stuck with the Indian Policy and the residential schools with their lingering effects. Ponting (1986) concurs that

Despite the zeal with which assimilation was pursued, the policy largely failed. Due to Indians' isolation on reserves, racial and linguistic

distinctiveness, marginality to the labour force, and the gulf between native and European cultural patterns, Indians proved to be a difficult group to assimilate (p.27).

Memmi (1965) writes about this contradiction between colonization and assimilation as he asserts that “within the colonial framework, assimilation has turned out to be impossible” for “in order to be assimilated, one must enter another; [but] he meets with the colonizer’s rejection” (pp. 124-25). Land was the commodity used to attract immigrants; in order for them to benefit, land has to be taken away from the original inhabitants. Two government policies, Immigration and Indian, left all those affected dispossessed, rejected and “politically disenfranchised, barred from certain occupations and free associations” (Stanley, 1990, p.144). Assimilation and colonization left only social and political problems for a particular group of people that became the legacy of all Canadians.

### The residential School

This legacy was nowhere more felt than in the residential school. Here I examine only literature that has been written by First Nations scholars and authors, be it scientific research, personal narratives, fiction or non-fiction lay literature. All this literature has legitimacy and relevance as most of the writers have been directly affected by residential schools, through their personal experience or as descendants of those who attended. Some told their story to others that claimed authorship but it is theirs. It will be duly acknowledged. This is in no way to undermine the contribution made by Euro-Canadians. It is respectfully recognizing the courageous spirit of those who made the effort because “writing helps others understand who are we and what we went through. It’s a way to share our traditions and our



healing journeys" (Manuel and Loyie, 1998, p.8), wrote Larry Loyie. You see, it's painful to write about the past and what happened to children.

There are three generations of First Nations people alive who attended residential schools; many of them attended during the 1920s. They were children separated from their parents to satisfy a goal of assimilation in Canadian Indian Policy where institutionalized racism was practiced in many forms. After separation, and away from parents and communities, First Nations languages were forbidden, and most children were punished if caught (Ing, 1991). Some had needles stuck through their tongues (Chrisjohn, 1997, p.243) and they suffered many other cruelties and indignities. Few of the staff advocated on their behalf when "students often experienced a variety of abuses inflicted in part from the racist values of society at the time and from the people who administered the schools" (Residential School Update, Assembly of First Nations, 1998, p.4). Church-going was routinely forced on them, and Hill (1995) refers to it as the trauma of "churchianity" because, she wrote, "it is not necessarily Christian teachings that are wrong, rather, the church's interpretation that has destroyed our people" (p.13). First Nations culture was branded inferior. Schools carried out a program of cultural replacement so severe that it forced some of those leaving the schools to deny their identity as First Nations people. "It took me years ... before I could admit I was an Indian even to myself. I suppose this was natural after being raised in an environment that held little or no respect for Indians" (Deiter, 1999, p.67). This experimentation became complete as children were also raised away from the nurturing environment of their elders and culture. Bull (1991) wrote, "This

naturally breaks the tie between the child and ... parents at a critical time in ... life and denies ... the affection ... so much ... desired" (p.25) and rightfully needed and wanted by children. Family structure and social organization were nearly destroyed and parenting was affected (Ing, 1991 and Davis, 2000). The Indian Act was amended several times to force compliance to the goal of assimilation. For what purpose did all this manipulation serve? In the end, most of the children returned from the schools alienated from their communities and unable to fit in to the Euro-Canadian society because of the overt racism. Many of them had few resources to help them deal with this society because that important spiritual element of self-esteem was severely compromised or nearly destroyed.

Although not a scientific study, one of the first writings linking residential schools as a policy of assimilation was edited by Martens (1988) who collaborated with two Aboriginal authors, Daily and Hodgson, in The spirit weeps. One of these Aboriginal authors, Brenda Daily, made this link to pathological problems such as alcohol and drugs, and sexual abuse. "Low self esteem and self-concept problems arose as children were taught that their own culture was inferior and uncivilized" (p.110) in these institutions. Others who attended these schools wrote about self esteem to describe their plight (Willis, 1973; Bull, 1991; Ing, 1991; and Knockwood, 1992). But more than self-esteem was affected. Community based studies by Chrisjohn, Belleau and others (1991) and Foxcroft (1996) also discuss sexual, emotional, physical, and cultural abuse.

In a 1994 study conducted by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the researchers discussed "how First Nations children were wounded during their time

at residential school" (p.37) emotionally, physically, spiritually [culturally], and mentally.

A child becomes wounded emotionally when the expression of feelings is suppressed, discouraged, or belittled [or when threatened]. Wounding emotionally is also affected by withholding nurturance. Finally, emotional wounding occurs through shaming and humiliation, ridiculing and "putting down" children (p.38).

Many children suffered indignities, either directly or indirectly. Running away was a common practice of rebellion and resistance. Most were rounded up and returned to face severe punishment in humiliating ways, such as being stripped naked and strapped, "whipped or beaten" (Jaine, 1993, viii) before all the other students, to show the consequences of running away (Brass, 1987). For girls who were menstruating they were further humiliated (Bull, 1991, p. 45 and Manuel and Loyie, 1993, p.93). There were allegations of murders committed in which young children were forced to watch, and other deaths mentioned (Knockwood, 1992, p.107 and Ennamorato, 1998, p.134). Through these painful punishments, terrors, and humiliations, many children were unable to express feelings in any way. "Closely tied to this pain, was that experienced by not being allowed to comfort, care for and have regular contact" (AFN, p.41) with siblings due to separation of children. Bull (1991) and Chrisjohn (1997) made comparisons between residential schools and Goffman's description of 'total institutions'. Chrisjohn took the description further in terms of the type of discipline and punishment that occurred there using Goffman's phrase "mortification of the self" (p.74) to describe the ways children were forced to watch others' punishment and that "such demonstrations serve as warnings" (p.75). He added,

Even if a given child was personally able to avoid severe treatment [s/he] was likely to witness it being applied to other children ... there may be occasions when an individual witnesses a physical assault upon someone to whom one has ties and suffers the permanent mortification of having ... taken no action (ibid.).

In Chrisjohn's notes (#168) he further explained that "The Residential School's disciplinary structure, via the Goffmanesque 'permanent mortification,' thus may have created permanent distance in the Aboriginal world between family, friends, and future spouses" (p.138). This is liberally stretching the application as in the notes it is used to describe how couples react in the face of terrorism. How they respond to the tactics either destroys or strengthens the "trust relationship between" them. Here it is used to give some sense or meaning as to what may have happened to children when they were "emotionally wounded" by watching their friends being treated so cruelly. Any expression of feelings was suppressed by the traumas. Expression of feelings is necessary in the nurturance of children.

Another way that children were forced into silent submission was through punishment when speaking the only language they knew (Bull, 1991; Ing, 1991; Chrisjohn, 1997; Deiter, 1999; Knockwood, 1992; Atkinson, 1988; and Brass, 1987). There are descriptions of one particular teacher who cuffed children on the ears saying "You silly little hussy" (Deiter, 1999, p.53), causing more than ear damage. For those who wet their beds at night, humiliation followed in the morning as some were forced to walk around with their sheets over their heads or wear signs (Sterling, 1992). This mistreatment caused what Bull (1991) calls "distance (social distance) placed between" the staff and the children, "and the fear-initially of the unknown, but later the fear that developed and that was instilled in their ... minds as

little children" for the environment was "so overwhelming ... strict ... militaristic" (p.41).

Children were always hungry (Johnson, 1988, p.137). There are similar stories of how they managed to survive by sneaking out and killing rabbits and cooking them (Bull, 1991, p.43, and Deiter, 1999, p.74) or some other "creative means" (Chrisjohn, 1997, p.75, and Bull, 1991, p.41). Nearby, in the staff dining room, they could smell the roast beef, or as Sterling (1992) recalls,

They get bacon or ham, eggs, toast and juice ... We got gooey mush with powder milk ... Once I found a worm in my soup. When I told Sister Theo, she told me not to be ungrateful. There were starving children in Africa (pp.24-25).

In some families, three generations went to residential school but most of the living generation is affected. George Littlechild (1993) wrote: "My mother and all her brothers and sisters went to these boarding schools, and so did my grandparents. They grew up without their families and never learned how to raise children of their own" (p.18). He was raised in a foster home. The toll has been that

Every First Nations group has suffered a disintegration of political and social institutions of culture, language, religion and economic existence. The destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity ... has been felt by successive generations (AFN, Residential School Update, 1998, pp.4-5).

Not only were students emotionally deprived. Another destructive outcome has been the individual attack on the culture, making children feel ashamed of who they are, persons of a proud and thriving culture before European settlement. Many children left these schools with an inferiority complex, feeling so ashamed of themselves and their families that they lived a life of denial, some never returning to

their communities. Ruth Tom, in Wisdom of the Elders, despairingly reflected as she was growing up,

I felt sorry I was Indian. You keep hearing you're not much good ... I was fourteen by the time they let me go home ... it was too late. I never got close with my mother. I wanted a better life ... When my daughter came, I didn't want her to know the pain I've had ... I shielded her from being Indian (p.244).

This has had detrimental effects on their children who feel they have been deprived of learning and knowing the positive and beautiful things about their culture. But when Raphael Ironstand told his story to Dickson (1993) in Hey, Monias! he said,

Despite all attempts to dilute our ... culture, we have proven to be remarkably resilient ... determined to pass onto our children ... knowledge and wisdom ... from the elders, so that our children and grandchildren can once again be proud of their cultural heritage (1993, p. 149).

## Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to examine: the views of Canadians during the 1867-1920 period using the theory and goal of assimilation in the Canadian Immigration Policy and Canadian Indian Policy. The chapter looked at the role of racism and ethnic discrimination and established a link with that century's ideas of race as many immigrants arrived from Europe and Asia. First Nations suffered cultural and social displacement due to starvation, diseases and loss of land through treaties, and eventually through the creation of the residential school system.

In conclusion, First Nations were most vulnerable to domination and control because they were already suffering hardships due to the rapidly changing society around them. In fact, First Nations assimilation was not accomplished for the same

reasons it was impossible for non-Anglo-Saxons to assimilate – racism and discrimination blocked their entry into society. This factor is often overlooked or given little consideration. Opportunities were not open to either group. Instead, efforts by society to segregate the immigrants were successful because the state influenced this through the Immigration Policy. First Nations were furthermore prevented from joining society by the Indian Policy because after signing treaties, they were strictly regulated through the Indian Act with provisions on where they must live and who would educate their children, all in complete isolation from the rest of society. Ponting (1986) writes,

A large part of the responsibility for the failure of assimilation must be laid at the feet of the broader Canadian society, for the obstacles posed by societal discrimination and prejudice were immense. Government policy tried to induce Indians into a mainstream that was unwilling to receive them (p.27).

It is difficult for some to accept that racism was rampant in the Canadian society, and that government policy ensured this. However, “To understand Canada one must understand racism for Canada was born and grew as a racist state” (Boyko, 1996, p.11). During 1867-1920 immigrants who took their “last steps to freedom” were greeted by “the evolution of systemic racism in Canada” (p.13). They did not much question the restrictive category in which they were placed, whether they were white or non-white. Although it took time, societal changes occurred for these immigrants’ descendants. Through hard work and perseverance most succeeded. What could not be accomplished in this way was ameliorated further by legislation. However, the First Nations people still have to deal with the

lingering effects of institutionalized racism because of government policy and the legacy inherited from the residential school system.



## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

... the residential school took me away from my culture and forced me to think in a different way. I think I was not always able to be a good example to my children about the way which they should lead their lives. But my children have watched me and they have seen me work steadily to support them. However, I was never able to sit down with them and say, "This is how to do things," like my parents did to me. I was not able to do this because of all those residential school experiences that were so bad that they confused me so much (Ing, 1991, p.95).

### **The research design**

Finding an appropriate research design is an important step. The research design is qualitative, using the case study approach. Creswell (1998) writes that one can design "a study differently depending on the type of qualitative research" (p. 2). He defines qualitative research as an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of the" (p. 15) participants. He defines what the different characteristics mean. For example, "complex, holistic picture" means "a reference to a complex narrative ... into the multiple dimensions of a problem ... and displays it in all its complexity" (p.15). To help complete the meaning of a case Creswell calls it the "'bounded system' ... of study."

The 'case' selected for study has boundaries, often bounded by time and place ... has interrelated parts that form a whole ... with focus being either the case or an issue that is illustrated by the case (or cases)(Stake, 1995). A qualitative case study provides an in-depth study of the 'system', based on a diverse array of data collection materials, and the researcher situates this system or case with its large 'context' or setting (p.249).

In application to my research it means presenting the complexity of the impact of 'Indian' residential schools (the 'bounded system' and the case) with all the dimensions in their creation. This includes government policies, the social conditions of the time, diseases, starvation of the affected population, the grief and loss associated with these catastrophes, the racism in society, the need for settlement of a dominant population, and legislation of the Indian Act and treaties. This was the purpose of the preceding chapter. The words of the participants (cases) will not explicitly refer to this complex detail of events that shaped their destiny, but rather their stories will be the result of this complexity of events ('bounded') but bounded in a time frame by history.

The "defining feature is that the researcher examines several cases (e.g. multiple case study)(Stake, 1995). The context of the case ... In analyzing and describing a case, the researcher sets the case within its setting" (Creswell, 1998, pp.249-50). The broadly conceptualized setting here is described in the large historical, social, and political issues of Canadian society where this problem was created in the 1867-1920 time frame.

Creswell goes on to question, "Why ... engage in such a rigorous design?" For to engage in such "requires a strong commitment to study a problem ... demands time and resources ... and it should not be viewed as an easy substitute for a ... quantitative study" (p.16). He adds that one must be willing to commit to the following:

... collects extensive data, and labors ... trying to gain access, rapport, and an "insider" perspective; engage in ... time-consuming process of data analysis ... sorting through large amounts of data ... reducing ... to a few themes or

categories"; write ... [to] substantiate claims ... show multiple perspectives ... [this] form of social and human science research ... does not have firm guidelines or specific procedures and ... changing constantly (pp. 16-17).

Furthermore, he writes, "Case study research holds a long, distinguished history across many disciplines" (p.62). Stake (1994) substantiates this credibility because the Harvard Law School and School of Business have used case study for decades (p.238). Yin (1994) also confirms that it is used "as a teaching tool on the part of business schools across the country" (xv).

My research started out as a qualitative inquiry using a case study approach. As I proceeded into the interview stage with the participants it appeared to be a biography of each case. However, since the research is not focussed "on the life of an individual" (Creswell, p.37) but rather on how residential school impacted on a particular population, it falls within the framework of a multiple case study. Some would call the finished research exploratory. Nevertheless, it is people telling their side of a story in the residential school experience.

### **Need for the study**

Rather than call this section 'the statement of the problem', I prefer to describe the need for the study. At my work environment I know of many successful First Nations people and have admired their accomplishments. I am familiar with these successful adults enough to know that they were children of 2<sup>nd</sup> generation residential school endurers. Many of them were in different stages of degree work in universities and most had already graduated with one or two degrees. I was amazed that this side of residential schools was not emphasized

much. Most of the stories on residential schools in the media (newspapers, radio, or television) are the recently sensationalized versions of law suits brought on by those survivors of sexual abuse (with legitimate reasons to do so); and in the past, those focusing on alcohol addictions or incarcerations (Waldrum, 1997, pp.22-23).

Generally there is no personal information on the lives of these people, even if they are trying to live their lives as normally as they can and may be successful in other ways.

So, I found it important and necessary to tell another side of the residential school story, focusing on those whose accomplishments include post-secondary education. The definition that I decided to use for those who have successful lives, despite their and their parents' legacy of residential school, was the ability to pursue and, in most cases, complete a university degree program. But they also had to be suitable in that they were ready to share their story.

Suitability was determined by their readiness to participate in a sensitive and emotional topic. Readiness meant a desire to share their story and the experience of being a descendant of one or two parents who endured residential school. And hopefully, sharing their experience would be a part of a healing journey for them and, later, help in the healing of those who would read the finished study.

Therefore, finding participants for this research became a thoughtful process.

Selection was based on readiness to share their story; however, it was still purposeful sampling (Creswell, 1998, p.251), and the rationale for it is that one or both parents had to have endured residential schooling.

To summarize, the purpose of this case study is to discover and describe what are the intergenerational impacts of the education at residential schools on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation children of those who attended the schools. They are now adults, most with their own children (now the 4<sup>th</sup> generation), and have succeeded in obtaining post-secondary education. This aspect of residential schools has received little attention.

### **Participants**

As mentioned earlier in the text, this research is a continuation of my interest in residential schools. The study will focus on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of those who endured years of separation from caring families and sharing communities. Being a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation endurer of residential school, the researcher is acquainted with a number of First Nations people, including family, friends, and colleagues who were potentially suitable to be participants in this study. I was comfortable asking them to consider a role in it.

### **Selection of participants**

Before beginning the research, I submitted a Request for Ethical Review Contact Sheet to the University of British Columbia (UBC) Office of Research Services for approval. Having received approval, I had planned to send letters to prospective participants. However, the project took on a life of its' own. I mentioned it to a family and asked if they would consider participating; and they were happy to be asked. I then sent them a "Research Participant Contact Letter" (Appendix A) explaining the purpose of the research as it also assured

confidentiality and anonymity. Then, on separate occasions, I asked two acquaintances I know who are related to each other if they were interested and both consented. I mentioned the study to another person who had expressed an interest but there were enough participants; however, later, realizing there was a lack of gender representation, I asked he if was still available and he graciously consented. His sharing is helpful because he is a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation; his father attended, and married a non-Aboriginal. Remembering I had casually discussed my research topic with another colleague, who at that time expressed an interest in participating, I called and asked if she would consider being interviewed; she willingly agreed.

In the end, ten participants gave their consent, eight females and two males. Because they have been promised confidentiality and anonymity I have tried to make the participants as anonymous as I am able. Their privacy (protecting their identity) is also respected.

Each was given a code number with an identifying name of a bird at the time of the interview. Their actual names, with the code number and name of a bird on the audio-tapes, were stored in a locked safe until all ten were completed. The tapes were removed from the safe to be transcribed verbatim by a third party, who signed a confidentiality agreement (Appendix C); the number of the interviewee and a bird's name was on the tape, but there were no other means of identification. I have attempted to keep the participants as discreet as I can to protect their privacy. They live in different regions of Canada.

## **Data Collection Methods**

Interviews were conducted with ten participants who had one or both parents that attended residential school despite how Creswell cautions that the researcher chooses no more than four cases. What motivates the researcher to consider a large number of cases is the idea of generalizability a term that holds little meaning for most qualitative researchers (p. 63).

Yin (1984), in suggesting the use of case study when investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real life setting, is confident that it is possible to use as few as three case studies. He also describes case study as a “rigorous method of research” (1994, xiv). I chose ten case studies because these participants were willing to share their stories. I consider it an honour and a unique opportunity to discover what are the similarities in their lives because of their parents’ experiences in residential school.

Before each interview, I went over the Consent Form (Appendix B) with them by reading it out, and each signed two copies and kept one. They were told that they have the option of withdrawing at any time. I explained the process of using the tape recorder and each agreed to the use of it. Interviews were up to sixty-ninety minutes each, using semi-structured and open-ended questions. The research questions are now presented. There are seven, with two questions having more than three parts.

### **The research questions**

The research questions are central to the research. Behind each question is an explanation for asking it:

- 1) Did your mother or father attend a residential school?  
(Criteria for selection: 1 or 2 parents attended).
- 2) Did your mother or father ever discuss his or her experiences at residential school with you?  
(Probe: Impacts on parents and child relationships by sharing/not sharing).
- 3a) What education do you have?
- 3b) Did part of your education ever include studying about residential schools?  
(Probe: Was this topic/subject ever part of any curriculum).
- 3c) What education do your parents have?
- 4) What did you learn about residential schools?  
(Probe: What are the effects of residential schools?)
- 5) Even though you did not attend residential, you may have been (directly or indirectly) affected by your parents' experiences. Can you discuss or share some of your childhood and adult experiences?  
(Probe: Residential schools and the intergenerational impacts).
- 6) How do you deal with some of the outcomes of this residential school education on:  
Individual  
family  
community,  
the Canadian society, in general? Let's begin with you.  
(Probe: What are the strengths/weaknesses of the individual and others in society that help/not help to cope with the effects).
- 7) What have you personally done to counter the effects? And, if you have children, in your family?  
(Probe: How are they changing their children's lives).

The interviews were conducted in the participants' choice of place. Four people, passing through at different dates, stayed with me and we conducted the interview in my living room. We had a cup of tea together before and during the interview. Five others found it convenient to use my office where we shared a cup of tea or coffee and I covered my window, shut off my phone, and hung out a "Do not disturb" sign on my door until the interviews were finished. I went to another



person's home; and one person preferred to use his office. Even though this is an emotional and sensitive topic, I think we were all comfortable in the different settings chosen.

Because this is a very sensitive topic, provoking deep emotional responses by both the interviewer and interviewees, I kept a journal. After each interview I made entries on how the session went, the emotional reactions by me and the interviewee, and how during the actual interviews there were times that I had to turn the tape recorder off to restore calmness to the person to help them through the process. Each was asked if they wished to continue. Those who broke down always wanted to continue after a break. They were dignified in their anguish. I wept with them. I wrote one entry: "I can never again take a person for granted no matter how confident they appear. I need to be more aware of where people are at. Each and every person who went to residential school has a heart-breaking story to share, even their children have become innocent by-standers. Education has been so traumatic and problematic for First Nations people in Canada. The conscience of Canada is tugged at every time they hear about another horrendous incident that happened to a child at these schools. I'm driven by the need to make things better. My children avoided the actual experience but they still have to live with the effects somehow."

I also kept separate copies of the questions for each interviewee and wrote in comments where I needed more specific information beside the question as I wanted to avoid interrupting the person. I did not want them to lose their train of thought. For example, one participant said she had "in-depth discussions with my mother"

but no examples. I recorded that. I asked her to be more specific after. She said, "Her experiences ... were always negative ... really terrifying ... I never got the sense that it was a positive experience," which was still too vague. Finally, after more prompting, she gave some examples. One was, "She was always very afraid at nighttime because this teacher [nun] would tell her there were devils underneath her bed. She was always afraid to get up and go to the washroom so she would very often wet her bed at night."

I analyzed this to see if I was being invasive. But it seems that most were comfortable with being asked to give a specific example; I did not have to ask any one to explain what was meant after the tapes were transcribed.

Another partial journal entry went like this:

This person came from class. We talked-to settle her down and make her comfortable. She's gentle and so striking in appearance. I admire her ... We de-briefed. She said she felt good and wasn't in need of counseling. I left it open for her to call me back. We [then] discussed the questions. She was confused on some of them. I asked her what needed changing. She found that question 3 was confusing. She didn't learn about residential schools because it was part of the course, but because she learned it on her own through term papers research. So, the question 'What did you learn about residential school?' should be separate.

I then separated the questions and re-numbered them. The analysis is based on this change, which actually made it easier. I also found it important to add a question about their parent's education to see if any changes in education had occurred between those who were 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation; this was added as part of question four. The change of the original question three that was confusing to the participant became question five. I thank her for her keen observation. Finally, the transcriptions of the tapes were minimally edited for clarity and grammar.

## The position of the researcher

My position as researcher is integral to the research. I am a Cree woman who attended three residential schools; neither was by choice, as each move meant separation from older siblings. This was a traumatic experience for me and it was years before I could speak of this sad period in my childhood, being moved, and no one there to comfort us, my younger sisters and myself, through yet another loss. When I did, it was emotional and I could not stop the tears. Hence, it is difficult to remain detached. Stake (1994) is quite clear and committed to empathy. He writes,

It is the researcher who decides what is the case's own story ... what s/he will report ... what is necessary for an understanding of the case ... Many a researcher would like to tell the whole story but of course cannot; the whole story exceeds anyone's knowing, anyone's telling ... the holistic researcher ... must choose (p.240).

Therefore, personal biases will be present in the analysis of data. Perhaps what I remember of my childhood will be validated and I will extract this evidence out of the participants' stories. In the end, complete objectivity will be open to question. Also, case study is not an experimental method. Description of the data is fundamental to understanding. I cannot consider any of the participants as the "other" or a "distant, antiseptic ... categorized ... faceless respondent, but ... a living human being ... " (Fontana and Frey, 1994, p. 373) because like their parents, I went to residential school. They may, at times in their lives, have been a "forgotten or an oppressed" group, but each is a "real person, the interviewer recognizes them as such" (ibid.). The participants were all promised privacy (protection of identity), anonymity, and confidentiality. However, it was necessary to use a pseudonym for each in the data analysis and interpretation as it was very awkward writing

'participant 1', or whoever. So, each was given a four letter name, making it easier to identify who said what: Todd, Sara, Olga, Wynn, Nora, Lara, Rose, Earl, Hope, and Ruth. This brief introduction on them will be as discreet as possible.

### **Participants**

There are eight females and two males in this study. They comprise four families and they range in ages from early 20's to late 50's. All have secondary education. Given the low success rate of First Nations graduates from Grade twelve, this is an extraordinary accomplishment. Eight participants have at least one post-secondary degree, with three having two Bachelor degrees; two of them have one Master degree and one has two Masters degrees; and five are pursuing either a Bachelor, Master or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees. They occupy professional positions in universities or other institutions such as professor, coordinator of program, counsellor, teacher in a secondary school, publisher, students in Education, Science, Law, and Psychology, and stay-at-home parent. Nine are parents, single or otherwise, with one to three children. All are single-minded in making changes to society that will benefit their children's lives and others, particularly those who have few advocates, that is, Aboriginals in general. I am indebted to them and feel I owe them each a brief profile for their unselfish contribution in this research study. I proudly present a short profile on each of them.

The youngest, Hope, works hard in her studies leading to Medicine eventually and volunteers some hours in a student position; she is committed to

excellence and working with third-world and her own people. She is gracious, self-confident, and is proud of her First Nations heritage and culture. Her parents raised a considerate caring person.

One of the two males, Earl, is a publisher in a unique enterprise, publishing prestigious works by First Nations authors. He has a wide range of outstanding experience working in his own culture and travels world-wide promoting books he has published and giving lectures on First Nations issues and literature. He is a single parent with a special child and is an Ironman competitor.

Sara, a courageous woman, consented to share her story. She said, "I have had to work so hard on myself because of residential school, going to therapy for years and it seems never-ending." She is smart, articulate, committed to her teaching, loyal to her family, and so forgiving. I honour her contribution. She and her husband are raising caring, wonderful children who will make a difference.

Nora is a soft-spoken but dynamic young woman who has taken up the land claims and treaty issues to an international level in her Master studies, which will continue to make a lasting contribution, not just in her profession, but extending her work to include Canadian Aboriginal youth.

Another young lady, Wynn, works professionally with Aboriginal youth in an urban setting, which is sometimes cruel and indifferent to their issues, but she is determined to right the wrongs left behind by residential schooling to make it better for this group of young people. She persists in her university studies at the same time.

An articulate young mother of young children, Rose has other interests besides using her education degree for teaching; she will do future work in 'birthing' to help bring life back to communities who wish to have their babies at home. She has processed her mother's struggle at residential school and learned how to empower others through empathy.

Lara, another single mother, struggles to juggle her career of professional counselor, being a student and giving her child the deserved loving care. She has developed unique intervention using customs and traditions from her First Nations culture as she works alongside respected elders from the community where she lives and works.

Todd, the other male, raised two productive children and maintains his spirituality through the sweat lodge with his wife, who supports him proudly. He endeavors to apply First Nations customs in the curriculum at university classes. He plans to complete another degree in 2002.

The 'elder' of this group, Olga, has a wide range of experience in a government department and successfully raised a caring and self-confident child, proud of culture and committed to giving back to the community what was handed down. She is the only one of the participants who attended residential schools. Olga is generous, kind, and polite to everyone she knows and meets.

Finally, but not least, Ruth, another professional young woman who adores her child, and will move mountains to give this special child every opportunity to have a happy childhood. She brings grace, integrity, confidence and hope to students in her university position. She developed courses on First Nations women

and other Indigenous groups for use as intellectual tools in their struggle for legal and social justice.

Presently, you will hear their stories. Listen with an open mind and a kind heart for I know they will inspire you as they did me. Honour in a good way what is shared. The next part will discuss the analysis of the data.

### **Data analysis**

As mentioned earlier, transcribing the audio-tapes was by a third-party who signed a confidentiality agreement. The transcripts consisted of 213 pages. Each transcript was read two times before actual analysis began. Then, at another point, the interviews were replayed as I read the transcripts to verify the transcribing. Most were accurate except for a few words that were missed or difficult to hear; I recognized the words as I was familiar with the context, such as one interviewee mentioned 'Friendship Centre', and in the original transcribing it was 'Friendship seven'.

I want to add that this part of the project was most difficult emotionally for me. I am cognizant of the words made by one of the interviewees who said, "I'm reliving it all." It has taken me years to work through my own experiences and not succumb to feelings of doubt and self-blame for what happened. I became somewhat despondent. It's important to keep a perspective on the reason why I would put myself through such torment. I want the story of the residential school system and its legacy to be told so that those who attended the schools, and their descendants, will not continue to feel they have a defect in their character. Rather,

they can look at themselves in light of what happened at the schools, and begin to understand how this has severely impacted on their ability to live as productively and as happily as they wish. This has not only affected them but their children as well, that is, intergenerationally.

The next step was the analysis. Each transcript was read for themes, feelings, effects, and separate intergenerational effects as I perceived them. The quotes that were selected to verify these were minimally edited, corrected for grammar, and sections of quotes were moved around and placed under the appropriate chapters. Some quotes are extensive. This is necessary to convey the whole effect as the participant intended when s/he shared. The format used is different from other researchers who divide data into themes and develop the analysis around the theme by interpretation. What I did instead was to give voice to the participants and keep as much, in their own words, what they intended to share. Each section of quotes was lined up in order of intended usage, and always in the same order for each participant (each with a pseudonym). This was done to separate those whose parents went to residential school in the 1920-30s, who are 2<sup>nd</sup> generation; and those who are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. These quotes were then placed under the appropriate chapter titles. Minimal interpretation before and after follows some quotes. The summary is provided to give a more succinct conclusion to the data analysis in each chapter. This is useful for those who are unable to read the whole text of the participants.



## CHAPTER FOUR: THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF FINDING OUT

... the staff there didn't treat us very well. There was absolutely nobody there that I could ever trust or who loved us. This is where I put aside the teachings of my parents. I was lonely ... the elders had teachings that were given to them to teach them how to survive off the land and live in a good way (Ing, 1991, p.90).

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to address the title, the circumstances of finding out. It will include the following: What are the range of ways that the children found out and what parents were willing to tell. What does this say about wanting to protect children and from what. Their children have to deal with what was learned in order to understand it. What are the themes and emotions they go through to reach the understanding? The chapter concludes with the results and a summary.

I begin with answers to questions 1, 2, 3a, and 3c: Question 1) Did your mother or father attend a residential school? (Criteria for selection: 1 or 2 parents attended), the answers were: Mother attended: Yes-9, No-1, Father attended: Yes-9, No-1.

Although this was not a question per se, most could recall that their parents went to either Anglican or Roman Catholic residential schools. Some of the participants knew their family background enough to share that their: **Maternal** grandparents attended: Yes-7, No-2, Don't know-1; **Paternal** grandparents attended: No-4, Don't know-6.

On question 2) Did your mother or father ever discuss his or her experiences at residential school with you?, the answers were: Mother shared: Yes (only later in adult years) 6, No-3, Not applicable-1; Father shared: Yes-2, No-4, Not applicable-4. Not applicable-father or mother is non-Aboriginal or non-Status-legislation did not apply.

On question 3a) What education do you have?, all of the participants attended or are currently attending university, and some had: One Bachelor Degree-8, Two Bachelor Degrees-3, One Master Degree-2, Two Master Degrees -1, and Pursuing Degrees-5, includes, Ph.D.-1, B.Sc.-1, M.Ed.-1, B.Ed.-1, and B.A.-1.

On question 3b) Did part of your education ever include studying about residential schools?, the answer was: Yes-1 (in a literature course using novels), No-9.

Although not part of the semi-structured questions, I thought it would be interesting to ask if they knew what education their parents (those who are Aboriginal and Status) had. The answers were quite astonishing, as again, this is an aspect of residential schools that is given little recognition – the value of education – and may be a factor to account for why these ten participants are successful. 3c) What education do your parents have? (Their parents would be 2<sup>nd</sup> generation endurers). The answers were: Seven mothers had 1 Bachelor Degree, five mothers had 1 Master Degree, and one mother had a Ph.D., and one currently pursuing a Ph.D.; of their fathers, three had 1 Bachelor Degree, and two had 2 Bachelor Degrees.

## Parents share their experiences with their children

This section begins with the details of the analysis as to whether parents ever discussed their residential school experiences. You will notice that many of the quotes are extensive. I don't apologize for this. I have endeavored to remain true to the voices of the participants and present what they said as a form of respectful research as Creswell (1994) stated that

Realities exist in any given situation: the researcher, those individuals being investigated, and the reader or audience interpreting a study ... qualitative research needs to report faithfully these realities and to rely on voices and interpretations of informants (pp.3-4).

At the end of each section or chapter, a summary of findings will be presented along with the themes and range of emotions that participants processed. You may want to go to those summaries and skip the lengthy quotations if you so wish. However, I do encourage you to respect what was shared by reading the full text, and equate the reading as listening. I'd like to share a short story.

There is a carved cedar house-post in the Longhouse where I work, a gift from the Harris family, Walter and his son Rodney, to the students at UBC. It has a wolf holding its cub. At the top are three figures representing the students, two with mouths closed, one opened; the lesson is important-we should listen twice as much as we speak. In my culture, listening is a value. Perhaps, by reading the full text, you can be 'practicing' the art of listening, and gain understanding this way.

I have made a distinction between 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. Those I call 1<sup>st</sup> generation are parents who attended in the 1920-30s. We know of them and can make some assumptions about them from the stories their children have told; these

children are 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. Only one of these participants attended residential school and is still classified as a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation because her parents attended in this time frame; the rest are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation; and they are children of those who attended residential school in the 1930-50s. This is significant because we have knowledge from the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation person (who went) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation persons (who did not go). This allows one to extract and compare what are the intergenerational impacts and to find out the reason why those 2<sup>nd</sup> generation persons were left to search for their identity. But all the participants, as a whole, have a chance to discuss how they think they have been directly or indirectly affected by their parents' experiences.

There were two ways of finding out. The circumstances were from family (mother, father, or others) and through the university education system as students wrote term papers. These are now discussed in the text through the interviews with minimal interpretations.

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> generation

The first three incidents (from 2<sup>nd</sup> generation) pertain to two fathers and a mother who went to boarding schools in the 1920-30's.

In July 1996, there was a trial of Bishop O'Connor. He was charged with having "raped or indecently assaulted four young Aboriginal women three decades earlier" (Barman, 1997/98, p.237). Todd's father said, "There was a Father O'Connor at the school ... and he had a reputation for doing similar things ... the sexual abuse and having relationships with some of the women and girls." This

ended the long silence for Todd and the beginning of understanding his own life and that of his 50's-something father.

Sara spoke about the denial in her and her mother's life when the topic was brought up.

No, and growing up that was a contentious area with her. About all she ever said was that went to boarding school and that was the end of the conversation. Never where or how long, it was a well kept secret. She believed and told us, that she was an orphan. Her mother had died when she was really young, and was raised by her grandfather. She said, 'Oh yeah, maybe I have a half brother or a half sister but they're drunks and I don't really want to know them anyway.' My mother only began to discuss her life now, in her 76<sup>th</sup> year.

Having to lie about one's past and family history is a decision made to 'fit-in' to the kind of society for that period (1920-30) in Canada's history.

I don't know what prompted Olga's father to share the incident but she explained her father (1<sup>st</sup> generation) only talked about his experiences in his later years. He told her that

My grandparents told him not to talk about the bad incidents that happened, so he thought that was the best way of coping with his life [there]. He said it was an industrial school, he didn't have a good time, even though he was closer to home than we were ... There were times he was made to march around with a gun, he retaliated [one day] and said he wasn't going to do anymore of that, so he got into a fight with his teacher, and he was expelled ... He was okay with that because my grandfather told him anyway that he had to learn how to survive on the land, so he took him trapping and fishing to learn those skills.

But Olga, as a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation endurer, admitted she never talked about her experiences with her 3<sup>rd</sup> generation children. What prompted her to begin?

It was just before I finished university that I started talking about my experiences to my daughter and that I had a hard time being a good parent because I never really had a role model, just peer groups, and they weren't good to pattern. I let her know I did the best that I could. She was going

through some healing herself so I wanted her to know I understood, and I also want her to understand ... why I did some of the things I did ... I was always yelling at them. I couldn't see why they weren't a family like I wanted them to be and how to behave.

Why didn't she share before this? Olga said that, as a young child, "I was always so afraid of speaking out, because every time I had tried to use my language I was punished. It got so bad I wasn't even able to speak."

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation a connection with the physical punishment and the emotional impacts can be made. Olga would naturally slip into her own language when she didn't know the English word, only to be punished, leaving her traumatized; and people left the schools ashamed of their families. They were also stripped of a positive self-image that justified their denial of being First Nations; they avoided looking upon their race in a proud and positive way; and shame replaced this pride for Sara's mother and Todd's father.

### The 3rd generation

The circumstances parents shared were documented. For the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation some of the things shared are indelible. Wynn says: "Growing up I never heard too many stories. They were not allowed to speak their language ... and when caught, they were usually slapped with a ruler." Hunger is also a reason for sharing, as parents "used to sneak out at nights and trap rabbits to cook or roast to feed themselves, as early as 5 years old."

Lara said that her mother was only three when she was taken away and was moved five times; she said her mother shared twice. She went with her mother to see a medicine man to help her with a flashback; her mother talked about "kids

being made to watch a dog killing a boy.” A murder was committed in order to “quiet them about ongoing abuse.” The second time her mother talked about it was when a 1990-year book for a residential school reunion was published portraying “life as good.” Her mother attended this school [not the reunion], and “wrote a letter to the man who abused her; told him she remembered; and if she hears of more abuses she would report him. She mentioned sexual abuse but she never talked about the details. We’ve [her family] been kind of in and out of therapy since I was 14.”

Nora heard her mother share twice, at a conference, to others who experienced residential school, about her suicidal feelings. Mother “talked about the spiritual help she received from an elder. I think she was trying to tell the people in the room that those with suicidal feelings were not alone.” Being able to talk is important when you are around those who shared the same experience, if it seems to help them. She was proud of her mother. But Nora felt cheated because “I had to find out in a group”; she then makes a connection to their family situation. “What struck me about it is that I can go to a therapist, a person I don’t really know, but I can talk more easily to her than I can with my own family.” She describes the second time her mother shared. She said she

... told me of a time that she was with some kids at school and they [staff] let some dogs loose, who were chasing this little boy and they viciously attacked him. By the sounds of it, he tried to run away and this was his punishment, but she told me she never saw this boy again.

Nora expresses these feelings and offers some advice.

When I hear those stories I'm affected on so many different levels, that pain, complete outrage. [We have] To start talking about it, but gradually because I see the pictures and it's difficult. I'm reliving it all.

Nora has been able to process some of her experiences in terms of its effects as she said, "residential school made people unable to communicate ... my mother found it hard even to hug us ... she wasn't always there [emotionally] for us. I remember feeling lonely and unloved." An important way to nurture children was missing; her mother was forced to watch this brutal murder as a lesson not to run away; any expression (of feelings) may have been suppressed; and carried into parenthood, making her unable to be affectionate. For Lara's mother, what are the other consequences of her being moved, first at age three, and then five more times during her childhood?

Rose describes this incident of terror that her mother shared unexpectedly:

Once we went out for dinner together and quite out of the blue she told me about a really hard time for her at residential school where she was quite a young child and somebody from the school beat her quite badly, to the point where she was hospitalized. She had been left for dead in a boiler room, beaten with a poker. Somebody found her and took her to the school infirmary. The man came back and attempted to smother her. That was really difficult for her to share with me. To this day I don't know what possessed her to share that with me but it was a really hard story to listen to.

This is a case of assault and attempted homicide or murder. Rose also remembers this story of trauma that an aunt shared.

It involved her witnessing the beating of another child to the point that he died, was murdered. Then he was taken to a barn building and the whole thing was destroyed by fire, the body of the child, the building, with some animals, were made to look like an accident. She shared that story when a lot of our family was there and it was so hard for her to go back to that memory. The pain of it! It kind of pierced everybody, they still feel shaken by it.



Children were silenced through punishment if they spoke their language but also when witnessing violence. One was silent from an assault and a second attempt that nearly resulted in being smothered by the same assailant; other children were forced to watch a child being murdered. But Rose also remembers punishment of another kind her mother shared. "One girl was punished by having a bag of marbles tied to her knees and made to wash the dining hall floor. Observing this punishment stays with her to this day and [she] is still disturbed." There were, however, remembrances of happy times as children,

Even through all the terrible things they still managed to have fun. She and other girls would swing from the hot/cold water pipes that ran along the ceiling in the basement, using them like monkey bars until one of them got a steam burn. That ended their fun.

Children were so young when they experienced and witnessed these incidents. Who could they turn to for comfort? For their many feelings of terror there was no opportunity for the children to safely express them.

Rose's story of her mother's assault and near-smothering speaks about her mother's fear and her own. She remembers as a young child there was a sense of

fear ... that my mother carried ... my brother and I ... weren't given a lot of freedom ... I can only assume that she lived in fear, for her own life, friends, and family, and it's transferred to me as a parent. [Now] I regularly have an inner battle about my kids' safety. One day she called and asked how we were. I said the kids were at the local community centre. She was panic stricken. 'Are they alone? How do you know it's safe?' I had just let go of the fear myself since moving to the community and feeling it out, and saying okay, it shouldn't be a problem.

Fear is now intergenerational. Rose had allowed herself confidence in letting her young sons do what most people take for granted-risking her children's safety in the perceived safe environment of a community centre close by.

Lara has also processed her mother's experiences and made connections to her upbringing and said,

I'm the first child, so I felt I didn't get a lot of attachment to mom. She never wanted me out of her sight when she was baby-sitting my 3-year-old daughter. Then I connected the dots-she went to residential school at age three-and having to see a three-year-old would trigger the memories of when she had to leave [home]. I became aware of the ability to attach then.

Earl's mother did not share anything that he can remember. Here we have a complete shut-down and with-holding of information to protect children.

Hope says both parents talked about it. Of her father, she says,

His friends were very much like family to him in the school and how they looked after each other to make sure that they could make it through together until they saw their family again. He would share lots of his childhood experiences about playing sports and having fun with the boys and things like that. Most of the boys in that school were from the same community because it was quite small.

Having a sense of family with other boys from his own community and playing sports together helped Hope's father to endure the separation from family.

Many children suffered physical and emotional abuse at the hands of their teachers; Ruth shared this about her mother:

My mother did discuss her experiences as I got older, probably in my teens. I never got the sense that it was a positive experience ... really terrifying. One of her teachers [a nun] was very cruel ... physically and verbally abusive ... to her, her brothers and sisters, and other children, as she called my mother names all the time, hitting her. When she was really sick this teacher just hit her and told her that she was just pretending to be ill. She was always afraid at nighttime because this teacher would tell her that there were devils underneath her bed so she was afraid to get up and go to the washroom, so she very often wet the bed at night. It was very terrifying for her.

Bed-wetting and its consequences are mentioned frequently by those in the residential schools.

### The Circumstances of finding out

If parents talked about their residential school experiences the circumstances varied: the trial of Bishop O'Connor in 1996; a mother was loathed to discuss it and was 76 years old before she talked about her life; retaliation and confrontation resulted in being expelled as a father shared how he refused to do gun drills; she, in turn, only spoke to her daughter who was under going healing at the time; two incidents parents shared with children were being slapped with a ruler when caught speaking the language and stories of hunger; twice a mother shared-when a daughter went with mother to see a medicine man for healing over trauma and a reunion yearbook on a residential school her mother attended brought out a story of sexual abuse; two stories are shared, at a conference about healing with an elder to help others, and trauma from a vicious dog attack; mother and daughter go out to dinner and a near-homicide is shared, cruel punishment, and a happy childhood memory at playtime; when she was young a father mentioned fun at sports as boys from the same community looked after each other; and in teen years a mother shared physical and emotional abuse.

### Summary

What emerges is that residential school was a terrifying ordeal for the parents who endured it, and understandably parents are reluctant to talk about it. Only two incidents of happy times are shared: girls play on pipes and boys play sports. Many incidents of silence are mentioned. Todd said his father in his 50's ended a long silence one day when he heard a news report. Sara's mother felt it best to only tell her children they were orphans and remained silent about all else. Olga's father

said his own parents had advised him not to talk about his bad experiences. She, in turn, used silence with her children after being traumatized by punishment. Cultural control, hunger, and physical punishment were what Wynn heard about from her parents. Intimidation and reprisal were used to teach children not to run away as they were forced to witness murder. Silence is again used when sexual abuse is mentioned. A mother shared when she thought it would help someone else who went through the same experience; and Nora made a connection on this lack of communication to her family today; also, she's outraged by the way her mother was forced to watch a dog viciously attack a boy. Rose's mother was brutally beaten; the assailant returned to try to smother her when she was convalescing; and she mentioned the beating of another child who died later but her mother also shared a story of a fun time she had with girlfriends. Earl's mother was totally silent. Hope's father shared positive things such as children looking out for each other and the fun they had as they were from the same community. Finally, Ruth's mother shared how her mother often wet the bed at night due to punishment and a deliberate attempt by nuns to scare her mother through stories about devils under her bed.

The **themes** are silence, abuse-physical, emotional-threats of reprisal and intimidation, and verbal; survival; sharing fun experiences; denial (parents live lies); retaliation; lack of good role modeling; seeking elders for healing; understanding; and lack of communication.

The **effects** are parenting problems, need for healing, denying family, fear of speaking, children's resourcefulness to use cultural practices to combat hunger, the

threats of reprisal and intimidation causing silence, need for therapy, carrying fear and insecurity, lack of attachment, suppressed emotions, and survival.

The **emotions** children and parents feel include fear (of punishment, not allowing children freedom), terror (seeing a murder committed, one near-homicide as attacker attempts to smother victim), pain, empathy, anger, (out)rage, feeling cheated, pride in parent's sharing, shame (inherited from denial of identity), guilt, frustration, perception, and safety (feeling safe as a family to survive).

### **"Through the eyes of their children"-The 2<sup>nd</sup> generation**

This next section will explore what were the effects of this education on the parents (2<sup>nd</sup> generation) and on their children (3<sup>rd</sup> generation). Most of these participants have one, two, or more degrees; only two have not completed their bachelor's. What was included in their education on residential schools at university? And, on learning about their parent's experiences, what were some of the ways that children coped or tried to reach an understanding? What are some of the effects of this education (as they perceive it)?

Although Todd has two university degrees (and is pursuing a third), he did not ever study the topic of residential schools. Self-introspection was a necessary step in regaining his First Nations identity that was denied him by his father's shame, likely instilled early on at residential school in the 1920-30's. But another factor is introduced when Todd said: "His [father's] mother (abused alcohol, may have attended residential school ... ) wasn't in any circumstance to look after him so he ended up being adopted, taken care of by his grandparents and then staying with

an aunt.” As his father attempted to ‘fit-in’ after residential school he experienced rejection due to his race. “My dad as a teenager had this job and was told he was the best worker, but he had to be let go because the employer was criticized for hiring an Indian when there were unemployed white men.” At first Todd experienced frustration and anger but understanding came about gradually with new knowledge he gained. He said,

With the awareness of the last decade or so [that] my father did attend residential school a whole lot of the things in my early childhood have been put in a context which I can understand a bit more. In terms of discussing our First Nations ancestry, Dad would get angry. He was about 50 when my siblings and I investigated, and after forensic work to birth certificates, and notarized statements that his name was changed when he joined the army, we discovered we were band members; only then he admitted that we were Indian. But he never said, ‘Well, here’s the story’. It was quite a revelation at 28 years of age to find out our surname was \_\_\_\_, and not be able to discuss it. I’ve been angry with my father for a long time ‘til I had some understanding.

Todd’s father went to extremes to hide his past and identity as a First Nations person; he joined the army, then after the war, lived in England with his English war-bride, and Todd explained, “My English mother claims she was not aware he was a Canadian soldier. He told her he was French, and our surname was \_\_\_\_.”

But Todd detected the shame and questioned the silence around it as:

The issue of being ashamed was puzzling. When individuals would make comments to my father like ‘It’s nice to see an Indian family doing well’ and I’d ask him, ‘Are we Indian or what are we?’ his responses were not a denial but a kind of passive acceptance but he would not discuss it. In terms of my identity, I experienced not knowing why I was ostracized in school, ‘half-caste’ was used by my mother; and her tone of voice was full of shame as she attempted to explain it. My father denied his brother and this is confusing and hurtful, as he is my uncle.

Denial is complete; not just within the nuclear family but in the extended family as well. The consequences are hurt and passing on of shame.

Sara began her search for self and identity through her own research during her second degree. She recognized many symptoms and applied it personally.

I realized after learning about residential schools how my family ... my life was affected. I was very emotional about this; I inherited the shame from my mother and felt guilty. What I found out about residential schools made me so excited, I wanted to phone everyone [in my family] to say, "Now I know why things are the way they are, why [our] family is plagued with tragedies and why mom is the way she is!"

In reflection she began to understand her mother, as,

For much of her life she had no respect for herself or being Aboriginal and was probably taken advantage of. She left that school when she was 16 and by then had already learned that the white way was better. Her first husband was white, an important choice for her to make, because she figured she was doing the right thing.

Being white was to be a passport for acceptance in a society that laid down 'ground rules' by 1920-30's.

Olga shared when she began to learn and made connections as to why children were sent away. But her reaction was one of anger, too.

For our parents it was mandatory or else they would have ended up in jail for not sending us and they were left with no children at home. I was angry that whole year in school. I would wake up in the morning and I would be [furious] just mad for no reason. In my class I was able to at least talk about it with no tears ... able to heal by talking about it and my feelings, not always easy, especially in front of the class because I always had the fear someone would come along and strike me with a ruler.

Previously, we heard Olga's story about her language experiences, and she is never rid of this fear of "being struck by a ruler." Again it comes up in the conversation as she talks about interpersonal relationships.

I had fears of being struck with a ruler, I was always afraid, I have a hard time when someone offends me because I'm so sensitive. My grandparents taught me to be kind and not say anything bad about another person. I tried to follow that. It's hard when I have conflicts dealing with them because I was always so stifled at school. I have a hard time making friends and dealing with confrontations. I have mostly women friends because in boarding school we were never allowed to talk to our brothers. We were always separated. I have a hard time making male friends, can't even name one. After we left school, we didn't know how to share personal experiences. I was in denial about my experience as we did not live a good family life [in my marriage].

Dealing with conflicts requires skills such as problem solving and confrontation.

The inability to confront is further hampered by the fear of being struck. The separation of siblings is recognized as not normal for healthy family inter-relationships in later years.

### The 3<sup>rd</sup> generation

This group's grandparents and parents went to residential school. Through unexpected ways each begins to understand as they hear some people speak about the horrendous experiences they went through. What's interesting in the first instance is that a mother and daughter go together to a reunion. We get some sense of the impasse between remaining silent and allowing children to witness and hear someone else's stories of the past. Wynn said,

In the early 80's I attended a residential school reunion with my mother. It was then that I heard all the horrific stories of abuse that actually took place within the schools. That was very empowering and healing for me because it was in a room full of women who shared their stories about being raped, sexual abuse was common and long term, and women tried to run away. One shared where when she was caught she was shaved [her hair] in front of everybody at three or four in the morning. The [other children] were all wakened, called to the gymnasium, and she and the other runaway were stripped naked. She was menstruating and they [staff] pulled out these big paddles and made them bend over and they beat them on the behind. She remembers being so humiliated because during her beating the blood was



dripping down her legs. I sat listening to these stories and feeling their pain, it's like they were so detached from their pain because they were laughing about it.

Laughing about it, or using humour, is not an appropriate way to deal with anger or pain, but it is necessary for survival and making sense of suffering. Later Wynn uses this reunion as a primary source. To help her process the knowledge, she has the opportunity to write. "In my first year of university, in women studies, I did a research paper on residential school ... on the abuse of women. What I heard at the reunion validated the research." But there's a cost to trying to learn and understand as she explains. "The paper was very difficult for me to finish. I had to get an extension because it was just so painful to read all these stories." And what are the effects of finding out? It's an emotional burden to bear on one's own. "On completing that paper I remember I went through a range of emotions processing what I had read and learned such as disbelief, anger, then I internalized it; and I became a victim." But the valuable gain is that she discovers a new understanding that turns into compassion for her parents' lack of effective parenting, combining love with affection.

Realizing the parenting that I had received from my parents I remember feeling a lot of compassion for my parents, that they did truly the best that they could, given the skills they had. I understood more about what happened in our own family. I felt really empowered as an Aboriginal woman because, despite all this abuse, generations of the system trying to erase our history, who we were, our languages, that my parents held on, that they raised me in a manner where I could truly honour who I am.

What were some of the ways parents tried to replace this lack of affection and silence around their identity and culture?

I never fully understood why during the summers my parents would make me go to the reserve to spend time there, hating it, but now I truly, truly know what they gave me, and I am fortunate, like attending the funerals just to become part of that community.

Lara drew on knowledge already gained in training to be a professional counselor and strongly articulates what she learned and how she applied the learning to understand the meaning behind what happened. She labeled policy as

... unjust and racist-based, [there was] ignorance around people's assumptions on how a society can be functioning alive and well but basically incorrect and not respectful, separating children from their families, environment and resources, their way of life, language, culture; it's traumatic to experience separation ... all portrayed as in the best interest of the people. Then there was the '60s scoop', which kept the policies in place today. Original policies were to exterminate the people based on what they wanted a society to look like. They wanted the land and the resources. One way to get it effectively was to kill the future by taking the children.

It's difficult to learn this about the society in which one lives. Lara applied her counseling knowledge and said,

The parenting styles were affected in not having appropriate parent models, so the stages of development in children got arrested. Certain skills weren't learned. The transmission of knowledge was military style, [in that] information was one way, children only listen to the one way, and so the individual is not acknowledged traditionally. Group identity followed what they were told rather than learning how to think and do for themselves.

Nora speaks about her distant parents; a father who was secretive and ashamed of the way he grew up (also a residential school endurer), and of her mother's pain when the topic is discussed. Nora read some books on the topic, but it was through her mother that she learned. "But I know that it's not easy to talk ... I always want to be cautious, talk about it [only] superficially. When she [mother] reads about residential schools it makes her feel bad for days but it shouldn't be kept a secret, even if painful, it's important that we discuss it when she wants to and

when she feels comfortable.” Just as her mother was silent about her past, Nora is now protecting her mother (and herself) to avoid being overwhelmed by her anger and her mother’s pain. Nora shared more about her mother’s vulnerability as a young child in school:

When they had to have their hair cut, she hid in a toilet trying to hide, picking up her legs, thinking they wouldn’t notice her and she’d be able to keep her hair. When I see little kids now I think about her being that small and feeling that way – wants to keep her hair, so important [yet] no one to protect her. She was sexually abused by someone in authority – I also saw his picture in a yearbook. She sensed that I was sexually abused and asked me because she recognized the behaviour.

Rose said there was no clear focus on residential schools in her undergraduate degree which included Native Studies, but she

learned that children were forcibly removed from their ... communities, families were split up – boys from girls; language was taken from them; schools were work camps, children [were] not treated humanely – no love, no care. If they ran away they were caught and sent to another school, the schools were like Nazi concentration camps – run down, dirty, inhospitable, bleak places.

Earl enrolled in Native Studies and never studied residential schools, although some literature course touched on the topic. His perception of it

was personal heartache, suffering, and emotional trauma because in many ways the students that came out of the schools had difficulty parenting ... parents did not pass on the traditions, culture and language ... became dysfunctional, and most likely passed onto the next generations. You can see that in First Nations communities around the country; and it varies, due to the severity of the trauma and abuse, across the country how long the system lasted, how many generations are affected. Schools were formed to assimilate First Nations people and destroy their cultures and traditions so that their land and resources could be taken by the Federal Government and the Canadian population, and to Christianize First Nations people. The churches were involved to save money for the government so it didn’t have to totally run and finance the schools.

On his own, and due to the nature of his career, Earl did independent research and read books on the topic. His mother started “research on residential schools and she started telling me a little bit about her research; eventually I read her thesis which taught me a lot ... I also read manuscripts and published books on residential schools.”

Hope “learned ... from family members, my parents, and a CBC documentary. I felt a sense of sadness and pain knowing my parents went through it but never expressing it. The schools were part of the assimilation process.”

Ruth states that the topic was not part of any of the course content in either of two universities she attended and relied on primary sources; but her mother also did much research on it. “Any First Nations content courses [I took] had to do with legal issues, surveying people ... my own research ... and in-depth discussions with my mother ... my own family, who’d been through it”.

### Summary

The topic of residential schools is not part of the university curriculum. What parents shared was previously summarized. The ways participants learned about the topic were: At a residential school reunion listening first-hand to women share their experiences, talking to mother for a term paper, reading books, novels in a literature course, conferences, independent research, work projects, from family members, parents, and a television documentary.

This is what they learned: Todd learned his father had changed his name when he went into the army and would not discuss his First Nations identity; through forensic work he discovered the family were band members; this denial

caused anger. Understanding replaced this anger but the identity problems lingered. Sara realized that her mother's lack of self-respect was due to her education, as her mother left residential school at age 16. Olga had anger, but found comfort in class; she could talk about it without tears and found it, despite her fear, healing. Wynn found it painful, but healing and empowering to hear women's stories even though they were about brutality and humiliation; this validated research she later read about in women's studies and the abuse of women; and experienced a range of painful emotions-disbelief, anger-and internalized it. But remembering the parenting she received she felt compassion for her parents, when she realized they did the best they could. Lara learned that schools and the policies around them were unjust, based on racism and ignorance. It's also traumatic for children to experience separation from families as parenting was affected, and stages of development were arrested and certain skills unlearned; and transmission of knowledge was one way; and an individual is not acknowledged to learn how to think and do for self. Nora read books on residential school for term papers, asked her mother; but she's also cautious as it's not an easy topic for her mother, so she can only superficially talk about it as her mother feels bad for days after reading anything about residential schools. Although painful, it should be discussed when comfortable. She's sympathetic when she sees young children, remembering her mother wasn't protected. Rose learned that children were forcibly removed from families, separated, language was taken, children had no love, no care, and schools were like concentration camps. Earl learned how children suffered, had difficulty parenting; traditions, culture and language were taken away, creating

intergenerational dysfunction in families; schools were for assimilating, so land and resources could be taken by Canadians; churches were involved to Christianize and to save government money; but he learned more on his own at conferences, independent research, reading books on topic, publishing books, and work projects. Hope learned schools were for assimilation from family members, parents and TV. Ruth studied at two universities with First Nations content but neither offered residential school as a topic, and she did her own research, talked with mother and other family members.

The responses included these emotions: anger, excitement (about finding out), guilt, healing by talking, fear, empowering and healing, humiliation, disbelief, internalizing anger, compassion for parents, understanding, trauma at separation from families, shame, neglect, sexual abuse, and sadness (at recognizing certain behaviours attributed to residential school endurers).

The themes in learning about residential schools: There were forms of physical, emotional, verbal and sexual abuse. Research validated stories one heard at a reunion. One learned that unjust policies (Indian Act) were race-based; and there was much ignorance on peoples' perceptions of 'Indians'. The government wanted the land and resources; it set out to kill the future by taking the children; in turn, parenting styles were affected, as some skills were not learned, transmission of knowledge was militaristic. Forcibly removing children from parents, took language, culture, and traditions away; families are now dysfunctional; and churches Christianize First Nations and help save government money.

Most learned about residential school in research for term papers and offered various emotional responses to the knowledge gained and its application, but also learning about the reasons behind the formation of residential schools are revealing.

It is difficult separating the effects of residential school as seen by the children and how these got played out in their lives. Then, sorting out the intergenerational effects gets more difficult. The next chapter will present the findings on the intergenerational impacts and the legacy handed down.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACT

... there is a consensus ... that due to residential school education, the current generation of elders and others who survived [endured] the system suffered traumatic losses in the areas of self-esteem, parenting skills, and language; that those losses are both psychological and cultural; and that, consequently, those traumatic experiences will be transmitted in some form to the next generations (Ing, 1991, p.86).

### **Introduction**

The formation of self-identity and identity plays a critical role in how a person sees the self as s/he interacts with others, either of the same race or not. If a person has grown up not knowing what they are, in terms of race, it becomes problematic in adulthood, particularly in Canada where so much emphasis has been placed on the superiority of a particular race of people in its early years of nation-building. Two of the participants, as children, were okay with accepting what parents told them, but this isn't good enough when one becomes an adult. The question has remained unanswered and now some seek the truth, not denial. I believe that children intuitively feel shame and some know when they are given the 'run-around', denial, or avoidance of a topic but cannot detect why. The term 'cultural denial' is often used to explain this feeling of shame.

### **The 2<sup>nd</sup> generation**

Identity conflict brought on by parental denial creates confusion and fosters feelings of shame and confusion in the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. In Todd's case, it results in puzzlement over being raised in a 'cultural vacuum'. He explains:



Being raised in a cultural vacuum is a measure of [the] attempt on my father's part to control us, and I did the same to my kids in terms of wanting to be the best Indian family. If we are going to be identified as a member of the First Nations community, my kids are going to be the best behaved ... deportment ... beyond reproach. I received from my parents the expectation to be judged negatively and carrying that on, anticipating it, and then passing that on to my children ... it came to the point where I wanted control over [my wife] ... I had to change ... she wasn't ready to accept my control and angry outbursts ... so I had to learn. [What about your children, are you seeing any of these traits in them?] No. My son ... has more insight about himself ... going at it from a cognitive journey. He has more insight into himself than I did at [his age] ...

Todd changed his attitude and behaviour positively after coming to terms with his identity. His son has no apparent effects, with a healthy self-identity because identity was not such a shameful issue for him. This is an important intergenerational change.

Coming to terms with one's identity is a long process if denial was the norm. It affects individuals in different ways but it is still devastating until you can begin to replace the shame and guilt with facts, particularly around a family history of alcoholism. Sara realized, through her education, that

The situation of my family wasn't because of who we were. It was an eye opening, emotional experience to one day awaken and realize that there are many factors and forces outside of yourself that have affected your life and the life of your family. Until that particular point I think that I have believed the myth and the lies about our people. I did inherit the shame that my mother carried. I felt guilty and I left home at seventeen to get away because my family was plagued with alcoholism. I resented my mother because she never gave me a real father ... I never met my father ... I grew up surrounded by violence, fighting. I packed my bags, hitch-hiked across Canada ...

Running away was the only option for Sara and her unbearable home life, escaping from shame and violence. She could begin to effect some kind of resolution when she concluded there was a reason why she had no relatives. She explains that

One day I was looking at "This land is my land" by George Littlechild, and I turned to the page that has all his ancestors and it just hit like a ton of bricks. All those things I had learned about residential schools, that was my family. I realized I have no aunts, no uncles, no grandparents, no cousins, no connection at all to my mother's family. I wept. I realized that I had no family and there was a reason for that.

The individual effects are devastating. Sara resolved to search and find these lost relations. Sometimes a "sense of loss is often the place from which one begins to journey to find one's self and one's tribe" (Thimaera, 1998, p.15).

Sara shared intimate details of her family's life, and she has trusted me to use what I think will help others as she feels her story is all part of the residential school legacy. It has been carefully edited. I'm crying even now as I write. I want to present the next part in a dignified way but please understand how catastrophic are the intergenerational effects. Many cruel and heart-breaking experiences happen to First Nations people because of their race. The story of Sara's family is as follows:

My oldest sister has struggled with alcoholism for as long as I remember. There is this [very sad] ... legacy in my family ... My mother was raped when she was sixteen, and had my oldest sister, who also was raped at the same age, and had a daughter as well. My oldest sister now has three daughters ... What I find quite incredible is that she [my sister] went to residential school, too; not for long but she did attend; and I just almost see it has a life of its own. She's battled with alcoholism. Her three daughters [my nieces] have had a difficult time—the youngest married somebody who has been charged with murder, the middle one has a string of bad relationships and [is] abusing her children (one child is now being raised by the grandmother); and the oldest is really a tragic story. She ... attempted suicide, and later, desperate to be loved and wanted (she is a lesbian), became involved with a new partner, a well-known addict using crack cocaine and my niece fell into the same pattern ... in a scuffle ... she stabbed an undercover policeman and is now serving sixteen years for what she did. When I think about her [my niece], her mother [my oldest sister] and her grandmother [my mother], they never resolved the issues that they had in residential school, never dealt with the shame, the unresolved trauma of that experience. I really believe that my niece being in prison right now is a part of that whole legacy, what happens

when healing doesn't happen and people don't deal with that part of their lives-it is manifested and perpetuated in every generation.

The similarities between Todd and Sara are that they lived in a 'cultural vacuum' as the father and the mother who attended residential school in the 1920-30's left with a feeling of shame about their identity as First Nations persons. They both lived in self-imposed exile from their First Nations roots, denying self, then forcing an identity crisis on their children. Todd's father denied his brother (likely also other members of his extended family) and Sara's mother told her children that she was an orphan, making Sara believe that she had no living relations. Studying and learning about residential schools brought the identity issue back in perspective as both Todd and Sara regained a sense of loss and feelings of grief associated with their 'stolen' culture.

The important lesson here is that Todd and Sara did not resort to self-destructive behaviour. They carried on and lived productive lives through education; and will leave a different legacy for their children by raising children in the best way they know in how to be proud of their First Nations heritage. However, in Sara allowing me to present the other side of her family's story, it helps us to see the other destructive side of residential schools and the association she instinctively makes. This is the side of the legacy of residential schools with which society is more familiar and associates with the gloomy statistics. But her sister is also changing and that she is doing it through intervention that is within her First Nations culture, with acceptance and pride. Sara said,

The good thing about my niece's incarceration is that it has forced her immediate family to begin their healing. My oldest sister desperately needs

to heal, is now more involved with the Native community, attending some ceremonies, involved in healing circles, and in a grandmother's program.

But to say she is not directly affected would be denying the impact of her niece's life.

Sara loves her family.

Olga had important issues to overcome such as being moved so much, parenting, fear over language, and the cruelty associated with it. She said,

I went to three residential schools and was moved four times. I sent my son (15 years old) one year to residential school when he had behavioural problems but my daughter didn't go. I tried to give my children a good life. I never talked about my boarding school experiences, and I didn't teach them my language because I didn't want them to go through the same thing [but] I still speak my language.

Three schools and four moves are too much to put a young child through.

Development is compromised. She demonstrates her inability to parent as she tried to solve teen-age behavioural problems by sending her son to residential school despite what she knew about them. She was at residential school herself at that age and had no guidance for such a crucial developmental stage. Also, encountering cruel authority figures has detrimental lingering effects. The long-term consequences of abuse and neglect, and speaking the language being associated with 'striking me with a ruler,' never goes away.

I had this one awful teacher who was not very kind to me. In Grade one I had ear problems, painful, both my ears were infected. I told the teacher. She didn't believe me. She hit me where I had the ache ... It really hurt-I was never able to forgive her. She would always punish me for using my language, striking me with a ruler. I had no other way of communicating, so in turn, I had a hard time communicating with my children. It was hard to explain to them why.

The long-term effects were emotional and physical, as Olga needed an operation using a skin graft in adulthood when her doctor discovered both ears had broken

eardrums. But also, communication is affected. It's hard looking back to admit mistakes.

When I asked my daughter to do something and she didn't feel like it, I would push her and told her she had to do it. Whenever my friends [at school] asked me to do something that they didn't want to do, someone else had to do it, they would make someone do it by pushing you and say You have to. It was always this way. I know that things would have been different if I had stayed home with my parents, I would have been a better parent ... gentler.

Resorting to learned behaviour is the norm in child-rearing but Olga regrets the lost years.

### The 3<sup>rd</sup> generation

What are the lingering effects as perceived by this group? Many have degrees or those without are in the third and fourth years of completion. Some now have insight into their parents' experiences through their research in education. Of the silence or inability to communicate feelings, and not being given age-appropriate tasks, Wynn shared,

Everyone in my family coped individually, i.e., not dealing with anything out in the open. I matured at an early age, took on responsibilities, such as vacuuming the entire house, washing floors and dishes, cooking full meals with meat and potatoes, simply because my parents didn't know that at age ten you're still ... a child ... I was left alone on weekends.

She and mother have healed together but Wynn has no meaningful relationships with father because of

his alcoholism ... lost soul ... pity him for not opening his heart and finding ... true happiness, keeps moving from one relationship to another ... works hard ... provides for his families as he has a sense of responsibility, a very strong work ethic ... but ... cannot show emotion or love. There are times when I can see it in his eyes ... I can see him struggling ... doesn't know how to break through. What's different ... my mother has been there for me throughout

everything that I have experienced and it has been very painful for her ... Whereas, my father ... doesn't want to feel or ... to experience. Dad was militant about me making my bed. White shirts or t-shirts had to be worn with a vest or sweater, never alone; and shoes, they bought me the best shoes they could afford ... they never had properly fitted shoes.

Wynn is aware of her father's regimented or militaristic style of cleanliness and deportment. Despite these hardships in her children Wynn's mother demonstrated positive behaviours in a bad marriage, as she "was loyal to my father despite his weekend binge drinking, and instilled a strong loyalty to people ... I love ... and care [about]." But this stress has consequences. Her father's alcoholism is intergenerational but has been addressed by Wynn as she honestly declared about her "alcoholism ... but I have maintained sobriety since age 25." However, in the family other undesirable traits appeared as "my brother abused me physically, emotionally and sexually; he died at 19 (still molesting me) when I was 16." A resolution is successful to the relationship as "my mother turned to spirituality for healing when he died; she and I saw an elder regularly, bringing us closer as a family." Although Wynn accepts her limitations and strengths, doubts surface about her struggle to succeed in university as perfectionism may be indirectly connected to parents' expectations because

I've been taught that an education is something you should strive for ... though I quit school in grade ten, I pushed myself to do my GED then university ... but registered two years before I actually attended ... because ... of that fear of not being able to do the coursework. I'm very hard on myself. I feel that I have to achieve perfectionism ... extremely high grades.

She also feels pressured to live up to many other relatives who have degrees. She also feels there is "a stigma attached at work for not having one." She said some other cousins sense the same pressure to achieve; she is close to her cousins; and she

cites a string of degrees that different family members on mother's side have earned. I was able to verify these. Of her aunts and uncles, but including her mother, there are six people and between them there are twelve degrees. The significance of this knowledge is that these are 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. Of her cousins (who are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation), there are nine with fourteen degrees between them, two have 3 degrees each; and both groups are in various professions such as education, civil service, health care, and law.

Lara mentioned different feelings she had as a teenager and senses the 'angry silence' in her family now.

I felt isolation, independence and loneliness [as a teenager]. I knew I was different as did other First Nations kids but we never talked about it. I don't connect easily with people or function well in groups, and can't say what I think. In my family there is a lot of angry silence. I didn't realize until later that this wasn't normal.

She was forced to leave her home as "at age sixteen I was conflicting with my step-Dad ... just before high school graduation." Being in a position to associate the uncompleted tasks of childhood helps Lara to understand her mother. But in helping her child with schoolwork Lara admits that she finds herself using "kind of that military, 'you gotta' do this and you gotta' do that' ... I find my delivery quite hard," so she thinks that she learned that from her mother. And of the 'angry silence' she can reconcile how difficult it must have been for her mother. But the anger lingers.

There is some good, she got out of two abusive relationships and managed to keep us safe and have us go to school [in the city]. She had to come to terms with what was right and to provide a good home. But the bad needs to be acknowledged.

In her childhood, Nora had many traumas, interfering with healthy emotional development, and was further hampered by the inability to communicate in a family parented by silenced endurers of a system by saying she has “not fully dealt with my childhood.” She said

My grandfather also went [to residential school] and he [physically] abused my father; and my grandfather sexually abused me. I’ve been able to discuss this with my mother, and so I went to therapy at seventeen.

Nora adds that her father, an alcoholic, was ashamed of the way he grew up and lived a life of deception as “He kept his Aboriginal background hidden from his previous wife [non-Aboriginal] and child; he was abusive-physically and verbally-to my mother; and when she left him, he quit.” Growing up with an alcoholic and abusive father is recognized in the patterns that remain.

I see unhealthy patterns in my relationships with friends, family. In the past I felt I had to make a relationship chaotic to be normal. Only recently have I learned to have honest, loving relationships with people, but the chaotic urge is still there.

Frustration verges on resentment as she desires to talk about hurts with her family.

My sister and I are not close. When conflict arises in our family, we just walk away from each other, if we’re mad, silence. I feel like I missed out on so much because we are all really good people. I see it in the way we treat others and the way we can talk to others, but my brother, sister, and mother and I are not as open and honest with each other. There’s still so much resentment.

She also recognizes the loss of language and the effect on her. “I can’t speak my language and I feel like an outsider in my community. I have some tapes I listen to but I feel like a large chunk of my culture was not given to me.”

There is a range of feelings, and many complexities are involved in making sense in order to accept. Rose adds a different slant.



My mother attended residential school yet she values education. What a contradiction! I have trouble understanding her, having had such a bad experience yet highly valuing education. It was a profound realization for me that it was not the education per se that was troublesome but the school experience she had. She was able to separate her bad experiences and supported education for my brother and I. I kept my two children out of the school system [home schooling] until this year, they're 6 and 8. I found school a struggle and had forms of identity crisis.

On the other hand she is able to recognize what people go through to sort out the tragic side of this education her mother and others underwent but marvels at her family.

I see the tragedy of residential schools. It should never have happened. Some families have floundered; I see darkness daily. Many did not go on to higher education, live tragic lives, and their children too. Many of my aunts and uncles [my mother's side] attended and survived. I see the strength of their spirit, the human spirit. They didn't lose sight of the value of education and have wonderful lives. We have a doctor, lawyers, social workers, a publisher, professional counselors and educators from just one family. I think our own family strength helped us through. The life shared before residential school gave us all the strength to overcome the negative aspects of the schools.

Rose helps us see that people can heal and go on to live admirable lives but the important element of family strength has to be there.

Perhaps there are more children in Earl's category that we don't hear about.

Those with odds against them to survive childhood traumas can ensure their children never go through what they did by making conscious decisions such as reading and learning about positive parenting.

Well, I think I was very fortunate that both my parents made an effort to give me a solid upbringing even though they both had very difficult, emotional traumatic lives. They made a decision to stop the cycle at my generation, for me and my brother, and the following generation [his daughter]. They had to work very hard to learn good parenting skills. I remember seeing books about parenting and bringing up babies on the bookshelves.

But most influential was the role by a respected elder who is also a grandfather. Earl is also able to see his elder's inspiration in his nuclear and extended family.

We were particularly lucky to have a very strong family even though all of my mother's sisters and brothers went to residential school. They had a strong early upbringing from my grandparents; my grandmother died early but my grandfather ... a very strong figure gave direction to everyone in the family. Most of ... my generation turned out well-adjusted to live and work in Canadian society, but [also maintain] ... an identity as a First Nations person. I know some cousins didn't do as well ...

On the whole Earl is satisfied with his brother and his many cousins' lives, because of this influence. He is not deluded by the success of his own family because he is aware of what "some other families ... have been through ... the emotional trauma, in the present, ... will continue in future generations." He admits he wasn't left unscathed as "I didn't learn my [mother's] language, and had to learn some First Nations traditions on my own" that his mother didn't practice to hand down.

Hope's contribution is worthy because she is in her early-twenties, but has a keen perception of the society she grew up-a small northern community "where there was a lot of alcoholism" and away from a reserve. As a child she did not understand 'the concept' of residential schools, "as I just imagined it as another school ... except you're away from home." This is typically how many Canadians view the residential school, particularly those who compare a privileged boarding school education to residential school. The religious aspect was emphasized because the schools were administered by different churches; Hope said "I think religion played a major support role for my mother, but my father turned away from it." She feels that the racism she experienced and "the stereotyping of the drunken

and uneducated Indian” is a direct result of residential school. She is willing to say that

My parents had self-esteem issues. They married quite young and had my brother and I at an early age, and weren't prepared to have a family or a marriage. They never experienced a family, didn't know how to deal with family issues, and our family fell apart. It created self-esteem issues for me, too, thinking I came from a broken home. That's the most direct effect that it's had [on me].

Her father went to university to study after residential school, where he met her mother,

then he spent 25 years on land negotiations ... doing valiant work helping the community grow and heal itself, but it was an ultimate sacrifice at the expense of time not spent with his family ... He's very respected and I admire him. My mom quit university to stay home with my brother and me, and I'm grateful.

Hope also deals with the silence and lack of communication and interpersonal relationships.

We couldn't depend on each other for emotional support. There was no communication between us. I could only compare my family to TV families, and how they acted; we had no deep communication, no working out of issues as we never spoke about them. I also slept over at my girlfriend's and saw how their parents acted, communicated much more with each other, speaking about their day, nice things like that; it was comfortable to wake up and find both parents there.

Some of these are common problems that most children of divorced/separated parents have and understandably so. But one has to question the common theme of 'lack of communication' that is occurring so often in the study that is associated with silence. The intergenerational effects are the self-esteem issue, and due to father being away so much, it heightened the unspoken 'silence'.

This silence is repeated by Ruth, who recalls as a child her mother was “very distant, as though she didn’t want to really be ... well, not the warm affectionate person she normally is. She needed her own space and we felt we had to keep our distance.” Being distant was a coping mechanism from residential school when expression of emotions was taken away. It appears that children sense the body language and the feeling of isolation it creates, both for the parent and child. But, “in terms of my three-year old, my relationship is strong. Our family circle is really strong; yea, my child gets lots of warmth and affection.” This speaks of a positive intergenerational change.

### **Summary**

This chapter examined the intergenerational impacts by asking the participants to share some of their childhood and adult experiences, particularly those around identity and how a person sees the self as s/he interacts with others. The parents of two participants passed down a negative sense of identity. These parents, at residential school, were not given positive affirmation of their race. This caused them to deny their race, and their children suffered ‘cultural disconnection’. One person attempted to control his children by wanting them to be a model ‘Indian’ family in much the same way his father had done; this expectation to be judged negatively, and anticipating it, was passed down. However, his son is not affected. Another person inherited the shame her mother carried; refusing to discuss identity or residential schools and then denial, mingled with myth/lies about First Nations people, created confusion; and she also found herself lost and

bewildered because she had no relatives. Alcoholism appeared with the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of this family; drugs and incarceration is a further legacy, but healing, using First Nations intervention, is taking place for them. Another participant mentioned how often she had been moved, the cruelty she suffered because of language, and how this affected her communication skills. This is a direct result of physical abuse at residential school; and parenting was affected (for both 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations). All are linked as her daughter confirms. She said that self-imposed isolation became the norm; she was forced to mature early but it also made her responsible. Her parents did not know age-appropriate behaviour. But they instilled a sense of loyalty. Alcoholism (father-2<sup>nd</sup> generation and daughter-3<sup>rd</sup> generation) is prevalent; her brother sexually abused her; and finally, his death led the family to spirituality for healing, though she still strives for perfectionism. For another, isolation, independence, loneliness, poor interpersonal relationship skills with others and own family is carried on in her generation; and her anger lingers despite the recognition of the good choices her mother made. She (2<sup>nd</sup> generation) used Western therapy and so did her mother (3<sup>rd</sup> generation). But she insists that intervention from a cultural perspective, such as First Nations elder healer, is also necessary. From another we learn that the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation can't speak their language, creating feelings of isolation-not part of community-due to language loss but attempts to learn language are being made. There is an alcoholic father (2<sup>nd</sup> generation) and physical violence in home of this 3<sup>rd</sup> generation; and there are unhealthy family patterns as communication is difficult due to silence in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations. In another, despite her mother (2<sup>nd</sup> generation)'s bad experiences at

residential schools, she still supported education; and due to the role of her grandfather (1<sup>st</sup> generation), who also stressed education, her brother and cousins (3<sup>rd</sup> generation) are university educated. Another mother made a decision to stop the cycle of poor parenting for her two sons (3<sup>rd</sup> generation) proving parenting can be learned through books. The role that his grandfather had in the strength of his family is evident as this family is doing well compared to other families [who went to schools]; on the other hand, the participant said he does not speak the language and had to learn some traditions on his own. For another, racism in a community is recognized, as is alcoholism. Also, she knows that the way she was parented was affected but she still respects her parents and communication between parents was poor as she was growing up. Finally, for another, she said her mother (2<sup>nd</sup> generation) was distant, but did personal healing with traditional methods. She finds that talking about school experiences have helped to develop close family ties with her extended family; and her child (4<sup>th</sup> generation) has benefited from this close and affectionate relationship.

The intergenerational impacts have deep emotional affects such as shame about First Nations identity inherited from those of 1<sup>st</sup> generation who went in the 1920-30s. There is anger (played out in angry silence) with parent/s for denial from some of the 2nd generation children; unresolved resentment; fear as a 3rd generation mother overly protects her children (4<sup>th</sup> generation); trust/attachment; guilt from feelings of shame; and self-esteem is low.

The next chapter discusses on how participants 'move on', despite the disadvantages their parents experienced as children. The children know their parents did the best they could given the circumstances.

## CHAPTER 6: MOVING ON

It isn't possible to use all our elders' teaching now, but we can still try to use those things that we can. Our culture will give us the things that make it possible for us to live well; it serves us adequately. (Ing, 1991, p.92)

### **Introduction**

Chapter four focussed on how the parents shared their experiences at residential school, what was shared, and what knowledge they felt safe sharing in coming to terms with their childhood past. Chapter five shifted to how the children came to understand their parents' childhood; these children, then, as adults shared their perception of that past. That past affected their own childhood and, later, adulthood. This is accounted for in the question asking them about some of the outcomes of residential school education on them as individuals, in their family, and community. The section on community was meant to include either the First Nations or the non-First Nations, as one is connected to their identity and the other is where they live and work.

I have not included the education specifically of each participant because this is one way of concealing their identity and respecting their agreement of anonymity. However, each participant has attended or is attending university currently, and I turn the focus back to education in this chapter. The participants gained knowledge of residential schools, through some parents sharing, but mostly through their own learning in university; they then reached a point of understanding. They did not remain stagnant with this knowledge and understanding, they moved on. This was



the reason for their selection. Each and everyone is making a contribution to making a better life for self, family, and community, specifically, the First Nations community.

### **The turning point**

This part of the analysis will focus on how the participants are doing. The findings show they are 'moving on' despite the childhood their parents endured at residential school. This is about education and what the process has been about for their parents and what it's been like for their children. The participants have to come to terms with the impact of this education and I asked them to discuss how they deal with some of the outcomes, as individuals, in community (First Nations or otherwise), and society in general. The 2<sup>nd</sup> generation is first, followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation; and, in the attempt to understand how the 4<sup>th</sup> generation is being raised, a question was formulated for those with children. It is included at the end.

A flashback to childhood or in adulthood can be the start for healing, letting go of resentments, and 'getting on' with life. Todd lived his whole childhood without answers to his questions, "Are we Indian or what are we?" He explains

The turning point for me, in my 50's, was through some old photographs my brother sent me, our school pictures, I went back to being nine years of age and feeling not okay with being an Indian kid. But seeing the picture, I knew the outside world would say, 'Here's two Indian boys', and related to us that way, and no matter what my father was or wasn't telling us, that's who we were. It was the first time I'd seen the picture since I'd had some discussions about my father's attendance at residential school, and looked at it through a completely different perspective.

When speaking about the First Nations community, Todd has since come to know that it is accepting and not judgmental; but outside that community is the test. At a

conference one day, he had to face an insensitive remark, reinforcing the shame once again. "I was wearing a beaded jacket, presenting myself as very definitely First Nations, and one of the non-Native business persons in the elevator making a sarcastic remark" made him feel "very volatile" and "at the same time ashamed at being taken off guard by the remark." But Todd has learned to move on. He said, "I am getting to the point where I don't feel ashamed. It was not my father's doing that he chose to be ashamed-culture was taken from him-he didn't lose it." Todd had come to see the role that society has had in his father's and his own identity crises. "Being involved in ceremonies such as the sweat-lodge has helped me become more comfortable with who I am holistically. I regret keeping people at a distance."

Sara began a search for the self through education and establishing a link with the First Nations community where she lives and works, and by overcoming "a sense of inferiority ... a major issue in my life, but I've tried to blend in to be part of" society.

I educated myself and that was a turning point in my life ... in my 30's ... it was unheard of for myself or anyone in my family to go to university ... I had no connection with Aboriginal people ... it was where I had an opportunity to learn anything at all about who I am as an Aboriginal person. I made a conscious effort ... to find out ...

Despite the tragedies of her childhood with poverty, death of a sibling, and being referred to as "Indian ... in a very derogatory way" she had broken this cycle of shame; she found out something that made sense.

Through a residential school healing workshop I learned about the intergenerational impacts, my mother's experiences ... I know are not my fault. What motivated me to become a teacher was my mother's suffering,

life of poverty, discrimination, and tragedy, because under all this is a kind, generous, and loving human being. In the classroom I faced the problems associated with residential school-drugs and alcohol abuse, poverty, family-this forced me to deal with my own issues.

It has been an ordeal to make this link, though.

I had an emotional collapse and went on stress leave. I have been on therapy, psychologists plus spiritual work on self, for over 5 years. I had to look deep ... spiritual work on myself. For me that really made a difference.

Sara made a commitment to use traditional ways to create a positive experience for her children. Under the guidance of an elder, who said, "There is nothing the white world has to offer us that can help with our healing," Sara uses "ceremonies, prayer, faith and dances" but stresses that "one has to make the effort to heal."

Olga shared that, as her son reached his teen years, he "got into alcohol ... partying ... accidentally drowned" and she and her daughter had to "get help from an elder" who introduced them to "sweats and herbal medicines" to help them "heal as a family." She now follows Mid-e-way teachings and ceremonies, as "it gives me strength, a good feeling ... when I go to the ceremonies I enjoy them. When I come back, I have a good spiritual uplift." During her healing, she said, "my ears used to ache," but she does not suffer from ear problems now. Of her family: "My sisters and I keep in touch, are close, and we do things together. I would like to spend more time with my brothers but I don't." And she said she went to a 'healing from residential school' session with ten adults; it entailed going back to "early childhood, teenage, adult and maturity" to heal and to understand herself. Through this healing, spirituality, and sharing, she has developed a "very close relationship with my daughter." She also finds it necessary to include those outside of her family

circle in the healing. "To get over my pain, I usually lend my books, paper I've written on residential school, so that they can have an idea of what most of the First Nations went through, the impact and how some of the social problems originated."

Wynn has reconciled with the past and shared: "What my parents had learned is what they taught ... and I've tried not to do the same with my 10 year step-daughter, expecting her to be doing the things I was doing when I was ten." Lessons from the past have become good motivators for the present. At 25, Wynn started going to sweats again "with my mother ... I found it was like coming home because I felt really at peace ... so loved ... I knew this was right." She had suffered an emotional breakdown, sought help to overcome the abuse her brother had put her through. Throughout, her mother was there for her, allowing "me to go back to experience the things that I missed out on" such as being a child, a teenager, a young woman. As she experienced these flashbacks in therapy, "she would hold me and I would ... cry like a child in her arms. I would be so angry at her and screaming ... blaming ... she stayed by for that." This is healing, not only spiritually, but reconciliation also with her mother through the bad times of healing. She is able to move forward now and is proud of herself and said, "I'm strong, strong willed and not afraid to tackle new experiences-won't accept no for an answer from anyone" but also all this experience "has made me a very compassionate and understanding person." These are qualities well suited in her work with inner city youth "whose parents are still suffering" from residential schools, but "aren't aware of" it.

Just as Wynn has had help to face the past through therapy, and has a close relationship with her mother, Lara also shared similar circumstances, such as being in

personal therapy for about 10 years before studying the helping profession ... because I was interested in self-expression ... getting used to the group process, talking about the unspoken rules in family dynamics-how hard it is to remove the rules-like no talking, don't trust. You have to learn how to do that.

Similarly, Lara worked on

Reclaiming culture through the sweat lodge ceremonies with my parents. That was a good way to connect spiritually. It also helped me get through university, as it wasn't easy. I participate in sun dancing. It helps my health. Like mom's sisters, it helps them reclaim identity, and their self-esteem. I haven't had the direct experience of residential school, but it feels like I've been there in terms of the emotional expression; those who went there can't [express the emotions] because it was just so overwhelming. Internalized racism turns anger inwards, people can't articulate to know why.

Spirituality and the

different ceremonies [show] there are ways to express this that are not verbal or emotional. The value of some of the traditions developed over thousands of years is that there is an awareness of what the body needs as you are traumatized through the body, right?

I've tried to recapture some of the language by taking it at university. Mom still speaks it.

Nora also "started attending ceremonies with my mother. Here I began to feel safe, loved, cared for. Now I'm committed to understanding traditional knowledge as it's more spiritually valuable to me than my university degree."

"I was a teenager and I rediscovered my own spirituality, I feel strong in it now," Rose said. In her studies she found her identity, understood her roots as a child of a woman who went to residential school and what that meant for her.

[I] became active in the First Nations student association at university, becoming a spokesperson on the issue of post-secondary funding. Originally education has been a tool of destroying us, but it became a tool we could use to fight with, to regain our sense of identity.

Earl shares that he felt anger, outrage, at his mother and family “that I have learned to control. My parents went through the 30s-50s, and thought they should try and prepare their children to fit in as much as they could, that assimilation was a good way for their children to prosper.”

For Hope, she has learned that

Residential schools are just a part of my life. I used to be angry but it didn't help. I learned a little more about them so I could respond and explain in a rational way when the subject comes up [with non-Aboriginals].

She does not want to generalize across the Canadian population because there are many who are not like those who criticize. Also, having a supportive family, including “aunts, uncles, and cousins that have achieved much and have tried to improve their community ... has encouraged me. My grandma lives in a traditional fishing village, and I have learned fishing, gathering berries and medicinal plants from her.”

Ruth shared that her nuclear family has been successful, her mother has three degrees, but also her extended family have succeeded with university as 2 aunts have Master's degree, 3 with Bachelors, a cousin at Harvard doing a Ph.D., and other cousins have pursued Master's degrees.” On the other hand, “I have two cousins who haven't done much with their lives, but they made personal choices.”

She stressed the importance of

family gatherings. It was critical to my grandmother to celebrate amongst each other at family birthdays with food, potluck, but she made the cake.

That helped us bond. It was during these times, as we had fun and laughter that residential school, and how we were coping, came up.

### To account for the 3rd generation

Todd, Sara, and Olga are 2<sup>nd</sup> generation; they all have children. They are attempting to make a difference and succeeding with this 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. Todd originally shared he had “become involved in ceremonies at the sweat lodge” and found this “very helpful.” In the interim, though, “there was a gap in my life.” He attended an Anglican church “that filled the spiritual component” but that sense of community was lacking. Some of the benefits of being involved with people who practice the sweat lodge and other ceremonies have ameliorated the intergenerational gap between his father, and successfully bridged the gap

With my children [3<sup>rd</sup> generation], we’re able to talk, hold hands as we say prayers for food, and I feel wonderful rather than feeling shame when my father made a sarcastic remark about it. I told him, this is our circle, at my table, this is how I extend being First Nation. My son, at 29, wearing his Harley Davidson bike gear, reaches out without any hesitancy.

Another family, Sara’s, began to heal and has taken back what was lost through her mother’s education. Sara shares “the excitement of ceremonies with my children.” Her oldest son, “unable to articulate his anger [with his grandmother], started [using] drugs, takes things out on himself,” but she finds that he is gradually letting go of the anger. Her daughter has to deal with sarcasm with classmates around

a First Nations class, making her feel bad, and is not going this year. But I’m working with my kids, trying to introduce them to all the positive aspects of First Nations culture, pow-wows, ceremonies, art, and meeting positive role models.

Finally, Olga has a daughter and they go to sweats but also “I do many things with my daughter. We became close after I disclosed ... my boarding school experiences. For me, that’s good.” These are the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation with children. In the next section are five participants of the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation with very young children.

#### The 4<sup>th</sup> generation children

The rest of the participants with children shared what they are doing to help their children overcome residential school effects. Wynn has learned to accept that her stepdaughter “is a child ... keeping her ... a child for as long as possible ... giving her responsibilities that are within reason.” Lara is proud to say that “my child now comes into the [sweat] lodge too, that will help her over time.” Rose has disagreements with the school system and has ways to counter disputes around education as she

won’t settle for mediocrity. If it means pulling them out of the public school system to provide them with a well-rounded education I’ll do it ... there are so many out there whose knowledge they can draw on; all I do is set it up for them.

Earl is successfully using his “good upbringing ... I should be able to pass that on to my ... well-adjusted child. I’ll tell her about both her cultures.” And Ruth, a single parent, “considered it important that my child have a close relationship with his grandmother” because she had “learned much about traditional healing and ways of being through my own grandmother and I wanted this connection.”

#### Summary

When confusion about identity becomes an emotional hindrance to happiness, healing is required to overcome those feelings of shame and anger. Most



of the participants have healed and made a recovery through their cultural beliefs on spirituality, but education also was a remedy. An old photograph helped Todd realize how the world viewed his brother and family, replacing the shame with new understanding about him and his father; insensitive remarks still have a shaming effect, but he has learned to move on; and he finds holistic comfort with ceremonies like the sweat lodge. For Sara, it meant educating herself, going to a workshop on intergenerational impacts of residential schools, therapy plus spiritual work on self, and creating a positive cultural experience for her children, using ceremonies, prayer, faith and dances to heal. Olga got help from an elder using sweats and herbal medicines to help her family heal; also a residential healing session took her back in time; and she shares her experience outside her family. Wynn regained herself through therapy and attending sweats with her mother. Lara was in therapy, and reclaimed her culture through the sweat lodge and sun dancing. Nora also went with her mother to ceremonies. Rose started her spiritual journal as a teenager and university education helped her find her identity. Earl has learned to control the anger he felt by understanding why his parents attempted to make him 'fit in' society. Hope set aside anger for learning how to respond to critics; and family gatherings were critical for Ruth's family to bond.

### **Community**

This section explores the strengths and weaknesses of the community, whether First Nations or non-First Nations, which help or not help to cope with the impacts of residential schools. The answers in this section give a revealing picture of

society, both in the dominant one, where most of the participants work; and of the First Nations one, where most want to keep their connection as it is part of their identity. In constructing the milieu or the climate of the society, I find it necessary to include quotes from the participants, so 'listen' to their voices as they tell us some profound things about both societies.

Todd begins with the role of identity in both societies. He still has the need to justify his authenticity as a First Nations person.

I know it's had a very profound effect upon my life and I'm probably still being disturbed [in] other ways yet it would not be authentic to present myself as a residential school survivor. I would be susceptible again, open to approval, acceptance or rejection in terms of community based people ... did I live the life of a native Indian child ... ? Intellectually, much of the world has been relating to me as a First Nations child, teenager, and adult. So that leaves an authentic part of my make up but in terms of community, I came back and started playing in the Indian hockey tournaments, these mythical relatives became real and it was a great experience for me. I made that link myself, I don't have to rely upon my father's story about the hockey game he was part of [in the community].

Sara reveals how even the older generation can change with a positive experience in how cultural ways are presented. Maybe time makes a difference in how ready some are to rethink past hurts.

Over the last few years I've introduced my mother to some [of the traditional ways], taking her to see different elders, and once to a sweat lodge where she sat outside by the fire. Two days after seeing a well-respected ... elder, we were sitting in my house, and she started to tell me about her life as a young girl. I know it is only through our ways that healing will come.

But this need to share doesn't end with her mother. It is practiced in the non-First Nations environment where some of these descendants now live. Sara adds,

In my role as a First Nations teacher in the district I make a conscious effort to give those kids back a little of what was taken away through my mother's school experience.

Those who have attempted to bridge the two societies have found it difficult. Living and working in the dominant society for many years, and then trying to 'go back' to the reserve has not been accepted. Olga explains, "When I go to my [reserve] community, I don't belong there anymore, people tend to treat you as an outsider." She attributes this to "part of the residential school effects, you abandoned them, or you left because you didn't want to live that lifestyle."

The 3<sup>rd</sup> generation is making a comfortable transition between the two, as most grew up in an urban setting, and they do not feel the need to live in the reserve community. They feel accepted when helping urban youth. The participants' education has provided them with intellectual tools to help others make this transition. Wynn said,

I work with inner city youth where I see the suffering, these 4<sup>th</sup> generation kids don't know anything about residential schools, nor do their parents ... I listen, talk, share experiences with them so that they don't feel alone ... help the[m] recognize the different learning styles and ... develop it so they can learn.

Nora recognizes what youth lack in her work with those

involved with the criminal justice system. I see pain, because they don't know anything about our traditions and culture ... talk[ing] to my mom has allowed me to start helping other youth ... heal ... be proud of their culture. I'm hopeful about the future. There's many strong youth, but many lost ... but don't know why. We need healthy environments for our kids. [Is your generation the one to help?] There is also the other side ... young people ... who haven't been able to get the education.

There are the usual reasons, alcohol and drugs, abusive relationships, and trying "to find that love ... not getting from family, [but] in gangs." So, realistically, it will be a "slow process ... within our children's generation [4<sup>th</sup> generation] ... by raising them in a healthy environment." Wynn added, "it has to start right now ... within" us.

She also shared that residential school has far reaching effects, beyond “our families, within Canada” to another continent [Europe] because “my father has a son [there] ... who doesn’t know who he is ... what it means to be an Aboriginal person ... because my father could never leave that for him.” She wonders how many other lives are similarly affected.

Rose has an activist stance. She wants to use her education directly in the Northern First Nations communities, as “we don’t see birth ... and I have a dream to start educating women from the communities to become midwives” so they can experience birth at home and still stay close to their other children. She also said that some people’s version of history is not aligned with the First Nations perspective, finding it difficult to hear and accept another version. She said of an in-law:

We were sharing personal history stories ... [she] sat and listened quite well to the parts about residential school ... [but] into the darker place ... our people were even provided with ... [smallpox infected] blankets as part of the ultimate genocidal practices ... at the time ...

The person looked her straight in the eye and said, “I can’t listen to this anymore,” got up, and left. Rose thought that for someone to make “a leap was so daunting it would shake the whole foundation of what” was believed about the history of Canada. But she understands as

I realized that I had a few years at university to get used to ... understand the whole history and my own personal family history with it. It’s a huge challenge to reeducate ... just a general understanding of what happened [in history] from another point of view is just too much [for some to accept].

Earl has made an effort to “maintain a compassionate relationship with people affected by residential school,” and through his career, is able to forge

positive links with the Canadian public. "I've published a major book on the topic, tried to get the author around the country and in the press; through my mother's research, people ask me ... "

Hope, one of the younger generation, gives credit to her parents' endurance and admires them for they

shaped me and have driven me to want to improve my community through education ... to counter the effects of colonization. I'm proud of going to university, it's not easy but I want to be here. I've traveled in Europe and learned about myself, and I'm most proud that I know I can handle most things that came my way.

Not only is Hope capable of understanding the past, but it has given her confidence.

And Ruth has worked for the First Nations in the educational community for their benefit, developing curriculum and teaching on Indigenous women,

and law/leadership using Bill C-31 and its effects; looking at indigenous women who have succeeded; and in addition, I've taught criminal justice and Indigenous people, touching on alternate dispute resolution. Also, one article stands out as there was a link between the survivors of residential schools and the criminal justice system.

## Summary

Returning to the First Nations community is essential after identity has been restored with a sense of pride. This is the link to the participants' identity. The commonality is the residential school experience. Giving back is one way to stay connected with their roots as they work in a non-First Nations environment. All the participants have used their education to benefit their people. The cultural ways can help both elders and children; but returning to that First Nations community doesn't mean acceptance. Working with youth in the justice system brings

satisfaction but much work is necessary to help them through present family situations. The scope of residential schools goes beyond national boundaries. Changing views on Canadian history is challenging when it comes to a First Nations perspective but necessary; compassion around the issue of residential schools benefits those affected; improving the community through education helps to understand the past; and developing Indigenous curriculum also benefits the First Nations community.

## CHAPTER SEVEN:

### HOW DOES SOCIETY MOVE ON?

I tried to teach my parent's way; however, the white man's teachings from residential school got in the way. Confusion set in as I tried to live in two cultures. The values of the two cultures are not compatible. What happened is the white culture overtook ours because residential school weakened us so much by causing us to feel ashamed, and also, it caused some of us not to value Native [Cree] culture (Ing, p.92).

#### **Society and the participants**

Chapter seven presents the findings on the research. It first begins with an analysis on how participants dealt with some of the outcomes of residential school education and how they think Canadian society helps or hinders in coping with these effects. Do they feel that society is accepting of or blaming 'the endurers' of a system they had no role in creating?

This chapter examines the ways the participants view Canadian society as helping and the effects caused by the residential school system. Is it supportive, is it hostile, and in what ways? Is institutionalized racism still affecting them? After presenting the participants' views on how they try to deal with some outcomes of the residential school in their daily living with the rest of society, I will comment on some of the ways that society could help in these sensitive times. I will incorporate what the participants have said and connect it with current happenings around the 'residential school experience'. First I turn to the participants and how they view the current situation as it affects them.

Todd expressed that there's more to the issue than more government studies because

In terms of the relations with the government, society is just becoming aware of what took place in residential schools and they are ashamed of it. They don't want to deal with or provide a realistic means of addressing it as over fifty million was spent on the Royal Commission and 350 million for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation [which] is not a genuine gesture, just a Band-Aid solution. Their attention has not been drawn to some fundamental realities about Canadian society, such as ... colonialism, racist and Eurocentric perspectives still perpetrated in not so subtle ways.

The teaching of the truth in history is necessary to the understanding. Todd, by choice, mingles in both societies; in terms of his teaching. He said,

I'm challenging the students to go on their own journey ... to understand that they are part of that history, not in a sense of being at fault, or taking the blame, but realize they are in a privileged position and that privilege has been at the cost of someone else.

To help ameliorate the feelings between 'being at fault' and acknowledging the past, "they need to do something about it in terms of their relationships with First Nations; most students want to keep it at a distance when it's nothing to do with them."

Some First Nations have appeared complacent and submissive to acts of racism that society has inflicted, feeling that nothing they do will change attitudes. And society generally ignores or denies its role in this discrimination. Sara uses strong words to voice her frustration.

Canada is in denial about Aboriginal people, the genocide, experiences of residential school children, they say, Oh yeah, I went to boarding school, and I'm frustrated by their ignorance and lack of understanding. Despite the public apology by a politician, I'm not seeing how this is being put into action. I find society still blaming the individual instead of seeing the whole picture, it affects everybody, in terms of costs, when people end up with



addictions. Canadians figure this is an Aboriginal problem, nothing to do with us, this is those bad Indians.

Some financial effort is recognized but mostly it's the terms of who dictates the pay out. That causes concern for Olga,

Canadian society has supported us in some way by trying to put more services and programs into the community to overcome some of the problems we're going through ... [But] the Aboriginal Healing Foundation forces us to follow their guidelines, so it's still not our own agenda. It's policy that they've written, making it difficult for people to apply for funding, so it's not a fair process.

All through her education Wynn has dealt with "the systematic oppression of racism." Adding to this frustration Wynn says she is "constantly educating people" due to their ignorance on Aboriginal history. She thinks that more effort could be made for society to learn the "true history of Aboriginal people ... [such as] the pass system, people were not allowed to speak their languages, were separated from their families, weren't allowed to practice our ceremonies or our prayers." And removing some of the burden from young children is also crucial to understanding for teachers in elementary school. Wynn remembers her elementary school years when

Teachers believed I was dirty. I was quite the opposite. My father was very clean ... insisted that we have a clean ... tidy house ... clothes always washed but ... people had stereotypes of me coming from a dirty household.

But it also hasn't ended at university. A professor made a snide remark around budget cuts saying, "What does it matter ... you get your education free ... as well as your books," and another said, "There's no place in the system for you" while she was pursuing sciences.

Lara has helped to deal with racism in her work place. She sits “on a committee that is attempting to address it through workshops. I try to present it in ways that society can become allies as they” avoid looking at it or admitting it exists. “I present it in terms of loss ... with the facts of our history and why First Nations are the way we are.” It’s still a struggle to eliminate the stereotyping, as “people look at First Nations and think that we’re poor and struggling; some are, but it’s true for other people in the world; but we’re also having a great time.” Also, “Many First Nations don’t know their own history.”

Nora may have unconsciously practiced racism. “When I was growing up I had no Aboriginal friends. Now I try to address the racist history books ... Most Canadians don’t know the history about Aboriginal people, the residential schools, its impact on our lives and rights.” She is adamant that it’s not “all about land and financial power over resources. We had a beautiful way of living before, our own government and justice systems” and these need to be recognized.

Rose bemoans education and how little it has changed from when she was in elementary and high school in terms of how First Nations are depicted and

creating new textbook material or teachers becoming more educated about First Nations history, colonization; it’s still Columbus discovered America and all the lies. I can see myself going into a classroom, asking to examine the material critically, and sharing what I know so that the students get a more realistic picture of history. But it’s so widespread through all the subjects. Who decided that Shakespeare was great literature? We have our own great writers and storytellers.

The hurts of the past need to be addressed and presented meaningfully because Canadians were complicit in how First Nations were treated. Earl says:

As a result of what Canadian society has done to First Nations people I will never feel that I want to be totally part of it. I will work to advance the cause, to get the rights and recognition of Aboriginal rights, compensation for the damage of residential schools, theft of land and resources through broken treaties. I'll never call myself a Canadian and mean it, never be proud of this country in any way; that's basically my relationship with Canada.

Both Hope and Ruth believe that "residential schools should be introduced into Canadian history." Ruth adds that some attempts have been made by those "who went to residential schools to publish their experiences in an effort to educate others." Of those who made attempts through the justice system such as "restitution, it has been a very difficult way to do things because people don't get their emotional needs met" and "there is no focus on the emotional results, only the legal aspect of it." As for what has been published by non-First Nations, Ruth does not see any "attempts to really understand or support First Nations for these effects."

### **Summary**

The following is what participants shared in how society can move ahead with them in the residential school experience. After spending millions on a comprehensive study and a healing fund, the fundamental issues of colonialism, racism, and Eurocentrism [Ethnocentrism] have not been addressed adequately. The common ground for better understanding is more than an apology, blaming individuals, or detachment from the problems experienced. The support given by society through more services and programs is recognized but the controlled agenda is not. The systematic oppression of racism can be addressed in institutions for all students through relearning the truth about Aboriginal history. Attending anti-

racism workshops only scratches the surface. What First Nations people had in the past has to be recognized. This can be partially accomplished through new textbooks and teachers trained better in knowledge to teach critically. What Canadian society did matters for a meaningful relationship to exist between them and the original inhabitants. Residential schools should be taught in schools. Finally, attempts at restitution through the justice system do not address the emotional results of residential schools only the legal aspects of it.

### The findings of the research

The research has major findings for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations. There is evidence for the 4<sup>th</sup> generation also, as some of the participants have children.

**Table 1. Impacts Of Residential School**

	1st gen	2nd gen	3rd gen	4th gen
1 Denial of First Nations identity	Yes	Yes	Yes	
2 Belief in lies/myths about FN people	Yes	Yes	Yes	
3 Shame	Yes	Yes	Yes	
4 Poor self esteem	Yes	Yes	Yes	
5 Family silent about past	Yes	Yes	Yes	
6 Communication difficulties	Yes	Yes	Yes	
7 Expectation to be judged negatively	Yes	Yes	No	
8 Controlling father	Yes	Yes	Yes	
9 Experience of racism	Yes	Yes	Yes	
10 Violence and physical abuse in family	Yes	Yes	Yes	
11 Sexual abuse	Yes	Yes	Yes	

	<b>1st gen</b>	<b>2nd gen</b>	<b>3rd gen</b>	<b>4th gen</b>
12 Alcoholism	Yes	Yes	Yes	
13 Parents who value education	Yes	Yes	Yes	
14 Strong influence of grandparent on family	Yes			
15 University education		Yes	Yes	
16 Guilt from feeling shame		Yes	Yes	
17 Anger		Yes	Yes	
18 Emotional distance		Yes	Yes	
19 Silence in relationships		Yes	Yes	
20 Lack of affection		Yes	Yes	
21 Poor interpersonal skills		Yes	Yes	
22 Parenting affected		Yes	Yes	
23 Speaking of language		Yes		
24 Non-teaching of language to children		Yes	Yes	
25 Overprotection of children through fear		Yes	Yes	Yes
26 Healing through FN intervention		Yes	Yes	
27 Western therapy		Yes	Yes	
28 Personal healing through elders		Yes	Yes	
29 Militaristic communication		Yes	Yes	Yes
30 Father away from home too much		Yes	Yes	
31 Healing through family		Yes	Yes	
32 Stopping of cycle of poor parenting		Yes	Yes	
33 Departure from abusive relationship		Yes		
34 Attendance at res sch healing workshops		Yes		
35 Inferiority complex			Yes	
36 Loyalty			Yes	

	1st gen	2nd gen	3rd gen	4th gen
37 Incarceration			Yes	
38 Independence			Yes	
39 Language loss			Yes	
40 Lack of emotional support from family			Yes	
41 Ability to control anger toward parents			Yes	
42 Good parenting			Yes	Yes
43 Perfectionism			Yes	
44 Reclaiming of identity			Yes	
45 Learning of conflicts in school system				Yes
46 Teaching of children to be proud of culture				Yes

### 1<sup>st</sup> generation

These are parents of some of the participants. These parents went to residential school in the 1920-30s, the period included in chapter two. TABLE 1 summarized what they had leaving residential school in the 1920-30s: denial of First Nations identity, believe myths/lies about First Nations people, shame, poor self esteem, silence on past, communication difficulties, expectation to be judged negatively, father controlling, experience of racism, violence and physical abuse in family, sexual abuse, alcoholism, and parents who value education.

### Comment

From the interviews these impacts are what the children said about their parents and grandparents. What is significant is that those who left the schools in the 1920-30s are ashamed of their heritage, race, and families, and, consequently, did

not admit they were First Nations. These were the 1<sup>st</sup> generation. In this study, two out of three parents were stripped of a positive self-image. This justified their denial of being First Nations; they avoided looking upon their race in a proud and positive way; and shame replaced any pride they may have had before residential school because they learned the 'white' way was better. The other parent retaliated and was expelled. Perhaps this saved him from the same fate. Other findings are connected to the above. A 1<sup>st</sup> generation father changed his name when he went into the army, identity was hidden from his children; the consequence was anger in the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation because it created an identity crisis. Although replaced with understanding, the identity problems lingered for some time into adulthood. Another 1<sup>st</sup> generation mother lacked self-respect due to her education, left residential school at age 16, but by then she believed that the 'white' way was better, and said she was an orphan, leaving the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation to believe there were no relatives. The third person shared a story her father told; he went on to live a successful life using traditional ways to provide for his children. The first two used silence because of shame, the third was told by his parents not to talk about his experience because they were protecting him from sadness. But, for his daughter, her experience created much anger but she found it healing to share in a university class.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> generational impacts

Table 1 also summarizes what the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation parents experienced as told to their children. Their parents have university education, there is strong influence of a grandparent on family, guilt from feeling shame, anger, emotional distance,

silence in relationships, lack of affection, poor interpersonal skills, parenting affected, speaking of language, non-teaching of language to children, overprotection of children through fear, healing through First Nation intervention, Western therapy, personal healing through elders, militaristic communication, father away from home too much, healing through family, stopping of cycle of poor parenting, departure from abusive relationships, and attendance at residential school healing workshops.

### Comment

Happy times were rare and other experiences were rarely discussed. Why? As children the parents were traumatized and wounded emotionally by what they were forced to endure. Unable to speak English they were punished for trying to communicate, in fact so severely it caused ear damage for one and made the others silent. Fear replaced any expression of emotion for some as intimidation and reprisal was used to teach children not to run away. Most remained silent until an appropriate opportunity surfaced to share with their children. For those forced to watch violence (a murder) they were so emotionally wounded they withdrew feelings needed to show affection and necessary for nurturing their children. And the fear and withdrawal of emotions is intergenerational for some families. If they said they were ill they were punished. Some staff told scary stories so children would not get out of bed for any reason, and bed-wetting resulted. All this mistreatment created silence, need for therapy, carrying fear and insecurity, lack of attachment in the next generation, suppressed emotions, and, in the end, survival or endurance, so I call them all endurers. These are the major findings. Being raised in



a cultural vacuum (of denial) resulted in one man attempting to control his own children to be a model 'Indian' family, and expecting to be judged negatively was inherited; but his 3<sup>rd</sup> generation is not affected. Another inherited the shame her mother carried from the 1<sup>st</sup> generation. She also grew up surrounded by violence; and alcoholism is traced to the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. The children of the sister who went to residential school had a difficult childhood which is extended to the next generation in the form of bad relationships, abusing children and having apprehensions, involvement with drugs, attempted suicide, and murder ending in incarceration for a niece. But in her nuclear family, she appears to have broken the cycle. A son was involved in drugs, but is now home and attending school again. Inability to handle a teenage son's behaviour results in sending him to residential school for a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation parent. She rarely talked about her experiences; she did not teach the language to her 3<sup>rd</sup> generation children; and communication problems directly resulting from punishment affected her relationships within her nuclear family but this cycle of not communicating has been broken as she has a close relationship now with her daughter. This is the second generation as told in their stories from the ten participants.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> generational impacts

Table 1 also summarized what has happened to 3<sup>rd</sup> generation participants. Some suffer from inferiority complex, experience loyalty, incarceration, independence, language loss, lack of emotional support from family, ability to control anger toward parents, good parenting, perfectionism, reclaiming of identity,

learning of conflicts in school system, and teaching of children to be proud of culture.

### Comment

What the children learned about their parents contributed to their success. Seven out of nine of their parents have Bachelor degrees, some Master's degrees and one has a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), suggesting that their parents were excellent educational role models. All the participants have degrees or are currently enrolled in university. Despite this, though, the effects from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation linger.

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, they learned from their education at university about physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual abuse their parents endured. Some research validated this, unjust policies were based on race and ignorance, land and resources were wanted, taking children justified it, and churches were involved to assimilate and Christianize the children; they also helped the government save money. The parenting skills of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation were affected as required skills were not learned and development of their children was affected, and transmission of knowledge was harsh and militaristic. When children were forcibly removed, language, culture, and traditions were taken; and some families, depending on severity of abuse and length of time away, are now dysfunctional.

The intergenerational impacts are numerous. The original thirteen impacts in the 1<sup>st</sup> generation are carried over to the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation; additionally more categories emerge. Impacts in the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation continue from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation, but several others emerge, making the total forty-six. Many have been 'handed down' and others have ceased with the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation such as there is no longer an

expectation to be judged negatively, and poor parenting is curtailed with new awareness. It is important to understand that the impacts do not stop. One of the reasons for conducting this research is to help those who have experienced the residential schools but it also written for their descendants. For the 4<sup>th</sup> generation, only six of the participants were qualified to provide answers.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> generation

I asked participants what they now do with their children. These were the responses as summarized in Table 1: overprotection of children through fear, an admission of militaristic communication, good parenting, learning of conflicts in school system, and the teaching of children to be proud of culture. All above but two are a positive change.

#### Comment

There are positive results from these participants and their parenting. Only six of the ten participants who are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation have children; two are 2<sup>nd</sup> generation and have children (they are not included in the above responses); and two have no children. It is encouraging to learn that the children (4<sup>th</sup> generation) of these participants are in good hands and will likely not have poor self esteem issues or poor parenting.

#### Moving On

For all the participants 'moving on' is their strength. The indomitable strength of the human spirit prevails, and once they set their goal of reclaiming the

self, they have never looked back. For most, 'moving on' has meant following in their parents' footsteps, through education, and succeeding.

The findings are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2. Participants' Views on Moving On**

- 1 Education in some form continues for most
- 2 Healing is required to overcome feelings of shame and anger
- 3 Healing and recovery need to use cultural beliefs on spirituality
- 4 Even after understanding replaces shame, insensitive racist remarks still hurt
- 5 Education is helpful for finding the self and reclaiming identity
- 6 Therapy with licensed professionals is needed
- 7 Working with elder healers is preferred
- 8 Spiritual cultural activities such as sweats and ceremonies bring connections in the community
- 9 Reclaiming culture through sweat lodges and sun dances is helpful
- 10 Spirituality can begin as a teenage spiritual journey
- 11 Therapy is ongoing for some
- 12 Anger can be controlled through understanding
- 13 Family gatherings help to cope
- 14 A supportive family helps
- 15 A grandmother helps by passing down teachings about medicine, berry gathering, and fishing

Education in some form continues for most, healing is required to overcome feelings of shame and anger, healing and recovery need to use cultural beliefs on spirituality, even after understanding replaces shame, insensitive racist remarks can still hurt, education is helpful for finding the self and reclaiming identity, therapy with licensed professionals is needed, working with elder healers is preferred, spiritual cultural activities such as sweats and ceremonies bring connections in the community, reclaiming culture through sweat lodges and sun dances is helpful, spirituality can begin as a teenager spiritual journey, therapy is ongoing for some, anger can be controlled through understanding, family gatherings help to cope, a

supportive family helps, and a grandmother helps by passing down teachings about medicine, berry gathering, and fishing.

### Community

For those who have not been raised in the First Nations environment, returning to the community is essential. This is the link to their identity. The commonality is the residential school that has had a profound and disturbing effect. Their education is for the collective benefit, not just an individual gain. These are the findings as given in Table 3.

### **Table 3. Participants' Views on Community**

- 1 Relatives who were denied by a father were located
- 2 Education is used to benefit one's own people
- 3 Cultural ways can benefit both elders and youth
- 4 Returning to community does not necessarily bring acceptance
- 5 Working with Aboriginal youth brings satisfaction but much is needed to help family situations
- 6 Changing views of Canadian history are necessary
- 7 Compassion is shown around those affected by residential school
- 8 Improving community through education helps to understand the past
- 9 Developing Indigenous curriculum can be used as intellectual tools

### Comment

From the research we learn that parents should not decide to deny knowledge about their heritage under any circumstances. Children need to know about their ancestry. If they are denied this right, they search on their own in adulthood. Having a family and relatives is necessary for self esteem and sense of pride in identity as a First Nations person. Without it, there is cultural disconnection, a sense of loss, and bewilderment without a sense of family.

Through education the participants were able to make connections with this missing link. A sense of restoration began with the return to their community.

### **How does society move on?**

The participants also shared their views on how society helps or hinders them in living with the effects and impacts of residential schools. The term 'eurocentricism' is used by one of the participants. To maintain the consistency of my discussion in chapter two, I am replacing eurocentricism with ethnocentrism. The findings are given in Table 4.

**Table 4. Participants' Views on Society Moving On**

- 1 Fundamental issues of colonialism, racism, ethnocentrism are not addressed by government
- 2 Common ground for better understanding is beyond the apology, blaming individuals, and remaining detached from issues
- 3 Support given through services and programs is too controlled
- 4 Systematic oppression of racism can be addressed for ALL students through learning Aboriginal history
- 5 First Nations contributions need to be recognized
- 6 New textbooks and critical thinking are needed for teachers in First Nations contexts
- 7 Acknowledgement of what happened in the past means not blaming or assigning guilt
- 8 The role of residential schools should be taught in school
- 9 The justice system is another form of injustice

The fundamental issues of colonialism, racism, and ethnocentrism are not addressed by government; the common ground for better understanding is beyond the apology, blaming individuals, and remaining detached from issues; support given through services and programs is too controlled; systemic oppression of racism can be addressed for ALL students through learning Aboriginal history; First

Nations contributions need to be recognized; new textbooks and critical thinking for teachers in First Nations contexts; acknowledgement of what happened in the past means not blaming nor assigning guilt; the role of residential schools should be taught in school; and the justice system is another form of injustice.

### **Comment**

I attempt to incorporate the participants' views in the following interpretation. My views are strong on the issues raised.

As one of the participants said, the government and society have offered only Band-Aid solutions in the millions of dollars spent on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation by not addressing the fundamental issues of colonialism, racism, and ethnocentrism perpetrated in not so subtle ways.

Colonialism, racism, and ethnocentrism are contrary to democratic values. As I argued in Chapter 2, Canada developed from a racist state. The situation has not changed much for First Nations people. Residential school formation only assured this exclusion of equal participation in society, by making First Nations 'invisible' in educating them away from the rest of society. Added to this is the use of textbooks that still do not inform the citizenry in the true history of First Nations people.

Not including the residential school experience in the curricula is a form of this ethnocentrism, and perpetuates it. In this way, ethnocentrism encourages a form of racism because it causes conflict and hostility between groups. This was

established in Canada against First Nations people by colonialism. Canadians are complacent when it comes to First Nations people and their history. Not to understand what happened at residential schools to young children essentially fosters animosity between citizens. In this way, the people are complicit in this complacency. Governments are responsible for educating the public. Chrisjohn (1997) in the Circle Game wrote,

When it comes to providing details of individuals' experience ... there is ... official silence. The churches and federal/provincial governments have produced no histories, incident reports, legal opinions, psychologies, or sociologies of Indian Residential Schooling (p.27).

The provinces are responsible for education, hence, the production of curricula. Miller (1997) agrees with this complicity of citizenry. "If people get the government they deserve, then the people are responsible in a moral sense for what government does [and not do] in their name" (p.435). In curricula presenting one view is wrong.

On the issue of Canadian denial about Aboriginal people, the genocide and discrimination is rampant and the victim is blamed. To equate residential schools with private boarding schools that parents and children agree to go to by choice is an insensitive and uninformed statement. Chrisjohn (1997) writes these "overdrawn comparisons ... are fairly common" and berates those who

cannot tell the difference 1) between sending your own children off to exclusive boarding schools (where "these young men govern the school for a time ... as they expect to govern the country later") versus having your children removed under force of law to live under an alien system of language, religion, and culture, delivered by those with a stated ... commitment to the genocide of their charges ... (pp.26-27).

A participant mentioned the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and said that the approach is wrong. It is a bureaucratic agency and another type of "cultural



genocide" as "a more Canadian form ... death through bureaucracy" described by Boyko (1995, p.176) but now being practiced by First Nations people, who developed stringent guidelines and rigid controls over the distribution of the funds. None of it can be used for individual healing.

Being oppressed by racism in the education system, from elementary school to university, could be addressed through students learning more about the history or Aboriginal people in Social Studies. Elimination of stereotyping of First Nations people in any way is another mode to ending discrimination.

Society has advocates for First Nations people, but those with strong opposition against any advances made by First Nations through the Human Rights Acts or other legislation designed to control discriminatory behaviour get the media's attention. Sitting on an anti-racism committee is one way to create a less hostile learning environment for students in a university, but workshops sometimes only attract the converted. More emphasis on why Aboriginals have special consideration in pursuing equal access rights to education is needed. There is legislation to support this right. Those who have become 'allies' know and share the same goal towards equality for all society.

How textbooks address rights is important in the teaching of Aboriginal history. It's not about getting wealthy and having financial power over land and its resources. It's about telling the truth behind the corporate greed that does not feel socially obligated to give back a portion of its wealth to help build better roads and contribute to schools, hospitals, or other institutions that would benefit First Nations, from whose land these resources are extracted.

Columbus did not 'discover' America. Wright (1992) in Stolen Continents tells how a traditional chief of the Onondaga Iroquois denied Columbus' discovery. "You cannot discover an inhabited land. Otherwise I could cross the Atlantic and 'discover' England" (p.5). When is this lie going to be removed from textbooks? And what advantage is there to perpetuating this lie? In my view, it's another way colonialism continues to oppress, teaching lies that enforce that notion that this country was 'big empty land' with no one occupying it, so it rightfully belongs to the 'discoverers' at the expense of the 'discovered'.

Canadians should listen to why there is disenchantment with living in 'the world's best country' and its treatment of the First Nations people. Compensation for the damage of residential schools, theft of land and resources through broken treaties is a test of a country's integrity and moral obligation. Many of the recommendations from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples have not been implemented; and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation is not funding individual therapy to deal with the shame and unresolved trauma of residential schooling.

And finally, the Canadian justice system is a reminder of the injustice to First Nations people. Even attempts at restitution have driven some to bankruptcy, financially and emotionally. Emotions are not a legal concern; the law only looks at itself, and not the humanity it seeks to defend.

### **The interview findings and the literature**

The legacy of assimilation, through colonization and the education of First Nations children at residential schools, failed. Memmi (1965) describes assimilation

in this way as impossible, “for in order to be assimilated, one must enter another; [but] he meets with the colonizer’s rejection” (pp.124-25). Children met this rejection of the colonizers through the treatment they received from some of the missionaries who were the caregivers at these institutions. Instead of feeling respect and love children left the residential schools ashamed of their heritage, race, and families. This feeling of shame was closely associated with the racist assumptions that were specifically applied to Indians in the government residential school policy and of the society at the time. This remark, “raising them to a scale of humanity” (Ponting, 1986. p.26), when describing them is one example. Missionaries and bureaucrats tended to assess Indian ways against their standard and judged their ‘wards’ accordingly. The attitude of some of the missionaries, who were also the educators and supervisors, created untold grief and pain as children were systematically exposed to what became their shame, the devalued culture (Ing, 1991, p.86). All the generations of this study experienced racism, both those at the schools, and the participants who currently reside in Canada.

The interview findings have fourteen categories affecting the 1<sup>st</sup> generation. The denial, shame, self esteem, silence on past, experience of racism, and myths/lies about First Nations people (Ing, 1991; Bull, 1991; Chrisjohn, 1997; Foxcroft, 1996, and Knockwood, 1992) have had detrimental impacts on the next generation (Chrisjohn, et al, 1991). Chrisjohn wrote about fathers and mothers and said “residential school fathers ... were seen as ... giving their children less ... affectionate attention, and less supportive communication” (p.172). On the physical violence he reported that residential school fathers “were more likely to report that their mothers had been

beaten by their fathers" (p.172). In the study, a daughter reported that her grandfather and father had records of physical and alcohol abuse; her father displayed the same physical violence; and her mother left the abusive relationship. Chrisjohn also concluded that former residential students have "had a greater number of marriages/common law relationships" and the "climate could not be considered appropriate for learning, growth, and personal fulfillment" (p.172). The interviews also revealed that two fathers went into the army. If Indians joined the armed forces at the time, they were enfranchised. But Bull (1991) wrote how two males joined the army despite this threat, because "they were so brainwashed, so institutionalized, and just a number that many continued to maintain the highly structured and regimented lifestyle unconsciously" (p.51); they also had been incarcerated.

Communication difficulty (Foxcroft, 1996; Ing, 1991; Bull, 1991, and Manuel and Loyie, 1998) has been maintained through silence on the past. Residential school was a difficult experience and the second generation revealed some of the reasons behind the silence. There is guilt from feeling shame, anger, distance, silence in relationships, lack of affection, not knowing the language to teach it, and poor interpersonal relationship skills; and these have all affected parenting. All of these are connected to children being wounded emotionally, physically, spiritually [culturally], and mentally. "Being forbidden to speak their first language is the most fundamental way of being silenced" (AFN, 1994, p. 24). When it came to children seeking comfort from fear and terror, it was unavailable. The child "was not encouraged to express these feelings" (p.38) and missionaries "did not provide the

nurturing required for the development ... to feel good about one's self" because "it went against everything the schools advocated" (p.39). Expression of feelings is fundamental in the nurturance of children. Being made to watch other children suffering and unable to offer help created for some "permanent mortification" of the self (Chrisjohn, 1997,p. 138).

One of the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation interviewees attributed the family breakdown to her father being away so much and that there was no emotional support for the family. Bull (1991) wrote about the feelings of family and the "types of emotional ties" (p.40) that held the children together, forming "emotional bonds between them, the students kept the connection all their lives." This served them well in that environment because of the feeling of security and belonging. How was that played out in adulthood, though? Did the search for belonging continue in the 'male world' of land claims and economic development at the expense of the family? It may have been difficult to associate these feelings of attachment to anyone else but those friendships one made at residential school.

Spirituality and healing with elders is fundamental to reclaiming identity and sense of self. There is not a definition of spirituality given by the participants because it is "a personal decision" and a "defining feature ... a connection to one's ancestors ... that can include relations long gone or those ... lost in this lifetime" (Davis, 2000, p.61). I did not ask for a definition of spirituality as I respected the participants' privacy. Many of them in this study attribute their healing to the ceremonies and the spiritual practices of their elders and culture (McCormick, 1994,

pp.96-97). Spirituality, unlike religion, has a “holistic approach to life or culture” (Bull, 1991, p.51 and Anderson, 1993).

On the one-way militaristic style of communication and perfectionism now in some families, Ing (1991) and Deiter (1999) comment how “uniformity, perfectionism, and complete obedience were demanded of the children” (p.81). But the “coercion, humiliation, and regimentation” took its toll in other ways. Georgina Gregory told Deiter: “It wasn’t too long before we learned that white was right and that we and our parents were all wrong. We had to obey ... ”(p.82). For many it took years to overcome those feelings of inferiority that resulted from these demands of the staff.

Drug use has emerged in the 3rd generation and is a cause of concern. Gilchrist (1995) wrote, “Not very long ago addictions was primarily an adult concern ... Now Aboriginal youth are highly implicated in alcoholic, drug and inhalant abuse” (p.250); anger and shame in what their elders lived with, denial of culture and self, may have been a contributing factor. Alcoholism showed in all three generations of this study but not specifically in one family; also, one participant shared she has remained sober since beginning her ceremonies in the sweat lodge.

### **Limitations of the research**

This qualitative research using the case study approach was conducted on ten participants who kindly agreed to share their stories. They were not randomly selected. They were known to the researcher as successful people, completing or in

stage of completion of university degrees. Their experiences are their own and should not be generalized across the population who had parent/s at residential school. The experiences do not apply to everyone who falls under this category. Caution is therefore advised on the research's applicability.

The researcher attended three residential schools for eleven childhood years. Personal biases and complete objectivity is also open to question due to the case study method used.

This study can be used in an exploratory way and has theory-building capacity for further research. However, to do respectful research, permission from all the participants would be essential. Since they are anonymous and protected, careful consideration should be given as to how the information will be used.

The study was based on the participants' selective recollection of past events. Some information and events are lost in memory and irretrievable.

### **Future research**

Several non-First Nations people have attempted research in this topic. While I admit that looking at an issue in an uninvolved detached manner is more scientific I do not think the complete picture gets across. Only those who went through the experience can truly understand in a compassionate way. Therefore, research by more First Nations scholars is strongly recommended and those who are able to write about their residential school experiences are encouraged. It is emotionally draining; and only those who have healed and recovered spiritually should attempt this painful and rigorous project.

Women are more willing to share their experiences. Only two males are in this study. It is necessary to encourage those males who are ready to talk, if they are comfortable, to do so. More documentation on the male experience at residential schools is vital for understanding family dynamics.

This study is about university graduates and undergraduates. Another study on those who did not attend university, and had parents who attended residential schools, but are still successful in professions, should be considered. What qualities and strengths helped them succeed?

Further case studies of a single-family unit can be conducted to provide additional information so that comparisons can be made between the findings of this study that consisted of four different families.

Some people have said they had positive experiences at residential school. Studies using interviews should be considered to find out what made the difference between their good experience and what we already know about those many bad experiences.

Elementary school research should consider what factors have been helpful in the success of young children whose parents have residential school background. This is to find out how much involvement there is in the education of their children and how this may contribute to success. This study has shown that many of the parents of the participants completed degree/s in university; and all of the participants completed or are in process or completing degrees. They had to be influenced in many ways. Did the schools help in this way? Was it all parental influence?



This topic is always uncomfortable but racism needs to be addressed in the education system and more generally in Canadian society. How prevalent is it? How does it contribute to success or failure of students at any level of education? Is it honestly addressed in the education process? Why is there such a discomfort around the issue? This is an important topic for First Nations students as they are affected by both overt and covert racism. This study used the 1867-1920 setting to show the evolution of racism in Canada and to put residential schools in the broader context. How much has changed for any of those categories of people mentioned? How much are First Nations still affected by societal attitudes and behaviours? These are important research questions in a democratic society.

There are many First Nations organizations that have received grants from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to address the residential school and the problems it has generated in the communities. How successful are those programs that have been given grants to address these problems? What is the intervention? Who is included in the categories of residential school endurers (survivors)? Evaluative research can be conducted to find out answers to these questions.

The scope of this research was on the ten participants. I am not able to address the role of government or the churches beyond chapter two. Research could address the recent and current announcements such as the apologies, litigations, and the healing fund to find out what, if any, impacts are occurring on endurers and descendants.

Finally, I encourage personal narratives on the topic focusing “on the positive coping mechanisms” that have helped “rather than the detrimental effects ... ”

(Wilson, 1996, p.53). In academia there is still much support for quantitative “crunching numbers” kinds of formal research but it’s not “likely to uncover information that could not be obtained by generating and carefully examining personal narratives” (Chrisjohn, 1997, p.224).

### **Implications for education**

It is possible to get an idea of the effects of residential school on the 1<sup>st</sup> generation endurers because three of the participants had parents there from the 1920-30s period. This is significant. One of them who shared a story of her father is a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation; the rest are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, children of that 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. This gives a good indication of how education has affected First Nations people.

None of these participants had the choice of a course selection on residential schools. It was unavailable at the university they attended. Some universities now have courses with units on residential schools. The popularity of courses is based on supply and demand. If more students register for them, then more courses are created. Most of these courses contain giving marketable skills in their descriptions. At least those in the helping professions such as counselling (this includes guidance counsellors for public schools), social workers, nurses, and medical students should be encouraged to consider courses on residential schools to understand the current family situations of First Nations people. There should be a lobby for more courses on First Nations people in university, high schools and even elementary schools. Canadians are never too young to start to learn about what happened to First

Nations people, especially the residential school history and its intergenerational impacts.

Not only should the courses be taught to non-Aboriginals; some courses should be developed exclusively for First Nations and other Aboriginals (Status, Indians, Metis). This may not be possible in most colleges and universities as the content must not seem to be exclusive. This is possible in those few First Nations institutions that have degree-granting status, such as the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College and the Institute of Indigenous Studies in Vancouver. However, bear in mind how universities developed, to cater to the demands of the dominant population. At one time this was the exclusive domain of the white middle-class male. The course contents thus reflected this. Also, the target group was 'white' or Euro-Canadian, and the values and beliefs of the universities were reflected by the courses in French and English. Along with a historical background from the First Nations perspective, a course could include all the intellectual tools necessary to answer their critics. For example, in teaching about racism, as this accounts for one of the reasons we are marginalized, students should learn what is racism, what is a racist comment, how to handle a racist comment, and teach how we can work together (with non-Aboriginals) to overcome racism in society. Courses developed for building self-esteem in First Nations children should be strongly considered. As to the reasons, attitudes affect behaviour. You can legislate against behaviour; hence, some behaviour can be changed. Racism and discrimination are damaging to children. They affect self-esteem and so, too, self-identity.

Teaching values is fundamental to help young people learn what this means and to be practical in its application by using understandable concepts. If your parents want you to finish high school and go to university, that's a value. But there are First Nations cultural values too that have continued to ensure our survival such as caring and sharing. These could be incorporated in a values course to help children learn how values can be lost or misdirected when a group has been marginalized through education and explain what contributed to the cultural disconnection.

What works in coming to terms with residential school trauma for those who experienced it? This study shows that talking about, reliving the experience, and even hearing someone talking about it, makes one/us remember similar painful memories. How does a helper create a safe environment to encourage those who are ready to talk? Besides talking circles, what other intervention has been helpful for trauma? Using First Nations intervention such as the sweat lodge, talking circles, help from safe elders, and teachings in the form of story-telling have merit because they have been successful and comfortable for First Nations people seeking and getting help. But for those who are not ready for this type of intervention, what would help as a substitute before an introduction to these good ways of helping? Telling the story, that is the background, is one way. To help explain current behaviour requires looking at what may have contributed to it, such as parents' inability to parent effectively. Growing up in a family is necessary to experience how to parent. Many residential school endurers did not have that choice. Also, they did not receive emotional nurturing and do not know how to give or receive it.

Education has to be more proactive in addressing the forms of oppression First Nations experience from colonialism, racism, and ethnocentrism. No one is asking students to take the blame but only to acknowledge what happened and not distance themselves from First Nations relationships. This can be done by providing scenarios in applied learning for social work, counselling psychology, medical, and nursing students to demonstrate how students might behave if they had been put in the same situations such as being forcibly removed from their families and from comfortable surroundings.

The need for understanding why some First Nations children in elementary school are failing to thrive from their learning cannot be emphasized enough. Is the system responding adequately to their needs? More First Nations teachers are needed. On the other hand more non-First Nations teachers in training should consider that important element in the Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) that makes the program unique, First Nations content. This need for certain knowledge has to work both ways because the system educates all children, including First Nations. It should not be acceptable for only NITEP teachers in training to be receiving vital knowledge required for the success of all children.

## **Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to discover and describe what are the intergenerational impacts of the education at residential schools on the second and third generation children of those who attended the schools. Ten participants were interviewed. Chapter one gave an example of how an individual suffers because of

residential school and its impact. It was used to set the tone for the study. Chapter two is useful for making meaning out of the residential school system. It describes society at the time of the formation of residential schools, 1867-1920. Other dark-skinned Canadians, including Europeans, suffered discrimination, not just First Nations people. Chapter three is the methodology. The research design is qualitative using the case study approach with ten cases. Chapter four begins the data analysis of the interviews. It deals with the circumstances of finding out and what children learned about residential schools from their parents. Chapter five examines the intergenerational impacts from the shame and denial of identity and describes in more detail the anger, fear, and unresolved resentment and trauma. Chapter six shows how the participants have moved on. Their selection was based on their success, that is, they were successful in their education, obtaining or pursuing university degrees. The chapter concludes with their relationship with the First Nations community. Chapter seven asks how society moves on in terms of what the participants think is the common ground for understanding, which is residential schools and its impact. It also includes the findings of the study, literature of the findings, limitations of the research, suggestions for future research, implications for education, and the conclusion.

The principal findings are as follows as summarized in Table 1. Those who left the schools in the 1920-30s have thirteen identified intergenerational impacts. The 2nd and 3rd generation has all the similarities, plus added consequences. For the 2nd generation, twenty more categories were discovered, making the total thirty-six. For the 3rd generation (the participants) the discovered categories totaled forty-

five from the original thirteen. Although there is little data on the 4<sup>th</sup> generation there is reason to be optimistic as, of the nine categories discovered, two are consequences from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. The distinctive feature of this study is that all ten participants have graduated from university or are currently undergraduates. Their parents also earned degrees making them excellent role models in education. This aspect of residential schools is rarely acknowledged.

In summing up the views of the ten participants it's amazing how they have not only survived, but thrived, despite the many indignities that have happened to them and their ancestors. This is their ultimate accomplishment. They have struggled courageously to interact in a successful way to fight the odds against them to achieve an university degree. In addition, they have to deal with prejudice and discrimination in an attempt to better the lives of their children and their own, and throughout they have maintained their dignity. It has not been easy, but they have done so. I admire them for this.

Examining the self is the beginning of healing from this profoundly personal injury of the spirit. The study is significant because it has consequences for all of society. To present the human side of this important issue lengthy quotes were used. I hope it will help in the understanding. I am deeply grateful for all the participants who examined their past and I thank them for their trust in letting me tell their story. I honour them with respect. **All My Relations.**

**Ekosi, Kakinaw ni Wakomakanak.**

## REFERENCES

- Adams, Howard. (1996). A tortured people: The politics of colonization. Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books.
- American College Dictionary, The. (1956). New York: Random House.
- Anderson, B.M. (1993). Aboriginal counselling and healing processes. Unpublished master's thesis, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.
- Aronson, Eliot. (1988). The social animal (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Assembly of First Nations. (1994). Breaking the silence: an interpretive study of residential school impact and healing as illustrated by the stories of First Nations individuals. Ottawa: First Nations Health Commission.
- (March 1998). Residential School Update. Ottawa: Assembly of First Nations Health Secretariat.
- Atkinson, Jim. (1988). The mission school syndrome (film). Whitehorse, Y.T.: Northern Native Broadcasting.
- Boyko, John. (1995). Last steps to freedom: The evolution of Canadian racism. Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing.
- Brass, Eleanor. (1987). I walk in two worlds. Calgary: Glenbow Museum.
- Bull, Linda. (1991). Indian residential schooling: The Native perspective. Canadian Journal of Native Education, Supplement, 18, 1-63.
- Chrisjohn, R.D., Belleau, C., and others. (1991). Faith misplaced lasting effects of abuse in a First Nations community. Canadian Journal of Native Education, 18, 196-197.
- Chrisjohn, Roland, and Young, Sherri, with Maraun, Michael. (1997). The circle game: shadows and substance in the Indian residential school experience in Canada. Penticton: Theytus Books Ltd.
- Creswell, John. (1998). Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five traditions. London: SAGE Publications.
- (1994). Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five traditions. London: SAGE Publications.



- Coates, Kenneth. (1984-85). 'Betwixt and between': The Anglican Church and the children of the Carcross (Choooutla) Residential School, 1899-1954. BC Studies, 64, 17-47.
- Davis, Sarah. (2000). The experience of self-destructive behavior in First Nations adolescent girls. Unpublished Master's thesis. The University of British Columbia.
- Deiter, Constance. (1999). From our mother's arms: the intergenerational impact of residential schools in Saskatchewan. Toronto: United Church Publishing House.
- Dickason, Olive Patricia. (1992). Canada's First Nations: A history of founding peoples from earliest times. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc.
- Dickson, Stewart. (1993). Hey, Monias! Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.
- Ennamorato Judith. (1998). Sing the brave song. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Raven Press.
- Fanon, Frantz. (1968). The wretched of the earth. New York: Grove Press, Inc.
- Festinger, Leon. (1957). A theory of cognitive dissonance. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Foxcroft, Debbie. (1996). Indian Residential Schools: The Nuuchahnulth experience. Port Alberni: Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council.
- Frideres, James. (1985). "Racism", Canadian encyclopedia, Volume 111. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd.
- Gesell, Arnold & Ilg, Frances. (1943). Infant and child in the culture of today. New York: Harper.
- . (1946). The child from five to ten. New York: Harper.
- . (1956). Youth (10-16). New York: Harper.
- Gilchrist, Laurette. (1995). Kapitipis e-pimohteyahk: Aboriginal street youth in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Montreal. Unpublished Doctoral thesis. The University of British Columbia.

- Herbert, Elaine. (1994). Talking back: Six First Nations women's stories of recovering from childhood sexual abuse and addiction. Unpublished Master's thesis. The University of British Columbia.
- Hill, Barbara-Helen. (1995). Shaking the rattle: healing the trauma of colonization. Penticton: Theytus Books Ltd.
- Hodgson, Heather. (1989). Seventh generation: contemporary Native writing. Penticton: Theytus Books Ltd.
- Ihimaera, Witi. (1998). Growing up Maori. Auckland: Tandem Press.
- Ing, N. Rosalyn. (1991). The effects of residential schools on Native child-rearing practices. Canadian Journal of Native Education, Supplement, 18, 65-118.
- Jaine, Linda. (1993). Residential Schools: the stolen years. Saskatoon: University Extension Press.
- Johnson, Basil. (1988). Indian school days. Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited.
- Kirk, Ruth. (1986). Wisdom of the Elders. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre in association with the British Columbia Provincial Museum.
- Knockwood, Isabelle. (1992). Out of the depths: The experiences of Mi'Kmaq children at the Indian Residential School at Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia. Lockeport: Roseway Publishing.
- Littlechild, George. (1993). This land is my land. Emeryville, California: Children's Book Press.
- Mandela, Nelson. (1994). Long walk to freedom. New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Manuel, Vera, and Loyie, Larry. (1998). Two plays about Residential School. Vancouver: Living Traditions Writers Group.
- Martens, Tony. (1988). The spirit weeps. Edmonton: Nechi Institute.
- McCormick, Rod. (1995). The facilitation of healing for the First Nations people of British Columbia. Canadian Journal of Native Education, 21, 251-322.
- Memmo, Albert. (1965). The colonizer and the colonized. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Miller, J.R. (1996). Shingwauk's vision: A history of Native residential schools. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Morris, Alexander. (1991). The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers.
- Nies, Judith. (1996). Native American history: A chronology of a culture's vast achievements and their links to world events. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Nock, David, A. (1988). A Victorian missionary and Canadian Indian Policy: cultural synthesis versus cultural replacement. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion.
- Palmer, Howard. (1984). "Reluctant hosts: Anglo-Canadian views of multiculturalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century", in Mallea and Young, (Eds.), Cultural diversity and Canadian education. Ottawa: Carleton University Press.
- . (1985). "Prejudice and discrimination", in Canadian Encyclopedia, Volume 111. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd.
- Ponting, J. Rick. (1986). Arduous journey: Canadian Indians and decolonization. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd.
- Ray, Arthur J. (1996). I have lived here since the world began. Toronto: Lester Publishing Limited and Key Porter Books.
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). People to People, Nation to Nation. Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Ottawa: Canada Communications Group.
- Stanley, Timothy J. (1995). "White supremacy and the rhetoric of educational indoctrination: a Canadian case study", in Barman J., Sutherland N., and Wilson, D.J., (Eds.), Children, teachers and schools in the history of British Columbia. Calgary: Detselig.
- Sterling, Shirley. (1992). My name is Seepeetza. Toronto: Groundwood Books.
- Spock, Benjamin. (1968). Baby and child care. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Pocket Books, Simon and Schuster of Canada, Ltd.
- Willis, Jane. (1973). Genish: An Indian girlhood. Toronto: New Press.
- Wilson, J.D. (1997). Lecture in Course 507, September 11. The University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- Wilson, Shawn. (1996). Gwitch'in Native elders. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Knowledge Network.

Whitaker, Reg. (1991). Canadian Immigration Policy since Confederation. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association.

Wright, Ronald. (1992). Stolen Continents. Toronto: Viking.

Yin, Robert, K. (1994). Case study research. Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications.

## APPENDIX A

## THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Protocol A: Research participant contact letter

Department of Educational Studies  
 Mailing address:  
 2125 Main Mall  
 Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z3  
 Tel: (604) 822-5374  
 Fax: (604) 822-4244

date

name

address

city

postal code

Dear

Tansi. My name is Rosalyn Ing and I am a member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation, The Pas, Manitoba. I am currently a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia, under the supervision of Dr. Jean Barman. I am seeking participants in a study called, "**The inter-generational effects of residential schools on the children of those who attended 'Indian' residential school**". The purpose of the study is to explore the effects that one or both of your parents' attendance at residential school had on you personally, your children, family and community.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this sensitive and emotional topic.

Should you be interested in being interviewed for this study, it is expected that 1 to 2 hours of your personal time will be needed. You can select the place where the interview will take place.

Information gathered for this study will in no way be used to harm or misrepresent participants or the community. Those who consent to participate in this study have the right to withdraw at any time. Such withdrawal or refusal to participate will not jeopardize you in any way. Confidentiality and anonymity will be assured. Assurance of professional help (counseling and care) will be available, if needed.

Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. I will contact you at a later date by phone or visitation. If you have any questions regarding the project, the procedure used, or the extent of your potential involvement, I would be happy to discuss it with you. You can reach me or my faculty advisor:

Rosalyn Ing  
 188-1985 West Mall.  
 Vancouver, B.C.  
 V6T 1Z2  
 Tel. (604) 822-5613  
 Thank you.

Dr. Jean Barman, Faculty Advisor  
 Department of Educational Studies  
 University of British Columbia  
 Vancouver, B.C., V6T 1Z2  
 Tel. (604) 822-5331

## APPENDIX B

## THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



## PROTOCOL B:

Department of Educational Studies  
 Mailing address:  
 2125 Main Mall  
 Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4  
 Tel: (604) 822-5374  
 Fax: (604) 822-4244

## Research Participant Consent Form

**Title of project:** "The inter-generational effects of residential schools on the children of those who attended 'Indian' residential school"

**Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to explore the effects that parents' attendance at residential school had on children, family, and community.

**Procedure:** You are being asked to participate in a 1 to 2 hour interview concerning the effect that one or both of your parents' attendance at residential school had on you personally, your children, family and community. The data collected will be the basis for the doctoral research and possible subsequent publication by Rosalyn Ing, Ph.D. student, in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia. My research supervisor is Dr. Jean Barman, Department of Educational Studies. If you have any questions or comments about this project I would be pleased to hear from you at (604) 822-5613. In addition, Dr. J. Barman can be reached at (604) 822-5331.

Interviews will be transcribed verbatim by a third party who has signed a confidentiality agreement. The research supervisor will have access to the transcripts with identifying information removed. Tape recordings and transcripts will be coded for identifications and stored in a locked filing cabinet. Codes will be secure separately from the tapes and transcriptions will exclude or change identifying information. Data collected will remain confidential with regard to your identity. You will be identified by a pseudonym only. Assurance of professional help (counseling and care) will be available, if needed.

You are free to withdraw from the project at any time, and any tape recordings and interview transcripts will be destroyed at your request.

Two copies of this consent form are attached. Please return one of these forms to the researcher and keep the second copy for your records. Your signature on this form indicates that you have received two copies of this consent form.

If any time during the project you have any concerns about your rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact DR. RICHARD SPRATLEY, Director of the UBC Office of Research Services and Administration, at (604) 822-8598.

Please indicate that you consent to participate in this study by giving your signature and providing the date of your consent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (your signature here)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (date signed)

Thank you.  
 Rosalyn Ing, Ph.D. Candidate.

## APPENDIX C

## THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Educational Studies  
 Mailing address:  
 2125 Main Mall  
 Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4  
 Tel: (604) 822-5374  
 Fax: (604) 822-4244

PROTOCOL D:

## CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Date

Name  
 Address  
 City  
 Postal code

Dear

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that in gaining access to data gathered for the research project, "The inter-generational effects of residential schools on the children of those who attended 'Indian' residential school", I am responsible for maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of research subjects participating in this study. I will refrain from sharing this information with anyone not participating in this project.

Two copies of this agreement are attached. Please sign one copy and return it to me. The second copy is for your records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (date)

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Rosalyn Ing  
 Ph. D. student  
 Educational Studies  
 University of British Columbia.