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**Circle as Pedagogy:
Aboriginal Tradition
Enacted in a University Classroom**

by

Madeline Jean Graveline

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
March, 1996**

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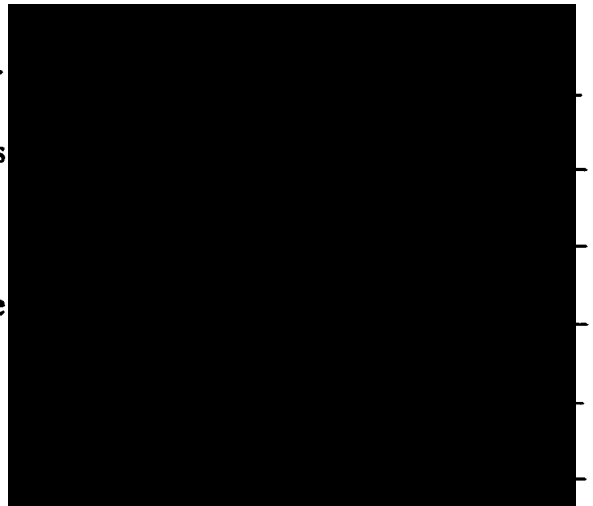
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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DEDICATION

**TO THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE ME
THANK YOU FOR WALKING THE PATH
AND LEAVING A TRAIL.**

**TO THOSE YET TO COME AFTER ME
HEED THE WORDS OF OUR SISTER IN THE STRUGGLE:
"RESISTANCE WALKS ACROSS A LANDSCAPE
OF FIRE ACCOMPANIED BY HER DAUGHTERS
PERSEVERANCE AND DETERMINATION".**

CONNIE FIFE, 1992: 31

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ABSTRACT

This thesis undertakes to describe and analyze an educational process undertaken in an effort to revitalize Aboriginal Traditional culture within a contemporary Western institutional location. Epistemologies of a Traditional worldview--immanence, balance and interconnectedness--are revealed as the foundations upon which our Self-In-Relation is constructed. The role of experience, voice and humor are noted in Aboriginal pedagogies. Tribal worldviews were disrupted by colonialism, as is this narrative. A critical interrogation of the foundations of Eurocentrism is inserted as necessary historical context for the current revitalization struggles.

The research project itself evolved as an analysis of students' journals, and Talking Circles held with participants from the Native, Black, Asian and White Communities on the themes of Consciousness, Context, Community, Change and Visions. The Medicine Wheel, an Aboriginal guiding metaphor, gives form and direction to both the description and critical analysis of the teaching Model-In-Use in a Cross Cultural Issues for Social Workers (CCI) classroom. This thesis reveals what participants learned and taught about: developing heightened consciousness about oppression, racism, privilege and culture; the introduction of aspects of Aboriginal Tradition into the university classroom; building community relations within the classroom, as well as between the profession of social work and members of diverse cultural Communities; and change as involving both a "personal" commitment to altering one's Self-In-Relation in multiple contexts, as well as through enacting activism collectively with others.

Introducing this combination of Aboriginal and critical philosophies and pedagogies, particularly given the Eurocentric nature of the university context, is fraught with contradictions. These are raised in the form of questions critically interrogating multiple aspects of the process itself, and the context in which it took place. Issues of language as a medium of knowing; the "service-role" of "minority" educators; adaptation or appropriation of Tradition; "negative" feelings enacted as resistance by students; and the endangering potentials of taking an activist position are the focus. Finally, visioning is theorized as a necessary component to sustainable critical engagement.

LIST OF TERMS

In this document several key sets of words are capitalized to bring attention to their importance to the overall text, and to signal that a particular intent or meaning is intended. The following list intends to alert the reader to expect capitalization on the following terms, for the following reasons.

All racial and cultural qualifiers are capitalized:

Aboriginal, Native, Aboriginality, First Nations, Indigenous, and all Tribal affiliations;

Western, White, Eurocentric, Eurocentrism*, and all ethnic affiliations, i.e. Acadian;

Black, Afro Nova Scotian, Afrocentric;

Immigrant;

Gay and Lesbian.

*For some this may seem awkward as they may not be used to capitalizing those qualifiers denoting the dominant group.

Those words expressing concepts sacred in Aboriginal culture are capitalized to show reverence:

Traditional, Traditionalists, Tradition;

Elders;

Medicine Wheel, Sacred Circle, Sacred Hoop;

Directions--East, South, West, North;

Talking Circle, Circle Talk, Circle; Trickster.

The terms as expressly introduced to articulate concepts evolved in this pedagogical process are also capitalized:

CCI refers to a particular course--Cross Cultural Issues for Social Workers;

Communities refers to Native, Black, Acadian, Gay and Lesbian, Immigrant Communities who were the focus of CCI course;

Model-In-Use, Model, In-Use refer to the evolving teaching model as applied to the course;

Self-In-Relation is a short form used to describe the foundation of a Traditional Aboriginal worldview;

First Voice is a new term developed to describe a pedagogy In-Use in this Model;

School is the site of the project, a particular School of Social Work in Canada, but could be read as any Western educational setting;

System refers to more specifically the social service System, more generally a powerful interlocked bureaucracy with power-over both providers and recipients of services.

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To all my relations: Ta Ho


Fyre Jean

INTRODUCTION

We all currently share location in a world in which an increasing number of people are affected by widespread homelessness, joblessness, illiteracy, crime, disease (including AIDS), hunger, poverty, drug addiction, alcoholism and other illness producing habits. Human degradation is dialectically interconnected with the continuing destruction of the very Earth we are dependent upon for our existence. The Aboriginal peoples of North America have been seriously affected by all of these calamities and are often documented as having the highest indices of all social disorders. While the advancement of the Western way of life has been seen as progress to some, we must face these realities as products of "late multinational capitalism" (Wallace, 1991: 6).

I am located in the intersection of Aboriginal and Western cultures. I walk with a foot in both worlds. I draw upon my Traditional Aboriginal "knowing" to assist me in surviving the nightmares of contemporary society. As "critical educator", and Aboriginal woman, I struggle to understand and challenge the existing relations of Western patriarchal capitalist domination. I want to explore how these relations are manifested structurally, intra and interpersonally within a classroom context.

Critical teaching, as understood and documented in this thesis, represents my "lifework". As a community member who desires to become especially knowledgeable about certain aspects of the world and its fundamental relationships, I am responsible to contribute back what I have learned, in thought as well as in action. As an Aboriginal educator, I am painfully aware that "schools have shown themselves to be ideological processing plants" (Maracle, 1988: 113). I wish to contribute to education as the

"practice of freedom" (Freire, 1972), rather than as an act of repression (Brandt, 1986), colonialism (English-Currie, 1990), or imperialism (Carnoy, 1974). hooks (1988) expresses a similar belief in relation to African American struggle. "It is our collective responsibility both to ourselves as black people and to the academic communities in which we participate and to which we belong, to assume a primary role in establishing and maintaining academic and social spaces wherein the principles of education as the practice of freedom are promoted" (1988: 65).

This work documents an effort to interrupt existing power relations by transforming "business-as-usual" - that is, by altering the prevailing social relations in a Western university classroom (Ellsworth, 1989). My research is focused upon a particular teaching model, which has evolved as an alternative conceptualization and embodiment of classroom relations. Pedagogical work within "a single classroom cannot overcome the realities of a racist, heterosexist, patriarchal capitalist society" (Briskin, 1990:14). I do believe, however, that it can be engaged as a potentially emancipatory learning site. My overall transformational vision scrutinizes the epistemological and pedagogical foundations of the currently dominant Western educational model. Educational concepts and practices which emphasize individual adaptation and skill development are matched to the current realities within public institutions. Our institutions operate within the context of market forces. "The acquisition of qualifications necessary both to participate in the labour market and to maintain oneself in public life, is the order of the day" (Jansen and Wildemeersch, 1992: 10). This impacts on the curriculum and climate in the university context: "the disguised values, norms and meaning of economical, political, and socio-cultural institutions are not the object of debate and contestation, but are framed as the self-evident features and effects of the internally referential goals and

criteria of 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness'" (Jansen and Wildemeersch, 1992: 10). As educational workers we are enlisted to support people to adapt to these standards by improving their 'personal' survival strategies. Rather than openly educating about everyday privilege of some, enacted economically, politically, and socially through dominant cultural forms, as well as through overt acts of supremacy, Eurocentrism is validated rather than challenged.

In educational theory and practice we assimilate to the norm by imposing and then supporting people to adapt to these demands, rather than introducing new paradigms of knowledge. The mission of this thesis is to actively encourage critical engagement in an analysis of the Eurocentric foundations of Western discourse, and to offer the possibility of an alternative paradigm. I am concerned with education's role in maintaining or challenging existing social and political structures of domination as they are demarcated along race and cultural lines. More specifically, I will explore the legitimacy of Aboriginal, holistic paradigms within some of the diverse frameworks available to an adult educator: experiential learning, feminist and anti-racist pedagogies will be emphasized. This thesis is intended to contribute to both the theoretical debate and pedagogical practice in the field of adult education in the post secondary context. This project is, moreover, part of the larger de-colonizing effort globally to challenge Westerners about "what they have to say" about the history and cultures of "subordinate" peoples. (Said, 1993: 195). It intends to help "establish the cultural integrity of noncanonical culture" (Fox-Genovese, 1991: 202) within the university context.

Within the Western university site, I am constructed and construct myself in the language of "minority teacher" (Ng, 1991). In its standard sociological usage, the term minority refers to people who are relatively powerless in the hierarchy of power and authority. In Western scientific, capitalist discourse,

numbers talk. According to Brandt (1986), "the almost exclusive recruitment of White teachers to the profession....ensures the perpetuation of White interests, cultural assumptions and the racial status quo of 'White' authority and 'Black' subordination" (1986: 128).

Collins (1991) aptly described the position as an "outsider within". This allows us a "distinct view of the contradictions between the dominant group's actions and ideologies," (11) including the "theories put forward by such intellectual communities" (1991: 12). According to Carty (1991a), daily lived experiences with racism and sexism mean that our lives are "less embedded in the linguistic and institutional hierarchical structures which define academia" (22). Our "subjugated knowledges" do not depend "solely on the dominant society's thought validation process" (22). Eurocentric male dominance of academic terrain has meant the construction of White/male as "the reference point of all knowledge" (22). Only one cultural reality is universalized, one language is spoken: "the abstract mode of talking" (Holloway, 1992: 269). The pressure to assimilate is constant. "The university is a highly assimilatory institution, and one of the recurring dangers that one faces in [our] quest for residence in the academy is immediate or gradual assimilation" (Raymond, 1985: 50).

Joe David (1991), a Mohawk artist, warns us of the signs of acculturation in our work. "By being influenced by government propaganda," he says, "by making polarized political analysis, by being vague or--worst of all--by making satire out of the pain, fear and despair of our brothers and sisters, we do the government's job of 'white-washing' history, of belittling the issues" (140). Loretta Todd (1992), a Metis artist, expressed this concern: "How can we, then, create our own scholarship and practice of art and aesthetics in the face of what would appear to be positions that are opposed to our worldview, and where

there is a real risk of assimilation, at worst, or serving the agenda of the dominant culture's own critics at best?" (76). While the terrain is contradictory and promotes fatalistic assimilation, I take heart from hooks. "Even in the face of powerful structures of domination", she says, "it remains possible for each of us, especially those of us who are members of oppressed and/or exploited groups....to define and determine alternative standards, to decide on the nature and the extent of the compromise" (1988: 81).

I am taking an "oppositional" stance. I acknowledge my intention to oppose in the education system whatever I perceive is operating to "oppress, repress or disenfranchise," (Brandt, 1986: 125) myself and other "minorities". Much of Traditional Aboriginal teaching is oppositional. Our teachers help us to see "the upside down, the opposite, and the other balances of things around us and our human ways of acting and talking" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 22). Thus, I, too, take an oppositional stance, and learn and teach through reversal, and embrace the Ikomi prophecy of "white man as Trickster" (Keeshig-Tobias, 1992). This opposition will be embedded in the historical and contemporary resistance efforts of many others.

Power is embedded in the context of the university setting, in the discipline of social work, and invested in my role as educator within that site. Critical educators affirm, as does the Assembly of First Nations (1988), that all education is political. Freire (1985) warns us, "the more conscious and committed they are, the more they understand that their role of educator requires them to take risks, including a willingness to risk their own jobs" (180). He claims that "[e]ducators that do their work uncritically, just to preserve their jobs, have not yet grasped the political nature of education"(180). Freire's words reflect my lived experience as an Aboriginal, feminist, anti-racist, critical educator, part of a very small numerical "minority", within the patriarchal

Eurocentric university context. Freire does not overestimate the risks, or the pain. Ng (1991) reports: "for critical teachers, especially feminist teachers, attempts at critical teaching can be acutely painful experiences" (106). We must ask ourselves for whom and on who's behalf are we working?

Chantra Mohanty (1994) theorizes that the classroom is a political and a cultural site. "Thus, teachers and students produce, reinforce, recreate, resist, and transform ideas about race, gender and difference" (147). She extends her analysis to the academy: "There are much larger questions at stake in the academy these days, not the least of which are questions of self and collective knowledge of marginal peoples and the recovery of alternative, oppositional histories of domination and struggle. Here, disciplinary parameters matter less than questions of power, history, and self-identity" (147).

"Demystification" or "prophetic criticism" is proposed by Cornel West (1993) as a mode of theoretical enquiry which unveils the "complex dynamics of institutional and other related power structures in order to disclose options and alternatives for transformative praxis" (213). In his view human agency is accented. According to Jay (1995), [a]gency appears in the way I take a social construction personally, as my duty, my responsibility, my ethos, my law, my enemy, or my love" (118). West (1993) believes that

Prophetic critics and artists of color should be exemplars of what it means to be intellectual freedom fighters, that is, cultural workers who simultaneously position themselves within (or alongside) the mainstream while clearly aligned with groups who vow to keep alive potent traditions of critique and resistance (216).

Peter McLaren (1994) concurs. He believes that "[w]e should not forfeit the opportunity of theorizing both teachers and students as historical agents of resistance" (213). Trend (1992) also expresses the view that teachers and students have "a role in the making of their world and they need not accept

positions as passive spectators or consumers" (150). "Resistance", Mohanty (1994) says, "lies in self-conscious engagement with dominant, normative discourses and representations and in the active creation of oppositional analytic and cultural spaces" (148). She believes, and I agree, that our "subjugated knowledges" need to be defined pedagogically in order to transform educational institutions.

It is through many years of encountering and mediating the oppressive relations in existence between Western educators and social workers and Aboriginal peoples that my need to re-theorize pedagogy has arisen. The context in which this pedagogy has been applied is a specific School of social work, located within a Eurocentric university in Canada. As social work educators, state bureaucratic structures constitute our most immediate material circumstances. Any bureaucratic form of organization "depends on a hierarchy of authority, control and salary" (Gilroy, 1990: 59). According to Leonard (1990), social work bodies of knowledge can be understood as "structures of discourse and regulation which aid in the establishment of forms of social management which have moved from the direct repression and punishment of deviants to their care, discipline and 'humane' control" (16).

As social work educators, we must examine our part in maintaining this discourse. Competency-based education models proliferate in social work education. Competence means not only mastery of specific skills, but also acquiring the knowledge or theory base of the discipline, which is almost all generated by middle-class, urban, White professionals. Skills and curriculum are based on notions of commonality within the human experience, and tend to apply personal solutions to socio-structural problems. Little awareness of cultural diversity is present in White educators, practitioners, or students. Few

culturally diverse members are represented in academia, and fewer still non-Eurocentric models of social work or pedagogy are available as curricula.

A skills-based definition of what is "required" for "competent" practice leads to an adoption of "power over" strategies in the classroom. Jarvis (1985) theorizes that the more control that a "profession" seeks to exercise over the body of knowledge, the more likely the educator's role will be a didactic exercise of control over the learners. Ben Carniol (1990) links the need for "professional" control directly to our role as state employees. We most often deliver services to disempowered populations: the disabled, the unemployed, the poor, the ill, the elderly, the children. Most currently, with tightening social spending and rising caseloads, it is becoming increasingly visible that the provision of service itself plays a role in maintaining social order. "[S]ocial work reinforces the impression that the organized society--the state--and its institutions care about and care for all people in its confines" (Carniol, 1990: 6). While Carniol and others (for example Van Den Bergh and Cooper, 1986; Dominelli, 1988) reflect the possibility within the social work discipline to take a more radical approach, this is mediated by the demands of "commodification" of the learning site. As is true for other forms of institutionally located education, students and teachers are pressured to learn and teach what is considered marketable. When the state is acknowledged as the major employer, the issue of social control of the curriculum becomes undebatable. The intention of this thesis is to more generally theorize a pedagogy of resistance which can be applied across disciplines and contexts rather than becoming lodged in grievances particular to the discipline.

This project attests to the reality that it remains possible for academics to resist acculturation through redefining and enacting alternative curriculum and pedagogies. In surviving the contradictory and assimilatory terrain of academia,

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UMI

Elders' advice is still regularly sought in coping with the dilemmas facing us. People come to ask Elders for advice because they can usually find an appropriate narrative or song to broaden the framework for thinking about a question, both when trying to explain some past decision made and when encountering ideas new to us. Our Elders' model an intellectual drive to formulate consistent links between "old ways" and "new ways" (Cruikshank, 1992; Meili, 1991). This quest permeates my "life work" and this account. As Minh-ha (1989) so aptly puts it: "i do feel the necessity to return to my so-called roots, since they are the fount of my strength, the guiding arrow to which i constantly refer before heading for a new direction" (89). As a teacher, scholar, and activist who identifies as Aboriginal, I wish to contribute to the revitalization of our culture. The linking of Traditional worldviews with knowledge of changing identities through colonization will enable the revitalization of cultural beliefs in our everyday lives.

Chapter one, Setting the Terms, will help establish the common language necessary, to appreciate the significance of the challenge to Western academia presented in this thesis. Chapter two will review the complexity and interconnectedness of forms of Aboriginal consciousness relied on by the original inhabitants of North America. Through words of Aboriginal shamans, teachers, healers, Elders, and other visionaries, "the Indian way" as it is being retained in the modern age will be constructed. Chapter three will highlight the epistemological underpinnings of colonial consciousness, as it was imposed on our ancestors. While material and political struggles for decolonization are occurring, so are cultural ones. As "forms of consciousness are power structures" (Merchant, 1989: 19), an understanding of the multifaceted process of colonialization, along with acknowledgment of the forms of resistance taken by Native Americans historically and in the contemporary age will aid in its

deconstruction. The role of Aboriginal Traditional pedagogies, upon which this model of teaching was constructed, evolved and evaluated, will be emphasized. This project, as a representation of the "Native perspective", is framed as an act of resistance in opposition to the current status quo.

Throughout this thesis, I rely on the Medicine Wheel, to the Plains people the "sacred centre" of the community. Gunn Allen (1986) described it as "a tangible object seen as possessing nonrational powers to unite or bind diverse elements into a community, a psychic and spiritual whole" (80). The Medicine Wheel was used as the organizing frame for the project overall. The curriculum of the Cross Cultural Issues course (CCI), the research design, and the presentation of data all rely on it metaphorically and practically. The second section of the thesis is a description and analysis of the Model-In-Use. By this phrase, I mean it is a Model from which I am presently teaching/learning from through application. In this section, the Medicine Wheel is used to describe, through the analysis of data, the efforts made to introduce Aboriginal epistemology and pedagogy into a Western context. In chapters four through seven, using the four directions of the Medicine Wheel, the Model-In-Use, will be explicated as a holistic, teaching and healing process. Beginning in the East, (chapter four) I explore the multiple ways in which consciousness or knowing evolved in the process. The content taught in the course will be reviewed, along with one primary tool of consciousness-raising, First Voice. Circling to the South in chapter five, I will discuss how Aboriginal culture--philosophy and pedagogy--was introduced into the classroom context. Specific attention will be given to one tool--the Talking Circle. Chapter six shifts to the West. Here I explore the various tools In-Use to build relations with the Communities with-in and outside the classroom. Applications to building relations between social workers and the Communities are explored. Chapter seven, the North, focuses on the

enacted aspects of the Model: learning by doing, including embodied teaching and taking an activist position are emphasized.

Chapter eight, explores the multiple layers of contradiction evident in introducing a teaching Model based on Aboriginal egalitarianism into a Western hierarchical context. Contradictory elements in each direction of the Wheel will be delineated. This thesis will conclude with visions (Chapter nine) participants and myself shared in using and analyzing the Model.

SECTION ONE: THE HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

CHAPTER ONE: SETTING THE TERMS

This thesis is about beliefs people hold and enact in-relation to others. It is an effort to explore changes in individuals' levels of conscious awareness. Structurally, I seek to challenge the forms of Western discourse which currently privilege the objective/rational/linear approach to knowing. Although this teaching experience, and my analysis of it, is current and ongoing, I accept that "[n]o experience that is interpreted or reflected on can be characterized as immediate, just as no critic or interpreter can be entirely believed if he or she claims to have achieved an Archimedean perspective that is subject neither to history nor to a social setting" (Said, 1993: 32). This thesis is subject to both history and social setting.

I aim to revitalize ancestral Aboriginal discourse within a contemporary Western institution of higher learning. Following Kearney (1984), I am working within the contradictory conditions given to me by my history, technology, environment, social structure, world view, and my own social relations with other peoples. This work is guided by my images and assumptions, by my ideas about reality, by my consciousness. For myself, as a Metis, White Eurocentric consciousness and Aboriginal Traditional worldviews are competing and contrary energy forms. It is upon this terrain that this teaching/learning project was constructed, enacted and analyzed. To frame the scope of this undertaking and lodge it within existing critical theory requires clarification of terms. As language is a cultural signifier and many terms have multiple and loaded meanings, specific language has been selected to communicate the complex ideas under study. In this chapter, these words will be defined and contextualized for use in the remainder of this thesis.

Beginning with definitions of consciousness, worldview, culture, I will then turn to a beginning exploration of "the Indian way" and "the White way" as two competing belief-sets, historically and in contemporary society. There will be no effort made to present a rational, objective or verifiable historical treatise. Rather the subject matter is being constructed as "ethnoscience"--defined by Blaut as the study of beliefs and "belief-holding groups" (1993: 32). An ethnographic approach explores "the people who believe a given idea, who communicate it to others as a belief. The question whether a person believes in the validity of an idea is not at all the same as the question whether the idea is in fact a valid one" (1993: 31).

CONSCIOUSNESS

Our understanding of events and the environment around us inform and are informed by our consciousness. "Consciousness", an active and changing state -- simultaneously both constitutive and constituting of our identities-- is "the totality of one's thoughts, feelings and impressions, the awareness of one's acts and volitions" (Merchant, 1989: 19). Consciousness is both individual and group, and is shaped by both environment and culture. For Merchant (1989):

A society's symbols and images of nature express its collective consciousness. They appear in mythology, cosmology, science and religion, philosophy, language and art. Scientific, philosophical, and literary texts are sources of the ideas and images used by controlling elites, while rituals, festivals, songs and myths provide clues to the consciousness of ordinary people (19).

Theorizing consciousness in this way allows it to be collectivized beyond the individual, and understood in terms of its social construction and its changeability over time and context. Understanding consciousness as a form of cultural expression, allows distinctions between people and their systems to be

made. This makes room for alliances across racial and cultural divides. As Armstrong cautions, "do not make the commonly made error that it is a people that we abhor, be clear that it is systems and processes which we must attack. Be clear that change in those systems will be promoted by people who can perceive intelligent and non-threatening alternatives" (1990b: 145).

WORLDVIEW

Collective consciousness can also be expressed as worldview, linked intimately to all forms of cultural expression, and can be explored through assessing relevant forms. "A worldview is a set of images and assumptions about the world...Since a world view is knowledge about the world, what we are talking about here is epistemology, the theory of knowledge" (Kearney, 1984: 10).

According to Kearney (1984), worldview and environment are a dialectic:

Perception of the total environment occurs, and is in part determined by the nature of that environment. These perceptions are organized systematically into a set of assumptions about the nature of that total perceived reality - into a world view. This world view in turn becomes the basis for socially and physically relating to that environment, and in this way alters the environment; the altered environment in turn will affect the way in which it is perceived (121).

"Worldview" is defined by Ortiz (in Beck and Walters, 1977), a Tewa historian, as: "a distinctive vision of reality which not only interprets and orders the places and events in the experience of a people, but lends form, direction, and continuity to life as well" (5).

TRADITIONAL

In his definition, Ortiz reveals the link between worldview and Tradition. "World view provides people with a distinctive set of values, an identity, a feeling of rootedness, of belonging to a time and a place, and a felt sense of continuity with a tradition which transcends the experience of a single lifetime, a tradition which may be said to transcend even time" (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 5).

Kearney (1984) defines the construct Traditional as linked with geographical space and worldview. If the inhabitants of an environment have inhabited it for several generations or more, they will have come to perceive it and relate to it in a Traditional way. "This way of perceiving the environment is nothing more nor less than their world view" (Kearney, 1984: 119). Paula Gunn Allen, a Laguna teacher, captures the dialectic of movement and tradition in this way: "The tribal systems are static in that all movement is related to all other movement--that is, harmonious and balanced or unified; they are not static in the sense that they do not allow or accept change" (1986: 56).

CULTURE

It is within this framework that the construct "culture" arises. Kahn defined culture broadly as "the environment in which things grow...A person's environment determines much of what she is able or not able to do, to feel, to think" (Kahn, 1982: 325). According to Kearney (1984) culture is a "dialectic relation between individual and collectivity, and between collectivity and history" (5). Kearney continues: "Cultures and societies exist in history through time, and are constantly self-creating by responding to historically given conditions. Idea systems and culture in general, while having a certain

autonomy are primarily responses--continuities--of that which has gone before." (Kearney, 1984: 5)

Indeed, few peoples make their own history and create their own culture. Often shifts are In-Relation to external conditions, and often in-reaction to imposed hierarchical relationships. "Inevitably the more wealthy and powerful," Kearney asserts, "are most able to shape society in their interest and in response to the resistance offered by the less wealthy and powerful" (Kearney, 1984: 6).

Aboriginal Traditionalists believe that culture, while enacted in our daily lives, and evolving in connection to our environment, is also about ties to Ancestral roots. Collins (1991) confirms that Afrocentric scholarship reflects long-standing belief systems among African peoples. "While Black people were forced to adapt these Afrocentric belief systems in the face of different institutional arrangements of white domination, the continuation of an Afrocentric worldview has been fundamental to African-Americans' resistance to racial oppression" (1991: 27). Culture then is both subject to the influences of domination and paradoxically a tool of resistance.

BICULTURALITY

Understanding the evolutionary nature of culture allows us to see that being Traditional in the modern context does not mean that Aboriginal people will return, or are able to return, to a way of life embodied by our ancestors many moons ago before Europeans controlled our physical environment. As Barman, Hebert and McGaskill (1987) document:

Canada's aboriginal peoples are not returning to a previous era; rather they are affirming their identity by selecting aspects of the old ways and blending them with the new...In many Indian communities, people are emerging with bicultural identities, with

an identity firmly anchored in the traditional cultural world of their people and a consciousness of the skills necessary to succeed in the dominant society (5).

Bi-cultural consciousness is produced by the reality that Aboriginal identities in the contemporary Canadian context, whether by inclusion or exclusion, are all defined, identified, and controlled by the Indian Act. According to Joane Cardinal-Schubert (1992), a Cree artist, to be a Native in colonized Canada "is to be in a position of powerlessness, to have absolutely no control over your identity...The government declares by number who is Native and who is not and these numbers were, and continue to be, referred to as treaty and status numbers to indicate your "official" and legal status as an Indian or Native. Under this system, whole families have been decimated for generations" (1992: 132).

Categories such as "White" or "Indian" are not "natural" divisions, but rather are products of history and politics. As Jay (1995) confirms, this does not make such categories "false, unimportant, or unnecessary, but it does mean that we must accept some responsibility for them, whether we wish to advocate or deconstruct them" (119). Racial and cultural qualifiers "not only name but help shape the groups to which they are attached" (Jay, 1995: 119).

"THE INDIAN WAY"

Although consistent efforts have been made by authorities to officially construct our identities for us, we can resist by continuing to do things "in the Indian way". As Maeg says: "If we are to be successful to any measure then we will have to be sure that we see the whole question we are faced with and deal with all of it in an Indian Way. It is the resistance of our forefathers and the continued resistance of our fathers that has left us with something to call ours"

(in Armstrong, 1988: 225). "The Indian way" is a colloquialism embedded in the psyche of many Native people. It reflects a commonsense acknowledgment of a distinct worldview. Spoken among community members, it embodies an act of opposition, a method of communicating every-day resistance In-Relation to the "White way". It can be understood as an expression of the "lifeworld" as known to Native people; a signifier of an internalized identity intact in modern America. Many 'inside' jokes and stories, which continue to evolve intergenerationally, have reinforced the dichotomized difference between the "Indian way" and the "White way" introduced through colonization. According to Said, "we are still the inheritors of that style by which one is defined by the nation, which in turn derives its authority from a supposedly unbroken tradition" (1993: xxv).

We need to exercise caution in positing an "essential" Aboriginal identity. Qualifiers like "the Indian way" may act to obscure the variety of conditions, geographic, economic, cultural, and the complexity of influences interacting to inform the lived experience of an Aboriginal person in contemporary society today. While anthropologists have identified at least eight distinct culture areas in North America, Native peoples identify more than 300 distinct tribal groups. As Gotowiec and Beiser (1994) observe, "[c]ompounding socio-historical differences, individual choices to live on or off reserve, to follow traditional cultural values, majority-culture ways, or varying combinations of both, create an extremely diverse reality of aboriginal life in North America" (7).

It is possible to distinguish Aboriginal identity through physical appearance, to trace bloodlines and tribal affiliation and to identify those who grew up in predominantly Native communities. All have been victimized by colonial discourses in their many forms, and are implicated, directly or by association, in the current politics of First Nations. The focus of this thesis is more specifically in the retention and enhancement of Aboriginal

consciousness. Many who follow the Traditional path claim to recognize ourselves in ancestral tales. If we proclaim or are proclaimed to be Aboriginal, we know, are seeking or are mourning our aboriginality. Many are calling on ancestral memory, through ceremony, for their connection to this knowledge base. We are, as a people, reweaving the intricate web of our Traditional ways by doing things "the Indian way".

"THE WHITE WAY"

To those who are still attuned to "the Indian way", the ways of the European colonizer are vivid in the stories of loss and are an integral part of the stories retained. As Russell Means (1980), a Lakota activist, articulates, although European, Western and White may be used interchangeably, it is not specifically the race that is targeted. Rather, we are referring to "a mind-set, a worldview that is a product of the development of European culture. People are not genetically encoded to hold this outlook; they are acculturated to hold it" (28). Jay (1995) theorizes "White" as a construct which "designates the supposed common culture binding diverse European immigrants" (124). He believes that since European ethnic and national groups did not constitute a common culture, "historiography had to invent one for them to help justify the project of colonialism and the institution of slavery" (124). Following Blaut (1993), Said (1993) and many Aboriginal writers words like European, Western, White, colonial will be understood as code words for the dominant belief-system construct. How the hegemonic force of this belief system has been implicated in the erosion of the unity and the diversity of Aboriginal Traditional worldviews will be one focus of this thesis.

White academics are accustomed to ethnographic encounters which reveal the cultural belief sets of Aboriginal and other peoples. They are

unaccustomed, however, to the application of similar analysis to "the White way". According to Blaut, when an ethnographic approach is applied to understanding and challenging White culture, "the results are disturbing and the enterprise itself seems somehow improper" (1993: 32). Some European descendants may wish to prevent the construction/unveiling of "the White way" as a dominant force globally. Reverence for diversity (ethnic, class, mind-set) is said to be ignored within this "essentialized" European construct. Some propose that the Europeans' descendants living on the North American continent today have evolved philosophically and technologically from their ancestors. A linear time sense allows distance from the ancestors who so brutally colonized the Americas in the early history of bounties on Mi'kmaq scalps and slaughter of buffalo on the Plains (Miller, 1991). This view, in my analysis, ignores the current exploitation of all of Mother Earth's resources to maintain a global, market-driven, export economy. The invisibility of "Whiteness" and the linear view of history are combined with the culturally embedded notions of individual autonomy (Fox-Genovese, 1991) to limit conscious recognition of this present generation's personal responsibility towards the actions and beliefs of our ancestors. White refusal to acknowledge implication in colonialism is a strategy to deny historical acts of genocide **and** to maintain current conditions of privilege.

EUROCENTRISM

West (1993) contends that a knowledge of Eurocentrism's history is a necessary component of "a new cultural politics of difference" (204). McLaren (1994) concurs: we need to call attention to the "dominant meaning systems", which are "ideologically stitched into the fabric of Western imperialism and patriarchy" (214). Following Blaut (1993), Eurocentrism will be used as a label

for all the beliefs, covert and expressed, that postulate past or present superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans. In most discourses it is thought of as sort of a prejudice, an 'attitude', that could be eliminated along with racism and sexism. Eurocentrism is not just a matter of attitudes in the sense of values and prejudices, but rather a matter of science, scholarship, informed and expert opinion. Eurocentrism guides what is accepted as "empirical reality", "true", or "propositions supported by the 'facts'" (1993: 9). Eurocentrism, then, is "a **unique** set of beliefs, and uniquely powerful, because it is the intellectual and scholarly rationale for one of the most powerful social interests of the European elite" (Blaut, 1993: 10).

HEGEMONY

Although it can be seen as controversial to openly acknowledge the hegemony of Eurocentrism as a belief system, Said (1993) confirms that the British, French, and American imperial experience has a "unique coherence and a special cultural centrality" (xxii). Blaut (1993) informs us that "the elite groupings of European countries together, in spite of their cultural (and national) differences, are a basic and permanent belief-holding group, and their beliefs form, to a large extent, a single ethnogeography and ethnoscience...they have together underwritten the production of a coherent belief system about the European world, the non-European world, and the interaction between the two" (33).

Their analysis of cultural forms such as the novel (Said, 1993) and the textbook (Blaut, 1993) show both these forms express white supremacy. According to Said (1993) there is "virtual unanimity that subject races should be ruled, that there **are** subject races, that one race deserves and has consistently earned the right to be considered the race whose main mission is to expand

beyond its own domain" (53). This race is the White or European race. The Eurocentric worldview has highly influenced all of what is considered "theory" in academic settings today. Said explored the "main fields of scientific, social, and cultural inquiry." His findings were clear: "without exceptions I know of, the paradigms for this topic have been drawn from what are considered exclusively Western sources" (1993: 41).

Knowledge, critical theorists argue, is inextricably tied to power. "When it becomes institutionalized, culturally accumulated, overly restrictive in its definitions, it must be actively opposed by a counter knowledge" (Clifford, 1988: 56). Taking an ethnographic position allows us to see that any world view, including Eurocentrism, is at best an approximation of reality, rather than an accurate image of it. Many who are acculturated to the dominant world view assume that theirs is the most accurate and presumably adaptive world view in the history of humanity. But, compared to the many thousands of years in which the general features of Aboriginal thought and society existed, the contemporary world view is but a brief experiment (Kearney, 1984).

UNVEILING HEGEMONY

According to Said, "being on the inside shuts out the full experience of imperialism, edits it and subordinates it to the dominance of one Eurocentric and totalizing view" (1993: 28). For Said, "it is ironical that the imperial European would not or could not see that he or she was an imperialist, while the non-European in the same circumstances saw the European **only** as imperial....can one speak of imperialism as being so ingrained in nineteenth century Europe as to have become indistinguishable from the culture as a whole?" (1993: 162). Challenging Western cultural hegemony means acknowledging that for centuries Westerners have studied and spoken "on

behalf of" the rest of the world, the reverse has not been the case. Now, I join with others, in the "immense wave of anti-colonial and ultimately anti-imperial activity, thought, and revision" that has challenged and begun to overtake "the massive edifice of Western empire" (Said, 1993: 195). As Said tells it, it is the first time Westerners have been required to confront themselves "as representatives of a culture and even of races accused of crimes--crimes of violence, crimes of suppression, crimes of conscience" (1993: 195). Such opposition confronts the deeply-rooted denial embedded in the psyches of Westerners regarding their own cultural hegemony.

This is an effort, as an "outsider-within" (Collins, 1991: 11), to unveil and challenge the Eurocentric philosophies and pedagogies which currently define and confine my practice as an Aboriginal educator. It is part of the countercurrent of resistance to dominant hegemonic forces in academia. Following Said (1993), this work can be read as a narrative of emancipation and enlightenment. In its strongest form, it is a narrative of **integration** not separation. It can be read as a story of Aboriginal people/models who have been excluded from the main group, but who are now fighting for a place in it.

At this historical juncture, the voices of Aboriginal Elders, artists and scholars can no longer be effectively dismissed or silenced. Our interventions are an integral part of an existing political movement, and in many ways are "the movement's **successfully** guiding imagination" (Said, 1993: 212). We are using our intellectual and figurative energy to resee and rethink our now shared but contested geographic and discursive terrain. According to Said, "For natives to want to lay claim to that terrain is, for many Westerners, an intolerable effrontery, for them to actually repossess it unthinkable" (1993: 212).

"THE NATIVE PERSPECTIVE"

Academically and politically, the ground of Aboriginality as a discourse has not been established. Weedon (1987) observes that "[I]n order to be effective and powerful a discourse needs a material base in established social institutions and practices" (100). She continues: "Not all discourses have the social power and authority which comes from a secure institutional location. Yet, in order to have a social effect, a discourse must at least be in circulation....(it) can offer the discursive space from which the individual can resist dominant subject positions" (Weedon, 1987: 111).

Aboriginal scholars, looking towards the texts of the Western canon, confront Eurocentrism, objectification, idealization, and silence. The absence of Aboriginal consciousness, the silences and the negations, offer clues to the suppression/oppression of the Aboriginal worldview. "A hegemonic culture relies as much upon negation as upon positive affirmation for its binding force. The more negation can be inscribed in silence, the more binding it will be..." (Fox-Genovese, 1991: 237). This thesis is an effort to resist hegemonic discourse both by critiquing Western Eurocentric practices, and by offering a revitalized version of Traditional Aboriginality.

One form of resisting is to insist that Aboriginal culture is not "vanishing"; our culture is not dead. To an anthropologist or archaeologist, trained in linear progression, cultures do die. To Native American Traditionalists, they do not. According to Alfred Young Man, a Plains Cree artist and scholar, "[f]ar from being a static entity, cosmology is dynamic, changing and moving through time as ritual moves through space...All things exist in Wah'kon-tah and Wah'kon-tah exists in all things" (1992: 88). Our Traditions are not static, only functional in the past; they are ever changing to the new demands of our environments. Native cultures are "continuously in construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction as

specifically ecological, political-economic and ideological processes impact on them" (Young Man, 1992: 98).

To view Aboriginal Tradition as "lost" is ahistoric. The conditions of life colonially imposed upon Aboriginal people have involved the worst of treatments, and have stimulated a crisis of large proportions today. Many authors document the efforts which have been made historically and are continuing to be made at every level to erase Aboriginality, to eliminate or assimilate us, but we resist and survive, for example (York, 1990; Miller, 1991; Boyce, 1989; Knockwood, 1992). In the following chapter, I will attempt to reinforce the Traditional belief that the Elders, their stories, and our Traditions still inform the construction of our subjectivities, and so continue as a discourse. As Weedon (1987) states, "not all discourses in a given field carry equal weight or power, in any society one set of discourses is dominant, and it reflects particular values, and class, gender and racial interests" (1987: 36). While Aboriginality no longer is the shared worldview of all inhabitants of North America, it does continue to exist.

CULTURE AS RESISTANCE

Cultural knowledge is an essential component of cultural resistance. In the process of decolonizing, and producing cultural resistance, several possibilities are pursued by Said (1993). Decolonizing "subjects" insist on the right to see their Community's history whole, coherently, integrally. They work to restore "the imprisoned nation to itself" (215). Language, and in particular, the practice of a "national culture" is central to resisting cultural hegemony. Slogans, pamphlets, newspapers, stories, poetry, drama organize and sustain communal memory. Through acknowledging and revealing ancestral ways of life, our cultural expressions can enhance emotions of pride as well as

defiance. Local narratives, Elder's autobiographies and memoirs "form a counterpoint to the Western powers' monumental histories, official discourses, and panoptic quasi-scientific viewpoint" (Said, 1993: 215).

Gunn Allen (1986) describes our ancestral oral Tradition as a vital form of resistance:

The oral tradition....has, since contact with white people, been a major force in Indian resistance. It has kept the people conscious of their tribal identity, their spiritual traditions, and their connection to the land and her creatures. Contemporary poets and writers take their cue from the oral tradition, to which they return continuously for theme, symbol, structure, and motivating impulse as well as for the philosophic bias that animates our work (53).

According to Gunn Allen (1986) many have effectively resisted both colonization and genocide through focused attention on the retention of "the Indian way" in the face of White domination.

American Indians in general have more often than not refused to engage in protest in their politics as in their fiction and poetry. They have chosen rather to focus on their own customs and traditions and to ignore the white man as much as possible. As a result they have been able to resist effectively both colonization and genocide (82).

Resistance itself needs to be re-theorized and reformulated as "an alternative way of conceiving human history" (Said, 1993: 216). We are resisting by "**writing back**", by disrupting the European narratives and replacing them with either a more playful or a more powerful new narrative style. "The conscious effort to enter into the discourse of Europe and the West, to mix with it, transform it, to make it acknowledge marginalized or suppressed or forgotten histories is of particular importance..." (Said, 1993: 216).

VOICE

One quest of this project is to contribute to the ongoing struggle not to lose the power of voice through academic appropriation. Voice is a central conceptual notion in this thesis. Voice is a complex multi-faceted, multi-layered term. Traditionalists believe in the power of expression through voice -- words are believed to be sacred. Spoken words/sounds are one way of expressing our relatedness to each other: "speech is the materialization, externalization, and internalization of the vibration of forces...everything in the universe speaks" (Minh-ha, 1989: 128). What we know, what we have learned from our lived experiences is embodied in our voices. When spoken and heard, our voices pose a challenge to the dominant order of who speaks and who listens in Western society. Remember the words of McMaster and Martin (1992): "I want to say my own things to the world, and so, of course, given history, part of "my own things" is that you don't let me say anything" (1992: 23). Feminists articulate this as the "mute symptom of misery" which is deprivatized and oppression overcome through the process of "speaking of bitterness" (Hart, 1991: 68). We are reclaiming our voices. Through voice we speak/write of our acts of resistance, the healing and empowering values of our Traditions, and the role of the Europeans/colonizers in the destruction of our Communities. Through voice we are gaining our own sense of conscious reality and providing another lens for White colonizers/social workers to view themselves: "With history being made up of the voices of all nations, all peoples instead of just one European people, the sand will be taken out of the eyes of Europeans showing them what their own history and worldview has been doing all these years" (Charnley, 1990: 21).

SUBJECTIVITY

The de-colonizing process requires Native people to reclaim their own voices and subjectivities. "The voices of the unheard cannot help be of value", states Lee Maracle (1988: 1), Metis/Salish author. "After all the academic discussion is over....in the end it is subjectivity that matters: our world views as they proclaim us, in images from our lives" (Todd, 1992: 78). Subjectivity, according to Weedon (1987), is "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of her self and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (32). The subjectivity of individuals has recently been acknowledged as a contested terrain. The revitalization of the "Native perspective" can be articulated as "subjectivity in process" (Weedon, 1987). When we resist a particular subject position and the mode of subjectivity it brings with it, we are doing so from the position of an alternative definition. Everything we do signifies compliance or resistance to dominant norms, so potential forms of resistance are "wide ranging encompassing all areas of social meaning...not all resistance is conscious" (Weedon, 1987: 87). According to Benhabib (1992), both essence and construction are visible in an articulation of subjectivity that allows the self to vary from racial/cultural codes, to resist the hegemonic discourses which pervade in academia and their social structures.

REFRAMING RESISTANCE

When we declare a "native perspective", we resist hegemonic Western perspectives and embrace our subjectivities as rooted in pre-colonial tribal worldviews. According to Young Man (1992):

The Native perspective would prefer to state that Native art is, in fact, part of a continuum of Native American culture and metaphysical existence that has persisted for thousands of years with no loss of authenticity. Indian activism, as a concept for

continuity, has been around for centuries and certainly was in existence at the time of Columbus. Though this fact has many detractors, it needs no further proof than the walking, Native Americans themselves, wherever they may be found on the American continent (81).

In order to embrace a "Native perspective", we need to theorize our ancestors' multiple forms of resistance to colonization. I believe, as do many other Traditionalists, that throughout the ordeals of five centuries of colonization, some Elders who remained certain of the strength of their Traditional values were able to pass them to their children and grandchildren. Harold Goodsky, an Anishnabe, tells us that it was his grandmother who counselled him to resist the acculturation policies. "One thing that scared me is when I was young my grandmother told me never to speak English, never to go to church. Because, she said, 'if you do, you'll become half animal, half snake, and half man, and you'll be swimming in water all your life'" (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 165).

Many have resisted silently, inwardly, with their spirit, by refusing to change. Merchant (1989) acknowledged that although Aboriginal discourse was losing ground as the dominant form, as more and more colonizers arrived, with arms and diseases which resulted in a vast reduction of their numbers, "the surviving Indians maintained much of their tribal heritage, mythology, customs, and spirit" (98). Aboriginal forms of consciousness continue to survive within the wider constraints of the now dominant Eurocentric consciousness.

Cultural resistance can be manifested through ignoring--by continuing to practice your culture when you are told not to. Silence--the guarding of ancestral secrets--has long been embraced by our Elders as a successful tool of resistance. As Clifford (1988) insightfully realizes:

Accounts of conversion as a process of 'giving up old ways' or 'choosing a new path' usually reflect a wishful evangelism rather than the more complex realities of cultural change,

resistance, and translation. Recent ethnohistorical scholarship has tended to show that Native Americans' response to Christianity was syncretic over the long run, almost never a radical either-or choice. Moreover, in situations of drastically unequal power...one should expect the familiar response of colonized persons: outward agreement and inner resistance (303).

Vine Deloria Jr. (1994) a Lakota scholar, records this pattern in some depth.

The record of Indian resistance is admirable. When people saw that they could no longer practice their ceremonies in peace, they sought subterfuge in performing certain of the ceremonies. Choosing an American holiday or Christian religious day when the whites would themselves be celebrating, traditional Indians often performed their ceremonies 'in honor of' George Washington or Memorial Day, thus fulfilling their own religious obligations while white bystanders glowed proudly to see a war dance or rain dance done on their behalf (240).

Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hahn captures the way resistance has had to become a daily-lived cultural form:

So perhaps, resistance means opposition to being invaded, occupied, assaulted and destroyed by the system. The purpose of resistance, here, is to seek the healing of yourself in order to be able to see clearly...I think that communities of resistance should be places where people can return to themselves more easily, where the conditions are such that they can heal themselves and recover their wholeness (in hooks, 1990: 43).

We resist through treasuring our children and honoring the visions and words of our ancestors. We recognize our grandmothers' and mothers' political role in the "homeplace as a site of resistance" (hooks, 1987) and embrace the politicization of love as a powerful force that challenges and resists domination. The revitalization of our role as mother (Armstrong, 1990a; Fiske, 1992), the reaffirmation of the extended family, and developing harmony in our sex roles

(Battiste, 1986) are all known forms of resistance to encroaching, enforced European ways.

This project explores the revitalization of Traditional Aboriginal consciousness as embedded in contemporary cultural forms and as translatable to a Western academic terrain. It is part of a larger communal effort to continue to speak of an "Indian way" despite the systematic efforts to make us "vanish". According to Deloria Jr. (1994), White America and Western industrial societies often recognise only the appalling indices of social disorder of the tribal peoples, and envision only continued disruption. He asserts that Westerners are "unaccustomed to viewing life as a totality", therefore they "cannot understand the persistence of the tribal peoples in preserving their communities, lands, and religions" (1994: 292). Traditional Aboriginality is a current discourse--it is not only alive and well, but achieving a vital renaissance. This becomes more recognizable when Traditional epistemologies can be located in both current factual analysis and fictionalized accounts. As Slash, a central character in Jeannette Armstrong's novel by the same name, puts it, "All the questions that were unanswered for years suddenly seemed so simple...it wasn't a matter of belief. It was more, it was knowing for sure (201)" (Armstrong in Currie, 1992: 147). Republication of Deloria Jr.'s text God is Red, along with the recent increase in publication of Native material by Native people, attests to the spread of our discourse.

BACKLASH

Repossessing the cultural terrain means both challenging Eurocentric epistemologies, and revitalizing our own "Native perspective". Notions of White superiority are deeply ingrained. According to Blaut (1993), when one attempts to challenge Eurocentric beliefs, either from the inside or the outside, "no matter

how persuasive these arguments may be, they cannot be placed, so to speak, on one arm of a balance and be expected to outweigh all of the accumulated writings of generations of European scholars, textbook writers, journalists, publicists, and the rest, heaped up on the other arm of the balance" (9). Said (1993) expresses a similar sentiment: "Whereas we write and speak as members of a small minority of marginal voices, our journalistic and academic critics belong to a wealthy system of interlocking informational and academic resources with newspapers, television networks, journals of opinion, and institutes at its disposal" (1993: 28).

Challenging Eurocentrism in the face of overwhelming denial is dangerous. According to Blaut, "It has long been a truism that existing scientific beliefs tend to be defended in the face of new hypotheses that question them, and the defense is often fierce, bitter and dogmatic" (1993: 37). My efforts to represent other than the "reasonable", "linear" ,"rational", and decidedly Eurocentric view of the history of our cultures' interrelatedness is a necessary resistance strategy. The message can be viewed negatively and the speakers labelled ungrateful: "Why don't they appreciate us, after all we did for them?" (Said, 1993: 22).

While declaring the "Native perspective" can feel empowering for the speaker, the reversal may be true for the non-Native audience. Young Man (1992) observes that:

To an American Indian artist, Native perspective texts may seem all too true and absolute vindication. However, a Euro-Canadian who reads them may begin to feel uneasy and ultimately culpable in a very nasty historical drama indeed...some readers may suffer twinges of guilt and some may even lapse into throes of despair if they persevere through what can at times be excruciatingly insulting and accusatory material...The Native perspective may not be easy to accept, particularly by those who feel adversely implicated by its conclusions. There is no escaping the dynamic theme once the wheels are set in motion (83).

I concur with Said: "And if the old and habitual ideas of the main group were not flexible or generous enough to admit new groups, then these ideas need changing, a far better thing to do than reject the emerging groups" (1993: xxvi). This thesis undertakes to give a Native perspective.

We now turn to explore those philosophies believed to have guided Aboriginal ancestors Traditionally.

CHAPTER TWO: REVITALIZING TRADITIONAL EPISTEMOLOGY

According to Aboriginal political theorists, challenging the colonial order of things requires a dual approach. Jeanette Armstrong (1990b), an Okanagan educator, says that it will include:

the dispelling of lies and the telling of what really happened until **everyone**, including our own people understands that this condition did not happen through choice or some cultural defect on our part is important. Equally important is the affirmation of the true beauty of our people whose fundamental cooperative values resonated pacifism and predispositioned our cultures as vulnerable to the reprehensible value systems which promote domination and aggression (144).

Charnley (1990) also acknowledges that Traditional philosophies, which are distinguishable from colonial beliefs, must provide the basis for survival strategies, even in contemporary times. "We must use our own understandings of wholeness and balance and not bend to the violent means of domination and separation that history has proven are the European's goals: 'divide and conquer' as the old adage goes. 'Unite and nurture' would be more to the First Nations person's way of thinking" (1990: 20).

Aboriginal authors in this era are beginning to reclaim their history and rearticulate the belief systems that they/we understand as underlying the "lifeworlds" of our ancestors prior to colonization. These efforts, as documented by modern-day artists, shamans, Elders, anthropologists, historians and educators from diverse Aboriginal tribal affiliations, will provide an articulation of an understanding of the epistemological foundations of a Traditional worldview.

It is neither possible nor desirable, given the historical reality of colonization and the modern challenge of valid historical proofs, to present my case within the rational scientific paradigm. It is a profound irony that those who

"destroyed the evidence" would require proof by fact! However, it does remain an exciting philosophical project to attempt to uncover the "commonsense" underlying the spiritual practices of our ancestors. These practices are understood by Traditionalists to have allowed the ancestors to live harmoniously prior to colonization, and to survive spiritually the processes inflicted on them since. The uncovering of 'factual' evidence to 'prove' the truth claims of modern-day orators of "the Indian way" is not the intention of this work. Rather, it is an effort to construct a web of understanding. I will attempt to weave together a pattern of thoughts--beliefs articulated into words--acknowledging what this generation of Aboriginal people have to say about the gifts of our ancestral heritage. While the environmental context has shifted incredibly over the last 500 years--the ancestral forms of understanding and relating to our Earth Mother, necessary for subsistence prior to industrialization, are now being applied to a different set of survival challenges. I attempt to develop a language based on common articulations of ideas considered foundational to the "sacred ways and practices" of Aboriginal peoples across tribal divisions. As our peoples relied on oral transmission, analysis of existing written documents often shows that these are reflections of historical constructions done by "outsiders": missionaries, military, colonial officials, and later anthropologists. Given the prescriptions of the English language, and the politics of publishing, which have distorted written transmission, efforts have been made to base this section on examples from the oral Traditions of Aboriginal people. Traditional knowledge has been "constructed" for use within this analysis, through excerpts of interviews, speeches, prayers, songs, and conversations, as well as other documented sources. Conscious of the debates of cultural "authenticity" I recognize that a "pure nativist" (Said, 1993) position is impossible. Any move from oral Tradition to written requires an act of translation and participation in

some measure in a cultural tool that is not of the ancestors' making. Words and the oral Tradition have long been our teaching tools; the written word, "paper stories" (Cruikshank, 1992) are only recently being embraced as avenues for cultural revitalization.

TRADITIONAL EPISTEMOLOGIES

The epistemological foundations underlying our ancestral cultural practices are the "commonsense" of our Traditional societies, and are perceived as inseparable from the 'ordinary' daily lived experiences of Traditionalists today. As Aua, an Iglulik shaman, says, "[I]n our ordinary, everyday life we do not think much about all these things, and it is only now you ask that so many thoughts arise in my head of long-known things; old thoughts, but as it were, becoming altogether new when one has put them into words..." (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 8). Aua expressed a contemporary sentiment regarding speech acts as giving meaning to reality, as well as describing it. Raes (1992) notes that speech is not 'unmediated' but rather is influenced by the structure and rules by which speech is determined. It is only within a contemporary context that Aboriginal epistemological foundations are being articulated in this way. Prior to colonization, Aboriginal systems of thought were said to have been incorporated into our daily lives. It was the dominant mode of consciousness. Patterned into our unconscious through stories, rituals, humor and enacted in everyday experiences, it was common to all members of North American society. Today, we represent a numerical minority: our discourse has been ravaged by colonialism. As Harding notes, "[p]erhaps epistemologies are created only under pressure from a hostile environment. After all, why would anyone bother to articulate a theory of knowledge of her beliefs if the ground for those beliefs were not challenged?" (1990: 87).

This work embodies the challenge to articulate the "commonsense" foundations of early tribal "lifeworlds" in order to apply them in a context which has been constructed as part of Aboriginal existence only since colonial invasion. This is an effort to reconstruct and revitalize a Traditional "belief-set" which reflects commonalities amongst diverse tribal groups. Several constructs have been developed: immanence, balance, interconnectedness, self-in-relation, and learning through doing will be explored.

IMMANENCE: RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE FORMS

Aboriginal traditionalists respect **immanence**, that is, we share a **belief in or knowledge of unseen powers**. These unseen powers are non-material energy, "something loose about the world and contained in a more or less condensed degree by every object" (de Angulo in Beck and Walters, 1977: 2). These mysterious powers are found in all Earth's creatures: rocks and crystals, birds and feathers, trees and wood, plants, animals, and humans, and are visible especially in dreams, visions, and through ceremony. In our world all things have inherent value, because all things are beings. "We do not have to earn value. Immanent value cannot be rated or compared. No one, nothing, can have more of it than another. Nor can we lose it. For we are, ourselves, the living body of the sacred" (Starhawk, 1987: 15).

These mysterious powers are manifested and observable in the way the seasons change, the way the day follows night, the way the sun moves across the sky. All the physical changes throughout the day--from the colors and sounds of dawn through the afternoon to the stillness of night time--all these changes have personalities, are forms of energy shape-shifting. Ongoing cyclical changes affect each one of us and we learn to read the signs they show us, to learn from Mother Earth herself how to change and adapt to ongoing

demands. Growth itself, the germination of seeds, the stages of the life cycle, are all part of the great mystery of life (Beck and Walters, 1977).

Elder Eva McKay (1992) a Cree Elder, expresses a Traditional sense of reality:

Native People are very close to nature. When we come into buildings such as this we feel closed in, like budgies in a cage. The evening sunset indicates the end of the day, the early dawn when the birds start chirping tells us there's a new day, there's new life. The sunset and early morning give us a spiritual feeling. The world is a spiritual creation of the Great Spirit who has also given us breath...Should you become weak, strengthen yourself by looking at the world around you, and see that you are not alone in the sacredness of life which was, and is and always will be (346).

Cycles of growth and change are often marked by collective rituals and ceremonies, to recognize the spirits of the seasons, to honor and thank them for good they bring, and to ward off the negative aspects: dread, fear, disease, and disaster (Beck and Walters, 1977). Power is understood as all-pervasive and consistent. Through knowledge of it, we can come to understand it and thus utilize it to advantage. Knowledge in this sense is "virtually synonymous with power" (Kearney, 1984: 148).

According to Deloria Jr., the world that the Traditional person experiences is dominated by the presence of power, which manifests as life energies--"the whole life-flow of a creation" (1994:88). "Recognition that the human beings hold an important place in such a creation is tempered by the thought that they are dependent on everything in creation for their existence...the awareness of the meaning of life comes from observing how the various living things appear to mesh to provide a whole tapestry" (1994: 88). Sacred oral Tradition deals with all these aspects of life and power, and instructs us how to find our place within the world around us. Our universe is

based on an understanding of "dynamic self esteem", the "ability of all creatures to share in the process of ongoing creation makes all things sacred (Gunn Allen, 1986: 57). To Cree Medicine woman, Twyla, "[U]nity is the great spiritual law...the law of nature....Everything had its place, and everything works in unison...equality to the Indian meant that everything in this universe had a place" (in Steiger 1984: 110). Mac Saulis (1994), a Maliseet educator, concurs with Twyla:

A universal sense among native people exists in regard to spirituality and that it coexists in all aspects of life. It is not separate but integral, it is not immutable, it is not replaceable, it resides in the essence of the person, and it is not always definable. It is in the community and among the people, it needs to be expressed among the people (15).

Georges Sioui (1992), a Wendayette artist, expresses a similar view,

All peoples acknowledged the physical and spiritual reality of the Earth, mother of all and therefore, indivisible. The sacred was omnipresent and sovereign: one could say that America was but one great theocracy where all categories of beings possessed and exercised certain forms of rights. Amerindians lived in integral democracy that included not only human beings (or certain categories of them), but all beings of all orders (67).

BALANCE: TRADITIONAL SCIENTIFIC "TRUTH"

Our Aboriginal ancestors relied on Mother Earth as our metaphor for all of life. The complexity of daily subsistence relied on a shared vision, a clear understanding of and respect for the interconnectedness of all life.

Understanding the balancing of various forms of energy, can be viewed as the epistemological foundation of Traditional "science", as "(t)he primary task of any science is to discover orderly arrangements and patterns among the observed phenomenon, and then to describe them adequately" (Kearney, 1984: 31).

Pam Colorado (1988), metaphorically offers a Traditionally validated truism: life and learning can be understood through our sister, the tree.

Indian science, often understood through the tree, is holistic. Through spiritual processes, it synthesizes or gathers information from the mental, physical, social and cultural/historical realms. Like a tree the roots of Native science go deep into the history, body, and blood of the land. The tree collects, stores and exchanges energy, It breathes with the winds, which tumble and churn through greenery exquisitely fashioned to purify, codify and imprint life in successive concentric rings--the generations. Why and how the tree does this is a mystery but the Indian observes the tree to emulate, complement and understand his/her relationship to this beautiful, life-enhancing process (1988: 601).

Donawaak, a Tlinget Elder, gives advice which also contains this commonly expressed Traditional metaphor:

The foundation, you have to know your roots, where you are coming from...You see a tree that is weak, about to give up. Sometimes you find people like that. Why is that tree just barely making it. Because the roots are not strong. If the roots are solid and strong, then you see the tree is strong and pretty. It can withstand cold, hot weather and winds. The human, has to have those roots because we are growing too...We are put here with them. We are also part of the plant life. We are always growing, we have to have strong roots (in Colorado, 1988: 601).

Seeking the roots, their functions, and the relationships and connections between things forms the basis of Native scientific methodology. As Deloria Jr. says, "the universe is alive" (1986: 6). To see a Native speaking with a tree or a crow does not carry the message of mental imbalance, but rather is a "scientist" engaged in "research". Barney Mitchell, a Navajo teacher, says that "the greatest sacred thing is knowing the **order and structure of things**" (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 11). This knowledge is necessary to achieve **balance**.

Medicine people, shamans, who studied Mother Earth and her mysteries found that everything is made up of four elements: air, light (fire), water, and

earth. Each aspect of creation, all plants, animals, humans and other energy forms, maintain their "shape", by a balance of these elements in their structures. Learning and teaching in the Traditional way embraces the mental, spiritual, emotional and physical aspects of the individual, the family, the community, and Mother Earth as a whole. According to Deloria Jr. (1994), "the task or role of the tribal religions is to relate the community of people to each and every facet of creation as they have experienced it" (85). Tribal religions function "to determine the proper relationship that people of the tribe must have with other living things and to develop the self-discipline within the tribal community so that man acts harmoniously with other creatures" (88).

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

We are taught a common understanding of **interconnectedness**, that **all things are dependent on each other**. Everything and everyone, though having our own individual gifts and special place, is dependent on and shares in the growth and work of everything and everyone else. We believe that beings thrive when there is a web of interrelatedness between the individual and the community, and between the community and nature (Beck and Walters, 1977: 11).

Our community prospers when the work that each member performs is in alignment with the Earth and is a direct and sacred expression of Spirit. In Aboriginal Traditional forms, the spiritual suffuses a person's entire existence within the world, not only integrating our self as a unified entity, but also integrating the individual into the world as a whole. Spirituality is experienced as an ongoing process, requiring and simultaneously moving the individual towards experiencing connection--to family, community, society and Mother Earth.

Traditionalists believe that a healthy and prosperous culture is one that lives within the fundamental laws of reciprocity, where no more is taken than will be returned. According to Maggie Hodgson, a Cree healer, Native culture's greatest strength is our community-mindedness. "In keeping with the Native way, what they receive is given back to the community as their spirits touch the community in a healing way" (Hodgson, 1990: 38). "It is spiritual connectedness between and within all that exists that has been one of our greatest weapons, healers, liberators in our battles against genocide" (Charnley, 1990: 18). Our Elders teach us that to be without relatives is to be really poor.

To recognize interconnectedness is to know oneself as part of a vast circle in which all expressions of life, the birds, animals, trees, insects, rocks are our brothers and sisters, all equally beloved and vital to our Mother Earth (Medicine Eagle, 1991). "The American Indian sees all creatures as relatives (and in tribal systems relationship is central), as offspring of the Great Mystery, as co-creators, as children of other mother, and as necessary parts of an ordered, balanced, and living whole" (Gunn Allen, 1986: 59). The idea of kinship is based upon the concrete observation that each of us is totally dependent on the same things. All of nature is in us, all of us is in nature.

We can stop very quickly and think about what this means. If we lose our hands, we can still live. If we lose our arms, we can still live. If we lose our legs, our noses, our hair - all kinds of other things - we can still live. But if we lose the air, we will die immediately. If we lose the water, the plants, the earth, the animals we will die. We are more dependent upon those things than we are upon what we call the body. As a matter of fact, we don't really have a body separate from these other things (Forbes, 1979: 3).

We are like one big family with "all our relations". Nothing we do, we do by ourselves, together we form a circle. That which the trees exhale, I inhale. That which I exhale, the trees inhale. We live in a world of many circles; these

circles go out into the universe and constitute our identity, our kinship, our relations. As George Manuel, a Plains historian, suggests, "our ideologies and religions respect all life...even as [hu]man has life, air and sun have life, deer, moose have life. Our religions teach us that Mother Earth is the giver of all life including our own life" (1974: 40).

According to Kearney, the particular manner in which individuals perceive their relationship to the other is a world view universal, and a stance toward the world. Images of the nature of relationship dialectically are part of past collective experience, and shape strategies for interacting with social and physical aspects of others in the present. If one views oneself as intimately interconnected with others, and one's well-being as dependent on the well-being of other life forms, this forms the basis of "ecological consciousness" (1984: 74). This form of consciousness is common in band and tribal societies. Viewing others as aspects of our self, predisposes the self to be more altruistic. Acting in the best interest of others, and in the interest of the world in general, becomes consistent with self interest. Rather than a concern with "power-over", there is concern to balance and harmonize the multiple and ongoing relationships between self and other. "If the Self is seen as continuous with the Other, than an attitude, a relationship of respect and maintenance toward the Other is a product of enlightened self-interest" (Kearney, 1984: 154). According to Gunn Allen, "those reared in traditional Indian societies are inclined to relate events and experiences to one another. They do not organize perceptions or external events in terms of dualities or priorities" (1986: 58). This epistemology is theorized throughout the remainder of this thesis as Self-In-Relation.

SELF-IN-RELATION

Aboriginal Traditionalists have long recognized the dialectical link between individual responsibility and community well-being. The knowledge that each person is responsible for his or her actions, in-relation to the larger community is a fundamental epistemological belief, further discussed as "**self-in-relation**". Self-In-Relation is linked to a tribal worldview, and is very important in the formation of an Aboriginal identity. A person must first know him or her self, his or her family line, his or her tribal nation and his or her responsibilities to all relations, if he or she is to function within an Aboriginal identity (McCaskill, 1987). According to Paula Gunn Allen: "An American Indian woman is primarily defined by her tribal identity. In her eyes, her destiny is necessarily that of her people, and her sense of herself as a woman is first and foremost prescribed by her tribe" (1986: 43). According to the Traditional view, an Aboriginal identity provides a framework of values upon which one views life, the natural world and one's place in it.

Madeleine Dion Stout (1994), a Cree educator, works to conceptualize an Indigenous model of human relations, which is both "multi-generational" and "transdirectional". She reveals several key components related to the construction of Aboriginal identity:

1. discovering the centrality of **self**, especially individual will and ability or 'medicine'
2. transmitting individual power to **family** through values, attitudes, behaviour and institutions
3. extending the family to the broader end of **community** and developing **agency** to connect diverse groups of people
4. challenging the existing imbalances between the cultural/structural divide of all peoples of the **world** and;
5. recreating **self** in solidarity with those who are, those who have been and those who are yet to be (14-5).

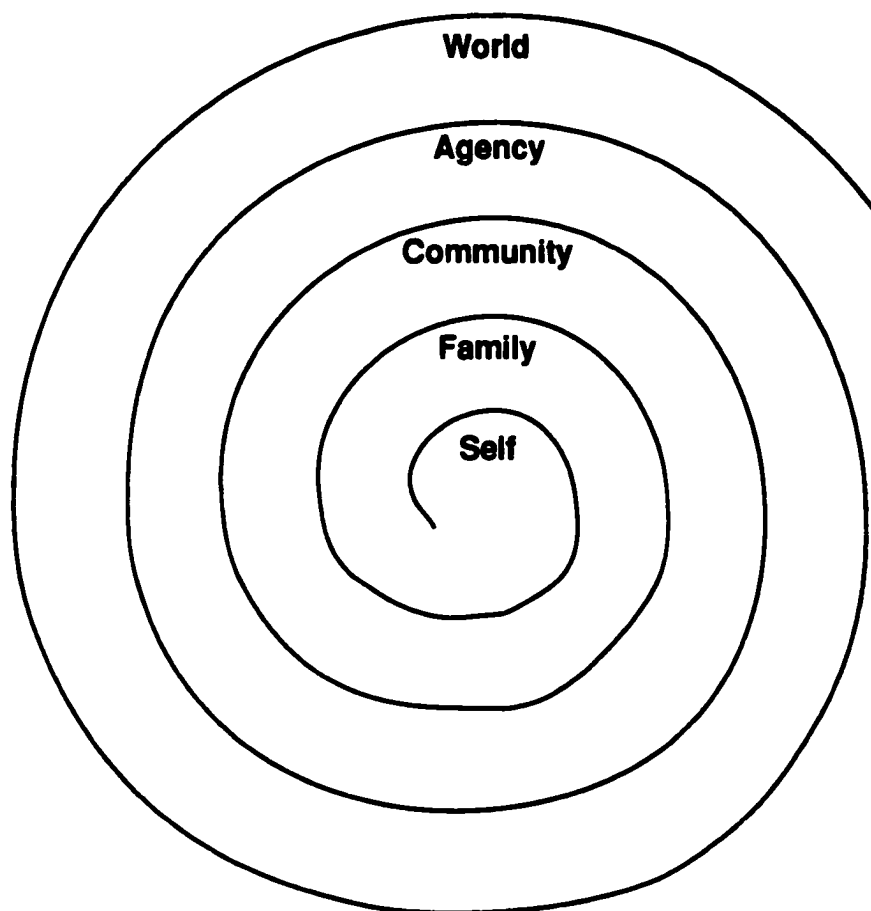


Figure 1: All my Relations
Source: Maggie Hodgson: personal communications
Madeleine Dion Stout (1994: 15)

The main characteristics of a multi-generational and transdirectional model of Self-In-Relation to Others

To the Traditionalist, the individual is only knowable as a member of a specified community, and Communities are only recognizable through their constituents. As Dion Stout instructs us, "[M]orality and the duty and obligation found in community, is at once the domain of the individual and the collective.

By merely tracing the spiral from its periphery to its center and vice versa, a unique and free individual is revealed" (1994: 15-16).

We are able to see ourselves and our immanent value, as related to and interconnected with others--family, community, the world, those behind and those yet to come. Through embracing this epistemology, each individual becomes intensely aware of personal accountability for the welfare of others. We are taught that we must, each in our own way and according to the dictates of our own conscience, attend to communal responsibilities. Personal awareness of intergenerational responsibility, and "proper conduct" are still expected throughout the life cycle. A poem by Lee Maracle, a Metis/Salish author, called "Creation", expresses a contemporary translation of personal responsibility:

I know nothing
of great mysteries
know less of creation
I do know
that the farther backward
in time that I travel
the more grandmothers
and the farther forward
the more grandchildren
I am obligated to both
(in Grant, 1992: 338).

The individual was taught to be responsible for his or herself, but not in isolation from the community, or the natural world. Forbes (1979) expresses a Traditional view.

A person who has developed his (or her) character to its highest degree, and who is on that path, will also be able to master specific skills. But if they don't have that spiritual core, they will use those skills to hurt other people...They have the skills, but they have no morals. They will do whatever they are paid to do. So knowledge without the spiritual core is a very dangerous thing (1979: 11).

According to Gunn Allen (1986), the perception of humanity collectively rather than individually, as "cocreator", discourages people from "setting themselves up as potentates, tyrants, dictators, or leaders of any other kind" (1986: 67). She clarifies the link between our understanding of relationship and other aspects of world view. She illustrates how our beliefs about interconnectedness are integral to our sense of time and space. Native Americans view "space as spherical and time as cyclical...the circular concept requires all 'points' that make up the sphere of being to have a significant identity and function, while the linear model assumes that some 'points' are more significant than others" (1986: 59). She argues against the linear notion of time, and posits an essential Aboriginal sense of time, which has persisted throughout time, based on a ritual and circular understanding of order and harmony.

For an Indian, if being on time means being out of harmony with self and ritual, the Indian will be "late". The right timing for a tribal Indian is the time when he or she is in balance with the flow of the four rivers of life. That is, Indian time rests on a perception of individuals as part of an entire gestalt in which fittingness is not a matter of how gear teeth mesh with each other but rather how the person meshes with the revolving of the seasons, the land, and the mythic reality that shapes all life into significance (154).

TRADITIONAL PEDAGOGIES: LEARN BY DOING

In the Traditional worldview, high value is placed on communal/family responsibility, particularly the obligation to educate children in a holistic way. The Traditional way encompassed all aspects of the person's life, In-Relation to the world around her or him. "Learning emphasized such values as respect for all living things, sharing, self-reliance, individual responsibility, and proper

conduct. Children also had to learn how to utilize the environment most effectively for economic survival" (Barman, Hebert and McCaskill, 1986: 3).

Recognizing immanence, the essential spirit, energy of each, of all of creation, we show respect, and learn from all of our teachers. As Brooke Medicine Eagle (1991) asks:

Do you recognize your teachers in All Our Relations--in all their surprising forms? Do you take to heart the profound wisdom voiced from time to time by the little children in your life? Are you willing to learn from the simple grasses of the Earth about the importance of flexibility and tenaciousness? What have you learned from your family pets?" (32).

Part of enacting our responsibility has to do with seeking knowledge in experience and stories ourselves, using our own bodies and senses to learn.

In almost all cases, learning the way for Native Americans in classical tribal times meant going directly to the source of the Mysteries. The people voyaged with their entire bodies, with all their senses including language and thought, in order to find the answers to these questions, and to aid in their understanding of themselves and their world...In order that knowledge did not get separated from experience, wisdom from divinity, the Elders stressed listening and waiting and not asking why....Larry Bird, a young Keres man, explains, "you don't ask questions when you grow up. You watch and listen and wait, and the answer will come to you. It is yours then, not like learning in school (Beck and Walters, 1977: 51).

Methods of learning shamanism involve meeting spirit guides who will accompany us through life as teachers, special guardians and helpers. Spirit helpers are found in solitude, out in nature, usually fasting, sometimes during a vision quest, "by watching patiently and without expectation, by exercising instinctual perception like an animal...[O]rgans of perception have to be sensitized to be able to recognize the many vibrations and currents of the earth

and finally to be able to see the invisible world and its entities" (Lorler, 1989: 28).

For this reason, silence is sacred. The origin of language and the power to speak with plants and animals is a mysterious thing, learned and known by only a few people. The only way a person can learn the language of the wind, the trees, and streams is to be silent a long time, making silence an important part of sacred language, prayer and song (Beck and Walters, 1977). A great part of our beliefs are grounded in the respect of the immanent powers, and listening silently to learn from them. This is reflected in Aboriginal "mimetic" consciousness, "an integration of all the senses with the body in sustaining life" (Merchant, 1989: 20).

In this mimetic consciousness, culture was transmitted intergenerationally through imitation in song, myth, dance, sport, gathering, hunting, and planting. Oral-aural transmission of tribal knowledge through myth and transactions between animals, Indians, and neighbouring tribes produced sustainable relations between human and nonhuman worlds...For Indians engaged in an intimate survival relationship with nature, sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch were all of equal importance, integrated together in a total participatory consciousness (Merchant, 1989: 20).

Traditionally, no special educational institutes existed. Everyday lived experience and the sacred as manifested within the social group as a whole was the "school" of our ancestors. "The practical and the religious, the manual and the intellectual, the individual and the social flowed as one complex integrated function" (Gresko, 1986: 89). A central theme, within this informal educational model, was learner initiation and direction of the process; instruction was provided upon request, after observation and reflection by the learner (Sterling and Hebert, 1984: 295). Mead (1942) argues that conversion, "purposefully attempting to alter the ideas and attitudes of other persons" (634) did not occur in tribal societies.

My Elders cautioned, "Too much thought only leads to trouble", "Keep your eyes open and your mouth shut", and "There is more to life than meets the eye." By this they meant to educate me as to the epistemological foundations of truth claims in Aboriginal society, that is, we accept as knowledge only what can be fully assimilated into daily experience. "True knowledge is considered to be that which is derived from experience. Events are viewed personally and knowledge must enable the individual to survive in the bush" (Bowers, 1983: 939).

The ancestral Traditional beliefs provided a strong code of morals and ethics, which set the limits and boundaries of personal behaviour, the way individuals ordered their behaviour with each other. These beliefs were reinforced ancestrally, and are being revitalized today, through methods of healing and teaching which will be represented as: use of ceremony or ritual; storytelling and humor or reversal.

CEREMONY OR RITUAL

Through Traditional use of ceremony or ritual, each community member enacts a personal commitment to the "sources of life", which is intended to make one aware of the affects of their actions on his or herself, the community, and Mother Earth. Ritual was a central pedagogical tool--our beliefs were evident in and reinforced by the use of ritual. Ritual acknowledges the belief in unseen powers, often relying on symbolic energy forms from the natural world; calling on the elemental powers of the four directions; and smudging with herbs. Speeches, stories, and songs recall our personal responsibility to continually reestablish our links to each other and to all of creation. These basic principles are acted out so they can be well understood by everyone, although not all aspects of the ritual will be understood by everyone, as some knowledge is

"learned and rehearsed in secret, under the supervision of specialists" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 37). The community shares a physical experience, marking important changes in the Earth (seasons, moons) and in the lives of individuals (birth, naming, puberty, death) to make the person aware of the meaning of life and their contribution to the community. Ritual is a physical enactment, performed collectively; "they appeal to the emotions, to the imagination, and to the intensity of feelings in each individual and in the group as a whole" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 38).

Gunn Allen (1986) defines ritual as "a procedure whose purpose is to transform someone or something from one condition or state to another" (80). The purpose of ceremony is to integrate: to connect the individual with his or her fellow humans; to link the community of people with that of the other life forms. We are to understand that this larger communal group, what we know and experience as our world, is interconnected with the worlds beyond this one. "A raising or expansion of individual consciousness naturally accompanies this process. The person sheds the isolated, individual personality and is restored to conscious harmony with the universe (Gunn Allen, 1986: 62).

Ritual is the physical embodiment of Self-In-Relation, providing the unconscious and conscious foundations for everyday practice of respect for the immanence of all other aspects of creation, including other humans who share our context, those who have gone before, and those yet unborn. Reinforcing the fundamental law of reciprocity uplifts the community mindedness, which has been one of the central survival mechanisms in our struggles for maintenance of a collective identity in the face of encroaching individualism.

Elder Xaye t'an, a Tewa, explains, "the purpose of our ceremonies is not entertainment but attainment; namely, the attainment of a good life. Our dramas, our songs, and our dances are not performed for fun as they might be in the

white man's world; no, they are more than that; they are the very essence of our lives; they are sacred" (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 39). In Traditional practices, "during the time of a ceremony, a drama, a dance, the entire atmosphere of the community is charged with excitement and many special activities go on. Special foods are prepared, special decorations are made for costumes and homes, special prayer-sticks constructed, special songs composed--in short, a circle is drawn around the community and everything within that circle is sacred and taken out of the ordinary" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 39).

Prior to ceremony, "certain procedures are followed in order to prepare the mind and the body to be receptive to be aware...you want to make yourself receptive to knowledge and divinity" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 23).

Our Native Elders have taught us that before a person can be healed or heal another, they must be cleansed of any bad feelings, negative thoughts, bad spirits, or negative energy -- cleansed both physically and spiritually. This helps the healing come through in a clear way, without being distorted or sidetracked by negative 'stuff' in either the healer or the patient (Broden and Coyote, 1991: 1).

Fasting, conducted with the guidance of an Elder or respected healer, while out on the Earth can open up our senses and our spirits to the Earth. Fasting helps to cleanse the body of "toxins that are stored from keeping old anger and fear in my body" (Phyllis in Hodgson, 1990: 44). Another often noted procedure for "purifying" is "smudging", where you burn certain herbs and take the smoke in your hands and rub or brush it over the body. It is a process to aid you to "erase your thoughts. You get rid of all poisons and excesses...you make yourself empty" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 23).

According to Broden and Coyote, two Anishinabe, "the Elders say that all ceremonies, tribal or private, must be entered into with a good heart, so that we can pray, sing and walk in a sacred manner and be helped by the spirits to

enter the sacred realm" (1991: 3). In order to be able to pay proper attention and honor ancestral traditions, our Elders advise, the space should be prepared carefully; it should be clean and orderly. Lighting and air, overall atmosphere, are very important. Tom Ration, a Navajo teacher, tells this story:

Our parents would say to us, "Arise, wake up. What are you sleeping for? Take the ashes out. Clean around the outside, we do not want trash around the hogan!" This is done so the Dawn People do not see all the trash. They will know they are welcomed to this place. "There is no wealth here, let's go in and give them some," they will say (by wealth they meant trash). Where the place is dirty and trashy, they will ignore the place and say, "too much wealth here, let's go to another place" (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 54).

In ritual we recognize the powers of the unseen, and begin by calling in the powers of the directions. "This is done to invite the archetypal qualities of the cardinal points, that they might bear witness, lend support, and impart wisdom to our endeavors. This acknowledges that we human beings need help" (Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 37). Although we exist in community, and stand in Circle together, we are all taught to understand that, "in the end you are alone--that is, you have to make decisions for yourself, decisions that will effect the community and the natural world. Therefore personal awareness is at the heart of responsibility: to be aware of what is going on around you and what life holds in store for you--all of life's possibilities throughout your life to Old Age" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 63).

STORYTELLING AS CULTURAL TRANSMISSION

Our ancestors taught us that **those with knowledge have a responsibility to pass it on**. Teachers are individuals who have taken upon themselves to become especially knowledgeable about the world and its fundamental relationships, a knowledge they then are responsible to pass on to

others. In cultures in which experience is particularly valued, Elders are expected to pass their knowledge on to younger people, both orally and by demonstration. The special regard for Elders as teachers, historians, and sources of authority, underlies ethnographic accounts by "outsiders" (Cruikshank, 1992), as well as contemporary discussion by "insiders"--Native people concerned with incorporating traditional values into present day life (Armstrong, 1987; Medicine Eagle, 1991; Buffalo 1990).

According to Smith, an Athapaskan Elder, until recently, every Athapaskan learned either through direct experience or from verbal descriptions or instruction. "An ultimate value of oral tradition was to recreate a situation for someone who had not lived through it so that the listener could benefit directly from the narrator's experience" (Cruikshank, 1992: 339). Traditional people retain the value for the ear, and believe that an accepting, subjective stance is essential to full understanding. The strong oral Traditions that are common to all tribes predispose Aboriginal people to listen intently and respectfully to Elders and teachers in a non-demonstrative, introspective way, experiencing fully what they hear. This reflects a respect for self, and "a respect for the world outside the self and a recognition of the potential for knowledge and insight to come from anywhere" (Macias, 1989: 48).

Gunn Allen (1986) recognizes the importance of stories in maintaining Aboriginal identity:

Since the coming of the Anglo-Europeans beginning in the fifteenth century, the fragile web of identity that long held tribal people secure has gradually been weakened and torn. But the oral tradition has prevented the complete destruction of the web, the ultimate disruption of tribal ways. Oral tradition is vital; it heals itself and the tribal web by adapting to the flow of the present while never relinquishing its connection to the past. Its adaptability has always been required, as many generations have experienced (45).

The persistence of stories and story telling suggests that it is central to an Aboriginal intellectual tradition and provides the core of an educational model. Ration reinforces the responsibility of the "keepers" to teach in the modern age:

"The stories that are told can be repeated...to make them last. If we keep them to ourselves, in about fifteen or twenty more years we will not have them. It will all be gone. There will not be any songs or prayers because the legends go along with all this. One cannot exist without the other (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 30).

The Elders' stories are our identity statements. Elders' oral testimonies have been called "statements of cultural identity", where "memory continuously adapts received traditions to present circumstances" (Cruikshank, 1992: 12). Elders continue today to take shared cultural Traditions, use them to interpret events from their own experience, and then pass them on to succeeding generations. Traditional narrative is used to explain life experiences, with an emphasis on common themes: "landscape, mythology, everyday events, and continuity between generations" (Cruikshank, 1992: 2). Elder women's stories differ both from Native men's accounts and from those of non-Native women. For Traditional women the recurring theme is one of connection--to other people and to nature. "Connections with people are explored through ties of kinship; connections with land emphasize sense of place. But kinship and landscape provide more than just a setting for an account, for they actually frame the story" (Cruikshank, 1992: 3).

Gunn Allen (1986) elaborates how our ancestral notions of time are still captured in our traditional stories. Our stories,

...emphasize the motion inherent in the interplay of person and event. In them the protagonist wanders through a series of events that might have happened years before or that might not have happened to him or her personally, but that nevertheless have

immediate bearing on the situation and the protagonist's understanding of it (148).

The structure of the stories out of the oral tradition, when left to themselves and not recast by Indian or white collector, tend to meander gracefully from event to event; the major unifying device, besides the presence of certain characters in a series of tales, is the relationship of the tale to the ritual life of the tribe (152). ...dream, event, myth, tale, history, and internal dialogue are run together, making it evident that divisions do not lead to comprehension. The structure reflects the point that particles move in moving time and space and that individuals move in a moving field (153).

Annie Ned, a Tlingit Elder, speaks: "Long time ago, when they know, what they see, that's the one they talk about, I guess. Tell stories--which way you learn things. You think about that one your grandma tells you. You've got to believe it, what Grandma said....Old-style words are just like school!" (in Cruikshank, 1992: 267). Relying on "old-style words", she answers questions about her youth with speeches, probably learned from those orated in ritual, as a demonstration of how she actually learned as a child. She uses this form to discuss "what kids should know", reaffirming familiar themes: the power of words, the skills needed to survive, the importance of learning from one's grandmother.

Those who were "keepers" of Traditional knowledge "help pass knowledge and sacred practices from generation to generation, storing what they know in their memories" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 27). Because the information was delivered orally, there was a special regard for speech and for the truth. Elder Ned insists that the correct way to tell stories involves reliable repetition: "[Y]ou don't put it yourself and tell a little more," (268) because you are not actually the person telling the story. You are only a transmitter from the original narrator, whose experience it was. A recurring theme of Kitty Smith, an Athapaskan Elder, is that authority to speak about the past comes not from

originality but from accurate repetition. In all her teaching, she insists on naming her source, and she differentiates between two kinds of authority: the received wisdom from Elders--"I know what I tell. This is not just my story--lots of people tell that story. Just like now they go to school, old time we come to our grandpa. Whoever is old tells the same way" (268); and direct experience, from having witnessed a particular event: "That one story my grandpa tells me. But this time, myself, this time I'm telling you the story" (268). She is careful not to speculate when asked questions outside her experience: "I don't know that one. That's what they say, but I don't see it. Whoever tells you this, ask him" (268). She challenges the authority of anyone younger than herself. Referring to someone ten years younger, she comments: "[That person] is too young. [That person] didn't see it. Just a kid. Old people, that's the one's I'll tell you" (in Cruikshank, 1992: 268). Authenticity is a critical issue in the minds of Elders. Most of Elder Smith's focus is directed at ensuring that the listener, especially as she was to be the translator to the "paper world", learn to "get the words right" (in Cruikshank, 1992: 268). This is amusing, considering the numbers of Aboriginal authors having trouble getting their work published because they are not saying it right/white (Lutz, 1991).

The Elder's concern for accuracy and "truth" allows us to see that validity claims for Traditional minds, are embedded in the actual experience. But, simultaneously, experience is understood as particular, subjective and contextual. What then, is a true story? To an Elder, it is one narrated by a person who either participated directly, observed first hand, or heard it from someone who did. Many "truths", multiple interpretations of the same story/experience were/are permissible, as each storyteller understands the "facts" from their own location, and adds each new experience/story to their repertoire as one adds beads to the string.

Ruth Whitehead (1988) illustrates how the personal, the community, and the tribal are interwoven in Mi'kmaq stories:

Within the framework of the traditionally long story cycles, individual storytellers often transferred elements from one cycle into another. The intent or whim of the teller was the string onto which episodes, actions, characters and messages were threaded like beads. Such 'beads' could change their color and forms as well, so each retelling of a story, even by the same person, might be different. The structure was fluid, accommodating itself to the teller's will. All its elements could change their shapes, their content (2).

The story is a living thing, an organic process, a way of life. Stories are fragments of life, "fragments that never stop interacting while being complete in themselves"(Minh-ha, 1989: 143). In a similar way, truth is fluid and changing. "In tribal religions no effort is made to define religion as a system of doctrinal truths about the nature of the world. It cannot, therefore, be verified...Over a long period of time, however, the cumulative experiences of the community become a truth that has been manifested for the people" (Deloria Jr., 1994: 291).

Stories have always been accepted by Traditionalists as a way of teaching/learning from other's experience. Angela Sidney, a Tagish and Tlingit Elder, is an excellent model as a keeper and teacher. As the eldest daughter, she looked after her mother, using their time together to listen to her talk about family and clan histories, traditions, songs, and stories. Through this process she absorbed normative rules about social behaviour for potlatching, puberty, marriage, and childbirth. But times were changing with the Gold Rush, so many stories tell of her disappointment when her own experience never precisely matched the "old ways". She gained an ability to recognize contradictions between what people said "should" happen and what actually did happen, and developed a preoccupation with evaluating and balancing old customs with new ideas. She uses narrative to discuss all these issues, showing an

"uncommon ability to step back from her experience when she explains her culture or her language...mak[ing] her life history an exceptional cultural document. Part of her talent lies in her capacity to understand the kind of context a cultural outsider needs to be taught before that person can actually begin to hear what she is saying" (Cruikshank, 1992: 21).

The Elder Sidney illustrates a modern-day Aboriginal worldview, when, through her stories, place names and genealogies, she built a framework for constructing her life story in the context of her tribe. As the Elder became more confident that the listener was "grasping the building blocks she was providing", more and more of the stories began to place her own experience within that context. "I was relying on the scaffolding of narratives and names she had already provided" (Cruikshank, 1992: 26). This is a description of a Traditional pedagogical practice, reinforcing Self-In-Relation, the interweave of the individual in the community, in the tribal history, and in the geographic context.

The knowledge base of the Yukon Elders, along with many other tribal Elders, is expressed in Traditional story form. This challenges the discourse that language loss equivocally means culture loss. Annie Ned sees herself as one of the last Elders and therefore as a particularly important teacher. In her own childhood, instruction came directly from "long-time people" (268) who taught with stories. She brings ancestral responsibility to teach, still an active epistemology for today's Elders, together with insight into modern-day pedagogical process, Elder Ned's primary concern is that "school kids learn from paper" (268). Her continuing objective has been to prepare a book they can read: "Kids used to do jobs for old people--get wood, water. They paid us with stories! We bring wood: now! Time like school! We stayed there--we listened" (Cruikshank, 1992: 268).

Elder Smith has motives for recording her stories which are also related to her intergenerational responsibility. With reference to a great-grandchild she said: "Well, she's six years old now. She's going to start school now. Pretty soon paper's going to talk to her!" (in Cruikshank, 1992: 16). Most schools teach things totally outside the experience of Elders and rarely call on them for assistance. "Paper" stories, can be a connection between the world of Tradition and the schools' "paper world". The Elders feel that, once legitimized--as on paper--the stories should be able to be a part of the school curriculum.

Moving our oral stories to paper has mixed results. It can bring the children closer through reading and hearing the stories, but it can also create more distance as they no longer have to visit the Elders for the stories. Basil Johnston, an Ojibway author, reflects a Traditional view of "paper stories": "Ever since words and sounds were reduced to written symbols and have been stripped of their mystery and magic, the regard for them have diminished in tribal life" (1992: 10). A comment by Elder Ned emphasizes parallels between narrative explanation and academic storytelling. After a long day of hearing archaeologists present their findings to the community, she stood up and asked:

Where do these people come from, outside?
 You tell different stories from us people.
 You people talk from paper --
 Me, I want to talk from Grandpa (in Cruikshank, 1992: 356).

In a very real sense, her oppositional stance has helped identify what seems to be the central issue: storytelling is a form of teaching, and teaching a form of storytelling. Our cultural locatedness influences the way we tell stories, and largely determines who will hear them, and what meaning they will take from them.

HUMOR/REVERSAL: "INSIDE-OUT" LESSONS

Our ancestors embraced **humor** as sacred and necessary part of our struggle and survival, as "human beings are weak...and our weaknesses lead us to do foolish things" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 30). An Iglulik proverb says, "[t]hose who know how to play can easily leap over the adversaries of life. And one who knows how to sing and laugh never brews mischief" (Rasmussen, in Beck and Walters, 1992: 32).

Ben Black Bear, a Plains Elder, acknowledges the centrality of humor to Aboriginal existence:

When you are alive, you give homage to the Great Spirit, and you will do favours for others, and then you will enjoy yourself. If one does not do those things, he will explode within himself. These three things are the highest in law. Realize this. These are truths, so be it (in Beck and Walters, 1977: 40).

The knowledge that is instilled in youngsters throughout their lives in Native tradition, is the knowledge of relationships and how they are arranged and interact with each other. Many stories, and experience itself, tell us how this harmony can be upset and what tragedies can result. It is said by my Elders that "Too much of one thing can lead to imbalance"; "Don't take life so serious"; "Don't take yourself so serious"; "Don't make yourself bigger than you really are" my Elders taught. Too much power, too much seriousness, are feared for they can "unbalance" life in the community and the environment. We are taught by the clowns, by the Trickster, and others, not to take ourselves too seriously, not to make ourselves too important. No one individual is that indispensable. While the potential exists, in this modern age of domination by "stronger" individuals or nations, for this philosophy to reflect and feed our internalization of external cues of inferiority, the intention was and is to assert the Self-In-Relation. Humor is used to destabilize the individual who wishes to see her or himself as "better".

more powerful than others. The human who wishes to forget his or her dependence on other life forms, as he or she exerts power-over or superiority over all other forms is challenged through humor. Humility is revered in an Aboriginal Traditional worldview, the ability to see oneself as dependent on and interconnected with other forms of life is an aspect of intertribal wisdom reinforced through humor and stories of reversal.

Myths are central to the oral Tradition. They are not clear-cut reflections of either past or present, but are statements about the human mind. "The tendency of myth (is) to invert normative social behaviour and suggest that one purpose of symbolic narratives is to resolve issues that cannot be worked out in everyday life" (Cruikshank, 1992: 3). For example, the Elder's story of "Moldy Head" is an illustration of the consequences of human arrogance. "Her use of dialogue to create two points of view--one human one animal--reinforces the importance of maintaining a dual perspective in one's dealings with nature" (Cruikshank, 1992: 169). Sometimes multiple unidentified characters carry on debates to which each contributes in turn. Adding to the complexity, much of their dialogue may involve reporting conversations they have had with other characters (where each part is again taken by the narrator), and characters' individual thoughts as well as their words may be presented as dialogue. The Elders use this technique to explore conflicting points of view. By taking the parts of successive characters and creating discussion among them, both in accounts of daily life, and in Traditional narratives, the complexity of living In-Relation is unveiled.

The Trickster is evident in some form in every Native culture, and is responsible for the changes that took/take place in the world. The Trickster is often a male figure, but he can change his shape at will and can change into the shape of an animal. "He does not plan, he is impulsive, he is jealous and he

imitates others without thinking of the consequences. The consequences are usually disastrous for him, but he must suffer alone; no one comes to his rescue. He is neither good nor bad, but is responsible for both because the reader can learn from the trickster's actions what is good and bad" (Grant, 1992: 25).

The Trickster, the transformer, the power of learning through reversal, through "inside out lessons" (Medicine Eagle, 1991) shows up in many of our stories.

In such a story the protagonist meets a super human being (usually an animal disguised as a person) and is taken on a journey from the secular, material, temporal world of everyday life to a supernatural, timeless domain. The two domains--ordinary reality and the unfamiliar realm--are marked off in some physical way: the protagonist may pass under a log, into a cave, beyond the horizon, or may be given a "slap" causing temporary amnesia. The physical characteristics of this new domain are the reverse of those found in the more familiar world. It may be a "winter world" where everything is white, including people and animals, usually the customs, food, and behaviour of human beings are offensive to the inhabitants. Often the central organizing principle is a refraction of the human world from the perspective of animals. This view of human social order is not a mirror image, but one that (like myth itself) simultaneously unbalances and reorients the protagonist, revealing the ordinary in new ways (Cruikshank, 1992:340-1).

Lenore Keeshig-Tobias (1992), an Ojibwa author, laments that the Trickster has not been regarded as relevant to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies since the arrival of Europeans on this continent: "you, what ever happened to you, Trickster?" (102). Trickster, who helped us see our own mistakes, who helped us laugh at ourselves, and each other, a necessary strategy to keep us strong and sane, was seen to have deserted us through the colonial period.

Now if there'd been a story, just one new story, even a little one -if only to make people laugh, things might have been different, might have been okay, might have been bearable. But

there wasn't. There were no new stories. No wonder no one was looking for him, watching for him, waiting for him. He had just kissed-off-and who cared. He hadn't even warned the people about treaties! (Keeshig-Tobias, 1992: 103).

However, Trickster, as a teacher and caretaker of indigenous values, is once again being revived in Aboriginal traditions. Keeshig-Tobias (1992) points out the similarities between the Trickster and the White Man. According to Iktomi prophecy, Trickster warned: "He is like me, a Trickster, a liar...a new kind of man is coming, a White Man" (101).

Living our lives as Traditional Aboriginal peoples has become, through the imposition of colonial discourse, a much more highly complex function. We can and do reflect on the ancestral gifts of immanence, balance, and interconnectedness (Self-In-Relation), as they are pedagogically expressed in "experience" and "voice". Traditionalists continue to acknowledge the ancestral responsibility to teach the values and ethics that once sustained, and are now required, to revitalize Self-In-Relation. Many continue to rely on the ancestral pedagogical forms to do so. The dangers inherent in separating the learning of skills and facts from Traditional worldviews that guide our making of "meaning", our understanding of "proper conduct" In-Relation to other life forms, is visible globally. "The spiral towards genocide in most indigenous cultures, as well as humanity as a whole, should convince us that in having removed these safeguards from learning we may have removed the sole means for our continuance" (Armstrong, 1987: 19). Our ancestral ethics call on us to recognize that Aboriginal people "stand at a pivot point at this time in history", where we each have the responsibility of "deciding for our descendants how their world shall be affected and what shall be their heritage" (Armstrong, 1988: 13). The Trickster teaches us to acknowledge and recognize that, in the contemporary era, our lives--experiences and voices--are contextualized by the immediate

and daily interface with "colonial mentality". To move wisely towards visioning for the future, a clear understanding of Traditional Aboriginal identity, philosophy, and pedagogy as they are continuously revealed in the modern context is required. Along with revitalizing Traditional philosophy the rewriting of colonial history is also an essential step in the decolonial project. Colonialism disrupted the epistemologies and pedagogies guiding our ancestors' daily lives and continues to play a large role in separating Aboriginal people from a positive identity construction today. It is necessary to unveil the epistemologies and pedagogies which were/are used to dominate us in order to better challenge them. As Armstrong (1990b) reminds us, the lies need to be dispelled--the current conditions of our people "did not happen through choice or some cultural defect on our part" (144). The following chapter intends to aid in the deconstruction of colonialism as a hegemonic worldview. This text intends to disrupt the "commonsense" versions of history, often accepted as fact, by positing a Native perspective. This is considered a necessary strategy in the struggle to advance a Traditional Aboriginal worldview in the contemporary age of Eurocentric domination.

CHAPTER THREE: CHALLENGING EUROCENTRISM THROUGH INTERROGATING THE EPISTEMOLOGIES OF COLONIALISM

According to Said,

Appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in interpretations of the present. What animates such appeals is not only disagreement about what happened in the past and what the past was, but uncertainty about whether the past really is past, over and concluded, or whether it continues, albeit in different forms, perhaps(3). ...even as we must fully comprehend the pastness of the past, there is no just way in which the past can be quarantined from the present. Past and present inform each other each implies the other and...each co-exists with the other....Neither past nor present...has a complete meaning alone...how we formulate or represent the past shapes our understanding and views of the present (1993: 4).

Recognizing that our present lives are embedded in contemporary times, and the present is built on our histories, many modern Aboriginal voices address the issue of the attempted erasure of our culture, identity, and history through processes embedded in and constructed by colonial consciousness. As this is an ethnographic enterprise, of specific interest are the discussions of the values, ethics, and beliefs underlying the colonial process. These became the basis upon which the early Euro-American societies were established and contextualized the current relationship between our Communities.

Said (1993) recognizes the dialectical interrelation between colonizer and colonized, authority and resistance, and how that has been made invisible in dominant forms of historical analysis and cultural production.

If...Indian and British history are studied separately rather than together, then the experiences of domination and of being dominated remain artificially, and falsely separated. And to consider imperial domination and resistance to it as a dual process evolving toward decolonization, then independence, is largely to align oneself with the process, and to interpret both

sides of the contest not only hermeneutically but also politically (Said, 1993: 259).

In contemporary times, writing about culture and cultural "exchange" involves thinking critically about structures of domination and multiple historical precedents of forcible appropriation. Throughout the history of cultural contact in every colonized location, "someone loses, someone gains" (Said, 1993: 195). Discussions of North American history are increasingly becoming interrogations of that history for what it did to Native peoples. According to Clifford, "[s]ince 1950 Asians, Africans, Arab orientals, Pacific islanders, and Native Americans have in a variety of ways asserted their independence from Western cultural and political hegemony and established a new multivocal field of intercultural discourse" (1988: 256).

The process of decolonization, as articulated by Blaut (1993), involves two parts. First, it is necessary to resurrect one's own history and to find out how it has contributed to the history of the world. Secondly, it is necessary to rewrite colonial history to show how it has led to poverty rather than progress. Minh-ha poetically expresses this challenge: "You who understand the dehumanization of force removal - relocation - reeducation - redefinition, the humiliation of having to falsify your own reality, your voice - you know" (1989: 80). The representation of the "Native perspective" defies what the Eurocentric population has known and has historically enshrined as "fact", namely the natural benefits accruing to the colonized from their encounters with a "superior" European state. We are challenging the complex system of denial which allows people to still believe that "[n]othing can fully compensate the Europeans for their gift of civilization to the colonies, so the exploitation of colonies and colonial peoples is morally justified" (Blaut, 1993: 16). George Longfish (1992),

a Seneca/Tuscarora artist and educator, speaks another view of the "facts" of the colonial project.

Change had a great effect on indigenous people who have gone from a culture closely in tune with nature and the environment to participation in the industrial revolution, not to mention the spiritual revolution. Five hundred years later the non-Indians, who have had little respect for human rights, animal rights, or the earth's environment, are having to overcome their own ignorance and come to terms with the alternative concept of making change that doesn't destroy the elements of this planet and its people (150).

Aboriginal writers across tribal affiliation share a common and universal critique: the history of Indian and White relations, commonly referred to as "fact" in the textbooks, is socially constructed as an act of colonial privilege and power, and must be challenged and reconstructed in the voices of Aboriginal peoples. In Fanon's words, "[b]y a kind of perverted logic it [colonialism] turns to the past of the oppressed group and distorts, disfigures and destroys it" (in Godard, 1992: 199). Ortiz claims that "historical documents enshrine the worst images ever visited on Indian peoples...Conventional history is so at odds with the facts that Indians often simply ignore it...History is so distorted it is irrelevant" (in Sioui, 1992: 59).

Specifically, this chapter is an effort to redress the failure in the colonial version of history, to address the "Native perspective" about our shared history. This version emphasizes the dialectic of hegemonic authority and resistance to acculturation that was and is experienced by Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people have developed many forms of resistance, as varied the attempts to change their ways of life. Freire (1985) names this resistance as universal: "The colonial process brings with it an incredible and dialectical counteraction. That is, there is no colonial intervention that does not provoke a reaction from the people about to be colonized" (183).

This chapter will trace the epistemologies of colonial consciousness, the tools used to inculcate it into the minds and hearts of the Aboriginal inhabitants of North America. It is argued that the impacts of colonization on Aboriginal consciousness have been far reaching. But the imposition of continuous colonial authority has been dialectically interrelated with multiple acts of resistance. This resistance has provided the foundation for the current renaissance movement. Clearly, one cannot argue for the revitalization of Aboriginal discourse in the modern era, if one believes that colonization as a force was successful in entirely "eliminating" the consciousness of Aboriginal Nations. Rather, it is argued that colonization as a force, produces a counter-force of resistance; this dialectic is played out in the everyday expressions of consciousness and the material conditions of our lives. As Said confirms, "it was the case nearly everywhere in the non-European world that the coming of the white man brought forth some sort of resistance....Never was it the case that the imperial encounter pitted an active Western intruder against a supine or inert non-Western native; there was **always** some form of active resistance, and in the overwhelming majority of cases, the resistance finally won out" (1993: xii).

"FORMS OF CONSCIOUSNESS ARE POWER STRUCTURES"

Merchant's (1989) analysis reveals that current (dominant) forms of North American consciousness, can be understood in terms of historical construction and changeability over time through interaction between Aboriginal and Western cultures. As Merchant reminds us, "forms of consciousness are power structures" (1989: 22). "When one worldview is challenged and replaced by another during a scientific or ecological revolution, power over society, nature, and space is at stake. Symbol systems, metaphors, and images express the implicit ethics of elites in positions of social power" (Merchant, 1989: 22). Blaut

theorizes that "the dominant group has a fairly definite set of concrete worldly interests...these interests are social, economic, and political agendas" (1993: 39). This chapter will focus on the efforts of one group, the Europeans, to take power over Aboriginal forms of consciousness in order to meet their own interests. The imposed shift in forms of cultural consciousness was a highly stressful process which was actively resisted by some and acquiesced to by others. As E.P. Thompson states, "[t]he stress of the transition falls upon the whole culture: resistance to change and assent to change arises from the whole culture" (1991: 382). Unequal power relations defined this process. The European culture expressed and exported their dominant systems of power, property-relations, religious institutions, "inattention to which merely flattens phenomenon and trivializes analysis" (382).

Merchant (1989) summarizes the process of "ecological breakdown" as beginning at the level of material culture.

Production relations were altered as tools and utensils obtained in the fur trade created inequalities among neighbouring tribes, and dependency relations were substituted for reciprocity. The relations of reproduction were altered by diseases and property rights that further destroyed traditional patterns of subsistence. Finally, a new religion injected by Jesuit missionaries, who consciously set out to undermine Indian animism, seemed to offer rational explanation and solace in a time of crisis and confusion. The colonial ecological revolution in northern New England that began with the fur trade was essentially complete by the end of the seventeenth century (61).

The transition under analysis from the dominance of Traditional worldviews to the epistemologies necessary to support the growth of industrial capitalism is materially based, but it is inevitably about cultural consciousness. As Thompson (1991) reminds us, "there is no such thing as economic growth which is not, at the same time, growth or change of a culture; and the growth of

social consciousness, like the growth of a poet's mind, can never, in the last analysis, be planned" (403). While material exploitation is built into colonialism, and authority was executed in a planned way to achieve this end, what has been unanticipated and undertheorized is the Natives' ongoing resistance to the colonial efforts. The revitalization of our people's cultural consciousness, along with the rewriting of our shared history was and is not part of the Western plan, but is integral to advancing the "Native perspective". I wish to uncover the epistemological foundations of the European system of thought, science and education, which, when introduced to this continent, began a major transformation for its original inhabitants.

FROM MIMETIC TO MECHANISTIC CONSCIOUSNESS

Aboriginal consciousness prior to colonial intervention was based on "mimetic" consciousness, which was based on the insight that information comes from all sources, from all senses. "The Indians' face-to-face, oral-aural mode of transaction had been fully integrated with the other senses in daily survival" (Merchant, 1989: 96). According to Merchant (1989), when Europeans took over Native lands, they introduced a form of consciousness based primarily on vision: "an observer distant from nature...knowledge modeled on perspective, (and) a distant God substituted for the spirits within animals, trees, and fetishes" (58). "Transcendence undermined the epistemological equality of the senses through emphasis on the visual. Here truth is the light of God, knowing is seeing, and knowledge is illumination" (Merchant, 1989: 58). She comments:

Puritan eyes turned upward toward a transcendent God who sent down his Word in written form in the Bible. Individual Protestants learned to read so that they could interpret God's word for themselves. In turn, the biblical word legitimated the imposition

of agriculture and artifact in the new land...Treaties and property relations that extracted land from Indians were codified in writing. Alphanumerical literacy became central to religious expression, social survival, and upward mobility (Merchant, 1989: 20-21).

Knowing, for these colonists, was tied to the eye: "seeing is believing".

This represented a shift from the "face-to-face, oral-aural" integrative consciousness of Traditional peoples. Interconnectedness as a worldview was challenged by the epistemologies of domination.

THE LANGUAGE OF DOMINATION

Consciousness is expressed through language. Many authors are working to unveil and better resist the workings of colonial consciousness through an examination of the language of early European domination.

McMaster and Martin (1992) provide a succinct summary of relevant concepts.

Humanism elevated the human being above all species, supported the imperative of human domination and justified the new age of imperialism. Rationalism's pragmatic approach created a milieu of curiosity, restlessness and the need to explain and explore. This culture of science effectively reduced nature to a secular, rather than sacred, realm, and had long-lasting results in both technology and philosophy...Finally materialism, the celebration and possession of material goods, dominated the ethical and religious frameworks of European society" (12).

MODERNISM

Humanism, rationalism, "scientism", and materialism are all components of modernism. Todd (1992) reflects on the dialectical relationship of modernism and colonialism:

At the same time that modernism came into being, colonialism was intensifying. The colonies offered room for expansion and capital--including human capital--to fuel those technological developments. (73) Ironically, while Western thought was experiencing an Enlightenment and

even revolution within its own cultures, it was also practising genocide through colonialism (74).

According to Fay, "enlightenment" refers to "the development of the powers of critical thinking and the will to use these powers to fashion the nature and direction of life" (1987: 61). According to Western culture's own critics, "the Enlightenment relates to things as the dictator to humans" (Horkheimer and Adorno in Benhabib, 1992: 208). This period of European consciousness externally is characterized by objectification and an ideology which revered domination of (European) humans over all life forms. As Silko poetically expressed: "They see no life when they look...they see only objects..." (1981). The early colonial forms of consciousness evolved continuously interlocked with the rise of capitalism and "analytic, quantitative consciousness" (Merchant, 1989: 21). Capitalism emphasizes efficient management and control of nature through the "development of mechanistic science and its use of perspective diagrams" (Merchant, 1989: 22). "The fences, fields, houses, roads, canals, and railroads that mapped the surface of the soil constrained it within grids imprinted by human minds that were guided by the goals of capitalist production" (Merchant, 1989: 260).

MECHANISM

According to Merchant (1989), the "mechanistic" paradigm is based on the following assumptions about "reality": (1) nature is made up of discrete/separate parts; (2) sense data is received in discrete/separate bits; (3) the universe has an order that can be described and predicted by mathematics; (4) problems can be broken down into parts, solved, and reassembled without changing their character; and (5) science is context and value free knowledge. "As constructed by the seventeenth-century "fathers" of modern science, the

mechanistic model served to legitimate the human prediction, control, and manipulation of nature" (199).

European "progress" and increased wealth was achieved through the extraction of resources from the Earth by the "most efficient and profitable method" (Merchant, 1989: 202). "Nature was engineered with machines to maximize production, while aesthetics was assigned to the realm of the private" (Merchant, 1989: 230). How humans live on and use the Earth is foundational to any worldview analysis. Merchant (1989) expresses a Traditional view when she represents "ecological thinking" as offering the possibility of a "new" relationship between humans and nonhuman nature that could lead to the sustainability of the biosphere in the future. She contrasts the assumptions about nature of the "ecological paradigm" with the mechanistic one, expressing as she does, the epistemology of the Traditional understanding of Self-In-Relation. "(1) [E]verything is connected to everything else in an integrated web; (2) the whole is greater than the sum of the parts; (3) nonhuman nature is active, dynamic, and responsive to human actions; (4) process, not parts, is primary; and (5) people and nature are a unified whole" (263). Merchant proposes "ecology" as a "new worldview" that could "help resolve environmental problems rooted in the industrial-mechanistic mode of representing nature" (1989: 270). She continues,

In opposition to the subject/object, mind/body, and culture/nature dichotomies of mechanistic science, ecological consciousness sees complexity and process as including both culture and nature. In the ecological model, humans are neither helpless victims nor arrogant dominators of nature, but active participants in the destiny of the webs of which they are apart (Merchant, 1989: 270).

WORLDVIEW UNIVERSALS

All worldview universals become contested terrain in the process of colonization. In this section, space, time, and relationship will be explored.

"Since Aristotle the notions of Time and Space have been accepted by Western philosophers as necessary attributes of human thought" (Kearney, 1984: 90).

SPACE

Said's definitional work makes clear the connections between lands and colonialism. "'Imperialism' means the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory; 'colonialism', which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (1993: 9). According to Blaut (1993), "[b]etween 1810 and 1860 or thereabouts Europeans subdued most of Asia, settled most of North America, and began the penetration of Africa" (1993: 22). The process of denying Aboriginal title and ownership and bestowing European place names, exemplifies the appropriation and possession that was central to the European approach to space. As McMaster and Martin ask, "Why would colonists assume these lands were unclaimed and unnamed?" (1992: 12).

This belief-set is articulated by Blaut (1993) as the "myth of emptiness" (15), by which colonists made a series of claims about lands, each layered upon the others:

- (i) A non-European region is empty or nearly empty of people (hence settlement by Europeans does not displace any native peoples)
- (ii) The region is empty of settled population: the inhabitants are mobile, nomadic, wanderers (Hence European settlement violates no political sovereignty, since wanderers make no claim to territory)
- (iii) The cultures of this region do not possess an understanding of private property--that is, the region is empty of property rights and claims (hence colonial occupiers can freely give land to settlers since no one owns it) (15).

Said (1993) makes it clear that understandings about space and geography are related to the construction of cultural and physical domination.

Territory and possessions are at stake, geography and power. Everything about human history is rooted in the earth, which has meant that we must think about habitation, but it has also meant that people have planned to **have** more territory and therefore must do something about its indigenous residents. At some very basic level, imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others. For all kinds of reasons it attracts some people and often involves untold misery for others....the earth is in effect one world, in which empty, uninhabited spaces virtually do not exist. Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free of the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings (7).

TIME

The Western conception of time also played a vital role in the process of colonization. According to Kearney, "[m]ost people relate to time much as a fish relates to water-- uncritically swimming through it, and largely oblivious to it. And yet, they do have rather definite but unexamined notion of what it is" (1984: 98). By 1900 all of the non-European world had been carved up into colonies; the "notion of natural, continuous, internally generated progress" (22) in the European core was no longer questioned by mainstream thinkers.

European culture is concerned with planning and history, which is linked to the "desire to dominate space and seek mastery. According to Kearney (1984), "[M]odern industrial peoples tend to have an aggressive, exploitive attitude towards nature and society. It is supported by a linear-future image of time in which change and "development" are actively sought"(Kearney, 1984: 168). He theorizes that a well-developed linear time image is most compatible with and most supported by modern industrial urban society. "Societies like this

usually have a well-developed sense of history; technological and social change in them tends to be rapid and in some respects cumulative" (1984: 101). In the linear worldview, progress is seen as a desired, if not an inherent aspect of reality. Individuals are continuously made to be aware that things will never again be as they were, emphasizing a future orientation. This form of consciousness is reinforced by modern urban life, where humans are insulated from astronomic and other natural rhythms.

Instead of stars, the phases of the moon, and the seasonal movement of animals and growth of plants, one is exposed to clocks, calendars, and history books, which all proclaim the relentless onward march of time....Since linear time is irreversible, the past cannot be regained and the present is but a transitory point on a journey to future events (Kearney 1984: 101).

According to Deloria Jr.:

The very essence of Western European identity involves the assumption that time proceeds in a linear fashion; further it assumes that at a particular point in the unravelling of this sequence, the peoples of Western Europe became the guardians of the world. The same ideology that sparked the Crusades, the Age of Exploration, the Age of Imperialism, and the recent crusade against Communism all involve the affirmation that time is peculiarly related to the destiny of the people of Western Europe. And later, of course, the United States (1994: 63).

Merchant concurs: "the rhetoric of manifest destiny sanctioned the spatial motion that encouraged control over natural resources as Europeans swept westward bearing the torch of "civilization" (1989: 201).

By the time of intense colonization of North America, industrial time sense was well established in England: "the familiar landscape of disciplined industrial capitalism, with the time-sheet, the time-keeper, the informers and the fines" (Thompson, 1991: 385). In capitalist society, time itself became commodified. Thompson tells us that "all time must be consumed, marketed, put

to use; it is offensive for the labour force merely to 'pass the time'" (1991: 395). People in modern industrial societies talk and think about time precisely and literally, showing changes in "inward notations of time" (Thompson, 1991: 354). According to Thompson, many tactics were used in Britain to inculcate the version of time necessary for "efficient" labour habits: "the division of labour; the supervision of labour; fines; bells and clocks; money incentives; preachings and schoolings; the suppression of fairs and sports" (1991: 394). Although "it sometimes took several generations" (Thompson, 1991: 394), evidence is plentiful to indicate how far industrial societies have become habituated to the industrial time sense. "Mature industrial societies of all varieties are marked by time-thrift and by a clear demarcation between "work" and "life" (Thompson, 1991: 399).

According to Gunn Allen, chronological time structuring is useful in promoting and supporting a sense of time required for "efficient" industrial production. "The idea that everything has a starting point and an ending point reflects accurately the process by which industry produced goods" (1986: 149). An Aboriginal time sense does not support, nor is it supported by industrial capitalism. Chronological time contrasted sharply with the ceremonial time sense of our ancestors: "the individual as a moving event shaped by and shaping human and nonhuman surroundings" (Gunn Allen, 1986: 149). According to Gunn Allen (1986),

There is a connection between factories and clocks, and there is connection between colonial imperialism and factories. There is also a connection between telling Indian tales in chronological sequence and the American tendency to fit Indians into the slots they have prepared for us. The Indians used to be the only inhabitants of the Americas, but times change. Having perceived us as belonging to history, they are free to emote over us, to re-create us in their history-based understanding, and dismiss our present lives as archaic and irrelevant to the times (151).

RELATIONSHIP TO THE OTHER

The particular manner in which individuals perceive their relationship to the other is a world view universal, and a stance toward the world. "A person may regard the Other, or parts of it, as existing to be maintained, obeyed, or acted upon. That is, is the Relationship between Self and Other one of harmony, subordinacy, or dominance?" (Kearney, 1984: 73). "The individualistic Self is predisposed to competition and struggle with other persons and with the Other in general" (Kearney, 1984: 77). Western culture has been described as "Faustian", as having an "existence which is led with a deep consciousness and introspection of the ego, and a resolutely personal culture evidenced in memoirs, reflections, retrospects, and prospects and conscience" (Kearney, 1984: 25 quoting Spengler). Dominant notions of "community" arise from lack of community, the tyranny produced from the prioritization of the needs of some, specifically elite European males globally, over the well-being of the whole. Individualism was produced and now reproduces "Communities" of people divided by norms of hierarchy, riddled with sexism, racism, classism, ableism, heterosexism. The grand political theorists of the 17th century did not acknowledge all people as individuals. Fox-Genovese (1991) observes that they excluded propertyless men, slaves, and women from political participation, perpetuating the illusion that individualism and collective life could coexist. "In our own time individualism, fuelled by the capitalist market, threatens to swing the balance between individual and society--the balance between personal freedom and social order - wholly to the side of the individual" (8).

Aboriginal community was built on egalitarianism; divide and conquer was inspired by colonialism and continues to be fueled by individualism. Fox-Genovese (1991) identifies the dangers in the individualist tradition: "the ease with which it has invited individuals to objectify everything that they perceive as

Aboriginal community was built on egalitarianism; divide and conquer was inspired by colonialism and continues to be fueled by individualism. Fox-Genovese (1991) identifies the dangers in the individualist tradition: "the ease with which it has invited individuals to objectify everything that they perceive as other, to view other human beings as nothing more than obstacles in their path" (235). When one's place in the world is beneath others, community is severed.

Throughout the colonization process there was a convergence of views in Europe about the nature and historical dynamics of the others--the "non-European world". Said expresses this as an "us" and a "them": "Throughout the exchange between Europeans and their "others" that began systematically half a millennium ago, the one idea that has scarcely varied is that there is an "us" and a "them", each quite settled, clear, unassailably self-evident (1993: xxv). "Culture", taking definitional cues from the linear, mechanistic model, was theorized as evolutionary, from very "primitive" beginnings, progressing, through European diffusionism, to a more "advanced" state. It was through the lens of hegemonic imperial experiences, that notions about culture, and people of other cultures were clarified, reinforced, criticized, or rejected (Said, 1993). The discourse about Aboriginal people was established based on the colonizers' need for detailed information about ethnography, languages, and geography. As Blaut (1993) points out:

Colonialism in its various forms, direct and indirect, was an immensely profitable business and considerable sums of money were invested in efforts to learn as much as possible about the people and resources of the regions to be conquered, dominated, and perhaps settled, and to learn as much as possible about the regions already conquered in order to facilitate the administration and economic exploitation of these regions (23).

Colonial administrators and missionaries everywhere were required to submit detailed reports about native legal systems, land tenure rules,

production, reproduction, socialization, spiritual practices and much more. It is crucial to remember that most of what was learned, recorded and is now taught about Aboriginal peoples came from biased sources: "Europeans with very definite points of view, cultural, political, and religious lenses that forced them to see "natives" in ways that were highly distorted" (Blaut, 1993: 24).

A well cited example is evident in the sixteenth-century Spanish debates about the "nature of New World Indians." Colonists questioned: "Are they human? Can they receive the True Religion and, if so, can they be made slaves?" (Blaut, 1993: 20). Rationalizing the enslavement of a people by denigrating them as less than human was reinforced by colonial misinterpretation of our ancestors' close link to the animal world. Merchant documents the sixteenth century perception that "bestial characteristics and animal-like passions in the human body and soul must be suppressed in all 'civilized' humans. The polar opposites of 'wildness' and 'animality' were 'civilization' and 'humanity' " (1989: 39). She continues later, "[t]he association of Indians with animals also helped to legitimate the extermination of the red race through warfare" (Merchant, 1989: 63).

Calling into question the humanity of Natives was one way to conceptualize European expansion in a way that would explain why it was "natural, desirable, and profitable" (Blaut, 1993: 23) for all. The notion that non-Europeans were less rational, less innovative, and proven inferior scientifically, helped in defining the colonial process as beneficial for the colonized as well as the colonizer. This characterization was deemed necessary to allow "advanced nations" to work to bring "prosperity and advancement to the poor nations" (Blaut, 1993: 29). The theories generated allowed Europeans to rationalize that "colonialism, for all its horrors, did at least bring about the diffusion of capitalism to the non-European world, a necessary though painful process for the non-

According to Said both imperialism and colonialism are "supported and even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people **require** and beseech domination" (1993: 9). Language, again, reveals the colonial belief-set. The vocabulary of nineteenth-century imperial culture expressed knowledge affiliated with domination through words and concepts like: 'inferior' or 'subject races', 'subordinate peoples', 'dependency', 'expansion', and 'authority'" (1993: 9). Said points out the similarities that exist amongst colonial discourses globally:

the notions about bringing civilization to primitive or barbaric peoples, the disturbingly familiar ideas about flogging or death or extended punishment being required when "they" misbehaved or became rebellious, because "they" mainly understood force or violence best; "they" were not like "us," and for that reason deserved to be ruled (Said, 1993: xi).

Gloria Cranmer Webster, a Kwaquitle artist, expresses her understanding of the colonial worldview: "It was as if by thinking of our people in the worst possible terms, the white people could justify attempting to take complete control of our lands and our lives without reference to their own concept of justice" (1992: 30). The necessity for these dehumanizing forms of discourse arose out of the need to justify the actions taken by colonial powers to "maintain control in the face of Native resistance" (Blaut, 1993: 26). As Said (1993) poetically expresses, "the aim to civilize and bring light to dark places is not antithetical and logically equivalent to its effective end: the desire to 'exterminate the brutes' who may not be cooperative or may entertain ideas about resistance" (Said, 1993: 166).

Examining negative discourse is one avenue to challenging hegemony. We need to embrace the reality that our people have resisted through being "too dumb" or "too lazy" to learn the ways of the colonizers. One example is

revealed by interrogating the myth of the "lazy native", created and sustained intergenerationally as a stereotype. According to Said, these descriptions are based on the "'false consciousness' of colonialists" (254) who were unwilling to accept the Natives' refusal to work as one of the earliest forms of resistance to the European intrusion. This projection steadily acquired "consistency, authority, and the irrefutable immediacy of objective reality" (254). Colonists then constructed it as a rationale for further subjugating and punishing the Native, since the "decline in Native character" had already occurred, and was seen as "irreversible" (254). Said concluded, "the myth of the lazy native is synonymous with domination, and domination is at bottom power" (1993: 255).

We have had our immanent value as individuals and as a group devalued through colonial processes. Decolonization requires that we challenge the internalization of the structurally imposed reality of being victims and being inferior. Longfish comments:

The words that explain or define us have been "primitive", "ethnic", "minority" and "lazy"....How do we rid ourselves of these ideas and concepts that result in low self-esteem? How do we better ourselves? The learning process revolves around identification. "Who are we?" We have a long history to review--we have been survivors (1992: 150).

He asks:

How can Native people separate themselves and integrate into a white society without losing themselves? And when they do integrate and bring their cultural and survival information with them, does that make them stupid? (Longfish, 1992: 151).

Longfish offers his ideas of decolonization of the subject.

The more we are able to own our religious, spiritual, and survival information, and even language, the less we can be controlled....The more we get rid of the 'stupid' pictures in our

space and believe in our own abilities, the more we are able to make change work for ourselves. To rid ourselves of these pictures and own who we are is to take control and not play the game by white rules (1992: 151).

Longfish's proposal of reestablishing a positive Native identity, in now Eurocentric America, offers the seeds of radical change. Taking control of our lands and our lives was facilitated by many colonial tactics, and it will take a multifaceted approach to achieve decolonization. According to Said, "decolonization is a very complex battle over the course of different political destinies, different histories and geographies, and it is replete with works of the imagination, scholarship, and counter-scholarship" (1993: 219).

Most clearly linked to this thesis is the role of schooling in altering Aboriginal forms of consciousness, and more currently the role of Aboriginal pedagogy in altering Western forms of consciousness.

COLONIAL PEDAGOGICAL FORMS

Education became one tool by which the new analytic forms of consciousness, were expanded beyond the dominant elites to include most others. Martin Carnoy (1974) argues that Western formal education came to most countries as part of imperialistic domination. "It was consistent with the goals of imperialism: the economic and political control of the people in one country by the dominant class in another. The imperial powers attempted, through schooling, to train the colonized for roles that suited the colonizer (1974: 3).

Jo-Anne Fiske (1991) lodges residential schools within the service of the colonial order.

The federal government saw them as essential to altering the aboriginal economic order and to assimilating Aboriginal peoples into the dominant society; the missionaries saw them as necessary to transforming the Aboriginal moral order and to creating a segregated Christian society (134).

Colonial forms of education, particularly residential schools, have contributed greatly to the efforts to mechanize Traditional forms of Aboriginal consciousness. The ancestral model of education as integral to daily life and family and communal relationships shifted radically through colonial pedagogical measures. Merchant (1989) summarizes:

The downfall of the Indians' memorized oral tradition and its replacement by a European system of thought, science, and education was a major epistemological transformation....Seeing the written word provided the opportunity for individual recall without the emotional associations of song, rhyme, or rhythm of speech. Not recalling, but problem solving was what mattered; not repetition, but seeing and creating anew (110).

Thompson documents the role schools more generally played in the process of inculcating "time-thrift": "Industry, Frugality, Order and Regularity" (1991: 387) were taught through enforcing a chronological time sense. Celia Haig-Brown (1988) quotes a residential school survivor:

In the morning, we had to get up at six o'clock, perfect silence. We all took turns going into the bathroom: we'd fill our basin full of water and we'd take it to our bedside. We'd wash, take that basin, empty it, clean it out, put it back, fix our bed, get dressed and as soon as your finished--you only had half an hour to do all this--brush your teeth, get in a line and stand in line in perfect silence. (1988: 54)

Eurocentrism predisposed the colonizers to believe that separation of children from their family and communities would best serve the longer-term interests of assimilation into the colonizer's "superior" culture. "There", claim Barman, Hebert and McCaskill (1986),

attendance would be ensured, and all aspects of life, from dress to use of English language to behaviour, would be carefully regulated. Curriculum was to be limited to basic education combined with half-day practical training in agriculture, the crafts, or household duties in order to prepare pupils for their expected future existence in the lower fringes of the dominant society (6).

Blaut tells us, "[s]trictly speaking, missionaries and colonial administrators were in the business of diffusing Europe to non-Europe" (1993: 24). Native people in the schools were very aware of the "civilizing functions", including standard practices of "physical punishment for speaking their own language even when they knew no English" (Barman, Hebert and McGaskill, 1986: 10). The colonization process, and in particular education, targeted oral Tradition--our voice. The decimation of our tribal languages, mourned by many, and aided by colonial education, is understood as one fundamental aspect of cultural genocide. Johnston (1992) eloquently expresses the Traditional view of the connection between transmission of an Aboriginal worldview, language, and language loss.

They lose not only the ability to express the simplest of daily sentiments and needs but they can no longer understand the ideas, concepts, insights, attitudes, rituals, ceremonies, institutions brought into being by their ancestors; and, having lost the power to understand, cannot sustain, enrich, or pass on their heritage. No longer will they think Indian or feel Indian. And although they may wear "Indian" jewellery and take part in pow-wows, they can never capture that kinship with and reverence for the sun and the moon, the sky and the water, or feel the lifeboat of Mother Earth or sense the change in her moods; no longer are the wolf, the bear and the caribou elder brothers but beasts, resources to be killed and sold. They will have lost their identity which no amount of reading can ever restore. Only language and literature can restore the Indian-ness (1992: 10).

While cultural workers may argue with Johnson's concluding statement, few can dispute that language as a symbol system is challenged as part of the

power structure in an ecological revolution. Johnston asks: "[w]hat is it that has undermined the validity of some of the "Indian" languages and deprived this generation and this society the promise and the benefit of the wisdom and the knowledge embodied in tribal literature?" (15). He answers:

In the case of the Beothuk and their language, the means used were simple and direct: it was the blade, the bludgeon, and the bullet that were plied in the destruction of the Beothuk in their sleep, at their table, and in their quiet passage from home to place of work, until the tribe was no more. The speakers were annihilated; no more was the Beothuk language spoken; whatever their wisdom or whatever their institutions, the whole of the Beothuk heritage was destroyed (14). ...In other instances, instead of bullets, bludgeons, and bayonets, other means were used to put an end to the speaking of an "Indian" language...And if a boot or a fist were not administered, then a lash or a yardstick was piled until the "Indian" language was beaten out. To boot and fist and lash was added ridicule (1992: 16).

Ridicule was a useful tool as Native children had been exposed Traditionally to the Elders using humor when necessary to challenge their conduct towards others. When combined with physical assault, the impacts were strongly felt. Johnson continues:

Both speaker and his language were assailed. "What's the use of that language? It isn't polite to speak another language in the presence of other people. Learn English! That's the only way you're going to get ahead. How can you learn two languages at the same time? No wonder kids can't learn anything else. It's a primitive language; hasn't the vocabulary to express abstract ideas, poor. Say 'ugh'. Say something in your language!...How can you get your tongue around those sounds?" On and on the comments were made, disparaging, until in too many the language was shamed into silence and disuse (1992: 15).

Language is an expression, a shaping force, and the transmitter of the culture; when it is lost the culture is crippled. York (1990) estimates that fifty of Canada's fifty-three Native languages are in danger of extinction. Thirteen

languages are considered extremely endangered because there are fewer than a hundred speakers. "Once they disappear, they will be gone forever. There are no foreign countries where the language will be preserved" (1990: 36).

Along with introducing English as the language of communication, "systematic denigration of their culture as 'barbaric', and personal characterization as 'goddam savages'" (Barman, Hebert and McCaskill, 1986: 10), was commonly described by residential school survivors. English-Currie, a Okanagan educator, reflects on her experience of colonial schooling: "We were told outright that not only all Indian religion was heathen and should not be practiced but also that Indian culture and language were savagery. This further oppressed Native people and created a false belief that our culture, language, and religion were degrading and insignificant" (1990: 54). Keeshig-Tobias (1992) makes visible the more subtle Eurocentric and linear biases of the educators, which devalued ancestral traditions, making them into historical artifacts, things of the past.

All through school, remember, our growing up, remember, the holy sisters, the priests and the lay teachers they all told us such things did not and could not exist in the modern world, their world, the white man's world. That's why our culture faded away like worn out clothes and useless things cast away, and locked them deep inside, so deep that some of us couldn't even find them. It's no wonder we were so crazy mixed-up. It was like being chased by the wind (109).

According to Said, "[t]here is no minimizing the discrepant power established by imperialism and prolonged in the colonial encounter" (1993: 166). From the Native perspective, it is important to not discount the intensity and depth of the impact of enforced colonial practices on Aboriginal consciousness. The imposition of colonial consciousness was understandably traumatic, especially once it is unveiled that it was European custom to make

the Indigenous people change by either controlling us or killing us! What would history have been like if the colonizers had simply accepted the differences among the cultures they met and themselves, and not criticized Native customs and teachings? What might have happened if the colonizers had respected geographical and ecological boundaries of various tribal societies and had not tried to take over all the Native lands? (Beck and Walters, 1977).

It is vital to recall the dialectical link between authority and resistance. Although the colonial powers reemphasized in many ways a belief-set based on their own cultural superiority, acculturation was not willingly accepted by the Natives. Said (1993) documents globally how people have "banded together in asserting their resistance to what they perceived was an unjust practice against them, mainly for being what they were, i.e. non-Western" (218).

No matter how apparently complete the dominance of an ideology or social system, there are always going to be parts of the social experience that does not cover and control. From these parts very frequently comes opposition, both self-conscious and dialectical...Opposition to a dominant structure arises out of a perceived, perhaps militant awareness on the part of individuals and groups outside and inside it that, for example, certain of its policies are wrong (Said, 1993: 240).

We need to acknowledge all the early forms of individual and collective resistance enacted against the enforcement of schooling. The failure to attend institutionalized educational settings prompted further authority measures with the act in 1920 to make attendance compulsory. Even with legal penalties, and state imposed right to take children to the schools, many families continued to resist. As a consequence, as late as 1951, eight out of every twenty Indians in Canada over the age of five possessed no formal schooling (Barman, Hebert, and McCaskill, 1986).

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As Longfish acknowledges, "when we came to the new system to learn the wisdom of the dominant race, to our surprise we found that this wisdom involved little or limited information about or acknowledgment of Spirit" (1992: 150). Isabelle Knockwood (1992), a Mi'kmaq Elder, reinforces in her narrative how our ancestors withstood the strapping and other "spirit-stripping" measures enacted by the mission nuns. This is also illustrated by Fiske (1991). She argues that while subordination of females was at least one agenda of residential schools, for some Carrier women at least, it was subverted. She states:

In the final analysis, the missionaries' forceful interventions into Carrier society did not facilitate the anticipated social changes. Carrier women did not accept European models of patriarchal authority, nor did they accommodate themselves to the state's assimilatory policies. Women resisted efforts to undermine their social position and to restrict their personal autonomy. Women and men selectively utilized novel skills and knowledge beneficial to themselves; in so doing, they effectively subverted the missionaries' intentions by broadening their economic strategies and by developing sophisticated political responses, which to a large measure were spearheaded by schooled female leadership (145).

The recent efforts to reveal acts of resistance to dominant educational processes is supported by Freirian theorizing. According to Freire (1985), "when the dominated culture perceives the need to liberate itself, it discovers that it has to take the initiative and develop its own strategies as well as use those of the dominant culture. The dominated culture does this....to better fight against oppression" (193).

UNVEILING COLONIALISM IN CONTEMPORARY FORMS

In order to put forward the Traditional worldview, we need to continue to challenge the Western paradigms that guide today's educational systems. As Deloria Jr. (1994) points out, continued resistance needs to be mounted, as Western educational models are still playing a large role in reinforcing altered forms of consciousness. He notes:

As tribal religions emerge and begin to attract younger Indians, problems of immense magnitude arise. Many people are trapped between tribal values constituting their unconscious behavioral responses and the values that they have been taught in schools and churches, which primarily demand conforming to seemingly foreign ideals. Alcoholism and suicide mark this tragic fact of reservation life. People are not allowed to be Indians and cannot become whites. They have been educated, as the old-timers would say, to think with their heads instead of their hearts (242).

Thinking with the head (cognition) as separable from the heart (feelings) is expected and continuously reinforced in Western schooling, Deloria Jr. continues,

Education itself is a barrier to the permanent revival of tribal religions. Young people on reservations have available an increasingly complicated educational system. Perhaps like conservative Christians, older Indians see the educational system as basically godless and tending to destroy communities rather than create them. As more Indians fight their way through the education system in search of job skills, their education will increasingly concentrate on the tangible and technical aspects of contemporary society and away from the sense of wonder and mystery that has traditionally characterized religious experiences. In almost the same way that young whites have rejected religion once they have made strides in education, young Indians who have received solid educations have rejected traditional religious experiences. Education and religion apparently do not mix (1994: 247).

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CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

Paradoxically, while our youth are continuously being influenced to reject Traditional teachings, some European descendants have come to embrace them. In the modernist period, it was the lands and resources the colonizers sought; in the postmodern, the experiences, the sensation, the artistic, the spiritual have become objectified as commodities. Todd (1992) is poetic in her analysis: "We have become the source of spiritual merit badges for the politically correct, and conduits to the cosmos for the instant shamans of the New Age (72)....Nothing is authentic or autonomous...therefore everything is fair game. Couple this with a still-vague yearning for meaning and for the past and what do you get? Most often, appropriation of 'tribal' cultures through the world" (74).

Many definitions and examples of appropriation are possible. Central to the act of appropriation are: misrepresenting or partially representing an idea or artifact without recognition of the Traditional sources of knowledge or inspiration; often in combination with gaining prosperity, success, or benefit from others' ideas. Vine Deloria Jr. (1994) works to reveal the complexity of the appropriative act:

The second development that emerged following the cresting of the Indian movement was the intense interest in tribal religions by non-Indians and the seemingly wholesale adoption of some of their beliefs and practices by significant segments of white society....Whites then began making and using drums and feather fans for their own use in ceremonies they were holding. The first wave of appropriation, therefore, was simply the symbolic costumes that non-Indians believed would place them closer to nature (40).

spirituality is linked to a general Western propensity, documented by Merchant (1989), to simultaneously objectify and glorify nature.

The instrumental consciousness that manipulated nature for commercial gain found its antitheses in the romantic consciousness of personal involvement with nature. The same forests and mountains that were being exploited for lumber for the market economy were being visited, painted, and eulogized as sources of personal peace and serenity....These dualities within nature and culture were integral to the capitalist ecological revolution (250).

Once the basic spiritual ideas were begun to be shared more openly, confusion was intensified by "the elevation of whites once again to the primary exponents of Indian religion and culture" (Deloria Jr. 1994: 41). Reflecting on authors like Lynn Andrews, Deloria Jr. asks, "How can there be so many medicine people who have been commissioned to hold ceremonies for non-Indians while their own people suffer without religious ministrations?" (1994: 43). Since the late 1970s and continuing through present time, the literature on Native Americans included "not only books on Indian religion written by non-Indians but also anthologies and treatises on ecology allegedly using Indian principles" (1994: 42). This is usually done without acknowledging the appropriative act involved. Appropriation contributes to sustaining the status quo, reifying the White expert voice as truth, while suppressing the Native's own truth. Following Said, Todd (1992) argues that the term "Native" is a discourse. It is "inscribed with meaning from without". From "the Noble Savage to the radical warrior to the quiet maiden to the wanton half-breed" (77), it has become a knowledge that blocks our own "certain subjectivities and ways of experiencing the world" (77). The construction of "Indianness" as a discourse is visible in the publishing industry; those who control whose voice gets heard. Lenore Keeshig-Tobias says publishers have returned manuscripts submitted by

Natives writers with "too Indian" or "not Indian enough" scrawled across them (in Godard, 1992). I Am Woman, by Lee Maracle (1988), is a self-published book, a choice made to overcome the coercive powers of the dominant literary institution which would make her "speak it right"/"speak white". They would do this either by refusing to publish her text or by shaping it through the editorial process to fit the conventions of Native life-writing, as happened to Maria Campbell's Halfbreed (Lutz, 1991). "She will not keep silent about the oppression she has suffered. Nor, however, will she collude in the norms of the dominant discourse which values struggle negatively and privileges narratives which work toward unity and harmony in resolution" (Godard, 1992: 213).

McMaster and Martin (1992) discuss this perception:

The stories which we would have liked to tell were largely appropriated and retold by non-Aboriginal 'experts' in such fields as anthropology, art and history and especially in the political realm. Not surprisingly, the appropriated stories distort the realities of our histories, cultures and traditions. Underlying this paternalistic and damaging practice is the supposition that these 'experts' have the right to retell these stories because of their superior status within the cultural and political constructs of our society (1992: 17).

This "superior status" is now being challenged by many voices. McMaster and Martin aptly question: "I want to say my own things to the world, and so, of course, given history, part of 'my own things' is that you don't let me say anything. The question now is, will Euro-Americans want to hear the Aboriginal stories and come to accept them?" (1992: 17).

AUTHENTICITY: WHO IS THE REAL INDIAN?

The chronic history of appropriation of voice through the colonial process, as well as government appropriation of our right to define our own identities through the Indian Act, provides the context for the issue of

authenticity. The search is on for the "real" Indian, someone who is authentic enough to be **the** authoritative voice on what an "Indian" is. **Young Man (1992)** explores authenticity:

Are North American Indians "real"? Can a non-Indian do Native American art?...Does the loss of language necessarily imply cultural loss and if so why does this raise questions of whether or not an artist is still culturally a Native American? Who finally decides when an Indian is something other than an Indian? And when this "someone" decides, why must it always be a "specialist"-someone who is mysteriously given authority by society at large--who decides rather than an Indian? (82).

The Western definitions of community, as antithetical to a highly-prized individualism, has been used socially and legally to weaken our tribal bonds. It is a truism, in the modern construction of the Aboriginal worldview, that we have not been left to develop our tribal systems in a peaceful manner. We have been systematically stripped of our lands, and separated from the epistemologies that ground our Traditional identity formation. The enforced assimilation, detribalization, and retribalization of Aboriginal peoples through the process of colonization, is known by many Elders, educators, visionaries, and activists as the root cause of our current well documented social breakdown. **Deloria Jr. (1994)** captures the impacts of industrial capitalism on Traditional solidarity.

Today many of the Indian tribes are undergoing profound changes with respect to their traditional solidarity. Employment opportunities away from the reservation have caused nearly half of the members of Indian communities to remove themselves from reservations for work and educational programs leading to work. Massive economic development programs on reservations have caused population shifts that have tended to break down traditional living groups and to cause severe strains in the old clan structure....While Indian tribes have been able to maintain themselves in the face of sweeping technological changes, the day may be fast approaching when they too will fall before the complexity of modern life (215).

The colonial project worked to reformulate tribal identity construction. This reality continues to plague our communities today. Deloria Jr. expresses a common understanding of the governmental restrictions which interfere with exercising our determination as a communal people today. "Tribes can no longer form and reform on sociological, religious, or cultural bases. They are restricted in membership by federal officials....Indian tribal membership today is a fiction created by the federal government, not a creation of the Indian people themselves" (1994: 243).

Many current challenges to the construction of Aboriginal community and tribal affiliation exist. Clifford's (1988) study of the social/legal construction of the Mashpee "tribe" gives insights into some ways in which Eurocentric beliefs have impacted on tribes' efforts at self-definition. As is custom in Western systems of "justice", a White judge was empowered to specify a particular legal definition. For the Mashpee Indians to be known as a "tribe", "all the key factors of race, territory, community, and leadership had to be continuously present" (Clifford, 1988: 334). The legal definition did not specifically mention "cultural" identity, although an enormous amount of testimony from both sides debated the "authenticity" of Indian culture in Mashpee. This became the undeclared but crucial point of contention. "Had the Mashpee lost their distinct way of life? Had they assimilated?" (Clifford, 1988: 337).

Complicating this quest for authenticity, was the demand for cultural continuity. If the Mashpee Indians had ever in their history not organized or represented themselves as a "tribe" under the legal definition, "it was lost for good" (Clifford, 1988: 334). This decision is culturally biased by the Western mechanistic linear view of culture. The Western discourse of culture carries with it an expectation of geographical "roots", "a stable territorialized existence" (338). Clifford challenges: "How rooted or settled should one expect 'tribal'

good" (Clifford, 1988: 334). This decision is culturally biased by the Western mechanistic linear view of culture. The Western discourse of culture carries with it an expectation of geographical "roots", "a stable territorialized existence" (338). Clifford challenges: "How rooted or settled should one expect 'tribal' Native Americans to be--aboriginally, in specific contact periods, and now in highly mobile twentieth century America?" (Clifford, 1988: 338).

The Western idea of culture is tied to assumptions about "natural" (read linear) growth and life, and does not tolerate radical breaks in historical continuity. Cultures, in the Western tradition, "die", rather than accounting for "complex historical processes of appropriation, compromise, subversion, masking, invention, and revival...It is just as problematic to say that their way of life 'survived' as to say that it 'died' and was 'reborn'" (Clifford, 1988: 339). Using a linear analysis, tribal Traditionalists and contemporary political leaders are seen as representing two ends of a progression, "one looking back, the other forward. It cannot see them as contending or alternating futures" (Clifford, 1988: 338). We do not succeed in arguing "authenticity" when faced with challenges of continuity in the face of historical "progression", as the colonial mind-set has already placed us in the past. James Clifford (1988) observes:

Indians had long filled a pathetic imaginative space for the dominant culture; they were always survivors, noble or wretched. Their cultures had been steadily eroding, at best hanging on in museum like reservations. Native American societies could not by definition be dynamic, inventive, or expansive. Indians were lovingly remembered in Edward Curtis' sepia photographs as proud, beautiful, and 'vanishing' (284).

The linear view of history results in an "either/or" logic being applied to the examination of authenticity. Clifford argues that:

The plaintiffs could not admit that Indians in Mashpee had lost, even voluntarily abandoned, crucial aspects of their tradition while

at the same time pointing to evidence over the centuries of reinvented "Indianness". They could not show tribal institutions as relational and political, coming and going in response to changing federal and state policies and the surrounding ideological climate. An identity could not die and come back to life. To recreate a culture that had been lost was, by definition of the court, inauthentic (1988: 342).

Clifford concludes, based on the legal findings against Mashpee tribal identity, that "[m]odern Indian lives--lived within and against the dominant culture and state--are not captured by categories like tribe or identity" (Clifford, 1988: 336). Legal restrictions continue to be used to define Native life. In the Mashpee case, they were not arguing a return to a "pure Wampanoag tradition" but rather were seeking "a reinterpretation of Mashpee's contested history, in order to act--with other Indian groups--powerfully in an impure present-becoming-future" (Clifford, 1988: 334). Even though the court decided that they were not a tribe, the Mashpee Indians continue to assert and live that they are. Tribal life has once again become powerful. Clifford is led to question: "But is any part of a tradition 'lost' if it can be remembered, even generations later, caught up in a present dynamism and made to symbolize a possible future?" (Clifford, 1988: 342). More essentially, the Wapanoag Supreme Sachem, Elsworth Oakley, commented after the verdict: "How can a white majority decide on whether we are a tribe? We know who we are" (Clifford, 1988: 344).

Clifford discusses Said's critical analysis of Orientalist "authority" as applicable to the discussion of Native identity. He challenges: "the paternalist privileges unhesitatingly assumed by Western writers who 'speak for' a mute Orient or reconstitute its decayed or dismembered 'truth', who lament the passing of its authenticity, and who know more than its mere natives ever can" (1988: 258). He believes that Said's methodical suspicion of the "reconstitutive

control" (Blaut, 1993: 39), and thereby may succeed in convincing most people, that its interests--social, economic and political agendas--are the interests of everyone, this has not always been the case. Everyday acts of resistance are embedded in the colonial narrative, and continue today

RESISTANCE RETHEORIZED

The articulation of the experiences of oppression and acculturation in a White-dominated system can teach us many things, including the reality that the Western beliefs, versions of history and solutions to life's challenges are not necessarily ours. Those who are unaware of the stories of resistance and cultural renaissance assume that Aboriginal people must eventually yield to acculturation (Kahn, 1991). Fox-Genovese (1991) discusses a similar theme in teaching feminism: "The students worry that if power and its attendant violence have always been monopolized by men, there may be grounds for believing that they always will be. How can women identify with a record of our collective life that is only a record of their collective suppression and frequent brutalization?" (227).

While critical theorists see humans as "an active, producing, fabricating humanity" (Benhabib, 1992: 207), "it is only in certain circumstances that humans can realize their potential for activity" (Fay, 1987: 57). It is the project of critical theory to spell out the nature of political activity and the circumstances under which resistance remains possible in the face of domination. Resistance for Aboriginal people has always been necessary for our survival, and activists voices "in the thick of the battle", have "an understandable tendency to....combative, often strident assertiveness" (Said, 1993: 274). Means, a modern day orator, inspires us to rearticulate the idea of resistance. He questions whether solutions posed by the White world can offer us answers to

our present dilemma as it is "culture which regularly confuses revolution with continuation, which confuses science and religion, which confuses revolt with resistance..." (1980: 38). Means expressed a sweeping challenge to the construction of "resistance" in Western theorizing when he stated: "We resist not to overthrow a government or to take political power, but because it is natural to resist extermination, to survive. We don't want power over white institutions; we want white institutions to disappear. That's revolution" (1980: 31).

It is a revolutionary utopian dream to envision a world for Aboriginal people free of colonial domination. We, as Aboriginal people, need to use our own cultural belief-set to inform the strategies in-use to battle against the colonial reality. Following Means, we need to critically analyze the notion of resistance as "essential" to our survival. We also need to critically interrogate the concept of "agency" as it applies to our quest for decolonization. Many Native ancestors did resist actively with agency. This is evidenced historically in our acts of Resistance and Rebellion in the Red River areas, and all across the country (Miller, 1991). In many ways our people have resisted the imposed violence by the State, including brutalization by the R.C.M.P., and victimization in the "justice" system. We have taken collective stands against the continued military intervention brought to bear against our Communities across this Nation (Oka, the Innu of Davis Inlet, the Haida at Clayquot Sound are some recent examples). We are informed by Said that "the slow and often bitterly disputed recovery of geographical territory which is at the heart of decolonization is preceded--as empire had been--by the charting of cultural territory" (Said, 1993: 209).

Politically, tribal communities have only begun to see some success from their generations of struggle--recently united as "First Nations"--in a nation-wide resistance movement (Erasmus, 1989). The shared cultural identity as

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Politically, tribal communities have only begun to see some success from their generations of struggle--recently united as "First Nations"--in a nation-wide resistance movement (Erasmus, 1989). The shared cultural identity as Aboriginal, and political identity as "First Nations" of Canada, is strategic, just as the shared identity "as women" made possible the contemporary feminist movement (Spelman, 1988: 15). Today, the political arena is still governed by numbers, and collectivity is a precondition for voice. Politically, the agenda of self-determination requires a position of unity, evident in the language of "First Nations". Said asserts that "nationalism", defined as "restoration of community, assertion of identity, emergence of new cultural practices" (1993: 218) has been mobilized as a political force in the struggle against Western domination everywhere in the non-European world. "Natives banded together in independence and nationalistic groupings that were based on a sense of identity which was ethnic, religious, or communal, and was opposed to further Western encroachment" (Said, 1993: 218).

Said theorizes that all colonies "respond to the humiliations of colonialism" by "teaching nationalism". This is an expression of the need to find an "ideological basis for a wider unity than any known before" (1993: 210). He believes the basis of unity is often found in "the rediscovery and repatriation of what had been suppressed in the natives' past by the processes of imperialism" (1993: 210). This process is inherently contradictory, as to a certain degree we must work to recover forms already influenced and infiltrated by the culture of colonizer. "Just as the Europeans saw Africa polemically as a blank space when they took it...decolonizing Africans found it necessary to reimagine an Africa stripped of its imperial past" (Said, 1993: 210).

justification and legitimacy". Finally, the "rebellious 'natives'" need to "impress upon the metropolitan culture the independence and integrity of their own culture, free from colonial encroachment" (Said, 1993: 200). Relying on Fanon's argument, we are cautioned by Said: "[T]he empire never gives anything out of goodwill. It cannot **give** Indians their freedom, but must be forced to yield it as the result of a protracted political, cultural, and sometimes military struggle that becomes more, not less adversarial as time goes on" (1993: 207). Once our voices become heard in the struggle, the ground shifts. "There are now two sides, two nations, in combat..." (Said, 1993: 207).

Some Communities continue to be engaged in "primary resistance", literally fighting against outside intrusion on their existing land base. Many have entered into a period of "secondary" or "ideological resistance". Efforts are being made to reconstitute our "shattered" communities, "to save or restore the sense and fact of community against all the pressures of the colonial system" (Basil Davidson in Said, 1993: 209).

Said asks, "How does a culture seeking to become independent of imperialism imagine its own past?" (1993: 214). We must recognize and resist our colonial identity "as a willing servant" (214) and discover our "essential, pre-colonial self" (214). ... "To become aware of one's self as belonging to a subject people is the founding insight... We must not minimize the shattering importance of that initial insight--peoples being conscious of themselves as prisoners in their own land... that sense of beleaguered imprisonment infused with a passion for community that grounds anti-imperial resistance in cultural effort" (Said, 1993: 214).

Joe David (1992), a Mohawk artist, is one such contemporary role model:

The catalyst for strong expression, logically, is direct involvement. I would not be compelled to make a strong statement,

whether it be in print, paint or spoken word, had there not been this outrage, this anger engendered by an attack on my people. Strong emotions came with the realization that in Canada, the "colonial attitude" is alive and well, that "Might is Right" is still the doctrine practiced. Freedom, equality and justice are still relative as long as you are rich, white or subservient...That is my perception: As Native people, that is our reality.....Part of the artist's role should be to jump into social issues: see a wrong and try to right it, learn a truth and try to paint it. Jump in with both feet, get dirty and feel the full spectrum of emotions. Take some responsibility. Use the tools of our trade to challenge the government's sanctioned version of the truth (141).

McMaster and Martin provide an apt summarizing statement of the Native perspective regarding the relationship between European and Aboriginal peoples: "In their ignorance of the cultural practices that had enabled Aboriginal people to flourish for centuries, the colonists introduced to the continent a legacy of conquest, conversion, cumulation and control" (1992: 12-3). These practices continue today, disguised in the language of "modernization", a process by which now "de-colonized" countries gain prosperity, by accepting the continuous and increasing diffusion of economic and technological advancements from the "formerly" colonial countries. This remains a process that now, as in the past, is supremely profitable for the latter. "In the diffusionist belief system, it is profitable for everybody, and also is right, rational, and natural, just as it had been a century earlier" (Blaut, 1993: 29).

Aboriginal people have come through the "darkest era" of colonization, and are now moving towards a more hopeful vision of the future through embracing and politicizing Traditional forms of consciousness which were denied our ancestors. The Eurocentric belief system is currently being challenged for its obliteration of the non-European role in history. The emergence of a critical body of thought, including the rewriting of history and reformulating all forms of discourse about "us", is a challenge which occurs on

the cultural terrain. I have begun to explore the complex issues of ancestral philosophy, identity, and pedagogy, and how these are influenced by the process of colonization, and our resistance to it. These are the central themes which interweave my work.

I agree with McLaren (1994): "Educators need to stare boldly and unflinchingly into the historical present and assume a narrative space where conditions may be created where students can tell their own stories, listen closely to the stories of others, and dream the dream of liberation" (217). Acknowledging and recognizing that, although our lives, our lessons and our students are seeped in colonial mentality, we still must accept responsibility to teach, and can still rely on ancestral forms to do so. My ancestors teach that "You have to realize and believe that one person can make a difference. I was brought up to believe that!" (Cardinal-Schubert, 1992: 135). I stand strong in my ability and my ancestors' belief in accepting personal responsibility for understanding power and relationships, and for sharing what I have learned through my own experience and voice. The next section of this thesis will more specifically address my attempts as an Aboriginal scholar to introduce Traditional epistemologies and pedagogies to the Eurocentric university classroom context.

SECTION TWO: THE MODEL-IN-USE

While the pedagogical tools articulated in this Section arise, for me, out of my Aboriginal ancestral traditions, several have supports in feminist, anti-racist and other critical theory bases. Through a weaving of Traditional and critical, I endeavour to illustrate the usefulness of ancestral forms for resolving modern problems. I also acknowledge the reality that to begin to assert Aboriginality as a possible discourse within academia requires links to existing theoretical standpoints. Given also that post-secondary educational institutions are immersed, intellectually and numerically in Eurocentrism, my teachers have been non-Native critical educators, feminists and anti-racists, who have pushed/taught me to theorize this Aboriginal model using Western discourse. This task I have approached cautiously, heeding the words of many before me. Ellsworth (1989) paraphrased Lorde to say, "To call on students of color to justify and explicate their claims in terms of the masters' tools--tools such as rationalism, fashioned precisely to perpetuate their exclusion--colludes with the oppressor in keeping 'the oppressed occupied with the master's concerns' " (1989: 97). These words articulate the "commonsense" resistance known to many Aboriginal, Afrocentric, anti-imperialist, gynocentric activists. During these times of "decolonization" of previously suppressed voices and of renaissance of the Ancestral Gifts of our cultures, more time and energy is needed to address our own worldviews and less should be used to summarize and to reconfirm the works of the "masters" of Eurocentric thought forms. It is in this spirit that I describe and analyze my Model-In-Use, based on Traditional paradigm--the Medicine Wheel.

Traditional understandings can be embodied in the Plains tribe's "sacred centre": the Medicine Wheel or sacred hoop. Medicine Wheels are actually

ancient rock formations used for contact with ancestral spirit forms during ceremony. However, the metaphor is also used by Traditionalists in the modern day to illustrate/invoke/re-inspire understandings of ancestral beliefs in this contemporary world of separation and abstraction. Through use of the Medicine Wheel, people are taught to acknowledge the essential immanence and interconnectedness of all things, challenging "the opposition, dualism, and isolation that characterize non-Indian thought" (Gunn Allen, 1986: 56).

The Medicine Wheel provides the epistemological foundation of the teaching Model-In-Use in the Course: Cross Cultural Issues for Social Workers (hereafter abbreviated as CCI). It was also used in designing the research project, providing the organizing frame for the description and analysis of the Model. This paradigm challenges us to shift from the linear, cause-effect models of thinking now dominant in the Western industrial world, and to embrace the circular, ever-evolving dynamic captured in a single phrase: all life is a Circle.

My understandings about the Medicine Wheel stem from early teachings by my parents, especially my father, a user and practitioner of Traditional healing himself. I have also been influenced by my work and life within several Native groups, and in different institutional contexts since leaving my ancestral roots in northern Manitoba. Each of us must take from the ancestral teachings what we are each able to know, given our path, and grow and share with others for the revitalization of Aboriginal culture to continue. As Kathy Absolon reminds us, "[w]hen we speak about the teachings of the Medicine Wheel there is always the danger of those words becoming rhetoric unless our talk is accompanied by an action that reflects the nature of the talk" (1994: 29). This description and analysis of the Model-In-Use is the story of my efforts to "walk the talk", to bring the Medicine Wheel to life in my teaching, to embody it, and to teach it, so that

students can learn to embrace the gifts of Aboriginal culture. The spirit of this effort is to reweave the web of interconnectedness, to help recreate the great medicine blanket of our spiritual ways, to help us to revitalize our connection to each other and to Mother Earth, to begin to heal and to vision our path through these terrible times.

Chapter four on the theme of consciousness begins with a specific focus on the epistemological ground of the project itself. The topic of content, and what, in my view, is necessary knowledge in pursuing a cross-cultural model of teaching and learning follows. First Voice, a central pedagogical form in the alteration of students' levels of conscious awareness, is highlighted. Chapter five will shift to the South direction and address the cultural/spiritual practices introduced as pedagogy; Talking Circle will be a focus. Community has been a central theme. In chapter six, both community relations within the classroom and building community with the diverse Communities are reflected upon. Applications of the Model to the social work relationship are also articulated. Circling finally to the North, chapter seven will focus on the Model-In-Use as a change model. Attention is paid to the role of activism as a teaching tool. I "give away" to you, educators and students, to those who are open to learn and share our gifts respectfully and honestly, in the spirit of caring and sharing--this Model-In-Use. It is a method of teaching/learning and healing that was developed through a revisioning of ancestral Aboriginal philosophy, combined with my daily lived experience as an anti-racist, feminist, experiential educator and activist.

To All My Relations.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE EAST: CONSCIOUSNESS

In Aboriginal Traditional practice healing and learning begins with efforts to make our own levels of consciousness knowable. How do I know what I know? What theories or philosophies do I espouse? What have I learned through my experience? To begin with myself is a conscious, political choice. Once we accept our "selves" as the ever present "subjective I", "like a garment that cannot be removed" (Peshkin, 1988: 17), we call into question an epistemological foundation of Western intellectual tradition: objectivity. I understand myself to be In-Relation to my research subject: myself, my students, my teaching, our journey together through cross-cultural terrain. Following Raymond, I espouse "passionate teaching": "We are deeply involved in the things that we study. We cannot pretend that we do not care. We look at our subject with passion because we are our subject" (1985: 58).

Following Weil and McGill (1989), I will speak about theory and practice related to teaching and learning from my own position, in the first person, in a specific rather than generalized context. "One of the strengths of experiential learning in practice is the meaning that we give our actions and therefore our thinking. They are not separate entities. Meaning is not 'out there'; we are part of that meaning and we can therefore convey it personally" (1989: xx).

I agree with Devault (1990) that we need to analyze more carefully the specific ways that we use personal experience as a resource. As my personal history, my collective identity, provides impetus and direction for the study, and embodied experience, mine and others, is used as a teaching/learning tool, and to develop "content" for this thesis, I am aware that I am articulating my personal and collective consciousness throughout this analysis of the Model-In-Use in CCI. To declare 'what I know to be true' is a complex undertaking, particularly

as my own consciousness is in part influenced by my Aboriginal ancestors' mimetic consciousness and our interactions with Western colonial consciousness.

I am working to uncover and acknowledge prior theoretical assumptions, grounded in my own **experience** and **worldview**. Section one explicated the foundations of both Western and Aboriginal worldviews. Section two applies these understandings to a complex modern problem--teaching respect for diversity in a moderately diverse classroom, within a dominantly White Eurocentric institution. I attempt to reflect on my classroom experience, the Model-In-Use, as I perceive it to be epistemologically and pedagogically, as well as give voice to participants--students and community members to express their understanding of the process and content of the learning/teaching interaction expressed and enacted within the Model-In-Use.

The work of Schutz (1967) on "streams of consciousness" is insightful. "If I wish to observe one of my own lived experiences", he claims, "I must perform a reflective act of intention (102)". This helps me to see that as I am not visibly present to myself, I rely on self-talk, with the language available to me, to create meanings for myself. Many times I have had the experience of being caught in a difficult encounter and living it through in confusion, only to leave and minutes/hours/days later to be ultimately clear about the oppressive nature of it. I am angry then, after the fact. Sometimes clarity is achieved through self-talk, sometimes it requires sharing the experience with others. Hearing my self saying it out loud, always helps contextualize it, so I encouraged "speaking out" about experiences and feelings, and promote this in the "Talking Circle" process in Cross Cultural Issues Class, and engaged in it in the Circles on CCI.

Following activists like Armstrong (1990b), Charnley (1990), and hooks (1990), I have adopted writing as a tool for clarity and expression of my own consciousness. An analysis of others' journal writing of their own lived experience/perceptions of the teaching/learning encounter is a rich source of data for this project. In this way, I embrace the self as the subject of a life narrative. According to Benhabib (1992), "[w]e tell of who we are, of the 'I' that we are, by means of a narrative" (214). Our 'personal' narratives are "deeply coloured and structured by the code of expectable and understandable biographies and identities in our cultures" (214). Our stories are never 'merely' personal, nor are we the "mere extensions of our histories" (214). Through the construction of our own life narratives, "we are in the position of author and character at once" (214). Schutz (1967) also reminds us that "the self-explication of (our) own lived experience takes place within the total pattern of (our) experience. This total pattern is made up of meaning-contexts developed out of (our) previous lived experience" (105).

THE PROJECT: A "GROUNDED" APPROACH

In order to understand more deeply what aspects/combinations of the pedagogical practices contribute to what kinds of transformational learning, for whom, I pursued a "grounded" approach to data collection (Acker, Barry and Esseveld, 1983). Students in Cross Cultural Issues (CCI) kept weekly journals to air feelings; to record thoughts, insights, observations and experiences; and to report on actions. I asked students to:

Specify what has impacted on you with respect to your development as a more culturally aware social worker/person: a piece of in-class info; one of the readings; a gut feeling; a memory from your past; a racist incident; a taste of power or

powerlessness. Discuss details in depth. End with, what do you now know or do differently? (Outline, Appendix 1: 3)

Journal writing or creative storytelling are good outlets for documenting and reflecting on emotions. Charnley (1990) proposed writing, and I have adopted it, as a method of assisting myself and students in releasing feelings and transforming personal pain into structural change. In this Model-In-Use, participants have been encouraged to present their experiences and learnings in class and from their lives in the form of a "story", making connections between their personal experiences and the cultural and structural realities that frame our individual/family/community lives. Students were specifically asked to use the journal to tell stories of racism they were currently encountering or that had occurred in their past. Sometimes they shared the deep-rooted feelings that had been harboured for years, along with demonstrating their structural insights, and newfound conviction to do better in the future.

Many students reflected on how journalling helped them articulate and reflect on their experiences and feelings during the course in a manner previously unavailable to them. Many found that *"there was definitely not a lack of issues to write about"* (Tia 93-j).¹ The following excerpts from journals will illustrate the usefulness of journalling as a learning tool and as a source of data about feelings and experiences regarding the course.

It's hard to pinpoint my most important learnings because I feel that everything I have written presents an idea or a feeling I would not have normally thought about. I'm just beginning to become culturally aware, therefore everything I learn is of value to me...

I wrote my journals on a weekly basis and although there were times I didn't always know how to express my ideas, I was never hard pressed to find a topic...The ease with which I found topics signifies something in itself--oppression and racism are everywhere and many people feel the impact on a daily basis.

Attending class and writing journals have provided me with the opportunity to unlearn certain things and to express my ideas and feelings. I have also developed new ways of thinking aside from my white middle class perspectives. Most of all I have gained an understanding about my white privileges and how I can use my own voice to help change society's racist attitudes and actions. (Gela Apr 93-jsum)

I feel the journal was difficult to write. I am not used to putting my feelings on paper. However, I think that what I have written is a good reflection of how I have felt over the course. I see some changes in myself and in my outlook that has caused me to reconsider some feelings and opinions. I was unsure of what to write, sometimes, but I avoided getting caught up in things like, "How long should it be?" I wrote from the heart and only put down what I truly felt. In this sense I feel that I have achieved the spirit of what I wanted-which was to reflect my inner struggle with these issues and to convey it honestly. (Mac 92-j)

Students, once they had completed the CCI course, were invited to resubmit their journals and tasks. These became a significant source of data. Along with data collection from journals², ten Talking Circles³ were held to invite students who had completed the course, and community members⁴ who had participated in the class, to contribute their voices to the description and analysis of the Model. Circles were taped and transcribed. Many people contributed to Circle Talk on CCI, several from the Aboriginal, Black and Immigrant Communities, balancing the journal contributors who were primarily White. Several categories of data were constructed and deconstructed, and what remained in the analysis were the following themes: reviews of the Model/course overall; discussion of the Talking Circle process; community building as seen by community participants, specifically lessons for social workers in building community relations; change--how to make it happen, what are the costs and blocks; and visions--where do we go from here? Many of these themes were integrated with data from journals and added to information already available⁵. The most interesting and challenging Circle Talk data

revealed and analyzed the contradictory and often paradoxical aspects inherent in using this Model, in the Eurocentric University context, with a culturally diverse group of individuals. Contradictions do not exist separate from the experience--they are embedded in and contextualized by it. For clarity and integrity in conveying a rich and flowing description of the Model, I have left the critical analysis to the end, in a separate chapter.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW: THE CONTENT

Certain theoretical and process conceptualizations are necessary to provide clarity and common language from which to proceed, as a shared vocabulary is essential to developing anti-racist literacy (hooks, 1988). Teaching shared concepts provides a language for discussion, and can aid students in adjusting to being "culturally located", to help them recognize that the privileges/oppressions received are based on racial/cultural group membership, not necessarily on individual merit or choice (McIntosh, 1990). **OPPRESSION, RACISM, WHITE PRIVILEGE, and CULTURE**, the ongoing critical themes of the CCI course, are all theoretically produced in current discourse by feminists and other critical educators.

OPPRESSION

Beginning with Frye's (1983) early metaphorical work on the "cage" of oppression, theorized and enacted through either psychodrama or Talking Circle, students learn that oppression is many layered and societally constructed while it specifically impacts on us as individuals.

The experience of oppressed people is that the living of one's life is confined and shaped by forces and barriers which are not accidental or occasional and hence unavoidable, but are

systematically related to each other in such a way as to catch one between and among them and restrict or penalize motion in any direction. It is the experience of being caged in: all avenues, in every direction, are blocked and booby trapped (Frye, 1983: 4).

As Frye (1983) makes very clear, it is not a singular experience of discomfort that can be classified as "oppression", but rather it is a continuous, ongoing set of relations that have to do specifically with your membership in a particular group. "When you question why you are being blocked, why this barrier is in your path, the answer has not to do with individual talent or merit, handicap or failure; it has to do with your membership in some category understood as a 'natural' or 'physical' category" (1983: 8). To name oneself or to be named as oppressed, the person identifies or is identified as belonging to a group--racial, gender, cultural, etc. This immediately serves to collectivize an individual's consciousness, heightening awareness of our structural location. Participants from the Black and Native Communities are able to give an "insider's" viewpoint, illustrating how oppression is lived with and resisted on a daily basis. Unicorn, a Black participant, shares her insights in her journal.

How am I the oppressed? I am oppressed based on my race (Black) and as a woman. I am oppressed - When: The floorwalkers in department stores immediately begin watching me and following me around,

-I am overlooked for promotion, credit because of my race and gender.

-I am expected to automatically assimilate into the white culture.

-It is assumed that I provide personal or sexual service work based on my skin color and gender.

-It is assumed that I am angry and violent.

-I am not portrayed in a positive light by the media not included in important positive community news reports.

-My culture is not acknowledged or respected in the education, political, social, health and legal systems.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Need I say more? (Unicorn Oct 6 93-j)

As many other feminist and critical educators have articulated, knowing one's Self-In-Relation, one's membership in and outside of certain socially defined groups, is fundamentally a group process. Groups are central in the process of "discovering" oppression as imposed upon individuals by society, and which is experienced in common with others. In teaching about oppression, I follow Brandt (1986), who promotes collaborative, group-centered learning in anti-racist pedagogy. Members of the group can learn from each other. Not only the subject matter itself is processed in group, but the 'real life' knowledge of diverse group members is shared as knowledge. According to Redwine (1989), the small group experience can motivate participants to take responsibility for their own learning, while at the same time provides a sense of community: "a social support group with which to feel a shared obligation and help in time of need" (1989: 88). Sharing experiences can be an important way to learn to value ourselves, build empathy with others, and to reclaim the histories of oppressed groups.

The value of group-centered learning is evident in journals written by students from dramatically different cultural locations. For some, the insight comes from a re-articulation of their own stories of oppression. A Native participant, Randi, expresses her new insights.

Class tonight was a very powerful experience, as we talked about oppression it became obvious to me that not everyone understands oppression, but if you've lived with it all of your life, it's right in front of you all the time.

The oppression that I feel as an oppressed Native lesbian woman often astounds me, I feel so isolated from family and friends, there are few supports for a Native student who feel alone. As a Lesbian not out at work, I find work isolating and depressing.

As we discussed the bird cage analogy it became obvious that sometimes it is easier to look at the bars than to come forward and realize that the Space between the bars is clear but the bars still exist (Randi Jan 13 93-j).

Randi later summarized her learnings about oppression.

I learned that oppression occurs across all cultural lines, and that each form of oppression is devastating to a particular group (Randi Apr 93-jsum).

Consciousness of oppression requires recognition of the everyday lived experience, the personal pain and suffering that accompanies oppression, as well as the dialectic which includes resistance and healing. Phil did a thorough analysis of all the forms of oppression she had experienced. She concluded with the strength that she had gained from her life experiences.

These are the ways I have been most oppressed. I didn't plan to get into so much detail, but it poured out. I never really thought about how I had internalized the oppression before. I can see all of the layers that were so thick and hard to break through. But I can also see how it has made me strong, and given me insight and empathy. It made me willing to challenge things that I think are wrong.

Oppression is very complex, everybody has experienced it both as a giver and as a receiver. But some people experience more of it than others. I don't think that it is possible to do away with oppression completely, but it is very important to be aware of it and how you are affecting other people and also how they are affecting you. If you do not realize that you are being oppressed it becomes internalized. This is even more painful to deal with because you become isolated. When you come to terms with oppression, it can give you strength and courage (Phil Apr 93-t1) .

Depending on the choices we make, our behaviours and attitudes can serve to maintain or reduce oppressive forms. This is true in our personal lives as well as our professional lives. In the dialectic of oppression, two roles are required: the oppressed (who receive the bulk of critical social work focus) and the oppressor (who is seen to be someone or somewhere else). In teaching students to develop their understanding of Self-In-Relation to oppression, I

emphasize personal responsibility to interrogate our own social/cultural position as we embody it on a day-to-day basis. Task One (see Outline in Appendix 1) challenges students to describe the ways in which they have been oppressed, to interrogate the social causes for personal traumas as a means to begin the healing process. Simultaneously it requires an unveiling of opportunities for being oppressive. For some, this is an entirely new concept requiring reframing to include the subtle as well as overt acts of oppression. Specific attention to the detail of our daily lives and how we are playing out these roles in large and small ways assists students in reviewing their own location and targets for change. Uncovering one's role as oppressor is something that takes time and patience, as layers of denial are reinforced by existing White privilege.

When reading the question, "How am I the oppressor?" I couldn't pinpoint a time when I had ever oppressed anyone. However, a closer examination provided me with lots of examples...First, I feel that I am the oppressor because I rarely take action to stop someone from being oppressed. I certainly know it's wrong but I don't usually speak up unless I am with people I know well. Because of my actions, I help to perpetuate unfair treatment of certain people because I'm too weakwilled as an individual. I can participate in someone else's cause or action just as long as I don't have to initiate the action myself. I sometimes see myself as the oppressor because I would much rather follow than lead. In my experience I have learned that to only follow sometimes means that you end up saying or doing something you really don't believe in. I'm slowly learning that beliefs of cultural equality are only of value if acted upon (Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

While it is often noted as essential for oppressed persons to embrace the structural realities which "cage" them, to evolve from self-blame to empowerment, little attention is paid to the recognition of internalized oppressiveness, and how to recognize the structures of oppression that keep one attached to the oppressor role in subtle and overt ways. Recognizing this lack in the daily consciousness of most students, as well as in mainstream

literature, this topic has necessarily become the subject of a lecturette, which had always generated much response from previously "unaware" students. Two illustrations will be given. Van records her perceptions of that particular class.

The discussion was very brief but really hit home. You were talking about subtle forms of racism and mentioned something that I did all my life. That is, thinking that everyone was just like me. I knew that this was a naive way to think, but I did not realize it was negating other's existence and/or experiences. Every time I did this I was erasing someone's reality, allowing their oppression to be invisible. This blew me away...This course is going to blow me away!!! (Van Sept 22 93-j).

Analee, also a White female, self-interrogated her own acts of privilege as a result of that same class. This reinforces the use of specific examples in the daily lived experiences of participants, as an impact-full teaching tool.

When you began to speak of "subtle" avoidances that people sometimes make I felt myself growing a little uneasy. You spoke of sticking with things you know and are familiar with, for fear of getting involved in something that is unfamiliar. When we use this type of avoidance we free ourselves of the possibility of FEELING or being emotionally responsive or involved with a particular person/situation or event.

As you explained this concept to the class I felt myself wander a little as I recalled a few instances in which I feel I was avoiding certain things - especially conversations. At the time, I didn't really think about it, but since you have explained what "avoidance" really involves, I am now able to identify instances in which I have done this very thing.

I tried to rationalize my actions by thinking that I would rather not participate in some conversations or discussions because I simply did not know enough about the topic at hand to add anything worthwhile. Looking back, it may very well have been that, but, I think, no matter how subtle, that it was also a hint of avoidance on my part....it was my keeping a safe distance from things that were unfamiliar to me....it was my way of not having to FEEL in those particular instances.

It is helpful for me to be able to see and understand the many facets of oppression - and reality that no matter how subtle or bold, they are still very hurtful.

This was a lesson learned for me....(Analee Sept 22 93-j).

When participants from the Communities are able to express their knowledge about oppression as a daily lived, personal and emotional experience, this promotes a deepening level of awareness among privileged students of their role as "oppressor".

This circle had quite an impact on me tonight. I have had a lot of experience as an oppressed person - incest, emotional abuse, being a woman. But for the very first time tonight, as the black, Acadian, and aboriginal members of our groups spoke, I felt like an oppressor! I felt guilty, but couldn't even name what I had done - it was sort of a collective guilt, (without knowledge, intention, or desire). I didn't like it and feel a need to change whatever I can about my personal attitudes and behaviours so that I am less oppressive. I hope as we progress, I can define some things to work on (Char Jan 14 93-j).

Tonight in class we discussed our personal experiences of oppression. Throughout my two years at this school, I have really come to realize that I represent the oppressor as a result of my gender, class, sexual orientation and race. So when we students are provided with the opportunity to discuss our personal experiences of oppression, I usually resort to shutting down, and do not discuss openly my experiences as oppressor. Tonight just for a moment, I felt like opening up to the class about how I perceive oppression. But then I started to realize that I do not even know how to explain my feelings, because I constantly feel guilty and angry. So instead of opening up, I just acknowledged to the class that I cannot begin to fully understand or explain what oppression is like, because I am the oppressor (Ken Jan 13 93-j).

Through the articulation of concepts, expression of experience, and group processes, students are taught, metaphorically and practically, that they have a role to play in oppression, and that structural oppression is the norm. Char expressed her awakening in a poem describing her new Self-In-Relation to the oppressor role and the feelings that this generated.

Oppressor

***As Painful
As it is
To Learn
How I am oppressed
It is even
More painful
To learn
How I am the oppressor.***

***I am
Beginning to understand
That to be white
Is a privilege
I had never even considered.***

***But now that
I have begun to consider it,
I can no longer deny it.***

***I am beginning
To see it everywhere,
And especially
In me:***

***-being surprised that the "Speak It" director is black;
-not being surprised that hotel chambermaids are black;
-expecting pictures of Jesus to be white;
-not noticing the absence of black and other racial representation
in schoolbooks;
-assuming employees in stores, banks, schools...will be white;
-discomfort being alone with a black cab driver;***

***I do not
Like me
In this role (Char March 25 93-t1).***

RACISM

Racism is one form of oppression which affects the lives of "visibly racial" members of Communities on a daily/hourly basis. Brandt (1986) describes racism as "multi-faceted and dynamic" (133). It includes not only acts of "prejudice, 'race hatred', bias, and ethnocentricity" (1986: 133), but must be critically analyzed in terms of power and the legacy of imperialism and

colonialism. Racism exerts a powerful influence over people's lives that "ranges from the ideological to the material and from the institutional to the interactional. The elements of this racism could be either covert or overt, hidden or blatant, and can operate in very specific ways in specific institutions" (Brandt, 1986: 133).

In this Model, participants were challenged to see the specific ways in which racism has been and is operating around them on an every-day basis. Essed (1991) outlined explicitly the multiple possibilities in which racist practices can unfold, targeting both the micro and macro dimensions. Most literature primarily reflects the Black experience of racism, but Laroque and others challenge this construction. "Everyday, Natives encounter some form of personal prejudice or institutional violence. This comes not only from the proverbial "redneck" but from high and influential places in society--from judges, journalists, doctors, businesses, teachers and politicians" (1991: 73). The daily encounter was a common journal and Circle theme.

A Black participant, Nadine, journalled her reality.

The occasion to be in a racial confrontation can occur daily. Unless you are a racially visible person, you would not understand the impact of such situations. In fact many White people say that you are being too sensitive or you're overreacting when you express your concerns (Nadine Feb 3 93-j).

Recognizing the everyday nature of racism may help retain focus on the topic and restrain the common reaction: 'does she always have to bring up racism...'

When I hear people say that they are tired of hearing about racism for example, I always remember that people who are Black, Aboriginal, Indian, etc. have no choice in saying that they don't want to talk about racism. They live racism every day, hour, minute

of their lives. In remembering this it puts my reality and the reality of others in perspective (Tia 93-j).

As Maracle states: "Racism is for us, not an ideology in the abstract, but a very real and practical part of our lives. The pain, the effect, the shame are all real" (1988: 2). hooks (1990) refers to this as "racist trauma". Many voices in Brandt and Bhaggiyadatta's (1986) collection on racism speak to the pain, the pattern of which is known to many.

It comes up and overwhelms you. You can't even think for a moment...you are just consumed. It's a kind of blinding rage and humiliation that's really wearing on a person. I try not to think about it and then, a couple of days down the road, it will just flash back into my memory. For that moment, I would go through the whole pain over again (158).

One Native student, Phil, used her journal to give a vivid example of how racism happens in daily life and what to do when it does.

This afternoon I was crossing the street with my daughter, A and a friend's daughter, R. R sang "Apple, Pear, Peach and Plum; I smell a stinky old Indian bum." I was so angry that I felt as if I was breathing fire. I stopped on the corner and got down on one knee so that I could look directly into her eyes. I told her never to say racist things like that ever again. I told her it hurts people. I asked if she knew what it meant, and where she learned it. By the time I had finished she was in tears. I felt that I had gone too far, I gave her a hug and told her that I know that she wouldn't deliberately hurt people, that she was a kind girl, but that she has to think about what she says or sings before she opens her mouth because even if she didn't mean to be hurtful she was. I walked them to school and we talked about racism and the things that other children say at school. A told her that if she hears someone saying things that are hurtful to another person, she should always tell them to stop, and help the other person.

I was very concerned because of the intensity of my reaction to her. I didn't want to traumatize her, but at the same time I wanted her to realize how strongly I feel about it. I think that it will be an experience that she will never forget. I hope that she learns from it (Phil Jan 15 93-j).

Participants from the Communities often tell stories of racism and how it negatively impacts on children and adults, challenging the listener's commonsense understanding of today's "tolerant" society. One story told by a Native participant, Redbird, will illustrate.

And I walked up to my doctor's office just last week and I was called an f....ing savage by a total stranger on a street! And it was so early in the morning that it was only him and I on the street and I thought - is he speaking to me? And I looked around, there was no one else there, and he turned back "yes I'm speaking to you." And then about four days later I was on my way to my daughter's to help her out and I got called the exact same name by another man just walking down the street with such a vicious, cruel look on his face! And I thought, you know, do I stand out in a crowd or something? What is it about me or something? (Redbird CC1:18).

The ending line--"What is it about me or something?"--is a commonly expressed reaction to racism, and signifies a form of complex denial of the structural aspects internalized in us all. Being systematically trained to internalize racism, and reinforce the internalization in others, victims become labeled and label themselves as the "problem". If we have recognized the pattern, assessed the situation as oppressive, and are safe enough to attempt to confront the perpetrators, we receive the label "over-reacting" or "hostile", "trouble-maker". "Am I overreacting or too hostile?"--we learn to ask. We engage in self-interrogation and leave oppressive systems intact. Through complex forms of internalization, we become our own critics and can attach these labels/expectations to ourselves reproducing "anomie" from our group. This contributes to our own oppression. Vada expressed her own internal dialogue about the link between slurs, personal pain, and reaction to others in her journal.

In our class yesterday you spoke about that people often do not think they are racist at times you feel they are racist towards you. I have been struggling with this issue for some time. Because I am a white immigrant and coming from a wealthy European country, people seem to believe that I do not experience discrimination and do not see me as an immigrant. When they, through racist jokes or statements about immigrants show their dislike for immigrants and our move to Canada, they do not realize they make me feel uncomfortable and targeted. I have often wondered if I am only overreacting to these statements, and should not think of myself as an immigrant. But, when I try to convince myself of this, something in myself tells me, "Yes, I am an immigrant and what people say about immigrants they also say about me". I also feel that I should be allowed to feel that I am discriminated against when the situation makes me feel uncomfortable, silenced and different. These situations make me feel like an outsider and not interested in becoming a Canadian. The class discussion made me feel that maybe I do not overreact when I feel discriminated against. I should probably go with my gut feeling (Vada Feb 28 93-j).

Recognizing this pattern and refusing to wear the labels is one form of resistance. As victims, we need to be able to go with our "gut feeling" and react strongly when we feel discriminated against. As students come to recognize themselves as part of a larger structural dynamic, they begin to recognize more specifically how our daily lives are directly affected by state apparatuses which serve to divide us into categories based on physical and other traits, and then mold us to fit the assigned, and then internalized, labels. Students can often relate to racial language, slurs and stereotypes, as forms of power. Unicorn gives a vivid illustration of the power of language in shaping the representations of our people, and our own identities.

As a Black Nova Scotian, I have been described and defined by others as 'colored, minority, visible minority, target group, you people' etc. This made me feel like a problem....By categorizing oppressed peoples in the above way, it presents an issue having to do with being in a minority group or problem concerning numbers instead of the real problem stemming from privilege, power and oppression. (Unicorn Dec 2 93-j)

Many expressed how slurs and stereotypes have been used against them, what feelings are associated with these negative qualifiers, and more essentially how even our names become contested terrain. Vada has this story to tell.

People have also told me that I should change my name to a name that is easier to say. While it makes me mad to hear this, I feel that my name is the one thing that I have that tells me and others who I am (Vada Feb 93-t1).

In many and diverse ways, the state challenges our identities through the construction of categories, labels and codes in the name of the "efficiency", so prized by mechanistic mentality. This is clearly recognized by Mac in his analysis of "bureaucratization of culture".

The most humiliating thing I felt this far is how the Federal Government gets to decide who is Native and who isn't. It just seems crazy when you think that there have been cultures here for thousand of years and now one must virtually apply to some faceless bureaucrat to be legitimized in being recognized for one's own identity. The bureaucratization of culture. If you don't fill in the forms correctly then it can't get processed and then nothing is real. Categorization for manipulation (Mac 92-j).

In Joane Cardinal-Schubert's (1992) art installation, part of the Indigena exhibit, racism is visually discussed through an examination of labels and stereotypes that she experienced growing up in a non-Native society. She metaphorically offers a choice to viewers as to how they wish to look at Native people:

Do they wish to look at their skin color and thereby color what knowledge they possess of Native people? Do they wish to look at a different view of history? Do they wish to look at a more personal examination of the individual and the contribution of that

person on an individual level? Do they wish to look at the ancestors to prove their theories about Native people are misinformed? Do they believe a fenced-off area is all native people want out of life? Do they believe Native people are misinformed about the details of history that are not included in the history taught in the schools of this country? (133).

She further states that "it is difficult to see all the facts in just one look. It is uncomfortable to peek through the little holes of this site. You miss some of the picture. What's more, it is an uncomfortable and unsettling experience. Good! Now you know how I have felt for most of my life" (133). Loretta Todd (1992) confirms this as a common theme: "I remember being spied upon, vulnerable and invaded. It reminded me of how public our lives have been-investigated, studied, always subject to inspection" (78). Nadine, a Black female, told this story in her journal.

In anticipation of my new job next week, my partner asked me an interesting question. He said '(Name), do you think you got the job because of your race or because of your ability?' I hesitated then answered that I felt it was a bit of both. Definitely my ability had a lot to do with it. I wouldn't apply for a job I couldn't do. Yet the Department gains by having their 'token' Black in management. This fills their affirmative action policies and takes the onus off them to hire racially visible people in the near future. This puts a lot of pressure on me. I am often plagued with the thoughts that I don't want to become 'one' of them. I have known many Black people who achieved professional status only to sell out to their Black community. I have promised myself that I will not allow that to happen. White people don't have these types of worries when they secure employment. They don't have to worry that all eyes are on them and they are not in a position of feeling that they are choosing between their job and their community (Nadine Jan 13 93-j).

While it is clear that some participants may have deep insights into racism and its effects, many students from the mainstream express little or no insight into their own or others' experiences with racial dynamics. This lack of

insight becomes an early target, as recognition of racism is a necessary precondition to anti-racist activism. Van captured this well:

Racism can be obvious when one learns how to see. It can be so simple yet so hidden because we do not know what to look for, or what questions to ask. This takes a conscious effort that requires active thinking and consistent question asking (Van Oct 93-t1).

For many White students the most fundamental learning in CCI is the uncovering of racial overtones and undertones all around them. As one White participant, Dana summarized:

Now that I have developed an awareness, I see it everywhere....I am now looking for racism and racist remarks in everything that I see, hear, and read. This was an excellent learning experience: A cross-cultural learning experience and awakening!! (Dana Dec 10 92-jsum).

When first beginning to recognize and interrogate racism, the process may feel all-consuming. As Gela recorded in her journal:

I wonder if I am becoming too critical of the environment around me....Am I becoming too extreme in my identification and analysis of racism? I remember when I first began to learn about feminism and the oppression of women. I did not know how to respond to a man who opened or held a door for me. Sometimes I perceived such an action as a simple kind and respectful gesture, whereas other times I wondered if the man thought I was too frail to open the door myself. I guess it's natural for me to be extra sensitive about racism, especially since I am just becoming aware of the many ways racism is expressed by society (Gela Feb 22 93-j).

Char provided a continuing dialogue about her racial awakening, traceable through her journal excerpts over the period of the course. At first she recorded:

I am really confused about racism. I'm not at all sure what it is, what it isn't; I'm not aware of being racist, but I'm sure I must be. I think I could easily identify blatant racism - aggressive, violent acts. But I certainly can't yet "see" the subtleties and innuendoes that seem so obvious to others (Char Jan 28 93-j).

She compared her current situation to earlier work uncovering sexual abuse.

I feel like I'm in the same place I was in 2 years ago regarding my own emotional and psychological abuse....I just couldn't see it. But gradually I grew to understand that, so hopefully I will gradually become more aware of racism, both around me and in myself (Char Jan 28 93-j).

She concluded this entry with a question which illustrated an emerging understanding of the mundane reality of everyday racism.

I am wondering if racism means that your actions are based on a person's skin color/race? For example, when the little black girl comes selling blueberries. If I buy them because she's black, or if I don't buy them because she's black - am I being racist? My decision to buy/not buy should be based on my desire for blueberries - not her skin color?" (Char Jan 28 93-j).

People often begin with a race awareness that is limited to different treatment based on "skin color". By attending a Community sponsored event, Char was challenged to begin to unveil her own racial constructions. This recognition expanded her own conscious understanding of the more subtle forms of racism embedded in us all.

But it was when they were introducing the director after the show, that I came face-to-face with my own internalized racism: I found myself surprised - expecting her to be white!! I can't imagine why I would think a film about black people and racism would be white - it didn't make sense when I thought about it. But

I guess we don't think often enough - it is part of our socialization. This really stunned me - I found it amazing.

This seems to me like a milestone - in my awareness of my own racism. It's like a light came on - I think I am beginning to understand what racism means (Char Feb 7 93-j).

The student later generalized her new-found insights, uncovering the link to White privilege In-Relation to her own family members.

An interesting insight happened on the way to visit. I had stopped at a bookstore to buy a present for (bi-racial niece). In looking at little books suitable for an 18-month-old - I didn't notice how white middle class they all were until I picked up one that wasn't. It included pictures of children of all races, classes and abilities. All of a sudden it was very clear to me how racist the other books were, and how racist I am to not even notice - this is "white privilege" I think (Char Feb 21 93-j).

She began and continued a pattern of interrogating the everyday encounter for subtle and overt racism and recognized it as enmeshed with gender.

An interesting thing happened today. I met a black man coming toward me on the sidewalk. There was so much snow that there was only a very narrow path - wide enough for 1 person. One of us had to move over, and he was the one who did.

As I went by, I said "Thank you" - but my head was filled with questions.

Did I expect him to move because I was white? or a woman?

Did he expect to have to move because he was black? a man?

In my new assertiveness as a woman, did I decide I wasn't going to move even though the passive-me would have?

Was it just a simple, courteous gesture on his part, with no deep underlying dynamics of racism or sexism at all?

I feel confused (Char Feb 22 93-j).

Confusion is to be expected. Recognizing racism is not as obvious for some as for others, but it is necessary in order to challenge it.

I feel at the end of this course that I have at least made a beginning of my consciousness and understanding of racism. I recognize I have a lot to learn, and a lot of inner work to do on my own racism.

I find I "see" incidents of racism much more readily. I am amazed I couldn't see them before. I feel that this new awareness will continue to expand, and gradually I will be able to take more risks to combat racism (Char Apr 6 93-jsum).

For those not exposed to the daily lived experience of oppression, developing an anti-racist consciousness requires critical self-reflection. Mac reflected this in his "inner dialogue", made visible through journaling. He began:

I think that I am going to have to shed some cherished notions. At least the ones that centre on my acceptance of other races and cultures. Funny, I've travelled around the world, worked with many people, have relatives from other cultures, and still I feel tested by this class. I thought that I had this one licked. (Mac 92-j).

Examining "cherished notions" about one's acceptance of others is a difficult task for those who have built identities around being accepting and caring people. It requires personal risk. Mac recognized and discussed this reality.

How can you if your heart isn't there. If your sense of security is left intact. When there is no risk, there isn't anything at stake. I've never been taken to task about the times that I froze up when a group of young black guys turns onto the same side of the street as I am walking on at night. About those after thoughts.

There is no line in the sand that, once crossed, means that you are culturally sensitive. You can not be sure of how you'll act when you only deal with issues on an intellectual level. What about when it hits you in the face. What about when you have to take a stand. What is the point of proclaiming oneself racist but well intentioned. Is that enough? Can I now rest upon my laurels? Am I free to criticize others? Do I have the right? Can one be aware and not act? How do I know which feelings are real? Can I trust the class to give me a break? The last thing that I want is to

come off superficially but I don't trust strangers with my inner most feelings. I am worried but I think I may be at the bottom of the issue.....The question is, "Do I live up to it?". Do I act racist in spite of myself.

That is the real issue. If we have defined racism as my existence in a white dominated society, then admitting my racism at this point in my awareness is not very meaningful. Some would say that it borders on a truism. And if this is the case, what is the most I can ask of myself? It is time to stop asking questions and start looking at actions (Mac 92-j).

WHITE PRIVILEGE

Like oppression, racism affects all of us, whether it is because we are victimized by institutions and persons who have been acculturated to believe in White supremacy, or because we are reaping the benefits of a racistly organized state. Because, through colonialism, White Europeans have come to dominate the Western world, culturally, spatially and politically, some citizens in North America are raised with material privilege and White cultural privilege. This translates into the construct known as WHITE PRIVILEGE. McIntosh (1990) usefully described this construct as a set of oppositional statements, by which White experience is paralleled with "non-White" on the basis of everyday lived experiences.

In tonight's class we discussed white privilege, and specifically Peggy MacIntosh's article "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack". After reading MacIntosh's article, I went over the 26 points, and checked off 21 points that reflect my life. This was a really scary realization for me, because it just shows how much I execute my white privilege on a daily basis without even knowing that I am doing it.

Also another learning experience I gained from this particular exercise, was realizing how each time I am executing my white privilege I am in turn oppressing those who do not have such privileges. This exercise was very educational for me, because it pinpoints exactly where I am being oppressive, and I feel that the first step in fighting oppression, is admitting that I do indeed oppress (Ken Jan 26 93-j).

White privilege is very much interlocked with racism. As the Model has evolved I have become more and more committed to studying these constructs together. Many Whites, even critical feminists, have never interrogated race as an issue, so have never had to see their privilege as related to someone else's pain. Bannerji (1991) articulated an understanding of the dialectic of racism and White privilege:

And sitting there, hearing claims about sharing "experience", having empathy, a nausea rose in me. Why do they, I thought, only talk about racism, as understanding us, doing good to "us"? Why don't they move from the experience of sharing our pain, to narrating the experience of afflicting it upon us? Why do they not question their own cultures, childhoods, upbringings, and ask how they could live so "naturally" in this "white" environment, never noticing the fact until we brought it home to them? (10).

Some students unveil their privilege through reversal, or mirror work. When they hear stories about racism, they recognize their own reality as different. White privilege becomes constructed, understood and described by what oppression they do not receive. In particular, Analee noted the absence of the recurring daily pain reflected on consistently by Community members.

As (guest) spoke of his experiences as a Black man, he really said something that has had a big impact on me. He talked about waking up every day and thinking to himself about what type of experiences he will have that day as a result of the color of his skin...as a black man, what type of discrimination he will encounter today.

This really made me stop and think...When I wake up in the morning I never think about what type of racist experiences I will encounter today as a result of the color of my skin. This has helped me to see yet another one of the many privileges I have as a white person. Until Mark spoke of this, I never thought about it...I am seeing how easy it is not to have to think about things like this when they do not directly affect you....I guess this is something that is a big part of the lives of many people (Analee Oct 27 93-j).

Gela more generally articulated her privilege as an oppression-free reality:

I cannot readily think of a time when I have ever felt oppressed. Although I am aware of the systematic oppression of women, I have been fortunate not to have experienced the blatant effects of differential treatment on a personal level. I have been fortunate to have been raised in a family that instilled in me the idea that I can do whatever I want if I set my mind to it. So far this has pretty much been my experience. I realize that my life experience has been somewhat sheltered and limited up to this point in time, and that in the future I could experience various forms of oppression in my personal relationships or my work environment etc. However, I never anticipate to experience the kind and degree of oppression that members of minority groups experience on a daily basis, especially women of minority groups. The color of my skin and my middle class status has pretty well ensured my acceptance by larger society (Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

White privilege is hidden through the complex, multi-faceted denial process which produces individuals who do not recognize their own racial or cultural makeup as White European. Analee's story reinforces the "essential" invisibility of White privilege in the commonsense "lifeworld" of privileged Europeans. She traced her own evolution to a heightened consciousness about her privilege.

White privilege is something that I never thought about growing up. I lived in a small town that was predominately white and I went to schools where the majority of students and all of the teachers were white. In my home there was never any mention of racism or prejudices but my parents always taught us to treat others as we would like to be treated....

These values were instilled in me as a young child and I have carried them with me to this very day. Something my parents did not teach me about was white privilege. As I have said, it is something that I honestly have not thought about until these last couple of years. I never really gave a second thought to....

Taking many of these things for granted was certainly the case for me. Most of these things seemed so common to me that I

never took the time to stop and see what was really going on. I am very glad that I am learning about white privilege but you know, sometimes I feel so ignorant for not being able to see things that now are so obvious to me (Analee Nov 17 93-j).

Analee had earlier journalled about the aspects of the class on White privilege that most impacted on her:

The display that was set up for this presentation was also an eye opener for me. It is sometimes too easy to overlook things that do not directly affect you. For example the magazines, the Hallmark cards, the hair products, etc....all products that have as their focus, the white population. As I was standing there looking at the display I was feeling very stupid as I thought to myself that these are products that we see, and use everyday and too often we do not even realize who these products are geared towards - Why?...because. that is another privilege we have - it seems so common to us that we do not even question it (Analee, Oct 6, 93-j).

She concluded her entry on White privilege acknowledging her changed level of consciousness.

I have definitely had my consciousness raised on a number of occasions in this class - Now, I often find myself asking questions a lot more - both of others, of different situations, and of myself. I am much quicker in identifying things in myself that I say, or do, that are the result of white privilege. As a result of my learning I am better able to make these connections. In being more capable of identifying white privilege, I am also better able to understand the affects this has on others. It has helped me to see the importance of making changes within myself before I can be effective in fighting for change in the larger society (Analee Nov 17 93-j).

Being unaware or unconscious of one's cultural location as within White privileged mainstream culture, can allow individuals to remain distanced from accepting responsibility for the abuses of their ancestors historically, and themselves and their peers in the day-to-day. While many can feel sorry for Natives, Blacks or others, they cannot see how they themselves are

responsible, what they could do. Some can see that bad actions might have been taken historically, but this does not have relevance for themselves. If they do not and have not blatantly acted in a racist way, either through violence or slurs, they are not racist, so have no role in the change process personally or politically. The problem of racism, through this convoluted but common rationalization process, belongs to those hurt by it, rather than to those who gain benefits from it.

CULTURE

This Model-In-Use follows Young Man (1992) in seeing cultures as "continuously in construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction as specifically ecological, political-economic and ideological processes impact on them" (98).

To Thomas (1984), within an anti-racist approach, "culture is not viewed as a static body of information which can be transmitted easily" (22). Culture is embedded in the "lived everyday responses of people to the circumstances in which they find themselves...how people have tried to change things which are wrong and unjust...nurturing a respect for the courage and skills it takes to do this....(and) examining how people develop and adapt cultures to survive in particular circumstances" (23). A Black participant, Cal, noted his reactions to the presentation of Acadian history and culture.

How the Acadians were loaded into boats and shipped away from their homes. This was very much like what happened to Africans. The point that I wanted to make was that Acadians were able when necessary or possible they were able to assimilate into the larger society. This was at a great cultural loss. Blacks have not been able to do this because we are seen (Cal Feb 9 94-j).

Nadine, another Black participant, was accustomed to viewing culture through the lens of visibly racial difference. She had her radical construction of culture challenged and reframed by a presentation on Native culture.

One point that stood out for me in viewing the Native presentation, was how accustomed and stereotypical we have become, when I found myself looking at the young dancers and saying that they did not look Native. Of the five dancers only one young girl looked what I've conditioned to believe natives should look like. As in the Black race, this could be the result of mixed-relationships today, or as a result of forced sexual behaviour of White Europeans on the women of the earlier generations. Whatever the reason, culture is more than a color or a look. Culture is what a person lives, and passes down to their children (Nadine Mar 10 93-j).

This Model-In-Use focuses on the cultural forms expressed in the often ignored "oppositional elements which cause people to resist and challenge those things that hurt and oppress them" (Thomas, 1984: 22). For many of us, our survival and sustainability is linked to the ancestral traditions of our people, to the stories of resistance told and retold by our Elders, artists and other visionaries. Russell (1985) provides one illustration: "When words failed, remember how Aunt Jemima's most famous recipe, ground-glass plantation pancakes, made the masters' choke" (Russell, 1985: 161).

It is embracing our cultural identities to resist acculturation that frames our daily struggles. Simultaneously, we must acknowledge oppression, and resist these forces. The oppositional struggle is one of the vital and sustainable gifts of our cultures. It has been necessary to engage in continuous acts of resistance since contact with the colonial powers in the modern age. Being a culturally identified Black or Native today encompasses both experiencing White Eurocentric domination and individual and group valuation of independent, long-standing cultural consciousness(es). These more

oppositional gifts, gained through resistance efforts necessary for survival, are often disguised rather than taught in multicultural models that simply emphasize material representations (Brandt, 1986).

Many cultural groups, targeted in society through racially visible differences, have struggled and learned to embrace their own culture as a gift. Paradoxically, many Whites cannot articulate what their own cultural affiliation is. One White female, Lena, expressed her difficulty in answering one of the task one questions: "What is my culture?"

I have never felt that I have had a culture. I just recognized myself as being white. I am not sure if what has been told to me is specific to Irish/Catholic culture or has been appropriated from other cultures... (she states a few ethnic traditions) That is about all I know about my culture. It isn't very much when I see it on the monitor but I haven't given up yet. I am glad I had this opportunity to look at what my culture is and how I relate to it. My partner is Greek and he is always amazed that I didn't know much about being Irish. At least now I have a few pieces of information. Finding out about my culture has given me a certain feeling of...identity, I think? I am not sure what this feeling is but it feels O.K. (Lena Feb 21 93-t1).

McLaren (1994) proposes "interrogating the culture of whiteness itself" (214). He believes that "unless we give white students a sense of their own identity as an emergent ethnicity--we naturalize whiteness as a cultural marker against which Otherness is defined" (214). Values cannot be challenged unless they become visible to the learner and the learner can find his or her Self-In-Relation to their own cultural identity. The existential categories adapted by Ibrahim (1985), along with Katz (1985) and others, can be utilized with students to heighten understanding. Eurocentrism means that Whites learn that the world is White. They often only see and relate White persons and products and are taught White history and culture in the context of their own worldview.

According to Katz (1985), because hegemonic White culture is the norm, "it acts as an invisible veil that limits many people from seeing it as a cultural system" (1985: 616). I agree with Katz, it does appear easier for many Whites to identify and acknowledge the different cultures of others, than it is to accept their own racial identity. She proposed an understanding based on a logical paradigm: "If we acknowledge that minority group members, in fact, have distinct cultural characteristics, we must logically accept that Whites also share similar cultural dimensions that constitute a separate, unique culture" (616). Because "White culture" is "omnipresent" it is hard to "see" and accept. Whites rarely, in the Western context, are required to step outside of their own dominant norms and see their beliefs, values, and behaviours as distinct from other cultural groups.

Gregory Jay (1995) shares his own process of critically unveiling his Whiteness as a cultural qualifier.

I found myself puzzling over my own cultural identity. Did I have a race or ethnicity? A gender or a sexual orientation? A class or a nationality? Was my cultural identity singular or plural? And was it something I got by inheritance and imposition, or something I could choose at my own will? Perhaps most important, why hadn't I worried about all of this before? Who was I that I hadn't had a cultural identity crisis? Why had I so suddenly become a white man? (121).

He theorizes that the notion of "cultural identity" strikes White people as "strange", because of an ingrained acceptance of individualism: "Identity is supposed to be personal, idiosyncratic, something you don't share with anyone else" (122).

Dominant American culture defines the person as essentially private and thus by definition lacking a cultural identity. A cultural identity would be a restraint on individual freedom, a straightjacket of convention, a prescription of inauthenticity. A

cultural identity would limit what the person wore, ate, said, kissed, worshipped, wrote, bought, or sold (122).

For members of diverse Communities to be given an opportunity to share their experience and the gifts of their cultural groups without feeding appropriation (Ellsworth, 1992), Eurocentrism as a cultural belief system must first be unveiled. A process must be put in place which honours and respects the power of their voice and experience. The question remains: how can these concepts (oppression, racism, privilege, culture) be taught in a way that inspires those who are known to actively resist learning either the truth of colonial history, or the devastation of modern-day racism, enacted daily by and on all of us? White people are often blinded by their own language and values to the pain of others. These blinders are painful to remove, but recovering the "truth" about historical and modern uses of power is necessary for the healing of our people and our planet. Ingrained dominance, an artifact of a culture steeped in Eurocentric mentality, is evident in every institutional location: schools, churches, the military, politics, media, the family and the social service state. As Malcolm Saulis, a Maliseet educator, argues:

[T]he implication is that if you follow the rules, aspire to the same aspirations, and behave appropriately you will have a place in society and share in its abundance. If you do not then actions will be taken against you to keep you in order. The situation of native people has been that a relationship has been defined over history but now needs to be redefined (1994: 19).

This redefinition requires the unveiling of White supremacy as commonsense epistemology in society today. This is an understanding reflected in the words of a Black student participant.

I found the term and use of the word White Supremacy and not Racism to be much more empowering (enabling) expression of

how we as Black people should see the world. The statement to explain this was that whites had internalized values and attitudes of their white ancestors...It is how powerful and insidious racism and white supremacy is that makes us forget that we are raised in a capitalist society and what that means in real terms of internalization (Cal Jan 18 94-j).

People acculturated to the dominant discourse may theorize that "skin color doesn't matter"... "we are all equal"... "we all have equal opportunity to succeed". We on the margins of society know by our daily lived experiences, and the stories of our ancestors, our Elders, our peers and our children, that this is really the "myth of meritocracy" (McIntosh, 1990). When we are working to unveil the complex reality of oppressed and oppressor--the interconnectedness between racism and White privilege, we are expressing our Self-In-Relation. We are all interconnected. Racism exists to feed White privilege--material, political, social, and personal benefits are at the expense of those living in poverty with little political, social, or personal power. White society--Westernism--did not rise to prominence because of its inherent superiority, as White historians, philosophers, and authors studied by Blaut (1993) and Said (1993), would like us to believe; it was off the backs of indigenous peoples robbed of their lands, their resources, and their labour. Those studying the complex relations of colonialism and imperialism have uncovered that White privilege is maintained at the expense of all others, locally, nationally and globally. I propose that by applying the philosophy of Self-In-Relation, we can begin a shift from the dichotomous trap which focuses on either individual adjustment or structural change, and embrace simultaneously and ecologically, both individual and community change. How can students, each of them, be challenged personally and professionally to take up the structural problems of oppression and racism - which we are all affected by - and which we all

participate in - by blindly turning an eye to others' pain, or by confronting directly? We must all begin by seeing ourselves as In-Relation to racial issues. This relationship can be facilitated by the introduction of relevant content, and by processes which re-emphasize and enact in a experiential way the established themes. As Horwitz (1989) advises, "One cannot teach something in the complete isolation of the classroom and then hope that a transition will automatically be made to real life" (1989: 86). If learners are going to be able to take their new knowledge out of the classroom and into the Communities, the connections must be made in the classroom.

HOW DO WE KNOW? : LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE AND VOICE

In the Cree tradition of transformational practice, awareness is the beginning. "The Plains Cree medicine people heal individuals by bringing unconscious conflict and resistance to a conscious level where they can be worked with" (Buffalo, 1990: 118). Awareness is also seen by feminists and those targeting racist oppression, as the beginning of the will to resist, to challenge and change the structures which confine us (hooks, 1990; Collins, 1991). The transformation process begins when we air feelings, perceptions, and personal reactions and discover that they are socially constructed. According to Charnley, "[i]n order to really know what is working against us we have to be able to question, reflect on one's own experience and see it in relation to and in dynamic with other people and environs" (1990: 16). What Charnley is advising is often termed by critical educators as "consciousness-raising". Consciousness-raising is an educational and healing model which focuses on sharing of personal feelings, attitudes and behaviours to gain a deeper understanding of the collective reality produced through societal

conditions. Through consciousness raising participants learn how to use their own "personal" experience as a starting point for individual and/or "political" change. The feminist conscious-raising model, strong in beginning with lived experience, dealing with feelings, working in non-hierarchical groups, and using our own voices, will be explored as an avenue for developing cross-cultural understanding. It also resonates in the course and research design, as we move continuously back and forth from historical relations, through current daily lived experiences, to people's hopes, dreams and visions for their children's futures.

In feminist consciousness-raising models it is voice that is emphasized--the re-gaining of women's voice, in spite of the patriarchy's attempts to silence us. Consciousness-raising has been described by Gould as a process of "going from a discussion of feelings and experiences, to analysis, and then to political action" (1987: 9). According to Hart (1991), the overall pattern of the process is "one of moving from surface phenomenon related to the immediate present; then to the depths of pain, anger, or bitterness related to past experiences; and outwards again toward utopian outlooks for the future" (Hart, 1991: 68). This view respects Aboriginal philosophy, as we are taught to always consider the past, the present and the future. Voice is a central pedagogical tool in this Model, for Traditionalists know that learning occurs both through the rearticulation of our own experience as well as through hearing the stories of others.

Hart (1991) explores enabling conditions for use of feminist consciousness-raising as a tool for transformative learning within the post-secondary system. These include: the acknowledgment of oppression which provides the basis of commonality of experience; the importance of personal

experience which goes against the grain of university objectivity; the need for homogeneity in the learning group to establish an atmosphere of self-disclosure rather than self-protection; a consideration of the issue of equality, particularly considering the unequal power relation of instructor and student; and the recognition of the value of gaining and sustaining theoretical distance which helps us look more clearly at and generalize our experiences. This list, rather than providing indicators that consciousness-raising will be successful, reminds me of the opposite--exactly what a large undertaking it is given the contextual conditions of work including: lack of acknowledgment of oppression as in-relation; resistance to sharing personal experience; along with great differences in experience produced by heterogeneity in the group which is necessary to experience difference; the unequal power relation regardless of efforts to equalize it; and epistemological questioning of abstraction/theoretical distance as antithetical in this learning situation which requires affect and connection to heart. In spite of the potential and actual contradictions, I support the consciousness-raising model, for use in the classroom, to struggle within the university, to change it and society, through personal transformation of students. I wish to reappropriate, adapt and adjust the consciousness-raising process, and expand its conceptualization.

If one can be acculturated to hold dominant views, they can also be deculturated. The altering of consciousness, theorized by many feminist, anti-racist and critical educators, is one of the central foci of this thesis. I ask: how can social work students, steeped primarily in hegemonic Eurocentric consciousness, become aware of the nature of their cultural conditioning. This I consider a necessary precursor to an alteration of their attitudes and behaviours towards peoples from the Communities serviced. The Western foundations,

upon which the social work profession rests, must not stand unchallenged (Ibrahim, 1985; Katz, 1985; Wicker, 1986; and others). Social work students, many of whom are White and middle-class, need to explore the legacy of their Eurocentric culture and recognize its impacts on their lives--personally and professionally.

Encouraging students to adjust their cultural view to embrace the gifts of cultures other than their own, to revision their relationship to the Communities, to accept the responsibility to create anti-racist change, requires a "meaningful" process that engages each student in processing their own subjectivity, their own relationship to others--their Self-In-Relation--their own place in the complex interweave of oppression and privilege. According to Collins (1991) it is not just experience, but collective history which leads to knowledge: "Black women's concrete experiences as members of specific race, class, and gender groups as well as our concrete historical situations necessarily play significant roles in our perspectives on the world....Knowledge is gained not by solitary individuals but by Black women as socially constituted members of a group"...(33). Brah and Hoy concur. "[A]ll experience is shaped by concrete social conditions" (1989: 71). The concept of experience is an ideological construct which needs to be deconstructed and unpacked: "What is 'experience'? Can experience ever be constructed outside of social relations?" (Brah and Hoy, 1989: 71). By implication, knowledge gained by White individuals is also as socially constituted members of their group, and shapes their perspectives of the world. Collins (1991) cautions that collectivity, or being part of an identified group, allows for but does not guarantee that collective consciousness will develop among all members, or that it will be articulated as such by the group. According to Brah and Hoy (1989) "there is a difficulty in

assuming that people have the same understanding of the structural determinants of their experience" (74).

Cal, a student from the Afro-Nova Scotian community, pointed out that not all Black or Natives identify as group members or can articulate their understanding of culture or oppression.

One of the other Native guests...says that all Natives do not understand their culture or their oppression. This is a point made about Black people as well that this understanding is not innate. This is something that we must struggle toward to develop (Cal Feb 2 94-j).

The connection between experience, consciousness, voice and collectivity shapes the everyday lives of anti-racist activists and scholars, as well as those whose lives are validated by the mainstream. This Model-In-Use is designed to explore and challenge people's beliefs and actions In-Relation to their current socio-cultural positioning. It is an effort to mobilize them to engage in personal and political change. Learning how we are conditioned/allowed to be oppressor/oppressed in our daily lives and in our professional roles, is critical self knowledge, considered a first stage of awareness--necessary to progress further to being an activist/change agent.

It was in the East that I began to sort some things out in my own mind as I focused on my own ignorance surrounding a number of the issues we would be discussing. I also began an important examination of myself - of my own racist ways, of my privilege as a white woman....as well as a recognition of the need for change in myself before I can work with others (Analee Dec 93-jsum).

Our ancestors recognized this reality--one must be aware, feel connected, responsible to others, be aware of being In-Relation. As long as people remain ensnared in material/social/cultural/personal privilege, they will

be untouched by the pains and struggles of other peoples. Illusions of equality, democracy, freedom of choice, and helpfulness will be maintained. Viewed through the Aboriginal lens of Self-In-Relation, each student must come to find their identity within the complex constructions of the dominant culture. Then they must recognize the necessity of altering their consciousness and their behaviour In-Relation to the diverse Communities.

FIRST VOICE AS CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

First Voice as a critical pedagogical tool arises out of anti-racist, feminist, experiential and Aboriginal discourse. First Voice is the reliance on the "voice of experience", our own interpretation of experience to guide our knowledge base. As Elder Smith theorized:

My roots grow in jackpine roots...I grow here. I am the oldest one. If I don't remember more then nobody does. So other people shouldn't talk about what they don't know (Elder Smith in Cruikshank, 1992: 163).

The power of First Voice is rooted in identity and authority through lived experience. Arising out of Aboriginal ancestral Tradition, First Voice poses a necessary alternative to the truth claims articulated in the voice of the White "expert", who "knows" what we "need". Reliance on the expert is a commonsense, and often unchallenged condition for many mainstream students.

The "universal" Eurocentric version has become contested terrain in Western academia. The recording of the past and present conditions of our peoples has not been neutral, and has been unveiled as not reflective of the many voices living it. Rather the story, that is the acceptable teachable version, has been written/told in the voice of the colonizer/oppressor. One version of

reality has been widely accepted as the epistemological foundations of the canon, and underpins the majority of pedagogical methods currently used in mainstream settings. The commonsense nature of this practice is captured by Lena's entry:

I took social history last semester so I had studied about the Acadian Expulsion but Monday was the first time I've heard an Acadian person talk about it (Lena Mar 14 93-j).

Hearing the voice of the people whose lives are affected by the history and daily lived experience challenges the everyday condition of appropriation of voice both within and surrounding the academic setting. Howse and Stalwick (1990) proposed that the most fundamental question is: "[w]ho should speak about Native person's oppression and related social movement experiences?" (84). They answer: "When such words come only from outsiders it could block a much-needed rereading of history for such a social movement" (84). hooks, (1988), Sanchez (1988), Godard (1992), and others who discuss this topic agree: we need what I have coined as First Voice. That is, we need to hear each person define/align themselves, and speak of their own experiences in-relation to their own selves/people. We need to move beyond appropriation of our cultural voices, beyond the "we or our" (Harris, 1991) expert voice heard speaking for us all. "We shall not have our great leap forward....until the marginalized and exploited have begun to become the artisans of their own liberation - until their voice makes itself heard directly, without mediation, without interpreters" (Gutierrez, in Howse and Stalwick, 1990: 85).

Many students and teachers unquestioningly accept the voice of White "expert" as "truth" about Blacks, Natives, and others. White people who know a very limited amount often see themselves as "experts" because they know more

than their colleagues who know little beyond the recorded version, and current media representations. One White participant illustrated this beautifully in his first journal entry for the course.

Before tonight, I figured I knew a lot about the native culture. In fact I felt so confident that I knew so much that I actually told the class that I would offer my non-native perspective of the native culture throughout this year...When I would get the chance I would dazzle my non-native peers with my new-found knowledge of the Native culture as I see it. I would also quote certain passages of a book I read on the Native culture (name), as supporting what I already observed...

As a result of just tonight's class, I now realize that in order to effectively educate others about a certain culture it is imperative to be a first voice from that particular culture. My working within a Native setting does not constitute me being a first voice of the Native culture. Also even the book I was so proud of quoting as supporting my own experience, was not even written from first voice.

I also realize now as a result of this first class, that I do not know much about Native culture, as I so confidently thought I did...Although I go to work 4 days a week on a Native reserve, I know now my exposure to various aspects of the Native culture have been very limited (Ken Jan 6 93-j).

Through First Voice, each participant is encouraged to recognize perceptions of reality as socially constructed. Each person's reality is understood as filtered through the lens of collective, cultural consciousness. In this Model-In-Use, one's cultural locatedness is synonymous with one's 'authority' to speak about that cultural group. I often need to caution participants: "Don't talk about what you don't know". "If you are not a member of the Black, Native, Acadian, or other Community, you are not in a position to speak about that cultural group or experience." This challenges all participants to keep focused on their In-Relation to the topic. It is difficult but not impossible to unlearn White "expertism". As Blacks, for example, are empowered to address the issues of their own identity and community, so too are Whites empowered to

address issues of privilege and their role In-Relation to racism and oppression. An Acadian Elder participant reiterated the importance of First Voice, hearing from the people themselves.

I think that the first part of this to know is very, very important when you speak of a different culture or a different language or a different something. Especially with our French language, for example, to know why we spoke French the way we did. To know why we spoke English the way we did. If you want to know about people, I fully agree that the people who are teaching others about themselves, they should be the people who are really those people. I can't tell you, even though I work with the Native or the Black, I can't tell you exactly who they are and what they are. You have to know. Make yourself known that way! (Celi CC2:25).

Representations of ourselves outside the already fixed categories, interrogating the discourse of "problem" or "victim", acknowledging our peoples as co-creators of history, as people who struggle and resist and live incredibly varied and complex lives, has become in itself a weapon against oppression. Many artists, teachers, visionaries, and Elders echo a theme articulated by Rita Joe, a Mi'kmaq Elder, as the "gentle war" (Joe, 1989: 28). Through conceptual constructs like First Voice, we express our wish to invoke a society in which we each have opportunity to represent our own selves, our own cultures, rather than the appropriation of voice, experience, art and spirituality which has become the unacknowledged but taken for granted basis of "Western" culture.

First Voice for our cultural Communities is almost unheard of in university classrooms. What is taught is the Eurocentric canon, and derivatives of which inhabit all disciplines (Said, 1993; Blaut, 1993). Curriculum is not inclusive of the experiences, histories, voices of those on the "margins". Often when "multicultural" courses or content is offered, it is "added-on", with one or two "token" representatives read, or invited to tell their painful stories. They are decontextualized from their Community, from societal relations, and from the

body of knowledge being taught as "the" curriculum (Weir, 1991). It is necessary to pluralize the singular nature of "the" expert which serves to reinforce tokenistic measures, where one member of a community is expected to speak for all. First Voice as critical pedagogy challenges mainstream styles of curriculum development, targeting the ingrained acceptance of the hegemonic voice speaking for us all. This occurs at several levels. Emphasis in this Model-In-Use has been placed on both interrogating textual representations commonly accepted as "truth" in Western university life, as well as giving opportunity for members of previously silenced Communities to speak face-to-face, orally transmitting their knowledge.

INTERROGATING THE TEXT

Given our text-based institutional location, an anti-racist theory base must be reflected in curriculum content and materials. Acknowledging that materials are not neutral, Brandt (1986) suggests several questions: do materials reflect our society's diversity in a positive light? do they relate to 'oppositional' experience? do they provide a basis for challenging "stratification and inequitable distribution of society's resources?" (131). Reviewing syllabus content is essential, as Kalia (1991) contends that "lack of race consciousness, in any 'major work', even when keeping in mind 'the context in which it was written', is intolerable in any discipline" (227). Eurocentric models of education have tended to "lock out, marginalize and discriminate against" (Brandt, 1986: 131) culturally-located participants by not validating their knowledge or social reality. Using materials which support and validate knowledge and experience outside of academic "school knowledge" can work to diffuse the power of "hidden curriculum".

As hooks (1988) noted, domination is reinforced when the author's "authority is constituted by either the absence of the voices of the individuals whose experiences they seek to address, or the dismissal of those voices as unimportant" (43). First Voice pedagogy uses the lived experiences of the Community members themselves as the starting point. Mainstream publications offer a paucity of material to select which is authored by members of the Communities themselves, or moves beyond the problem-focused orientation prevalent in Eurocentric discourses. Publishing restrictions and social class intersect along with gender and culture to keep our participation in academic "research" limited. According to Kalia (1991), "[w]e write short works, because we are generally not supported by a class structure or academia that facilitates our scholarship" (280). Collins (1991) concurs:

[m]uch of the black women's intellectual tradition has been embedded in the institutional locations other than the academy....musicians, vocalists, poets, writers, and other artists...political activists.....such women are typically thought of as nonintellectual and non-scholarly, classifications that create a false dichotomy between scholarship and activism, between thinking and doing (15).

This dichotomy is predicated upon theories that elevated rationalism above other forms of knowledge. Through healing the artificial split between thinking and doing, we give voice to our experiences as a way of developing heightened consciousness, as a source of knowledge. First Voice as pedagogy is designed to help expand the Western notion of knowledge as "ratio", to help students embrace the possibilities of learning from many sources. In particular, this pedagogy emphasizes learning from the words of those who have directly experienced that which is being theorized about. Remember the wisdom of Elder Ned, when she speaks the Traditional voice: "Old style words are just like

school" (in Cruikshank, 1992: 267). The need to only relate in the uni-versal language of universities, namely academic English, interferes with the expression of difference through oral or textual means. The orientation to "universalized" abstract cognition detracts from "authentic" transmission of culturally-based insights to the "paper world" of academic life.

An emphasis on First Voice necessarily relies on the use of more aesthetic-expressive forms like poetry, stories, speeches, dialogues and fiction to supplement the paucity of "minority"-authored academic discourse. Gordon, Miller and Rollock (1990) note that "the meanings of our behaviour are often better explicated in our artistic and fictional work" (18), they reveal the interiority of our being. Said (1993) documents the resistance revealed in the practice of a "national culture" (215), which includes newspapers, narratives, speeches, poetry, drama, slogans, forming a "counterpoint to the Western monumental histories, official discourses, and quasi-scientific viewpoint" (1993: 215). Poems, stories, songs, speeches, and refereed works from Aboriginal, Black, Acadian, and other regionally represented Communities are the basis of the CCI Reader (Appendix 2). These sources reveal our political agendas as well as our personal feelings. Through offering a new lens to view familiar issues, opportunity for critical reflection is enhanced. One mainstream participant indicated that the interrogation of textual representation has become generalized into her daily life.

I learned about appropriation and the necessity of first voice literature. I am now training myself to be very careful in selecting reading material before I would read things without even taking into consideration who wrote it. I do not do this anymore (Lena 92-jsum).

FACE-TO-FACE ENCOUNTER

Aboriginal people believe in the centrality of "the other" to the individual. We are "born into a social world" and take others' existence "for granted without question" (Schutz, 1967: 98). More complex and more compelling in the cross-cultural teaching/learning context is how we come to understand the meaning of others. In acknowledging the primacy of the face-to-face situation, Berger and Luckmann (1967) support an Aboriginal worldview. They propose that "the reality of everyday life contains typificatory schemes in terms of which others are apprehended and 'dealt with' in face to face encounters" (31) and that these typifications become "progressively anonymous the farther they are away from the face-to face situation" (31). These typifications "appertain to anyone in the category" (31).

Are stereotypes a form of typification? Could cross-cultural understanding, then, best be achieved in face-to-face, in the "here and now" exchanges, when "individualization" becomes possible, and a person has opportunity to "manifest himself as a unique and therefore atypical individual?" (32). Many participants expressed the value of the face-to-face encounter in Cross Cultural Issues class, between my self as Aboriginal professor and students, among diverse students, and with our guests from the Aboriginal, Black, Acadian and other communities, as they visited our classroom and we the Communities. Eileen expressed her insights metaphorically:

Direct interaction with persons from other cultures have brought me some of my most rewarding experiences in this course. I was able to share issues and interact for a few brief moments without a multitude of racial barriers. It was like we were able to cut through the barb wire and saw hope to keep it open if we worked at it everyday for the rest of our lives (Eileen 93-j).

Mac's journal soliloquy speaks the same message. He reinforced the value of the face-to-face encounter as a method to challenge internalized racial stereotypes.

When someone is invisible it is easy to pretend that they don't exist. It is clear to me that there is so much beneath the surface. You must allow oneself to go beyond the superficial. Into the feelings and fears of another person. To see what they sing and what they cry. To see them as whole human beings. Too busy, too much work, too little time, don't know where to begin, all interfere with this essential truth. Hollywood can't stand up to face to face. It is easier to believe in the myth. It is easier to not take time to find out the truth, it is easier to close your eyes and think, hope, that someone else will take care of it. It is easier to avoid the reality of others when you are swept away by your own. It is easier to rationalize and to put off. It is easier....for whom? (Mac 92-j).

When I speak of my experiences as an Aboriginal woman, and encourage other members of the Communities to speak of their experiences, the theories and "paper stories" common in educational institutes are brought to life. I invite, and encourage students to invite guests from the Communities to class to express their own experiences, rather than giving voice to White experts, whether social work or academic professionals. This is a political, consciousness-raising act, part of the larger struggle to resist appropriation. Our Communities have had a specific history with social work, and with education, which can be a clear model--"an inside-out lesson" (Medicine Eagle, 1991) for social work educators/students about what we do not want to do. I want to use my role as educator to "assist in creating a model of social work that willingly turns its back on social control and defends the authentic serving of people in need" (Howse and Stalwick, 1990: 87). I call upon members of the Communities to aid in this struggle.

Insisting on people representing their own voices, their own stories, their own histories has become a central pedagogical tool in CCI. Students have come to appreciate the difference between being told about someone or something, and being told by someone....experiencing the difference, seeing the body behind the words, the feeling in the voice. They can begin to recognize our traditions and lives as diverse, while seeing the cohesion that sharing common oppression can bring. Black, Aboriginal, Acadian, Gay and Lesbian, and Immigrant voices represent themselves, individually and collectively throughout the course: in written materials; in person in the classroom (myself, students, and community members); and through "tasks" which require community contact.

FINDING VOICE

First Voice as pedagogy challenges why and how certain voices/enunciatory positions are privileged over others. It is "an instance of pedagogic authority used to selectively empower social groups lacking hegemonic authority" (Weir, 1991: 25). "Empowerment", according to McLaren (1989), is multifaceted. It can refer to "the process through which students learn to critically appropriate knowledge existing outside their immediate experience in order to broaden their understanding of themselves, the world, and the possibilities for transforming the taken-for-granted assumptions about the way we live" (186). Empowerment in this case involved learning to question and selectively appropriate those aspects of the dominant culture that would provide individuals and their Communities with "the basis for defining and transforming, rather than merely serving, the wider social order" (186). Randi's story of her own struggle to find her own First Voice in the class, will be used to illustrate the

process of empowerment through voice as a evolving one. She began documenting her growth in this area in her first entry.

As class ended tonight, I reflect on the wonderful experience that it was! I was so happy to finally be able to express my Native identity as part of my being. It was the first time that my Voice was actually being heard, not only by others but by myself. What a wonderful enlightening experience.

It certainly helped tonight, having other first voices present, it allowed for a sense of security at a time when it is hard to be secure when putting ones feelings on the line.

Along with the good feelings came some insecurities about who I am, I have always had trouble speaking in group settings, so hopefully I'll feel more comfortable as time goes on (Randi Jan 6 93-j).

She highlighted key issues, including the necessity of "the ear" or a listening audience as critical to expression of voice. The necessary "sense of security", is fostered by the presence of other "first voices". This is a crucial factor for anyone who has been chronically silenced. Part of the security of being voiceful as a cultural representative is being secure in the knowledge being transmitted about your own cultural group. It also requires a sense of safety that you will be respectfully listened to. Given the numerical and attitudinal dominance of Whiteness in the university context this remains a difficulty. It is recognized and reflected on by Randi in a later entry.

Tonight as I ponder over last class I feel as though some things will never change, I see the looks on people's faces around the room and wonder, do these white middle-class students have any idea what this whole course is about? I shouldn't be so harsh it's hard not to be!

I see anger, dismay, defensiveness, and it makes me angry to think that these people have the nerve to be defensive, we've been defending ourselves all of our lives and we're tired of it!

It's time to give us a break and listen to our stories, songs, tales, we have so much to say if people would listen!

I guess for me I am finally listening to my own songs, stories and tales and realizing that they are a part of me and I'm so proud

to be a Native person, I feel so honoured to be me, I feel that I have such a spiritual connection with the earth that it keeps me centered inside even if my life is chaos outside, and heaven knows it's been chaotic this past few months, despite it all I manage to find the strength to attend and feel empowered every time I go. It's wonderful. Thanks again for the wonderful experiences so far. See you next week! (Randi Jan 27 93-j).

When Aboriginal/Black/Acadian/other participants have had the opportunity for voice, and are respectfully heard by their peers, empowerment is realized. Randi experienced validation and shared further insights regarding her identity and experience.

As I presented tonight I was so nervous, will people take me seriously, will they believe my stories, will they listen carefully?

I believe that people did listen and understood what I was saying!

It was one of the most powerful experiences I have ever had in my life, it allowed me to verbalize everything I ever felt about my Aboriginal identity, it made it all seem real, it was as though I had someone to validate my experience and acknowledge that it was real!

You never really realize how oppressed you are until you talk about it! I never realized that until I spoke!

I hope you enjoyed the presentation, thanks for the input during my presentation (Randi Feb 10 93-j)

The successful voicing of Randi's cultural identity to a listening audience, deepened her "sense of security".

I feel a sense of security in class now as I speak, I'm more comfortable and I believe that people truly are listening (Randi Mar 31 93-j).

As Randi's experience informed us, finding voice is a lengthy process and was a continuous challenge for her throughout the course. Showing external confidence in one's voice can still be accompanied by embodied cues of insecurity. In her final entry she apologized for her nervousness when she

spoke: *"I was shaking inside even if you couldn't see it on the outside"* (Randi Apr 7 93-j). She concluded her journal by indicating that finding her voice was her most important learning. It is a process that she expressed intentions of continuing after the course.

The most important learning for me was that I have a voice, and if I don't begin to use my voice it will get lost! My identity as an aboriginal woman is something to take pride and gather strength in, even though I'm nervous speaking I need to keep doing it until it feels natural, and until I have integrated all the pieces of my identity that I am comprised of (Randi Apr 93-jsum).

Randi's story continuously expresses a dialectic that is accepted as commonsense in Traditional minds: every voice needs a ear, and every story has impacts on listeners. First Voice pedagogy definitely has multiple impacts on learners. Students in this post-modern age of fragmented identities are reminded that our personal stories are constructed out of the conditions of our lives, and these are dominated by race, class and gender. For personal narration to become part of the process of developing strategies to challenge oppressive structures, the individuals and their stories must be embedded in the power relations in society. "Individuals are enabled to make sense of their personal histories by making links between autobiography, group history and social and political processes" (Brah and Hoy, 1989: 73). As participants make these links, they are encouraged to voice their new understandings to the group.

IMPACTS OF FIRST VOICE

Voices visibly embodied, persons telling stories of their own lived experiences of exclusion and oppression have a visible and emotional impact on the listeners. Use of First Voice in text and orality reinforces and brings to "life" the

theoretical constructs being "taught". The affective impacts of First Voice on students were frequently mentioned in journals. Van emphasized the role of First Voice in helping shift her learning from solely at the intellectual level.

This course will be done in first voice, which will make everything shine in a new light. This first voice approach has already had an effect on me - I'm feeling more of what is being said, rather than intellectualizing it (Van Sept 22 93-j)

Another student reflected on the insights First Voice participants allowed her into the pains of oppression. As role models they exhibited ever present strength and determination.

Through first voice experiences, I have gained much insight into the pain that culturally diverse individuals live everyday. I can never understand the depth of the pain and frustration but I can empathize and I can continue to challenge myself and the white culture that thinks it is so superior...I have been inspired by the strength of the guest speakers, and the first voice experiences in class to never give up the fight...(Bejay 93-jsum).

Dana shared her heartfelt reaction to the story of a Native woman who had relayed her experience of the traumas of residential school.

I felt so much pain for her while she shared her story. I can only imagine how painful the experience was for her. How damaging it would be for her self-esteem, and her pride and cultural identity. After all these years, she still feels pain and this is quite understandable. I feel so angry that any child would have to experience such cruelty and brutality! This school stripped its pupils from their identity, culture, and dignity. Like (name), thousands of other children shall carry the physical and mental scars of this school. How could such a school stay open? Who would allow such education to continue? This institution was very racist and should never have been allowed to educate.

I feel so much anger and rage to think of how many children had to experience this and how it was allowed to operate as an educational facility, or any facility for that matter!!! (Dana Nov 31 92-j).

A recognition of the value of learning through sharing of experience was also expressed.

One of the more important things I realized was the lessons that are to be learned from those of different cultures who speak out and who share their personal experience with us. The lessons we learn from this are often far more valuable than any text book could ever teach (Analee Dec 93-jsum).

Having described First Voice pedagogy as an essential "consciousness-raising" tool in this Model-In-Use, I will return in the final chapter to discuss in more detail the contradictory aspects of this practice. We will turn now to the South and explore more specifically tools which are grounded in Traditional Aboriginal practice. Of particular relevance is the Talking Circle, the format in which opportunity for voice is produced in the classroom and in the data collection process.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE SOUTH: INTRODUCING ABORIGINAL SPIRITUALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

While First Voice pedagogy begins to raise students' consciousness to the lived experiences of themselves and persons from the various cultural Communities, often the focus remains on oppression and racism in its many faces. This chapter explores how Aboriginal spirituality can be entered into the university classroom context, to challenge students to see the gifts of the cultures, to revitalize the will to build community relations, to actively resist forms of Eurocentric domination personally and collectively. In this Model-In-Use, Traditional forms of Aboriginal spirituality are combined with anti-racist, feminist consciousness-raising, to create a more balanced, holistic model of practice. With this in mind, we shift to the South, the Spirit or Will, as integrated in the learning process.

FOUNDATIONS

To Aboriginal Traditionalists, knowledge/knowing without acknowledgment of the spiritual core, the moral code, is a very dangerous thing (Forbes, 1979). Our Elders teach us that "[i]t is the spiritual connectedness between and within all that exists that has been one of our greatest weapons, healers, liberators in our battles against genocide" (Charnley, 1990: 18). It is the Traditional epistemologies of immanence, balance, and interconnectedness that underpin the pedagogies In-Use. The tools elaborated on throughout this chapter resonate with Hart's (1992) idea of the "liberatory potential of intuitive, metaphysical and imaginative--playful modes of thinking and knowing" (213). She believes, and I concur, that "these capacities and modes of knowing are essential prerequisites for engaging in anticipatory, utopian thought and action"

(213). For Benhabib, "[u]topian thinking is a practical-moral imperative...without such a regulative principle of hope...radical transformation is unthinkable" (1992: 229).

These modes of thinking and teaching are also vital for an empathic and imaginative bridging of individual and cultural differences. Pleasure and humor balance fear, when attempting to develop an appreciation of difference, rather than escalate the wish to appropriate colonialistically or keep a "safe" distance. As educators, we all use a number of dialogic strategies to assert our authority as conferred by the institution. In this Model, Aboriginal strategies are utilized to create conditions of Respect, Honesty, Caring and Sharing, to assert Aboriginality, to teach Self-In-Relation both inside class and out. Several forms of spiritual practice widely used by Traditionalists in Aboriginal societies, ancestrally and in the modern age, have been adapted for use in the classroom context. It is hoped that through an examination of Traditional educational strategies, "we may identify the changes we must make, not only for our survival as indigenous peoples, but perhaps for our very existence as humans" (Armstrong, 1987: 19).

HOLISM

According to Kathy Absolon (1994), a Cree educator, the word 'heal' has the same roots as the word 'whole' and 'holiness'. The interdependence of holiness and wholeness are integral to healing in Native tradition: "[t]he holiness, or sacredness, of healing is manifested as a striving towards wholeness of spirit and an attempt to incorporate this wholeness of spirit into ourselves, our families, our communities, and the environment" (5). In the Traditional worldview, wholeness or holism is equated with balance. "Healing is

a therapeutic process, an evolution toward balance; the process accesses essential healing dynamics which are spiritual in quality and power" (Absolon, 1994: 7).

Accumulated anthropological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people, prior to contact with Europeans, had a sophisticated and effective system of healing that was based on a holistic world view (Weatherford, 1988). According to Ed Conners (1994), a Mohawk educator, "[t]he healing system accepted that maintaining health and effecting healing required a knowledge of the interaction between the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual" (2). A healthy lifestyle rests upon the ability to maintain a balanced commitment to growth and maintenance in all four areas of the Medicine Wheel. As applied to transformational pedagogy, all four areas are relevant to the growth and maintenance of an alternative consciousness. As Conners (1994) warns: "[f]ailure to attend to growth in any one aspect of self can throw the entire organism into a state of imbalance, resulting in deterioration within the other realms of experience" (2). The holistic perspective promoted by use of the Medicine Wheel permits one to see the entire educational process as a complex, integrated whole: psychological, spiritual, emotional, and physical are all part of the human consciousness, and are inseparable. Using Traditional methods, "one would never think of, nor attempt to practice healing in any one of these areas separate from the others" (Conners, 1994: 2). Nor should we as Traditional educators fall prey to the division of these domains currently required in Western pedagogical paradigms. Imbalance is the overall diagnosis Traditionalists have of current Western processes. An Aboriginal worldview, represented by the holism of the Medicine Wheel, highlights the narrowness of Western thought, and calls into question the high value placed on intellectual

analysis, reflected in the exclusive focus on cognition in transformative pedagogies. Hart and Holton (1993) seek to develop a more comprehensive concept of emancipatory education, asserting that "an inclusive focus on critique, on the power of reason in isolation from other human powers can lead people to pessimism and a feeling of helplessness rather than to social action" (2).

EMBODIMENT

A Traditional Aboriginal perspective pays attention to learning and teaching as an embodied experience. Our ancestral consciousness was mimetic (Merchant, 1989) and participatory. Traditionalists continue to believe that the more of our senses--sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch--that we use in learning/teaching something, the more likely we are to understand and remember it. As Minh-ha poetically expresses: "We write - think and feel - [with] our entire bodies rather than only [with] our minds or hearts. It is a perversion to consider thought the product of one specialized organ, the brain, and feelings, that of the heart" (1989: 36). Ancestral sources of knowledge incorporated and added to the rational, logical data. According to a local Mi'kmaq source, the people have always been taught by Elders that there were five physical senses and six non-physical senses, thinking, memory, imagination, dreaming, visioning, and spirit-travelling. Mi'kmaq people recognized that these were all gifts from the Creator and used them as other people use their sight. Using dreams, visions, and spirit-travelling were important to help people heal and to give people insight into what needed to be done. They did not see the "spirit" (in the sense of the non-physical senses), as trapped in the body but interconnected with it (Pictou, 1993).

Storytelling, metaphor, myth, ritual, meditation, and art are ways to tap into "right brain" energies essential for more holistic learning. According to Griffin, "the role of metaphoric thinking is to invent, to create, and to challenge conformity, by extending what is known into new meadows of knowing" (1988: 11). Our Elders teach that this capacity is only released by quieting the rational mind, relaxing and moving into another state of consciousness.

Following the Traditional belief in the value of learning, first-hand, through our own lived experience, the Model-In-Use places emphasis on the physical. One way in which this manifests itself is allowing for students to actually experience in a sensory way the material gifts of the cultural groups. Char consistently journalled the material aspects of the presentations on culture that were done in her section. These quotes illustrate the kinds of "cultural" experiences which are possible to orchestrate in the classroom setting. For Char's group, Acadian culture was 'experienced' first.

The Acadian presentation tonight was wonderful. A good history via slides, a video about the Acadian festival in Wolfville, live music by (Acadian entertainer) - very talented and personable. It's easy to tell he loves his craft. The feast - rappie pie.

It reminded me of the Acadian Song Festival last fall at the Cohen that (friends) were in. It was so lively and colorful and energetic, just as this presentation was. There is a special quality about the Acadians - it's hard to define, but I came away from both events wishing I were Acadian! Perhaps it has something to do with me growing up in Quebec (Char Feb 10 93-j).

This was followed by the Mi'kmaq cultural night.

Our presentation on the Mi'kmaq culture was tonight - everyone seemed to enjoy it. I spent the morning making Lus'knikn, and Essawiasikeiwey - breads much like baking powder biscuits, except the latter had molasses and raisins added. They were baked in oblong pans rather than individual biscuits.

The program included 7 Mi'kmaq children and their leaders from the Friendship Center. They performed several traditional

dances with songs and rhythm accompaniment. The class was invited to join in several of them which was fun - but tiring! They all wore traditional white leather dresses and moccasins with beaded jewelry and noise. The decorations on the dresses were painted in earth colors - mostly dyes from plants - and the pictures and symbols represented things that were meaningful to the wearer.

This was followed by storytelling - when all the aboriginal class members told of meaningful events in their lives. This is how native history has been passed down from generation to generation - along with song and dance. It is only very recently that the Mi'kmaq language has been written down.

The last part of the evening was the feast - with the bread I had made, a cranberry bread, and stew that (student) made.

I had picked up a box of Mi'kmaq artifacts from the N. S. Museum and arranged a display on the table, so the class could look at all sorts of samples of hides, bark, paint, grasses, arrowheads, pictures and books (Char Mar 3 93-j).

The third cultural night that term was on Black culture.

Tonight was the Black Culture presentation. There were a lot of junior high black young people who sang, rapped, read poems. It was lively and fun.

There was also a good talk given by (Black Elder) who had been to Sierra Leone - lots of pictures, and beautiful carvings.

The third part of the evening was African clothing and designs which were beautiful. They were displayed by (guest) from Nigeria (Char Mar 10 93-j).

While these entries reflect a particular student's perceptions of her experience, they also illustrate the experiential nature of the Model-In-Use. Weil and McGill (1989) define "experiential education" as "the process whereby people, individually and in association with others, engage in direct encounter and then **purposefully** reflect upon, validate, transform, give personal meaning to and seek to integrate their different ways of knowing" (248). This definition underscores the idea of direct encounter as a necessary base of experiential learning. This Model-In-Use allows for "integration" of "different ways of knowing". It allows for the learner to use more of their senses to learn,

which reinforces the understanding that learning comes from many sources, including themselves, rather than only through formal theory promoted by experts.

Our cultural locatedness is a strong factor in how we experience the world, informing how we react/act towards others. Culture is often distinguished by physicality, and our bodily reactions are linked to acculturation. We act and feel based on what we have been taught to expect as the 'norm'. According to Benhabib (1992), culture does not 'construct' everything: "[t]he body is an active medium with its own dispositions and 'habits', which process, channel and deflect the influences that come to it from the outside, in accordance with its own accumulated modality of being toward the world" (1992: 236). Through revisiting the material aspects of culture, and acknowledging them as the gifts of each of the groups, students are engaged in a physical exploration. Feasting, drumming, dancing, singing--tasting, touching, seeing, hearing--invokes embodied learning of cultural difference as challenging and pleasurable. Culture is experienced as common to groups, and distinct for each individual. An embodied approach to teaching and learning can help students re-awaken the knowledge that their bodies are continuously giving them feedback. Griffin (1988) reaffirms that:

Our bodies reflect our emotions: anxiety becomes tense shoulder muscles or knots in the stomach; embarrassment turns into a blush on the cheeks. Sometimes, however, we feel the bodily reaction without having noticed the emotion. Sometimes we ignore the emotion, sometimes we deny it or repress it. The body knows it is there, however, and expresses it in some way (115).

Having students pay attention to their bodies as a source of feedback about their level of comfort, and learning to breathe properly from the belly, will help to reduce the stress which can be produced when dealing with

controversial topics, or listening to a painful retelling of personal narratives. Our bodies are constantly processing our experiences. In Traditional pedagogical forms, paying attention to our physical reality will help us learn and carry wisdom that our "minds" may not be "conscious" of. This is reflected in many healing and learning methods which are meditative, ritual-based, earth-based.

Relaxation exercises, art, massage, ritual, herbology, crystals, drumming and chanting, all of which have roots in Traditional shamanic healing practices (Lorler, 1989) can be introduced in the Western university context to help students be more in touch with their physical selves, and enhance their "earth connection". Earth connection, a central form of Aboriginal pedagogy, focuses on feeling the energy of the Earth as a sensory experience, as a real, palpable connection that sustains us. We are told by our Elders: "Go out into nature in a quiet way, Listen. What do you feel from the earth, the trees, the sky, the sun, the rocks, all the natural elements around you?" Traditionalists teach that we are all Interconnected, a form of environmental/ecological consciousness which is becoming increasingly necessary as our Earth Mother is dying from overuse and abuse. When we consider what the disconnection from nature, what the striving to "control" our Earth Mother has done, we must rethink our relationship to her.

The Medicine Wheel, and forms of meditational work which I have evolved through it, can be used to ground people, helping to reestablish their own connection to the Earth and to themselves. Several students noted the "therapeutic" benefits of "earthy" meditative work.

I felt so comfortable and relaxed - it was very inspirational. This exercise is very therapeutic - to step out of line and put myself into the world of Native, harmony, and tranquillity. I felt so relaxed during this experience. I hope to experience this again. If I felt stressed, this would be beneficial (Dana Sept 15 92-j).

Tonight's class was amazing. I find the whole concept of the medicine wheel very earthly, I feel a real connection to what it stands for. The guided meditation was something I really needed at the end of this particular day. It helped me to clear my thoughts and release some of the tension that was built up through the day (Bejay Jan 6 93-j).

I was then introduced to the Medicine Wheel meditation. This I found to be extremely powerful - powerful in a very relaxed and peaceful sense. By the end of the Meditation, the nervousness I had been feeling quickly faded away. For me, this sense of peacefulness was very therapeutic (Analee Sept 15 93-j).

CIRCLE: A PHYSICAL REALITY

In ancestral times, the Sacred Circle (Gunn Allen, 1986) was central to the teachings of the Elders. The Circle is a form that arises in nature, and has imprinted upon our culture as well as our individual cells. Part of the energy of the Circle has to do with the physical structure: a Circle has no head and no tail, no beginning and no end. Everyone is equal in a Circle, the point of reference is the middle, which is both empty and full of everything. Everyone is equidistant from the middle so there is no sense of hierarchy (Cahill and Halpern, 1992).

Since the decimation of tribal village life the transmission of ancestral wisdom has had to rely upon re-visioning of ancestral methods. In this chapter, Circle work is proposed as one form of breathing new life into the spirit of human interchange, for inspiring renewed personal vision, and for recreating a cohesive community. It is based on a Traditional belief set: the connection between people in a Circle creates the threads that will weave the human species back into the Sacred Hoop of life (Gunn Allen, 1986).

Traditionalists believe that the Circle contains a recognizable power that defies superficial boundaries. To bring understanding between tribal peoples, in times of decision making, conflict resolution, or healing, Circles were formed.

Today, we face the necessity of bridging differences between the cultures, with few tools which are not based on the same individualistic philosophies which have been used to "divide and conquer". The Circle process can act to deconstruct the Western dualism of individual/community, by allowing us to work individually, in a transpersonal context, while building a community. Establishing a cohesive Circle is an integral part of re-establishing interconnectedness.

Medicine Eagle works with ritual action, a therapy method that targets the physical body and, through that, the unconscious, in order to teach/heal. She suggests that the embodied metaphor of moving and sitting in a Circle is a learning about interconnectedness that goes deeper than people are consciously aware of. There is a physical impact on the human system that happens while sitting in Circle. "The actual physical lesson that it takes to get yourself in a true circle is a part of building the nervous system that it requires to be in the circle of life. Whether it is the circle of your family, or your community, or your larger family of all of Earth's children" (in Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 127). Traditional forms of dance, done in a Circle, physically teaches embodied interconnectedness within the greater Circle: "if someone slows down, if someone falls, or gets out of place, it throws the whole circle off" (in Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 130). Our Elders teach us that we need to experience that lesson in our lives: "if we knock someone out of the circle and they fall, then the whole circle is affected" (in Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 130).

Part of the energy of the Circle has to do with the egalitarian structure, which reflects the Aboriginal philosophy of immanence. In Circle, energy flows from speaker to speaker, creating an opportunity for a different kind of focusing and a different type of awareness about the relationship to self, to one another

and to the whole. We experience having more personal authority when we sit in Circle, compared to when energy is focused on one person at the front, the expert, the authority, the one who is imparting to us knowledge--what we "need" to know.

When we move into a Circle where we can see each other, where the information and the Traditional teachings come through, Choqosh Auh-Ho-Oh, a Chumash shaman, says, "we make of ourselves a crucible, like the alchemist's bowl. All the chemistry of all our beings, from our different countries, our ancestors, our experiences, who we are, the chemistry of our faces and the different looks, creates...the circle (in Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 110). Since North America is now a "multicultural" society, one that is the repository of many people's teachings and methods, our Circles will reflect competing cultural influences. This is becoming increasingly true in the university classroom context, through measures being taken to redress historical inequities in the educational system. It is proposed in this thesis that even with adaptation to difference in cultural composition of the group and in the context, the Circle itself, if it is vital, will produce its own healing and message that is appropriate for its time, place and membership.

CEREMONY: SETTING THE STAGE

Traditionalists teach that successful teaching and healing depends upon clear intention, but such intention is directly connected to honoring the immanent value of each member. We are taught that it is important to honor all in the Circle, and all of life as a part of the Circle. If we are clear about our teachings, we will not be cut off from the real purpose of Circle work, which is to **reaffirm our interconnectedness**. Facilitating direction, the flow of energy, is a

vital role necessary to inspire and maintain the learning/healing intent of Circle work.

Because inequality, evaluation, separation, and individualism are built into the institutional environment, special efforts have to be made to make the Circle a safe space, a "ceremonial basket" (Gunn Allen, 1986), where life-affirming things can happen. To do so, we can return to the ritual traditions of our Elders. If we are going to honor spiritual interconnectedness, intended as a central epistemology of Circle work, care must be taken to do more than place ourselves in a circle formation. If our intentions are to revitalize, rather than appropriate, the powers of the Circle as an ancestral form, we must invite the ancestors and the other powers of life into our learning spaces. To do so requires insight into, thorough understanding, and implementation of ritual or ceremonial practices. Guidance of, or consultation with, other Traditionalists is essential prior to undertaking any Circle work. As one Native participant contributed:

It's a valuable tool for the most part. I also share that concern that sometimes people do not respect certain things and they end up abusing or not knowing the responsibility that goes with the eagle feather, or sweet grass, or different things like that....I think it's important to try to differentiate that there are different teachings. And that whatever teachings you choose to follow, hopefully you have a spirituality advisor because otherwise you just get lost (Ray VC2:15).

The spirituality invoked in ceremonial work is related to the philosophy of Self-In-Relation, and recognition of the dialectical link between individual responsibility and community well-being, the knowledge that each person is responsible for his/her actions, In-Relation to the larger community. Through ceremony, "[t]he person sheds the isolated, individual personality and is restored to conscious harmony with the universe" (Gunn Allen, 1986: 62).

In order to be able to pay proper attention and honor to our ancestral traditions, our Elders advise, the space should be prepared carefully; it should be clean and orderly. Lighting and air, the atmosphere, is very important. In Traditional ceremonial times, the entire atmosphere of the community was charged with excitement and many special activities went on. Special foods, costumes, special prayers and songs were composed--"in short, a circle is drawn around the community and everything within that circle is sacred and taken out of the ordinary" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 39). Feasting, drama, art, singing, dancing and sharing of cultural stories are aspects of ceremony that charge the overall atmosphere, altering the classroom atmosphere in ways that are more conducive to entering the sense of sacred time and space.

In ritual we recognize the powers of the unseen, and begin by calling in the powers of the Directions, that they might bear witness, lend support, and impart wisdom to our efforts. Through the establishment of an "altar", upon which is placed physical manifestations of each element in the centre of the Circle, attention is drawn to the elemental powers. Through an opening meditation on the Medicine Wheel, which invokes the elemental powers of the four directions, the stage is set to open our learning space to the influences of the seen and unseen powers of the universe.

In most Aboriginal Traditions, prior to ceremony, procedures are followed in order to prepare the mind and the body to be receptive, to be open to knowledge and insight to come from anywhere. Smudging, the use of burning herbs for purifying space and one another, has many effects on the individual and collective psyche. It serves as a demarcation of time, notifying everyone that "Circle time" is beginning. It is a signal for the mind to be still and in present time; it provides everyone in the group with a shared embodied experience. As

the sweet-smelling smoke encircles the area it is easy to feel the calming presence of our plant sisters, entering and filling all of those present. Students reported in the journals, feeling immediately present and noticeably more relaxed, as I circle the room with the burning herbs.

It has a very pleasant scent, which in itself is nice, but the circle seemed to draw us all together - to unify the group - which created a sense of purposeful togetherness (Char Jan 14 93-j).

As the sweet grass was being held over the candle flame, a silence fell over the room...a silence that seemed to intensify with the passing minutes.

I could feel myself growing very relaxed and comfortable as the sweet grass slowly made its way around the room. I was able to shift my thoughts away from my worries and concerns of the day and focus solely on the situation at hand. This was especially soothing for me as I often find it more difficult to free myself of my racing thoughts (Analee Sept 29 93-t1).

I find the smudging a very powerful experience, it helps calm my mind and allows me to feel peace inside myself! (Randi Mar 31 93-j).

The sweet grass and smudging ceremony reminds me of gentleness and the need for community members to be gentle with one another (Eileen 93-j).

Once sitting in Circle, our spirit helpers invoked, our minds cleared, we are ready to begin to share our selves with each other, in an effort to learn more through dialogue. It is important to put in place a style of communicating that will build respect amongst individuals. In Aboriginal community, a "sacred object" is used in Circle to facilitate communication. Whoever holds the object has the total focus and attention of the group. The object can be any natural energy form, as all have immanent value: including a specially carved and decorated stick, a crystal, a feather, a ceremonial artifact, or anything that the group decides upon. Some people use a vertically held stick to represent the unity of earth and sky, some a crystal to amplify whatever anyone is feeling, some a

feather to carry the thoughts expressed to the Spirit world. During highly ceremonial occasions, a Medicine Pipe is used to remind the participants of the sacredness and importance of the council, and our connection to all life forms. A simple unadorned stick or a rock that is found spontaneously for such an occasion can be used as a reminder to the Circle of the simplicity of speaking and sharing from the heart. Group members can take turns providing "sacred objects", giving individuals an opportunity to share something of themselves with the group.

As many university students tend to be very much on the surface of their feelings, crystals can be used as intensifiers: amethyst for clearing, and clear quartz for healing. A special gift from my South American sisters, a "rain stick", which when turned vertically, makes the sound of the rainforest, is brought to celebrate rainy days, to encourage people to take time to let the rain "wash" their thoughts before they speak. On special occasions, clearing up of conflict, I have used the "talking feathers": eagle feathers prepared for the purpose of Circle work (Graveline, 1994).

TALKING CIRCLE AS PEDAGOGY

To instill respect for language, and for truth, my Elders counselled, "Don't talk too much"...which most often meant "Don't talk too often", or "Don't talk too long," or especially, "Don't talk about matters that you know nothing about". Elder Ned shares in the Native American belief that words are sacred, and "spoken words are infused with power that increases in value with repetition" (in Cruikshank, 1992: 267).

According to Marie Battiste (1986), a Mi'kmaq scholar, oral narration was so important to the ancestors, the most principled and persuasive speakers

often became leaders of the tribe because they expressed and lived the ideals of the Communities. Deloria Jr. (1994) concurs, "In the old days leadership depended on the personal prestige of the people whom the community chose as its leaders. Their generosity, service to the community, integrity, and honesty had to be above question" (248). According to Johnston, an Ojibway author, "[s]o precious did the tribe regard language and speech that it held those who abused language and speech and truth in contempt and ridicule and withheld from them their trust and confidence" (1992: 10).

Proper conduct was established with regard to the sharing of speech, to build community values of: Respect, Honesty, Caring and Sharing (Geo, 1993). Isabelle Knockwood (1992), a Mi'kmaq Elder, describes the "Talking Stick" process:

Our Mi'kmaw ancestors used the Talking Stick to guarantee that everyone who wanted to speak would have a chance to be heard and that they would be allowed to take as long as they needed to say what was on their minds without fear of being interrupted with questions, criticisms, lectures or scoldings, or even of being presented with solutions to their problems. An ordinary stick of any kind or size is used. Those seated in the Circle commit themselves to staying to the end, not getting up to leave or walk about because this behaviour is considered an interruption. Anyone who leaves the Circle can return and sit with the latecomers whose only role is to observe and listen. This is because they have missed some information and therefore cannot offer advice or make an informed decision. The person who has a problem or an issue to discuss holds the Talking Stick and relates everything pertaining to it especially everything they have done to solve it. After they are through, they pass the stick to the person on their left, following the sun's direction. The next person, Negem, states everything they know about the problem without repeating anything that was already said. They tell what they or others have done in similar situations. They neither agree nor disagree with what others have said.

The Talking Stick goes around until it returns to the person with the problem or issue, who then acknowledges everyone present and what they have said. Sometimes the solution or answer comes as soon as everyone has spoken. Maybe the

person has already thought it out, or it may come as an inspiration on the long trek back home. Or else, it could appear in the form of a vision or a dream. Dreams were a very important part of problem-solving with the First People of the land. Maybe a Spirit Guide will come, or some new information will be brought to light or a series of events will fall into place... (7-8).

Isabelle's story of the Talking Stick impresses upon us several important Traditions of Talking Circle. One very essential norm of the Circle is that no one is to interrupt the person holding the sacred object. The commitment is the same as in other learning situations--to sit and attentively listen, allowing the wisdom of the teacher/speaker to really be heard. We must each learn to pay each other full attention and to take responsibility for maintaining focus on what each speaker is sharing. This assists people to learn not to project their experience and feelings onto others. The only way to really "know", to really see/hear someone else, is to fully experience and own our emotions and thoughts. Through respectful listening we are better able to enter into another's experience through their words.

Talking in Circle reminds us that to speak is a privilege, that spoken thoughts--words--are sacred. In our Tradition, words are carefully chosen and carefully listened to so that the power of the words and the images behind them "travel between the speaker and the other individuals to become One Thought" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 42). This kind of group consciousness--"collective mindfulness"--exists when each individual's thoughts are directed to a collective thought and collective objectives. "Collective mindfulness [is] the concentration brought to an idea or thought by a lot of people at the same time...one is mindful when one is aware, respectful, careful" (42). Mind-full-ness orchestrates the power of thought, helping actualize "the ability to create, transform, and vitalize" (Beck and Walters, 1977: 43). In many creation stories, the world was thought

into existence (Gunn Allen, 1986, 1991). This reminds us of the importance of the study of Traditional beliefs and the process of transmission of the ancestral worldview.

THE PROCESS IN-USE

Through use in the classroom as pedagogy, and in the project as a research tool, I learned that clarifying the process and the intent underlying Talking Circle is essential. This is especially true as participants most often are unacculturated to the Circle process. Clarification can result in simplification of the Circle process, inviting participants to join in the experience, rather than resist the unfamiliarity of it. It is a good idea to begin each Circle by stating clearly if a specific form or theme is intended. This helps participants to understand what is expected, to collectivize the focus, and keep the process on track.

Circle "rules" In-Use were articulated at the outset of each Circle on CCI, and became more concise in that evolutionary process. The basic rules of Talking Circle are: one speaker at a time; the person holding the special object is the speaker; and, all others are to be respectfully listening to that person. In Talking Circle you speak your own voice; describe what your own experience has been. You have the opportunity to express what you feel is on your heart to say. The point is: to speak "from your heart", of what moves you, of what spirit moves through you, when the sacred object reaches your hands. To choose words with care and thoughtfulness is to speak in a sacred manner. This usually takes time and experience; explicit modelling and direction and patience are required. Time, linear Western time, is often an obstacle to using the Circle in academia. "Do not rush the council", my Elders counsel. To speak from the

depths of the heart can be difficult for those not accustomed to it and it can not happen if time is being measured. Students need to be cautioned: "Be easy on yourself....If you find your mind rehearsing, just take some deep breaths and focus on the speaker. The speaker, like you, deserves to be heard" (Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 47). There is as much energy to be put forward into respectfully listening and really trying to hear what the other speakers are saying as there is in articulating your own voice. It's the balance of that energy that makes a Circle positive or powerful. By attending to others and speaking from your heart, you honor yourself, the speaker, the Circle, and the spirit of interconnectedness.

As the sacred object is passed from hand to hand, and the Circle becomes deeper, emotions are shared more freely. Speaking and listening respectfully in Circle create an atmosphere of compassion, the building block of community. Circle process can teach the foundations upon which a proper relationship to oneself and others is developed. The state of conscious awareness contained within a Circle of interconnectedness can generate openness that is rare in Western society today. The energy of a Circle can create a space that can allow for the unorthodox to enter and the unexpected to happen. People, including myself, often find themselves exploring issues and making disclosures to themselves and others that surprise them. As modern-day shamans have found, "[w]hen people gather in a circle and their intentions are aligned, it can help them drop the armouring of their personality structures.....On the societal level it is also healing because it is a perfect form for joining different groupings of people" (Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 2).

The Talking Circle process, kin to Talking Stick (Knockwood, 1992), can be useful as a pedagogical tool when people need to share feelings, experiences, or their point of view. Participants from diverse backgrounds can

gain insight as they "speak heartfully" and "listen respectfully" as others voice, together reflecting on experiences of racism and cultural difference. The Circle process, as adapted for classroom and research use, was embraced by many student and community participants. As one Native woman, Dee, exclaimed at one of the Circles on CCI:

I think about coming here and being with people again, and feeling the closeness that comes from being in a group of women that I know. And I have to leave out men because he's not here. I'm not being discriminating, but it really helps...I'm so grateful to be here! (Dee TC3:2).

Some non-Native students also gave strongly positive reviews of the Circle process overall. As Van declared:

And I really yearn to be here, (laughs) which is the only word I can say! I took Jean's course and it really touched me. It made an impact on me, and so I want to participate as much as I can (Van TC3:4).

Cindy drew parallels between the Circle process and her assessment of Canadian culture.

The Talking Circle is a nice place because at least there's a place that people can tell what they want to say and it allows different opinions. For me, this Circle reflects the whole environment in Canada. I appreciate some of the culture here. It allows different opinions to be voiced out, though you can't change many things (Cindy TC2:12).

Later in the same Circle, Cindy reflected at a deeper level on her own process of identity construction through Circle.

And it gives me a chance because I'm not so confident about my part, and I think it takes time for a minority to build up your confidence to confront the dominant culture. As for me, many, many immigrants, when (we) come to the dominant culture, we just

try our hardest to integrate or assimilate to the main culture. And then suddenly, I shift my focus and try to maintain my own culture. This needs another kind of mechanism or another kind of strength and confidence to do this. I found that the Talking Circle keeps everybody silenced and I'm the only one to talk. Then I can have time to think and arrange what I'm going to say....It is an entry point for people to find their voice and to speak up (Cindy TC2:33).

Some community participants also expressed open appreciation for the process. Some Native community participants were already experienced in Circle, but little opportunity exists for urban Natives to actively participate in Circle, so appreciation was expressed for the chance to take part.

I love coming to the Circles, each and every one of them. I've always enjoyed them. And the only thing that I'm sorry for is that most of them, in any Talking circle...my situation or story had to be such a downer and I don't mean it to be that way, but that's the way my life has been, mostly an uphill battle all the way (Redbird TC3:11).

To community participants outside the Native community, Circle was most often newly introduced to them in class and through the Circles on CCI data collection process. Those newly initiated often had positive reviews. "So I feel like I learned a lot through the process of just seeing how it works, and how effective it can be" (Sis TC3:3). Another community participant expressed how impressed she was, and how the experience strongly impacted on her and her family members who had participated in the class.

I was introduced to the Circles the Acadian night. I came with my grandmother and basically deferred to her in a lot of different areas, but it was quite enlightening for me. What really impressed me was the fact that it is very open and it is very easy to express your feelings. I was quite taken back as a matter of fact. I'm from a corporate background....I was really impressed by it and I was walking around on a cloud for about a week I felt tingly for about a week. It was really good....The other thing is; I am a lesbian and I found that (names sister) has been really opened up in the last three or four

months....certainly trying to learn more about how I feel and I really appreciate that. And I think that Circle had a lot to do with that as well (Cat VC3:13).

VOICE: HEARTFULLY SPEAKING

Speaking in Circle can also be a process of finding one's own voice: Circle talk requires all those that do speak, to address their own experiences and feelings rather than generalizing or theorizing about others. This, I have found, is a new and sometimes terrifying possibility for those who have been acculturated to be cut off from their hearts. Char expressed this sentiment:

I was able to speak my feelings - very briefly tonight. It's never easy for me to do this, but every time I've been able to do it, I have felt better about myself for being honest, open, and following my own integrity (Char Feb 10 93-j).

Vina, a student from the Black community, journalled her first experience of participating in Circle Talk. She signals the ambivalence which is often felt by speakers unaccustomed to having an opportunity to speak what they know, without criticism or backlash from their classmates.

After smudging we talked in circle. Jean started to pass around a crystal. With this crystal people can tell stories of their experiences or just say what ever they wished to share with the group or decide to pass the crystal along without saying anything. This was very nerve wracking. Knowing my turn was coming, knowing the crystal was getting closer, what would I say? Do I just pass the crystal to the next person? What do I do, what do I say? Oh, no, it's my turn. Then I decided to answer a question someone asked earlier. It was on the term Indian, she wondered where the term had come from. After my answer I thought hay, that was not bad (Vina 93-j).

Vina's experience was "not bad" in that she was able to speak when her turn came. But she did not address an issue from First Voice, something close to

her heart or her own life experience. This is a more difficult level of involvement in the process and happened for Vina in the next round.

However, the crystal went around a second time. Now what do I say? Do I respond to the term mulatto which (another student) had used during the first crystal round. As the crystal went around the circle I must have changed my mind at least five times. Yes I will respond, no I won't, yes, no, yes, no, yes then as the crystal approached me I said no I won't comment because this would mean I would have to share an experience from my life. My mind was made up, no. Suddenly the crystal was passed to me, & I felt compelled to speak. To speak from the heart. I didn't want to speak. I really just wanted to pass the crystal, but I couldn't. All of a sudden my mouth started to speak, these words came out and I could not control them. They were neither anger or judgemental. They were not accusing, they were calm & I began to explain. Mulatto I explain was offensive to me, because I am a light skin black female, I am asked frequently about my cultural background. However the problem does not lie with whites who ask. My only advise to (student) & anyone else who really don't know was to "JUST ASK" (Vina 93-j).

Ambivalence and anxiety were also reported by some White students. The struggle to find voice, to speak heartfully in Circle about topics related to race relations, challenges all participants to be self-reflective and culturally-located. Analee tells her Circle-talk story.

After the burning of sweet grass, the class prepared to take part in circle talk. That safe, peaceful feeling I had experienced earlier was quickly replaced with feelings of anxiety as circle talk began. As the stone came closer and closer to me I felt a certain churning in my stomach....I had to ask myself why?

As the beautiful stone sat in the palm of my hand I paused for a moment, but was unable to come up with the words to describe how I was feeling, so...I passed the stone on and remained very silent.

The stone travelled around the room a second time. This would mean I would have yet another opportunity to speak in circle. Before I knew it I was sitting quietly in my seat staring down at the stone in my hand. I sat for a few moments as the thoughts began racing through my head. Finally, I began to speak. I felt scared as I listened to the tremor in my voice....I had to ask myself, why? (Analee Sept 29 93-t1).

Analee spent a few minutes in an internal dialogue, trying to find answers to these questions. She continued her entry.

As a result of what I have learned recently about oppression, I was able to realize that I was doing the very thing that I have identified in myself as being oppressive - I was avoiding talking about anything that made me feel a little uneasy...anything that was the least bit unfamiliar to me. As a result, I was able to sit and remain unattached and emotionally distant.

Being able to see this in myself, I began to feel a little saddened. So, as the stone moved around the circle for a second time, I chose to take a risk and try to share with the class what was running through my mind. I was feeling...I was feeling scared and overwhelmed...but I was feeling. I was glad that I was able to share my fears of unfamiliar - my fears of sharing my thoughts and feelings (Analee Sept 29 93-t1).

When participants are able to grow throughout the course to be able to speak from their hearts, this enabled them to be more in touch with feelings--their own and others. Analee concluded her journal with the following entry.

This class did play a very important role in my learning - it provided what I felt was a safe place to speak from the heart. Sometimes this is a difficult task for me because there is so much that I am learning about myself. It can be scary, exciting, and sad all in one. I am learning to feel more - to speak from my heart and not my head. Sometimes it is easy to absorb what is being taught and not let it touch you, or touch your heart...this is something this class has given me the opportunity to do (Analee, Dec 1 93-j).

Through Circle, students can come to understand the daily lived experience of racism and White privilege as they draw on their own and each others' experiences. Circle-talk helps students gain a sense of trust in their fellow classmates and helps to equalize power between instructor and students as we all sit in the Circle together. Through passing the "sacred object" each in

turn, "speaking from the heart", with others present in Circle, maintaining respectful silence and bearing "witness" to the experiences of each other, individuals can come to believe that what they say will be listened to and accepted without criticism.

SILENCE: RESPECTFULLY LISTENING

Using the Aboriginal Talking Circle reminds us of the relationship between "who speaks?" and "who listens?". We are taught that we require silence, "respectfully listening" to accompany voice "heartfully speaking". When we see silence only as produced through an exercise in domination, we are missing the significance of silence to voice. Aboriginal people are taught to respect silence as a pedagogical tool. In Circle, we listen "as witness", respectfully, to the experience of others. According to Cahill and Halpern (1992), "Learning how to witness is essential because we live in a time when great numbers of people are beginning to tell their truths. Some of these are hard to hear...yet they must be told and heard. When they are not heard properly the telling is undermined and damage, rather than healing, may result. It can take a long time to regain the courage to tell the story again" (Cahill and Halpern, 1992: 75).

Through having to respectfully listen to each speaker, participants are able to gain an empathic appreciation for points of view other than their own.

After hearing from first voices thus far from the black culture, the Inuit culture, the Native culture, and now the Acadian culture, I am finally not just experiences feelings of guilt but now feelings of downright envy, because my white culture pales in comparison to the pride and richness associated with each of the above mentioned cultures (Ken Feb 17 93-j).

It is a large shift in consciousness to move from pity and guilt to embracing the "pride and richness" of the culture. Listening to others in Circle does provide an opportunity for self-examination. It can help provide the social context for an experience/viewpoint previously understood as "personal".

Not until last week have I come to total grips with the fact that the incident two years ago was not a personal attack on me, but indeed a direct product of oppression. I only fully realized this after hearing a class full of students sharing their experiences of oppression last week. It hit me, if I experienced the oppression on a daily basis even half as strong as some of these students said they did, then I would most likely express anger and frustration in not so appropriate ways (Ken Jan 29 93-j).

Participating in the experience of Circle provided a lens for Van to interrogate herself and her "representations" of Native culture.

I have always been interested in Native folklore and the spiritual aspects of the culture. This interest was natural to me and I nourished through reading books, both fact and fiction. As informative as reading is, it is still second hand knowledge. The reader does not have first hand experience with what they are reading, and is removed from the material.

For me, this distancing allowed me to romanticize some aspects of the native culture. The talking circle is a ritual that I put in a romantic light. I turned this into something "ideal" instead of real. I did not envision it as real people sharing real sorrows and struggles and pain. My vision was more of wise elders telling of spirit quests and native tales of long ago. This to me had nothing to do with the real world and the anger and resentment of the native peoples toward the white culture.

This is where my whiteness shines through, giving me the luxury of not having to think any other way but white. The sharing done by our First Nations guests in circle the other night, certainly helped to put issues into perspective for me. I also realize there are other forms of sharing within the native customs and minimized this with my romantic notions (Van Oct 13 93-j).

Altering who speaks and who listens, and "reauthorizing" (Schenke, 1991) what can and cannot be said is an act of radical transformation. Helping

students be empowered to find voice is often an aspect of transformational pedagogy, but requiring silence from those who have been accustomed to voice is not. I reflect on this dilemma in Circle Talk on CCI.

One of our ways of working in Circle is that people are not compelled to speak! If what you get out of Circle is you hear a story that resonates with you, and you never find a voice to say your own story, you're still getting the listening part, you're still taking in the Circle. Maybe not everybody has to be empowered to voice in Circle. That's something I've been really struggling with because, being silenced often myself, when I came to the teaching project, my biggest ambition was to get every student voice-full in class...I have found, really, in my teaching experience...trying to figure out what to do when you've got always a few, mostly white students, who are USED to having voicefulness, and then you've got other students from First Voice who are used to being silenced, and then you've got people all used to having the teacher talk at them, where is the beginning transformational point going to be there? (Fyre TC2:24).

Through teaching the Circle process, I found, quite by accident, that experiencing silence for White, middle-class students was a profound learning to them. For many Western students a lesson in silence is needed as much as a lesson in speaking, as many have rarely experienced lack of voice, so have little respect for the power of words, or the act of resistance inherent in claiming lost voice. If we recognize that differences in experience exist due to cultural locatedness among other factors, then acknowledging these differences in our pedagogies means reflecting critically on the dialectical relationship of silence and voice.

While many reviewed Circle Talk and First Voice as primary learning and healing aspects, other participants paid more attention to the aspect of silence and the struggles inherent in learning to listen. While the power of giving voice--speaking heartfully--is an expressed value of Circle talk, the process itself requires much more listening respectfully than talking. The lesson of respect for

silence embedded in the Circle process impacts on participants' voicefulness in sometimes unexpected ways. While respectfully listening is a valued attribute in Aboriginal societies, and "active listening" a highly theorized skill in the social work profession, it is often under-utilized in Western styles of communication. As Cindy declared:

Talking Circle has a good function; they are forced to listen. Though they may not like to listen. (laugh) If for confrontation; sometimes I find that they are so defensive. ...They may not take our words. But now it's a Talking Circle, they know at this moment they should listen. And I wonder how many times in their lives that they can sit down and listen to what other people say....

Maybe after awhile we can shift to another Circle that we can confront each other. But when we confront there's a risk that the people will be very defensive and they will not listen to what you say. And it's a win and lose situation for white people they are very competitive. (laughs) (Cindy TC2:33).

Participants reflected on the difficulty of "unlearning" the "activist" mentality. It is a challenge to try to stop competing, analyzing, or trying to change or "fix" what the speaker's "problem" is, and to learn to really listen to what is being said.

I like the idea of being able to be a listener and reflect, or especially if you're an activist, you tend to just be proactive and jump in to everything and go crazy and there's times in our lives that it's really important to hear First Voices and learn from that (Gracie CC2:34).

Cal reflected on learning the Circle process from his own cultural location. He spoke out about the difficulty of learning to listen in Circle Talk.

The first time I did it, I had a little hard time with it and it's only now that I realize why. We were talking about voices, when someone else is talking, people actually listen, you're not preparing a response like we normally are.... You don't have 5 or 6

people talking at the same time. It's also so respectful as well. (Cal CC2:31).

Cal articulated his recognition of what has been previously theorized as "collective mindfulness" (Beck and Walters, 1977).

There's so much that we think, that doesn't have to be said. I can remember being at home and feeling at one in that environment; where we could go for hours, sometimes days, without ever having to ever speak to anyone, and that was ok. There were things that were understood, it's a language unto itself. Thoughts were understood. Anyway, to some extent, it's like being here, there is a union without the words having been expressed. We don't have to respond to everything. There is a degree of understanding. (Cal CC2:31).

This is only possible if the group has acculturated to the norm of respectfully listening. The presence of collective-mindfulness is considered by Traditionalists to indicate "successful" Circle work, as communication is occurring without relying on expressed words. Silence in this deeper sense makes possible a form of communication less distorted by "representations" or "signifiers". When we are sitting in Circle, telling our stories, sharing our learnings through experience, our feelings, we are establishing relationships among the Circle participants uncommon in the Western educational context.

In embracing any Traditional pedagogy, it is essential to acknowledge the role that time, timing, taking time, plays in our healing and learning processes. In contrast with Western chronological consciousness, to the Traditionalist, "time is not a phenomenon that we can waste or spend, but we must learn to patiently move through it" (Absolon, 1994: 9). Learning patience, to wait for, to know the time and place, when transformation is taking place, is considered part of healing and learning cycles. Time, patience and relationships are all required to learn and teach in the Traditional way.

Honoring the time that is necessary, practising patience through the process and acknowledging one's relationships are all central....Practising these teachings is not easy given the fast paced lifestyle and technologies of contemporary society, yet it is necessary to train and discipline our minds, body and spirit. There are no quick recipes for zapping sacred knowledge into the essences of who we are. (Absolon, 1994: 33)

Neither are there quick recipes for curing the ills of individuals/communities/nations today. Mac Saulis (1994), a Maliseet educator, gives further depth to the Traditional belief-set regarding Time.

Time and timing are an important consideration since one needs time to learn, to change, to heal and to grow. There is time for things to happen, that spiritual influences destine things to happen in a given way. No one will determine the time for things to happen. rather a number of elements have to come together in order for events to take place. Time has a physical, emotional and spiritual dimension, which depends on other people to understand the message of each dimension. Some people understand the future, some the present, and others the significance of the past. One must take time in order to listen for messages and to comprehend the significance of what they hear. People become wise only with time and effort. Time is a thing we experience and through experience you see the value of time. Time is an integral part of the whole continuum of culture and tradition, and the heritage gained (1994: 16).

Taking the time to practice sharing and mutuality builds individual and community strength through egalitarianism, as we become more able to recognize our immanence and interconnectedness with each other.

These are essential understandings if we are to build community across diversity, inside the classroom and out--the theme of the West--to which we will now turn our attention.

CHAPTER SIX: THE WEST: BUILDING COMMUNITY INSIDE THE CLASS AND OUT

Sharing our feelings and experiences in Circle is one strategy, of many, that our ancestors relied on to build community. Community relied on individuals to develop their sense of Self-In-Relation and was based on the insight that we are all part of the larger Circle of life. Building and sustaining community is a deep concern to Aboriginal people, as our community structures have been shattered through imposition of colonial measures. They need to be repaired. The retention of the value of community in the modern-day is reflected in the description by Maggie Hodgson (1990), a Cree healer, of a Native women's group: "Their greatest strength is their community-mindedness built on self-help and peer support. In keeping with the Native way, what they receive is given back to the community as their spirits touch the community in a healing way" (38). This Traditional epistemology was also reflected in statements articulated by Native participants in Circle Talk on CCI.

I guess that all comes out of looking at yourself as a Native person. Or as who you are!....It's not assimilating, but having assimilation imposed on you - well, are the people really recognizing that? They feel that you have to bring, and you do have to bring it full circle, when you go out to university you have to come back. I feel you have to come back to your community and do something for your community. So that is a concept of the Circle that I believe in. That it goes, but it comes back, eh? (Jose VC2:13).

Coming together in a Circle, caring for each other, sharing with each other, helping each other gain a better understanding of our cultural locatedness, our Self-In-Relation, is considered by Traditionalists to be necessary today for the transformation of the society. We are working to re-establish the individual in connection to the community and In-Relation to

Mother Earth. Collins (1990) points out that the type of community implicit in the market model is an arbitrary one based on competition and domination. For instance, she notes that Afrocentric models of community emphasize connection, caring and personal accountability. Rejecting existing models of power, she puts forth an alternate vision based on self-definition and self-determination. Fulani (1988) maintains that the system works to undermine our sense of community, history and solidarity, as it poses a threat to the current status quo. It is a commonsense reality to our Communities, that the authorities are acting to erode our community ties. In the name of progress, community has become constructed as the dualistic opposite of individualism/individual freedom, Western society's "highest value" (Fox-Genovese, 1991: 7). According to Fox-Genovese (1991), "[t]he ideal of community in the abstract is hopelessly utopian and today amounts to little more than a metaphor for those bonds among individuals that the market is eroding" (54). Society is becoming increasingly atomized--each individual increasingly relying upon a sense of morality which focuses primarily on social relationships as a function of our own personal choices. "Hence, obligations towards, and alliances with others, obtain a provisional character" (Jansen and Wildemeersch, 1992: 9). This construction of community leads to an escalation of individual isolation, hopelessness and despair. One student reflects on her perception of difference in cultural interpretation of the construct community.

*Community seems to mean true connectedness and caring
- what the world lacks today in our capitalistic alienating, cold,
efficient society. It's obviously what we need more of! (Lola Dec
92-jsum).*

COMMUNITY THEMES

Community is a sacred concept with high value in Aboriginal culture. The rebuilding of Self-In-Relation--the connection between the individual and the Community--is an act of resistance, given the level of individualism in society today. Therefore it was of central importance in my curriculum building and collection and analysis of data regarding the Model-In-Use. I took a highly community-oriented approach--which emphasized Self-In-Relation to the Communities at many levels. Outreach to and networking with the Communities was necessary for the Model to be functional. At the outset my links to the Black, Native, Acadian, and other cultural Communities were limited due to my recent relocation to the area.

When I first got here to teach this course, I didn't know anybody in the community at all. When you look at the number of people that have come in to my class through using community outreach, some people say, that's because you know the community. ...But in terms of the structures of Blackness here, the structures of Micmac culture here, or Acadian...my job in this course was learning about the community, because I feel that it's really essential for people to know their community...I feel that it is possible, and I have modeled how to develop community while you're learning about community (Fyre TC3:23).

The involvement of students in task-oriented work, which involved outreach to the Communities, helped to build the network necessary to deliver the Model. For example, one student arranged for a panel of several Black social workers to come in and speak out about their experiences as service providers in the System.

Tonight's class was a presentation by Black Social Workers. They are so outnumbered in their offices/agencies and they seem to be given not only all the black caseload, but all the minority ones as well - ethnic, disabled!

It must be hard for them when racism is so ingrained. For example, one woman described how everyone in her office had made such a big fuss about St. Patrick's Day - and had virtually ignored Black history month. It must hurt a lot (Char Mar 17 93-j).

Talking Circles with input from the members of the Community provided crucial data about building social work relationships and community building across diversity in the classroom. An edited version of my own theme-building work at one Circle on CCI will provide an outline of the overall emphasis placed on "community" in this Model-In-Use. Making the class a place where people can be connected with each other requires altering pedagogical forms in a multiple of ways. This excerpt reinforced how culturally-constructed our notions of community-building are.

I've tried to make the class a place where people can be connected with each other, at a number of different levels, by doing teaching in a lot of different ways. To try to make people feel more comfortable about bringing their children in, bringing their Elders in to class. Talking from their hearts. Feasting after class, a social time so that people can socialize together and learn together from that. So that people can be together. Dancing, having dancers in, having (guests) teach dance. One day we had...thirty people from the (Black community group) dancing, singing, doing poetry in the class here...It was wonderful! Those are the kinds of classes that I really remember as building community, as being times when people really got something more than just the theory out of it. They got a sense of relationship, they got a sense of community. They got a sense of understanding about what it means to be in relation. That's the heart of the West, being in relation. How do we notice that we're connected to other people? We notice because we have feelings....because we have conversation with them. We hug them. We dance with them. We sing with them. Those are the things that are the heart of the community. And we work together, we do things together to make a change. Those are the kinds of things I was trying to teach about community...Our culture really defines what we see as community and what is important in community...the way that I see community building is very Natively defined. The way Native people build community is by singing together, by dancing together, by eating together, by sharing stories together, experiences together. By

sitting in Circle together....How can we build that kind of community here? (Fyre TC3:9).

A White community participant, who had taken the course from another instructor in the past, also related my Aboriginal identity to the development of community in the classroom.

When I think of how you brought community in to the classroom literally and figuratively, it makes sense that it happened because of who you are as the teacher in structuring the whole exercise, who you brought in and who the students were. When I think of the difference - Most of my classes at the School; whether the B.S.W. or M.S.W., have been largely White students and always White teachers, and readings by White men and women usually. And how can you have community in that setting when our community is multi-racial and lingual? It is filled with all kinds of people with different genders and sexual orientations and experiences, as far as economics and all that stuff. How can you have community reflected when everybody's from the same perspective and that's all we're talking about? (Sis TC3:16).

COMMUNITY AND NUMBERS

In adapting Traditional methods as tools for transformative pedagogy, a small-group Circle (15-25) is the pattern that works best, because it is somewhere in between the individual and the mass. In a smaller group, you can connect more intimately and become more strongly bonded, you can build community, recognizing commonalities and differences in each other, and at the same time become more aware of yourself as a socially constructed individual. When other pedagogical forms take precedence, the atmosphere is different, "less safe", and less "personal" material is processed in class. Responses from two students who began the course in a overly large group will serve to illustrate the impact of size on group functioning.

I've been thinking a little bit about the size of the group. I found after we split up...I found that was good because there was (fewer) students - And I found that was just great because we had time to be in the Circle (Vada TC2:36).

I don't know if it's possible to have the class, to have people in the class get to know each other better because the issues are so heavy and because there is resistance and because students are...so challenged by the course. People are coming from such different places and all of those places are being given voice for the first time. So I don't know if it's possible for the students to come together more...our Circle, at times, was too big (Kate TC2:34).

Community is illustrated and built into class through working actively to recruit representation from more than one, tokenistic, voice from the group. This was by far, for me, the most exciting aspect of developing community in the classroom.

As far as seeing community in action, I think one of the clearest times we had that, seeing all the diversity in community in action was when, (student) brought in several members from the Chinese community and...other members from the Immigrant community. We could see all of the class/race and gender lines being drawn right there in the classroom as people disagreed on certain issues and represented their own voice, and it was a really beautiful illustration of how complex community is. Community isn't just what one person can say about it. Community is that all of these different people with all of their different agendas, all trying to live in community in some way....that was one of the beautiful illustrations of...how in reality that all comes to be (Fyre TC3:5).

Cal echoed my feelings in another Circle, when he discussed a presentation in which several members of the Black community were involved.

That was so powerful for me. I can remember getting so choked up in the class feeling that degree of family and community in that class. And the fact that people who came, they all came, we were talking about culture but everybody came with a different perception of, not necessarily what culture was, but what the role might be in terms of dealing with issues in the community. I

thought that was so...so interesting....people were really passionate about it (Cal CC2:15).

CROSSING AGE/GENDER LINES

Building community in the classroom, is linked to reinforcing connections between different cultures as well as cutting across the age and gender lines. Cultural ideals of the importance of family togetherness to build community strength, interrogates the Western divide and conquer mentality. Why are we forced to learn separately from our children, our Elders, our other family members? This is so ingrained it is rarely challenged in Western schooling. This Model-In-Use challenges this "commonsense" notion of schooling by encouraging family groups to come to class. Several family groups participated in the classroom, and in Circle Talk on CCI. Many others have brought their children, sisters, partners, Elders, friends to share in class work. I expressed my heartfelt appreciation to the families present at Circle, as I have experienced it as a very enriching experience.

One of the really strong things about my experience in university...the White Model of Education is to divide everybody into their right age group, into their right everything group, and have them learn separately from each other, and I think it's so rich to be able to learn...from our own family members and with our own families present. And I've always taken the opportunity to invite my family to come to Circle and I really appreciate you guys coming as a family group. I love that. That's really nice (Fyre VC1:13).

A Black participant expressed very positive feelings towards being able to participate with his partner in class.

In the class of the several guests, one of whom was my partner, it was nice to see her in that form. As the feather was passed, I introduced her as my partner and mother of my two year

old son. I welcomed her to the class and to a safe environment. I also attempted to point out to the class how grateful I was for her and for the courage that she has displayed over the years of our relationship (Cal Jan 94-j).

Elders, children and families can play a vital role in transformation of the classroom atmosphere, when a link is established between them and the classroom community. Elders can be used as a metaphorical bridge between the two cultural domains. Elders are repositories of cultural and philosophical knowledge and are the transmitters of such information. Using Elders in the classroom can help to combat the idea that university degrees are the only avenue to knowledge. "Now, the elders speak...Let us honor them by listening to them and learning from their wisdom" (Medicine, 1987: 149). Many varied lessons are available from the words of Elders in the classroom. Analee journalled the personal impact one Elder had on her.

This brings me to something that [name], an Elder, shared in story circle tonight. She spoke about how so many of us spend so much time wishing we had "this and that", or that we could lose weight, or gain weight, or be more serious, or funnier, or taller, or shorter, or smarter....wish, wish, wish....I think most of us think by having these things we will be better people, or happier people, or maybe even better liked by others. [name] said that even if these wishes were granted, who says that they would make us happier, or make us better people? She stressed the importance of being happy with who you are now and trying to be the best person you can possibly be...an important lesson for me (Analee Oct 13 93-j).

Tia journalled the impact of the Elders' presence at the field trip we took to the community-based Native justice diversion project.

...what really made me aware was the fact that the diversion process values the voice of its elders and recognizes the importance of their presence in the community. Today we live in a world that does not respect its elders and listen to what they have to say. Instead we wait until our elders reach a certain age and put them in manors to basically die. However, from what I have

learned this year the Micmac and other Aboriginal peoples respect their elders and they clearly hold a valuable place in the community. From what I have learned all people are valued and seen as unique parts of the community. In a way I feel envious of this bond and inner peace that does not exist in white culture (Tia 93-)).

The need to show respect for Elders is a cross-cultural value, and was expressed by a Elder of another cultural minority.

We have always to learn to respect Elders, because we cannot overlook the fact that the Elders mostly they have learned from the experience of life. The book of life has taught them so many things which it never teaches a young person because we haven't gone through all those things (Erma VC3:6).

Elders, and other community guests must be treated respectfully.

Beatrice Medicine (1987), a Cree educator, challenges us to interrogate our "use" of Elders in the classroom. She asks: "Are they exploited as informants? Are they used without consultation? Are their duties explained previous to their entrance into an educational institution? Is their cultural mandate understood?" (1987: 50). She cautions us that "asking an elder to bestow a name upon non-natives or to offer prayers delves into delicate cultural norms" (1987: 150).

It is essential to learn local norms for asking Elders or other community guests to participate. I caution students, if they are unfamiliar with the norms, to find that out first. Gaining entry into the "knowledge banks" of community members requires respect, patience, honoring, and reciprocity. Certain steps can be taken to honor the Elders and other invited guests: invite other community members to help establish comfort in a dominantly White group; encourage guests to bring family members or friends from their personal network; adopt the Traditional practice of obligation towards feasting and gifting the Elders and guests for their contributions. One group of students invited

several foster parents from the Black community to the class. Nadine documented this process. It is a good example of respectful community building through task work.

[Students] then contacted one or two of the foster parents and requested their time and assistance in participating in our presentation. A total of six parents were contacted, all female, who are the primary care-givers in their homes. Contact was made by telephone initially, then followed up by a personal visit...

Two of the four women indicated they were "shy" and were not certain if they could contribute anything to the discussion. We assured the women that their experiences were important and not to be intimidated as the students were small in number and interested in learning from their experiences. We informed the women that the presentation would be informal, refreshments would be served and we would try to make them as comfortable as possible....On the day of the presentation we provided transportation for the foster parents, babysitting services were not required (Nadine Mar 29 93-t3).

STORYTELLING AS A COMMUNITY BUILDING PEDAGOGY

It is important to develop an atmosphere that will allow a style of discourse which is familiar to the Elders and guests, so that they understand the expectations and can contribute in a meaningful way to the process or topic. Storytelling is an excellent method of giving speakers an opportunity for uninterrupted voice, in a manner culturally conditioned for many diverse groups, and rich in learning for the listener. The ultimate value of storytelling is to recreate a situation for someone who has not lived through it, so the listener can benefit from the teller's experience. Stories, told by Elders, shamans, and other "authorities" have been documented as our main form of cultural transmission. Many Native people, particularly Elders, treat storytelling as absolutely central to conversation, and base their evaluation of other people on their storytelling

abilities. Randi, a Native student, expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to both learn from others' stories and to enhance her own story-telling skills.

Tonight's class was wonderful, the dancing, feasting, storytelling was great! I loved to tell stories of my past because storytelling is not a great skill of mine and I would like to perfect it! It's so nice to listen to the Voices of women like yourself, and (guests) because it allows me to listen carefully and to validate your experience, as well as my own! Wonderful! (Randi Mar 17 93-j).

Storytelling or "testifying" is also a familiar and comfortable ritual in Black culture. Russell's pedagogy, "experience as text", encourages storytelling. She states that it is "[t]he oldest form of building historical consciousness in community....Robbed of continuities, prohibited free expression, denied a written history for centuries by white America, black people have been driven to rely on oral tradition for our sense of the past" (1985: 156).

Buffalo (1990) reflected more specifically on the power of story-telling as a healing and teaching tool, used ancestrally to share feelings and build the rapport necessary for sustaining community:

Healing through stories is but one important aspect of synthesizing our relationship with ourselves and with the entire universe. As well as being entertaining and giving a sense of pleasure, stories arouse heightened mindfulness, a sense of wonder and mystery, and a reverence for life. As the story unfolds, a rapport develops between the storyteller and listeners (120).

Cruikshank (1992) reinforces the role relationship has in storytelling for the Elders that she interviewed.

Storytelling does not occur in a vacuum. Story tellers need an audience, a response, in order to make the telling a worth while experience.....when they tell me a story, they do so to explain something else to me. The whole rationale for telling them

disappears if I cannot understand what they are trying to teach (16).

Starhawk (1987) also supports the healing, empowerment, and community-building potential of storytelling our daily lived experiences. Stories can help us weave our personal traumas into the larger structural context.

When an experience becomes a story, it is passed on, given away, made sacred. The story intensifies the value of the events that have passed. Pain and rage can be released, isolation broken, triumph and ecstasy celebrated. What was a singular experience becomes woven into a larger context (123).

Charnley (1990) advises writing as a form of personal activism--"taking action with the voice and hand".

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

I expressed similar insights in my reflections on the power of storytelling in Circle. I emphasized how we are linked emotionally to others through recognizing ourselves in each others' stories.

When you hear somebody's story that's similar to your own story, then you go home and you rework that story, it's like it becomes yours! And so a lot of the teaching Model and a lot of the emotions that people put out in class I take that home and I work it over and I work it over myself (Fyre TC3:8).

Storytelling is a form of reciprocity in which we each learn and share from each other. As Phil expressed, this can produce a healing effect.

I know that for myself, just coming in as a student and as a community participant; its been very healing for me to talk and to tell my stories, and nice to hear what other people's stories are (Phil TC3:14).

STORY CIRCLE

Several students reflected on the impact that a particular "story circle" on Aboriginal culture had on them. These excerpts illustrated the teaching and community-building potential available through stories.

As story circle began, so did the beating of the drum...thump...thump, thump...I learned that the drum with its drumbeat represents the center of life, just as the heart provides life with its heartbeat. I paid very close attention to the stories that were told...The stories that are told in circle are all very important - and we all have something to learn from them...

It is the sharing of experience of others that helps us see things in ourselves that before we did not see...or in some cases, that we just choose not to see...

Through participating in story circle I was able to get a sense of the importance of oral tradition to First Nations people. I was able to see how stories that were told were very important in teaching a lesson to all who listened. I was told by a native friend that these lessons were not pointed out to you rather, it was often left up to you to identify the parts of the story that were valuable in helping you learn something (Analee Oct 13 93-j).

This student, Analee, was able to gain insight into the importance of oral narration to the Aboriginal culture. She also acknowledged the aspect of personal responsibility for the learning which is embedded in Traditional pedagogies. Another White student, Bejay, journalled more specifically about the content of the Circle and its emotional impacts on her. Her response illustrated the importance of the relationship built between the teller and the listener.

Today's class was the Aboriginal presentation. It was a very meaningful experience. I really enjoyed the circle talk and the

drumming. I felt connected to the rest of the group. The stories that were shared left me with a lot to think about. The story that one of the speakers shared about her partner's experience at the residential school was absolutely horrifying. I am so angry that white people thought they could just rip these children from their families and "educate them in the white way".

I cannot even begin to know what it must have felt like for those families who lost their children, to those who has to attend those heinous institutions. I do know that it is very, very important that this never be allowed to happen again and that as a white person and a future social worker, it is my responsibility to fight in whatever way possible to prevent this form of atrocity from taking place once more.

I feel privileged to have the story of the Eagle Feather shared with me. The person who shared that story is very lucky to have been gifted with the feather, and to have viewed those eagles flying overhead. She taught me that there is more than one form of energy at work. It is not just the physical things we all see, and that some of us take for granted. It is also the spiritual.

Doing the dancing and singing the songs felt great! It was fun and relaxing, very uplifting, really set the pace for the day. The feast was very enjoyable. It gave everyone the chance to speak and socialize, to learn from each other (Bejay Feb 15 93-j).

"REACH FOR YOUR DEEPEST FEELINGS"

The West calls us to pay attention to the emotional impact of the educational experience. As critical educators, we are told that we must respect and value the power of pain, of deep feelings, in provoking change. As Galper (1980) notes, "the most sophisticated intellectual analysis possible will not lead to a commitment to sustained action until it becomes personally and actively painful to continue in the old way" (185). hooks says "remember the pain" because she believes "true resistance begins with people confronting pain, whether it's theirs or somebody else's, and wanting to do something to change it....pain as a catalyst for change" (1990: 215). Bill Mussell (1994), a Sal'i'shan educator, sees the sharing of emotions as an integral part of the educational project.

Healing means far more than emoting or discharging feelings. It is a process of experiencing emotions, gaining insight into their source, and identifying and changing negative beliefs and behaviours. It is a holistic process which calls on the powers of the mind, the emotions, the body and the spirit and results in freeing of these powers for positive action in the social and political world (8).

The Aboriginal processes In-Use employ various means to help a person accommodate balance and wholeness, to revitalize unity within the self and In-Relation to others. According to Medicine Eagle (1991), this may create a radical discontinuity in the way the person's reality is assembled. Discomfort is produced from the struggle to regain balance. Absolon (1994) notes that there may be "feelings of release or relief in exposing, encountering and recognizing the sources of one's problems (10)...elated feelings resulting from understanding and working toward ridding oneself of the hidden causes of guilt, shame, anger, jealousy, fear, and other sicknesses" (11). One Native participant disclosed the depth of feeling, and the cyclical process, related to uncovering, acknowledging and healing emotional imbalance.

We weren't allowed to show emotions, we weren't allowed to feel and share with others. It's been a real struggle for me, to move from being very physical and very disconnected from myself, to come to a place of being connected. I think it comes in phases. I go from being very connected to very disconnected at times. And I feel like, I am very in touch with myself and I feel good about that. And then there are times, like I said, when I feel very disconnected. And I think that comes from not having had the connections. Because that left a long time ago. So...(participant is very emotional and trying to control her crying) So the components of my life I've never received. So it's very hard because I'm physically isolated, to get those pieces.(crying) So I have to use my friends as family to get the pieces of my life and to gain strength among the Native people because the pieces that I need I don't have. So it gets very painful...but...I think things are improving. I certainly feel like I've grown over the past two years. (crying openly) Thanks to people like Jean. I have some supports.

And it's very hard because the emotional is the component in my life that I've never had. But I am making progress (Randi VC 1:18).

The release of feelings, and reestablishment of community, can be an extended process when there is much buried loss and anger. Carmiol (1990) warns us that "[s]uch explorations with severely oppressed individuals can be fraught with the pain of discovering deep personal and emotional commitments rooted in promises that the system never meant to keep" (121). Pain, anger and other strong emotions, are not exclusive to the Aboriginal and Black cultural experience; they are also common expressions of those engaged in the transformational process. According to Culley (1985), a feminist teacher, when students are engaged in a process that "allows them a glimpse, a taste, or a full-face confrontation with the truth that the dominant culture is steeped in the hatred of women" (210) and others, the journey can make them "uncomfortable, anxious, despairing and angry" (210). Joycechild (in Lather, 1991) lists students' reactions to consciousness raising in a feminist classroom:

excitement, empowerment, feeling they've been duped/ignorant because they never had this knowledge before, resistance, disbelief, frustration, anger, burn-out, wanting to act but wondering how, feeling as though their worlds have been shaken up, getting hostile/resistant reactions from family and significant others (128).

There is strong evidence to indicate that emotions/reactions should be aired as part of the educational experience from the functional perspective which views repressed emotions as a block to effective absorption of material. Henry (1989) notes that the determination not to neglect the human side of learning and to acknowledge the role of affect and conation alongside cognition is central to experiential models. Some critical educators claim that contemporary culture "offers only one guiding norm about feelings: control"

(Heron, in Jarvis, 1985: 152). Post-secondary culture restricts emotional content. Education has been controlled by the Eurocentric emphasis on the intellect, which has been regarded as the controller of the emotions. From the critical perspective as tool of consciousness-raising, there is a close link between emotion and the motivation to act. In Freirian pedagogy, "learning to name the world", starts with identifying issues which the learners speak about with excitement, hope, fear, anxiety or anger (Hope and Timmel, 1989). One student, Vada, expressed her experience in this way.

This is the class which has stirred my feelings the most and the class that has stayed on my mind the most. While it has been a painful learning, it also has been a very rewarding learning (Vada Apr 4 93-jsum)

Many feelings were generated throughout the experience, an issue that I reflected on in one Circle on CCI.

There was a real difference for people about what kinds of feelings came up. For a lot of people it was fear, anxiety, guilt, anxiousness. For some people it was bringing up past issues, and that was painful. There were tears shed sometimes in class. Certain incidents, certain classes, really stand out in my own mind's eye, times when a lot of feelings were shared (Fyre TC3:5).

Sadness, shame, guilt and anger were widely expressed among White participants. Gracie shared the depth of her reactions.

Yesterday and today I wrote about oppression and I cried all day.....As the white race rips through technology with terrifying speed, we certainly have destroyed a great deal of Mother Earth and the essence of ourselves. Large tears from my heart... (Gracie Oct 4 92-j).

Most often the feelings expressed were linked to a particular trigger, an exercise, story or speaker. Some participants are more able/willing to articulate

their emotional reactions than others. Lena was able to express her reactions vividly in her journal.

One of the issues which had an impact on me tonight in class was (Black guest's) statements in the talking circle.... Two feelings arose in me while she was speaking. The first was complete shame. Shame for not recognizing the racist practices of the media who covered this issue and shame for being associated with the white dominant society.....

I also felt anger at the media for turning an issue about the oppression of women of all colours into an issue about race. If the government and society as a whole would look at the economic issues in this country and the oppressive nature of racism and sexism instead of scape goating a few black men, than maybe change would occur (Lena Jan 17 93-j).

We express our deepest feelings to those who we are In-Relation with, including our family members. Lena's journal excerpt about her "speak-out" in Circle will illustrate.

I totally made a fool of myself in Wednesday's Cross Cultural class. I don't know if you'll remember by the time you read this but I cried yesterday when I started to talk about (my partner's) new job... Sunday night he told me that he felt like people didn't like him because he was not white. I was blown away. I feel so terrible. I wouldn't have guessed that racism was the problem. For a week now I've been on his back to feel grateful that he had gotten the job. I am completely stupid. He must have felt so terrible when I was saying those things. I am so privileged because that would not happen to me. It is because of my own racism that I didn't even think he was being discriminated against. The more I write about this, the more I want to go down to that office and scream at those employees. White people are idiots. All I know now is that I want to be as supportive as possible for (him), but besides that I don't know what to do (Lena Jan 24 93-j).

SHARING STORIES/SHARING FEELINGS

Creative storytelling is a good outlet for documenting and reflecting on emotions. I have adopted it as a method of assisting myself and students in

releasing feelings and transforming personal pain into structural change. In this Model-In-Use, participants have been encouraged to present their experiences and learnings in class and from their lives in the form of a "story", making connections between their personal experiences and the cultural and structural realities that frame our individual/family/community lives. Students were specifically asked to use the journal to tell stories of racism they were currently encountering or that had occurred in their past. Sometimes they shared the deep-rooted feelings that had been harboured for years, along with demonstrating their structural insights, and newfound conviction to do better in the future. Students' stories of past racism reconfirms that we live our lives In-Relation, and that the experiences that have the most meaning are those that we share with our relations. The concluding remarks from two entries of students who did interrogate past racial learning within their families of origin, will illustrate.

It's really hard for me to look back and realize how racist certain members of my family were (are??). It's not easy to come to terms with a less than perfect family. My family situation serves to show how racism can be learned at an early age, how racism affects those it's aimed at and the debilitating affects it can have on the person who acts upon it (Gela Jan 18 93-j).

By doing this I feel that I will be getting to the root of where my own racism developed first, through socialization. I also feel that information is meant to be shared and if my family can become more aware, they can pass this knowledge on to others (Tia 93-j).

The reality of the racist pain inflicted on ourselves as children, and on children in our lives trigger strong reactions, particularly for those who are currently or envision themselves to be future parents. An Aboriginal community member, Redbird, contributed this story.

My grandchildren, the poor little thing went to school and they started racism on her, and I found that out by her coming home and saying, "Nannie, I'm ugly, I want to be different. I want to be different!" And I said, well how do you want to be different? And she said: "I have to have blonde hair and blue eyes right away!" And I said, well who told you that? And she said: "I'm ugly and I hate myself." And she'd go around and (her mother) would be so upset and I would be upset! And I tried to explain to her that you are beautiful, you know, you have two beautiful cultures in you and you are beautiful! It's so hard to tell a little 5 year old that and make her understand! She's just learning now the hard knocks of life, where I came from, the School of Hard Knocks! And she's learning that! And it's sad that in this day and age in the 90's, that it's still going on (Redbird CC1:18).

Vada expressed her deep reaction to hearing this type of story.

I just came home from the class about racism and oppression. I am not sure if I shall scream or cry. I feel so upset with my racism and the effect of racism and ignorance on other people. Tonight a mother told us about how her daughter is ashamed of who she is, her family, culture and her race (Vada Jan 24 93-j).

While this story was told early in the term, Vada concluded her journal, two months later, still reflecting on the impacts of the same class.

The learning that has had the greatest impact on me, and that has stirred my emotions the most, is the growing awareness of the personal impact of racism. While I knew that racism had great effect on people's lives, it was the story about the little girl that was ashamed of her race, history and family, that really struck home with me. The learning after that day became so much deeper and emotional for me.....What made this learning as strong as it became, was that I thought about my own concerns about raising children that have a good sense of their identity and pride of who they are. I thought of how painful it would be to know that my children were ashamed of who they are and wanted to be different, as well as knowing that my children who have not done anything to anyone, are treated badly by others just because of their skin color, culture or language. The other stories about children growing up with racism, and the adult person's life with racism made my awareness, anger and my admiration for their strength even greater (Vada Apr 4 93-jsum).

I often draw on my own experience as a mother to share experiences of how racism affects my daughter's relationships with children in her school and in our neighbourhood. Illustrating through story that children are also capable of committing racial slurs towards other children provokes reflection on the responsibility of adults towards the socialization of children in their lives. Racially unaware students often react very emotionally to this form of teaching story. In one entry, Lena expressed her heartfelt reaction.

I've also been thinking a lot about what you said in class the other night about your daughter's experience with racism. It sickens me to think that people raise their children to believe the things (my daughter's) friend believed. When are white people going to recognize that they are racist and that what they believe, say and do hurts other people. I am sick of we white people saying something racist and them saying "But I am not a racist" - Bullshit. This Saturday I am doing child care for my sister, she has two little girls and I am going to grill them as to what they think about people from culturally diverse groups. I don't have any kids of my own right now so they're the closest thing I have. I know that my family is racist so I am definitely going to check out what my sister and her partner have taught their kids. Hopefully, I will be able to take them to some Black History Month things so they'll learn through first voice (Lena Jan 24 92-j).

Self-interrogation and exploration of one's Self-In-Relation to one's family, regarding responsibility for challenging racism, can be seen as a positive step. As Nadine reflected, children learn racism from adults, and we must take responsibility to help them un-learn it as well.

I thought all the next day about Jean's daughter's experience of racial slurs by a friend. The comment made by (her) friend is a typical remark of many children today. I can't help but remember my experience as a child protection worker dealing with abuse. We are taught as social workers that children are innocent. If a child alleges sexual abuse, a social worker takes the remark seriously, most children know nothing about sex. They come into

this world without prejudice, biases, or hatred of any kind. Yet, here we have a seven year old girl talking negatively about another because of their physical differences. Children learn racism. They hear, see, and react to situations that are learned from other people, often these people are their parents, teachers or significant others in their lives.

Children have to be educated in other cultures, and what better time to educate them than when they are young, influential, and eager to learn (Nadine Jan 27 93-j)

A Traditional approach to education recognizes that respectful treatment of all participants is critical to the idea of community building in the classroom. As Hart (1991) stresses, "[t]he fostering of solidary relations among all the participants in a context of caring is therefore as vital a component of an overall liberatory educational practice as the fostering of critical reflexivity" (135). Both critical and cultural philosophies support group interaction as a valuable learning process. Development of a strong peer culture, through an emphasis on collaborative group process, including family and community members, reinforces Aboriginal values of community and helps to compensate for the "individualism" stressed in the learning site. Through First Voice, Talking Circle and Storytelling, students are encouraged to seek diverse ideas in their learning and rely less on teacher as "authority". While guidelines are developed to help students engage in the learning process, it is actually the students themselves who make it happen.

This Model-In-Use is an effort to "nurture a new morality of non-oppressive, caring relationships among all the participants in an educational situation" (Hart, 1991: 126). Through the pedagogical processes emphasized, the affective and relational dimensions of transformative education are embraced along with the cognitive. Engaging in Circle work in the classroom, which includes connections to diverse Community members, across lines of age, gender, and class contributes to building interconnectedness at a more

macro level. These community-building efforts respond to the challenges posed by Hart and Holton (1993) to develop pedagogies in which "[d]iversity and interdependence, multiplicity and interconnectedness are inseparable, unifying all forms of life beyond the many artificial separations created by our [Western] culture among people of different races, sexes, ages, etc., and speaking to a profound spiritual connection among all living things" (9).

I am joining Hart (1992) and others in the search for "dominance free forms of interaction". She includes the "epistemology of mothering", which is characterized by non-dichotomous relationships of: knower and object of knowing; natural and social; critical judgement and empathic intuition; reason and emotion; subjective and objective. Through First Voice, Circle Talk and Storytelling these dichotomies are challenged, and replaced with pedagogical forms that harmonize rather than divide experience and knowledge. Let us turn now to a further theme in the West, the applications of this teaching and healing model to building the social work relationship with our Communities.

BUILDING THE SOCIAL WORK RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITIES

Shifting the way we relate in the classroom is, at another level, an effort to model an egalitarian form of practice, which can be translated and applied to building social work relations with members of the Communities. Once we make the effort to build community in and In-Relation to the classroom, we then have access to "First Voice" stories. These stories can be used to help educate prospective social workers at a deep level to impact the dominant model of practice on community members and community ties.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR ROLE AS OPPRESSOR

When exploring the social work relationship to the Communities, it is necessary to recognize that as workers of the state we are employed/empowered to mold others to fit quietly in their "cages", rather than to bend or eliminate the wires (Frye, 1983: 3). To challenge Eurocentric consciousness for social workers, we need to both revisit the history of colonization/oppression, and the role of social work in that, and to inspire understanding and respect for the rich gifts of our cultures. Historically, the social work profession has played a large role in implementing destructive practices, especially in child welfare, corrections, addictions, income assistance and community 'development'. Howse and Stalwick (1990) express a "commonsense" understanding of the worker's role: "The social workers that participated in the damaging of our people by removing our children were like puppets. They were part of that process without understanding" (95). While these state-controlled practices are lodged in the same colonial epistemologies earlier explicated, it is the enactment--the translation and imposition of the policies upon the "subjects", which is the terrain of social work practice. As Gracie declared:

Professionally my culture is of social work, a relatively elitist group of service deliverers, primarily comprised of women who individually and as a group, have been inter-generationally conditioned to be responsible for rectifying the woes of the world (Gracie 92-t1).

Eileen, another White participant, gave an excellent rendition of how her identity as a member of the privileged majority impacted on her enactment of the role of worker.

As a woman and social worker of the privileged majority, I belong to a group who oppresses other groups, emotionally and physically, into segregated stations. I am a member of a group who exercises racism upon Natives, Blacks and other minorities. I have learned from birth to separate from others who are different, culturally or visibly, without considering the harm I inflict on others. I support institutions that continue to block minority groups from equal access to society's resources. How can I describe myself as anti-racist when I fail to speak out against racial injustices I see daily? How could I have been so arrogant as to assume what was the most appropriate intervention with respect to Native or Black problems? I am quick to observe some of the ways in which I, as a woman, have been oppressed but still fail to appreciate the extent of oppression against minority groups. If I do not understand how I oppress others, I cannot begin to understand the oppression experienced by others (Eileen 93-t1).

Social work students cannot remain unaware of themselves as oppressors, or how the social work profession has oppressed others. As social workers, we do oppress others, very readily, unless we make "a conscious commitment saying: 'I am not going to oppress others.' One has to make that commitment consciously. One cannot unconsciously continue to go around saying 'I don't know'. It is important to know--to make it conscious" (Howse and Stalwick, 1990: 97). Given the amount of power vested in social workers, as agents of social control, it is imperative that social workers learn about their power--who has it; how does it manifest itself; how it can be used to empower, rather than further oppress. According to Howse and Stalwick, "ignorance is inexcusable" (1990: 103). Contradictions must be made visible: is it "possible to 'heal' within a context where social purposes are connected to social control?" (Howse and Stalwick, 1990: 103).

The role of child welfare worker is one illustration of what Gela named as "oppressor by association".

No matter how respectful I treat people I still represent a figure of authority and power. This is a status I have gained simply

because of the nature of the agency I represent. Even as a student social worker I am viewed as being in a powerful position. I'm being educated to carry out the agency mandate as a means of social control. I don't mean to make light of this power dynamic, but I often refer to this sort of position as being "oppressor by association"....(Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

A Native child welfare service provider in a mainstream setting analyzed her experience as "oppressor". She illustrated the impacts this had on her own psyche as an "oppressed" person.

*As I left class tonight, my mind really became focused on
How am I the oppressor?*

I realize that in my job as a social worker in child protection, I oppress the women I work with, because of the power and control that I have in my job, the power to tell parents how they should parent their children, the power to control parents behaviour, to take children into care, what a horrible job!

I hate having that power, because I know the humiliation and pain these parents must feel, not having control of their lives!

I hope some day to work with aboriginal people and to help end the torment of oppression as an oppressed person, not as the oppressor (Randi Jan 20 93-j).

For her, and many others, this paradox can only be resolved by changing fields of practice.

I developed a sense of myself as an oppressor and how to help myself deal with that role, I've decided to resign! (Randi Apr-jsum).

Leonard (1990) explores the structural context that contributes to maintaining social workers' "ignorance". He proposed that fatalism, a major influence on social work practice today, has been "culturally constructed to serve the dominant order of things" (3). "We resign ourselves to our role as agents of the state: Instead of acting with, we act upon them, instead of being subjects, they are reduced to objects--categorized, classified, planned for,

evaluated, monitored, reviewed....We may detect ourselves acting upon our clients as if they were objects, but we experience a similar objectification of ourselves as social workers" (1990: 9). Ela, a Black service provider, speaks a truism for our Communities. Our members **know** when service providers view our relations as worthless.

People in the helping professions that really have a belief in the worthlessness of other people that they're dealing with - it comes through in everything that say and do, and it's really unfortunate because they actually think that they're doing something to help people because they're in that position to help people. Just because you're in a position to help people, doesn't mean that you are helping people. In some cases you might be doing more harm than good (Ela TC4:20).

Many members of our Communities experience and internalize objectification at the hands of uncritical workers. Having community participants speak out about their own experiences within the service delivery system, provides many clear "inside out lesson" for aspiring social workers. One Native participant, Redbird, spoke heartfully about her life time of experiences with various types of services.

In respect to Social work and Social Workers, I think the system has failed miserably....We were failed terribly....I can see now why a lot of people don't want to deal with Social Workers or anybody in any type of system, because they tend to...put fear in you that if you don't do as they say...we may take your children, or if you can't budget...you can't ask for help anywhere it seems, without some kind of a reprimand...That's why a lot of people don't want to deal with anyone that could be a higher position that they are. I think it makes them feel less, and a lot of people don't want to do this....My little girl and I needed some counselling and I found that to be degrading. It was no good at all. The whole thing and all I did was get a bill in the mail for it....dealing with social workers and everybody like that, the whole thing has been nothing but a nightmare!

And why people have to go through a lifetime of hurting, always hurting, and no esteem. It's gone, it's taken from you, everything. And when you're in a situation that you have to go to

these places and ask for help of any kind and be rejected time and time again, then your self-esteem is totally shattered....

And there's no one. Who can you go to? You can't talk to anyone. I've always learned to keep things inside....Keeping things inside will eat away at you. I heard that all my life. Mom used to say something about, like it will eat away at you like a cancer. Keeping things inside, no, I don't really think it's a good thing to do. But you have to have a safe place or a person to let it out. And if there is no safe place, like Mom used to say, never tell anybody anything you don't want to read in the newspaper. (laughs) So, as a result, it's hard to say who to trust and who not to trust....

All my life everything seemed like everything was different, wrong, or something. Nothing made any sense! So that's how I had to live and that was the end of it and that's how I'll probably live out the rest of my life. (Redbird TC3:29).

Redbird's voice speaks a story common to many "clients". Recognition of the structural realities of a "personal" story is aided by other participants recognizing and validating each other's stories. Through Community members telling the stories of their similar and sometimes shared experiences in the System, the lessons required by social workers in general are taught. One Native youth, who had been in care, spoke out in Circle about her experiences of racism as a consumer.

I had the same sort of ideas that social workers are all like that because all my experiences with social workers were bad...My worker would always say to me, Oh, you're such a beautiful little Indian princess and stuff. And she would say, how come you don't wear the little dot on your forehead and things like that. She didn't really know what she was talking about. They were all bad experiences. I don't really have a good idea about what social workers should be like. From my own experiences (KP TC3:13).

Her mother had earlier journalled about this incident, making personal links to structural issues.

(Daughter)'s counsellor asked me whether I had to fool around with student loans to go to school. I told her that I was

sponsored...She said that at least I have one benefit for being Indian. I felt furious. I told her that it was just one of the many benefits, and that I felt proud to be Micmac. Later I thought about finding another counsellor for (daughter)....I am angry that I have to tolerate racism in order to have my daughter's needs met. And I am angry that she has to tolerate racism, and see me powerless to help. I can see a wall growing around (daughter) to protect her from this counsellor and her white privilege. The hard part is in teaching (daughter) to understand where the counsellor's racism comes from and to take what she needs and let go of the rest. This makes me angry that we need counselling about how to receive counselling because there is such an imbalance of power and privilege. We need native counsellors in the city for native children and adults (Phil Jan 11 93-j).

Speak-outs from consumers and service deliverers who are members of the Communities provide opportunities for critical analysis of the system. They help clarify to present and future service deliverers, the social work role, past and present, in oppression. This educational intention is clearly communicated to participants. My contribution at one Circle expressed this concern.

The Model I'm trying to teach from is really trying to teach from people's experience; to try to change the attitudes of social workers so that they will do their work in a different light....And I'm trying to invite the community to be involved in that because I can't do that on my own! I know that... our ancestors say--repetition, more voices can give the same message. Maybe your story will trigger somebody, whereas somebody else's story will trigger somebody else....A lot of people think racism happened over 40 years ago, but not today. So those daily experiences from today is really what people can feel in their hearts, they can feel it's wrong, they can hear that there's something going on here that's different than the story that the social workers try to tell, which is we're helping people, we're looking out for people, and that whole illusion. When they hear the people's actual voices, they can see underneath that and they can think: what kind of a social worker do I want to be? Do I want to be the kind of social worker that listens respectfully to people's stories? That tries to help them in the best way I can to get what they need? Or am I the kind of social worker that interrupts them, asks them a bunch of questions, makes them feel uncomfortable? Acts in power over them? Those are the kind of things I try to point out all the way through. (Fyre CC1:21-22)

The heartfelt declarations of Community members help social workers to see how the mainstream model of social work is perceived by others. Several service providers and recipients from the Communities are called on to articulate their impressions of the social work profession as they have come to know it as "outsiders within". The critique of the power embedded in the worker role can become internalized and expressed as a challenge to the profession as a whole. Free expressed an evolving and contradictory Self-In-Relation to the profession common to our members:

I never wanted to be a social worker. (laugh) I had a lot of bad experiences with social workers in my younger years and I never wanted to be one. I guess that is until I...looked around and thought, somebody's got to do something different or learn something different (Free TC3:19).

A White community participant and current practitioner, Sis, expressed one possible reaction to some of the stories which had been told in Circle.

I used to think social work was a nice thing to get in to. I felt good going in to it in thinking that I would be a social worker. And when I hear the horrible experiences that people have had it makes me want to distance myself from the profession because of the disgusting things that happen (Sis TC3:16).

This is another form of learning through reversal at work. Traditionally, we learn through mistakes, ours and others. In some cases, these challenges to the social work profession can be perceived as overwhelming. This can cause paralysis and serve to perpetuate the discourse of fatalism, already becoming "commonsense" for workers today. Mac reflected on this theme in a journal entry.

I don't know what to write. I am not sure that it's writers block or if it's that I feel overwhelmed. So often in my classes, social work gets cut to pieces. There is a lot of discussion on how social work is an agent of social control and everyone gets into the feeding frenzy. Child protection workers are idiots, welfare workers are jaded, etc. etc. etc. Then it just seems to stop there.....Maybe everyone is feeling scared that they will fall into the same trap. I've asked what we do in the face of these accusations and the pat answer is collective action. Everyone knows that it is easier said than done....The students hope that they will somehow fall into a job where they will be able to survive with their ethics intact and don't confront the reality that not all of us will be able to pull that off....That is a real fear (Mac 92-).

Stories of hardship within the System can cause some to begin to interrogate the "profession's" identity and competence as well as their own. Others, already familiar with the problems engendered within the current system, are challenged to offer potential resolutions. Applications of aspects of the Model-In-Use to the resolution of some of the inherently oppressive dynamics of social work was addressed in Circle Talk on CCI.

REBUILDING OUR RELATIONS TO THE COMMUNITIES

Several participants responded to the query: how can social workers build relations with the Communities? Free noted the importance of opportunities for community members to speak heartfully, to share with others.

Any relationship begins when we begin to speak about ourselves and about things that are close to our own heart. And that's how we learn, when we ask other people about the things that are close to their heart and how we begin to form a bond because we all know that people are very social beings and we need to interact with other people in order to survive....We have to build these community relations with the people around us. And we do this by respecting them, and caring about them, and sharing, and being honest (Free CC2:32).

She extended her analysis to reflect on the overall relationship between the School and the Communities.

If that is possible as social workers, if we could build that relationship between the communities around us and the school, the school will then get better rapport not only with the community, but a better understanding of what goes on here!...If we're going to be strong, this community, then we have to be able to reach out to the people in our community; to expand that community and to draw in other people (Free CC2:32).

Free identified the building of relations between the School and the Communities as a vitally important aspect of this Model-In-Use. The Communities themselves must have a say in the education of potential workers.

And that's why I think this whole Model and bringing things to the School is so important! If we can encourage the community to bring these issues to the School, or any issues that they feel that are pressing and are very important in the community...And then the social workers will then in turn be able to then apply themselves to what they need to know about the communities they work with! (Free CC2:32).

I agree with Free, "As social workers we have to make it our business to know about the people that we work with (CC2:32).

A Traditional understanding of the elements of a community-building social work relationship would emphasize the fundamental value of respect. Respect for the basic immanence of all of creation provides an epistemological foundation for showing respect for our human "clients" also. Free's "speak-out" illustrated that respect is multi-dimensional when applied to an analysis of the current context of social work practice.

I think that respect is what is missing, not just in the social work relationship, but in society in general. People tend to be moving so fast in their minds, in their busy day to day lives, that they just tend to forget to pay that little bit of respect....Not just to

other people, but they never notice the flowers growing in their garden, they put them there but they never really notice they're growing there, and a lot of people don't even know what they smell like! It's basically they just don't have the respect for the world around them! (Free CC1:24).

She communicated another Traditional message regarding respect: you have to give it to get it.

I am open to the teaching of respect, and we can only teach respect by giving it. If we want to get it then we have to give it. We have to respect other people. We have to respect all of creation and make that very visible in our daily lives! (Free CC1:24).

Cognizant that respect is not the only value integral to individual and community healing, Free continued on to reflect on the four Traditional laws of living in community.

The four laws of living in community can really work if people just internalized them and take it upon themselves as a responsibility...I have taken upon myself to say to myself, I will treat people with Respect. I will Care about these people! I will be Honest with these people! And I will Share with these people who will be my clients. I will do these things (Free CC1:23).

She maintained this commitment to an altered practice modality due to her past experiences with the System.

I have made that an obligation to myself because I have been treated with very much disrespect in the Welfare line in the past. And I have seen where the people of my community have been with social workers. I have had to work with provincial social workers when I knew nothing about them and they knew nothing about my community!...They have that perceived power over. We are threatened! And I felt that way many times (Free CC1:24).

Free linked her experiences in the past with her perceptions of the Model. She reflected on how the authority dimension is minimized through Circle work.

And that's why I really, really like this Model so much. I have really enjoyed participating in it because Circle takes away that authority! It takes away that perceived authority. In Circle Talk you don't have to be afraid of the person sitting next to you, or you don't have to be afraid of...a person who is facilitating the Circle. It's the distribution of power (Free CC1:24).

Participants' reviews of the Circle Process were often a reflection of the Traditional values: respect, honesty, caring and sharing. Honesty is recognized as a vital force by Van.

There's always someone who says something that speaks to you, and that's what's so important about this Circle, this method of teaching, and what I get from it. You have to be honest! The force is honesty. It's very easy to give what the person wants to hear, it's very easy to do that, but a circle for some reason, it really forces honesty! I think that's very important. Especially if you're going to be a social worker, to be reflective, honest, to appreciate what you can learn from people, what you can give back. It has to be real (Van TC4:3).

Respect was highlighted by many as integral to the Circle process.

It gives everybody a chance to be heard rather than a discussion going on where some speak and some don't. And I think it's very powerful the respect that comes with it. (6 second pause) I think it can be used in so many ways. I think it's a very respectful process (Bea VC1:23).

Free, at a further Circle, related respect to definition of "need". She emphasized a service application for "First Voice"--the need to listen to the people themselves in order to determine the service goals. She begins:

As I began to do my social work education there were all kinds of people and professors telling me these are the problems in the community, these are the things we have to deal with... This was just a continuation of the way life had been for me on the reserve - Indian Affairs Officials, health nurses, social workers, were continuously telling me what I needed or what was missing in my family (Free CC2:17).

This concern is often articulated as commonsense by members of our Communities. She spoke the collective consciousness as she questioned:

Who defines whose needs? How often and how long do we have to live by having what other people think we need? (Free CC2:17).

She asserted that more listening is required.

It's time for us to listen to individuals about what they need. So that we can begin to service people and do the things they need as opposed to what we think they need...As professionals, we do this to people; we see things we think they need and we want to rescue, we want to service...even though they haven't even identified it as a need. We continuously do this as service providers, in not listening (Free CC2:18).

Many social workers do not listen respectfully to others. This theme was reiterated by another social worker from the non-Native community. She confirms Free's insight.

What we don't think about enough is listening and remembering or thinking of ways that we can be sure that we respect other people and think about it hard! Thinking about ways of being humble, because when you look at another culture, then you learn so much about your own (Bea CC2:27).

Respect is shown when value is placed on sharing experiences, and caring about and learning from each other's experience. This is remarked upon and addressed to members in the Circle in a very caring manner by Sis.

I totally trust that this is a good atmosphere to learn in and a good way to hold a class. I've loved it! I can't believe how valuable it's been.....Just the strength that I feel to be in the circle, everybody's experiences are so valuable. And it just strikes me that...our society values the letters after people's names so much and when I hear someone with your strength (speaker is crying) it just makes me sick to think that someone can be twenty-five and have a couple of degrees and be really respected for no reason at all (still crying) and someone with your experience and your wisdom (Redbird), which I really, really appreciate, doesn't receive the respect that you deserve. It's really bad and I hope you know how valuable you are! (crying openly now) (Sis TC3:35).

The four values: respect, honesty, caring and sharing are the fundamental "laws" of living in community according to Traditionalists. The "feeling of community" that Circle brings is reflected on by student and community participants. As Char noted:

It would seem to me that this would give everyone a sense of worthiness and being valued and listened to, and respected. It makes me wonder how different our society would be if we had adopted such traditions; perhaps we would have maintained the sense of community. (Char Jan 14 93-j).

Another mainstream student expressed her learnings through Circle. She reflected a Traditional message very appropriate to the current classroom context.

The circle reminds me of a community where people join together in a sense of community where they are expected and would be respectful of one another (Eileen 93-j).

A participant from the Black community, new to Circle work through the project, had this to contribute.

I think Circle, doing Circle with others gives me the feeling of community as well. And how important community is to me. And

that I don't live in isolation. Sometimes I think of Utopia too much too, but hopefully there's a point in our world that we can come to where we can live and breathe and love each other without necessarily putting limitations or conditions on that (Liz VC1:20).

CIRCLE AS A "NEW" MODEL OF PRACTICE

The Circle process itself helps build community connections. As a tool for personal healing and transformation, it provides reciprocity to community members who come in to share their stories and experiences with us. I reflected on the potential for community-building and healing through Circle.

Sometimes when you're in Circle...and you're having that Circle feeling of interconnectiveness, you do feel that other people's lives are as important as your own. You have that connection and even if you never met them before, and even if you never heard their story before, and even if you may never hear their story again, for that time you're there you feel connected to them....I really have a lot of respect for people who can put out for other people. Who can take care of other people. I have a lot of respect for you (Redbird) and your story about your family. And I think that all of us women in the Circle today have had to be strong in our own families and in our own lives...If you are not feeling as strong as you need to feel try to find some people to sit in Circle with you and have your own love circle, have your own sharing circle. I think that we all always need more love, we always need that connection. The circle, whether it's a big circle or a small circle, can bring that connection back for people. Heartfelt sharing can bring that connection to people. Wherever we do it! (Fyre TC3:42).

The Circle process emphasizes individual and community healing through sharing stories of pain and strategies for change. The Circles on CCI generated much reflection in the healing aspects of Circle work. This theme was most consistently articulated by Native participants, many of whom had felt healing benefits in their own lives and families as a result of Circle work. I reflected on how my own early learning about Circle was as a healing tool.

I learned Circle as a healing tool; as something to do, for people to heal with. To heal their conflicts in their families. To heal their conflicts in their communities. To heal feelings from things like sexual abuse or other varied forms of abuse that often get lodged in our bodies, and get lodged in us, and we don't have a lot of ways to bring it out or heal it. And Circle is a very healing forum in community if people can learn to use it (Fyre TC3:25).

A Mi'kmaq Elder contributed a similar perception.

Circle is a place of healing. And it's true when they say that Native people need to heal themselves. It's very true because we are the walking wounded. But, little by little Native people are coming to terms with themselves, because they've gone through a lot (Sarah VC2:18).

A service provider from the Mi'kmaq nation also expressed a view which was congruent.

In some way Circle, Talking Circles, provide that little bit of healing because you're allowed to share in a context that's not necessarily so structured....when you're allowed that opportunity to sit down and talk in a spiritual context, about spiritual things, but other things as well, it just provides that opportunity to...let people see that there are some things that are more important than the knowledge that you get in a book. Our own life experience is a valuable tool. I can really see the value of this (Ray VC2:16).

Phil, a student from the Native community, shared her experience of the healing force of Circle for her and her family.

I had started healing before I learned all about the Circle...But it's made me so much stronger and it's given me ways of healing my family as well. We've come a long way in the last couple of years by using the Circle. I can see that that's a very important way of healing all families and all people with their worries. It's so powerful to be able to share with other people and to gain strength from everybody else, and that support. To be listened to and respected for what you've got to say. There's really no other place anywhere where that happens (Phil VC1:16).

A personal narrative of healing through Circle, given by a Mike, a Native community participant, clearly drew the links between healing and reciprocity in building self-esteem and revitalizing Self-In-Relation to family and community. As is expected in Traditional teaching, Mike began on a very 'personal' note.

Today I know who I am and know what I am, and I know what I don't want. I don't want to bring back that thick, thick wall. I have to work at myself everyday. When people like Jean ask me to come in and do a presentation and a lot of people hear my stories, they think that I am helping them. But it isn't. It's the other way around. You people here are helping me, because everyday I've got to keep healing. And I really like being asked to come out and take part because when I'm in this Circle I am no longer alone! Before, I could be in a room of about 100 people and still be alone. But when I'm in a Circle, I know I'm there, and I'm taking people's strength, and also I'm giving strength (Mike VC1:8).

His expressed appreciation for the chance to be at Circle, telling his story, illustrated the reciprocity built into the relation. He continued:

Jean, I want to thank you for asking us to come back. It really feels nice to be back. Those of you who have heard my story, I hope you've learned or I've shed some light on it...For me, when I get the opportunity to share now - You know maybe what I'm saying ain't going to hit or it ain't going to sink in, take it, put it in your pocket, and if you come across a situation for something like that, take it back out and use it (Mike VC1:8).

Our teachers know that not every story, not every speaker's experience is going to impact on every listener. Our location in life at the moment of the telling impacts on our ability to take it in. This contributes to producing multiple interpretations of the same reality. Mike reflected on how speaking his voice, sharing heartfully of his experience--staying out of his head--is a healing tool.

When I went in there I talked from my heart. (4 second pause) And I had something that they didn't have, no matter what diplomas, what courses, what certificates, I had life

experiences...And I found by staying out of my head, I don't know what I say, it just comes out. And I believe that this mouth of mine is just a tool because now inside me, there is no more fighting. It is hard but those things we have to grow with, we have to understand it That's why when we have this Talking Circle it's healing. I can share that a little bit now (Mike VC1:25).

Sharing in Circle is special because communication in the outside world does not follow the same flow. It does not give the same opportunity for freedom of emotional expression. As Mike told it:

It feels good to come in to Circle because out there, once I go through those doors, I can't speak for all of you, but what I got to do is I've got to play the game. I have to turn and go out there and do what I have to do. Then when I come back in; I come in to Circle...Let it go down. And it's nice. It's nice to breathe and say ok, good. I want to get a little bit of that garbage out. Just throw it out. I don't want it. Take it. Somebody else take it. Help me here (Mike VC1:25).

Mike provided a role model that healing is possible. Self-love is possible to obtain, but it is a long process which includes reclaiming our own feelings. He concluded his 'speak-out' as he began, with a 'personal' reflection.

But I am good....That's took a long time for me to say that! It's ok for me to be me. It's all right. I like that. Because there was a time I wanted everybody to like me so I would forget about me. And I've learned I can't. The most important person in this Circle is me. That's what I have to remember. I used to borrow people's feelings: anger, pain, fear, joy, but it wasn't me. I've learned today it's ok. (6 second pause) How can I say thank you for sharing and caring and letting me be me? But by simply saying thank you (Mike VC1:27).

Circle as a healing force is also addressed by non-Native participants. One White service provider commented:

This Circle I find is almost an automatic healing space. I didn't know what I expected the first time or the second time...it

always brings me back to other times when I've healed. Some of it is very comfortable for me. Very meditative and reflective. But it's together. It's that community thing again. Which is really nice when you hear other peoples' voices and you realize so many other people are dealing with so many things that are the same, part of them different, but similar in many ways (Bea VC1:22-23).

A powerful testimonial by a Black participant reinforced the Native perspective of Circle as therapeutic. His contribution validated the heart of the Model. I had hoped to create a teaching/learning Model which was empowering and healing across cultures, even while being located in a contradictory context. He began by acknowledging the "personal" impacts of Circle on his own being.

I think it's really important for me to make some statements about the Circle, in terms of the kinds of personal effect it had on me....[reveals personal history]. It's incredible when I start to look back through the circle; the impact that it has had on my life. [reveals personal history]..I've learned to grow through the Circle (Cal CC2:24).

More specifically, he noted the strength-oriented foundations of learning in Circle: our experiences are our teachers. In Circle we learn that we need to accept/uncover lessons from all sorts of experiences and stories. The 'reframing' from victim to survivor, can produce healing in itself.

I think what I hadn't been able to acknowledge during that period of time was the fact that all those things have happened, but they have shaped who I am right now. I have survived that...I started to look at some of the strengths that came out of that, who were some of the people that gave the support that I needed (Cal CC2:24).

In this case, the participant paralleled Circle directly with therapy.

Because I have not been seeing the therapist, this became my awakening, my consciousness at a personal level, at a political

level....Now looking back, I can see things falling in to place. Not that my life is a whole lot easier than before, cause it's not! But, I think the way I look at things has changed somewhat (Cal CC2:24).

Reframing one's past history of oppression enables acceptance. When we speak of changing "the way I look at things", we are signifying a change in consciousness. Cal expressed his growth as continuous throughout the Course.

As a part of the circle I see myself move through the stages, it was continuous growth. It's transformation....I'm concerned that I can't move further because what I require isn't there. That [] creates some concern for me because there's...this form where I gained consciousness; I gained a higher degree of understanding. It has been a real awakening. But there is no platform and there is no support net for me to remain a part of...where is my community and where is the circle for me? How do I continue to hold on to that? (Cal CC2:32).

Circle work was recognized by some participants as a form of intervention which can enhance a strength-oriented, community based practice approach to individual, family and community healing. Phil reinforced the value of Circle work for strengthening the individual In-Relation to Community.

One of the biggest assets of the Circle work is that it builds personal strength for people to be able to bring up their lives and stories and to talk about it. And feel that they will be valued. And the strength of knowing that people care about what you value. And the strength in the community...In people being able to be there for other people and build up bonds between everybody in the community. It provides all these strong role models for people, as they see women and men showing the strength that they had in dealing with difficult times and how they've come through, and how they can talk about it and learn from it. The strength that you gain from learning from somebody else being strong in the situation (Phil TC3:33).

The strong role models provided by some participants inspired others. Stories of pain, survival and success inspire ourselves and others and become

lessons that can be learned from. Unless we have a listening ear, our painful experiences can become lodged in our bodies. Instead, they can be released as a story to be learned from.

If you don't have a Circle or a way of talking about it or sharing, you become isolated and then you don't see the positive sides of what you're learning, so your difficult times are never used in a positive way. It's always just kept in yourself. You're just left to eat away at yourself...Through the sharing you can find strength and you can see a purpose for what you've gone through, that it's making a difference in somebody's life if you do share it (Phil TC3:33).

Phil reaffirmed the view that Circle is a valuable tool and proposed that concepts of Circle work could be applied to any kind of social work practice, even without a formal Circle.

So I can see that it is such a valuable tool for people to be able to learn how to use Circle to help promote strength in people. Even if you don't have a formal Circle work, the concepts, like the sharing of your experience and telling your story and listening to other people telling their story, can be woven in to almost any kind of social work practice (Phil TC3:34).

Reciprocity is a critical aspect to developing community, in expanding our Circle of interconnectedness, and is essential in social work practice with the Communities. Phil reflected on how reciprocity is built into Circle work and this Model.

From my observation, having community people come in and be part of that Circle has provided a really valuable healing for people in the community as well, because it gives them an idea of being able to share things and feel validated to come in and be part of a Community Circle, which they might never have had been given the liberty, been given the chance, otherwise. It also helps ...introduce people to other ideas about social workers and how social work isn't only...negative experiences, but where there are social workers trying to make changes and do things and their

frustrations involved in changing systems that are so hard and stuck in their ways. I think bringing community in to the Circles and talking about these kinds of topics, the Circle becomes a living entity almost...It produces change just from having gone through a Circle. It might give people new ideas and new stories and new ways of thinking about things and finding out about how other people have changed things and what you can do...I can see changes in people being able to participate in Circles over a period of time and how it's valuable (Phil TC3:15).

Phil noted the impacts of divisions between professionals and the community, between academia and practice, and between personal healing and professional growth and development.

School work is so often separated in to learning to heal other people and healing yourself. Healing yourself is seen as something you should do outside of your school work. It's not really part of it. A lot of classes that they bring up emotional support, talk about going elsewhere to get their support if it has emotional content in that class. I don't really see that you can separate the two. I think that it's part of being in relation. You're always learning from people that you live with and work with and that they learn from you. It's a reciprocal thing (Phil TC3:14).

That is, it can be transformed into a reciprocal relationship. Phil reminds us of the "inside-out" lessons provided by stories of service providers known for their power-over tactics.

That's part of what happens when social workers stop learning from the people that they're working with. It then becomes this talk down thing where you're telling the person what they have to do as opposed to the reciprocal relationship between people....They break it all down in to a totally unfeeling, top-heavy type of relationship (Phil TC3:15).

And it is exactly this kind of relationship that this Model-In-Use seeks to Change. Whether power-over is enacted in the social work relationship or the classroom, it must be interrogated and transformed. I concur with Mussell

(1994): an educational experience "must prepare the learner, or educator as well, to be an agent of change who can help mobilize and help to build inner resources of other community members willing to join in creating the desired positive lifestyle. The ultimate of this healing/education is the community, not merely the individual worker" (8). This relational work of building community in and outside the classroom assists in forming the alliances necessary for change to occur. Following the path of the Circle, we now move to the North and focus on change strategies enacted within and through the Model-In-Use.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE NORTH: ENACTING CHANGE

According to Absolon (1994), in following the path of the Medicine Wheel, "the fourth direction involves creating a healing movement towards change--this is possible only when the other components have been acknowledged" (18). To move to the "doing" phase, the North, requires that we take the knowledge gained from all the Directions and enact it. Only in following this form of "praxis" is balance possible to achieve. This Model-In-Use has emulated the wholeness of the Medicine Wheel in following the flow of the directions. Enacting and teaching a change Model, in this instance, included many aspects. Consciousness raising and empowerment through First Voice does provide the insight upon which an activist position can arise. Being in and listening to First Voice can produce personal change for the listeners and the speakers. Enacting Aboriginal cultural practices, within the University context, can produce affective and relational change in the atmosphere and the participants. The healing and community building influence of Circle produces a forum for change in individuals, In-Relation to their families, the Communities and the social work professions. Change in the philosophy and methods of social work practice has been a consistent focus. In the North, attention will be paid to learning the process of en-Act-ing Change. The embodiment of the learning process as enacted in my own lived example as teacher and activist, is discussed as providing visible change role modelling. More specifically, activism will be theorized and analyzed as a pedagogical tool.

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

This teaching model is rooted in EXPERIENCE. The reality of learning from experience is embedded in the Aboriginal epistemology from which the Model evolved. In class we examine the daily lived experiences of racism and privilege; through listening to First Voice, the voice of experience in Circle, we can re-experience the pains of oppression, feel our own part in story; through use of ritual and storytelling we experience the rich gifts of the cultures; we use Circle to experience our Self-In-Relation to members of the Communities, developing this connection in a form which does not rely on hierarchical, nor purely rational models.

This emphasis is vitally connected to the reverence I was taught, for valuing the lessons gained from experience, my own and others. I addressed this issue in one of the Visions circles.

I really feel that most of the strongest and most powerful lessons that I've had in my life have been directly at the hands of other people. In a face to face encounter, or because I've taken on an action that I thought was small in the beginning, then all of a sudden it became huge, and then I learned from all the ripples and all of the things that came from that. I know that from my Elders, experience is the teacher (Fyre VC3:23).

To the Traditionalist, our own experience with others and within various contexts is the source of many vital lessons. Observation and emulation of the model provided by the teacher/Elder is crucial. I expressed this insight and how this relates to the University context.

I strongly believe that we can't just say to our children, or to people, we want you to act that way. We have to be that way ourselves. We have to act that way ourselves. And by showing people what it is that we want them to do, or be like, they will learn that....In University people are only used to learning from talking. They're not used to learning from watching and listening, and doing. I really had to adjust my mind-set and my work that way,

because in our Aboriginal ancestry most of the learning is by doing (Fyre VC3:23).

A Black participant reflected on the learnings available for students from the "dominant" culture produced through the experience of having to acculturate to pedagogical forms introduced throughout the course.

One of the most important things that will be helpful in anybody's learning is introducing the dominant culture to a different way of learning. Giving them exposure to what it may feel like for us when we're constantly expected to learn things the way they do it. And I've really enjoyed that aspect of it as well. I think it opens a lot of people's minds - it's not easy just to adapt so quickly (Unicorn VC2:23).

Mac, a White male, paralleled his experience in CCI class to his growing understanding of the feelings associated with oppression.

Class has been opening up some new ideas to me. When the speakers come in they really talk from the heart. It is interesting how squeezed people feel by dominant ideology. I am starting to get a sense of being pressed into a smaller and smaller space, mentally and physically. It almost makes me feel marginal and invisible. I don't compare myself to an oppressed person; that would be presumptuous. However, I think that I am gaining a better sense of what it is like to be from a group that is stigmatized and excluded (Mac 92-j).

Van also noted this aspect of her learning.

The set up of the class, ie. being taught a new way of listening, being put in a position of minority, where you have little choice but to relate to what is being said, the end definitely justifies the means (Van Sept 22 93-j).

Evolving a Medicine Wheel analysis of healing and learning requires and demands continuous and ongoing reflection of our selves In-Relation to others. Attention must be paid to the dialectic of maintaining balance, while

embracing change. Absolon (1994) advises us to ask: "Where do I sit in relationship to the Wheel and where must my own healing begin? What are the dark forces that contribute to my imbalance and dysfunctional behaviours?" (7). We begin the process by identifying what a basic pattern of balance looks like. We might see it modeled in our Elders, or reflected in the animal or plant worlds. We might learn it through reversal, from inside-out lessons that illustrate what difficulties are produced from imbalanced living. The teaching and healing process is evolutionary and cyclical in nature as is the continuum of the Medicine Wheel. It begins with a desire to understand and identify with the balance, wholeness, and interconnectedness expressed in the Medicine Wheel. Through this movement or process the seeker of knowledge begins to identify with the pattern of the Wheel. By modelling it ourselves and teaching the model we will continue to gravitate toward a positive pattern of balance for ourselves and others. Healing and teaching the Traditional way involves recognizing and respecting teachings which come from Mother Earth (Absolon, 1994).

TEACHER AS HEALER: A "PERSONAL" CHALLENGE TO HEGEMONIC AUTHORITY

We are encouraged to learn from our experiences, our successes and our mistakes. We observe, then we do, and then after we might ask an Elder or someone with more experience to help us interpret what happened.

The course has been like that for me. My vision of the Model is that I'm going to continue to learn that way, and I'm hoping that I'm going to keep moving forward with it and learn from what I've been doing (Fyre VC3:23).

I have been learning through experience, in an applied form through evolving this Model-In-Use, how to take a culturally specific, anti-racist approach in a post-secondary educational institution. I have learned that attempting to develop an egalitarian model in an educational or research context requires paying specific attention to the authority dimension, as authority is structured into the professorial role and is a "commonsense" reality for most participants. As the "professor", how can I engage in Circle work and maintain the integrity of an egalitarian process in a hierarchical context? If our intentions as educators are to be inclusive and power-sharing, active attention must be given to the removal of barriers that may prevent community building in the classroom from taking place. In particular we must interrogate our own role as teacher/expert in maintaining the dominance already structured into the academic setting. According to Hart and Holton (1993), "[t]he teacher's consistent, respectful valuing of the differences existent in the classroom (be they cultural, social, racial, or developmental differences) cannot be emphasized enough" (22). Absolon (1994) provides guidance in this area, reminding us of the Traditional epistemology--walk your talk, heal the healer.

We cannot begin to help other people deal with their imbalances unless we first begin to heal ourselves and deal with our own imbalances....We can only facilitate a healing journey to the degree that we as healers have had the courage to journey on our own. If you have not dealt with your own traumas of racism then how can you help another deal with their internalized inferiority?...The healer's openness to change is a key element in the healing process (14).

Katz and St. Denis (1991) draw upon studies of Traditional teachers--Elders and Medicine people--to elaborate the notion of "teacher as healer". "The 'teacher as healer' is one who, infused with spiritual understanding, seeks to make things whole...seeks to respect and foster interconnections--between

herself, her students, and the subject matter, between the school, the community and the universe at large--while respecting each part of these interconnected webs" (24). Traditional teachers must display qualities of the "heart": "courage, commitment, belief, and intuitive understanding" (28). Heart is not limited to feelings, rather it "involves the total person as he or she operates in her deepest essence" (28).

This Model-In-Use is an expression of a change process, a vision enacted of my own deep desire to be a Traditionalist and an activist as part of my daily lived experience as a teacher. I "walk my talk" when I consistently endeavour to take actions in my multiple environments that I perceive are congruent with Aboriginal/anti-racist/feminist/de-colonial/environmentalist social change agendas. As a traditional teacher, I recognize that I am on my own healing/learning journey. As I tell my own stories, and follow the path of the Wheel in each section I teach, I pay attention to my own process and re-learn as I teach, and re-experience the Model each time it is produced. Rather than teaching as an exercise in pedagogical transmission, I embody and transmit my experience as a Guide--as one familiar with the process, having previously undertaken it. As teacher, I do not stand apart from but rather am an integral part of the process. This style is also described as the "carrier role" (Carroll, 1986) in Alaskan Native culture. The helper/teacher/carrier helps bring a person from one place to another (mentally, spiritually, emotionally, or physically) where that person may, in turn, become a helper/teacher to others. As Jock tells it, "[e]ach person is a teacher and a healer with a strength to offer and a weakness or pain to heal" (in Absolon, 1994: 13).

Teacher as healer is a strong message asserted by many Aboriginal educators today. When we follow the Medicine Wheel paradigm of teaching, we can look to the work of shamans who were Traditional teachers and healers.

Traditionally, a shaman's functions are concerned with making whole, finding balance. The starting point of each shamanic action is discovery of the root cause of the problem and through a transformational act, reconnecting the individual to the Whole, to the cosmic laws. Shamans have the duty of deciphering the existing imbalance so the person can again live in harmony with his or her body and soul, a state that is described as "health". This takes place primarily on the spiritual plane, but includes the mind, heart, and body as well. The real transformational work is done by the person's themselves, as the shaman awakens their own "inner healer" who helps them learn the message of the "illness", allowing transformation into "health" (Lorler, 1989). Medicine Eagle (1991) reinforces this view. "The function of the healer is to embody and manifest that wholeness of Spirit in such a way that he or she can guide those who have fallen out of rhythm, who have stumbled into dis-ease, and help them to reestablish their balance and rhythm (60). The teacher as shaman may help to awaken the inspiration of each learner to be open to what they each need to know to achieve balance and interconnectedness in their own lives and work.

Following Traditional processes requires a component of mutuality in the teaching/learning relationship. There is an emphasis on honesty, openness and authenticity, with efforts to minimize social and power differences (Nelson, Kelley and McPherson, 1985). Working under the principle of voluntary cooperation as opposed to coercion is a constant challenge (Goodtracks, 1973). Even when teaching is done in Circle, the institutional authority as evaluator is embedded in the need to produce the relevant grade, so true equality is unattainable. To be "in charge" of a Circle process in academia, requires a great deal of sensitivity, awareness, self-reflection, and patience. Too much direction can stifle and inhibit the flow, creating blocks to people's mindful

participation, as people concentrate more on what "the Professor" expects, and less on what their own process is.

The Aboriginal epistemology, Self-In-Relation, reminds us that as educators we must remember to consider ourselves In-Relation to our students. According to Kleinfeld (1975), "[t]he intensity of the emotional relationships that characterized the most effective teachers of Indian and Eskimo students could be judged inappropriate according to the usual Western professional orientations" (305). She noted that when teachers had been socialized in mainstream university education programs, "they sometimes felt a conflict between the professionalism they had been taught and the personalism that they say "worked" in the classroom" (305).

Being unfamiliar with the specialized, impersonal relationships characteristic of large Western institutions, Native persons may interpret impersonality as dislike or disrespect. We are acculturated to be In-Relation, and expect others, whether an educator or a student, to care about us as total persons, not as learners or teachers of a particular subject matter. In the Traditional way, "You've got to be personal...What you have to do is shed the barrier of formality that you put up between you and the class. Approach them like people you know...The classroom should be like a little family" (Kleinfeld, 1975: 318). While it is unexpected, and can be considered "inappropriate", in mainstream academia, I challenge this form of Eurocentrism by maintaining a "personal" approach. The Model is built on my own identity and my experience of the world as an Aboriginal feminist anti-racist educator. As I teach I rely on my embodied experience of the world and of the evolving educational process as dynamic content for teaching/learning about race relations. In Circle Talk on CCI, I addressed the complex issue of my identity/subjectivity and how it evolved through/into teaching in the classroom.

When I really come to the heart of why I'm teaching this way, it really comes down to feeling alienated, and isolated, and voiceless in my own experience as a student. And I'm really trying to find now, a place for myself as a Native teacher, in a location that I still feel isolated, alienated and voiceless. I'm trying to use what little teeny bit of voice I have in the University--the professor has the voice of designing the course outline and building the curriculum.

I really see this Model as a piece of my own resistance, in trying to work in a Native way in a White organization...But it is hard to embrace your own background, your own identity, as a cultural identity. It's really hard in a White place...I really had to come around to being myself first. To really deciding that's who I am and that's what my heart is, and that's where I am in the world, that's who I am in the world. Then if I can embrace that, why is it that I'm trying to embrace that? What is it about that, that is good for me that I want to share with other people? Then how can I bring more people in to that and then how can I use that to create change? So to me, the Model is really my own process, the way that I've learned to make sense of the world. The way that I've learned to make sense of my own identity position in the world, which is really conflictual. Now I'm trying to teach from that same position. Sometimes it's really personal and terrifying; and I leave class and I ask: Why did I ever say those things to that group of people? I don't even hardly know them! (laughs) Here I am saying some of the most personal things that ever happened to me in my life. I'm trying to model that...It's ok to say about the mistakes you've made. It's ok to say about your struggles, if you've had an identity struggle....Sometimes it's a big, painful experience to come around to embracing that. Now, having embraced it, speak out about it. That's what I'm trying to model....It really does feel very personal to me, it's a very personal teaching model. It's a very personal experience to be in the class. I've certainly had that feedback from students and from the community participants. It's been a very personal experience to them (Fyre CC2:31).

Several participants expressed their recognition of this in journals and in Circle Talk on CCI. The following journal excerpts serve to illustrate that participants do see me as a "person", this Model as "personal", and the process as one in which we are engaged in together.

The first breakthrough was in meeting Jean - our professor - who instantly proved to be non-authoritarian with a very warm

humane personality and then seeing how the class was conducted, so informally (Lola Sept 14 92-j).

Thank you, Jean, for guiding us so sensitively in an emotional and delicate topic. It was a wonderful experience (Char Apr 6 93-jsum).

I would like to note that as powerful as the content of the course was it would not have been as powerful without the strong life force and commitment that you, as a Metis, a woman and a teacher, brought to class (Van Dec 93-jsum).

What is always "personally" gratifying to me is to be able to provide a role model to other "minorities" struggling to survive academia.

I have been most impressed with the aura and spirit of the instructor who has demonstrated a courage in and out of class unlike any other person that I have encountered. She has spurred me on to take greater control of my life to bring about more balance. It becomes so important to balance family, work, and community. It is obvious that my consciousness and my person have grown a great deal (Cal Apr 7 94-jsum).

I wanted to thank you personally for the inspiration that you have given me to pursue my career along aboriginal thinking. You've given me the direction I was looking for, when I was lost (Randi Apr 7 93-j).

As I have helped and am helping other women heal, I feel Jean may help restore my strength in grass-roots feminism and women's up-front real support of each other...a spark of hope (Gracie, Sept 29 92-j).

Community participants also reinforced the idea that my identity and personality contributed to the development of the Model overall. I was pleased to hear an Elder from the Native community give me a very Traditional form of praise.

It was really nice to get to know Jean....I was really glad I did because I found out that she has such a special way of giving. Giving back to the people. She's got such a giving and sharing and concern for the people. I appreciate the message that it has to give to other people (Sarah VC 2:24).

In the university context, efforts must be consistently made to equalize and humanize professor-student relations in the learning process, rather than consciously or unconsciously accepting and using strategies informed by "power-over" (Starhawk, 1987). Participants have acknowledged that I strive to be "personal". I have struggled to consistently treat all participants with respect, as living beings with spirits, feelings and thoughts, not as inanimate objects-- "the empty vessel". I follow Kleinfeld's (1975) advice, and use early sessions to combine clarifying objectives and terminology, with establishing the foundations for classroom relationships. "In contrast to other teachers who plunged immediately into academic work, these teachers spent a substantial amount of time at the beginning of the year establishing positive interpersonal relationships, not only between teacher and students, but also within the student group" (Kleinfeld, 1975: 336). Establishing social relationships is a task prerequisite in Aboriginal culture, an epistemology revealed in many rituals, including the Greeting Circle. The Greeting Circle, introduced every first class, is customary at the beginning or end of a Traditional gathering. A Circle is formed and each participant is greeted verbally or physically or both, by every other member in turn. After initial hesitation, an expected response to anything "new", students often really enjoy the experience. It is an excellent method for getting a feel for the energy of the group, and a non-threatening way to introduce students to the more participatory learning approach exemplified in this Model-In-Use. A Native participant, new to this Tradition expressed her enthusiasm:

The greeting circle was my first experience with a different Native tradition, it was a wonderful opportunity to get to know people, what a powerful feeling to be such a part of a wonderful tradition! (Randi Jan 6 93-j).

Gracie gave a thorough analysis of the process and how it may contribute to developing human "connectedness".

Three things I liked about this: 1) the sense of physical connection connotes a sense of 'joining' with another human. 2) The sense of greeting from another, listening to their voice - tone and delivery - and eye contact combined with your own greeting gave a sense of give and take, listening and being listened to - equal participation, and 3) the idea of slowly warming up to possible negotiations and differences by way of human "connectedness" versus separation (Gracie Sept 17 92-j).

The experience of Traditional teaching definitely has provided many lessons for myself and students, both direct and inside-out. As an Aboriginal woman I teach from my own lived experience--I tell my own stories--I speak from the heart--and practice listening respectfully. Students' journalled responses to the personal stories I tell in class reinforced my own analysis. Being "personal" helps trigger a personal response from students. Students are encouraged to struggle to see me as a "person" rather than a cultural artifact or authority figure. Van's response to a story I tell to teach captured what effect I intend "personal" story work to have.

Two things really touched and angered me in this class: one was your story about when you were made to feel invisible by your women peers from class. It illuminated for me how people will sometimes support what is politically correct (or necessary) to support - for example, you were supported by them as a woman, because that was their solidarity, they were safe and comfortable with that. As far as supporting you as a first nations woman, with a horrifying happening, that was unfamiliar to them, (was) sadly, not necessary (and of course would upset their illusion of being all inclusive in their solidarity).

That is what angered me about this story, but what touched me was you and your presentation of your story and your spirit. You allowed the class to see your pain and vulnerability, yet maintained your strength and presence as a teacher (Van Sept 22 93-j).

I work to continuously re-establish my self In-Relation to members of the Communities in and outside of the classroom/School. I expend my time and energy on social functioning of the class and the Circles, including cooking, singing, dancing, and attending to the needs of the participants. I take up issues as they offer themselves in my day-to-day life as a mother, partner, student, teacher, healer, advocate and concerned community member. I teach from these forms of daily lived activism, which simultaneously keeps me challenged to remain in the activist role, while incurring a high cost personally and professionally. I will return to these themes in the chapter on contradictions.

"TAKE A MATERIAL APPROACH"

Russell advises that to be effective in anti-racist education we must emphasize the concrete: "take a material approach" (1985: 165). A "material" approach has been enacted through various means. Having students continuously examine their daily lives is an ongoing exercise in applying new levels of consciousness about culture and race to their own concrete reality. Re-telling experiences with racism as part of journalling and Circle Talk, engaging in Circle Talk and other structured exercises in the classroom, and actively listening to oral narration of experiences by victims/resistors of racism all help focus on the privilege and oppression evident in these experiences.

Russell tells anti-racist educators to "use everything, especially the physical space of the classroom to illustrate the effects of environment on consciousness" (Russell, 1985: 163). Groups or classes may be thought of as having an energy level and a flow of energy. "Some experiences stimulate high energy in us, and some seem to drain us of energy. Are you aware of what kind of learning experiences energize you? What deenergizes you?" (Griffin, 1988: 114). Experienced facilitators learn to be sensitive to the energy flow and

respond to it. Some tension and stress are necessary, but too much is a hindrance. "A relaxing learning environment can be created with color, softer lights, music and rearrangement of furniture" (Griffin, 1988: 114). As noted by Medicine Eagle and other Traditionalists, eliminating rows of tables and chairs in favour of a circle of chairs changes the learning environment drastically. Moving the group out of doors to experience a physical reconnection to our Earth Mother can also provide stimulating learning.

One of the things I really loved about teaching in the interior is that I had an outside teaching space. So we used to do Circle on the ground, outside, underneath this big tree. I would really like to be able to teach Circle that way again. There's something missing in Circle when we have to sit inside a box to do it! When we can't be sitting out on the ground with the beautiful sky over our heads and the grass on our bums, the birds singing, and feel the sense of interconnectedness to all of creation as we are there, because that's what brings the power to Circle (Fyre TC3:42).

Altering the classroom environment, moving from linear rows to Circle, smudging with herbs, using music, drama, poetry, meditation, ritual and feasting are some ways used to materially challenge dominant Western institutional forms. First Class entries by students are illustrative of the difference in my classroom environment and what students are "expecting" to encounter in the context.

...seeing how the class was conducted, so informally, and to further relax me was an intro to First Nations customs - burning sweet grass and participating in the greening circle. What a pleasant experience and such a warm intro to aboriginal culture....I feel excited to be part of this class - I can see my complacency regarding racism is going to [be] 'jarred' in this peaceful learning environment (Lola Sept 14 92-j).

Some students' first class journalling illustrates the embodied paradox of introducing the Aboriginal "atmosphere" into academia.

1st class of Cross Cultural!!! Exciting, Challenging.....TERRIFYING! I have never felt so intrigued by a class yet so scared....A very big contradiction in emotion - going through the calming meditative exercises and then being terrified by the expectations. I love the task choices that are offered. I love the meditative, first nations atmosphere of the class., I will learn, learn, learn, not only about cross cultural issues but also about myself (Van Sept 15 93-j).

These excerpts from journals of Black participants show how their reactions to first class are very clearly in contrast to the overall School/university context.

By the time I made it to this class, I was seriously considering leaving the program. As this class proceeded, I felt my protective 'shell' loosen. A glimmer of hope crept in and eventually took over. I sat in class wondering - how many people will understand or accept what they are about to learn? How many students know that this class is just the beginning of our learning? How many will care? Ah! I will. As I prepare for sleep I savour the relaxing cleansing effect the 'Sweet Grass Smudge' has on me. May our People continue to stay strong. (Unicorn Sept 15 93-j).

Learning environments must be viewed with anti-racist lenses on, how comfortable are "minority" members of our school communities with our pedagogies, with our programs? Have we asked them? Many shared their views of the School environment in journals and Circle Talk on CCI. One Black participant journalled frequently about her Self-In-Relation to the School context.

After my first class in the program, I felt that I had made the wrong decision. I felt angry and isolated from the others in my class. I stepped into this class feeling that I am here in body but not in spirit. In my first week of the program I have had two encounters that made me feel uncomfortable. Yes, we were all social workers but I did not want to be like the others (Unicorn Sept 15 93-j).

Angry, isolated, de-spirited, uncomfortable, and not wanting to conform to be "like the others" are all commonly expressed by "minority" members of the School community. How do we survive and learn to grow in these environments? The Model-In-Use is designed to provide a comfortable classroom climate for those who have this experience in the rest of academia. This need is documented by the above student in a later entry.

As I reflect on Wednesday's class, I may be able to survive the School set up a second time. It was difficult the first time but I expected it to be even more so this time (eight years later). I grew but the School despite it's effort does not meet my expectations. I am more aware and sensitive of my history, race, and culture. I am open to learning to be aware and sensitive of others who do not benefit from 'white privilege'. I want - I expect to be included in all of the curriculum not just cross-cultural issues or anti-racist education courses (Unicorn Sept 23 93-j).

Taking a material approach also means putting community and world events squarely into the classroom. This becomes possible primarily through aligning ourselves to the anti-racist struggle outside the classroom, in the institution and in the Communities. This relationship is facilitated by direct face-to-face encounters in the classroom and in the Communities, with members active in their Community's struggles.

"YOU MUST MOVE AND ACT"

For Traditionalists, we learn/grow/change through actively using our thoughts, desires and feelings as vital components in the realization of our visions. Brooke Medicine Eagle knows well that "[y]ou can talk about something or think about it all day, but to make it real you must do it. You must move and act" (1991). This is the gift of the North: the need for activism, action, to challenge racist practices and structures in the classroom, the institution, and society are called for. For change to occur we are all challenged to do more

than unveil the existence of oppression or privilege. As well as acknowledging one's role in maintaining or resisting oppressive structures, activism requires applying the Will to a given target.

As feminists and critical educators before me have espoused, the raised consciousness which may follow from transformative pedagogies, may not lead to involvement in social change. According to Freire, the possibilities of "conscientizacao or conscientization" (1985: 185) refers to "the process in which men [and women], not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness of both the socio-cultural reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality" (1972: 51). Through the process of reflection, learning can result in individuals becoming agents of change, freed of the constraints of the social structures and enabled to act back upon those structures in order to change them. Education then becomes "the practice of freedom" (Freire, 1973). Kenway and Modra (1992) are critical of feminist educators' "over-valorization of consciousness-raising" (156). As many of us have learned through experience, "one might very well develop a heightened awareness of pain and contradiction but may still feel powerless to resolve problems" (156). They caution us not to stop short of action, the true goal of conscientization. According to Freirian "praxis", it is experience, reflection and **action**, not memorization, that enables the individual to act as a change agent, to resist the hegemonic mind-set.

This Model-In-Use radically challenges educators to see that the educational process is not complete unless learners take concrete steps to physically apply what is learned towards change. In this Model, I am proposing a form of community-building education, which involves persons engaged in actively transforming the quality of their lives, Communities, and societies. Rather than being an individualistic academic exercise, it is a dynamic process

in which education, experience and social change are interwoven. Gela expressed concern about the lack of focus on change strategies in her educational experiences so far.

I feel that the bulk of our social work education is learning to identify oppression, and that not enough time is spent brainstorming ways in which we can fight and change it. If we don't learn the basics of change at the school (an environment in which students do share similar goals), then how can we become effective initiators of change in the real world (Gela Feb 2 93-j).

To teach a change model, it is necessary to understand the basics of community organizing. Awareness of the potential for activist opportunities within all locations is crucial. Piven and Cloward (1977) develop this theme. "...[i]t is the daily experience of people that shapes their grievances, establishes the measure of their demands and points out the targets for their anger" (21). They note that "institutional roles determine the strategic opportunities for defiance, for it is typically by rebelling against the rules and authorities associated with their every day activities that people protest" (21). As people can only defy institutions to which they make contributions or have access, choice of targets is limited to those In-Relation to the activist. This leads us as activists within the university system to recognize our classrooms as potential sites of resistance. "Practising freedom" (Freire, 1985) within the School--an institutional bureaucracy--posed particular constraints to which I will return in the chapter on contradictions.

Developing the classroom as a site of activism is a process of building new forms of relating. Students are challenged to focus consciously on how to take action to challenge domination in our institutions and our society. Participants are encouraged to see all the opportunities for activism in their daily lives. Following the Traditional conceptions of Self-In Relation, students

can target themselves, their family, friends, workplace, the School, as well as the possibility of engagement with one of the Communities, or in coalition work.

"PERSONAL" ACTIVISM

It is necessary to reframe "action", to embrace all forms and contexts of activism as vital to the transformative learning process. Engagement in action is a process of growth in itself. Targeting oneself/one's subjectivity for change is a possibility that students can explore in their examination of the range of possible actions available. Analee learned to reframe action to include her own self-talk.

For me, I didn't really see that the changes I was making in my own personal life could be thought of as an action. I saw 'action' as being more like taking part in an activity or putting on as activity or function.

In giving this a lot of thought I came to the conclusion that action can come in a number of different forms - making changes and taking action in my own personal life being one of these. Since I have started taking this class, this has been an important priority for me. I have been examining my own thoughts, ideas and response to different conversations and situations. As I do this I try to identify for myself what I think may be racist behaviour - whether it be a thought, something I voiced, or an action. Once I identify this, I work on taking action to make changes in these things... Whether or not you choose to communicate what you are thinking, does not make it any less racist! (Analee Nov 24 93-j).

It is possible to target oneself. Students can reframe changes in their consciousness about race and culture as a form of "action". I strongly encourage students to find some way to externalize their insights at a level they feel able. I teach that change can be understood as a personal, transformational experience. But it must also be linked dialectically to structural change. I spoke out about this in the Talking Circle on change.

I really think that change is required in the structures. There's no way to get around that. And just making people see that change is required isn't enough for change to be there! People have to be doing something with that knowledge, and with that insight! Sometimes we can get bogged down in our own internal critique and our own rooting out of what it is that's holding our own selves in position. And if that's where our energy gets locked or stopped, I think that sometimes we do need to be patient with that and let ourselves go deeply in to that and work on that as much as we need to. But at some point that has to become externalized again, and there's got to be that continuous external/internal thing going on (Fyre TC4:26).

Many of us learn to be active through acting out of necessity. We do not learn the lessons of oppression and privilege by reading or talking alone, much is embodied. While an understanding of theoretical constructs is necessary for gaining the consciousness of what to do and why, doing is vital to our survival and to change actually occurring in the conditions of our daily lives. As Unicorn told it, transformation of daily life within this racist society is already consuming for some members.

Please note as a Black woman living in a racist society, I find it necessary (personally, professionally and socially) to take actions every day. Some are short-term, some evolve into long-term. I have learned ways of actions from the history of my people and others facing a similar struggle. This knowledge was obtained through first voice story, storytelling, reading, television, community meetings, workshops and this course. Learning to adapt action(s) to reflect what the current situation of issue is the key to progress (no matter how small or large). It is important to do with others not on to them when doing cross-cultural work (Unicorn Dec 93-t4).

While critical theorists have been elaborate in their development of the terminology of oppression, less attention has been paid to the daily lived experience of resistance, our "activist" struggle to survive. Efforts to enact structural change were addressed specifically as a personal journey, through critical consciousness to promoting change, by one Black activist. Benny

reflected on the process of coming to anti-racist activism In-Relation to her own life experiences of racism. She expressed a commonsense reality for many activists. What seems a "small piece" to some may be perceived as highly challenging to another.

It initially starts off as a small piece. I'm going to go do this, but sometimes even just facilitating the workshop, talking about your experience, you're challenged in ways where people think you have two heads most of the time! You leave there sometimes thinking, maybe I am making too much of this, or when that consciousness comes on it's like you're critiquing everything - You see a commercial and you say, how come there's no Black kids in that commercial? How come there's no Black kids or Black people, period, on that poster? How come there's no Black people working in that store? Even within my day to day, whether it's I'm getting on the bus, or whether it's I'm watching tv, or whether it's I'm at work, it's a constant struggle, and I always have to find that I put myself in a position to try to create some change (Benny TC4:9).

The desire to communicate insights and experience, to create change was one that grew with age and exposure to critical views.

When I was a few years younger I didn't make waves, but now it's probably to the other extreme. People know me as a person who's got to speak out. That's really important for me to feel that way! I believe that when I do it I don't do it in a confrontational way. I do it in a way that hopefully people will learn from my experiences... That's the change that I hope to make, and the change that I'm making within myself, and hopefully it will work throughout the Black communities (Benny TC4:9).

SHIFTING THE BLAME: THE PERSONAL IS STRUCTURAL

Several participants spoke about how the course helped them change their analysis. A shift from strategies of personal adjustment to identifying and attempting to alter structural forces was noted. This represents a form of empowerment which is personal, yet dialectically--it is politically inspired and

collectively achieved. Phil noted that becoming conscious of the extent of racism contributed to being able to externalize rather than internalize it.

It's really made me aware of how to go about making changes, and to have the confidence in what I've been doing, and that it's worth fighting for, and that there are other people who feel the same way. It's also made me realize that all the racist kinds of things that have happened to me; they've not just happened to me, they've happened to everyone, but I've realized that on a deeper level than I did before...I realize that the extent of it is built right in to the whole social system. I find myself looking at everything, and noticing things that I wouldn't even have recognized as being racism. And being surprised when other people didn't realize that what's happened was racist, and even people that it's happening against, often think that it's just something that's happening to them. So I've been starting to be able to when I see things like that, even letting the person understand that what's happening is racist. It makes a big difference to have the person perceive what is happening instead of internalizing it. If you understand that it's coming from someone else and it's not you personally, it makes a big difference for being able to deal with it (Phil TC4:23).

Sharing "personal" stories of oppression and change helps to promote the consciousness necessary for activism to occur. Collectivizing our understanding of oppressive experiences helps depersonalize racist trauma and refocus our energy on an external target. Being an activist does take a certain amount of personal clarity--the feeling of being able to en-act requires a conviction that systemic and or personal change is possible. Redbird reflected the everyday "overcrowdedness" that makes us bitter but helpless to do anything about it.

I have so much on my mind, I think it's overcrowded! I can't seem to think of anything else except maybe injustice and that type of thing. It makes me so bitter. I feel really helpless to do anything about it. Because I can't do anything about my own life, but I'd be more than willing to help change the system if I knew how. But I don't know how, and until that day comes, and if I'm still alive, I will be more than willing to help change (Redbird TC3:12).

CHALLENGING IDENTIFICATION OF SELF AS THE PROBLEM

Having the "know-how" is essential information to break down internalized and externalized barriers to change. Shifting the focus from personal adjustment solutions to social change was seen as a challenge by some. Members of the Communities are continuously reinforced to assimilate, to adjust to the "commonsense" norms of White middle-class life. Activism, in this case, is "personal"--challenging the internalization of "self as problem". Cindy gave a clear depiction of empowerment--the gaining back of personal strengths available when the sources of alienation are located in systemic rather than individual deficits.

This is my fourth year already, and this is the year that I begin to shift from focusing on my person, as a person, to the systems, and I find that I learn all these things from the sharing in the class, and listening to the feedback from the people.

I face these things and suddenly I find that I'm so isolated, and I'm really marginalized by the society. No matter what color patients that I get, people still treat me the same, and they don't change their attitude. And that makes me feel stupid, or I have some sort of personality problem. The whole society can come together, and they function real well; how come I feel I'm isolated and marginalized, and cannot fit in the society? And I still damage myself. And people around me say, because I'm not tolerant, or I still have to do something good to fit in the society. But when I come here, then I realize, it's the system!...When I share with the classmates, and listen to the feedback, I start to get my power, I start to realize it's the system...So, suddenly, when I'm in this system, I find that I gain back my strengths. And I feel good about that. I hope, if personally, I can face all these critiques, all this attack, maybe I myself can be a person to demonstrate to other females how we can come together and change the environment (Cindy TC4:5-6).

RESISTING ASSIMILATION THROUGH EMBRACING CULTURAL IDENTITY

One form of "personal" empowerment, according to McLaren (1989), is "gained from knowledge and social relations that dignify one's own history, language and cultural traditions" (186). This Model-In-Use uncovers systemic

oppression while validating the importance of cultural gifts, including teaching reverence for the rich heritage of resistance. This combination encourages participants to actively resist assimilation. Dealing daily with a racist environment means engaging in a continuous on-going struggle to maintain/embrace a cultural identity in the face of institutional assimilatory forces. I role model resistance to assimilation in the classroom through the use of Aboriginal process. I know and teach that it is an essential survival strategy to embrace your cultural identity. Participants from the Communities often reflected on the importance of preservation of cultural roots. Embracing cultural identity as a daily lived expression of resistance to White cultural domination is expressed by one Black participant.

Because our society is ruled by the dominant culture, white - privilege and power, they judge us based on a mirror image of themselves. The message that this sends is - the white way is the right way and the only way. Based on my readings (for class and others), guest participation in class, and my experience the white way, right way and only way does not ring true to oppressed peoples (Unicorn Dec 2 93-j).

Acadian participants reinforced the necessity of their community's resistance to assimilatory forces. One Acadian Elder had this to contribute to Circle Talk on CCI:

I could go on forever to tell you how the Acadians have changed or how they've evolved and how precious we are now, but, because the time is short, I'm just going to say that we have gone a long, long way and I would say the last 15 or 20 years, even about,...from 25 to 50 years: there were job applications, people would put up jobs and say "Acadians need not apply!" And we walked down the streets here in Halifax and people would, if we spoke French, people would gawk at us and call us names. They would go, oh, those French frogs, etc. etc. Well that gradually, that has disappeared. And just the fact that I've been asked to sit here as an Acadian, I think shows one of the ways where we have finally, somebody is recognizing that the Acadians exist and we have our French schools, etc. etc. Like I said, I could

go on all day about how it's changing, but we still have some distance to make (Celi CC2:35).

Cindy links the Model and my cultural identity with what she has learned through her efforts to assimilate to White norms.

This is the only course that I'm not taught by a white teacher....that validates all different ethnic groups and different cultures. I find it's very important because no matter how we learn from the white community, unless I say I will completely cut off my culture, my community, and completely tune in the White community, those things that I learned from the White community may help me survive in a White community, but then if I do that, I face the problem of when did the White community accept me to integrate to the society? - Because in the past I tried to learn the white's strategy, but I feel that all the time I cannot fit in to the White's society. I know no matter how much I try to be completely assimilated to the White's culture, there's drawbacks (Cindy TC4:27).

She concluded by discussing the construction of a "dual" identity as an alternative to accepting assimilation. According to Cindy, there are "two levels of understanding". One is for the cultural group--"you can never cut off the relation with the Community and the Culture". The second is for the dominant group: "given the choice, the white people will pass some comment. Maybe they are intangible, but they try to push you to assimilate to the white culture" (Cindy TC4:27). Her solution is to try her best to validate her culture and try to learn creative approaches to avoiding assimilation tactics of Whites.

The validation of cultural identity, necessary for our survival, also simultaneously provides a challenge to the system.

Once we get over the fear of being ourselves, our own identity, what makes it a contested terrain here is when we decide I'm going to stay who I am, I'll learn when I have to of your stuff, but I want to be who I am when I get out of here still! So I think that was part of my struggle; yes, I'll learn your stuff, but yes I want to stay who I am too (Free TC2:5).

Hattie clearly drew the links between her experience, cultural identity, resistance to assimilatory forces, and the impact of the teaching Model-In-Use.

I look at this School and I look at the instructors; I had these instructors telling me that I should start thinking different thoughts and writing differently. I should not spend my time talking about racism, its pain, I should begin to think about different things. My response is that I'm not white, so I can't think white. I don't have a different cultural background and I can't think that. I am because of my culture and because of my experiences. I might be able to change my life in certain ways, but I'll never be able to change my culture. And your experiences are what they are. I found I just wanted to be here because it would have been the only time in my university life, except as a professor, where I would have any control. I would be able to feel like I was a person. I felt I didn't even have to explain myself to anybody, for one time in my life. That it was ok to be me. And I think that experience in itself is the thing that really kept me joyful (Hattie TC2:21).

She voiced her experience of embracing a positive/resistant cultural identity as an ongoing challenge in multiple but converging assimilatory contexts.

The thing that I find with society, what they want you to do is assimilate. Assimilate, assimilate, assimilate. And if you don't assimilate, it's nothing. It's pain, it's pain, it's pain! I've always been this type of person. I have to be who I am regardless of what the cost is. I will always be that in Circle. I was allowed that in this class. And I guess that's why I really appreciate this class. And that's why I really didn't care for once in my life. I felt like, oh, this is how white people are because they don't have to apologize for who they are, they can just be themselves. I was allowed that in this class. And I appreciated it! (Hattie TC2:22).

The pain produced from contact with the constant assimilatory forces present in the context was poetically spoken by this participant. Simultaneously Hattie testified to the validation she felt when participating as a student and community member in the Model-In-Use. Her speak-out reinforced the practical/applied link between validation, cultural identity and political change.

Guiding/learning on the journey, in our struggle against assimilatory forces, I deeply appreciate these testimonies of cultural resistance inspired and nurtured by my teachings.

ACTIVISM IS IN-RELATION

For some, our daily lived experience motivates us to try to create change in our own lives and the lives of our family and community. Brandt (1986) links Black activism to first or second-hand experience of continuing acts of overt and covert racism in their daily lives and the lives of their children: "street violence, racist laws and educational oppression..." (123). While the "fight against racism has been led by those who suffer most its effects" (Thomas, 1984: 23), this Model seeks to "engage the energies of both those who experience racism and those who are members of the dominant culture in the challenge to racism" (Thomas, 1984: 23).

Aboriginal, anti-racist, and feminist organizers and educators would agree with Howse and Stalwick (1990): "one cannot learn second hand in an authentic way about change and social movement. Merely associating with those who struggle is not enough. One must 'get in there and help' to realize and learn participatory alignment" (106). In this Model-In-Use all students are expected to engage in, process, and share their learnings from actions taken during the period of the course. Guiding students to undertake en-act-ed forms of expressing their learnings has been a constant effort in the production of this Model. Students are challenged to show actively their learning through doing, while engaging in theory building. This is an oft sought after balance for educators. The activity-focused task work lends itself to this process as does the explicit demand for activism.

TASK IV: Do something about it! Take an action. For example, anti-racist community work (join a local organization and work with them on a project); an analysis of racism in an organization or a piece of policy; a class project on racism or cultural diversity could be organized...(Outline, Appendix 1:3)

Following the Model, students are encouraged, as am I, to be continuously engaged in learning how to "get in there and help". Activism can include a challenge to any of the various forms of oppression and hegemony which create and sustain the current status quo. European domination of our geographic and cultural spaces is visible in nearly every location/site in which we engage daily. The educative processes, course content, and research strategies In-Use are intended to help participants to recognize oppression and injustice **and** act on it.

Action is seen as an integral and dynamic aspect of the process, as both educational and transformational. As Khosla (1991) poetically expressed,

From the navel to the fist - from individual reflection to political action - depending on what route you chose, can be a long, personal, abstract, meandering journey that safely explores every corner of our victimization, but never quite makes itself into a cohesive social resistance. Or it can in fact be a risky, collective snap into consciousness that is rather startling, and quite liberating (98).

Students become engaged in hands-on action In-Relation to self/family/workplace/School/the Communities. This provides them with opportunities for risk-taking activity. While multiple possibilities and sites are encouraged as targets for intervention, the readiness of the student strongly influences the level of activism engaged in. Consciousness and access to community or collectivity impacts on choice of target. Some students require specific guidance, but more race-conscious and activist students will readily select forms of action which are challenging for them and those around them. I

have come to frame action, in this Model, as interactive and requiring: a) a heightened consciousness of the issues (East) b) a heartfelt commitment (South) c) a form of relation/access to the individual/community/institution (West) d) widely divergent types of acts (North). I teach that it is possible to enact change in any possible context. We each experience individual and collective opportunities for action daily. We must learn to recognize and be open to them. Collective action requires reciprocity and must be community directed. Through taking action you learn, and you give back to your 'teachers' the gift of your time and energy. In this Model, students are asked to take an active approach to a cross-cultural situation within their immediate environment, or within a negotiated community context. They are to plan the "intervention", enact it, reflect on it, and share in Circle with their peers. Vada expressed her learned definition of "activism":

The class has made me feel that I need to be more active in promoting cultural diversity and awareness, and to fight racism in any way it is expressed (Vada Apr 4 93-jsum).

Students have taken many forms to achieve this expectation. These include: challenging racial slurs with friends, family, co-workers, professors; writing letters of protest to papers, magazines, companies, agencies, the School; organizing and/or facilitating race relations training, including sessions on White privilege, for peers, agencies, children; lobbying for change in policy, service provision, staffing of social service agencies; joining existing community groups working for change; working for change at the School through committee work, workshops, video production, Open Circles. Some of the learnings through activist efforts were expressed in journalling, and in Circles on CCI.

"I CAN DO IT!"

Some students were most inspired by the fact that they did find an avenue to undertake an action over the term of the course. Often this is something they had never previously done or even thought they could or would do. I recognize that the levels of entry into activism are different for different students. Some students need in depth consultation even to become conscious of what access is available to them. I reflected on this in Circles on CCI.

For some people it's really hard to get to that first action! They never, ever, took one in their life. They never confronted a joke. They never said anything back to people. I see that struggle in my course all the time, for people who did never do anything before at all, and now it's their struggle to try to figure out anything at all to do! (Fyre TC4:2).

The empowerment experienced through taking action was expressed in a heartfelt manner in some journals. As Randi commented in one entry:

And of course I took an action, even though it may seem minute to some, it was gigantic for me, and I really felt so empowered doing it! (Randi Apr-jsum).

The small action with big meaning is a common theme.

For me, I see now how important this is if we want to work towards any kind of positive change. These changes that I have been making may seem small to some, but for me it is a big step - it is personal action that I will be able to continue to build on (Analee Nov 24 93-j).

Each action taken needs to be validated as an important source of learning and personal empowerment, although some targets are larger.

I feel very good that I was able to get to a place where I could initiate an action that would have such a far-reaching impact on so many people, and more especially that I had to overcome great feelings of personal risk to do it. It was empowering to me,

and I hope will be the beginning of further political action (Char Mar 29 93-t4).

TALKING CIRCLE ON ACTION

Targets vary, as does the magnitude of the actions. All students have opportunity to raise possible actions that they want peer support on in class or to consult me regarding their plans for action, or lack of the same. While some students report on the progress of their activism in journals or in Circle throughout the term, all are encouraged to report on actions taken at the Talking Circle on Action held each term. Students often express appreciation for this Circle. They comment on what they learned and unlearned about their own and others roles in anti-racist activism. Some of this is captured in the following excerpts.

I liked tonight's cross-cultural class. It was mostly a talking circle on Actions people have taken. There seems to be a lot of diversity and some of the group actions have been very complex (Char Mar 31 93-j).

One Native participant journalled a common reaction of members of cultural Communities to this particular form of Circle.

The talking circle on taking action was great, it allowed me to verbalize my experience....It was my first political move, it was quite a big step for me to be vocal and be heard...It was great to hear of some of the actions that others have taken, it's nice to see that white society does take some sense of responsibility for some of the oppression that exists! (Randi Mar 31 93-j).

Talking Circle on Action gives students an opportunity to share their experiences, to speak publicly as an activist, to hear peers address their efforts at social change, and to reaffirm their own responsibility.

Talk in class was good today. I feel that it is important to hear from each other how we handle racism, how we fight it, and from first voice, how it is lived with. I have gained so much knowledge through first voice experience. It always used to be that I would ignore my racism, seeing it as someone else's problem. I see and hear from those it affects, I have learned that I am responsible in challenging myself and the larger institutional forms of power and oppression (Bejay Mar 22 93-j).

This entry illustrated a shift in level of commitment to activism and reflected an internalization of Aboriginal sentiments regarding Self-In-Relation. Bejay expressed having learned the sense of personal responsibility to act on one's knowledge. Participating in Talking Circle on Action can be experienced as validating, empowering, informative and hopeful. For others it is overwhelming. Paradoxically, and true to Circle form, some students receive an inside-out lesson about what they have not done. One student's entry tells this tale.

Listening to (student)'s description of their involvement with a native organization in taking an action - I was blown away - totally impressed with what they have done but horrified at what I hadn't done. At this point I'm quite overwhelmed by my deadlines and can't or haven't even given any thought to this task. I think I thought by some miracle an idea was going to fall from the sky, since a few weeks ago I put it on hold. This may say something for my own hesitance to get "involved", and also for my procrastination... (Lola Nov 30 92-j).

SILENCE EQUALS COMPLIANCE

Most often students practice/enact their activist role through language, a comfortable medium for most middle class Whites. They learn to challenge others around them on their verbalized racism. I encouraged them to story tell about these actions and what they learned from them. Bejay reports, in her first entry, a clarified understanding of the activist role regarding slurs--silence equals compliance not disapproval.

I have been learning over the past two years how harmful racism is to those whom it oppresses. I always thought that if someone was making racist remarks or telling racist jokes, and I remained silent, I was letting it be known that I did not approve. I know now that silence equals compliance, and that it is important to speak out and educate people as to how harmful these things are (Bejay Jan 13 93-j).

Speaking out about racism can be taken as one sign of the development of a heightened awareness about racism.

I realized in this incident how much more aware of racism I have become. A few years ago I would have ignored it and not said anything, even if I disagreed. I now cannot keep quiet and I am glad. I have developed a heightened awareness about racism!!! Thank goodness!!!! (Dana Sept 21 92-j).

In practicing their speaking out to challenge racism, many students expressed their Self-In-Relation by engaging in an educational process with their own family members. This reinforced the aspect of the action theory In-Use that specifies that access or relation often defines/confines our activism. Tia told the story of challenging her mother to examine her racial consciousness.

After this first class and critically analyzing my flashback, I phoned my mom to share my feelings and thoughts. When I explained what I had remembered she apologized to me and agreed that she was still unaware of her own racism. I explained that permitting herself to be unaware is not acceptable and that apologizing may make her feel better, but it doesn't change attitudes, values and beliefs. Actually, this discussion was a bit more heated than how I have described it on paper (Tia 93-j).

This student was not alone in her desire to share insights from the course with other family members. Others told tales of family interventions.

My husband paints such statues for various churches, he paints them skin tone, which is white. I mentioned to him that Jesus was Jewish and therefor should at least be represented with

olive skin. We debated over this and the next night I came home to find my husband painting a darker skinned Jesus (Van Oct 93-j).

Another level of handling racial situations is gained when peers and co-workers are targeted for race awareness. Analee expressed her transition to activism in this way.

For me, an important part of the learning is actually putting what you learn to practice. This week I had an opportunity to do this. I was involved in a situation where I was able to identify and address what I saw as a racist comment. I was meeting with someone and we were discussing his financial situation when he made (a slur). I decided to address this comment right away. I discussed how negative, offensive, hurtful and racist this comment is and tried to point out some other ways that he could express what he was trying to say.

I was feeling a little apprehensive at first because I did not want to offend this person, but, in the end it worked out quite well. He looked at it as being "just an expression" but I helped him to see that it was much more than that. For me, this ended up being a very positive learning experience in that I was able to confront this individual in a non-threatening way and help him to see that we must really think about what we are saying because what we may think are "just expressions" may be very racist...and very hurtful towards others.

This may be a very small gesture to some but to me it was a very big step...it gave me the opportunity to put into practice what I have been learning. I think it is very important to address these small comments because it will help us to get a little further ahead in our struggles against racism (Analee Oct 15 93-j).

Reframing Action to include verbally challenging racism in our day to day lives allowed many a "glimpse" of activism. As previously theorized, the "small gesture" of resistance can be a very big step in heightening consciousness and commitment to act. A later entry by Analee expressed continued growth in this area.

...I don't feel as scared about addressing certain issues with people. In fact, a big step for me was addressing an issue with a co-worker. I was absolutely terrified because this person was almost twice my age! I thought they would think I was just trying to be smart...or that I would offend them in some way. It turned out to be a positive experience in the end....I actually think this person may have learned something from me...not that he would ever admit it, of course! (Analee Nov 24 93-j).

One student from the Native community provided an excellent example of applying her learnings about activism in every area of her life, including at the School. Her journal illustrated the many forms "speaking up" can take. One day she challenged a professor directly, by responding truthfully to the question: "Do we make you comfortable here?"

I felt very proud of myself for having been able to speak up about this. At one time I would have felt silenced by it. I think that I am starting to feel confident about confronting people when I am hurt by their racist remarks (Phil Mar 16 93-j).

Further motivated to continue her activist learning, Phil took an assignment in another course, a direct practice video, and turned it into a lesson about racism in the classroom. She enacted, with a White male colleague (Mac) playing the role of Native student, the multiple forms racism in the classroom can take/had taken. The video included the psychological impacts on the student and a culturally appropriate style of intervention in dealing with the trauma.

I felt very good about having done this video. It was a good way to make (professor) think about racism, without making her lose face. It was also good for the people in my group to watch because it brought out a lot of issues that they had been unaware of. I felt empowered by taking an action against something that I had felt so strongly about (Phil Mar 23 93-j).

In her journal summary, Phil reflected on the progress she made. She noted progress from being conscious enough to make "self-protective remarks" and address racism with children, to now being empowered to raise issues with people who have "power over" her. Her journey included several interventions within each context of her life, including the School context.

I think that the most important thing that I have learned this year and largely as a result of this class, is to be able to speak out against racism. I feel empowered in a way that I have never felt before. I feel that I have a voice, and that people will listen to what I have to say, and take me seriously. I can see the progress that I have made in this way through my journal. In the beginning I made only self-protective remarks, like I did with the counsellor. I had always spoken out about racism in children before, but never to anybody who had any power over me. ...Since then I have been empowered enough to confront students and professors on their racism. I would have been terrified to do this last year. I know that I will continue to develop and gain strength in this area (Phil Apr 93-jsum).

I teach that speaking out against racist slurs whenever we encounter them is a step on the path of becoming an anti-racist activist/social worker. Acknowledgment of the transition from an "anti-racist wanna be" is expressed by Lena.

I have also learned how to begin to practice anti-racist social work practice. At the beginning of my journal I wrote about an incident where another white woman said something racist and I did not respond. Later, towards the end of my journal I wrote about two incidents where I called people on their racist behaviour. I feel I have grown from practising non-racism to anti-racism...I feel I went from being an "anti-racist wanna be" to actually taking action against racism... (Lena 92-jsum).

COLLECTIVITY COUNTS

It is both a comfort and a source of distress that it is not by my actions alone, the sole Aboriginal scholar on faculty, that systemic transformation will occur. I take courage from the writings of Razack, who says: "It is within my control to name the dilemmas of speaking and working across differences at this historical period, even to the point of whining, and to work at the same time to ensure that the ratios that I live with ultimately change. It is not possible for me to speak with integrity till then" (1991: 46).

Speaking with "integrity" as a minority scholar is difficult. We need to critically interrogate employment equity for its potential as a "mask of reform". Our positions within the institution can be theorized as the "indigenization of social control....when indigenous people are recruited to enforce the laws of colonial power" (Howse and Stalwick, 1990: 105). Mama (1989) acknowledges the same theme in Black organizing: "[I]t is clear that putting a few Black faces at service delivery points does not address the inegalitarian character of service provision....Rather, it is a question of collective power as well as politics" (38).

Challenging the hegemonic code, Leonard observes, "effectively requires collectivity and not simply individual refusal, however heroic that may seem" (1990: 23). As Thomas states, "Racism is not an individual problem - it is lodged squarely in the policies, structures, practices and beliefs of everyday life" (1984: 24). Collective action is crucial to the development of an environment where racism can be discussed, and resisted. An important part of anti-racism is about "making explicit, the implicit" (Brandt, 1986: 127). Once the issues are defined in explicit terms, targets can be set and resistance enacted. Working with others in the system who have common aims, building networks, gaining allies and advocates is essential. As the magnitude of the issues are revealed, including the commonalities and differences across the Communities, coalition-

building is reflected upon as a necessary strategy. This is illustrated in journal excerpts from members of the Native and Black Communities. One Native student journalled:

I learned a lot about the struggles of other oppressed groups and can join in their struggles to help themselves, for it is the power in Numbers, collectivism that helps! (Randi Apr 93-jsum).

Nadine shared a similar realization.

I can't help but wonder what would happen to our society if all of the racially visible peoples and those discriminated against, banded together to promote changes that would benefit them, rather than having to fight the larger powers solely? (Nadine Mar 3 93-j).

Change, when envisioned as a structural issue, requires community participation. Stories that illustrate effective change strategies enacted by our Communities are encouraged, told, and retold. We need to remember and retell our successes as well as our pains. Phil told of how the women of one Native community banded together to stop men abusing women in their community by collectively, with their children, moving into the home until the abuser moved out. She concluded,

How important it is to have everybody working towards the same thing - a group of people working....It made a big change in that reserve. It just put that message out that women weren't going to take that any more and that they weren't about to let men continue it, and there were consequences. It really shows how you can make changes if everyone sticks together. It wouldn't have made any difference at all with just one person left to themselves, but having the whole community react and finding a creative way of solving something that seemed like an impossible task before (Phil TC4:41).

I have consistently worked to expand my connection to the Communities by providing an opportunity to listen actively to voices from the Aboriginal, Black, Acadian and other Communities represented through First Voice in the School. I have engaged in reciprocal relations with many Community members using my own resources to support and advocate for money. As I continue to encourage and require an activist position in all participants in the educational process, several avenues to create sustainable change are opened out.

ENACTING CHANGE WITHIN COMMUNITIES

Some students take their activism outside of their immediate lives and the School. On occasion students seriously take up learning by doing, by volunteering in the Communities for a special project or established period of time. In making efforts to join with existing community organizations to contribute to change efforts, I encouraged students to focus on an entry point as defined by the group. When mainstream students wish to offer assistance to Native/Black/Acadian or other cultural Communities they are not members of, reciprocity is stressed as crucial. If a Community is offering an individual/small group a learning opportunity, then the student(s) consciously must work to contribute what they can to the site. What the student learns about working across cultures is to be documented along with the action accomplished. Respectful and reciprocal relations are expected and validated in any communication I have with the students embarking on these journeys into "helpfulness". An excellent example of such an intervention was three students who engaged in a voluntary relation with a local Native service organization to aid in doing background research for a proposal the agency wished to submit. As the outset of the term they approached me with their intention and we discussed the appropriate methods to approach a Native agency and the kinds

of service they could offer. They collectively negotiated their own terms with the agency and wrote up their learnings jointly in a task report. While the nature of the work they undertook is contained in their full report, the section used here illustrated the depth of their learning through doing. They emphasized the necessity of learning and unlearning when working to build cross-cultural alignments.

Throughout our contact with the people of the (agency), it must be said that (co-ordinator) and others have been most accepting of our group coming in as virtual strangers. In our learnings about First Nations people, we have needed to learn and unlearn some of the ways in which we have been socialized to interact in White society which are in conflict and sometimes seen as offensive to the people. We have needed to suppress our urgency for information and to learn to sit back, relax, and develop a trusting relationship. We have learned to be quiet and to be still as we were like intruders. We also learned to go outside ourselves and our learnings. It is also significant to state that we needed to learn to be patient and to appreciate any contact that was shared with us...

Overall, this project has been a great learning experience for each of us. We have learned that Aboriginal and mainstream cultures need to learn to appreciate one another. It is the consensual opinion of this group that White society could stand to learn much from the Aboriginal values and beliefs towards child care, community interconnectedness, and respect for our relationship with Mother Earth (Group Report Nov 23 92-t3).

Mac, one group member, shared his cultural learnings, expected and unexpected, more specifically in this journal entry. He showed how what he learned theoretically, from the "books", about cultural difference, both became meaningful and helped process actual experience.

Well I finished with the (agency). I am not sure that my experience there was quite what I expected....Most of my learning came from sitting and listening. From talking and asking questions. It was through those moments of sitting around the office discussing issues of racism and the history that I really came to know more about Aboriginal people, culture, and oppression. I feel that the other work was secondary. It is interesting how quickly my

expectations changed. At first, I thought that when I started to work that at least some acknowledgment was due to me. Also, when I greeted people I was a little disturbed by the apparent lack of response. Then I read that in Native culture that there is no onus on the other person to return the greeting and that this does not necessarily mean an insult. Also in Native culture, a level of participation that in White culture would be considered above what people would deem acceptable and, therefore noteworthy of praise is expected as a regular contribution. So, there is not as much concern given to "extraordinary" acts as the individual is expected to contribute what they can toward the survival of the community (Mac 92-j).

These "realizations" allowed the student to stop worrying about "being accepted" and to **do** what he could to contribute to the Community. Mac learned that acceptance is culturally expressed: in Native culture acceptance rests more on what you do than what you say.

I don't think that I was totally accepted but I also don't think that, that was important. I was there to learn that there are good reasons why I might not be accepted....By doing this I feel that I have become a little more accepting of other cultures and ways of seeing things....Perhaps it also lets me see that there truly are different ways for doing things and that this does not mean that the world will come tumbling down. It simply means that other ways are different; not better or worse (Mac 92-j).

Perceived acceptance or lack of acceptance within the non-White environment seems to be a common theme for mainstream students. This is vitally linked to their own acculturation to implicitly adopt White values and to not accept others' cultural ways as equally valid. Also, Whites are accustomed to being accepted in dominant culture, so are often "uncomfortable" when they are not openly welcomed in the ways that they are used to. This reaction was graphically displayed in Dana's reflections. She attended, with two White peers, a majority Black community event.

I have been reflecting more on my experience at the (event). I did feel oppressed there, as one of the only white

persons. To be in a setting like this, for the first time, it was very educational. For the first time, I was not a member of the dominant group. I felt very uncomfortable. I was hoping that someone would come over and say hello, or introduce themselves to me, as I did not know anyone there, except for (2 students), who I went with. I could feel the discomfort. I felt like a fish out of water. I was hoping that someone would introduce us, include us into their circles of communication. I felt like we were being watched; people were probably trying to figure out who we were and our reasons for being there. It was a great learning experience for me. Never before did I feel so alienated and uncomfortable in a crowd. I have learned first handedly how difficult it must be for Blacks and other minority cultures, who must face this everyday in our white, dominant culture. I could feel myself that day looking for other white faces in the crowd to help me to feel more comfortable (Dana Nov 20 92-j).

Students need to learn that some uncomfortable feelings are necessarily a part of entering into an unfamiliar racial or cultural context. As Dana reflected, it can be reframed positively as a first hand experience of what others from the Communities face every day. Van's entry reflected on her embodied experience of "minority" status, made visible to her in task work.

Being the only white person involved in this presentation (racism) was quite an eye opener for me. I did not just hear the rhetoric of whites can't speak for blacks, first nations or any other non-white groups, I experienced the reality of the words.... The most illuminating aspect of this presentation was my being on the outside looking in. This was my presentation and I was expected to do the work for it, yet I was on the peripheral.

The boundary of color and the uniqueness of the black experience put me in the position of uncertainty. This helped me to understand, on a small scale how a person of color feels when they walk into a white room in the education system. They are expected to learn, do their work and succeed, in spite of the barriers they face daily, hourly, minute by minute, second by second (Van Oct 93-j).

Van reported her action of joining a White anti-racist coalition. She emphasized the role her experience with the Model-In-Use played both in motivating her to join and in her analysis of her experience with the group.

My action is that I have joined the (group name). What brought me there - my belief in the respect for all peoples, my desire for peace among people and the need inside of me to do something. I have always known that my lamenting and verbal support for fighting racism, were not cutting it - This class was the door of awareness, that I could not close.

...This class presented me with a door that would not close so easily - The words "do more than say", were/are the representations of truth to me - "my door jammers". I knew I could not be inactive any longer...

Being a member of the "white group" at first seemed strange to me, I thought that a unified group of blacks and white would be more effective. I now see the necessity of having a white group - it is our responsibility to educate other whites, but I also now know the power of first voice and the dramatic effect this has had on my learning, hopefully it will have the same impact on others (Van Dec 93-t4).

This type of act, another small beginning, can result in activism of a longer duration than the conclusion of the course. These acts are a spark of hope for sustainability of White anti-racist activist initiatives begun through participants' involvement in the Model.

Some students from the Communities targeted service delivery systems relevant to their group. One Black student, Nadine, emphasized objectives and learnings she obtained through intervention with her own community members. She stressed reciprocity for the community members; learnings and benefits for all participants involved.

I feel that the presentation accomplished a couple of things. One in particular was the opportunity for Black foster parents to network and share experiences. These foster parents have the opportunity to be members of the Foster Parents Association, a predominately White organization. Since being a part of the White structure can be intimidating many Black foster parents choose not to participate. Currently, there is no homogenous group or support for Black parents to come together and talk about their experiences.

The presentation was also a great learning experience for prospective social workers. Present and future workers need to

hear that cultural difference is an important part of a child's life. The workers need to be culturally sensitive...

I feel strongly that the presentation was a valuable learning experience for all who attended. The letter composed and sent to the foster care officials will hopefully promote change within the program as it affects Black children in care and foster parents who work within the system (Nadine Mar 31 93-t4).

Hope and vigilance are required in attempting to promote change in the overall service delivery structure. The learning experienced, the impacts on participants, were supported by Randi's journal entry. She expressed her heartfelt reaction and action taken as a result of this learning experience.

During second round I wanted to speak to the Black women in the room and to let them know that their experience and wisdom has impacted on me greatly this term. My work as a professional has been impacted by my decision to go against policy and find black foster homes, a big step for me! (Randi Apr 7 93-j).

A learning Model that emphasizes an action-oriented approach, lodged in day-to-day life, can help students more clearly identify the symptoms and causes of oppression. It helps concretely support efforts to learn ways of challenging structures of domination once visible. Hands-on activism helps to equip all of us to recognize the need for personal and collective strategies for change. An understanding of the relationship of persistence to successful activism is also required but difficult to teach in one-half credit. In the first year, an action group began the process of initiating an anti-racist policy at the School level. In each year at least one group followed this up, providing a lesson in sustainability critical to successful social change processes. While some limited progress has been achieved in this area, many proposed changes have been successfully resisted. We have begun an annual Open Circle to honor International Day to Eliminate Racial Discrimination. This event, organized by a group from the class, is an educational event open to the

School, the wider campus, and other community members. The first was the hottest topic on campus that year: Racial Harassment on Campus. Due to the backlash produced from several community members speaking out about their experiences at the School, I advised a less radical topic for the second year. The group wanted to focus on "Whites" role in anti-racism. We settled on "Working Together for Anti-Racist Change: What Can I Do?". Both Open Circles were very well attended events with many members from the Communities, the School, and the larger University. I have now introduced the possibility of one Open Circle being produced per term, as they have resulted in incredible learning for students and School alike.

The combination of pedagogical strategies enacted through this Model-In-Use has produced impacts and reactions which can be labeled as dialectical, paradoxical, contradictory and sometimes endangering. The following chapter on contradictions will highlight several of the most recurring themes, including those issues which arose directly from the activist aspect.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONTRADICTIONS IN ALL DIRECTIONS

Retracing the path of the Medicine Wheel will allow me to reveal the several layers of contradictory dynamics which resurfaced in various manifestations of the Model-In-Use. As Ellsworth (1992) reminds us, as "[u]ninvited, uncomfortable, threatening, and confusing as they may be, these moments become the curriculum when they erupt in classrooms" (9). This chapter is an effort to make visible both the "internal" factors--that is issues that arose from the curriculum and pedagogies In-Use themselves--and the "external" or contextual factors that have intensified these dynamics. I will begin in the East, with issues of language as a medium of "knowing" and understanding identity and difference. In particular, the contradictory elements of First Voice as pedagogy will be discussed. Circling to the South, the difficulties of "adapting" Aboriginal Tradition to the Eurocentric university site will be noted. In the West, emphasis will be placed on the "negative" feelings produced for some participants, and how these "repressed" feelings feed into covert patterns of resistance. Finally, in the North, the contradictory reality of my role as "embodied teacher" is revealed, along with the endangering potentials of taking an activist position.

THE EAST

Language and its various meanings have been a major tool in this educational process, along with efforts towards a more embodied Model. The tools emphasizing First Voice, with members of the Communities visibly represented in the classroom, altered who speaks. Circle Talk is a process of designating how and when people speak. What is said or not said by whom becomes political and a very hot topic in this classroom. I am reminded of the

words of Minh-ha, "Words are think-tanks with second and third-order memories that die hard despite their ever changing meanings" (1989: 21).

ARE SLURS AND STEREOTYPES IN THE CLASSROOM TEACHING RACIST LANGUAGE?

Helping people unveil their own racism is a difficult and emotional task. Strategies are often linked to the uncovering of racial stereotypes and slurs. Racial slurs make many "uncomfortable" because they do make visible people's biases. Vada noted her reaction to a race relations exercise done by Black participants, which required writing the ends to sentences which reflected traits of Blacks and Whites respectively.

I also feel very upset with my thoughts when I wrote the ends to the sentences. How can I have learned racism when I do not remember any negative stereotypes spoken in my family. Is socialized racism that subtle that we do not even know we are racist before we are looking honestly at ourselves? I am very upset about the realizations that I may have been oppressive and expressed racism unintentionally and unknowingly (Vada Jan 24 93-j).

Uncovering and speaking racial biases is upsetting. Discomfort is present for those who recognize that the use of slurs and stereotypes produces pain for those categorized. Lena expressed her concern for herself and her peers.

In class this week I was uncomfortable because of the things I have learned about myself and how I was racist in ways I never knew....I was also uncomfortable in class because of the things the other students were saying...I felt worried that the things being said would hurt the culturally diverse students (Lena Jan 24-31 93-j).

While some advocate direct confrontation of these discourses, the use of slurs and stereotypes as teaching tools can have unintended effects. This classic debate is poetically addressed by Vada, who was previously not exposed to certain racial qualifiers. She articulated her experience that using racial slurs can reproduce them rather than stimulate unlearning. *"What has concerned me the most in my first week in this class, is how new negative statements and stereotypes of black people affects me. I had never heard about (slurs) before our last class" (Vada Jan 10 93-j).*

She was concerned that the more she learned about slurs and stereotypes, the more negative labels would be newly lodged in her thinking.

Even though I have learned a great deal about my level of racism and about the black community, I am afraid to learn more about other stereotypes or negative statements that I have not heard before. This experience has made me concerned about how I will react to examples of the racism that native people are experiencing. Will I start to think these negative statements or stereotypes also? (Vada Jan 10 93-j).

By term end, she was able to reconcile "unlearning" stereotypes as a positive aspect of challenging racism. *"I also unlearned many stereotypes about different cultures. This felt good" (Vada Apr 4 93-jsum).* Naming a list of slurs or stereotypes is not enough to pose an anti-racist challenge. Critically examining the power relationships which are explicated through negative qualifiers is required to stimulate unlearning.

Because of power relations structured into the educational environment, confusion can easily arise from the articulation of racial slurs by presenters/teachers. Spoken by some, slurs perpetuate the existing social order, yet First Voice storytellers have used them to challenge the power of dominating discourse. This was illustrated vividly in class one night when Ela, a

Black participant, told a childhood story in which she was called a common racial slur for Blacks. She told her own version in Circle Talk on CCI.

I remember one night in class I was relating a story about my experiences...throughout my educational experiences, and I used the word (slur); and I used it because I had to use the word in order to get across the message that I was conveying. So somebody else, when we went around the circle, used the word too. Somebody white used the word....maybe they should of given a little introduction, or softened the blow when they used the word because it came out not quite the same way! (Ela TC2:3).

When that same word was used by a White student, it became a weapon of oppression. This served to highlight to several present how large a role cultural locatedness plays in understanding the meanings of language. As a teacher, I now try to avoid speaking and writing racial slurs and stereotypes. I have learned that once they are spoken by the teacher, they become part of what is considered acceptable classroom discourse. That night, when the slur was spoken by the White student, many of us visibly flinched. When my turn to speak came, I addressed the issue of racial language, speaking of the need to avoid slurs and why it was improper to use them as qualifiers for group members. If and when some members of the targeted Community feel it necessary to say it as they tell their stories of resistance to racism, it is their right to do so. It is not the right of an "outsider", certainly not a member of the dominant majority.

As Ela re-told the story in Circle Talk on CCI, she mentioned that the student had approached her after class and at the last class again. She recreated the dialogue.

They said that they had felt they were chastised for using the word in that context...They said, when you used the word I thought it was safe to use it. I said, ya, but I used it from a personal experience because what other word could I use? That's what I

was called so I had to tell you that that's what I was called (Ela TC3:3).

Further, she clarified the conditions under which she felt that it was all right for a majority member to use a slur. In her opinion, a verbal "cushion" or warning is necessary.

So if you, from a white perspective, are using that word, then you say, I'm going to use this word and it's going to be an offensive word but I have to say it in order to get my message across. So you explain why you're saying the word, not just blurt it out! Cushion the blow a little bit! (Ela TC3:3).

Although I had spoke about it in Circle and she had offered her wisdom to the student at the time, she concluded the story by indicating that she felt the person still "*needed an explanation*". She perceived that the incident left the student confused, creating a block to learning rather than promote unlearning.

So that person carried that all through the course....Feeling slighted about that and wondering why they were slighted. Why I could use the word and they couldn't, and never said it until the last class (Ela TC2:3).

She wisely concluded with a now recurring theme, "*everybody gets something different out of Circle, and everybody interprets things differently*" (Ela TC2:3). Potential contradictions arise because of the multiple interpretations within the English language itself, interacting with diverse cultural locations present in the CCI classroom. Ela returned to this theme at a later Circle.

English is such a stupid language at times. I can say something and everybody in this room will interpret it differently. It's a matter of what's relevant, and again it's because of your belief system. You interpret what I say on the basis of what you believe. So that's where it all comes from and where it all goes (Ela TC4:37).

This dialectic is part of what I have come to describe as "multiple interpretations of the **same** reality". Cal offers his version of the same theme.

But I'm still questioning what the other students, the White students in the class, really got out of it. And I'm not sure whether or not what I had wanted them to see was what they actually saw (Cal CC2:15).

When exploring the contradictory dynamics of racial language in the classroom, it is essential to keep in mind that everybody interprets the learning/teaching from their own individual/cultural location. Usher (1989) notes that "the difference in reality interpretations are not accidental but are political by nature, because power relations and power-struggles interfere with and influence personal experiences" (1989: 25).

CAN WHITE BE USED AS A CULTURAL QUALIFIER?

Slurs are not the only language that becomes part of this contested terrain. Names for various Communities are often changing--Colored, Black, African Nova Scotian or Indian, Native, First Nations, Aboriginal, Indigenous are two such progressions in the naming of cultural Community. Most contradictory in this Model, and least discussed in mainstream literature, is the use of "White" as a cultural qualifier. As earlier theorized, a label like "White" is politically constructed in a particular historical time period. White has become a racial qualifier, so it is also a political category. A general dissociative pattern is shown by those of European descent towards being named (Katz, 1985). This has combined with the blurring of cultural diversity through the history of colonial migration patterns (Blaut, 1993). According to Jay (1995), "[w]hat hold white people together is not a common language, religion, cuisine, literature or

philosophy, but rather a political arrangement that distributes power and resources by skin color" (124). These factors reinforce the historically established and continuously recurring deconstructionism of "Whiteness". Vada expressed the difficulties she experienced in being labeled by a construct named "White". She was concerned that all Whites, regardless of ethnicity, class, or country of origin, would be categorized by this qualifier.

I'm white, but I still feel that I've gone through a lot of experiences. I don't see my culture everyday. I don't speak my language. I don't celebrate my holidays. And every time it is something special that our (group) celebrates, I would have to explain to people and so, where do I fit in? I'm white, I'm western, I'm....struggling with the word "white"...when we're talkingthere was a lot of talk about White and Black, and White and Native, and I had never thought about the term "white". Who did it mean? It was always giving white privileges. I was so confused, because I was thinking of the immigrant community, about many whites that had experienced different type of discriminations and I couldn't just see "whites" as one line, and White fit there and the Black fit there, and... the Native fit there. For me, I always think how different cultures and the different experiences in all these different groups of culture (Vada TC2:19).

Vada has highlighted a critical debate in the post-modern. If we accept the label--the category as constructed--White, Black, Native or Other--are we merely reiterating our place in the "*colored hierarchy*"?(Vada TC2:19).

According to Nicholson (1990), "the extent to which we insist on difference and how we describe the 'difference that makes a difference' is itself a political act" (1990: 10). Said's (1978) work acts to deconstruct notions of clearly definable cultural groups. He asks: "How does one **represent** other cultures? Is the notion of a distinct culture (or race, or religion, or civilization) a useful one?" (1978: 325). The questioning of fixed categories of gender, class, race, and culture comes at a time when groups need to consolidate the fragments of their identities in order to challenge the hegemony of Western meta-narratives. It also

comes at a time when "Whiteness" is being unveiled as hegemonic by post-colonists and others.

When members of cultural groups share the painful and common stories of their racial and cultural oppression, the unification of "White culture" takes on a particular meaning. Bejay described her Self-In-Relation to her culture.

I am white, anglo-saxon, protestant. My culture feels it has an inherent right to dominate, that it is superior over all other cultures. What white culture feels is important in other cultures, it appropriates for its own benefit. I have voice because I am white. I have privileges and power bestowed upon me by the mere colour of my skin. What is my culture? My culture is technology, competition, looking at the future, disregard for nature, oppressive, respectful of individual success, a heavy thing to live with (Bejay Jan 93-j).

Bejay expressed her culture as understood through an oppositional perspective. She has recognized the structurally oppressive nature of the White privilege she personally benefits from. When students are first internalizing this insight, it can be hard for them to celebrate the gifts of the dominant culture. Gela disclosed why it is difficult for her to see "White culture" in a positive way.

It is difficult for me to consider white people as having a culture. I have always associated culture with tradition and have perceived it as something positive among groups who celebrate their origins and act on traditional values and beliefs. Because of my personal definition of culture, I feel at a loss to describe white culture in the same positive light (Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

Gela described what she now has uncovered as the basis of her people's culture: "a set of sanctioned rules and bylaws".

White people certainly celebrate who they are and their values and beliefs have come to be the prescribed guidelines by which all people should follow. However, as I gain an increasing awareness as to what defines white culture, I am beginning to recognize that white people don't identify with a cultural heritage

as much as they identify with a set of sanctioned rules and by-laws. (Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

She identified the values of "White culture" as reflected in "*patriarchy, capitalism, competition, advantage, and an unyielding instinct to control*" (Gela Jan 25 93-t1). She has named the epistemologies of White domination as the basis of White culture. Through becoming conscious of a critical analysis of race relations, she has come to express an essentially negative assessment of the guiding values of her own group, Gela then documented specifically how these values were passed down to her through her family's definitions of an "acceptable lifestyle".

I have been encouraged to receive a secondary education, obtain a financially rewarding job, and to someday marry and raise children. The ways in which my parents socialized me are very much within the expectations of white middle-class status. Although no one has ever taught me to be cruel or harsh to others in order to insure I will succeed in life, my membership in the white culture is enough to ensure I will be somewhat successful in life providing I adhere to white mainstream ethics (Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

Finally, she unveils White supremacy as a commonsense reality for those with White privilege.

What white people consider to be important for them is the basis for white culture. I believe that membership in this white culture leads us to assume we will succeed in everything that we do because our "superior culture" (otherwise known as society) is set up to meet and fulfill our own white needs. (Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

When mainstream students are put in the position to interrogate their own Whiteness and to realize simultaneously the impacts of their privilege on others in society, uncomfortable feelings may arise. These feelings are akin to the anomie produced when members of racially-defined groups try to acculturate to White norms. Guilt and embarrassment, which are often characterized as

"negative" feelings, can be a result of a critical reflection of cultural locatedness for Whites. Hearing the "facts" of history from a Native or Black perspective is an emotional eye-opener for many students who have been acculturated to understand the colonial version of the story as "truth". Embarrassment, anger, fear and responsibility are all expressed in Tia's entry.

When I truly think of how history actually happened, I find myself extremely embarrassed and having minimal things to be proud of. I also find myself being angry. Throughout my life I was taught to believe the white man's version of history. Which obviously was not very accurate. I feel like I was brainwashed into believing that what I read was factual...I feel that we have to acknowledge what happened in the past, and that acknowledgment must include rewriting history as we now know it. As white people we must take responsibility for our ancestors because the garbage they wrote as the truth (true history) is wrong, and it is still being taught in our education system. As white people we need to finally stand back and listen and stop enforcing our power and privilege on to others.

...To be honest, I'm scared because I don't want my children growing up believing the lies I was taught as a child (Tia 93-j).

Tia later expressed the feelings of confusion and embarrassment she experienced in her work to reveal her Self In-Relation to her culture.

Not surprisingly I ask myself what my culture is and how am I a part of that culture? To be honest, when I look at myself as being a white person belonging to a white culture it is confusing and embarrassing. Feeling embarrassed because of the actions of people belonging to my culture fragments me as a person. When people ask me what my culture is I state that I am German, Acadian, French Canadian, Dutch and British....I have never recognized myself as having a white culture. When I consciously look at the wire cage Marilyn Frye describes, I see little to be proud of. I don't want to be a part of the oppressive values and roles our society states as being the norm... (Tia 93-j).

These "negative" feelings need to be reframed. While discomfort can be produced when we face the "negative" aspects of our own selves or society, this is an essential aspect of critically examining our lives in relation to social

structures. Gela described her embarrassment as a "starting point for cultural equality".

Throughout this entire journal I have attempted to describe, explain, and identify white culture. What seems ironic is my obvious resistance to describe "my" culture. I guess I'm a bit embarrassed to call it my culture. I just wish more white people would agree to understand and share this embarrassment. I believe this would definitely be a starting point for cultural equality (Gela Jan 25 93-t1).

Conscious awareness of White culture is an essential dimension transforming cultural imperialism. As Katz (1985) tells it, "the bonds of culture are invisible and the walls are glass. We may think that we are free. However, we cannot leave the trap until we know that we are in it" (623). By making visible the bonds of White culture, we may then examine how they serve to entrap. Due to hegemony--the domination of all institutional forms--Whites become blinded to the values which are used to dominate themselves and others. Through this lens, acts of resistance to Eurocentrism are framed as personal hostility rather than necessary acts of survival.

Theorizing White as a cultural qualifier can create confusion for White students as they try to define what their cultural identity is. As Jay (1995) notes: "To be a white person is to have certain advantages, socially and politically and economically, but being white does not provide you with a culture" (124). He is not surprised then, when students end up writing that "they do not have a cultural identity" (122). But, as Stuart Hall (1991) argues, "you have to position yourself somewhere in order to say anything at all" (18). These experiences then, can be considered as one way in which Jay's proposed "pedagogy of disorientation" can be enacted: "The exploration of otherness and cultural identity should achieve a sense of my own strangeness, my own otherness, and

of the history of how my assumed mode of being came into being historically. I could have been someone other than I think I am. And maybe I am" (125).

While this Model seeks to critically challenge dominant constructions of "culture", Dana posed a poignant example of someone who is lodged in, yet critical of the Western view of culture. She expressed her definition of "culture" as linked to "oppressed" group membership. Because of this, she is unable to capture her own identity within the construct "White culture".

When I think of what my culture is, and how my culture defines me, I do not think in terms of a "White" culture but instead, as my culture as a female. Is there such a thing as "White Culture"? Is this the same as "Western Culture"? I probably do not identify so much as a White person because I am not oppressed as a White person. I am however, oppressed as a female living in this patriarchal society, governed by male culture, values, and beliefs (Dana Oct 19 92-j).

Her efforts to understand the construct of White as a culture was further impacted upon by a positive connection made with a Traditional person from within the Native community. Through a process of reversal, a negative assessment of Whiteness was produced alongside a positive acceptance of the gifts of other Communities.

When I left this man, I felt lost and empty. He shared his native culture with me, the hand crafts, the medicine wheel, the dream catcher, and aboriginal culture, community, and values with me. It seems to be a culture that any feminist would like to live in, a world of democracy and equality; a culture based on community and sharing. I feel empty because I do not have such an exciting culture. Our culture is so mainstream and ordinary. I do not feel that I have a true culture. Can we really call the white culture a "culture"? This was a valuable learning experience! (Dana Nov 15 92-j).

Dana has become conscious of the value of a Traditional worldview. She has begun to challenge at a deeper level her culture's lack of connection to

their own material traditions. Days later another entry reveals more specifically how she began to unveil her own Self-In-Relation to Whiteness. An artifact she had purchased from the Native person stood in stark contrast with the rest of her living decor. The image of her own Whiteness was reflected to her through this. It was an image which she vowed to change.

Today, I hung the dream catcher up in my bedroom. I just realized how much my bedroom, and home reflected the white culture. I have two pictures in my bedroom of children - all white children. I do not have any decorations except this new dream catcher, that reflects the aboriginal culture, or any other cultures. I feel the need to change this. I want to create a feeling of Cross Cultural awareness in my home. I will find pictures of other children, other than white, to hang in my room. It took me this long to notice this (Dana Nov 18 92-j).

In this case, the student finished the course with her ideas of culture firmly entrenched. She concluded her journal by this entry expressing discontent with belonging to a culture that is not "distinct".

I feel empty. I wish that I belonged to a distinct culture, such as Aboriginal or Black. I do not like to feel like an oppressor. And, I do not consider the White, oppressive culture to be a culture. What is so distinct about it? (Dana Dec 10 92-jsum).

A combination of uncovering White hegemony and an uncritical acceptance of the material and spiritual gifts of Native culture produced a shift in her alliances, at least temporarily.

I especially enjoy the Aboriginal culture's link and spirituality to nature. It makes so much more sense to be - more spiritual and inspirational. I hope to learn more about it. It is a belief system that I could aspire to live by - a culture of sharing and democracy (Dana Dec 10 92-jsum).

In the post modern we are warned not to essentialize Black, Native or White as "distinct" cultures. Diversity exists amongst all cultural groups and

cultural expression takes on individual and communal traits. While I personally do not experience the teaching of "White culture" as contradictory, others have pointed out that it is highly controversial and not accepted within dominant discourse. White, when recognized and named as a culture becomes a political category. The naming of it clarifies--and disrupts--its silent dominance. Denying its status as "cultural" and "political" reifies White norms and White privilege.

Members of the Communities continue to suffer under the criticism that unveiling hegemonic Whiteness is somehow "White bashing". Certainly the reality that I am teaching this construct in a mainstream, White-dominated context adds to the difficulty. Context also plays a big role in implementing all alternate forms of pedagogy, including First Voice.

IS FIRST VOICE PEDAGOGY REENACTING THE "SERVICE ROLE"?

Face-to-face encounters, where First Voice is spoken, is a highly effective tool in challenging privileged students to gain an empathic understanding of the pains of racism and oppression. This strategy, however, is not without its perils. Given the historical roots of anti-racist pedagogy, concern must be expressed about reinvoking the long standing "service role" of our peoples. It is contradictory having myself, and other "minority" educators and students, placed in the position of educating White privileged students. As Carty (1991b) aptly reminded White feminists:

To turn to us and ask that we offer the knowledge of our experiences--in short, to explain our absence and educate the oppressors how they oppress us--is hardly evidence of anti-racist feminist pedagogy or feminist inclusionary praxis, but a denial of responsibility, and an act of exploitation. It is not the responsibility of women of Color the victims of racism, to teach white feminists how they practice racism or how it is manifested on a daily basis (17).

The Native, Black, Asian, Acadian members of our classroom communities should not have to be continuously held responsible for the curriculum development on racism or their cultural Community. This is one continuously recurring form that discrimination takes in the university classroom context. This viewpoint was articulated very poetically by one Black participant.

I grow tired of having to call people on things that are obvious to me. If they are attempting to be aware or sensitive they should stop hiding behind politically correct affirmative action programs that are all appearance, no sensitivity. Stop looking to the oppressed to educate people and make the changes. Stop hiding behind ignorance and white privilege (Unicorn Oct 1 93-j).

Participants from our Communities face a contradictory position when they are or become the content. While efforts have been made to de-tokenize members, a fundamental contradiction remains. How to call on Community members to share their experiences in First Voice, in a context which is dominated by White patriarchal norms, without contributing to their further oppression? Black community members who were ongoing participants shared their feelings in their journals and during Circle Talk on CCI. The first entry from Cal expressed this sentiment clearly. When he first learned that personal experiences of members of the Communities would be used to teach, he felt "uncomfortable".

This initially made me somewhat uncomfortable again as I am so tired of giving testimonial to White people as an explanation of just how they should act. To have them become more aware of how they have brutalized me and my race. Though I feel it is their work to do and understand their Racism.

I also have a role, but sometimes I am not sure I want to take on this responsibility (Cal Jan 5 94-j).

This concern is in part related to the current conditions within the university context, which inevitably means the "few" educating the "many". This reality is also expressed by Cal in his opening and closing entries.

I was somewhat disappointed to see that there were not more people of color from the majority cultures...in the class. The immediate bonding that usually would take place will need time as my present class mates have little understanding of the things that have ravaged my life (Cal Jan 5 94-j).

A culturally-loaded and common-sense reality is expressed in Cal's question: "Why do we always have to be the only one or two 'people of color?'" (Cal Jan 5 94-j). We make up the "majority" of Mother Earth's people when embracing this construct, why are we consistently understood and labeled as a "minority"? Being in-minority, while being First Voice in Circle, means sharing heartfully, "personal" racial and cultural experiences with people with "little understanding". As Cal tells it, "[f]ew of the students in the class really understood what it took to make this statement and to talk about my feelings so passionately" (Cal Mar 23 94-j).

The experience of First Voice on a weekly basis can produce many feelings; sometimes we are reluctant to share with these peers. Cal reflected on this contextual reality in his final entry.

In the beginning of each class, there were so many feelings and emotions that I had, sometimes I felt as if I would explode. There was so much I wanted to share and so much I knew that this particular group would not understand. I would just once like to be in a situation where one does not have to explain who they are. Where you don't have to make justification or defend who they are but have it accepted as a given. I had hoped that there would be Blacks in the class and that there would initially be a safe environment where we would not have to explain (Cal Apr 7 94-j)

First Voice participants often clearly perceive and articulate that the majority of their White peers do not understand or relate to the amount of pain that engaging in First Voice pedagogy can produce. When we are present in First Voice as teachers, students or special guests, we are very aware that we are in a White-dominated institutional context. We incur pain to present our stories, and our selves, in an effort to encourage other participants to support our brothers and sisters in addressing the issues of race, of cultural difference. The painful reality is that retelling our experience means reliving it. Listening to other's experience sometimes means remembering our own similar ones. This was graphically described by Unicorn.

I did have a difficult time talking in our first few classes. My reasoning is because I breathe, smell, taste, touch, sleep and live with/through racist experiences/situations of my own and others seven days a week and twenty-four hours a day. To constantly relive this is emotionally and physically draining enough amongst my family and friends. By the time I reach your class I've had my fill and did not wish to bare my soul and most intimate feelings to white strangers whom I believed not to have grasped enough of the course content at that point. Near the end I became more comfortable with classmates (Unicorn Oct 93-j).

"Comfort" is again a critical issue, this time for participants enacting First Voice pedagogy. Some students do express an increased level of understanding and respect. Vada's entry reflected an internal process of coming to this learning.

Today I also felt that it is so ironic that I need to be educated about my racism by the people that I oppress. Have they not gone through enough, and is it not our responsibility to educate ourselves about our weaknesses? (Vada Jan 24 93-j).

More often students learn if told directly about the costs of Voice. Excerpts from two students' journals illustrated this new awareness, gained through a "speak-out" by Unicorn.

(Unicorn) mentioned in-class another aspect that I had not thought of: That every time someone speaks in class it's her speaking also because she relives all of her pain. The presentations were painful for her--This learning helped me to see that I can not allow myself to believe I know anything because I don't!! (Van Oct 93-j).

Analee reflected this learning in her closing entry. While she did not specifically mention the "speak-out", clearly the message was received.

I realized the importance of First Voice to our learning. For some, the sharing of these experiences was very painful because as they share with us, they are 'reliving' things. As a result of this I have even greater respect for these people and I appreciate my learning even more. I have certainly learned a great deal from First Voice...it really brings things to life - the happiness, the heartache, the reality of the lives of those of different cultures. An excellent learning opportunity for me (Analee Dec 93-jsum).

While First Voice provides an excellent learning opportunity, the institutional reality is that the university context is White-dominated. It is not a "safe environment" to disclose "personal" experiences of structural oppression or to be validated for sharing emotion. Contextually, because of these institutionalized relations of White domination, being in the position of First Voice can work to position participants in highly contradictory relations of visibility and appropriation. How do I/we take the risk to speak when I/we know not how or by whom my/our words will be taken?

The impacts of this pedagogical method--the face to face encounter--on students' consciousness is continuously mediated by the limits of our understanding of others. According to Schutz (1967), "our knowledge of the

consciousness of other people is always in principle open to doubt" (107).

Given that the "whole stream of lived experience" of another is not open to me, "I can catch sight of only disconnected segments of it...when I become aware of a segment of your lived experience, I arrange what I see within my own meaning-context...thus I am always interpreting your lived experiences from my own standpoint" (106). The "habit" of interpreting another's experience from your own standpoint is a central feature of cultural imperialism.

According to Weir (1991), "non-white students addressing race place themselves in a vulnerable position, for they realize their statements may result in denial, minimizing, incomprehension and down right racism from white students: [T]hey have every reason to feel that their knowledge and contribution to discussion will be undermined" (23). This reality was addressed by several Native and Black participants.

Tonight as I ponder over last class I feel as though some things will never change, I see the looks on people's faces around the room and wonder, do these white middle-class students have any idea what this whole course is about? I shouldn't be so harsh it's hard not to be!

I see anger, dismay, defensiveness, and it makes me angry to think that these people have the nerve to be defensive, we've been defending ourselves all of our lives and we are tired of it! (Randi Jan 27 93-j).

Because of the topic, I felt it necessary to arrange the evenings class with variety to hold the class's interest. I see the non-verbal grinning and rolling of eyes when classmates hear about Racism.... As my Grandmother says, 'In one ear and out the other'. I even heard one classmate say I hope we are not doing that brown eye blue eye thing again. I kept all of this in mind when...planning the evening. (Unicorn Oct 7 93-j).

Anger, dismay, defensiveness, grinning and eye-rolling have all been visible in posturing and body language when sitting in Circle. In a context where "rational" explanation is expected for all that one gives voice to, verbalizing

one's painful experiences can be exhausting. Storytelling to a disbelieving or disengaged audience is tiresome, discomfoting and dangerous. Developing a level of comfort to speak in the Western university context about racism and oppression is a journey. Achieving comfort in the face of peers well-developed denial is difficult. Anticipation of and recovery from occasions of outright racial harassment is ongoing. According to Weir, "when the classroom becomes a site of anti-racist political struggle, the racism present massively among white people will be spoken" (1991: 24).

First Voice can be experienced as "personal turmoil" for the speaker. As a pedagogical tool it has the potential to reinforce "service" relations, with a personal cost to the speakers. It can also, simultaneously, be an enjoyable and empowering experience. Unicorn and many other First Voice participants concluded with a positive review of the experience and Model overall.

Despite my personal turmoil, I enjoyed the class. I enjoyed and learned from our talking circle. I expressed viewing this class the one that keeps me at the school of social work. It gives me the opportunity to re-experience and learn from new experiences even if it hurts. This course keeps me in touch with current issues based on first voice as opposed to theory from a textbook written by someone who has nothing in common with me (Unicorn Nov 19 93-j).

I have endeavoured to have First Voice representation be an empowering experience, central to the course, rather than tokenistic. I have paid particular attention to the feelings/thoughts/stories of students and community members who have represented their experience and have recorded what was positive and empowering and what remained oppressive. I have tried to be very aware of my own feelings of being oppressed in this role, and have found communicating openly to students to be enlightening for us all.

I recognize that learning occurs "among multiple, shifting, intersecting, and sometimes contradictory groups carrying unequal weights of legitimacy, within the culture and the classroom" (Ellsworth, 1989: 317). These "problems" of difference are left unaddressed by most critical educators--who fail to acknowledge the conflicts amongst and between differentially located students, and the impacts of their own identity on their own and others subjectivities. I agree with Jansen and Klercq (1992) that the experiences of participants in learning processes cannot be isolated from their integration into larger political, economic and cultural connections. These relations not only leave marks on their concrete experiences, but to a large extent they determine "which experiences and interpretations of the world are acknowledged and which are marginalized" (1992: 99). We must remember that "the degree to which students will feel free to voice experiences will be mediated by power relationships in the classroom" (Brah and Hoy, 1989: 73). The difficulties inherent in teaching this Model, designed to invoke an altered state of consciousness about what we need to know and how we know, were primarily context related. So are the following contradictions about introducing forms of Aboriginal philosophy and pedagogy to non-Natives, in a non-Aboriginal context.

THE SOUTH

In Western institutions, Eurocentric culture is most often the dominant form expressed. While members of the Native, Black, and Asian Communities may be occasionally present as students and teachers, it is not in numbers great enough to balance or challenge hegemonic authority. The Circle process can be used to begin to address this. Many who are accustomed to being silenced and treated marginally are welcomed, and given opportunity to tell their stories in Circle. In a Circle primarily of those seeped in "colonial

consciousness", care must be taken to hear rather than silence, honor rather than appropriate their voices, or the Circle method itself.

CIRCLE: A GIFT OR A STOLEN TREASURE?

In this Model-In-Use, Traditional Aboriginal philosophies and pedagogies have been introduced to non-Natives and have been "imported" into the mainstream university context. I addressed the inherent contradictions in my opening remarks at the Circle on Context.

The South is about the heart and the spirit, and to me, my heart in this project and in this work, has been trying to make enough space in this white western University to teach as an Aboriginal person and not feel that I have to be using white methods or that I have to be white to be here....I have been consistently, trying to bring Aboriginal spiritual forms in to the classroom through using the Smudge, through using the Circle, through using Circle talk, and trying to get people to get in to the spirit of being respectful to each other and trying to get into the spirit of heartfully speaking about the subjects, instead of what is generally the context; which is staying in your head, only talking about your thoughts, not getting in to your heart at all. In a system where people are competitive, not cooperative. In a system where the teacher is expected to tell everybody what they're supposed to know and not engage in a learning process with them (Fyre TC2:3).

The Traditional way of teaching is in contrast the "commonsense" expectations of mainstream university students and educators. I addressed some of the struggles in using a Traditional model in a Eurocentric setting in Circle Talk on CCI.

The Aboriginal way of teaching is that something happens!, and we're all part of it, or a story is told and we all hear it. And then we all make sense, each for our own selves, and sometimes we talk about it, about what learning we may get out of that. And so trying to operate from that Model of learning and teaching has been...a real struggle for me here. Trying to avoid the pitfall of being the expert, while still understanding that people have a lot to

know.. a lot to learn! And try to provide some learning opportunity (Fyre TC2:3).

I have been taught that Circle is a gift of Aboriginal culture. Free envisioned Circle as bringing peace, acknowledging ancestral use as a tool in conflict resolution.

As a person with Native ancestry, I learned a lot the last few years, just how much our people have been silenced over the years. My ancestors and my relatives. I am envisioning Circle work, and the Circle process, as a way for our voices to be heard, for us to be able to find the courage, and the safe place that we need to say the things that we have to say. I think it's important that we label our own oppressions; that we label our own needs. I see Circle work as being really important in that way. The time is not right to confront and say, HEY!, look what you did to my people. What is that going to solve? It doesn't solve anything, but puts more conflict out there. What I like to envision us doing as Native people, is using the Circle work and putting that forth as a gift. As a gift from our culture to help towards healing the Earth. We have tried it the white way for many years, according to my people. That's not working for us and we are saying, we have a gift here to try to put forward to initiate in to mainstream a way of listening. A way of hearing and a way of really being able to act on the real needs, what people are saying. It's very difficult to claim ownership. But I think if we try as Native people, or people with Native ancestry, to put forward that this is a gift, and put it forward as a gift, that maybe we'll just get enough attention that the Circle will spread. And if the Circle spreads, so will the peace that it brings (Free VC3:28).

Ownership is a contradictory claim in this era of post-modern diffusion. According to Said, "the history of all cultures is the history of cultural borrowings... appropriations, common experiences, and interdependencies of all kinds among different cultures...is a universal norm" (1993: 217). Phil emphasized the value of teaching Circle as a practice tool.

I learned a great deal just from participating in Circle and seeing what I can and can't do when sharing with other people, and how that works or it doesn't work. How deep to take it and what kinds of things to say to promote the understanding of what's

being done. Since that's happened I've been able to use it more on my own, to be able to use it and teach it as well, because I do think it's something that's been taught (Phil TC3:34).

I have attempted to introduce the "gifts" of our Tradition in ways that would bring beauty and honor to the Ancestors. This has been, and necessarily must remain, a very large challenge. I reflected this in my comments at one Visions Circle.

I think the richest and most difficult part of the learning has been trying to apply the Model in a Non-Native environment. It has been a real struggle at times to try to do it in a respectful way, that would bring beauty and honor to the Tradition, as opposed to feeling like it was being treated badly, or inappropriately, or misused. And to really try to be firm in myself about what it means to use this Model respectfully in a white setting (Fyre VC1:15).

The undertaking is inherently paradoxical due to longstanding relations of appropriation. It is an ongoing struggle to balance the desire to share our gifts to inspire respect and the fear of having the offerings appropriated and stripped of spiritual intention by "well-meaning" Whites. I raised this concern in one Circle.

I really struggle sometimes with feedback from members of the Native community who feel maybe sharing Native ways with Non-Native people is losing something. And I hear from other Native people that say, maybe sharing things of beauty from our culture will help people respect and share in our culture and learn from our culture (Fyre TC3:23).

Arising from and embedded in teaching an Aboriginal process in a Western context is the history and current reality of appropriation of our cultural processes. How do we teach respect for Tradition to those still embedded in colonial consciousness, with an ingrained practice of destroying what they fear?

One White activist, Charlotte, expressed this relation eloquently. She linked internalized domination with current pedagogical forms.

In order to teach people the power over system, from either side, to teach people to either be crushed by it or to dominate in it, you have to hurt them when they're young. The injury is part of the teaching. I think it's the heart of the teaching because you have to teach people to protect themselves. When they walk in to a situation look around, if they can take control, take control. And if they can't, obey, grovel. That's the reaction that being hurt teaches. So this whole system that we live in, that is based on, like a ladder. You dominate those below you and you grovel to those above you. It requires that kind of education! You can see it around this place. You can see how much it's based on criticizing people, tearing them apart, making them feel small. Dividing them into bits and isolating bits of the person or isolating people from other people. It's based on that and it's not just some intellectual exercise. This is really deep! It's an addiction. It's a built in thing that education is supposed to hurt (Charlotte VC2:26).

Recognizing domination as a pain-full cultural foundation, she expressed the need for all people, including Whites, to heal from the continuous projection of power onto others. She theorized that all of us need to become self-governing. This struggle will require models that focus on healing and self-knowledge.

So when you're trying to experiment with Models like this which are intended to heal...when you start seriously trying to heal through education you are going to run into people for whom that's deeply disturbing. And who's first reaction will be to lash back. (3 second pause) We must recover education as a healing function in order for all of us to be self-governing. White people aren't self-governing either. We've learned so well to project everything. Like to project the important decisions on our lives to the experts and to project our leadership on to the leaders. And then to project everything we dislike about ourselves on to scapegoats, and then punish them for it. Project, project, project! Self-knowledge is just unheard of because we haven't been educated that way. So to recover education that's based on self-knowledge and healing is going to be a long, long struggle. But if we're going to become self-governing enough, all of us, in order to save the planet, we've got to do it! (5 second pause) (Charlotte VC2:26).

CAN TRADITION BE "ADAPTED" FOR NON-NATIVE USE?

Recovering education based on healing and self-knowledge is an ongoing but necessary struggle in this context. Aboriginal consensual models offer many important avenues to challenge Eurocentric educational practices grounded in power-over. Because I was using an Aboriginal method with non-Native participants, I had to become more and more adept at articulating "Circle rules". This learning was based on what happened when I failed to specify specific rules at specific times. Other innovative educators express this as clarifying the "terms of engagement" (hooks, 1988). hooks' (1988) description of her own experience resonates with my own: "For a time, I assumed that students would just get the hang of it, would see that I was trying to teach in a different way and accept without explanation. Often, that meant I explained after being criticized" (53). This need for clarification or justification can be seen as Eurocentric intrusion into the sacredness of Circle. Circle Traditionally is taught primarily by example, sometimes combined with oral narration by Elders on "proper conduct". Students in academia are unaccustomed to learning by example and often do not recognize non-verbal cues. Only once they are told do they recognize the need to adjust their behaviour. I expressed this concern in Circles on CCI.

I taught for quite a few years using it with Native students and never thought to be that clear about the instructions because people seemed to understand what was expected and once we sat in Circle people were on the same wavelength...How to acculturate non-native people in Circle talk. It's been probably the largest struggle (Fyre VC2:21).

At first when I was doing Circle with Non-Native people...I was constantly shocked at how come Circle didn't seem right? How come people couldn't get it? How come people didn't know what to say? I've learned that it is a learned thing...it is something

that people do need to be taught. I've become a lot more conscious of teaching Circle, not only to the White students, but to Native students that haven't had an opportunity to learn. To Black students who don't have this as part of their cultural understanding....It is not something that people know, it's something they have to learn. And so to me that's been part of my learning...Now I see how using it consistently over time, what it can do and what some of the limitations are, given who we all are in a Circle (Fyre TC3:27).

In order for feelings to deepen beyond the surface, which is the expected norm of dominant Eurocentric pedagogies, serious consideration must be given to the make-up of the Circle. Circle in this cross-cultural Model is very different from the healing gift that it is in Aboriginal community. In Aboriginal culture we use it for deepening, deepening to the bone processes of healing. In the university context, it involved much more information sharing. We get to have each other's opinions. In an Aboriginal context we would have much more heart.

Like the onion skin, as you deepen in an Aboriginal Circle, and you've been around say, 5 or 6 times, what you get is a peeling away, peeling away, and peeling away, so that we're all finally in Circle together, towards the end, we all have cleared out everything and we're just there in our spiritual sense, or in our most closest to our heart sense (Fyre VC3:31).

It is a critical realization to note that the Circle process In-Use in this Model is an **adaptation** of the spiritual/healing process used by shamans and Elders in Aboriginal communities. While efforts have been made to articulate the ancestral wisdom that guides this process, the differences as noticed by myself and as pointed out by Native participants will also be highlighted. One example will illustrate the simple, yet complex transitional process occurring when using Circle as a data collection technique. I began one Circle by saying:

So I'm going to try to take a few notes while we talk. I always forget to. And so I'll take a few and then I'll forget. The last Circle I got home and I remembered that I had forgotten to take notes the whole time. (laughs) So let's see how it goes. My data collection has got its own set of problems using this method (Fyre VC2:1).

Sarah, a Mi'kmaq Elder present, immediately spoke up to remind me and others present: *"Jean, I was going to say, this is not the practice, taking notes...in a setting like this"* (JA VC2:1). Her position was reiterated by another Native speaker later in the Circle:

The only comment I wanted to make was that...it wasn't really emphasized that this is an adaptation of the Circle.Like Sarah said, you usually don't write in the Circle, so that's one adaptation of the Circle that's been done in this Circle, because of the fact that it is part of research (Jose VC2:24).

Is the "adaptation" of Traditional methods for use in the university context a problem in itself? In introducing Aboriginal ideas and processes in this context, I have used material representations of energy to aid in enhancing the spiritual and experiential aspects of the process. The use of material energy forms is a Traditional practice, and using any Traditional forms in the university context, with non-Natives, must be interrogated for potential appropriation. Local norms must be explored, or offense can be given. For example, using eagle feathers can be controversial. Mi'kmaq Elders teach that no one who has indulged in alcohol or who is on her "moon time" can touch the sacred feathers. Mi'kmaq participants present at Circle Talk on CCI raised these concerns:

The rules aren't exactly the way the Native people's rules are for Circle....Recognizing and acknowledging that we have more stringent rules of the Circle....I haven't been to one Nation that hasn't mentioned that about women and asking them to stay on the outside of the Circle to support the Circle (when) they're on their cycle (Jose VC2:24).

I wasn't sure how you handle people, whether they've been drinking or using drugs, and then you're using sacred objects, because I know some people prefer that they stay off of alcohol and drugs for at least 4 days (Ray VC2:25).

The specifics of Circle Traditions do vary according to teachings, and this does create a potential for confusion, especially for those new to the practices.

In some ways they're universal teachings, but in other ways,...there are variations that branch off. It is important to keep that in mind and be respectful of it....I guess that's the only thing I wonder about is how it's addressed--all these things regarding alcohol and drugs or the moon time, and any other, I want to call it rules, but laws are better (Ray VC2:25).

In adapting Circle to the university context, I have emphasized it as a teaching process, as a learning tool, rather than the spiritual or shamanic healing one. I have also been taught that abstinence and other "laws" exist in Traditional forms of practice. These vary by tribe and geographic location and often are linked to women's and men's participation in different types of ceremonies, times and places. I have rationalized that I am using forms of Circle as teaching tools, rather than teaching Circle or using it as a healing practice. While there may be healing effects, we are not primarily engaged in a shamanic healing ceremony. Requiring classroom participants to disclose their substance consumption over the last 4 days, or for women to be required to sit outside the Circle on their "moontime" would be viewed in an academic setting as unusual, if not "abusive" of students' rights to privacy.

Although I believe that our Traditions need to be taught to others to assist in healing the Earth, contradictions began to arise for me when non-Natives expressed a desire to use Circle to work within their own Communities. Blanche explored the theme of White acceptance of the gift of Circle.

That's a great concept the Circle as a gift. If the white culture can accept the gift because, the white culture has dominated for so long...I'd feel personally prepared to accept it as a gift. It's a wonderful gift. But I know people that I work with and come in contact with would find that real difficult to accept. Circle is a process that people have to open up to. That's the real trick. To get people first to come, and then to get people to open up. It's been positive, very positive for me. Professionally and personally, so I can see it as a worthwhile process to pass on (Blanche VC2:8).

Several White participants considered specific applications to their fields of interest. Blanche saw it as useful for work with the Deaf community.

I'm finding that Circles....give a safe arena for venting. ...People speak from their heart. There's no disguise or no political agendas, it's all just real emotional information. So I'm hoping that this will be useful in my work with the Deaf community.

We have to come to terms or accept the venting because there's been a lot of oppression in the Deaf community! The hearing people have to be responsible for that oppression. So the information that I'm learning in Circles and in the class is very helpful in terms of my work...Circle is a way of working together, instead of trying to work things apart or separately. Building community and change and consciousness, and it all really fits with what has to happen with the Deaf community (Blanche VC3:13).

Other examples will serve to illustrate the potential diversity of applications: one in business and one in counselling with battered women.

I hope to try to have some sort of a modified Circle of some sort in the team that I'm trying to build now. Hopefully the people will accept it the way that I have because I certainly think it's an opportunity to voice your frustrations and your feelings without being worried about someone else, like me, interrupting you and saying, well, this is the way it is. So, I think my biggest challenge will be to remain silent while we do it. But I think it's very valuable. Absolutely! (Cat VC3:28).

Another thing I have been thinking a lot about this week is how, if it is appropriate, could I incorporate more of what I've learned about circle and healing into the Liberty group I am co-facilitating. I do not want to appropriate things from the Aboriginal culture and I am not sure if it is respectful to incorporate these

healing techniques into my framework of practice. I am going to try to get the opportunity to talk to you about this. What I would like to do is have the Liberty group structured more like the circle time we have in class. We do check-in the Liberty group now, but it is time limited (i.e. say in a few words how you are feeling) and I feel this does not give the women an opportunity to address the issues they feel are relevant and necessary (Lena Feb 21 93-j).

Some Black participants also expressed an interest in adapting Circle to work in their community.

My reason for being here is to try to decide what I need to do to include more Black people, to allow them to incur the benefits that I have from this, to create a larger support network for myself, and to be able to draw on it, to feed the energy that I need in my own situation in my family and the community (Cal CC2:31).

Unicorn wisely realized that "sharing" Native gifts has not always been respectful.

I would like to be one of the people that when the Native people share their Circle with the Black community, one of the people that would be on the sideline to ensure that it's being used with respect, and when it's introduced, that it's adapted in a way that, in my terms I always say people tend to rape what we share from our culture, and I would like to be one of the vocal people that would work with others to try to not have that happen. So we would form more bonds and a better relationship (Unicorn VC2:8).

I found myself issuing a warning to zealous new-recruits who wanted to run out and apply what little they had learned to other contexts. I strongly encouraged further consultation with me or a Traditionalist who has used Circle in different contexts.

It's really important when you're thinking forward to Circle work, that you talk with somebody who's done quite a bit of Circle work. Just in terms of talking about the kinds of issues you might be approaching with it, the kinds of things that might come up, because it's really important to set the right stage for Circle work, and it's really important that people are informed in an appropriate

way about how to use it...especially if you're moving in to a highly conflictual topic area, it's best to have the ground laid prior to engaging in Circle work. If you do a Circle process, even if it's modified, and I did talk in advance with you about the ways to modify it, given various circumstances, it would be really good to have a follow up conversation to discuss how it went and here's what was learned from it, before moving on to other locations (Fyre VC3:29).

As this thesis documented, Circle work does have its complexities, in spite of the appearance of simplicity.

Circle is really a real good example of Native culture in its entirety. Everything I ever learned about Native culture, whether I learned it as a child or as an adult, was always really deceptively simple on the surface. When I first learned it, it was: Oh!, this is so easy. How come everybody doesn't know how to do this? But then as I've explored it more and took the gift on and then tried to use it and learn from it, then I found I learned many, many lessons from it. And not all of them painless. (laugh) To use it - be cautious and be clear in your own heart about what you want to put out. Especially moving in to corporate arenas where people are have learned competitiveness, they'd need quite a bit of instruction in Circle talk before they could begin (Fyre VC3:29).

My warning ties into Charlotte's expressed concern about the ingrained potential for appropriation of the Model by members of White culture.

When you introduce people from white culture into it you're dealing with such a deep old habit of control, tear apart, criticize, judge and I think it's fine at the first level, like when it's you or someone else who deeply understands the Model, guiding it, but what happens when they/we take it and try to apply it. Like in the old habit that white people have of assuming it's an intellectual thing and it's just like a model, like a leggo model. This is neat so you just put it here without really deeply understanding it. (4 second pause) The question is: Are you or are all of us concerned about that happening? What do we do about that? I just don't feel it would be ok for me to take your Model and use it. It would be appropriation. And I understand that some white people with all goodwill appropriate because they don't understand that we do have some models of our own too.

It's very tempting just to borrow wholesale from North American Earth Based Tradition because it's much more recent.

It's much more intact. It still exists in living memory, which ours does too to some extent, but not nearly to the same extent. So it's tempting just to borrow. But it's not right. And I don't even have a reason for saying that, it's just that it doesn't feel right. So that's just some questions about using Circle with white people. And with people of all races...who are not yet far enough along in healing from the North American/European Damage Education Model. Any Model we use will become a negative, a hurtful thing (Charlotte VC2:28).

Using the Circle in the university context has potential to become a negative, hurtful thing. Sarah, a Native Elder, responded to Charlotte's words. She spoke out based on her experience of the Circle process when it had been used for a political forum within the School context.

It's so very real because we've had an experience here. Right here in the School. Where we did have Circle. We did have people not using in respect. Because when I see the Model being used by the dominant society...who will be the participants? I think, do these people really understand? I question it. Are they really truly sincere in trying to understand?After the Circle was held...one of the teachers or administrators made the comment that she felt that the students were coerced into saying what they did say. And I was so hurt! I was really, really, hurt over that. And I felt maybe we shouldn't be doing this here. They don't understand. They don't understand. They shouldn't even be in the Circle.....This is something that belongs to our culture and I look at it with respect and so do all you people here. And I'd like the dominant society to learn from this. But I don't want them to exploit it or do damage to it, or make fun of it. That's my biggest fear.(4 second pause) (Sarah VC2:28).

What specifically concerned the Elder was the backlash perceived by Native participants who did heartfully speak out in that Circle. Their acculturation to Circle norms and their lived experiences of racial harassment produced clear and compelling narratives. These stories, heard by ears open to the "accusations" but closed to the "lessons", continue to impact on all our lives. Circle is supposed to bring community healing through sharing voice and

experience. For this to happen, the talk has to be framed in a healing way. A balance must be struck between the pains of our oppressive experiences and the rich gifts of our heritage of resistance and activism. Creating movement with the collective energy of our shared insights is possible. When not all members of the Circle are acculturated to Circle norms about type of speaking, or if some members hold power-over others and are acculturated and known to enact it, risks are magnified. Care must be taken to not place speakers in vulnerable positions by sharing too "personal" information. Some desire our silence. Some are shocked and afraid of the stories of pain and resistance. Some project their fear as our negativity. Beware of listeners who are acculturated to use 'personal' information as data to maintain the institutional status quo. We learned that the power of voice in Circle talk can be used against the heart-full, truth-full speaker. This experience challenged me to be cautious in using Talking Circle as a forum for taking up community issues in non-Native settings.

Several forms of appropriation of Aboriginal gifts are possible given the context. The most challenging concern is the adaptation of Circle process by non-Native users with little or no cultural sensitivity. This remains a real possibility and will undoubtedly, knowing the power of Circle, produce many "inside-out" lessons for those who attempt its use. Circle has contradictory elements built into its process, a topic to which we will now turn.

CAN SILENCE BE A TOOL FOR TEACHING EMPOWERMENT?

Given that Circle is a tool to empower speakers to voice their stories, it is paradoxical that the process itself provides much more opportunity for listening than speaking. Is teaching silence contrary to a pedagogy which emphasizes experience, voice and egalitarian relations? To value silence and listening challenges the "commonsense" overvaluation of speaking in university settings.

Cultural conditioning for domination rewards speaking and devalues listening. Posing specific questions which then have concrete answers which can be supplied by the professor, is the expected norm in Western educational endeavors. This impacts on people's openness to the process.

I acknowledge, overtly and positively, the necessary and dialectical relationship of silence to voice. I embrace the gift of silence--respectfully listening--as a form of teaching balance, as a practice tool itself. I recognize silence is often contradictorily arrived at. Silence can be spontaneously experienced in Circle. The link between respectfully listening and learning the power of silence is expressed by some Circle participants in their opening phrases:

Suddenly I've blanked out everything I was going to say, I've been listening to everybody and every time there's something more that I wanted to talk about (Vada TC2:16).

The interesting thing I find about Circle, is that when you really do listen, when it comes to be your turn to talk, I have nothing in my head. It's like I haven't prepared anything (Bea VC1:22).

"Nothing in my head" is not necessarily a problem when the focus is on speaking from the "heart". Some participants do learn a reverence for listening. One White participant reflected on this process.

The first time I attended the session which was specifically about the Circle concept, I found it very difficult to shut up, to finally listen to what other people had to say. Even at the beginning of this Circle I thought, it would be a lot more productive if we were allowed to ask questions....But in listening as we went around, I realized that not only does it offer you an opportunity to talk about what you have on your mind when the feather does come, but also as people are talking, you're constantly thinking about different things. Specifically about yourself and how you feel about different issues. And I think it raises your conscious level as to what you're actually all about (Cat VC3:22).

Many participants realized heightened consciousness, "a clearer picture" through silence, but the issue of "silencing" retained its negativity. I reflected on the contradiction inherent when processes designed to allow voice also serve to silence some.

A controversial part of the model is embedded in the first voice expectation, particularly as it is reinforced in Circle Talk...you have to have the experience or live the experience to talk about it, you're not supposed to talk about other people's experiences, you're supposed to talk about your own. But when people, particularly white students, begin to speak, they realize that they have very little number of things they can actually speak about with any insight! Sometimes that makes them silent completely! So instead of sharing what little they do know, or sharing their lack of insight, or sharing their fear, or sharing their hurt about not knowing, or sharing their feeling of stupidity, or whatever it is that's happening, instead of sharing whatever is on their heart, they feel overwhelmed by it and don't want to (Fyre TC3:25).

Vada expressed her feelings of being silenced through lack of validation of her particular cultural background.

I did not speak about my feelings as much as I quietly thought about them. This was partly caused by that I wanted to spend my time learning more from others, and by my feeling that my experience of immigrating and my cultural background were not understood and validated (Vada Apr 4 93-jsum).

Vada revisited the topic in Circles on CCI. She gave a more detailed account of how her internalized comparisons with other speakers interfered with articulation of her own voice.

This is why I don't like the Talking Circle, because I don't like to talk myself. I like to listen. Talking Circle was important because I could listen to people. I usually don't say too much because I felt that those things that I have experienced weren't that important compared to much of the other things that came out. And I was trying to figure out and compare them, the more, the very traumatic experiences, they came out through the Circle, compared to mine, that mine didn't seem that bad any more. ...that

was one of the other things that maybe hold other people back too (Vada TC2:37).

Vada also recognized that her internal "silencer" simultaneously allowed her to listen and gain empathy with others who had experienced a life-time of silencing.

It was very valuable for both me, and other people that are white, to have to listen. Even though I felt sometimes that I couldn't speak, even though I wish maybe I had spoken, it also gave me a lesson at the same time. I felt many times that I was put through the same situation that Black and Natives have been experiencing. That, this is how it must feel. Even though I knew that I could never totally understand. But it gave me the place and the feelings that went through my body, listening to many of the things, I think, it was good that I had to, that I was forced to sit down and listen. It gave me a clearer picture of how it actually is (Vada TC2:37).

Although as an Aboriginal community member I have been acculturated to respectfully listen to other's stories in Circle, I found at times a contradictory relationship to silence in the role of professor.

Sometimes when you're trying to use Circle in class and not everybody is really committed to the concept, or the philosophy behind it, sometimes things start being said that are really difficult. Because, with Circle the rules are always in effect, even as the teacher you can't interrupt (Fyre VC2:21).

When sitting in Circle, I also did not have the right, as I would in other educational processes, to respond after each student to question, process, or reframe their response to meet the learning task. This in itself has contradictory aspects. It is a professorial privilege (and often students' expectation) to use the "after remark" to acculturate students to the classroom norm. By validating some, by cutting off or negating others, the professor "teaches" what is considered valid classroom discourse. Could the limited opportunity for teacher response be hampering efforts to acculturate unfamiliar students to appropriate

Circle talk? Perhaps, if I took up the practice of responding after each speaker, with this intent, students would adjust to Circle talk more rapidly. More likely the whole process would break down or lose its integrity. I discussed this dilemma in Circle talk on CCI.

Sometimes when I'm sitting in Circle in my class and people are saying things...a judgment or some racism that needs to be confronted ...I don't know if I should intervene and cut this off or let it be said....I've found with using Circle consistently, the speaker who says it....if not right in that moment, recognizes by seeing the reaction of everybody else in Circle, by the tension created by making the remark in a group of 20 people, at least a few of them that recognize that it wasn't quite on. And how that shifts the speaker in itself, without any active facilitation. The Circle tends to facilitate itself (Fyre VC2:21).

Unicorn's entry illustrated how her peers' level of sensitivity to "remarks" is made visible to her in Circle.

She really put her foot in her mouth. I'm positive she embarrassed whomever invited her. A true case of saying something just to say something. She thought she had something to offer yet she showed her ignorance - I'm not even sure she knew. I did take comfort in the fact that the non-verbal of most students displayed their new awareness. We were in circle and could not say anything until our turn (Unicorn Nov 10 93-j).

Silence in the Circle does function in its own way. Use of this process has reinforced to me that it takes time, patience and perseverance to teach in Traditional ways. I try to acknowledge and interrogate my own internalized acculturation whenever I contemplate direct intervention and resist the impulse. I choose instead to remain true to Traditional forms, using stories, example and reframing to guide the Circle process.

If you stick to the rule, speaking from your own heart about your own self, you have to break the rules of Circle to get to the place of condemnation....People do become more acculturated to Circle and to talking in that way after a routine period. At first there

may be real glitches in how people speak and sometimes people are offended, but it is very hard for people to be condemning people in the same way, when they have to sit in Circle with them and have to put their own hearts out and speak about what their own issues are (Fyre TC4:43).

If someone has been acculturated to use voice as a tool of power-over, Circle has its own medicine.

The rules of Circle do also work...where you have a dominant member who is maybe not operating at the same level who needs to learn to listen to others and who needs to learn to speak from his/her own heart, as opposed to projection (Fyre TC4:43).

THE WEST

Encouraging consciousness-raising through encounters with Others from different cultural locations, is complicated by the reality that our ability to understand others is mediated by comfort. "We humans are most uncomfortable when confronted with differing values and practices from those we were shaped. As a result, we tend to resist any force which interrupts or challenges our own well-established behaviours or patterns of thinking" (Forbes, 1979: 146).

CAN COMMUNITY BE BUILT ACROSS DIVERSITY?

In doing a critical analysis of the Model-In-Use, it is essential to acknowledge that not all students were appreciative of all aspects of the process. Some did not feel embraced by the Circle process or other community building efforts in the classroom. I recognized that the competing and contrary energy contained in a diverse classroom context has definite impacts on trying to build community in the classroom.

I have found one of the biggest challenges is to find somehow to connect with students from all the different groups...Just trying to make that connection. Trying to make the Model work across diversity. That's been a real challenge for me (Fyre TC2:23).

In essentializing the difficulties, I dichotomized the participants into two different groups of consumers.

There are two different camps in my classroom work: those people who have the experience and have been silenced, who are from the various groups and haven't learned to value their culture and have learned to be marginalized and have learned to be oppressed, and they have the weight of oppression. They've learned a whole bunch of lessons in that. Then there are a whole, large group of people who have learned the exact opposite. They've learned to ignore oppression. They've learned to take people's voice. They've learned to have the privilege of speaking whenever they wanted, or to feel safe when many people have never been safe. In my work, it's always trying to engage both of those groups. To encourage the Black, Acadian, Native, Asian, Gay voices, to come forward and to articulate themselves, while simultaneously encouraging those people who have been voice-full to listen respectfully, to get a different place of learning than just their own expert model (Fyre VC3:29).

Within these groups, differences in experience and perception were expressed by participants. Not all members from the diverse Communities embraced the Model, not all from the mainstream population resisted it. One participant from the Black community, Ela, expressed her lack of comfort with the process. She linked it to cultural identity and context:

How I felt about Circle--not completely comfortable with the process. I don't think it would have mattered actually what the process was I just found coming to University was a very traumatic experience in itself. It wouldn't have mattered whether it was in a classroom full of whites, which was difficult, or in a Circle context, it was just a particular space and time that I had a lot of things to work out myself because of the experiences I had going through the entire education system. I don't think I would have been comfortable in any context in University, unless it was an

absolutely total "Black" experience for me....I did feel really anxious about doing Circle work. And I felt sometimes....called upon to speak sometimes maybe when I really didn't want to speak, but knew that it was important that I did speak. And so I had different mixed feelings about that. I sort of felt like being put on the spot at times (Ela TC2:6).

Being "put on the spot" as First Voice is one difficulty encountered by this Black community member. She continued on this theme later in her "speak-out".

I still find Circle difficult. It's not my favorite thing in the world to do. Some people will come in to Circle Talk and be very relaxed within, it hasn't been my experience because it hasn't been part of my culture....I suppose to some degree we might do this type of situation, but it would be in a different format within the Black community. The level of comfort when you're all coming from the same mind-set, as far as your cultural roots are concerned, then a particular format is a lot more comfortable for you because it's something that you can all relate to together (Ela TC2:12).

Ela reflected a Traditional view when she proposed that "people need time".

I think it's a good process and people need time to get used to it and to relate to it. Changing a particular format is not always easy for those who are going through the process and those who are trying to put that process in place (Ela TC2:12).

Kate spoke out about how I failed to address gays and lesbians as an integral part of the curriculum. For her, this promoted feelings of exclusion from the process, as peers' homophobia remained unchallenged.

When I would speak up in cross-cultural last year, and share experiences that I have had with homophobia and heterosexism, I felt like, sometimes, people were (thinking)....we're here to deal with racism, just be quiet. I was trying to make links. I was trying to share my experience, trying to have a voice. I think that if [the course] were a year, that kind of silencing wouldn't happen. Sometimes that was my own internal homophobia silencing happening, but sometimes people made comments or I felt the mood in the room of some people was very tense, and

impatient....can't you just be quiet about this? I really felt like the students, a lot of the students in the class, were just rolling their eyes whenever I talked about heterosexism, and to a certain extent about sexism. I was doing that in the context of making links. Trying to figure out my own privilege and oppression and all that. And means of resistance...those were the issues for me (Kate TC1:3).

Through this student's direct challenge of the curriculum, I was able to see the impact that the exclusion of gay and lesbian issues had on members' First Voice from that cultural Community. I addressed her and the issue directly in Circles on CCI.

I realized in working with you, working through that with you, and watching you locked in to that, and seeing that happen in class, was a really good lesson for me about having it overtly on the agenda, and really making a place for it in the curriculum, because it needs to be there!....It really motivated me to do something different then... (Fyre TC1:4).

Her voice and experience provided a lesson about being excluded from an inclusive model. Gay and lesbian content has now been included in the curriculum--the readings, the course outline, and the course progression. Members of the gay and lesbian community are encouraged to emphasize the gifts of their community as well as to express the pains of homophobia. Classes which have looked at gay and lesbian issues across the cultures have been an excellent illustration of diversity and unity within a given community. I acknowledged the impact of Kate's First Voice in the curriculum change.

At the time when I first designed it I couldn't figure out how we were going to do that. But now, I see, I have that as part of the design. I see how that pulls together now. But it took seeing that and learning that from you (Fyre TC1:5).

DOES SHARING FEELINGS BUILD COMMUNITY IN THE CLASSROOM?

The challenge of embracing many different cultural groups is one level of contradictory energy. The content itself posed many barriers to building positive community relations in the classroom. Interrogating our selves and our families about racism produces many complex emotions, including anger and guilt. These, when expressed outwardly, are considered "negative" emotions. When repressed, they can become internalized and directed at self and one's own cultural group. They can also become externalized and projected onto others.

I have learned that challenging people's worldviews can be an "uncomfortable" experience for all involved. This often needs to be contextualized so that people do not feel alone in their own process. Along with feelings that arise based on our own personal histories and struggles, anxiety, insecurity and disorientation can also result from "sociocultural dissonance", defined by Brown (1990) and Chau (1989) as the stress, strain, and incongruence caused by having to adjust to competing cultural demands. Dissonance is certainly an integral aspect of teaching Aboriginal and anti-racist methods in Western institutional settings.

One example of the dissonance produced is illustrated in Mac's self-reflection. It is clear in this entry how deeply challenging the emotional aspect of the learning can be, how these processes can shake the foundations of a Western worldview and can result in internalization at a very personal level for some.

I can't believe that I got so emotional in class the other day. But at that point it just came out. I don't know if it was more anger or frustration. I felt like I have been in the dark for twenty eight years. I knew about the things that happened to the First Nations but this was the first time I really felt it. That is the problem. It is too easy to turn away. To forget. I feel like I am starting over again. From the beginning. Questioning every assumption. Questioning what it means to have your history erased, your culture destroyed,

From the beginning. Questioning every assumption. Questioning what it means to have your history erased, your culture destroyed, your life blunted. I want to learn more, come face to face, but it is like I don't feel that I have the right.....I'm going through a real existential angst. Not the meaning of life again. I mean that I am desperately seeking my own place in all of these issues. My values used to be like bedrock. Now they are like sand dunes. I feel vulnerable but I feel open. I sometimes feel defensive.

I have to sieve through what I feel and think. Suspend judgements.

To be totally open.

To be with the moment.

.Things are (Mac 92-j).

Lather (1991) and others offer tools to use with students to view the process of transformation with them and their reaction to it. I have learned that helping students name the process, the alteration of consciousness, including an articulation of the possible feelings generated, can be useful in many ways. To share information is to share power. Participants need to know that a wide range of feelings is "normal", including embracing and reframing "resistance" as a "healthy" and expected reaction. Providing an opportunity to reflect on the experience as it unfolds and to understand it from a critical perspective, can reduce anxiety and resistance to the process.

ANGER AND GUILT

The power of anger, and the use of anger in the classroom, is discussed by Culley as the "energy mediating the transformation from damage to wholeness" (211). She theorized that as the person passes from denial to anger, the journey to affirmation and change becomes possible. "Only when our anger has been felt and acknowledged, not denied, when it has been demonstrated to be grounded in a personal and collective sense of worth and not their opposite, can we hope that our students will join us in the remaining work to be done..." (Culley, 1985: 216).

Anger was an often expressed emotion in class, in journals and in the Reader. Anger is often part of the stories told by First Voice participants, as re-living oppression and exclusion re-produces the feelings. Many speakers have been very direct about how the everyday nature of systematic racism produces "multi-generational" anger, which needs to be released somewhere. Releasing anger is a form of healing, as often loss and anger have been turned inward. As Charnley (1990) tells us, because of the pervasiveness of the dominant belief system, it is hard to make out who "the enemy" is. Often there is no target at which to aim our very reasonable and natural anger. The dilemma is found in Maracle's poem "Hate": "Blinded by niceties and polite liberality we can't see our enemy, so we'll just have to kill each other" (1988: 12). We have learned that when an external target is made visible to the victim, the release of anger and "bitterness" will produce a healing effect, and self-blame can be reframed and redirected as resistance to oppressive forces.

Because most people are unused to embracing anger as a healthy emotion which needs expression, anger is often repressed, misdirected, and displaced. In this Model-In-Use, emotional discharge is expected and planned for in the process. Circle talk is a process that gives opportunity for voicing strong feelings, while restricting opportunities for direct confrontation or targeting of others to occur. This process is complex in working with oppressed individuals, and even more so when working with members of the dominant culture. Students are often uncomfortable with direct expressions of what they have been acculturated to understand are "negative" feelings. Students respond at times by blocking or resisting hearing these stories/emotions expressed and wish to continue the safety of denial. Some have their own emotions stirred by the stories and by the process, and anger is co-produced along with guilt.

Guilt is a commonly expressed feeling of students at various points in the learning process. It can contribute to the desire to change, but it can also create and sustain defensiveness and promote resistance to the overall process. One White male clearly represented this as his reaction early in the course.

In circle tonight those of us who are white tended to express feelings of guilt for having white privilege. I was glad to hear these white female students express feelings of guilt, because as a result I did not feel as alone with my feelings of guilt. However my feelings of guilt, which seem to be increasing on a weekly basis, are based not only on my white privileges, but also on my privileges associated with my gender, sexual orientation, age, and class. I just hope I will be able to do something constructive with my feelings of guilt, instead of just feeling guilty (Ken Jan 26 93-j).

DENIAL AND PROJECTION

Mainstream students are faced with challenging something which they have internalized as part of themselves, that they have benefited from. This can result in complex forms of projection and denial and the "fixing" of one's "negative" emotions on others. As Culley (1985) noted, "anger felt by students in the classroom often fixes itself upon inappropriate objects, particularly upon other students" (213). One way of coping with the anger, guilt and "self-hate" engendered by uncovering the parameters of our own racist culture can be to direct these feelings towards others. Rather than exhibiting an increase in racial tolerance, some students react by further targeting as the "problem" those who have voiced their experience. I have learned that sometimes student's anger is projected upon myself as the instigator of the stressful learning experience. Culley (1985) expressed a similar insight regarding feminist pedagogy: "If she initiates a process challenging the world-view and the view of self of her students, she will surely--if she is doing her job--become the object of some students' unexamined anger" (213). This reality is conflated by issues of race

and gender. Ng (1991, 1994), James (1994), and many others share stories of how this has happened to them as "minority" teachers, particularly when challenging the belief systems of mainstream students.

HOW CAN STUDENTS' RESISTANCE BE REFRAMED?

Resistance was a continuous dynamic unfolding in multiple variations in the CCI classroom. It was a theme occasionally addressed directly in the classroom by myself. It was mostly absent in the journals (which were originally submitted for Grade), but reflected on at the Circles on CCI. Most often the forms of "passive" resistance enacted by students towards the Model were embedded in a more common pattern of resistance to dominant practices. Resistance is talked about a lot in Native and Black communities. Mostly it is *"behind the scenes, behind closed doors, and usually in a humorous manner...people don't usually sit down and talk about it in an analytical way, but it's understood, because without having to say it, as to why it occurs and to why its necessary and why it will continue to be necessary"* (Ela TC:10).

Resistance is seen as interacting with the experience/expression of First Voice, the Talking Circle process, and in particular related to the affective dimension of the classroom experience. Resistance was manifested in the Circle and in the classroom context, and was related to and impacted on the level of comfort/distress for participants. The Eurocentric dominance embedded in the context, numerically and attitudinally produced resistance. This resistance impacted on the efforts enacted by me in this Model to challenge/resist the dominant and dominating structures. Sharing Aboriginal discourse across cultural groups, particularly in the hierarchical university context, while an act of resistance to dominant forms of discourse, dialectically produced resistance from those who did not feel "empowered" by processes unfamiliar to them. I

articulated my understanding of resistance as an epistemological foundation of this teaching project.

It's really an act of resistance. Resistance to the dominant forms of teaching and learning. There's got to be a lot different experience of Circle and a lot different understanding of Circle for people who are just coming to it, then for me. I'm looking at Circle when it's happening here and when I'm doing it in class; I've got a whole long history of Circle behind what I'm seeing and what I'm hearing when I'm using Circle...I'm hoping that people can share with me what their experiences have been with that....It's competing and contrary energy going on there. Trying to use Aboriginal methods, which are very much about being open and receptive and comfortable in our learning, and being ready to accept this on our journey, and a University classroom, which is very set in terms of the ways of learning and the expectations (Fyre TC2:3).

Resistance by students to the process or the content can be reframed as a healthy reaction. Kea, a respondent in Lather's (1990) research on feminist pedagogy, defined it as "a word for the fear, dislike, hesitance most people have about turning their entire lives upside down and watching everything they have ever learned disintegrate into lies" (1990: 142). As she tells it, "'empowerment' may be liberating, but it is also a lot of hard work and new responsibility to sort through one's life and rebuild according to one's own values and choices" (142). Not everyone is prepared to undertake this "lifework", and many innately resist that which will move them in this direction.

Resistance can be described as a continuous, ongoing dialectical process, visible to and impacting on many, but mostly unacknowledged in any direct way. Participants reinforced the link between resistance and feelings of discomfort with the process. While First Voice, Talking Circle, and storytelling can empower "minority" voices, it can be a different experience for some mainstream students.

The level of affect in the classroom was addressed as a central contributory to resistance. Expression of feelings in a heartfelt manner was/is "expected" in the Circle process and mandated by First Voice pedagogy, but not common in Eurocentric learning models. The processes In-Use emphasize depth of feeling, and this produced a contradictory response from students unacculturated to such an experience.

I know there's mixed reviews on the heavy emotion times. I know for myself, I feel very comfortable with a lot of emotional expression, and so I bring it out in people and I do it myself, and I think there's been times when that's been real positive and sometimes when that's felt hard for people (Fyre TC3:5).

I have realized that while emotional expression is structured in as part of the Model, people are often "uncomfortable" with heartfelt expression. Tradition dictates that *"in Circle if you don't want to share your feelings, don't start doing it if you don't have the heart for it. But people have to at least be able to absorb others' feelings"* (Fyre TC3:25).

One form resistance took is the deflection of feelings expressed in Circle.

One of the things that happens is that people sit in Circle and deflect the feelings....because they've spent all that time barriering and deflecting they only get to their own feelings after the fact. And so they find themselves at home or they find themselves in the student lounge or they find themselves outside of the Circle and outside of the class, then sharing their feelings. Part of that is because they're blocking and deflecting because they don't want to have feelings in class. They don't want to relate to it. They don't want to have to know that (Fyre TC3:25).

Phil, a student from the Native community, expressed her understanding of how students' general lack of acculturation to the feeling content generated by the process led to expression of feelings about the class, outside of the class.

With every Circle that we had, afterwards, in other parts of the school, you would hear all these things that never got brought up in Circle. You would hear different perceptions and...people's ideas about what Circle was like and what was happening. And...you would hear all these things that no one would ever bring up...but be talking, like, two or three students in the lounge...and you would overhear conversation....Bringing the feeling content to the class and how doing anything in Circle forms brings out emotions and makes people feel safety in talking and relating things from an experience of your own....A story about your own experience brings up so many things for other people. But there are no other classes in the school that really deal with things on a feeling basis. And if feelings do come up in class it's always from an analytical point of view about why people feel this way and how can you make people feel differently. ...It's never actually just having the feelings and how you feel about feeling this way and coping with, that kind of thing (Phil TC3:14).

Ela expressed her surprise at finding out the level of controversy going on behind the scenes about the course. She felt that fear played a big role.

I was a little surprised at some of the feelings and things that were going on behind the scenes but weren't coming out in Circle. And a lot of it was anxiety. And a lot of it was fear. One of the biggest things was that students felt that they had nothing to contribute, because they weren't speaking from First Voice. The emphasis on First Voice really terrified them. And they felt that they couldn't speak about experiences with racism or anything.... It would have been nice to have heard some of those things a little bit earlier on when we were actually involved in the process, instead of at the very end of it....Authority and resistance, it really entered context....It was unfortunate that people couldn't talk about that type of resistance that they were embarking in behind the scenes among themselves and spreading throughout the school. That they couldn't have talked about those particular feelings that they had within Circle (Ela TC2:11).

Guilt was analyzed by Ela as a contributor to resistance.

I think students also felt that they were being put on the spot with all their guilt and their defensiveness, and were blaming themselves and projecting that onto other people (Ela TC2:11).

People [were] talking about the issue behind the scenes with their colleagues and stuff because they all feel guilty, so they try to find somebody else outside the class who thinks the same way that they do so that they can feel justified in the guilt!...I think some people...go through the whole course and block out much of the learning, unfortunately because of the guilt, which leads to defensiveness. What you see as a manifestation of that guilt, is defensiveness (Ela TC4:16).

Hattie responded later in Circle to propose another interpretation of the interconnectedness of personal comfort and the resistance of other students. She linked it to how the Model-In-Use challenged the cultural hegemony that Whites are accustomed to.

I listened to some of the negative complaints about the course. I analyze them as being...White people feel very out of control when they're not in charge. And that's the kind of emotions that I sense from the course: is that they're not in control now, the different cultures are allowed to present their self, their thoughts, what they feel, express their cultures with respect and honor...that they are too important being here....And some of the things that I looked at in the Circle is that people were there because they had to take the course. It was required. Some, I felt, were willing to learn and were really caring, but others were there because they had to be. So they would do what they had to do and get out. I looked at it, I'll never be able to do what I have to do and get out of my race. I'll always have to live that. I'll always endure pain because I'm a mother, because I'm a grandmother, and because I'm a woman (Hattie TC2:20).

The struggle to gain and maintain an identity not rooted in mainstream acceptance is "lifework" for members from visibly racial Communities. As Cal suggested, this is a reality little understood by those immersed in White" privilege.

However the real issue here right now is the point that whites have not been prepared to do the work to understand the lies or the distortions that they have been fed for most of their lives at a personal level or a structural level. I am also disappointed because unless it is understood at a personal level I don't think that it could be possibly understood from a perspective of

racialism. I have spent about 25 years working on this and trying to understand these issues and I am not sure that most whites are prepared to undergo this type of intense self reflection not for as long a period of time. The most profound point is that I have just begun to scratch the tip of the iceberg as far as my own awakening is concerned. This like many struggles requires lots of focused work.. (Cal 94-j).

Can Whites be expected to be seriously invested in challenging internalized and external forms of White domination? Cindy felt the level of commitment for participants from different cultural locations could be analyzed by noting the composition of "voluntary" Circles for Circle Talk on CCI.

In the class the atmosphere is mostly good, but after the class when I have another kind of relationship with them, then I can hear a culture of resistance to what we are learning in the class. So when I came to the Talking Circle last time, and this time, one thing that came into my mind is, OK!, when the Talking Circle is not required, it is not for mark, what is the composition of the Talking Circle? Just like today, I can see the same things happen...not too many white classmates will come. I really regard this as a kind of resistance (Cindy TC2:33).

Resistance can be expressed by physical or emotional absence from the process. Cindy also made the link between identity, privilege and depth of feelings stirred/shared in the Model.

And I find that during the class what they share with me...as compared to other minority or immigrants, when we shared a story, it really sticks in our hearts, but for them, sometimes, I feel, it's a bit superficial. Though I appreciate that they are aware of the whites' domination. But what they would talk about is...whether the pampers have the face of the Black people? What's wrong after they leave the classroom? Does nothing push them to understand the white privilege? And they can go back to their own shell and they're not required to do anything (Cindy TC2:33).

I have uncovered that White participants are not supported by peers, family or their community around them for engaging in reflective action on racial

issues. This means that many can afford to remain uncommitted to processes designed to challenge their supremacy. I have interrogated my role as "guide". I wondered what I contributed to producing resistance and have emphasized the part that culture and context play in our understanding of behaviour.

Somehow when I hear students complain, particularly white students, complain about how they didn't get to say everything they wanted to say and how they didn't really get to share all the feelings that they had, and how they had to feel that they had to go and talk outside of class, or they chose to go and talk outside of class; and in one way I feel, well, maybe I should be doing something different, maybe I should be acting different, maybe I should be making more effort to embrace them in this process and how I'm teaching this process (Fyre TC2:23).

My Elders teach that we can offer a learning opportunity but it is up to the learner to take responsibility for the lessons that apply to him or her. I have become aware that if I take responsibility for participants' feelings and acts of resistance, this works to solidify them as "personal". This detracts from learning to interrogate them as manifestations of structural reality. I have learned to reframe resistance as part of the whole experience.

I do really see that whole thing about talking outside of class....Sitting on a pile of something that's going on in your body, and not putting it out - as an act of resistance. Like the Native people resisted hundreds of years of colonization through silence! Through just keeping it to yourself. To me, if students are wanting to keep it to themselves, if they embody that as their act of resistance, I'd really like to work at that in terms of at least having them acknowledge it as resistance. Instead of them just being passively doing it and thinking that they're hiding it or it's not visible, because to me when that's happening in Circle, it is visible (Fyre TC2:23).

Resistance is visible in embodied cues of eye rolling, defensive posturing, and "superficial" contributions to Circle. What is "invisible" but detectable to experienced Circle practitioners is the difference between the

feeling of doing Circle when in a group of people who understand and practice the values in the Traditional way and the energy produced when participants in the Circle are resisting the process.

When you're doing Circle in a Traditional way you get a feeling that people are moving in around you, that they're closing in and they're supporting you in your story, and you get the feeling of community support for your story and a support for that. Even though the story...has negative things or hard things, that is Circle talk. We share from our depth of experience. In Traditional ways when we are able to do that and we are able to see that our community supports us, even in that position of weakness, even in that position of pain, then this intensifies our feeling of being together. But when people react this way from our pain, when people move back from our stories, when they don't want to hear them, or see the pain or react to it, then that can have an opposite effect. We feel our story is making people move away from us, which is not really what we want. We want to share our pain in a way that people can comfort us and care for us (Fyre TC3:25).

The resistance of students to absorb and relate to people's pain is a major challenge to using Aboriginal pedagogies to produce community in the classroom. Caring and sharing are epistemological values of any Circle work, and the depth to which people are acculturated to feel is a cultural difference. It is really a struggle to get people to respond differently than they are accustomed to.

You can set the Circle, you can bring the people there, you can do the smudge, you can do all the things that you would do to create that Circle environment as a safe place, as you would do in a Native setting, but you'll get an entirely different result.... The most fundamental difference is the ability to go in and the sense of responsibility of the sharing, that when I bring my pain out for you, when I tell my story to you, this is a gift...My story is a gift to you....When I cry about my experience, when I get to the point of having that heartfelt of a feeling, that it brings my tears out, that my tears are a gift to you! And this is a gift that builds community. Or when I tell a funny story and we all laugh about that story....we felt community in our laughing together. So pain is not the only way, or sorrow is not the only community felt feeling, but all of the feelings shared. If we could be open to them and send them out in

to the Circle of caring together, then that's how Circle brings community. I do think a lot of times in trying to do Circle work here, there is that restriction of people really don't know their hearts. People haven't been able to connect to their hearts....we're trained in so many ways to barrier ourselves from our feelings (Fyre TC3:25).

THE NORTH

Working in the Traditional way requires an "embodied" approach for both teacher and student. This is articulated in the Native "lifeworld" as "walking the talk". Walking the talk is, as Absolon tells us, "easier said than done" (1994: 30).

EMBODIED TEACHER REVISITED: CAN I BE A FIRST VOICE AS TEACHER?

As an Aboriginal educator in a mainstream university context, I face many struggles and contradictions in my efforts to walk my talk. The experience of being a "minority" teacher who is teaching race-relations based on Aboriginal philosophy in White Western academia, is an "embodied" experience. Following Bannerji (1991), one becomes an "embodied teacher" when one's body, and experience within that body, is part of the lesson. She tells of how she becomes aware that she is "a body in a space". "I am speaking particularly about my own non-white Indian woman's body, in a classroom where the other occupants are mostly white, and in a classroom in Canada" (Bannerji, 1991: 6). As I identify myself and am concurrently constructed by others as "not White", I become the "embodied" other. Embodiment is a contradictory position in a University context, where to be "not-mind" is to be excluded (Gatens, 1991). This experience, and therefore this narrative, is highly contradictory, very personal, and ultimately political. "It is nevertheless in these contradictions that I exist, and therefore think, speak, and write" (Ng, 1991: 10).

Confusion is inherent in the undertaking of teaching critical alternative content, enacting Aboriginal teaching methods, while engaged in surviving a Eurocentric context. Mainstream educational methods practice separation of teacher from learners, healer from "patients", worker from "clients".

Traditionalists are expected to be engaging with others in the teaching healing cycle, and working on ourselves first and foremost. In the Traditional world view, as teacher/healer, it is our responsibility to courageously share our own "personal" journeys. As Aboriginal educators, we need to know--acknowledge and communicate--our own past pains, our present struggles and visions for the future, in order to assist others on their own paths.

One recurring source of connection and disconnection was that of being a First Voice contributor and the professor. First Voice requires speaking about your own experiences and insights gained. In the Traditional way, we each tell our own part in the greater story. As we become Elder teachers we learn to understand/know more parts with greater depth to speak. It is understood in Traditional teaching that we learn and teach through our own experience/voice. This Model requires divulging of "personal" stories in a "heartfelt" manner. This is **not** an "expected" practice of "professors" in mainstream University settings. In Circle Talk on CCI, I spoke about the experience of recurring "cultural clash". I expressed my perception that hearing the "personal" stories of my life, because I am their "professor", is shocking.

Sometimes when I speak in Circle, I'll tell things that are really personal about my life sometimes. And I'm not thinking about myself in that situation as being the teacher! Or that I am in that role of professor to them! I'm just speaking in a heartfelt way in Circle about my experience....To me, we're all teaching each other together, but sometimes it's kind of a shock because I'm thinking that way and teaching that way, but then my students will be shocked that they find out personal things about me, or that they know personal things about me, because they're not used to it. White students aren't used to knowing personal things about their

teachers. They're used to having that big separation between their teacher and them. And usually by the time the course is over, students know quite a lot about my life because I tell stories every class in Circle about different things that happen; right then as they're happening, or things that might have happened in the past that I think are important in terms of my own experience. I'm trying to encourage people to share their experiences and encourage guests that come in to share their life experiences, and students to share their practice experiences (Fyre CC1:27)

As an "embodied" teacher, I am a model for other storytellers. The split between personal and "professional" is rampant in our discipline and in the University context overall. Once personal but political stories are told, the authority that is invested in the "aura" of teacher is demystified. This is especially true when "inside-out" stories are told, when the learning arises from what the Western mind would categorize as "mistakes". It is Traditional to teach through reversal, and I do practice this story-form. The contradictory results are contextually-based.

I even tell things about mistakes I've done and things I've learned from them...That's one of the ways that power is equalized, in that we're all then equal members in the community together; just because I'm the teacher doesn't mean that I know everything. Or that I've never made a mistake in my life. Or that I'm really not making a mistake right now!...What I'm saying is really my own experience, and what I know from that. I think that's quite shocking, for people in University to have a teacher that's talking about their own life, and talking about making mistakes, and sometimes actually even making them right there (Fyre CC1:27).

One Elder, who participated in Circle Talk on CCI, expressed a Traditional approach to mistakes.

You must always be ready to acknowledge your own weaknesses also. Because acknowledging never makes you small. It makes you much bigger!...If you think too much of yourself, then nobody else thinks of you. Try to set an example for what you want. If you want something then for you, think for others. Do for

others. And then, you see, the others will do for you...(Erma VC3:8).

Being open with your own evolving subjectivity, particularly in a context which does not revere female, Native, the personal, or "mistakes", can be demoralizing. Rather than inspiring respect and community, this kind of sharing can have the opposite effect.

Sometimes I get negative feedback from students - they often don't say it to me, but I'll feel not respected from students. Not the same way that they respect teachers that are bosses to them. Sometimes that hurts my feelings because I'm trying to be equal with them, and sharing, and trying to be a participant with them. When they don't respect that I am the teacher and that they still need to do the work and they still need to come to class, and they still need to meet the obligations as a student, and that I'm still meeting the obligations as a teacher, even though I'm not really acting the same way as they expect teachers to act (Fyre CC1:28).

A SPEAK-OUT ON RESPECT

The resistance, expressed and veiled, embodied in the classroom context has had impacts on my experience of sharing feelings/experiences/stories and on my will to share the gifts of Aboriginal culture in this context and to non-Native peoples. I have felt and expressed this concern on several occasions throughout teaching the course and at Circle Talk on CCI.

Sometimes that's been really positive and I felt really good and powerful about using Circle that way. Other times I feel like I'm appropriating a cultural method because it really doesn't belong here, and I really shouldn't be doing this. And a couple of times there's been big conflicts in class because I've spoken about that, and said to people that I didn't like the way it was working or because I've been angry at myself and put that anger forward, and then people have had a backlash about that (Fyre TC2:3).

Paradoxically, but true to the dialectical form, when resistance of students was targeted in a direct and honest way by the instructor, anger, guilt and more

resistance was often produced. The challenge was most frequently taken as imposition of authority of the "professor", rather than the voice of the oppressed calling into question the tactics of the oppressor. In one class, I spoke out about what I perceived as students' lack of respect for the process. Their reactions serve to illustrate the recurring dialectic of authority and resistance in the CCI classroom. These entries, when read together as descriptions of the same event, also illustrate a reoccurring theme: multiple interpretations of the "same" reality. Some students were able to recognize the structural dynamics that could lead to my "speak out" in class. Others were more concerned that I might have been expressing a 'personal' reaction towards what they might have done.

I was not expecting to hear what was said in class tonight regarding the feelings surrounding the teaching of our class. I feel awful that these vibes were put out from my class. I did sense last week that things were feeling a bit scattered. I am very glad that this has been shared. It has raised my awareness of where I am in class and what exactly are the things I hope to gain from this experience (Bejay Jan 20 93-j).

I feel terrible that you have been feeling so oppressed in this class. I can only imagine what it must be like for you to educate so many racist white people, and the energy coming from the students is not always positive. I hope that I didn't do anything to make it an awful experience for you. I am sort of glad that I am switching over because I feel like some of the white students take advantage of Circle and begin to talk about things that do not relate to the class. I feel guilty even writing these things but I really do feel that way sometimes (Lena Feb 6 93-j).

Tonight Jean expressed her deep anger at the way this class is going. I felt shocked at the depth of her feeling about the lack of respect for her people's traditions, and general disrespect within the class.

It must have taken a huge amount of courage to do that and I certainly admire her for it. I also feel so responsible and guilty for whatever I have done that contributed to her pain. I feel scared now to say anything for fear of it being offensive.

I feel like an oppressor tonight - in a major way. Not a nice feeling (Char Feb 3 93-j).

Sharing my feelings of being oppressed in the classroom has definitely been an educational experience. Each time it has had multiple affects on students, many unintended.

During tonight's class Jean shared with us her feelings about this class so far via her journal. Jean was very open and honest in her feelings, which she stated are very similar to feelings associated with oppression. I commend anyone who has the guts to describe specifically when, where, and how they are oppressed. However I found Jean's style to be so open and honest that it left me feeling I was personally attacked (Ken Feb 3 93-j).

Having my students feel "personally attacked" is certainly not an intended effect. Tia wrote an entry three days after my speak-out. She wanted to share with me the many feelings and emotions that arose: denial, anger, and fear were acknowledged.

The first word to describe how I felt was denial. My immediate reaction was denial and that I could never be a part of a group or collective of people who could oppress another person. WRONG! When I look back at the size of the class itself and the fact that a majority of the people in the class are white and maintain a white culture, this is a form of oppression in and of itself. As a group we want to share and voice our experiences yet not being silent and learn/listen to other first person experiences. This act alone silences those who have so much to offer.

Another feeling I was experiencing was anger. I felt angry because I was being grouped with a bunch of people who were oppressing someone and we didn't even know it. This angers me the most, that I am so privileged that I couldn't even see/feel what was happening. I also felt angry because you thought enough of us as people to tell us how you were feeling, but all I could feel at the time was that I was at fault and being blamed for something I could not see or feel.

This is when I began to feel scared and afraid. Oppression is so deep and so interwoven that it has become a way of life. I am afraid because if you were feeling this way, others may also be feeling oppressed in a classroom with a majority of white students. I am also afraid that the words I voice may silence others and contribute to this damned oppressive society. I want to be part of change, not silencing people (Tia 93j).

Tia concluded her entry recognizing the honesty and strength modeled when I heartfully shared my experience of oppression with them--the oppressors.

Finally, the word that stands out in mind is strength. It is not right that you have to explain you're being oppressed. Yet you shared this with a room full of strangers to assist in our awareness. You shouldn't have to explain anything. We should be able to see, feel what is happening in this classroom. I have a long way to go! But, I would like to thank you Jean for your honesty and strength in wanting a group of social workers to know, see and feel what you were experiencing - AWARENESS - (TVM 93-j).

Awareness was definitely produced each time I used my own lived experience in the classroom to teach students how to "know, see and feel" oppression. As a tool of reversal, the teaching potential of these types of inside-out lessons is tremendous. I have also analyzed this experience as a breakdown of the consensual aspects of Circle work. According to Hart (1985), consensual agreement is the outcome and the supporting structure of non-hierarchical relationships among the members of a group. Consensus is "a conscious, rational procedure orientated towards the creation of unity" (131). The contradiction arose because of the need to express criticism, which conflicted with "strong tendencies towards building harmonies, symbiotic relations" (Hart, 1985: 131). I used Circle Talk, a pedagogy built on harmony and egalitarianism, to speak out as oppressed while in my role of teacher (oppressor). Contradictorily it was perceived by me and others as simultaneously an act of resistance to oppressive acts of privileged people and as an oppressive act. As Weedon (1987) reminds us, "where existing power relations are under threat, initially consensual forms of discourse often employ coercion to govern the subjects in question should consent fail" (101). The issue of authority and resistance, consensus and coercion, is definitely a contradictory

one, especially when one envisions oneself as employing egalitarian methods. Balancing the power invested in the role of professor with the empowerment I seek for Aboriginal teachers, methods and students in this context is an ongoing struggle.

BACKLASH: DOES DOING MEAN BEING DONE TO?

Anti-racism means "speaking out when we hear a stereotypic statement, when we feel excluded by what we are asked to accept as a reflection of our reality, and when we see the same old ruling-class models being presented as the norm" (Kalia, 1991: 282). All anti-racist educators agree: racism needs to be challenged by the teacher, or the students. Racism, paradoxically, is often not spoken about, even when directly visible. Racism in the university context in this decade has become "the R-word". I and others have been cautioned not to use it to describe discriminatory harassment or credibility will be lost. Victims or activists naming racism are immediately called on to engage in a recounting of the explicit details of who offended who. When it is left up to students, they are perceived as "having an attitude problem" (Carty, 1991b: 36). Students reprimanded for "intimidating" other students and told to be less "accusatory" are left wondering, like many who experience racial harassment, "Is it me, or is it them?" (Kalia, 1991). Ng (1991) articulated parallels in our experience as academics, as we are considered hostile and non-collegial for our efforts to challenge students and other faculty directly. Other forms of contextual backlash rely on a dispirited form of academic freedom and the legal defense of institutional reputation.

Backlash is often experienced as "personal" yet is decisively political. Kalia (1991) expressed what has become a commonsense reality for many struggling to survive within racist contexts. "It is irrelevant, even if it could be

proven, that all negative reactions I encounter are personal, not race related - what is relevant is that I am in the particular position of having to consider the possibility that how others treat me personally may be motivated by race politics" (281).

How we survive the very real challenge of backlash from our political efforts needs to be theorized as a critical issue. Backlash, I have found, is an integral aspect of activism. Imperial authority and Native resistance have been theorized as dialectical; so can activism and backlash. Backlash is the action taken by the challenged authority. It occurs In-Relation to the resistance enacted.

RE-ACTIONS TO ACTIVISM

If we recognize that we are In-Relation, we will notice that others around us react to a change in consciousness. They especially "feel threatened" if they perceive an attitude-change is being "forced" upon them. Inexperienced yet inspired students often are quite confrontational in style early on--feeling **all** should share their newfound insights. This can result in personal backlash within family, peer, co-worker, professor, placement, workplace relations. Students' stories of family intervention illustrated the complexity of challenging racial "jokes" with those we love. Bejay told the story of challenging her stepfather on the phone about his use of racial slurs about her ex-partner.

At first I felt speechless and did not know how to respond to him. Then I felt very angry and, trying to remain calm, explained that what he said was racist. I was trying to show him that these awful labels and stereotypes hurt those they are named at. He just would not, or could not grasp what I was trying to tell him. He said he was only joking, and what was the big deal anyway? I ended up feeling very frustrated and had to hang up. I feel appalled and ashamed that someone I love who is very dear to me can be so disgusting. At the same time though, I felt good for speaking my view on this. I always stayed silent before but realize that I can no

longer do this. The more I do this the easier it will become and I can only hope that the things I say will reach someone and make a difference (Bejay Jan 13 93-j).

Bejay concluded her journal by summarizing her central learnings from challenging racism within her family context.

Examining my own family, I have had to face the racism that exists and was passed on to me through my upbringing. The knowledge gained in this course has enabled me to openly call them on it, and to expect resistance (Bejay 93-jsum).

As Bejay expressed, addressing racism can produce resistance in many different forms and contexts. Other students reported similar "unsuccessful" interventions on family members.

I have also had the experience where my action to address a racist incident with a family member of mine, did not turn out so positive. I made a point to address a particular comment with my uncle and he was very set in his ways...and his attitudes! My attempts at hoping to open his eyes to a few things pretty much failed - certainly not by lack of trying though! There is now quite a bit of tension between us - he insists on maintaining his attitude and I insist that he keeps it to himself when I am around. I have noticed that he makes a point to avoid me now...I am still very respectful of him but I felt it was important to let him know where I stood. Perhaps he will see the light some day.

Although this experience has not been a very positive one, I realize that I am doing the right thing in addressing these issues with him. Not every one, or every situation will end up being positive - and some people may feel uncomfortable, but if it takes them to feel this way to start making changes...well then maybe that's a good thing (Analee Nov 24 93-j).

WHOSE COMFORT?

As Analee recognized, people do feel "uncomfortable" when challenged to view themselves, language and/or behaviour as racist. These feelings can lead to an experience of backlash, the inevitable response to any act of

resistance. Many who have had their racial consciousness raised find that they are influenced to "see" and "hear" others around them differently.

One Black activist, Ela, reflected on the potential risk of loss of network members. This is often an early reaction to an enacted shift in personal consciousness.

One of the biggest problems that people face when they start making changes is that it might mean changing your whole circle of friends because what locked you in place with the old circle of friends, now you no longer have in common...Once I break out of that mold and all of a sudden decide that I see things differently and change my thinking, I see racism does exist, those friends are going to start either pulling me back in to the fold by trying to change my beliefs back to the old ones, or else they're going to reject me. Then I'm on my own and I have to create a new circle of friends...It frightens people to see somebody change because they're still caught up in the old belief system and don't have the courage to make the change, so they feel threatened by somebody who has the courage to move on and try things, and look at things in a different way (Ela TC4:15).

Critically interrogating the belief system of his peers, Mac exposed the fatalism expressed through cynicism, as convenient to the privileged class, and a major block to change.

My friends say that nothing changes and I used to feel that they were right. However, they use it as a reason to do nothing (except analyze and come to comfortably smug opinions about the true and ugly nature of humanity). I can't write off everything they say but nowadays I feel like that is a luxurious position to be able to take. If you're the victim of racism, sexism, or other forms of oppression that argument wouldn't be very comforting. In other words some people can afford to be jaded and cynical because they have very little at stake if no change took place (Mac 92-j).

It is important to critically reflect on the construct of "comfort". How far are we prepared to go to ensure "comfort" of those around us? Whose comfort level are we consciously trying to adapt to? While confronting racial slurs may create

uncomfortable feelings for some, slurs themselves produce very uncomfortable feelings for those targeted. Discomfort can also be experienced through failure to address racism. In this story, both the teller's experience as oppressive and her growing discomfort regarding the need to challenge the labels that construct her are expressed.

On the weekend, a couple I know and my partner and I drove together to a party when a racist remark was said.....While my partner immediately questioned this statement, I did only make a sound to indicate that I disagreed. I felt so uncomfortable and had so many thoughts that went through my head. Why did this man ruin the evening with this remark - should I ruin it even more? I had to spend the rest of the evening with him. Should I even want to spend the evening with him? When he attacked the "colored immigrants" I felt he was also talking to me. Often people say these statements without thinking they also attack me. I felt very uncomfortable, unwanted and conscious of my English. Even when I know that I am fluent in English, I often do not feel it. This statement made me question my abilities to speak English and enforced the pressure to improve my English.

This episode made me feel uncertain about myself and my racism. When I did not act I feel I reinforced the racism. I showed that it is ok to treat others that way. How can I effectively work with other immigrants and their issues when I cannot even handle this situation? (Vada Jan 31 93-j).

Acknowledging the reality of backlash means recognizing that the demand for action placed on the students can have contradictory aspects. Challenging co-workers, especially in the role of student placement, can lead to "trouble", as Bejay found out.

I sort of got myself into trouble at my field. I was taking part in a staff meeting and one of the staff started to tell a joke about a black man who had gone fishing. I decided to speak out about this and so I did. I stated that the joke was racist, offensive, inappropriate, and just plain intolerable. There was instant silence in the room, but the joke was not told. I was feeling positive that I had spoken out but felt I still need to address this with the person. I started to talk about why I had spoken out when this staff member cut me off. She said that I really should be careful because I was

"just a student" and that she could have some influence on the outcome of my field placement. Then she stormed out...

My initial reaction to this was anger! Who did she think she was threatening me? And why couldn't she discuss her racism! I felt like tearing a strip off her. However now I have calmed down a bit and can examine the situation a bit clearer. I am still mad. If I had to do it over, I would do the same thing. The joke was wrong and I had to call her on it. I recognize that I need to be careful because this person does hold some power over me in a sense. However I had committed myself to being anti-racist. This includes challenging my own racism and that of others, I cannot be selective about who I wish to challenge or I am in essence defeating my own purpose (Bejay Mar 1 93-j).

While the dangers of backlash are beginning to be visible to this student, it is clear that her commitment is unwavering in its youth. We all learn to be selective in who we challenge, but accepting the responsibility to confront, even with "risk" involved, is required of all committed activists. Bejay concluded her journal by restating her commitment to "an anti-racist lifestyle".

I have committed myself to an anti-racist lifestyle. As I have learned through some of my encounters over the past term, this will not always be an easy thing. But to live this day in and day out at the receiving end is so much worse that I am inspired to continue this fight. I have learned that those in power do not want to give up what they have - Much work needs to be done... (Bejay 93-jsum).

Lena expressed a similar sentiment in concluding one entry.

I learned that it is scary to call people on their racism and although there will be resistance, anger and maybe even violence for practising anti-racism I am going to continue to do so (Lena March 7-14 93-j).

Taking action, no matter how big or small we think we are aiming, does have risks. Activism can pose challenges to others and often brings a counter-action to ourselves. I theorized about my own experiences as an activist.

There's been more effort put out towards stopping or resisting any form of activism...then there has been to aid or add any energy to that work. I've been a bit shocked by the backlash. Then I say to myself: what's shocking about that? There's nothing really shocking about backlash. It happens almost routinely when somebody tries to make a difference or make a change, and it certainly happened to me a lot of times before (Fyre TC4:2).

Backlash can cause us to spiral into hopelessness and helplessness. A critical approach to these feelings reveals fatalism recast in another form. As we continuously endeavour to theorize the experience of backlash as dialectical with activism, we can ask: how and when does it occur? Multiple tactics utilized in each specific context to procure compliance are as diverse as possibilities for challenging systemic oppression. I reflected on one experience that had a snowball effect--something that was perceived by me as "a little piece" but which had big repercussions. This story illustrates the spiral that creates and sustains the personal costs of activism.

You think of it as a little piece when you first start taking it on, but then you get embroiled in the detail of what's going on with it, and you get emotionally hooked in to what's going on, and then you start taking personal responsibility for what's happening, and then your little bit that you thought you were going to take on all of a sudden becomes something personally part of your own psyche, or your own will. Part of what you feel you need to do. And then sometimes you get locked and you can't really vision how this is just a little bit, and how this little bit is just one more thing! And it's not really you, and it's not really the world, it's just one piece of the world that you're trying to change, and maybe it's not the end of the world. (Fyre TC4:3).

Paradoxically, it seemed that it is this very sense of personal commitment to change is what left me open to become a target for backlash. I reflected on the role personal assassination plays in deactivating political activism. This "speak-out" is a lesson story, an effort to help myself and others learn to be self-preserving in our activist efforts.

We have to keep our vision strong for what it is that we start with, and who we are in it, because one of the things that happens often is that when you're involved in a struggle, when people want this struggle to end, or they don't want it brought forward, then sometimes they use personal assassination to stop it. So to not take that seriously, to take it as backlash, to take it as...a political thing. It's hard to not feel personal when people are saying things about you, and to keep seeing it as part of the overall picture. (Fyre TC4:4).

Mohanty (1994) notes that for the university to continue to conduct "business as usual" in the face of overwhelming challenges posed by the presence of "people of color", it has to enact policy and programs aimed at accommodation. To this end, conflicts are personalized and psychologized: the "problems" of race and difference are formulated into "narrow, interpersonal terms" and historical and contextual conflicts are rewritten as "manageable psychological ones" (157). Through this process, "conflict resolution" is attempted in an effort to negotiate differences "between individuals who are dissatisfied as individuals" (157). Mohanty unveils that "[i]f complex structural experiences of domination and resistance can be ideologically reformulated as individual behaviours and attitudes, they can be managed while carrying on business as usual" (158). As in history, we are "managed" by "divide and conquer" strategies: "Our voices are carefully placed and domesticated: one in history, one in English, perhaps one in the sociology department" (159). There is an erosion of "the politics of collectivity through the reformulation of race and difference in individualistic terms" (160).

Opportunities for anti-racist intervention are continuously happening all around. Regardless of the personal costs, activism often cannot be turned off and on like a faucet. It is a form of "lifework", in which one's daily life becomes an embodied form of activism. This takes a certain set of strategies to survive.

It's not something that really you step in to and just say, well, I'm going to do this little piece and that's all for me for the next year. It's continuous demands placed upon me, in my situation, continuously. You've got to carve out what it is that you want to do, and take that piece and do it. How do you decide what pieces are worthwhile and what pieces are to be left for somebody else to do? (Fyre TC4:4).

Many participants addressed the contradictory aspects of activism. One Native Elder, Dee, reflected on a commonly theorized theme among activists-- why "certain people do things and others don't"? (TC3:10). Dee's analysis, based on recent activism in her community, emphasized the role "fear" played in disempowering people from taking action to impact on a local service delivery system.

A lot of it is about fear and oppression because people don't feel they have any power...if we are scared to death, afraid of what's going to happen because we are speaking up. If we're afraid, what does that say for others who not only don't maybe have any education in the secondary system where does that leave them? What does that say to us as social workers, of the power of people and what they have? When we're out there working we really need to be aware that they feel so powerless! And they will tell us whatever they need to tell us to survive. We need to look past that to see why it is they say what they say or don't say, or what they don't do. We really need to look past what we are normally aware of. One of the things that has become clearer to me in our Native community right here in Halifax, are all the fears that people have of coming forward to speak on anything! And even when there are those who have the strength and courage to come forward and speak, raise issues and fight for rights, other people in the community don't always stand behind them even though it's in their best interest, because of those fears! It's been a real enlightenment to me that people don't have the courage because they are afraid (Dee TC3:10).

She brought the example much closer to home, when she extended her analysis to include her experiences at the School.

I think it has come across also in the School here that people are afraid, very much afraid, even when we are

supposedly in a safe place, we are afraid. I have found out that we have good reason to be afraid. I think that has been a learning experience for me, I will be less critical of those who are afraid to come and speak out, whether they're here at the School or whether they're in the outside community. (2 second hesitation) (Dee TC3:11).

She wisely concluded,

People have long years of experience of being afraid, and they have good reason (Dee TC3:11).

Attending another Circle on CCI, Dee returned to the topic of fear, backlash, and "protecting your butt" as a worker and activist. She taught from her lived experience as she told of the risks of "taking a stand".

It's really scary when...you're wondering who is going to support you when the crutch claw comes down on your head with all the backlash. But you've got to say, what's important here? Is it important that something is done, that you take the social action? Or is it important to protect your butt? If you're going to be out there working in the field and you're too afraid to take any action because of protecting your butt, you'll never do anything. Nothing that really makes a big difference. Maybe you can make little tiny changes, get somebody their glasses if somebody's been refusing them, that kind of help...But unless you really take a stand and put yourself in jeopardy, it seems like you're not able to accomplish anything big, unless you do kind of put yourself out there...How can we expect anybody else to come forward, when we're scared to come forward? And we shouldn't be, but we are! I felt that was one of my best learning lessons, and hopefully that will be my thing to look back on to gather my strength for motivation for future things (Dee TC4:24-25).

In spite of her fear, Dee has intensified her activism in the Community and sees the "roots" of her inner strength as coming from what she learned through the Model about the importance of activism.

Today, or of late, I have been active in the community, and even though I still am afraid, which I'm sure most people I talk to are, and I like the honesty that they say they are afraid, but

nevertheless fight and force issues and take a stand. I think that's really good, and I think a lot of that came from this class. The roots of my strength inside come from what I learned in this course about the importance of it. That's something that has been my real gain from this class (Dee CC1:16).

What does it take to keep us going? How do we stay motivated to want to continue to make a change? How do we sustain that struggling force in the midst of all the things that happen to us and in our lives to exhaust us, to keep us down, to keep our minds off our activist work? Keeping our focus on the politics behind the personal attacks is one strategy for survival. Many personal and collective survival strategies are learned and shared in story--offered as condolences and given reciprocally among activists. Learning that backlash is a very real and expectable part of activism is essential to help one depersonalize the attacks when they come. Other Circle participants reinforced this theme. We need to remain strong in our activism, in supporting each other, even in the face of backlash. Free counsels us all to remain part of our community and to support others as the way for change to occur.

Change is really important, but I guess it's also important for us to feel that we can take our knocks! Because there is going to be backlash! There is going to be things that you don't feel are justified, but I think hanging in there and reaffirming in yourself and trying to hang on to your self-esteem through it, and remaining part of your community, is going to be important in change. Hanging on to that community and asserting yourself in it, and making yourself real and visible in it, as a supporter of other members in the community, I think that's the way for change (Free TC4:33).

CHAPTER NINE: VISIONING: THE FUTURE OF THE MODEL

Visions, I theorized in this Model-In-Use, are vitally linked to our Self-In-Relation. Their expression is conformal with the way our present reality is being constructed. Visions can be related to any and all directions of the Wheel. Visions can inform our thinking, willing, feeling and doing. Visions, dialectically, are products of a movement to change and act as change agents. As such, to be a vision-ary is to be reacting, enacting, and proacting. West (1993) theorizes the role of "prophetic critics" in visioning.

We promote a prospective and prophetic vision with a sense of possibility and potential, especially for those who bear the social costs of the present. We look to the past for strength, not solace; we look at the present and see people perishing, not profits mounting; we look toward the future and vow to make it different and better (217).

I expressed my Self-In-Relation to visioning in my opening remarks for Visions Circles.

My visioning comes out of a place of wanting it to be different! Of reflecting back upon my own past, my own struggles, and the pain of my own experiences within the system. And my daily lived experience now as a teacher here in a White University. Where most of what I see around me, and most of what I experience on a day to day basis, has very little to do with anything I understand to be Native tradition and reality. I would really like that to be different. I know from talking to other people, Native people that have been in the (University) system and burnt out, and who have left, that the experience of coming here, for many Native people, and for many Black people, and people from other non-white groups, is that we can't see ourselves anywhere here. We can't feel ourselves anywhere here. We can't make that connection. It's so hard to make that connection. So my vision is to create space for myself within this institution to work and feel happy and connected to my work. And also to begin to create a space in the university system for Native and Black and other students to feel connected at some level. To feel that there is a space for honesty and a space for our traditions (Fyre VC2:6).

I teach that we have to regain our visioning as a strategy essential to our survival in these systems.

So many of us have so little opportunity to really get in touch with what our life work is. What our real vision or our heart work is. What our connection to the earth is. What our connection to our work is. Many of us end up working day in and day out, but haven't, or don't and can't, and are unable to really take the time to vision. To take the time to, as we used to in ancestral days, go out on the earth and spend time, maybe days, waiting to hear, waiting to find out, waiting for a message that would guide us and lead us in to our future path. So that we could move forward in the future with a certain knowingness that we were on the right path. I think that one of the losses, through acculturation, that we're trying to regain now, and that we have to seriously work to regain, is the power of vision! Is the power of visioning. To not get so caught up, and I do this myself, caught up, bogged down, oppressed, beat up, by everything that's going on in our day to day (Fyre VC2:7).

Liz, a Black participant, acknowledged the loss of visions as a political act.

When I think of visions I think of how easy it is to be robbed of our visions; as a Black woman, as people of First Nations, or Native culture, or even as a woman, that we are robbed at birth of our visions! Or that we are denied access to them in some way or another. But most ways it's through living in a white predominant male, patriarchy, racist, sexist, homophobic society. And in that, I think reclaiming our visions is very painful...In taking back what belongs to us, or oneself...we are connecting parts of our sense of who we are, at least I feel I am, that have been robbed or taken away from me. In doing that, that's very powerful. In doing that, I'm stating, I feel, to someone else, that you're not going to get rid of me that easily. That I'm not going to be that disjointed so that you can pick apart every bone or be that parasitic, or the vulture and pick away at the last bit of flesh that I can reclaim as my own. In visioning I think of happier times too! And that I can be visioning by myself or I can be visioning with others like I am today in a Circle, and in that Circle we have that sense of sharing. I have that sense of sharing! And the sense that every territory can be walked on. That every part of one's self can be exposed without having to be judged at all times by other people. I think Circle work allows people to feel connected. And I think in that connectiveness, that we're allowed to be exposed and feel that we can claim back what is taken away from us...I can claim back my own sense of

spirituality that way too. That I am loved and I am capable of being, of giving love, and I am entitled to receive love, if not from anyone else, but from myself. So when I vision I think of all those parts of who I am and loving myself completely (Liz VC1:19).

Students were encouraged to express their visions in the closing entries of their journals. Randi expressed sadness at the closing of the course: *"As class ended tonight, I had a sense of sadness, the most wonderful educational experience in my life thus far is over!" (Randi Apr 7 93-j)*. Unicorn also expressed sadness as well as hopeful visions.

Last night's class was sad because class was over, but not my learning. I plan to attend some classes next term as well (Unicorn Dec 2 93-j).

She noted the positive impacts she saw on White peers and hoped they enact what many say--that they will continue their learning process.

In closing circle it was evident that your teaching methods gave my classmates student access to new knowledge. Although they are at different levels of awareness it is much more than they had before (positive). Your class has triggered a desire, to learn more and/or to take action, in some of my classmates. I have observed this transition from September. I hope they continue their pursuit of awareness and sensitivity with respect to how you have introduced them to cross-cultural issues (Unicorn Dec 2 93-j).

She concluded this entry by expressing the ways in which she found the course "extremely empowering".

Your method of teaching was refreshing to me. I have learned ways of assessing myself and the affects racism has on me. I felt good about who I am and my history and hopefully for the future because I was able to express my learning and processing in non-traditional (white) ways. Extremely empowering (Unicorn Dec 2 93-j).

Cal expressed his observations of last class.

This class was a bit different as several students were absent. The atmosphere was a little different as fellow students were legitimately feeling as though they were going to lose something from their lives. The circles, with the groups each week was an opportunity to try to deal with the immediate frustrations and the racism of the day or week, for me....The class despite my frustrations and expectations turned out to be very good to a great extent this had more to do with the model that was being used (Cal Apr 7 94-j).

He recognized his "personal" growth and visioned for greater focus and balance in his future activist endeavours.

It is obvious that my consciousness and my person have grown a great deal....I will continue to get myself focused and create a greater balance in my life. I need to select my struggles much more carefully, as it is my responsibility to defend the dignity of all peoples and fight the inhumanity of racism (Cal Apr 7 94-j).

Several mainstream students also expressed the sentiment that although the class was over they hoped to continue their learning. Mac was inspired to reflect his visions around the Medicine Wheel.

All that I learn here is just a beginning. It remains with me to continue my own learning to open my own doors, and to see with my own eyes. I feel like I have glimpsed the dawn but want to feel the warmth of the noon day sun. The North, the strength of acting and seeing will be my guide. A guide to new levels of understanding and knowledge which return me to the East and my awareness that my learning is not yet complete (Mac 92-j).

Gela's description of methods planned to continue her learning provided a valuable summary of lessons embedded in the process.

I intend to continue learning about cultures that differ from mine and look forward to learning ways in which to promote the equality and value of all people. I also plan to continue reading books and attending cultural events. As I become more and more culturally aware I would like to educate other white people about the privileges their skin color and status guarantee them. I hope to

continue learning by listening to first voice, I now realize that important issues and experiences are often distorted if they are not presented in first voice (Gela Apr 93-jsum).

A vision can be expressed at its most radical/root/simple level as a "wish". Lena expressed her deepest feelings in this entry..."if I had one wish".

If I had one wish it would be that we could go back in time and change all the wrongs done by white people. I am not going to be like other white people, I am going to change and try to fix and change some of the things that have been done throughout history by the white culture so this kind of horrific abuse does not continue to happen (Lena Jan 16 93-).

Tia's vision/wish was to continue to validate her own experiences, to continue to heal from the scars of oppression.

One of my steps for my healing is writing this on paper and recognizing that it happened to me. The next step that I am working on is being good to myself and validating my experiences. In doing so I am able to get rid of that pouch that I have buried so deeply and have carried on my back for so long (Tia 93-j).

Some participants visioned changes to be made at the School that they helped realize in the following year.

I'm hoping that as a collective group we can make a difference by starting with a students handbook. In this handbook I would like to see an anti-racist statement which the school embraces. I would also like to see a racial harassment policy in place. What is happening at this school really angers me and I believe that we as social workers must start practising what we preach in our code of ethics. For me this is also a way of working through the anger I am presently feeling (Tia 93-j).

Visioning change strategies gives us direction and hope. It is also a creative outlet for the anger which is always present once the many forms of oppression and injustice become more visible. Phil, who realized many and

varied opportunities for action, en-vision-ed a Traditional wish: to *"change things for the next students who are coming in"* (Apr 15 93-t4).

I am also going to write up all my experiences, and encourage others to do the same and find a way of presenting them to the university in a way that will document them, teach staff, and change things for the next students who are coming in.

I want to help to organize a support group for aboriginal students at the School. This will help students who meet with racism to get support and not to feel that they are alone and being personally victimized. It will provide a system of advocacy for students who need to address racism issues without feelings that if they say something there will be a lot of backlash (Phil Apr 15 93-t4).

Phil is wise to recognize that consciousness raising through First Voice about her own lived experiences within the School will require collective validation and support. The Native Support and Action Circle is a vision now enacted. It has now been active in the School for 3 years.

Several participants expressed hopeful visions for the future use of the Model and for their own lives. Some participants found their voices to share their personal life visions in the Circle process.

What I think is my vision of the world, and I think about an egalitarian society, I'm not even used to dreaming about. It's nothing we dreamed about in school. They never asked about our dreams and our visions. You would think that would be the first thing that would be taught so that you would know where you're going with your life (Bea VC1:22).

One Native youth envisioned a future for herself.

Speaking about visions, I'm probably someday, hopefully, going to be a student of Jean's. If I can make it through high school! (laughs) (El VC11).

As Native contributors, we often express visions In-Relation to our families and Communities. These visions are often rooted in our past histories. My opening remarks at one visions Circle illustrates this theme.

I'm hoping, or my vision is, not necessarily in my lifetime, but over time, if we keep working at it, if we keep putting it out, that there will be some change. That there will be some change for our children and our grandchildren. That they can feel hopeful and happy about being Native. And feel really strong about this (Fyre VC1:16).

One Mi'kmaq Elder spoke of her vision, which had become her "lifework".

I had a vision, and I still have that vision, and I believe it was established when I was thirteen. That was the time when I was leaving residential school. When I left that place I said, I hope this place will never exist for any other First Nations people to come to this place again. (sigh) It was a horrible place. I swore when I left that place; I knew I would get in to education, and that was the only way I could fight (Sarah VC2:17).

It is Traditional to express one's Self-In-Relation to one's children, and one's community. Free expressed this wish.

I see visions through my children! I see them still struggling living in their communities with their university degrees. Two of them! I see them giving to the community. I see them going to the schools and speaking and using Talking Circle. And Jean has also inspired that. They are now following the example. They use a rainstick, they use a feather, they use Talking Circles. And through me I encourage them also...This is a gift of our culture. A gift that we hope will help create peace between the societies. (Free VC1:20).

In Traditional form, she expressed connection to community, working over time and across generations as essential to manifesting her visions.

The answer is not in learning and then leaving. The answers are in learning and then building within the community with it. With our learning and standing strong within the

community. That's where I see the change taking place. I don't see a big change in my time, but I'm hoping that the influence of my children doing this work, and my grandchildren standing strong on it, and making that circle of connectiveness - interconnectiveness, bigger, as they go along, by extending their children and their relations and their friends, their non-native friends and supporters, the circles will get bigger and they will get stronger (Free VC1:21).

Free expressed a desire to use Circle in achieving her visions for Native people in the university community.

What I would like to look at, is the idea of Talking Circle giving voice to Native people in being able to speak their experiences of discrimination across the campus, across the University, in the different disciplines. To be able to speak their voice of how they feel themselves being treated and the vision idea of what would they like to see changed to make them feel more comfortable in this very "white" learning environment? I think that's really important for our people. I hope to carry these messages to my community as well (Free VC1:6).

Randi also saw Circle as part of her visionary work in the field of Native mental health.

The vision for me in the Circle certainly is to work on the mental component of our lives. And mental health, to be able to get some control over our own destiny as Native people in Native communities. To say that we aren't going to take it any more. We're going to do what's right for us (Randi VC1:18).

Black participants also expressed community-mindedness in their visioning. Unicorn expressed concern for the youth.

My vision is at present in the initial stages; is to try and do things with my life, my work, everything that I do, and everyone that I'm connected with that will be a role model for the younger people to come. I stress that it is geared mostly to under-represented groups. (3 second pause) In which my main two have always been Black, mainly because I am Black, and Native. (Unicorn VC2:8).

She reflected on her own isolation and need for more contact and support, more allies within the university context.

Even though I feel isolated since coming to Halifax, I'm just learning about those members of the Native communities. My need for knowledge and exposure - is based on working relationships and friendships in school...when you meet someone in situations, things draw you closer. My immediate vision is to work to find new ways to support other people's work in terms of Jean's, with Circle work. And Sarah in her work. Ways of supporting so that we don't feel so isolated when we're in a white environment. No matter what the differences and the struggles are, we need to have allies (Unicorn VC2:8).

Redbird connected the course and the teaching Model with her desire that the social service system will change for future generations.

I just hope that the system changes for the better for everyone. For Native people and everyone that needs it! I always feel apologetic for asking someone for anything, any kind of a favour, help, anything at all. So that's why I don't bother much any more. But for the coming up generations, I hope the system will change, and I hope that you, who took the course, will understand this and treat people with dignity and sympathy and give what they need. This is what I feel (Redbird TC3:3).

Charlotte reflected on her struggles as an activist. She emphasized time, patience and doing together as essential factors to consider.

I see movement happening. It's just hard to be patient. I know that one of my struggles on this particular journey is to come to grips with time. Not to try to do too much too fast all the time. Too many things at once. To just understand that when you're in the version of time that we're all living in at the moment one thing happens and then another thing happens, and then another thing happens, and that's all you can do. (3 second pause) It's very important to take one step and then take the next step, and then take the next step, and understand that that's enough. Understand that lots of other people are doing the same thing. You're not alone (Charlotte VC2:16).

Another White participant expressed similar ideas about the relationship of time, collectivity, and hopefulness by using a gardening metaphor.

I try to be hopeful when dealing with someone who just seems overwhelming...Maybe you're just planting an idea at this point, that really down the road more people will plant this same idea. But I think it is hopeful that change happens in time (Jan TC4:30).

Despite the contradictions, I remain hopeful for the Model.

I guess my biggest effort is trying to write it and still put it out, and get it out there, because I think that there are a lot of people trying to do this work right now for one thing. Cross-cultural issues work, anti-racist work, educational work, and I don't really think there's a lot of real good models for how to do it, and I am very hopeful for my Model. I've seen it work, not only here at the School, but in short workshops around various locations, and I really am hopeful for it as a good Model for other people to use and not just one that works only for myself. That's my hope for my piece of change, is that this Model does get out and get put out in the right sort of way that other people will be able to be inspired from it and try to do their own thing with it (Fyre TC4:4).

The spontaneous praise offered by several contributors to Circles on CCI confirms my will to continue this work. I found these disclosures heart-warming and they helped balance, for me, the turmoil of re-experiencing the contradictory expressions as they had unfolded throughout the course and the Circle process. Participants from the Afro Nova Scotian community expressed the following comments:

The cross-cultural course and the Circle work were one of the ...only things that gave me the strength to continue at the (School). (2 second pause) And then when times are tough, it gives me the courage or continued strength to want to remain to try and do my part (Unicorn VC2:2).

I was in a course with an instructor who validated me as a person, as an equal, not as an inferior. And it...was the first program or course I'd taken in the university setting that I was

finally a person. And I didn't care about the white people there. I didn't care about how they felt. I didn't care about heterosexism. All I cared about for the first time in my life was I was allowed to be me. And...when I thought about that, that in itself brings me much pain. ...As a Black person, an indigenous person from Nova Scotia, and not able to be yourself because you're Black and you're different. And,.. finally I was allowed to...be me, and I thank Jean for that opportunity to...be able to express my thoughts, my pain on racism. How I was able to feel that from a young child and...through all the institutions, and especially...at the (School), which caused me much pain for the very fact that it's supposed to be a helping profession, a profession that is colorless and painless (Hattie TC2:19).

Cindy, a student from another "minority" community expressed her feelings about the course.

I feel good that I took this course in the second term because in September I just came here, I don't feel I settled down, and after I take all the courses that are taught by the white professor, then suddenly I go to this course and I have a very big conscience, when I'm in the class (Cindy TC2:3).

Some White participants were also openly appreciative of the Model.

According to Van,

The Native culture and the Circle and this class is invaluable. Even if people are uncomfortable, that's learning! And that's good, that's great, you need to be uncomfortable in your life (Van TC3:36).

Van spoke at another Circle adding to her early statement.

I learned a lot in this class, and the structure I wouldn't have learned what I did or have been as touched as I was if the class hadn't been structured the way it was. With the Circle and First Voice. First Voice really spoke to me.... You have to hear from people, their experiences, their lives, and to see it, to know it, to feel it. Feel or try to empathize with their situation.... It made me feel instead of just hear! It was a total learning.....For me. For my heart and body (Van TC4:4).

Another White female student, Gracie, had this to say,

I feel very appreciative to Jean for giving me the opportunity of one of the very few kinds of opportunities I would have in an academic setting. If I could do all those courses, go through the pain, join with people, do something constructive, it would be worth a whole lot more than three letters after my name, and a whole bunch of bullshit that goes along with it (Gracie TC2:27).

Community participants were able to share their views at a number of different levels. An Elder commented on direct involvement in the course, and with me, acknowledging the dialectic between Model and identity of teacher:

Just the idea of coming here and introducing part of my culture - this made me proud. And it empowered me and I feel when things are not going right or I feel powerless or helpless, coming to a session like this really empowers me because I firmly believe in it. I didn't before. But as time went on I felt refreshed and new ideas began to surface. And I felt a power because I'm becoming a believer in the ancestral way. And I'm very thankful for that. Introducing some of this concept....it was really challenging. It's just real nice to come here and get revived and charged up again (Sarah VC2:4).

When participants compared what they had noticed when they were in class, and in Circles, with other Models for teaching/learning Cross Cultural Issues, which they had experienced as students, emphasis was placed on the learning from direct interface with community members.

I had cross-cultural issues with another teacher here in the school...And it was quite different. I think it's really special the way it's done now, and I hope it continues. Community input, the community being able to say, have some say to the school, some link open there, so that they can feel comfortable about what's going on at this school. What are we teaching social workers here? How are we teaching social workers to deal with the communities? It's nice for communities to have the input there. I think it's really important (Free TC3:4).

When I took cross-cultural a few years ago, the teacher was a white woman and although at the time I thought it was a pretty

good class, because we were talking about other people, other issues other than ourselves, I realize now that the way it was taught was really ineffective and we were given a big pile of readings about other people, and we very rarely had guest speakers or people from the community. We just basically did our little reading package and sat around and talked about some of the issues and some of the ideas on the readings....I can't believe the difference....I just can't believe what I missed. What everybody else is getting the chance to experience and I'll regret it if they are talking, in any negative manners or not realizing the value of what they're having because I can't believe how much I would have liked to have had that experience (Sis TC3:1).

My vision was also reinforced by participants who desired a longer course.

Cross-cultural can be a very affirming place to people who are silenced elsewhere. I think cross-cultural should be lengthened to a year; because looking at Black, Acadian, and Native experiences, one semester isn't enough for that! But people are also saying, well, let's do something on deaf culture...on gay and lesbians...on seniors, and issues around AIDS, and it's...EXPLODING, and it needs to!! But it needs a year for that! (Kate TC1:2).

When I finished the course, I was just ready to learn more. I had just come to the point where I got started with the questions more in depth. There was just, more and more, it went on. And, I was just ready. Then it was up to me to try to find another place for that, and it would be nice if the course was longer (Vada TC2:36).

Phil, and others, expressed a desire for continued Circle work after the project.

Hopefully when this is finished it would be nice to continue our Saturday morning traditions (laugh) in spite of having finished this particular project. It would be really interesting if we could have a Talking Circle every so often so that people who wanted to participate through the project would still be able to have a Healing Circle (Phil TC3:15).

Through this work, in class and the research, I remain convinced that a revolutionized world will not "come into existence in a linear way, as the result of a single-minded drive, but in a cyclic, circular way, working in all dimensions of a culture, moving from one position to another, not in reaction but in interaction with other forces" (French, in Gould, 1987: 18). The movement from linear models to acknowledgment of the strength of the interconnectedness of the Circle is truly a revolutionary position, one that guides the development of my pedagogy, my research and my vision for the future. I hope that my work contributes to the vision expressed by hooks: "I wish to help make a world where our work will be taken seriously, given appreciation, and acclaimed, a world in which such work will be seen as necessary and significant"(1988). It is to the attainment of this vision that I contribute this work.

All my relations, ho.

EPILOGUE: ENTRY INTO THE CANON

In order to put forward successfully an analysis based on Aboriginal epistemology and pedagogy, it is necessary to interrogate the process by which new paradigms gain entry into the Western canon. Due to the current Westernization of the North American context and my location as "outsider-within" (Collins, 1991) the established canon, this text was evolved as more ethnographic than "scientific"--as a study of beliefs rather than an inquiry into the "truth" of ideas.

In this epilogue I bring your attention to a critical issue which directly impacts on the visions shared about the future of the Model-In-Use: what is the process whereby a new belief, theory or model is **validated** as a "reasonable idea"? Blaut (1993) outlines three distinct procedures involved in the "licensing" process: compatibility, verifiability, and conformality.

IS IT REASONABLE?

Compatibility reflects the basic and common relationship that all belief systems are interrelated to all other beliefs in the system. According to Blaut (1993),

The judgment of compatibility...is the outcome of an important social process...when some new hypothesis is proposed within a belief holding group...One of the most crucial tests it must pass is that of compatibility with existing beliefs....In ordinary language, "it seems reasonable"....'reasonableness' is that form of the relation of compatibility which allows the most absurdly unreasonable ideas to pass for well-founded scientific argument (35)

For example, to some it may not seem "reasonable" to propose, given ingrained notions of historical progression, and inscribed memories of the "proud, beautiful and 'vanishing' Indian" (Clifford, 1988: 284), that the ancestral

beliefs being revitalized now in the post-modern are believed to be "part of a continuum of Native American culture and metaphysical existed that has persisted for thousands of years with no loss of authenticity" (Young Man, 1992: 81). Understanding the reasonableness of this and other arguments from the Native perspective is, according to Blaut's (1993) analysis, more a matter of tracing the compatibility of our beliefs with Western ones, rather than proving by "fact". Yet, verification is said to be critical to acceptance of ideas into the canon.

CAN IT BE VERIFIED?

Verification is testing the belief to see whether it fits the facts and entails a search for evidence that supports or contradicts the new hypothesis. "The process is never complete: everyone, of every culture and community, has to be satisfied with partial confirmation (and disconfirmation) of empirical beliefs" (Blaut, 1993: 36). Strong verification is nearly impossible in the social sciences, so a judgment of compatibility is always rendered--if not on the belief then on the person proposing it. "The words and procedures used in verification, the criteria on which a test is deemed adequate, and much more besides, are drawn from the stock of existing beliefs, and the test of a candidate belief is therefore only partly a matter of direct confrontation with new evidence" (Blaut, 1993: 37). According to Clifford (1988), the notion of evidence is bound by a "literalist epistemology", it has "to exist or not exist as an objective documentary fact" (340). Yet, what is most central to Aboriginal and many other cultures' existence was never written: "the surviving facts are largely the records of missionaries, government agents, outsiders" (Clifford, 1988: 340). These "facts" are taken as verified "truth". Understanding this, it is necessary to recognize that it is very difficult to advance analysis that relies on an alternative set of beliefs and on a rearticulation of the commonly understood version of the "facts". The

rigour to which new beliefs are interrogated for verifiability is connected to both compatibility and conformality.

DOES IT CONFORM (TO THE INTERESTS OF THE ELITE)?

"Conformality", Blaut (1993) proposes, reflects the interrelation between beliefs (things asserted to be true and not true about the world) and values (things to be preferred or not, agendas, interests). Statements do not ordinarily become validated beliefs if they do not conform to the values, and therefore the interests, of the group" (38). While the notion that beliefs are culture-bound is a common one, the proposition is not generally applied to the belief systems of Western scholars. He argues strongly that "our world-scale models, and many of our specific theories and factual truisms, are accepted mainly--and in some cases only--because of their conformality to the values of the European elites; that this has been the case since the beginning of the nineteenth century, and is true today" (39).

The way this influence is exerted was evident in colonial days, when nobody but the ruling class had the opportunity to develop ideas for publication, lecturing, and in policy formulation. "Conformality, in those times and places, was accomplished largely through the social vetting process by which only those people who adhered to the dominant belief system were in a good position to tender hypothesis as candidate beliefs" (Blaut, 1993: 39).

Fox-Genovese (1991) confirms Blaut's analysis of the elitism which underlies conformality within the canon.

Elite culture did not express the intentions, feelings, or perceptions of labouring people and rarely those of women, even elite women. Especially from the Renaissance on, elite culture tended to generalize from the experience of a very small group of men who it identified with humanity, or "man"....It also exercised a powerful hegemony. Since those who developed it spoke in the name of

power, progress, and increasingly, rationalism, it commanded emulation or excited envy merely by virtue of that power....The canon, or the power to speak in the name of collectivity, results from social and gender relations and struggles, not from nature. Those who fashioned our collective elite tradition were the victors of history. Their ability to write as authorities has derived from their social and political position, not so much as individuals but as members of a gender, a class, a race (194).

The way conformality is exerted is more complex, but still evident in our society today. According to Blaut (1993):

We can simply take note of the background of most professors (very few of whom are the offspring of poor or minority families), the reward structure in universities and consultancies, and other elements that jointly produce this result: few professional social scientists **want** to propose candidate beliefs which do not conform. This explains why, in spite of the most rigorous adherence to scientific methods and scholarly canons, our theories remain, to a large degree, conformal (40).

The very processes of inquiry in place to generate "new" knowledge, are inherently weighed in favour of retaining the status quo. Blaut (1993) continues:

There is simply no way that a scholar, once installed in the profession, can prevent conformal values from creeping into his or her work....One theory seems 'reasonable', or plausible, because it is compatible with another, accepted theory, although no explicit chain of connection exists: most links in the chain are buried in the realm of implicit belief. Finally it seems 'reasonable' to seek verification for a hypothesis with certain observations and not with others (40).

In summarizing, the validation proceeds by subjecting any candidate beliefs to three tests: compatibility, verifiability, and value conformality, all of which are grounded in Eurocentric beliefs. As Blaut (1993) states, "[i]t is most unusual for a new hypothesis or theory to become accepted as a belief if it contradicts the corpus of accepted beliefs in its field" (40). Shall I stop now and decide, as Aboriginal epistemology and pedagogy are not within the currently

acceptable belief system, that this thesis cannot be validated as knowledge? Blaut (1993) gives me some hope: "But it is always the case that society and its elite needs to be supplied with answers to pressing problems confronting them. So there is an important countercurrent. New hypothesis that display a touch of the novel and hold some possibility of solving an already recognized problem are encouraged, indeed rewarded. They must be compatible, but not **completely so**" (40).

While there are dangers inherent in proposing a view of history, culture, and pedagogy that may "contradict the corpus of accepted beliefs in its field" (Blaut 1993: 46), Aboriginal/White relations remain a pressing issue. Cross cultural relations locally, nationally, and globally are a highly sensitive issue for educators, many of whom are reaching for alternative models. This produces a countercurrent to the backlash reaped from challenging the status quo. It is to this audience that I send this dissertation, to those who are ready to hear the message, because they recognize their educative philosophies and pedagogies are not suitable or culturally sensitive to our peoples. Ta-Ho

ENDNOTES

1. Data Codes

All data is emphasized through italics.

Written data is identified by (pseudonym date-source)

Sources include: j (journal); jsum (journal summary); t1 (Task One); t2 (Task Two); t3 (Task Three); t4 (Task Four).

Oral data is identified by (pseudonym circle: page in transcript).

Circles include: Theme Circles: TC1 (Consciousness); TC2 (Context); TC3 (Community); TC4 (Change). Community Circles: CC1, CC2.

Visions Circles: VC1, VC2, VC3.

2. All students who were registered for Cross-Cultural Issues for Social Workers from September 1992 to April 1994 (four sections) were invited by letter (see Appendix C) to participate in the project. Total students invited was 61. Twenty-nine students declared interest and signed consent forms (Appendix D). Twenty-one students re-submitted journals, five of these also re-submitted Tasks. Others participated in Talking Circles.

3. Ten Talking Circles were held. We began all sessions with coffee and bannock while participants gathered. We began Circle with a smudge and Traditional prayer, and concluded with food and chat. Each Circle followed a three round process: opening round for introductions, theme round to process issues, and response round. All Circles were held at Hancock Hall, Coburg Road, Halifax, in the Spring/Summer of 1994.

Opening Circle:	March 26.	14 participants.
Theme Circles:		
Consciousness:	April 26.	6 participants.
Context:	April 30.	8 participants.
Community:	May 14.	9 participants.
Change:	May 28.	10 participants.
Community Circles:		
One:	May 7.	4 participants.
Two:	May 11.	7 participants.
Visions Circles:		
One:	June 11.	10 participants.
Two:	June 15.	7 participants.
Three:	June 18.	9 participants.

All Circles were audiotaped. Upon transcription, it was found that the first two Circles were not audible, equipment was changed, but it was impossible to recover the data.

4. Community members who had been directly involved in the Model through attendance at Cross Cultural Issues class were all invited to take part in the project. They were encouraged to bring friends/family if that increased comfort level. A total of 85 members of Native, Black, White, Acadian, Asian, Gay and

Lesbian Communities were invited by letter to attend one or more of the ten Talking Circles. 31 community members participated. Community participants were asked to sign consent forms at the Circle(s) they attended.

5. Editing Talking Circles to dissect data from the transcription was a difficult process. Much of potential importance to revealing the community building and healing dynamics of Circle work were eliminated in the effort to confidentialize and categorize the participants' talk. Personal information, stories that did not directly relate to the Model, supportive talk by some participants to others in Circle, and certain qualifiers were excluded: "you know", "right", and "like _____ said", community building terms; and "sort of", "like", "I guess", "of course", "I think", "I'd say", "so to me", "it seems", when edited out make speakers appear to express more authority than they might feel. I have gained appreciation and the will to examine more carefully what data analysis process would be more reflective and inclusive of the process as well as the content of Talking Circle as a research tool.

APPENDIX A

Cross Cultural Issues for Social Workers (CCI) Course Outline

This core course provides an opportunity to: critically examine theoretical frameworks for viewing racial, ethnic, and cultural groups in society; broaden student's understanding of those different from themselves, and examine their personal/cultural values as they relate to these groups; explore social work's relationship to oppressed populations; and emphasize strategies being taken to affect personal and social change. Students will be expected to become more aware of their own culture, and open themselves to experiences with peoples of other cultures, in order to be more able to work cross-culturally.

These broad objectives will be approached using an Aboriginal framework to enhance the opportunity for cross-cultural understanding, encouraging students to recognize and appreciate differences in both process and content of the course. Emphasis is placed on Learning through Experience and Voice: FIRST VOICE "Don't talk about what you don't know"; STORYTELLING Transmission of the "gifts of the cultures"; TALKING CIRCLE "Speaking From the Heart/Listening Respectfully"; and TAKING ACTION "Doing More Than Saying" are some of the lessons emphasized through Process.

The Medicine Wheel, a model/philosophy originating in the Plains tradition, promotes the values of Balance, Interconnectedness, and Unity--those things believed by Aboriginal Healers and Elders to be necessary for the health and well-being of peoples. Following this Vision, the course, the readings and the assignments, is grouped into 4 sections, the 4 directions. Beginning in the East, as is the custom, with what we need to KNOW to understand cross-cultural practice, we will follow the path of the Wheel. Exploring in the South, the peoples and their CULTURES; the West their/our RELATIONSHIP to social work; and in the North, STRATEGIES for change.

Whenever possible, "First Voice", the voices of the groups themselves, will be heard: Aboriginal/First Nations/Mi'Maq; Blacks/Black Nova Scotians; Acadians are highlighted as Indigenous to the region. Other populations, Lesbians and Gays, Immigrant peoples, and Disabled consumers may also receive attention, acknowledging the racial/cultural diversity within these "cultural" groups. Interaction with the Communities is highlighted through inviting special guests to class, and tasks involving direct contact with individuals/groups within the School/University/City/Region.

Active involvement of all students is expected, both in class through participatory learning methods and outside of class in terms of reading, journal writing, and involvement in cross-cultural experiences. Students are expected to be READING each week, completing a section of materials every three weeks. The materials have been copied for your convenience, and include a selection of articles, stories and poetry relevant to each section/direction.

PROPOSED COURSE PROGRESSION

Class 1: Introductions, Medicine Wheel Meditation, Outline

Class 2, 3, 4: The East: Knowing/Thinking, the Air

What do we need to **KNOW** to be effective as social workers in cross-cultural practice?

THEORIES of oppression, racism, and White privilege and culture will be explored.

TASK I: Who am I? What is my culture? How am I the Oppressor? How am I the Oppressed? Connect personal experiences to structural realities. **DUE:** February 5.

Class 5, 6, 7: The South: Spirit/Culture, the Fire

Who are the oppressed peoples? What are their histories, their present struggles, their visions for the future? How can we begin to see beyond the pains and struggles of victimization, to the strength and endurance of survival and resistance, the gifts of our cultures. What sustains our peoples in the face of the structures of oppression?

TASK II: Explore a Culture other than White culture. Interview a person/persons; attend an event/events; read a book/books; open yourself to learning opportunities. How do person/s see social issues/daily life? When you compare their views/experiences with yours, how do you describe the differences/similarities? How is this related to culture? Who's will, who's culture guides your work, your life, their work, their lives? **DUE:** February 26

Class 8, 9: The West: Relationships/Emotions, the Water

What has been the relationship of social work to Oppressed populations? What are the feelings/experiences of oppressed persons in relation to the social work profession (as clients, as workers)? This relationship is often acted out through specific fields of practice: child welfare, corrections, addictions, woman abuse, to name a few. How can we recognize when we are acting **ON**, rather than acting **With** someone?

TASK III: Examine a field of practice, either in relation to a specific population: Blacks, First Nations, Acadians, Lesbian and Gay, or "Immigrant" peoples. Or, take a particular issue, and explore it across populations. Explore historical context: what has been done in the past, what is currently being done, and what are the visions for the future, or explore Around the Medicine Wheel. Place emphasis on on how the Community/population serviced views the problem, social work profession, and the "solutions". **DUE** March 18

Class 10, 11: The North: Doing/Acting, the Earth

What are the interventions which can assist oppressed individuals/groups in their struggles for empowerment? Feminist therapy,

applied meditation, ritual action, advocacy, political analysis and political action are all possible tools to be explored. Explore methods developed by the Communities themselves: What are We Doing to help Ourselves, What do We Want Help with? What is a viable/respectful/helpful role for a Social Worker?

TASK IV: Do something about it! Take an action. For example, anti-racist community work: join a local organization and work with them on a project; do an analysis of racism/cultural bias here at the Maritime School/Dalhousie/your agency/community; propose a piece of policy or action to create change...follow up on last years' class projects. A class project could be organized. Open Circle's on various issues have been done to complete this task. We will talk further. Please consult myself or my TA for ideas, or to review strategies before enacting them. **DUE: March 25 at TALKING CIRCLE ON ACTION.**

Class 12: CLOSING CIRCLE AND CROSS CULTURAL FEAST (April 1)
Journals With Journal Review DUE.

EVALUATION:

All students are expected to complete **ALL FOUR TASKS**, and provide **EVIDENCE OF LEARNING GAINED** in each of the four directions. An in-depth **READING** of the materials supplied, as well as in-class participation will be necessary to be able to successfully complete the **TASKS**.

Students are able to choose how they are going to represent their learnings: a well-developed journal entry; an academic paper; a story; an in-class presentation; a "speak-out" in circle time; a piece of art work; a dialogue transcript; a video production.

Each student is encouraged to commit to a different style of representation for **EACH** of these four tasks. Each task is equally weighed at 20 percent. Tasks can be submitted in combined form and group work/pairs is encouraged. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that evidence of their learnings is submitted to the professor for all four tasks. A short paper (3-5 pages), clearly outlining learnings gained in undertaking the Task, is the minimal expectation for any non-written form (ie, presentation, art form).

JOURNALLING:

The remaining 20 percent will be allocated to the **JOURNAL**. Journal writing is expected **WEEKLY**, and to be course specific. That is, specify what impacted on you with respect to your development as a more culturally aware social worker/person: Something you have **READ**; something someone **SAID** in class; a **GUT** feeling; a **MEMORY** from your past; a **RACIST INCIDENT** you observed/experienced; a taste of **POWER/powerlessness**. How were **YOU** affected, Discuss the details in depth. End with, How is this related to your **PAST**, and what do you now know or want to do differently in the

PRESENT/FUTURE?

Journals are expected to reflect:

- a) processing of in class learning,**
- b) highlights of Readings, and**
- c) participation in community learning (racism logs, events, conversations, media etc.)**

All Journals are to be submitted on February 5 for FEEDBACK.

ALL JOURNALS are due on April 1.

Each student is expected to REVIEW their journal. Use the MEDICINE WHEEL to provide a summary of your most important learnings and your plans for continued work. Students will self-assign a letter grade, with rationale for their choice.

APPENDIX B

Cross Cultural Issues for Social Workers (CCI) Reader

CROSS CULTURAL READING LIST 01/96

OVERVIEW

Graveline, M. Jean (1990) "Education for Empowerment: The Medicine Wheel as a Model for Social Work Program Design". Unpublished paper.

Graveline, Fyre Jean (1992) "Lived Experiences of an Aboriginal Feminist Transforming the Curriculum" Canadian Woman Studies 14 (2): 52-56.

THE EAST: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW?

Frye, Marilyn (1983) "Oppression" The Politics of Reality. Crossing Press: New York.

Adair, Margo and Sharon Howell (1989) "The Subjective Side of Power" Plant (ed.) Healing the Wounds. Between the Lines: Toronto.

Tynes, Maxine (1990) "Racism: To Raise the Heart Against" Woman Talking Woman. Pottersfield Press: Lawrencetown Beach, N.S.

Shadd, Adrienne (1991) "Institutionalized Racism and Canadian History: Notes of a Black Canadian". McKague (ed) Racism in Canada. Fifth House: Saskatoon.

Woods, David (1990) "Artifact" and "Elsie Dorrington" in Native Song Pottersfield Press: Lawrencetown Beach, N.S.

Larocque, Emma (1991) "Racism Runs Through Canadian Society" in Racism in Canada.

Joe, Rita (1991) "Prejudice is Something We Can Do Without", Lnu and Indians We're Called. Ragweed: Charlottetown.

Sanchez, Carol Lee (1988) "Sex, Class and Race Intersections: Vision of Women of Color" Brant (ed) A Gathering of Spirit. The Women's Press: Toronto.

Crystos (1991) "I Like to Think" and "Gate #9" Dream On. Press Gang: Vancouver.

Woods, David (1990) "Nova Scotia Reality Song", in Native Song.

Wicker, Diane Goldstein (1986) "Combatting Racism in Practice and in the Classroom" VanDen Bergh and Cooper (eds.) Feminist Visions for Social Work. National Association of Social Workers: Maryland.

Tynes, Maxine (1990) "Racism" in Woman Talking Woman.

McMahon and Allen-Meares (1992) "Is Social Work Racist: A Content Analysis of Recent Literature" Social Work. 37 (6): 533-539.

Katz, Judith (1985) "The Sociopolitical Nature of Counselling". The Counselling Psychologist. 13 (4): 615-624.

McIntosh, Peggy (1990) "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack". Independent School. Winter: 31-36.

Keeshig-Tobias (1992) "The White Man's Burden" McMaster and Martin (eds.) Indigena. Douglas and McIntyre: Vancouver.

Crystos (1988) "White Girl Don't" Not Vanishing. Press Gang: Vancouver.

Barrett, Stanley (1991) "White Supremists and Neo-Fascists: Laboratories for the Analysis of Racism in Wider Society". in Racism in Canada.

Ameil, Barbara (1991) "Through the Lenses of Gender and Ethnicity". McLeans. May: 15.

Gramick, Jeannine (1983) "Homophobia: A New Challenge" Social Work 28: 137-141.

THE SOUTH: THE PEOPLES AND THEIR CULTURES

Kahn, Si (1982) "Culture" Organizing: A Guide fo Grass Roots Leaders. McGraw-Hill: Toronto.

ACADIANS

Comeau, Rev. Leger (1981) "Acadian Life in Nova Scotia" People of Nova Scotia. Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia: Halifax.

Theriault, Leon (1986) "Some Important Features of Contemporary Acadia" Buckner (ed) Teaching Maritime Studies. Acadiensis Press: Fredericton.

Marchand, Joycelyne (1990) "Campaigning for a Creeping Cancer". New Maritimes, Jan/Feb.

Samson, Denise (1986) "Organizing and Influencing" Language and Society. Vol. 17, March.

Calhoun, Sue (1987) "The Issue that Won't Go Away" This Magazine. 20 (6): 8-9.

BLACKS

Best, Carrie (1991) in George Clark (ed) Fire on Water: An Anthology of Black Nova Scotian Writing. Pottersfield Press: Lawrencetown Beach, N.S.

Angelou, Maya (1990) "Our Grandmothers" I Shall Not Be Moved. Random House: Toronto.

Tynes, Maxine (1990) "Africville", "Black Song Nova Scotia", "Africville Spirit", and "Africville is My Name" in Woman Talking Woman.

Woods, David (1990) "Luminere", "For Slaves", "Conversation with Gilbert", and "MaMa" in Native Song.

FIRST NATIONS

Whitehead, Ruth Holmes (1988) "Introduction: The World of the People". Stories from the Six Worlds: MicMac Legends. Nimbus: Halifax.

Joe, Rita (1991) "Rock Drawings of the MicMac", "Kujinaqq" and "Old Stories" in Lnu and Indians We're Called.

Gunn Allen, Paula (1988) "Dykes are like Indians" Living the Spirit. St. Martin's Press.

Crystos (1988) "I Am Not Your Princess" and "Savage Eloquence" in Not Vanishing.

Crystos (1991) "This is Where I Was Born" and "Dear Indian Abby" in Dream On.

Armstrong, Jeannette (1990) "The Disempowerment of First North American Native Peoples and Empowerment Through Their Writing". Gatherings: The En'owkin Journal of First North American Peoples 1(1): 141-147.

GAY/LESBIAN

Tsui, Kitty (1990) "Breaking Silence, Making Waves and Loving Ourselves: The Politics of Coming Out and Coming Home" Jeffner Allen (ed) Lesbian Philosophies and Cultures. State University of New York Press: Albany, N.Y.

Penelope, Julia (1990) "The Lesbian Perspective" in Lesbian Philosophies and Cultures.

THE WEST: OUR/THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIAL WORK

Crystos (1991) "Interview with the Social Worker" in Dream On.

Christensen, Carole (198?) "Cross-cultural Social Work: Fallacies, Fears, and Failings" Intervention, 74.

Dominelli, Lena (1988) "Social Working Black Families" Anti-Racist Social Work. MacMillan Press: London.

Crystos (1991) "We Cut Off Our Hair" in Dream On.

Howse, Yvonne and Harvey Stalwick (1990) "Social Work and the First Nations Movement: Our Children, Our Future" Brian Wharf (ed) Social Work and Social Change in Canada. McClelland and Stewart: Toronto.

Goodluck, Charlotte (1980) "Strength of Caring" Social Casework, October: 519-521.

Laskey, Heather (1988) "Hard to Erase Bitter Memories of School Days Filled With Fear" Atlantic Insight. February: 21-24.

Joe, Rita (1988) "The MicMac Family and Children's Services", "That Damn Alcohol", "I lost My Talk", "Hated Structure: Indian Residential School, Shubenacadie, N.S.", "The Lament of Donald Marshall Jr." and "Forever Poor" Songs of Eskasoni. Ragweed Press: Charlottetown.

Clarke, George (1989) "Reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic and Racism" Atlantic Insight. September: 5-7.

Tynes, Maxine (1990) "A Kid Moves Through the System" in Woman Talking Woman.

Crystos (1988) "Bag Lady" in Not Vanishing.

Brant, Beth (1987) "A Long Story" Pollack and Vaughn (eds) Politics of the Heart. Firebrand Books: Ithaca, N.Y.

Donadello, Gloria (1986) "Integrating the Lesbian/Gay Male Experience in Feminist Practice and Education" in Feminist Visions for Social Work.

Cardea, Caryatis (1990) "Lesbian Revolution and the 50 minute hour" in Lesbian Philosophies and Cultures.

THE NORTH: WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

Joe, Rita (1988) "Canada, the Motherland" in Songs of Eskasoni.

Woods, David (1990) "The Hypocrites and the Poet" in Native Song.

Angelou, Maya (1990) "The Human Family" in I Shall Not Be Moved.

Fulani, Lenora (1988) "All Power to the People! But How?" The Psychopathology of Everyday Racism and Sexism. Harrington Park Press: London.

Collins, Patricia Hill (1990) "The Power of Self-Definition", Black Feminist Thought. Routledge: New York.

Johnson, Eleanor (1983) "Reflections on Black Feminist Therapy" Smith (ed) Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology. Kitchen Table, Women of Color Press: New York.

Clinton, Michele (1983) "For Strong Women" in Home Girls.

Medicine Eagle, Brooke (1991) "Healing Through Ritual Action" Buffalo Woman Comes Singing. Ballantine Books: New York.

Charnley, Kerrie (1990) "Concepts of Anger, Identity and Power and the Vision in the Writings and Voices of First Nations Women" in Gatherings.

Crystos (1991) "She Has a Pain in Her Neck" in Dream On.

Dominelli, Lena (1988) "Campaigning for the Transformation of Social Work: The White Social Worker as an Anti-Racist Advocate", in Anti-Racist Social Work.

(1992) "Recommendations for an Integrated Approach to Antiracism" Developing an Antiracism Action Plan: A Handbook for Workers Working in Service Organizations of Metropolitan Toronto. Women Working with Immigrant Women and Cross Cultural Communication Center: Toronto.

Starhawk (1987) "Resistance and Renewal" Truth or Dare. Harper and Row: San Francisco.

CLOSING

Kahn, Si (1982) "Afterword" in Organizing.

Crystos (1988) "Ceremony for Completing a Poetry Reading" in Not Vanishing.

APPENDIX C

January 18, 1994

RE: STUDYING CROSS CULTURAL ISSUES MODEL

Dear Student Participant,

I am really pleased to invite you to study the teaching/learning processes that we were engaged in together in Cross Cultural Issues For Social Workers. Earlier this fall I proposed the CCI model of curriculum design and classroom process used throughout the course including: First Voice, Circle, Circle Talk, Storytelling, and Doing More than Saying, along with the anti-racist, culturally diverse content materials and experiential tasks, as a topic of study for my PhD thesis in Education. The purpose is to determine the extent to which the Aboriginal (feminist, anti-racist) pedagogies and philosophies introduced have had an impact on participants, in-relation to themselves, their lives, and their work. The research process, I hope, will be valuable to you in better understanding your own learning process, to me in reflecting on my teaching strategies, and in the development of a model for use by others working in social work, anti-racism, in activism and education.

I am proposing a qualitative, dialogic process, beginning with a review of student's journal/task submissions for themes to be used in a Talking Circle dialogue process. Certain themes, following the Directions of the Medicine Wheel, are of particular interest: Consciousness, Context, Community, Change, and Visions. How these emerged and were submerged in the classroom, in our lives, in our work places, will be the focus. Attached is my mini-proposal that more clearly outlines the questions and the process that I am requesting your involvement in. In general terms, the process has several components; **YOU CAN CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE IN PART OR ALL OF THE PROCESS**, depending on your personal availability and interest.

YOU MAY CHOOSE TO:

1. submit your journals/tasks for thematic review (students)

AND/OR

2. participate in Opening Circle

AND/OR

3. participate in one or all of the Circles on CCI. (Six circles held at 2-3 week intervals)

If you are interested in participating, or in further information/conversation, please contact me, by phone 494-1187 (office) 454-8816 (home), or by letter or fax (494-6709) to the Maritime School of Social Work. I have Monday and Wednesday AM office hours at Hancock Hall, Room 20.

To facilitate accurate transmission of data, permission of the participants to audiotape the Circles will be sought. Individual dialogues for clarification purposes may be requested by participants, or research (team)** , as work progresses. More formal permission for use of writings/voice quotes will be sought in written form at a later date. Participants will have final editorial say on any quotes/material of theirs used in the thesis. All material collected will remain confidential, all sources unnamed, unless the participant chooses to be named. Participation is voluntary, and all participants have the right to withdraw at any time. Although supported by the Maritime School of Social Work (MSSW), this project is independent of MSSW; your decision to participate or not to participate will not in any way affect your existing/potential relationship to MSSW.

I look forward to hearing from you soon, and will be informing you about the dates for the Circles. If you have preference for dates or some that are impossible, please advise. I was contemplating Friday or Saturday AM or PM, beginning late February, early March.

Sincerely,

Jean Graveline

**Should funding application be successful, Sheila Lucas (BSW, MSW), member of the Black Nova Scotian Community, and my TA for the past two years will be assisting in data collection and analysis of journals/tasks and Circles on CCI.

APPENDIX D

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM
CCI REVISITED: A PHD. THESIS PROJECT
JEAN GRAVELINE, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

I, _____, have read the information provided in the letter and mini-proposal, understand what is involved, and that my participation is voluntary.

I have been assured that I have the right to anonymity, and that information derived through the research process will be held as confidential (i.e., unnamed), unless I agree to waive this protection.

I know I can withdraw from the study at any time, may refuse to speak on certain topics, to answer certain questions, or to have particular writing/voice quotes used as thesis material. I understand I will be asked to give written consent for the writings/voice quotes actually used in the thesis.

I DO/ DO NOT (circle one) agree to the audio-taping of the sessions in which I am involved.

Participant's Signature

Date

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