

PIMATISIWIN:
INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS,
OUR TIME HAS COME

A Dissertation Submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Interdisciplinary Studies
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

By

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ABSTRACT

This naturalistic inquiry explored the contributions of Indigenous Knowledge to higher learning with the intention of improving life for all Indigenous Peoples. An interdisciplinary approach was used to examine the participation of Indigenous Peoples through the disciplines of native studies, education, and health. Critical theory was used by including feminists of color, post colonialists and other scholars who examine cultural, political and intellectual domination as a means of social control.

Indigenous peoples represent approximately seven percent of the world's population. They have developed knowledges that reflect their circumstances, environments and challenges and that meet the needs of peoples who for the most part have not been industrialized. Indigenous knowledges reflect the many aspects of life that make up community comprising agriculture, arts, medicines, architecture, weather and other aspects of culture such as stories, music, dance and languages. Indigenous scholars and community-based groups are integrating their knowledge into higher learning and within other educational centers. This dissertation contains our stories.

Storytelling was a central research tool throughout this dissertation employed to gather stories from the regions of South Africa, the Pacific, and North America who have long been active in the field of education as well as community activism. Using respectful

research that paralleled the ideals of participatory action research, the overarching research question originated from the communities of the Indigenous participants. Through a polyphonic text that presents multiple voices of participants, meanings garnered through conversational interviews, focused participant observation are juxtaposed with meaning-making by the storytelling of the researcher. Critical theory problematized and critically analyzed insights into Indigenous participation within the academic community.

The findings for this study suggest the range of work that is to be done and as well it shares stories of how this is being undertaken in several regions in our extended global community.

The participants were interested and encouraged to participate collaboratively in the production of a document which asked how community based and higher learning institutes could contribute to the quality of life for Indigenous peoples and entire communities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The family members, friends and colleagues who supported me through this educational adventure I thank you all. There are several individuals whose support and effort requires specific acknowledgement.

Dr. Linda Wason-Ellam, College of Education, whose dedication to detail and excellence pushed me to finish. Your dedication to your students goes beyond the call of duty and is very much appreciated.

Dr. Janet Smylie, and Dr. Lewis Mehl-Madrona, College of Medicine; Dr. Cecil King, Professor Emeritus, Education, committee members, provided sensitive and thoughtful suggestions. Thank you also to Dr. Murray Fulton, Agricultural Economics, Committee Chair.

My immediate family, Len and Mika, and my extended family, thank you for your patience, understanding and support during the writing of this project. Your work has provided the inspiration to this dissertation. To my huge extended family and my community in Canada and throughout the globe, thank you for your work, which provided inspiration and hope for me, you are leading the way. Special thanks to my two colleagues in the field, Dr. Catherine Odora Hoppers, Ralph Regenvanu, and many more

unnamed whose stories appear in these pages, I thank you for your inspirational work and your commitment to social change and the betterment of humankind.

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CHAPTER ONE

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE: MULTIPLE APPROACHES

As a First Nations Swampy Cree woman,¹ I am proud of my heritage. My ancestral lands were located in the boreal landscape of northern Saskatchewan. The region was once an intact forest ecosystem that contained an undulating patchwork of slow-growing evergreen forests. It still shares weathered outcrops of granite and innumerable lakes, marshes, bogs, and other wetlands that are typically found along the Canadian Shield. This magnificent shield sweeps in a broad arc through northern Alberta and Saskatchewan. I first became interested in Indigenous Knowledge Systems because of my roots in this land-based community. As a second-generation urban First Nations person, it was the self-sufficiency and knowledge of northern and land-based communities that intrigued me. Working in the North in the mid-1970s, I witnessed a transformation. Communities, which were self-sufficient, were being negatively impacted by development in the form of clear-cuts, forestry and mining. In 1967, the Squaw Rapids Dam, later named the E.B. Campbell dam, was completed. The disruption of the natural water flow had a negative impact on the area's natural resources. Economically, it was catastrophic for those who earned their livelihood as fishers and trappers.

¹ Throughout this paper, I use the terminology, Indigenous peoples, Aboriginal peoples, as well as First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples sometime interchangeably. The latter are legal terminologies that have been given by the government of Canada.

Over time, many people were forced to move to cities in search of work or languish with destroyed local economies and ways of life. I noticed the commonality of Western developmental impact on the majority of Indigenous communities in my province and throughout Canada.

During the early 1970s, my studies at Trent University afforded me another opportunity to hear first hand how the Cree were being displaced, both geographically and culturally, by the construction of large dams in the James Bay area of Quebec. In my undergraduate classes, I was developing a critical consciousness of the oppression of Indigenous peoples in other parts of the world. The concept of *conscientization*, or critical awareness, is foundational to the work of Paulo Freire (1970). Critical awareness is made possible through praxis, which Freire defines as "...reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p.33). He connects reflection and action together as part of the process in the recognition and transformation of social, economic, and political contradictions. The readings of Paulo Freire (1970) resonate with the critical rereading of my people in Saskatchewan, whose quality of life and living was substandard. In terms of our Western schooling, we inherited a colonial system that did not critique our circumstances, pose solutions to community problems or consider our organic Indigenous experience. As an Indigenous person, I learned that critical consciousness allows us to question the nature of our historical and social situation and to read the world with the goal of acting as subjects in the creation of our own democratic society. I became a voracious reader of

Paulo Freire; his methodologies spoke to me in ways that none of my formal schooling did. I was intrigued by the educational transformation he described in places like Guinea Bissau and Brazil. Later I would read works by Henry Giroux (1983), a disciple of Freire, who used the terminology radical pedagogy: "It's spirit is rooted in an aversion to all forms of domination, and its challenge centers around the need to develop modes of critique fashioned in a theoretical discourse that mediates the possibility for social action and emancipatory transformation". (p.2) Later, I would read Antonio Gramsci (1971) who writings contextualized my situation and that of my community within a broader analysis, one that explained hegemony and cultural domination.

My activism results from grappling with both intellectual reflection and my immediate personal experience. In academic institutions, I found that legitimated discourses of power privilege what books may be read by students, validate what instructional methods may be utilized, and authorize what belief systems and views of achievement may be taught. In so doing, power discourses undermine the cultural interpretations of language establishing one correct reading that implants a particular hegemonic message into the consciousness of Indigenous readers. As I look back at the process of becoming a professor and researcher, questions about how gains are made in the world of academia have challenged me. Through this process, I gained a new understanding of the relationship of power to knowledge, particularly concerning those who are privileged and oppress and those who are powerless. Initial efforts involved negotiating and wresting power away from public education agencies to establish Indigenous schools in Winnipeg

(Children of the Earth High School) and Saskatoon (Joe Duquette High School). These alternative schools inspired thriving community-based programs that presently serve the educational, cultural and spiritual needs of urban Aboriginal students. Alternative schools verified the possibility of improving the academic learning of students from Indigenous backgrounds through the use of culturally responsive instructional theory, that is, instruction reflecting the values and practices similar to their traditional roots.

I approached this activism in my intellectual life as theory in the making--unfinished and open-ended--as I pondered what differences could be made in education. I began contemplating with a historical glance to those who have theorized and pondered the dilemmas of Indigenous intellectual life. As I reread my own history, stories of my own family's suffering emerged. My father, Henry McKay Settee, a trapper and hunter, served in the First World War and was subsequently deemed "civilized" after the war. Under the Indian Act, he was forced to move from his reserve community. This statute was the rule of law for people who gave service during the war. The act of removing and disenfranchising people from their communities was a very clear statement that Indigenous communities—and all they represented—were devalued. Henry McKay Settee's removal from his home community meant more than simply a geographical removal. It was a symbolic removal of a man and his family from his spiritual and physical ties to the land, and it was the removal of the knowledge and way of life embodied in that land. He died in urban poverty as a victim of the system of that had marginalized him, a man who had served his country like many others. This dissertation

is my contribution to telling Henry McKay Settee's important story. Throughout, I will use the stories of similar people displaced from the land, whose lives have been forever transformed by circumstances and disruptions beyond their control. Their stories have important contributions to make in understanding Indigenous knowledge. The layered truths embedded in their stories are essential to cultural continuity (King, 2003). It is my hope and that of my colleagues that our stories can have a greater influence in the educational process and that they be recognized as legitimate knowledge. Stories have taught Indigenous peoples how to conduct themselves in a good way for the good of the community. In so doing, I utilize storytelling in my dissertation as a methodology to represent the essence of what it is to be an Indigenous person and to focus on our layers of knowledge. My beliefs are that these stories, and many others yet unheard, must transform the academy; and, in the spirit of Freire, they will lead to social and cultural transformation as well as to our own survival (1970).

Extensive travels since the late 1970s demonstrate that, at present, Indigenous people worldwide share common beliefs, practices, and similarities of knowledge including the experience of the tension of Western development. In many cases, the issues of land, power, disenfranchisement, and even genocide of Indigenous peoples keep surfacing. In the Indigenous worldview, the concept of power takes on a different meaning particularly in relation to the natural world as Armstrong states:

It seems to go back to the idea that human beings, and specifically human beings from the colonizing culture, are elevated above the rest of the natural world and that they have a prior right to use everything around them. It is a fundamental split in ideology that requires aggression. It advocates aggression as a principle of power and achievement. It is an ideology that advocates accumulation as a part of

power and is central to the idea that the measurement of a person's worth is their economic and oppressive power. The consequences of that ideology, both internally and externally to all life forms, is very frightening. (Armstrong in Jensen, 2002, p.287)

The destruction of the natural environment has had a great impact on the knowledge base of Indigenous peoples. It has only been by reconnecting to their traditional lands through the restoration of ceremonies and practices that they have begun to heal. The knowledge that has sustained Indigenous communities for millennia has more recently been referred to as *Indigenous Knowledge Systems*. This inherited knowledge included the traditional forms of knowledge developed by parents and other elders in relation to ways of knowing, relationships/codes of conduct, and information that helped in daily living. Personal experience defines an individual's worldview. As a person deeply involved in the cultural, educational and political events in my community, I have expanded my own definition of Indigenous Knowledge to include women's knowledge and other aspects of community knowledge. Throughout my dissertation research, my definition would be enhanced by the knowledge of my extended community of global colleagues who were describing the need to challenge western knowledge and strengthen the Indigenous Knowledge emanating from their communities. It was necessary during my documentation of Indigenous Knowledge systems to develop a critical theoretical framework which would encourage, allow and support those systems.

A central component to what it means to be Indigenous is to have a relationship and close ties to the land and all that lives on the land. That relationship is so deep and tied to

natural laws that many Indigenous peoples have names that are derived from connections to the land, such as *people of the earth* or *people of the land*. When our Indigenous knowledge is under threat, we have no choice but to become activists and identify the goals of activist scholarship/action. This threat is evidenced by the rapid disappearance of Indigenous languages, plant and animal species, and the degradation of Indigenous homelands, which threatens the very survival of Indigenous peoples. Along with the land degradation comes the disappearance of traditional foods resulting in extreme health problems for Indigenous peoples. Peoples' health is linked to the health of the land and the food harvested from that land. For Indigenous peoples, land, food, and health are key components of *pimatisiwin*, from the Cree root word *pimatisi* "to be alive". This situation of extinction and degradation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and what it means in its entirety is something that urgently needs to be analyzed through a critical framework and addressed, "It calls for a discourse that acknowledges as a central concern the categories of history, sociology, and depth psychology" (Giroux, p.2).

There are probably more questions than answers in relation to Indigenous Knowledge definitions. Because I believe that this definition is ever-developing, I have included many questions in my definition. It was also during the 1970s that I became familiar with the writings of Franz Fanon (1963), Eldridge Cleaver (1968), Angela Davis (1974), and Albert Memmi (1974). Advocates for equality and basic human rights like freedom, their writings stress that intellectuals must always remain connected with the struggles on the land and home communities. These writers helped me understand the impact of

racism, cultural and political hegemony, and the domination of peoples of colour and women. Later, I would read bell hooks (1984), Howard Adams (1975), Gloria Anzaldua (1987), and many others whose work were either influenced by or had similar experiences to the writer Antonio Gramsci (1971). Gramsci wrote extensively from his prison cell about the deep layers of state domination over oppressed groups. This domination was so entrenched in all levels of society—including education, literature, church, government, and the legal system—that it impacted every aspect of humanity. He wrote prolifically during a time when he faced personal persecution, which included being jailed for challenging oppressive regimes. Many of the writers Gramsci influenced made the link between class, race, and gender; and they described the deep impact of colonialism, racism, and hegemony. As an Indigenous scholar and a follower of Gramsci, Freire, Giroux and others, I feel the importance of challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge. It is my goal to ensure that Indigenous Knowledge Systems take their rightful place within the academy as legitimate knowledge. As Indigenous scholars, we have an important role that we inherit from our culture. It is also an intellectual role in defining, challenging, and working to eradicate oppression. This is the role of intellectual sovereignty:

Indigenous intellectuals in the United States and Canada are living at the center of the global empire, and we are the best-placed people in the world to counter the ongoing production of imperial attitudes and to defy its pretensions. It is our responsibility to reorient our own values and our ways of being away from cooptation into the imperial system. (Alfred in Mihesuah & Cavender Wilson, 2004, p.97)

CRITICAL THEORY

In the dissertation, I use Critical Theory as a tool of inquiry to illuminate pertinent and complex issues addressing Indigenous Knowledge. I chose Critical Theory as it focuses on the relationships among culture, power, and domination. Critical researchers have argued that culture has to be viewed as a domain of struggle where the production and transmission of knowledge is always a contested process. Dominant cultures employ differing systems of meaning based on the forms of knowledge produced in their cultural domain (Giroux, 1983). I introduce many questions, many of which may not have answers, making the research inquiry both exciting and challenging. In doing this research, it is my hope that this work will open the door to alternative possibilities for my people. Improved educational possibilities may improve other sectors, such as research and development, policy building, and the creation equal opportunities for all who are marginalized.

As a body of knowledge, Indigenous Knowledge, albeit with different names, has gained currency in the last 20 years among researchers and governmental agencies as well as among civil society organizations. I believe it has gained currency because physical and social scientists appreciate the extent of and the usefulness of the knowledge. Traditionally, Indigenous Knowledge Systems promoted practices that were sustainable, community centered, and provided a good life within natural surroundings. Throughout this dissertation, I claim that Indigenous Knowledge also poses a challenge to the dominant forms of development by reflecting concepts of balance, peace and harmony

and critically examining how they can be integrated into formal learning. “In more specific terms, this means developing analyses of schooling that draw upon a critical theory and discourse that interrelate modes of inquiry drawn from a variety of social science disciplines”(Giroux, 1983, p. 3). Historical events, colonization, and hegemonic practices by various governments have undermined Indigenous life. For this reason, all aspects of Indigenous Knowledge, including colonization, need to be critically examined within higher learning whose institutions have “suppressed questions of the relations among power, knowledge and ideology” (p.3). Dakota Elder, Ken Goodwill states that Indigenous Knowledge is valid in its own right and does not need to be validated by other systems (Indigenous Knowledge Conference, 2002). Having the opportunity to appreciate a range of Indigenous Knowledge Systems through a vast network of international colleagues, it becomes important to explore in this dissertation the following research question: *How can Indigenous Knowledge Systems contribute to the quality of life and learning within extended communities and higher learning?*

TRADITIONAL VALUES

Collectivity is central to Indigenous being and the collectivity of Indigenous Knowledge is reflected in many of the ceremonies, teachings, and cultural expressions. Aboriginal people have described Indigenous Knowledge with words, which reflect ancient knowledge for community life, well-being, and sharing of values. In the Cree language this is called *pimatisiwin*. It is taken from the root word *pimatisi*, “to be alive”. Another

core value is *miyo-wichihtowin*, which means “having good relations”. Individually and collectively people have, since time immemorial, been instructed by their teachings to strive and conduct themselves in ways that create positive relationships with our extended community. In many ways the concept of collectivity which is central to Indigenous Knowledge runs counter to the concept of individualism which is promoted by formal schooling systems. The concept of extended community and family is fundamental in Indigenous communities. Aunts, uncles, and grandparents are surrogate parents. The community is an extension of the family and many community members have family ties. This relationship is extended to the animals and the natural environment. These are ones who cannot speak for themselves, but whose existence is essential to human survival. The extended community takes in all relationships, human and nonhuman, and is reflected in our interdependence. My people, the Cree, begin each day by smudging with sage, which helps us to purify our thoughts, actions, and deeds. Smudging insures that our actions will be done with a good heart, a good mind, and gratitude for the gift of living another day. This ritual also reminds us to perform our duties for the betterment of humanity. Reference is made to the concept of all my relations, which means that all of humanity and living things are related and must be cared for by one other. A western capitalist system which promotes educational individualism and moving ahead of fellow human beings undermines what is at the heart of the concept of *wakohtowin*, the betterment of all our relations and our communities.

Ceremonies, such as the Sweat Lodge Ceremony and others, represent Indigenous

Knowledge ways of purifying oneself and renewing commitment to community. The most sacred and important ceremony of plains tribes is the annual Sun Dance that renews the allegiance, loyalty, fidelity, spirituality, and unity of First Nations people. Another value is the important role that hard work had in community; however, some lament that hard work today has slipped by the wayside for some:

When you think of the people of long ago, I guess, that must be the reason why they lived properly, because they kept busy, they kept busy with lots of work. But they did not dislike work, the people liked to work in order to look after them and to earn things for themselves by their sweat. That is what we have largely lost now. Not we alone, it must be like that all over, that this was lost and that people are only going to try the easy way to make money on which to live. But when we think about it sometimes, "I wonder if one day when there is no grain growing, I wonder if we will be able to eat money?"-that is what I usually say, some people put too much emphasis on money. (Ahenakew, 1987, p.99)

WAKOHTOWIN

For my people, the Cree, relationship values are embedded in natural laws called *wakohtowin*. Our symbol of the circle reflects the equality of all people and their capability to care for, nurture, protect, and heal the people and the land. Eleven-year-old Aliya Shanti writes:

The trees speak,
But their language is hidden deep inside their bark,
They must trust us,
Before they reveal it.
The wind speaks,
But in so many different languages
That is hard to pick one out.
The stars speak,
But their fiery flares
Make us afraid to know what they say.
All things in the universe have a language

It is not they who must learn to speak,
It is we who must learn to listen. (in Cox & Albert, 2003, p.180)

In the past, living and survival was an art that required skills, knowledge, and values to integrate many spheres. Some knowledge is timeless, such as, the knowledge that gives communities the values and roles for worthy human behaviour. Some values—such as sharing, caring for, and interdependence with fellow human beings and the environment— have not changed, but a capitalist society driven by monetary interests now creates tension in present human interactions. Cree Elder Emma Minde recalls:

That is what the Whites call cooperation, I will say it in English again, sharing as they call it, that is what Crees used to do long ago. When they had a surplus of something, they used to give it to one another. This also is not well understood, I guess, as money is the general obsession now and you only try to make money from everything. (Ahenakew, 1987, p. 89)

In the Cree teachings, essential human values are represented by the thirteen poles of the tipi: respect, humility, happiness, love, faith, kinship, obedience, cleanliness, thankfulness, sharing, strength, hope, and good child rearing (Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre poster). The top binding that holds the tipi together represents relationships, and the 14 pins keeping the tipi canvass intact represents the family. One value that is common to all Indigenous peoples is the value of working for the betterment of the community, which means putting community before individual gain. Mohawks refer to this as *Rotinohshonni Kaienerekowa*, or “the Great Law of Peace”. Its philosophy is simple and promotes unity among individuals, nations, families, and clans while upholding the diversity of Indigenous cultures.

According to Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred, who quotes the *Kaienerekowa*, the Great

Law of Peace:

You shall be a good person, and you shall be kind to all of the people, not differentiating among them, the people who are wealthy, and the poor ones, and the good natured ones, and the evil ones who sin readily; all of them you shall treat kindly, and you shall not differentiate among them. As to your own fireside, never consider only yourself, you must always remember them, the old people, and the young people, and the children, and those still in the earth, yet unborn, and always you will take into account everyone's well-being, that of the on-going families, so that they may continue to survive, your grandchildren. (Alfred, 1999, p. 97)

Similarly, Athabascan values and world views resemble those of the Cree, by having a focus on self-sufficiency, hard work, care and provision for the family, good family relations, unity, humor, honesty, fairness, and love for children. Athabascan values also include sharing, caring, village cooperation, responsibility to village, respect for elders and others, and knowledge. Wisdom from life experiences, respect for the land, respect for nature, practice of traditions, honoring ancestors and spirituality round out the world view of Athabascans (Alaska Native Knowledge Network poster, no date). In times of conflict, or when mistakes were made, the emphasis within the Indigenous world was on reconciliation, healing, and fitting back in, rather than on punishment and isolation:

Even when a person had made mistakes in life, there were people that would counsel them. There was a process of reconciliation. It was done through the oral language. It was done through the elders. There they talked about that person getting back into a balanced life and were made aware of how (to) focus (on) what was important in life. And if that person had listened and took the appropriate guidance from those kinds of people and they would get back into a

balance and be able to help them, to learn from these things. (Cardinal & Hildebrandt, 2000, p.16)

Indigenous Knowledge Systems do not encompass a singular body of knowledge but reflect many layers of being, knowing, and methods of expression. Indigenous Knowledge Systems include knowledge about economics, politics, music, leadership, transportation, building, astronomy, women's unique contributions, art, literature/stories, humour, and community values. Expressions of Indigenous Knowledge Systems are interconnected; hence, Indigenous science knowledge is not separate from Indigenous artistic knowledge. Songs and legends that reflect Indigenous Knowledge strengthen community and predate recorded history. Anzaldua (1999) states, “In the ethno-poetics and performance of the shaman, my people, the Indians, did not split the artistic from the functional, the sacred from the secular, arts from everyday life” (p.88). The exquisite silver grey birch bark basket that has been constructed and dyed embodies a knowledge of science, including engineering for strength and botanical knowledge of plant dyes. Similarly, the ancient pot, made from the clays of the Missinipe River in northern Saskatchewan, is one that has the scientific basis to endure the most extreme heat and cold, and it is lovely to behold. That being said, Indigenous Knowledge Systems are not something frozen in time.

Indigenous Knowledge is dynamic and continually adapting to reflect the dramatic changes occurring within Indigenous communities today. Some communities are in a state of disruption; they are devastated by Western encroachment. Communities—which

have been exploited for their natural wealth and beauty with activities like mining, deforestation, dams and tourism—are now the least productive for hunting and gathering societies whose knowledge depended on these natural resources. I have identified these conditions and believe they must be considered when engendering a critical role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. My research demonstrates that conditions in northern Saskatchewan have parallels in South Africa, Vanuatu, and other regions of the world. Worldwide, land is central to Indigenous being and contains the power to heal humanity. Manulani Meyer (2004) of Hawaii notes:

We will heal and we will be educated by aina (land). This is key. We will, once again, be “fed” by the tides, rains and stories of a place and people made buoyant because this is how culture survives. This is how children learn best. This is how we will survive. We will survive because excellence of being is found in the practice of aloha and that, believe it or not, is an epistemological point. So, let us shape our school lessons by this ideal and let us shape our lives accordingly.

(p. 57)

These values and world views are currently under threat for multiple reasons. The very communities and homelands that gave life to these values and worldviews are being undermined. Historical events such as colonialism, imposed dominant systems of governance, economics, and schooling have created near genocide conditions. The history of residential schools, which gravely impacted cultural practices and created human rights abuses, nearly eradicated Indigenous languages and cultures. Simply put colonialism and hegemony make it virtually impossible for Indigenous cultures, including their worldview and values, to endure. Indigenous peoples' way of life and values are under threat by many layers of dominant forces represented by mainstream

culture, economics, and systems of governance. Our communities have historically provided the raw materials for the creation of wealth elsewhere, leaving many of our communities underdeveloped, disrupted, and marginalized. My father, Henry McKay Settee, was an unfortunate example of this disruption. If we are to survive as Indigenous peoples it will mean being able to analyze and challenge these all-encompassing, dominant forces. We are not the only people impacted by forces of domination, and everyday the numbers grow. We can take lessons from, and share strategies with, similarly impacted groups. Our history and our cultures join the list of global peoples global who have been oppressed by Western development and practices that marginalize and claim more victims among once rich cultures. To counteract the impact and combat oppression and affect a rebirth, we can create a deeper understanding and hone our skills for survival. Once again we can rebuild strong nations by sharing our stories that reflect our culture and current realities. Ours is an uphill battle because we work within the larger framework of educational traditionalism that ignores the problem choosing to focus on individualism or serving dominant masters.

In both conservative and liberal versions of schooling, theory has been firmly entrenched in the logic of technocratic rationality and has been anchored in a discourse that finds its quintessential expression in the attempt to find universal principals of education that are rooted in the ethos of instrumentalism or self-serving individualism. (Giroux, 1983, p.3)

In keeping with Indigenous Knowledge, I use storytelling to honour our ancestral ways. I also use stories to hear what the people on the land have to say, stories left out of mainstream discourse. Stories tell of the world's beginning, its transformation to its

present state, and the importance of maintaining a balance between animals and humans, so that the world can be safe for all. In a colonized society storytelling reminds us of our histories and our interconnectedness:

The lessons taught by so many Native American stories, both traditional and contemporary, have never been more needed in our classrooms. The stories remember histories that other have forgotten. They teach us again the importance of community and generosity, the importance of the individual, and the balancing virtues of courage and compassion, self-respect and self-control. The strength of women, the true values of family, the recognition that we human beings are not alone in the world but part of a complex and interdependent web of life are themes easily found-not once, but again and again. (Bruhac, 1998, p. ix)

Stories have a dynamism which can ensure the survival and rebirth of Indigenous nations, “in the development of worthy ideas, prophecies for a future in which we continue as tribal peoples who maintain the legacies of the past and a sense of optimism”(Cook-Lynn in Mihesuah, 1998, p. 134).

OTHER INTERPRETATIONS OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

As Indigenous Knowledge Systems gains currency, non-Indigenous organizations have developed their own definitions and purposes. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) uses the following definition:

Indigenous knowledge represents the accumulated experience, wisdom and know-how unique to cultures, societies, and or communities of people, living in an intimate relationship of balance and harmony with their local environments. These cultures have roots that extend into history beyond the advent of colonialism. They stand apart as distinctive bodies of knowledge, which have evolved over many generations within their particular ecosystem, and define the

social and natural relationships with those environments. They are based within their own philosophical and cognitive system. In this way serve as the basis for community-level decision making in areas pertaining to governance, food security, human and animal health, childhood development and education, natural resource management and other vital socio-economic activities. Some see Indigenous Knowledge as a last hope in implementation of a sustainable future. (Draft Policy Document on “Indigenous Knowledge & Sustainable Development”. CIDA, September, 2002, p. 3)

The CIDA is developing Indigenous Knowledge policies in order to respond to requests from the international Indigenous people’s quest for political and cultural justice. The CIDA clearly defines Indigenous Knowledge, but it does not take it a step further to identify threats to this knowledge or the forces of domination that undermine it.

My work in researching Indigenous Knowledge Systems has taken me to South Africa and other regions of the world to examine the universality of such systems. This international experience, which has spanned over three decades, has enhanced my definition of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and added a new dimension to my extended community. My extended community has grown to include colleagues in the academy in Canada and other parts of the globe in Africa, Vanuatu, and Hawaii, adding people that I share no cultural ties with. The work that I do in the academy has the potential to influence the direction of formal education. It is for this reason that I desire to share my Indigenous knowledge with my extended academic community through this dissertation and my professional work.

In South Africa, Indigenous scholars have defined Indigenous Knowledge Systems as local knowledge that is unique to a culture or society and is outside the formal educational system. Indigenous Knowledge Systems allow communities to survive and are the basis for decision making in health, agriculture, food preparation, natural resource management, and education. In keeping with traditional practices, communities rather than individuals hold Indigenous Knowledge. It is embedded in community practices, rituals and relationships making it difficult to codify. Indigenous Knowledge is part of everyday life (Snyman, SCECSAL Editor, 2002, p.101). South Africans have critiqued the theoretical base of colonialism and its inherent cultural and intellectual domination that has been the force leading the African Renaissance and the rebirth of ubuntu.

SCHOLARSHIP, INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND ACTIVISM

My desire is to locate Indigenous knowledge as a scholarly discourse in the academy because there is a critical need for its inclusion. Working at a university means having an opportunity to create knowledge with a critical perspective. At an early age, I became both a feminist and an environmentalist. This gave me a stance wherefrom to critically position what was happening with Indigenous peoples, women, the land, health, and well-being of community. As land continues to deteriorate globally, so do people's well-being. Corpuz and Mander claim that this is attributable to unsustainable Western development (2005). Under these conditions Indigenous peoples' knowledge has no place. Women in many Indigenous communities, as well as others, are beaten and killed

existing under the influence of male domination. The treatment of Indigenous peoples is a metaphor for the treatment of our Mother Earth. The courts and jails are filled with Indigenous peoples. These human conditions need to be critically interrogated to reveal the underlying social and economic origins and to develop possible solutions. Identifying Indigenous Knowledge as a valid knowledge source raises the challenge of sharing the privilege, space, and power to adapt and change higher learning institutions. The global governance systems that fuel and promote such extinction are seldom on scholarly radar. I believe that any definition of Indigenous Knowledge Systems must include this very critical aspect.

Hegemony, the dominance of one group over another, is another important concept for scholars to be well versed in—in order to understand how their scholarship, writing, and ways of knowing are either included or excluded. Giroux (1983) describes hegemony as not simply referring to the content found, for instance, in the formal curriculum of schools. It is that and much more; it also refers to the way such knowledge is structured. Additionally, hegemony refers to the routines and practices embedded in different social relationships; and, finally, it points to the notion of social structures as natural configurations that both embody and sustain forms of ideological hegemony (p.197).

We have many jobs, like the warriors' dual work of challenging hegemony and creating respectful protocols to give a free rein to Indigenous Knowledge, which has the potential

to build a better world. Both efforts will help the large numbers of youth live with a sense of history and future built on dignity and human rights.

In this chapter, I begin by including some definitions of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and indicated the scope as well as the urgency for revitalizing and integrating this knowledge. There are many reasons why Indigenous Knowledge Systems need to be fully explored within higher learning and make a contribution towards community well-being. I believe that a lot of thoughtful consideration is needed to create institutional change by integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems that honour our ancestors, develop a critical consciousness among Indigenous learners in order to create a positive future for our children.

My vast network of international scholars has helped me to query how Indigenous Knowledge Systems will improve the quality of life and learning within our extended communities and institutions of higher learning. Our collaborative conversations became an exchange and reformulation of ideas and reflective questions. By sustaining and extending these conversations, it helped identify and understand our stories of learning as we explored our place in communities and the academy.

I have described the nature and range of these Indigenous Knowledge Systems and identified some of the threats to this knowledge. This chapter has provided details on what types of information, and also benefits, that Indigenous Knowledge Systems can

lend to the formal process of education. It has also introduced the concept of critical education which is expanded and provides a framework of support of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. This chapter reflects the process that Indigenous scholars and community based peoples take on as they commit to create better communities and change within the academic world.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The primary objective of this literature review is to share the relevant and related literature that supports the nature of Indigenous Knowledge and its contributions to extended communities and higher learning. This chapter examines the literature that identifies why Indigenous Peoples are relegated to second class citizenship within a multi-layered society. It looks at scholarship that analyzes theories of domination within a social, political, educational and cultural context. In addition, it analyzes and compares Indigenous marginalization through the critical lens of feminist literature and others who have also been marginalized. It examines the problem of mainstream education as identified by other critical scholars, scholars of colour, Africanists and feminists and makes a case to include yet another voice from the margins, the voice of Indigenous Peoples. Throughout, this chapter explores the histories and the significant experiences of cultural and critical scholars working in Indigenous Knowledge, and it considers the intersections between the personal and the political and between theory and experience. In learning to relevantly read the world, I move through the Freirian stages starting from unknowing and ending with a knowing with purpose stage (1973). Through this process, I break out of my silence as I learn to critically question. Liberatory education enabled

me to experience the power of my own dialogue by questioning reality and thus gaining new understandings and hope for alternative possibilities.

Within the last few decades, there has been significant writing by Indigenous peoples that has contributed to new theoretical developments in Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Some of the literature review focuses on the arts rather than written text; it is the oral and visual contributions which reflect Indigenous Knowledge in music, drama, radio and television.

The universality of Indigenous Knowledge Systems reflects the growing development of canons of Indigenous thought due largely to the establishment of a vast network of Indigenous scholars and human rights advocates. Much of the Indigenous Knowledge Systems literature is written within the framework of colonialism and neo-colonial discourse. Indigenous human rights activists and scholars have challenged the notion of development and empire building by largely colonial and Northern nation-states within Indigenous territories, and they are envisioning a world based on peace, equality, and sustainability, all principles of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (Taiaiake, Alfred, 2005, 1999). Indigenous Knowledge Systems, which are more holistic in nature, have been developed in literature to reflect the multiplicity and interconnectedness of topics that, in part, move epistemology from the oral tradition to the written. Globally, Indigenous peoples have been actively authoring literature that addresses the urgency of challenging the many layers of western hegemony. In that regard, we are one voice with the people

who work to preserve our Mother Earth and who work to create an educational process that is respectful of land-based communities, sustainable development, and poverty reduction. By extension we are also one voice with others in the academy whose voices have been marginalized, women, other scholars of colour and those that have been economically, socially and educationally marginalized and forced to live a life of poverty. One of the challenges is the fact that historically Indigenous Knowledge was not written but was passed down orally through storytelling or in music. In many communities throughout the world, oral communication still prevails, so I will use storytelling, the ways of my ancestors, to explicate Indigenous Knowledge as scholarship. As Native Studies departments at universities were the first places to support Indigenous scholarship, I have added them as part of my review.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

This literature review examines women writers, cultural knowledge projects, and the role that language retention work plays in maintaining Indigenous Knowledge. Indigenous literature provides an alternate voice to that of the status quo. As a vital link to the many threads of Indigenous thought and knowledge, I have included a section on scholarship and activism. It is as an activist that I have received some of my most important and critical teachings. It was within activism that I realized the interconnectedness and relationship of the knowledge of the world's Indigenous peoples. It is also where I

learned that other people, who are non-Indigenous, share some of our struggles including, environmental, food security, sovereignty, language, and culture issues.

After centuries of colonial treatment by British, French, Spanish, Dutch, and German governments left their communities devastated, Indigenous peoples are proclaiming their rights to self-determination, sovereignty, and the restoration of human rights. These claims are based on land-rights, the cessation of genocide, and the recognition of their own social, economic, and cultural rights to exist (Tauli-Corpuz & Carino, 2004). The Indigenous quest for self-determination and full human rights is a demand for democracy and the citizen rights accorded to other citizens. How universities and other educational institutions can assist the establishment of human rights and the process for the retention and survival of Indigenous Knowledge Systems is an important theoretical and practical question for Indigenous scholars and those who work in solidarity with land-based peoples worldwide. Some scholars have asked the question why certain knowledge (colonial) gains legitimacy over others (Indigenous):

How is it that certain claims to knowledge are able to secure epistemic authority at particular time, in particular ways and for particular purposes? What are the processes by which old knowledge-claims are rejected and new gain legitimacy? How do elements of the old persist in the new? Importantly, how is it that certain colonial formations have remained resilient within Indigenous education? (McConaghy, 2000, p.1)

Inability or unwillingness for western knowledge to consider other older forms of knowledge such as Indigenous Knowledge Systems has been referred to as Eurocentrism (Amin, 1989). Eurocentrism is not a theory but is a paradigm:

Eurocentrism is also not a social theory capable of providing the key to the interpretation of the questions that a social theory proposes to elucidate. Eurocentrism is only a distortion—albeit a systemic and important one—from which the majority of dominant social theories and ideologies suffer. In other words Eurocentrism is a paradigm which, like all paradigms, functions spontaneously, often in the gray areas of seemingly obvious facts and common sense. For this reason, it manifests itself in a variety of ways, as much in the expression of received ideas, popularized by the media, as in the erudite formulations of specialist in the different areas of social science. (p.viii)

Eurocentrism plays a central role in the domination of Indigenous knowledge systems within higher learning and its eventual marginalization as a legitimate form of knowledge.

Decades of activism and working with people on the land and the resultant scholarship by Indigenous Peoples have developed a significant theoretical base on the topics of Indigenous Knowledge locally, nationally, and internationally as a genre(s) of literature/scholarship. Indigenous scholars from within the University and community educational contexts have spearheaded this scholarship. Indigenous Knowledge scholarship covers a range of topics, including languages, environment, human rights, culture, women's knowledge, holistic values, and governance.

African scholars such as Odora Hoppers (2002), and Makgoba (1999) examined the African Indigenous condition within one of historical and present day colonialism and imperialism and one that many Indigenous peoples share worldwide. They see the

introduction of Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a democratization of learning. “It is the grassroots movements and their determination of new directions in the philosophy and sociology of science that have constantly demonstrated that knowledge is an intrinsic part of democratic politics” (Odora Hoppers, p.5). In the article *Problem of African Universities*, Vilakazi (Vilakazi in Makoba, 1999) describes the impact of slavery and capitalism’s on Africa and the potential for African Indigenous Knowledge Systems to transform and heal within the educational process:

As the fall of Africa brought about the profound illness in the ‘social character of modern capitalist civilization, so the rise of Africa—the African renaissance—shall be the foundations for curing the social character of modern capitalist civilization of the moral, spiritual and mental illness presently afflicting it. As the fall of Africa has a universal significance for human culture and spiritual, moral and mental life, so the rise of African shall be of crucial, universal significance for the healing of the social character of humanity. (p. 201)

Vilakazi states that because of the omnipresence of colonizing forces within Africa, Africans were denied the right of being recognized as a civilization. African knowledge remained in the rural and never integrated into higher learning. Vilakzi goes on to state those who were educated in universities were forced to become westernized in much the same way as North American Indigenous peoples were:

The peculiar situation here is that knowledge of the principles and patterns of African civilization remained with ordinary, uncertificated men and women, especially of those in rural areas. The tragedy of African civilization is that Western-educated Africans became lost and irrelevant as intellectuals who could develop African Civilization further. Historically, intellectuals of any civilization are the voice of that civilization to the rest of the world; they are the instruments for the development of the higher culture of that civilization. The tragedy of Africa, after conquest by the West, is that her intellectuals, by and large, absconded and abdicated their role as developers, minstrels and trumpeters of

African civilization. African civilization then stagnated; what remained alive in the minds and languages of the overwhelming majority of Africans remained undeveloped. Uncertificated Africans are denied respect and opportunities for development; they could not sign out, articulate and develop the unique patterns of African civilization. (p. 203)

Vilakazi talks about the need for educated Africans to go back to their rural roots and relearn their true history so that they can become agents for change and not just tools of Western discourse and intellectualism. In this way Africans challenge education to reflect their Indigenous African knowledge systems:

We are talking here about a massive cultural revolution consisting, first, of our intellectuals going back to ordinary African men and women to receive education of African culture and civilization. Second, it shall break new ground in that non-certificated men and women shall be incorporated as full participants in the construction of the high culture of Africa. This shall be the first instance in history where certificated intellectuals alone shall not be the sole builders and determinants of high culture, but shall be working side by side with ordinary men and women in rural and urban life (p. 2004).

Sefa Dei (2000), an academic originally from Ghana and presently a faculty member at University of Toronto states:

I see the production and validation of Indigenous knowledges, and the centering of them in the academy, as an important task for educational and social change. It is encouraging that so many educators, students, parents, and community workers are now questioning those modes of conventional knowledge production which privilege some knowledge forms and set up a hierarchy of knowledges. Students in particular are now questioning devaluations, generations, and omissions that have long been embedded in schooling and school knowledge—for example, the near total absence of teachings on non-European knowledge forms. There is a recognition that educators and learners must start to offer multiple and collective readings of the world. This means exploring multiple and alternative knowledge forms. (p. 70)

The marginalization of both African and North American Indigenous scholars have similarities because of our shared history of colonization. Schooling and education has been one source of domination which has undermined traditional Indigenous Knowledge Systems. In our mutual quest to deconstruct cultural and educational hegemony we can learn from each other, sharing our stories, histories and struggles and build from our realities.

Western scholarship, which has had centuries to develop academic discourse, has created and compartmentalized disciplines in which Indigenous Knowledge was either ignored or expected to fit into (Hunter, in Mihesuah, & Cavender Wilson, 2004). It has not been a comfortable fit which explains the development of academic, political, social, and environmental scholarship written by Indigenous scholars and others to reflect Indigenous ways of knowing, seeing, and being. Research has posed problems for Indigenous peoples which Smith (1999) has tackled in her land-mark book *Decolonizing Methodologies, Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Instead of research serving the status quo, Smith states that an agenda for Indigenous research “is conceptualized here as constituting a programme and set of approaches that are situated within the decolonization politics of the Indigenous peoples’ movement” (p. 115). Smith states that by ensuring that we have an ear on Indigenous movements our work as scholars will be better reflected in community needs. *Research as Resistance* (brown & strega 2005) describes Indigenous Methodologies and emergence from the margins. Kovach describes the emancipation of considering a range of research methodologies from several sources,

feminism, critical hermeneutics and critical theory. To this list, Kovach states an Indigenous framework can be added. To add the Indigenous voice is to look critically at the university's role in research and knowledge production:

The epistemological assumptions of these varied methodologies contend that those who live their lives in marginal places of society experience silencing and injustice. Within the realm of research and its relationship to the production of knowledge, this absence of voice is significant and disturbing. To discuss liberating research methodologies without critical reflection on the university's role in research and producing knowledge is impossible. (p. 21)

Centuries of colonial domination have been identified as a central feature to the disruption of Indigenous communities as Simpson (2005) eloquently sums up:

The answers to how and why our knowledge has become threatened lie embedded in the crux of the colonial infrastructure, and unless properly dismantled and accounted for, this infrastructure will only continue to undermine efforts to strengthen IK systems and to harm the agenda of decolonization and self-determination. The forces of cultural genocide, colonization, and colonial policy perpetuated over the last several centuries by successive occupying settler governments is responsible for the current state of Indigenous Knowledge, yet this assertion remains conspicuously absent from the literature-literature written primarily by non-Indigenous scholars and academics. But there are other important gaps as well, reflective of the continuing colonial mentality that plagues the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the Western academy. (Simpson, 2005, p.2)

The commonality and potential for working together that Indigenous peoples have with the rest of the world is that the current practices have left the natural world in a state of unprecedented chaos and discord. Environmental catastrophes, global warming, rising ocean waters, disappearing glaciers, vanishing species, disrupted communities, and a world ravaged by wars are but a few problems that send a clear message that Western

development is having an irreversible environmental impact on the world and its citizens. It is time to seek out other pathways and other world views to restore and protect our earth (Shiva, 1998; Roy, 2002).

NEW SCHOLARSHIP

In recent times, scholarship that represents Indigenous world views and methodologies such as storytelling, and contributes to the research and development needs of their communities is increasing. This new scholarship ranges from cultural (Carriere, 2002; King, 2003) and linguistic discourse (Ahenakew, 1999; Shutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Kirkness, 1998) to critical political discourse (Odora Hoppers, 2002; Simpson, 2005; Mihesuah, 1999; Smith, 1999)—all establishing necessary varied theoretical and practical strands. This literature review discusses cultural and linguistic knowledge that builds on the work of Cree linguists Dr. Freda Ahenakew, and Dr. Verna Kirkness and the Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute at the University of Alberta (Blair, Paskemin & Laderoute, 2002). Central to much of the literature are the universal values of *pimatisiwin*, “the good life”; *miyo-wichitowin* and *wahkotowin*, “for the good of all”; the integration of values and practices into higher learning. These core values are timely in our shared circumstances that involve the depletion of nature, a social order built on the domination and exploitation of many, and a breakdown in human relations where too many are left behind. The research has addressed research methodologies, such as storytelling and oracy, and examined the colonial forces behind

the human conditions of Indigenous communities both locally and globally (Smith, 1999; Wane, 2005). Additionally, Indigenous scholarship addresses the sustainability of Indigenous Knowledge and its importance in transforming Western ways of knowing and practice (Kawagley, 1993; Goulet, 1998; Smith, 1999). Indigenous Knowledge Systems have long sustained communities by providing them with food, medicine, and ways of life based on sustainable principles (Settee, 1999; Weatherford, 1988; Simpson, 2005; Frank, 2002, LaDuke, 2006). Furthermore, the Indigenous Knowledge Systems contributions include peace building, scientific and mathematical concepts, and architectural principles. This knowledge not only contributed to present day social and economic issues but saved early European settlers from suffering and certain death. Jack Weatherford (1989) is a non-Indigenous scholar who has written extensively about Indigenous Knowledge Contributions. Prior to writing his book, *Indian Givers*, Weatherford spent considerable time in South America and other parts of the world learning about Indigenous Knowledge, particularly in reference to food contributions. He claims that:

...without the experimental and trial and error methods of early Indian farmer, modern science would have lacked the resources with which to start. The limited agricultural background of the Old World would have been far too meager and would have required centuries more of research before science reached its present level. (p. 82)

According to Weatherford, Indigenous peoples in South America were the first to develop the *planting method* (as opposed to the Old World *broadcasting method*) of planting seeds. Corn was adapted to grow with a protective husk that saved the corn

seeds from both drought and insects. Prior to their adaptation away from wheat-based foods to potato diets, many Old World people died from famine when wheat was wiped out more easily than underground potato crops. Weatherford states that without potato crops many populations (including the Irish and Russians) would not have survived. Indigenous peoples of South America were the first to freeze-dry potatoes for storage and use after the growing season had come and gone. It is important for all people to understand the origins of many of our foods and the knowledge required to grow them. Weatherford's acknowledgement about Indigenous contributions to the world's food supply would be useful in Agriculture and Nutrition departments as a curriculum source in helping students to recognize the contributions.

VOICES FROM THE MARGINS

An important part of our development as scholars has been our ability to connect in the international sphere and to share information. African scholarship reflects the situation of Africa whose colonial experience has been equally devastating:

The role of African indigenous knowledge and its ways of knowing in teaching, learning and researching, does not take place in a vacuum, but rather within the context of a history of colonialism, imperialism, neocolonial, post-colonial, and anti-colonial discursive frameworks. Encounters between the colonizer and the colonized resulted in disrupting ways of knowing and teaching for most of the world's indigenous peoples. Therefore, in order to promote meaningful teaching and learning, educators must rethink how indigeneity may be infused within a Eurocentric curriculum. (Wane, 2005, p. 2)

Literature on hegemony and domination has contributed to the analysis of Indigenous peoples and their relationship to power structures within the broader social, political, and cultural context (Giroux, 1983, 1992, Gramsci, 1971). Giroux has searched for a “theoretical foundation upon which to develop a critical theory of education” (p.7) in his *Theory & Resistance in Education, A Pedagogy for the Opposition*. He claims that schooling should “equip students with the knowledge and skills they will need to develop a critical understanding of themselves as well as what it means to live in a democratic society”. (p.114) This is a good beginning point of reference in understanding and tackling the complexities and difficulties which exist within Indigenous communities and it’s relationship to education. However, this literature does not go beyond an analysis of power to include the tremendous range of human rights abuses that Indigenous peoples have suffered. Other voices from the margins have lent important contributions to class, race/cultural, and gender analysis (Moraga & Anzaldua, 1999). Voices that are not from the margins have added important critical analysis of cultural domination (Giroux, 1992). My choice of literature is reflective of a university professor whose daily life is bombarded by and reminded of the situation of many of my students—the majority of whom are female, sole-supported, living in poverty, and often victims of abuse in the home or facing discrimination in society at large. The literature also provides a critical link to the life-story of my father, Henry McKay Settee. It does this by framing all of their stories within a framework of the domination of land-based people who were/are subjected to a dominant worldview.

FEMINIST THOUGHT

Feminist scholarship has contributed significantly to analysis of marginalization based on women's experience. In *Women's Ways of Knowing, Development of Self, Voice and Mind*, Belenky and her co-authors (1986) point out that the "ways of knowing that women have cultivated and learned to value, ways we have come to believe are powerful but have been neglected and denigrated by the dominant intellectual ethos of our time." These conditions are still reflected within higher learning. Indigenous peoples can look at the situation of women's marginalization and seek mutual strategies for change.

Hartsock (1998) made the links between patriarchy, capitalism and white supremacy in her groundbreaking work, the *Feminist Standpoint Revisited and other Essays*. In many ways, the analysis of patriarchy and other forms of domination can give a useful analysis for the Indigenous reality within overall social situations including schooling. This analysis can give some initial understandings of Indigenous marginalization and place within higher education. Hartsock states that social realities are not created in a vacuum but within a web of connections that are demonstrated throughout all of society. One cannot look at only one system but the myriad of forces that create the condition of marginalization for vulnerable groups, women and people of colour included.

As a beginning point, feminism helps us to understand the interconnectedness of most forms of oppression in social institutions.

The power of a feminist method grows out of the fact that it enables us to connect everyday life with an analysis of the social institutions which shape that life. Application of a feminist method means that the institutions of capitalism (including its imperialist

aspect), patriarchy, and white supremacy cease to be abstractions we read about. Through their impact on us they become lived, real aspects of daily experience and activity. In this way, feminism provides us with a way to understand our anger and direct our anger and energy toward change.

White feminism, a discourse that is principally structured on the white mainstream, middle-class experience (Grande, 2003), gives a good beginning point of analysis but does not examine in detail the complexities Indigenous women face both historically and contemporarily. Indigenous women are neither monolingualistic nor monocultural; they represent a variety of experiences, histories, and identities; they share the one commonality of colonialism that white women have not experienced. Grande (2003) concurs with bell hooks when she notes that white feminism is a replication of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized:

...the contemporary production of feminist theory is sequestered behind the walls of the ivy walls of academia, where the growing social distance between white mainstream academics and the lived experience of “real-world” women have enabled high status feminists to build high-status careers by theorizing the lives of “other women”. (p. 331)

However, because Indigenous and non-Indigenous women suffer from patriarchy, the need to create links from a gender perspective is essential. Mihsuah (2003) explains:

to the issues of authoritative voice: there is not one among Native women, and no one feminist theory totalizes Native women’s thought. Rather there exists a spectrum of multi-heritage women in between “traditional” and “progressive,” possessing a multitude of opinions about what it means to be a Native female. There is no one voice among Natives because there is no such thing as the

culturally and racially monolithic Native woman. The label “Third World Women” is a large umbrella under which another umbrella, “Native,” may fit, but underneath that umbrella are each of the three hundred or so modern U.S. tribes and, still further under, each female member of those tribes. Thousands more umbrellas are needed to account for the tribal and individual sociocultural changes that occur over time. Knowledge of these complexities of value systems and personalities is crucial to understanding the rationales behind the Native voice the scholar listens to, in addition to knowing that it is not representative of all Natives. (p.7)

It is important to include information about Indigenous women’s strengths within Indigenous traditions because much of women’s role (and men’s) has suffered from our colonial legacy:

It is not a maneuver to subsume men; rather, students must be taught that colonialism and patriarchal thought affected—and still affect—Indigenous women. Native men, therefore, have also been negatively affected. Political policies, Christian ideologies, forced removal, physiological change, psychological stress, and population and land loss from warfare and disease disrupted women’s powerful economic, political social, and religious positions within most tribes. Females are not honored as they once were. Violence against Native women has escalated, and many suffer from psychological stress and identity crises. (Miheuah, 2003, p. 34)

Rosenberg (2002) describes a feminist critique of dominant culture which she feels is central for survival of humanity:

The term ‘feminist critique’ refers here to ecological/feminist analysis that draws from traditional knowledge, which views all of life as an interconnected web enriched by diversity; and which understand power relationships and domination from critical cultural perspectives such as sexism, racism, classism, ageism, homophobia, and anthropocentrism. Ecological feminist praxis challenges patriarchal institutions of power such as corporations, militaries, and governments, which are largely responsible for toxic pollution, which is known to weaken immune systems and to cause hormone, genetic, and behavioural disruptions, illness and often death. It draws links between violence against women and against the Earth, structural adjustment policies, the debt crisis, and

militar-ism, seeing all of these as forms of institutional and systemic violence in most contemporary societies. Largely due to breast cancer and other related epidemics, feminist activists are challenging environmental destruction and the tenets of economic growth. (p. 137)

As a Jewish woman she has turned to the Indigenous worldview as a model which challenges and has the potential to transform and educate dominant educational systems which she claims are built on exploitation models.

In addition to telling about the negative impact of colonialism, it is important to focus on the new roles of leadership that women are taking within their communities. Many of these modern roles have their roots in traditional Indigenous practices. Many of these new roles have developed out of necessity as the nature of families change and women take new roles in community development and education:

Many modern Native women leaders point to their tribal religions and traditions as inspiration and justification for their authoritative positions. Today, more Native women participate in tribal politics than ever before. They argue that taking leadership roles is a way of regaining the prestige and power their ancestors once held, in addition to assuming equal responsibility for the welfare of their tribes. (Mihesuah, p. 34)

Mestiza lesbian academic Anzaldúa (1999) describes her journey to transform education as exhilarating, in *Borderlands La Frontera, The New Mestiza*. As an academic, she is not prepared to be complicit with education that does not awaken or activate her potential:

There is an exhilaration in being a participant in the further evolution of humankind, in being “worked” on. I have the sense that certain “faculties”-not

just in me but in every border resident, colored and non-colored—and dormant areas of consciousness are being activated, awakened. Strange, huh? And yes, the “alien” element has become familiar—never comfortable, not with society’s clamor to uphold the old, to rejoin the flock, to go with the herd. (From the preface)

In the *Colour of Resistance*, Fife et al (1993) contain stories “that carry their own life, having been birthed through the voice of Indigenous women who have chosen to re-invent how we resist, how we refuse to be silenced, and how we use contemporary tools to express old beliefs in order to lay the seeds for future generations” (from the foreward). Fife describes resistance to mainstream discourse as challenging domination and abuse, choosing to persevere and writing about women’s reality and marginalization:

resistance is every women who
has ever considered taking up arms
writing a story leaving the abuse
saving her children or saving herself
she is every woman who dares
to stage a revolution complete a novel
be loved or change the world
resistance walks across a landscape
of fire accompanied by her daughters
perseverance and determination (p.20)

Many Indigenous women have chosen not to label themselves feminist because it has been a term that referred to white women or non-Indigenous women. Some have preferred to call themselves tribalist or activist (p.161). Winona LaDuke has written extensively about her activist work in Indigenous world. In her 2005 annual report for Honor the Earth, an organization she spearheaded, that supports activist projects, LaDuke states;

Honor the Earth has had the opportunity to be part of a movement to transform America and certainly to transform Native America. We have been privileged to work with some of the most amazing community leaders, elders and activists imaginable, and we continue to see positive change and resilience. The reality is that we are interested fundamentally in how we craft a society which has a dignified relationship between peoples and a dignified relationship to the natural world – whether that world is water, has fins, paws, or roots. That vision of and commitment to dignity and transformation is represented in the thoughts, words, and actions of our communities and in our own organization. We are incredibly thankful to be a part of making a new society on this *akiing*, this land. (p.3)

It is important that the stories from the margins as well as the intellectual nerve centers of our communities, including our students, form the foundation for research, development, and policy. Black feminism and others that originate from women of colour have created important theory that draws parallels for Indigenous peoples. Patricia Hill Collins, an Afrocentric feminist, speaks to the importance that knowledge plays in empowering oppressed people. Her insistence that both the changed consciousness of individuals and the social transformation of political and economic institutions constitute essential ingredients for social change is an important standpoint for Indigenous women who equally share an “outsider-within status” (2006). Indigenous women have written about the marginalization that they face particularly within an academic setting (Mihesuah, & Cavender Wilson, 2004; Lawrence in Anderson, 2003). Similarly, Native men scholars (James, in Mihesuah, & Cavender Wilson, 2004) identify being part of the “out” group:

Differences in implicit norms and identities from non-Native colleagues in higher education may make the information system of academe difficult for natives to deal with. The result is that Native individuals frequently find themselves in the out group in the dynamics of departments and academic institutions, as well as at the bottom of the academic-status hierarchy. (p.50)

hooks (1984, 1994, 2003) has written significantly on the need to challenge domination and transform the educational process. In *Teaching to Transgress*, hooks talks about the need for critical thinkers to talk to one another to cross boundaries and create spaces for intervention (1994, p. 129). She describes the power that educators have to develop our students into critical thinkers that can analyze and change reality beyond the classroom (p.137). hooks explicates her first contacts with feminism and how she was required to integrate white feminist theories with the stories of her poor and working class black communities:

Personally, that meant I was not able just to sit in class, grooving on the good feminist vibes—that was a loss. The gain was that I was honoring the experience of poor and working-class women in my own family, in that very community that had encouraged and supported me in my efforts to be better educated. Even though my intervention was not wholeheartedly welcomed, it created a context for critical thinking, for dialectical exchange. (p. 184)

In *Teaching Community, a Pedagogy of Hope* (2003), hooks describes how she saw “academic shifts” occur by two subjugated academic groups, Black Studies and Women’s Studies, working together:

As individual black women/women of colour, along with individual white women allies in anti-racist struggle, brought a critique of race and racism into feminist thinking that transformed feminist scholarship, many of the concerns of Black Studies were addressed through a partnership with Women’s studies and through feminist scholarship. (p. 5)

Historically feminist scholarship initiated the necessity and eventual shift of white male discourse and intellectualism to consider the voices of others. Over time feminism has learned to include the voices of many women who have been marginalized by dominant

forces. A joining of voices from many perspectives and from many community locations can strengthen our common quest for recognition within the academy. Whether we have difficulties with the concept of feminism should take second place to recognizing some of the gains that have been realized by women who challenged male domination. Like hooks in *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (1989), I believe we must look at feminism's potential to create political paradigms which could work for Indigenous peoples. I believe that women should think less in terms of feminism as an identity and more in terms of "advocating feminism"; to move from emphasis on personal lifestyle issues toward creating political paradigms and radical models of social change that emphasize collective as well as individual change (p. 182).

Feminism is an analysis that helps us remember that our work for social change, in the academy, in the community and on the streets is a difficult and slow process. It reminds us that we must always keep an eye on the kind of world that we wish to create (Hartsock, p.42). Feminism reminds us that we need to engage in the historical, political and theoretical process of constituting ourselves as subjects as well as objects of history (p.221). And finally it can help Indigenous Peoples to develop an account of the world that treats our perspectives not as subjugated, insurrectionary, or disruptive knowledge but as potentially constitutive of a different world (p.222).

CRITICAL SCHOLARSHIP

I chose critical scholarship as a framework to analyze some of the educational concerns posed by Indigenous scholars. Many Indigenous scholars who are critical educators do not draw on the works of early critical theorists but have developed what I call Indigenous critical theory. Mihesuah, Cavender Wilson, Deloria, LaDuke, St. Denis, Smylie, and Trask articulate a rich Indigenous perspective and one that clearly contributes in a scholarly way to the literature which represent the multi-dimensional concerns of collective Indigenous community while at the same time critiquing dominant society. I would describe the writings of these scholars as ones that reflect Indigenous sovereign scholarship.

Within mainstream scholarship, Gramsci has been recognized as the grandfather of critical thought. In his *Further Selections From the Prison Notebooks* (Boothman, 1995), Gramsci talked about the role of education in maintaining a separation between “high culture and everyday life, between the intellectuals and the people (p.145) and he referred to academies as cultural cemeteries (p. 146). The Indigenous goal to entrench our grassroots communities’ knowledge and the African goals of listening to “rural voice” parallel Gramsci’s identification of high culture as separate from common people.

As I continued to read and reread literature by scholars known for their critical writings (Giroux, 1992), I came to place concepts such as “construct a political vision” (p.240), “oppositional politics” (p.242), “cultural democracy” (p.247), “democratic possibilities” (p.239), “cultural workers”, and “cultural politics”(p.242) within my own understanding

of Indigenous struggles. These constructs confirmed my experience that mainstream education has an embedded political role, one that sees the relationship between knowledge, power, and literacy.

According to Giroux (1992), education's role is to propose a pedagogy at the same time as constructing a political vision (p.240). He describes the political resistance towards critical education by the ultraconservative educators, known as *the New Right* and the tension that arises from its opposing views:

The battle in the universities over the canon, in the public schools over a curriculum of diversity, and in Congress over the arts is not merely a tribute to the resurgent power of the New Right. Such struggles are also indicative of various opposition groups to refuse to allow dominant groups to undermine the basis of democracy in the name of an authoritarian discourse that legitimates culture as the reserve of the privileged and mostly as something that is done onto others. (Giroux, 1992, p. 239)

For over half a century Indigenous Peoples in Saskatchewan and other parts of Canada have fought for educational sovereignty. Our local First Nations Band controlled schools, Technical Institutes, Cultural Centers, urban community schools and Universities, Indigenous University Centers of learning represent our accomplishments as well as our refusal to let dominant groups undermine Indigenous educational democracy. In Saskatchewan early leaders such as John B. Tootoosis, Jean Goodwill, John and Ida McLeod, Freda Ahenakew and Pauline Pelly all fought for Indigenous rights within many sectors. Current day scholars stand on the shoulders of these early cultural, educational and political sovereignists. Indigenous reclamation of educational process has been an

exercise in what Giroux calls emancipation. In order to be emancipatory, education has to include reading the world with a critical perspective:

If a politics of difference is to be fashioned in emancipatory rather than oppressive practices, literacy must be rewritten in terms that articulate difference with the principles of equality, justice, and freedom rather than with those interests supportive of hierarchies, oppression and exploitation. (Giroux, 1992 p.245)

McLaren (1989), a contemporary of Giroux, references him by stating that:

...critical pedagogy must develop out of a politics of difference and as sense of community not rooted in simply in a celebration of plurality. In other words, tolerance of differences is not enough. Students, despite their differences, must become unified in a common struggle to overcome the conditions that perpetuate their own suffering and the suffering of others.” (p.235-236)

McLaren believes that:

...this critical approach to teaching is based on a social imagination rooted in history and intent on a resurrection of the “dangerous memory” and “subjugated knowledges” of oppressed groups such as women and minorities. The task of such an imagination is to build a world in which power relations are contested actively and suffering is finally overcome. (236)

Students’ ideas and experiences must be legitimated and considered as an essential piece of their learning process. Their voices are rooted in their history, culture, and communities. This is the essence of the role Indigenous Knowledge in education, and what it means to have Indigenous Knowledge Systems honored in higher learning. Cherokee scholar Heath Justice (2004) states that we must center our studies “in Indian lives and realities, rather than keeping the focus on white perceptions and ideas about

Indians” (p.103). As a two-spirited Indian man, he has been marginalized not only by his race but by his sexual orientation as well. Onondaga scholar, Keith James (2004) describes his experience with exclusion, “When lines of inclusion and exclusion are based on social group membership, friendship, or conjoint cover-ups of unethical and unfair practices, the result is a corrupt, discriminatory system” (p.49). Andrea Hunter (2004), a Cherokee scholar, describes her experience with anthropology, archeology, and ethics—areas that have posed serious cultural challenges for Indigenous Peoples:

For me, Indigenizing the academy means to reform the curriculum in American archeology. At the outset, we must infuse in the curriculum morally sound ethics in archaeological methods and practices. Students must recognize and understand that there are many perspectives to studying the past. The Western scientific view is not the only view. There are other ways of knowing the past, and archeologists must respect the views of others, particularly since anthropology is a holistic discipline where the objective is to explain cultural behaviour. In other worlds, anthropology’s ultimate goal is to understand cultures’ worldviews. (p. 171)

In the past, archeology has desecrated the gravesites of Indigenous peoples and sold skeletons and artifacts to museums. These desecrations leave a trail of bitterness for Indigenous peoples towards early archeology academics and underscore the experiences of Indigenous communities with academia and intellectual/cultural domination.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems are also about Indigenous peoples claiming their ethical space (Ermine, 2000), having their knowledge recognized as legitimate, and making important contributions to world philosophies. Indigenous Knowledge Systems challenge the notion that only Western knowledge is legitimate (Deloria, 1995). It goes further in pushing us to think about our situation as a struggle against Western hegemonic practices.

Hegemony is all-encompassing and reflective of the dominant culture leaving many Indigenous communities on the periphery. According to Anderson (2000), “We don’t need to work at discovering western culture; it is all around us, and increasingly all around the world. Western hegemony ensures that everyone knows and practices pieces of western culture and that we are rewarded for doing so” (p.29). It is important for Indigenous communities to possess, practice, and experience research sovereignty or research that reinforces Indigenous sovereignty over their communities. The critical conditions within most Indigenous communities require urgent educational sovereignty, the inclusion of subjugated voices, and the questioning of dominant power structures.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Indigenous Knowledge Systems represent the essential fabric of social, cultural, and economic developments within Indigenous communities that for millennia have existed in sustainable and symbiotic ways (Tauli-Corpuz, 2002). The politics of globalization, market economies, neo-liberal policies, and policies of international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, have dealt a deadly blow to Indigenous communities throughout the world (Shrybman, 2001, Tauli-Corpuz, 2002).

These policies oppress many more than just Indigenous peoples:

The Neo-liberal economic challenge, which supposedly invites everybody to drink from a fountain of equal opportunity, ignores the lines of class, race, gender, education, age, disability and so forth. It also pigeonholes people as skilled or unskilled workers, educated or uneducated, successful or unsuccessful, while leaving unchallenged the inequality inherent in the system designed to build

skills. It obscures the fact that choices may not be the same for people who do not have the resources to realize these choices, in a society that largely promotes injustice and unequal opportunities and resources. In the current global disorder people are “free to be excluded” without anybody feeling the moral and ethical responsibility to intervene to change this reality. (Macedo & Gounari, 2006, p.13)

Today, when Indigenous peoples are in the way of economic or technological development, their traditional economies are undermined leaving their homelands dominated, ruined, or contaminated. In too many cases, the people frequently disappear and often massacred (Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2005).

Community revitalization and development is an essential aspect of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and a direct and necessary challenge to systems of wealth-privileging corporate economic globalization. To deal with the colonial destruction, it is necessary to be aware of Aboriginal culture and knowledge in order to know what is needed in the area of community development (Silver, 2006). Community development is a powerful force at the heart of Indigenous peoples. Community development involves sovereignty that begins with a healing process for the Aboriginal individual and spreads to the community agencies and governance structures. In order for the healing and transformation to be successful, the process of colonization must be confronted with the intention of dismantling its powerful forces. Aboriginal sovereignty is front and center:

Rooted in traditional Aboriginal values of sharing and community, this approach to community development starts with the individual and the individual’s need to heal from the damage of colonization. The process of people’s healing, of their rebuilding or recreating themselves, is rooted in a revived sense of community

and a revitalization of Aboriginal cultures; this in turn requires the building of Aboriginal organizations. The process of reclaiming an Aboriginal identity takes place, therefore, at an individual, community, organizational and ultimately political level. This is a process now underway; it is a process of decolonization that, if it can continue to be rooted in traditional Aboriginal values of sharing and community, will be the foundation upon which healing and rebuilding are based. (Silver, 2006, p.133)

Community development has become a rallying cry for dignity, peace, and sustainable development for communities by communities. Proudly, Indigenous women have been at the heart of community transformation:

Over the years, I have found...a lot of women have been involved in all these projects, more women than men have been involved in all these projects...women in my experience, they've been the drivers of the child welfare initiative in the last few years, it's become of women the *Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata* Centre was born, women have been a central part of community development in my experience. Men are on board too, but there are lower numbers of men...in order for men to become involved more we need to help them to participate in healing, also to regain their role, their identity, with the community. (Silver, 2006, p.150)

There is a great need to build linkages between the privilege and power of the academy and the extended community. To date this relationship has not been adequately developed. We live in two solitudes as academics and extended communities. For Indigenous peoples, the impact is particularly difficult. Activist academics like Silver have bridged the divide between the academy and the Aboriginal community as it relates to community development in Winnipeg and can be a model for elsewhere. Indigenous voice is at the core of his writings.

INDIGENIZING THE ACADEMY

When I began my research on Indigenous literature as a means of conveying Indigenous Knowledge Systems, nothing prepared me for the complexity of the task of uncovering and reclaiming subjugated knowledge. Along with others, I collaborated with Métis author Maria Campbell (1988) on the children's book *Achimona*. At the time, literature seemed like such a straightforward message, just get the word out and on paper. Since then, communities of First Nations and Métis writers have come forward filling a gap in Aboriginal literature, including history, women's studies, drama, poetry, anthologies, English literature, myths and stories, songs and works on language retention. Now the task has produced layers of complex issues, such as who speaks for whom, who is more Indigenous, and who has the right to write on whose behalf—and also, can white people write about Native realities, or from a cultural perspective, should white people critique native literature? The field of native writing is a dynamic ever-growing force in the world of literature and the book shelves of some of our academic book stores and libraries speaks to their marketability. Interestingly, this same literature is virtually absent from other bookstores, such as the public market chains like Coles and airport bookstores. Added to the literature are some who take the perspective of critical theory through the eyes of writers who address most forms of discrimination and resistance.

I have included writers who are critical theorists and use concepts such as hegemony and class, and race and gender struggle (Gramsci, 1971; hooks, 1984; Smith, 1999; Giroux, 1983). The struggle to change institutional practices requires working hard to understand

and to theorize questions of knowledge, power, and experience in the academy so that one effects pedagogical empowerment as well as transformation. Along with stating what we know to be Indigenous knowledge, there are many questions that require answers. We must ask ourselves, what is the role of the ancient knowledge and values in devastated post-colonial communities? What is the future role of Indigenous Knowledge? How will educators honor and teach knowledge that is holistic in nature but expected to fit in the square boxes of contemporary schooling? In a keynote address at the 2003 Aboriginal University graduation celebration, Saskatchewan Métis author, Maria Campbell, challenged the university by asserting that we must change our expectations whereby elders are expected to present within the university in lecture form. Campbell states that the lecture method of teaching is authoritarian, transmissive and not conducive to the transformation of Indigenous Knowledge. Indigenous Knowledge reflects four distinct approaches of the physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual. If this is the case, how will Indigenous Knowledge contribute, survive, and flourish within institutions that value only the intellectual? Communication within the Indigenous worldview is two-way, as good pedagogy is two-way. Students are not just empty containers that need to be filled up, but they possess information, history, and truths that need to be validated. Traditional "banking" approaches to education suggest that such an approach only reinforces the rift existing between dominant/subordinate cultures (Freire, 1970). In the case of Indigenous students, their histories, information, and truths have been referred to as Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Teaching must be cognizant of this knowledge, a two-way communication, and not just use the lecture method.

Ensuring that the post-secondary experience is positive is the responsibility of the institutions, its administrators, faculty, staff, students, and the community in general” (Pigeon, Hardy, & Cox, 2002, p.8). How does Indigenous Knowledge fit with the academic hegemony that currently exists within Western academies? In raising the question, Indigenous scholars are able to move from a passive role as subject to someone else’s agenda to an active leadership position with explicit authority in the construction and implementation of the initiatives. In her study, *Learning Within the Ivory Tower: Exploring Aboriginal University Student Experiences*, Jann Ticknor (2006) interviewed six Aboriginal students from local universities who responded to questions about the opportunities and challenges of attending university in Halifax. Her study found that participants’ concepts of Indigenous Knowledge, knowing, and culture were absent or dismissed within dominant university discourse. As Hall, Rosenberg, & Dei (2000) have stated:

Indigenous knowledges are emerging again in the present day as a response to the growing awareness that the world’s subordinated peoples and their values have been marginalized-that their past and present experiences have been flooded out by the rise in influence of Western industrial capital. (p.6)

Indigenous Knowledge Systems gives academics hope despite the increasing partnering and influence of corporation over research in North American universities.

Since the 1970s, the international arena has created important opportunities among Indigenous and land-based peoples. I believe we can learn a lot from the scholarly writings produced by schools of thought such as the New African Renaissance. In the post-apartheid ideology of the New African Renaissance, writing serves as a political tool that is essential in critiquing the dominant political and social systems. Writing, in fact, is an action vital to cultural and racial survival because writing is not just to communicate, writing is for discovering oneself. South African scholars have written extensively on Indigenous Knowledge Systems in an attempt to define for themselves who they are and who they should become. In her new book *Indigenous Knowledge and the Integration of Knowledge Systems, Towards a Philosophy of Articulation*, Dr. Catherine Odora Hoppers gathers writings that describe integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems into higher learning. Odora Hoppers' work is a response to a call from the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Arts, Culture, Language, Science and Technology for the Heads of South African Science Councils. Her book explores the role of the social and natural sciences in supporting the development of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Odora Hoppers (2002) explains her thoughts on the contributions of Indigenous Knowledge systems:

At the philosophical or methodological level, one finds the harrowing legacy of epistemological silencing and the concerted strategies that have combined to preempt any possibility for co-existence, fruitful exchange of methods, or even dialogue around heuristic methods. At the level of application is found the arrogance of practice, which is still rife in formal institutions that are confidently, and without qualms, determined to continue with the monochrome logic of Western epistemology. (vii)

Like other African scholars, Odora Hoppers states the need to instill Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a tool that will rebuild democratic values, ethics, sustainable development, and, ultimately, human liberation free from all forms of discrimination. Higher learning in South Africa was largely driven by white intelligentsia, which took the lead in creating apartheid-enforced identities in knowledge production. Black scholars such as hooks (1984), Davis (1974), and Dei (2000) claim that only when intellectual production is de-racialized and black intelligentsia fueled by African values will an African renaissance truly take place. These are thoughts that can be useful to Aboriginal scholars in other parts of the world. In addition to intellectual production being de-racialized, it must also be de-hegemonized. Affording Indigenous Knowledge the same value as the dominant knowledge can do this.

ACADEMIC INDIGENISM

One attempt at teaching and learning Aboriginal knowledge, including history and contemporary issues, has been the establishment of Native studies departments at mainstream universities (Couture, 2000; Mihesuah, 2003; Kulchyski, 1999; Lawrence in Anderson, 2003). The first department of native studies was established in 1969 at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. The goal was to create a cadre of leaders and allies who would work over the course of their lifetimes to create new realities for Aboriginal peoples in this country and elsewhere. Initially, this course of study provided students with a foundation in Aboriginal history and politics, and in Haudenosaunee and

Anishnaabe culture, tradition and language. Since then, others have been developed including the Department of Native Studies at the University of Saskatchewan that was established in the mid-1980s. The discipline of Native studies has faced many challenges such as being on an uncertain footing in the academy. The uncertainty stems from a lack of commitment, under-resourcing, and a lack of understanding of the department by the university administration. Because Native Studies is more recent in comparison to other departments, it suffers from reduced financial contributions enjoyed by larger more established departments. Most university administrators and few faculty were ever required to take Native studies in order to expand their understanding or knowledge of who we are. Native studies is interdisciplinary because of the immensity and complexity of the discipline, which encompasses anthropology, history, political studies, economics, sociology, health, education, and the arts. Aboriginal peoples are in the process of dramatic change, which is a direct result of their colonial past, and by the fact that they represent many diverse groups not only here in Canada but throughout the world:

To varying degrees, community and academic stake holders perceive and strive to relate to what is characteristically high drama for people whose histories are unique and remarkable, and who are presently intensely engaged in inner/outer, individual/collective changes and growth, away from degradation and despair toward individual self-determination and group empowerment. As First Nations, Aboriginals are both subject and object of intense transition, of great stress and radical changes. They are moving away from an intolerable situation and beginning to establish conditions in which they will be responsible for their destiny. (Couture, 2000, p.158)

The establishment of Native studies departments is not a simple solution to including Indigenous Knowledge in academia or indigenizing the academy. Couture (2000) describes the tension between Native studies and the university. He claims that what is needed by the university is an open position and willingness to find complementary means of learning, understanding, and interpreting the traditions of others. Like others, he describes the elitism that plagues universities and its neutral values as inappropriate to Native studies. Native studies has to be more than just adding courses to address vacuums of knowledge in regards to Aboriginal communities. It must also examine methodologies and ways of learning, challenge mainstream pedagogies, and crack the structurally racist hiring practices and policies for which universities are renowned.

When describing what would be some agreed principles for Indigenizing the academy, from the textbook of the same name, Tyeme Clark states:

First, everyone here agrees, at least for now, that to decolonize what currently is widely accepted as knowledge about “Indians” is crucial. Second, a consensus emerges in these pages around the need to theorize, conceptualize, and represent Indigenous sovereignty so that our people may live well into the foreseeable future. Third, contributors to this volume argue for the necessities of producing indigenous knowledges for Indigenous peoples rather than primarily as subjects for non-Indigenous curiosity. (In Mihesuah & Cavender Wilson, 2004, p.219)

I feel that we produce knowledges for both Indigenous Peoples and others and not necessarily for their curiosity but in the hope that such knowledges will make them better human beings.

When I and my other colleagues have taught a critical perspective of Canadian and First Nations relations, we have often been taunted and challenged by the “ball cap” crew (The

young men who sit at the back of the class and mutter insults under their breath, especially if they are taking a required native studies class). This aggressive attitude finds its roots in the complacency or lack of critical awareness that pervades other university courses from other disciplines. If critical awareness was standard across all disciplines, it would make our job somewhat simpler because all faculty would be critiquing the many forms of domination and subjugated knowledge. The lack of a critical mass of Native Studies Graduate students, which could help develop a Native Studies profile, is challenged by Native students who historically don't bring many financial resources to their academic learning experience. With few or no resources many of these students do not aspire to graduate work, even where universities might offer graduate Native Studies courses. What is lost is a growing pool of potential Indigenous faculty members who could populate both Native Studies and other departments.

While I believe that Native studies departments are not the only answer to the browning of the academy, there are actions that empathetic colleagues can take to help. I believe there is a role that non-Indigenous colleagues can play within the broader university community to become involved in the Indigenization of learning. Our colleagues who are not Indigenous have tremendous opportunities to use their places of authority to influence decision-makers in creating spaces for Indigenization. They can insist that new hiring be filled by Indigenous candidates. And just so they are not just scooping up Indigenous candidates, or "vacuuming Indigenous Colleges" as it has been referred to, they can help produce and strengthen the pool. Our colleagues can do this by using their

experience to work with junior faculty members and graduate studies to provide opportunities for advancement and to seek out funding. Inversely, academics can stop applying for research dollars that are clearly designated for Indigenous research. They can examine their own paternalism. Our colleagues can insist on equity on committees where important decisions are made. They can insist that funding decisions reflect diversity goals. They can use their influence to convince their colleagues who may be less than convinced about equity. They can talk, and preferably listen, to marginalized people and take courses and learn about experience from marginalized perspectives. They can take risks and get involved with grassroots communities. They can demand answers to the reasons for the high attrition rate of Indigenous students. While they may never be marginalized and should not speak for Indigenous communities, they can begin the slow journey to appreciating who the "other" is. If universities do not have vision statements that espouse commitment to creating Indigenous spaces, they can collaborate with Indigenous colleagues to create such statements. They can ensure that universities live up to written statements of commitment. They can also get involved in academic life and begin to understand other forms of domination faced by women faculty and others who face discrimination within the academy. As Mesquakie and Potawatomi colleague, Tyeeme Clark (2004) states, "to Indigenize the academy means by necessity that Indigenous scholars and our non-Indigenous allies must identify and overpower anti-Indianism"(p.219). When all faculty work towards ensuring that the workplace is a respectful and life-enforcing environment, it will become a nurturing community for all women and men, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Despite the many challenges faced by Native studies departments, Kulchyski (1999), head of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba, claims that the discipline of Native studies has been responsible for some changes and gives native elders a voice equivalent to non-Native authorities which are cited in scholarly practice. Kulchyski feels that Native studies are about ethics and practice, about correcting history and knowing how to approach Native knowledge holders such as elders. He argues that “Native Studies involves the creation, recognition, or legitimization of new knowledge and new forms of knowledge” (1999, p.14). I would argue that Indigenous Knowledge is marginalized, not new to higher learning institutes. The conditions that exist within First Nations and Aboriginal communities require an urgent response by the academy where curriculum, research, and ultimately policy and development are created.

Native women face particular challenges when entering academia. Their wealth of knowledge systems, as well as developmental needs of their communities, require examination and action from the academy as well as other places. Women’s stories are particularly poignant within both academic and community life:

We continually look for ways to mesh our duties as scholars with our concerns about tribal interests and family. The lines between being female, Native, and scholar do indeed blur, and most of us are scholar-activists. (Mihesuah, 2003, p.22)

Bonita Lawrence (2003) describes the isolation she faced in being the only Aboriginal scholar in a mainstream university department. Lawrence longed to have writings by Aboriginal scholars and have those materials change the all-white workplace:

I was troubled by the absence of Native people in my academic department, and at University of Toronto in general. When I began my research as a graduate student there were no Native faculty members at my university and, in general very few Aboriginal people in North America writing sociological theory from Native perspectives. Because of this, I was aware that my research on Native identity was treading on new ground, and yet there were no other Aboriginal academics to consult with about the implications of undertaking work that questions aspects of Native identity in a non-native environment. Indeed much of the existing academic work by Aboriginal people, primarily from the United States, has suggested that it is dangerous to explore native identity in an academic setting where there are no other Native people present to ensure that Aboriginal perspective will be well represented. (p.71)

Some have described the tension and feelings of inadequacy that is created by the academy. A tension exists between Indigenous academics feeling the need to write the stories and feeling that they won't be seen as worthy by the academy. Graveline (2004) in her chapter called *Encountering Academedia* describes the fear that gripped her before her PhD defense:

I wonder. In dark of Night. "can They fail me? At this late date??my battered self-esteem is going Wild. "will my work be GoodEnough? AcademicEnough?" I know it. It will be tough to Defend. In a Eurocentric. Patriarchal. Institution. Known to be continuously marginalizing Heniyaw'ak. Women. Easy to feel Less Than. (p. 197)

For many Aboriginal women scholars, our work is not separate from our identities and can be all encompassing. Many of us work from the belief that our workplaces must be more responsive to the material needs of community. As Mihesuah (2003) relates:

Our jobs as Indigenous women scholars are an integral part of our lives and identities. Success in the classroom and in the world of publishing contributes to our feelings of self-worth and confidence, but because we are Native female scholars we often face confusion in the workplace. Concerns about tribe, community, and family are major focus points in our lives. We also are interested in earning a degree, acquiring a job, publishing, and receiving tenure and promotion—all of which require approval from dissertation, search, and promotion and tenure committees that sometimes comprise individuals disinterested in minority issues. Tribes need us to utilize the data we amass to assist in political, economic, social and educational spheres, but many universities do not support these activist interests. We are concerned about recruitment and retention of Indigenous students, and we are sensitive to how universities use images of natives for self-promotion. (p.21)

When I applied to do an interdisciplinary PhD program at my university, I faced what I thought was an unnecessary hurdle; an entire year passed from the date I applied to when I was approved to begin my program. This was an unprecedented event. I believe that it could be attributed to the fact the Graduate Studies Department had few ideas of the nature of my proposed interdisciplinary research in Indigenous Knowledge Systems as it applies to agriculture and education. Maybe, it was because my research might raise some controversial or contentious issues about food security in a College that researches genetically modified foods? Oftentimes our Indigenous research needs and interests are not familiar to the research norms of the academy, which often narrows rather than extends the boundaries. Sometimes our research needs and interests challenge and run counter to the goals of higher learning and official knowledge. Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred (2005), Director of the Indigenous Governance Institute in Victoria, British Columbia believes education must be a blend of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures. This, he says, will create a critical awareness of the Indigenous

experience and a political space for change at the same time as training young Indigenous learners in their traditional knowledge:

To do so, leaders must promote Native education both in the conventional Western sense and in terms of re-rooting young people within their traditional cultures. In time, such education will produce a new generation of healthy and highly skilled leaders who will be able to interact with the changing mainstream society from a position of strength rooted in cultural confidence. These leaders will practice a new style of Native politics that will reject the colonial assumptions and mentalities that have allowed state domination to continue. It will recognize and counter the state's efforts to co-opt, divide and conquer communities. It will be founded on the essential wisdom of tradition. It will blend respect for the ancestors' wisdom with a commitment to live up to their example. (Alfred, 1999, p.133)

Non-Indigenous scholars have offered their thoughts on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Peter Kulchisky, from the Native Studies Department at the University of Manitoba states that by establishing the basis for Indigenous Knowledge, we question and dismantle attitudes and practices that began with the Enlightenment era. These archaic attitudes and practices have no real application in education, nor are they reflective of diversity. Kulchisky (1999) questions the universality of non-Indigenous Knowledge systems:

A variety of challenges to the notion of a universal "man" who would continue to "progress" through the application of his rational powers have in the last few decades gained force within the humanities and social sciences. Feminists, anti-racists, and those involved in the struggle for decolonization have thrown the notion of a universal "man" into question, finding for the most part that where such a figure is presupposed it usually, on closer scrutiny, has been found to be a figure bound by values embedded in racial, class and gender privilege. (p. 15)

Scholar Roxanna Ng (2000) describes her experience with Indigenous Knowledge. Partly through her need for personal healing, Ng established a course in Traditional Chinese

Medicine (TCM), which she compares to Indigenous knowledge. Ng had been suffering from work-related stress, which she describes as a result of focusing only on the intellect parts of her being. Ng was raised in the British colony of Hong Kong and was not exposed to TCM until she became an academic at a Canadian university where she developed and taught a course called Health and Illness. For Ng, it was a transformational experience:

Teaching this course gave me an opportunity to explore and reclaim an aspect of my cultural heritage. It allowed me to experiment with a form of teaching that attempts to overcome the body/mind split in intellectual endeavor that is an endemic part of university education. Finally, it helped me bring the public (my career and activism) and private (achieving balance and well-being) spheres of my life together. (Ng, 2000, p.169)

In Ng's experience TCM had been subordinated to conventional and British knowledge. Her teaching included aspects of Qi Gong, a physical movement intended to integrate the body with the mind, not only in theory but in practice as well. Teaching this course posed challenges that her other courses did not. Ng believes it was because it challenged the hegemony of mainstream educational practice. Perhaps because it was an unconventional form of teaching, some students resisted and criticized her work:

One limitation of introducing alternative forms of knowledge into a mainstream educational setting is that they will always be resisted and delegitimized. This will happen, I conclude, however excellent the material and pedagogical skills of the teacher may be. (p. 178)

Indigenous scholars bring new ideas and another worldview, which are often lacking in university disciplines. The academy can be enriched by the inclusion of Indigenous

Knowledge Systems creating diverse, welcoming, inclusive workplaces where real democracies can be inspired and realized. But universities are well aware of the political ramifications of hiring Indigenous scholars who are politicized about equal rights. If they hire scholars who are activists, then they can expect disruption and pressure for change in the status quo.

In many ways, several of my colleagues and I have attempted to make a small difference in the institutionalization of Indigenous Knowledge and to formulate some answers to these questions through our personal and academic journeys. The laborious task of producing *Expressions in Canadian Native Studies* (2000) was the collective effort of a primarily University of Saskatchewan team of academics to define Indigenous Knowledge. We, the editors, asked ourselves the questions who would be invited to write and what would the table of contents look like. The planning of this textbook with fellow colleagues was not a straightforward path. As a collective, we had to identify gaps that existed within the current collections. How could a local team decide what topics would be identified for a textbook that was intended to serve a national readership? The final product was a Native studies textbook called *Expressions in Canadian Native Studies* (1999) that is currently used for introductory Native studies courses. The textbook covers the range of North American Indigenous Knowledge Systems, including Indigenous People's intellectual property rights, biodiversity, women's knowledge, and international human rights. Other events in knowledge production that I coordinated were two international Aboriginal science conferences and two conferences on Indigenous

Knowledge. I have presented papers at and listened to presenters at numerous conferences. Some of these have been scientific bodies and Indigenous Knowledge conferences. My presentations included preserving Indigenous Languages, research methodologies, sustainable development, water rights, curriculum development and food sovereignty. The purpose of the majority of my academic work has been to bring Indigenous Knowledge forward to the academy and to present it as legitimate knowledge. The following is a quote from a paper I presented on Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Global Food Systems and Community Sovereignty at a symposium called *The Globalisation of Agricultural Biotechnology: MutliDisciplinary Voices from the South at the Center for Globalisation and Regionalisation* at the University of Warwick, England in 2005:

Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems have contributed greatly to global health in the area of foods and medicines. For the most part this knowledge is seldom acknowledged. Indigenous peoples have suffered devastating losses when they have had contact with colonizing forces. Today Indigenous peoples are going through a process that has been referred to as recolonization as a result of the forces of globalization. The loss of human rights among Indigenous peoples has resulted in a global struggle for sovereignty. However this time the issues involve more than just Indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples, farmers and other concerned communities need to unite around issues of food sovereignty, food safety, and food security. The well-being the earth and all who live on earth require concerted action. (p.16)

Similarly, my Masters thesis in Education, entitled *Honoring Indigenous Science Knowledge as a Means of Ensuring Western Science Accountability*, documented Indigenous Knowledge in the sciences and described some of the tensions that exist between the two bodies of knowledge. "While it is indisputable that Indigenous

knowledge in the sciences predates much of Western science, and forms the basis for many contemporary scientific wonders, recognition for these contributions is not evident” (Settee, 2005, p.6). Through this process of learning to critique the conditions of dominant culture and the ensuing development of a critical mass of Indigenous scholars, curriculum is changed and we educate our colleagues and students to appreciate Indigenous Knowledge Systems and to consider how we can become critical educators and learners.

In 2002, I graciously served as an assessor for and later recommended a new degree program on Indigenous leadership and Community Development at Negahneewin College of Indigenous Studies at Confederation College in northern Ontario. That same year, the provincial government of Ontario approved the degree program. In addition to conference presentations, I have been advisor to many federal governmental processes which sought out the Indigenous voice on such matters as biodiversity, benefits sharing, and sustainable development. These consultations sought answers to how Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Indigenous voice can be considered when discussing government interests. These conferences, consultations, and meetings attracted scholars and community representatives from various regions of the world and permitted us to exchange strategies and curriculum ideas for use within the academy. Unlike many academic conferences, our meetings, almost without exception, include the voices of the extended Indigenous communities. As educators, we must continue to listen to the voices from community—the source of Indigenous Knowledge. This praxis helps to keep a

critical perspective of the needs of community, to encourage civic participation, and to foster the development of democratic values. Or as Giroux (1992, p. 18) might query, is education and schooling “to uncritically serve and reproduce the existing society or challenge the social order to develop and advance its democratic imperatives?”

WHOSE KNOWLEDGE?

Critical theory makes it possible for Indigenous people to see the world in an enlarged perspective because we have removed the blinders that obscure knowledge. There are some troubling issues of knowledge creation that need to be addressed. As Indigenous peoples, we cannot understand or explain the world we live in or the real choices offered us as long as western scientific and technological knowledge has deskilled us. We need to ask some hard questions. Who gives Indigenous knowledge-holders voice in the poorly laid out path of globalization and the hallowed halls of academic research and development where that knowledge is subjugated? We are not the only ones who are questioning the relationship of globalization, knowledge creation, and democratic rights. How do communities who hold collective rights to knowledge cope with Western imposed concepts of intellectual property rights as private ownership? How do we handle the crises of the disappearance of Indigenous languages and their relationship to Indigenous Knowledge? Western science generates technologies and applications that are not morally or politically neutral (Harding, 1991). Who has the rights to or stewardship of the earth and can call up the purveyors of unethical research practice, such

as the atomic and nuclear bombs that now have capacities to wipe out virtually all life on earth? Some leaders now admit that they hold some regions of the world hostage through the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. How do those knowledge keepers who have taken centuries to produce the well-adapted and life-giving hybrids comprehend the knowledge of suicide seeds, known by some as “terminator technology”? Research now has the capacity to clone human beings (Shiva, 1993). One question should be, does this type of research need a formal policing and who will do this? Another question should be, how can we guarantee public accountability for questionable research? Lastly, how can we assure that community needs drive public research? For these and other issues, Indigenous peoples are demanding a place in knowledge production. Indigenous peoples believe they have valuable contributions to make to ensure the survival of the planet. If as Indigenous scholars our struggles have been met with mute stares from keepers of the academy, how then can grass roots communities expect any audience? Who gives voice to the disenfranchised without reserve First Nations and Métis people whose numbers grow daily?

INCORPORATING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

Indigenous Knowledge Systems can play an important role within the larger society where Indigenous people are located but have less influence. Within that sphere, misconceptions and misinformation exist about Indigenous people. This is due to the

fact that formal educational institutions do inadequate jobs of teaching about Indigenous history, culture, and the history of colonialism. The lack of critical perspective gives rise to racist views, attitudes, and color-blindness (Giroux, 2006) about Indigenous and other marginalized people's living conditions and cultures. Like other marginalized people who live with economic poverty, Aboriginal people live very public lifestyles. They are highly visible because of the economic poverty that leads to homelessness, crimes of poverty, jail rates, and street life. The media helps perpetrate a type of informal education and the broader society makes the obvious conclusions that most of our people are criminals living violent and unproductive lives. Informal education, that which we see with our eyes and outside what we are taught in schools, becomes a type of education permanently etched in our mind:

Inherent in the logic of color-blindness is the central assumption that race has no valence as a marker of identity or power when factored in the social vocabulary of everyday life and the capacity of exercising individual and social agency. (Giroux, 1992, p. 76)

This type of informal education and its role in the production of racist attitudes must be met head on with a thoughtful educational approach that initiates a critical inquiry into the roots of poverty and other forms of marginalization. Left unchecked uninformed attitudes give rise to creation of stereotypes and racism with far reaching consequences. As a group, Indigenous peoples in Canada have been marginalized in all aspects of society including employment, education, housing, and safety. Yet Indigenous peoples are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, courts, jails, and in the streets. The fact that we are overrepresented in negative indicators means that the problem is

structural in nature. Until those structures have been corrected, Indigenous peoples will continue to live within Canada with no human rights. Giroux (in Macedo & Gounari, 2006) refers to these conditions as racial injustice that the uncritical public considers a matter of private concern, rather than the lack of democratic rights directed at those who face discrimination (p.69).

The great need for awareness about Indigenous peoples was demonstrated in a 2001 study. In that year, the Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies (CAAS) conducted a national Student Awareness Survey. The purpose of the survey was to measure awareness, attitudes, and knowledge of facts about Aboriginal peoples' histories, cultures, worldview, and current concerns. In total, 519 young adults responded to a 12-page survey. A coalition of Aboriginal and Canadian educators, scholars, elders, and advocates of the CAAS network developed and administered the survey. The report called "Learning about Walking in Beauty" describes the findings from the survey and offers a framework and proposals for learning about peaceful and racially harmonious coexistence:

For generations, Aboriginal stakeholders have been calling for improvements to school curricula, Learning about Walking in Beauty is ground breaking because it demonstrates that Canadians also want curricula to present Aboriginal histories and cultures honestly and respectfully. Broad inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives in school curricula will increase students' awareness about this land, our interwoven histories and current issues in the relationship facing all Peoples who live in Turtle Island, now known as Canada. (Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies, <http://www.edu.yorku.ca:8080/~caas/>, accessed March 25, 2006)

The “Learning About Walking in Beauty” highlights section states that 65% of Aboriginal students are now educated in provincial or territorial schools and not on reserve (no page number). These students are instructed in provincial curricula. There are great opportunities to impact Aboriginal students’ self-esteem by infusing Aboriginal perspectives throughout mandated curricula. These Aboriginal perspectives help ensure the students’ academic success and also addresses the multi-generational cultural repression that has arisen from official policies. All students have an opportunity and obligation to begin this work:

For their part, Canadian students must be prepared to address the economic, social and cultural marginalization of Aboriginal Peoples, which the United Nations Human Rights Committee stated is "the most pressing human rights issue facing Canadians"(April 1999). Aboriginal perspectives integrated across the curriculum from the earliest grades to high school will begin to address the causes of racism. (Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies, <http://www.edu.yorku.ca:8080/~caas/> , accessed March 25, 2006)

The report follows a unique pedagogical framework based on the four directions of the Learning Circle or Medicine wheel, which is a fluid and flexible model for learning and understanding. The *North* covers issues such as language, traditional spirituality, cultural elements and customs, relationship with other parts of the natural world, and responsibilities of individuals, families, clans, nations and confederacies. This section also covers Aboriginal perspectives on traditional education, history, and the importance of changing what is being taught about Aboriginal peoples. The section to the *East* addresses the process of colonization, treaties, land theft, and the exploitation of

resources on unceded territories. It covers issues such as the Residential schools' policies of forced assimilation, such as the Indian Act. This section works to dispel the myth of the Indian as victim. The section to the *West* represents the decolonization process, one of renewal and rebuilding. Here students are encouraged and prepared to take up adult civic responsibilities. The *South* concludes on a positive note that students are concerned and want changes that facilitate understanding. CAAS data confirm the finding in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: "Canada's young people have evaluated their schools. They have determined that the education system is not informing them how to approach the issues of relationship between Aboriginal Peoples and Canada." (p. 130)

Some solutions identified in the report call for:

- Aboriginal-directed professional development opportunities for in-service teachers;
- Aboriginal-led changes to curricula for pre-service teachers;
- Public policies that encourage more Aboriginal men and women to become educators;
- Redirection of resources, more critical analysis and policy development.

The report further suggests that the federal government should partner with civil society institutions and charitable foundations and other educational partners to turn their attention to the following points:

- Collaboration, at the policy level, of all education authorities to enable and promote mandatory Aboriginal Studies, so that all students have access to this curriculum
- Implementation of resource distribution policies which will enable access to quality Aboriginal-produced resources such as the RCAP report and its educators' guide
- Program development, which support teachers who wish to invite Aboriginal resource persons into their classrooms
- The design of new and innovative research
- The development of research, which includes valid, appropriate Aboriginal perspective curriculum

The “Learning About Walking in Beauty” report is an important document to direct policy, especially, if governments act on it.

Within education, as well as other areas, Indigenous peoples have been kept out of policy-making that affects their daily lives. This omission is largely because Indigenous peoples until recently were not generally involved in research. Research has been a contentious issue for Indigenous peoples This has been referred to as “the colonial dynamics of dominance and control” (Dudziak, 2000). Dudziak states that there is a need for colonial relations to be transformed into new cultures of policy-making that are more just, egalitarian, and emancipatory. She describes how Aboriginal Knowledge and values can be used to disrupt conventional policy-making practices and to help create new social

relations. The new paradigm is one of inclusivity, concern for justice, adaptation, and workable inter-cultural relations. Dudziak states that in the future when policy is established, particular attention will be paid to Aboriginal knowledge and cultural norms (p. 235). This sentiment is echoed by Bud Hall, Head of the Department of Adult Education at Ontario Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. In Hall's words, Indigenous peoples have been silenced and their issues ignored or misrepresented largely by, and with the compliance of, mainstream educators:

This project of silencing Canada's first people has reinforced the appropriation of land, the degradation of the environment, the creation of assimilationist residential schools, and the continuation of racist stereotypes about people of aboriginal descent. And through curriculum design, program planning, school reform, textbook adoption, language policies, limitations of language provision, and thousands of smaller ways, many non-aboriginal educators have participated knowingly or unknowingly in this educational silencing. The accumulated result of this systematic exclusion has been that information about aboriginal life has not been easily accessible to students, teachers, and adult educators. In particular, the perspectives of aboriginal peoples, expressed in their own voices without the mediation of Western culture, have been largely absent. (Hall, 2000, p.203)

In their study called "Researching with Aboriginal Peoples: Practices and Principles", Pidgeon and Hardy Cox (2002) state:

It is the researcher's ultimate responsibility to the people involved and the research process itself to ensure that respect and integrity are observed. Researchers must strive to contribute to the field of research by considering the following core questions: How will the research contribute to Aboriginal peoples? What support exists among Aboriginal people for the research? What is its relevance? What research gaps will be filled? What questions will be addressed? (p.2)

Research that is approached as a process with the researched in mind will be more respectful, responsible, relevant, and reciprocal (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

Pedagogic institutions are sites where borders are constantly drawn and redrawn, borders that define cultural, social, political, economic, gender, racial and class spaces that legitimate them positively or negatively. As First Nations peoples, we know that omissions within the education sector are paralleled within all socio-economic sectors resulting in inequitable consequences that become entrenched through all Canadian social, economic, and political sectors. It is important not to include Indigenous Knowledge, as a subject matter-only, but to recognize that philosophy is a key component in the transmission of Indigenous Knowledge. In other words, the *how* is as important as the *what*. Jane Harp, a northern Saskatchewan Cree educator, describes how learning is done in Aboriginal communities. In traditional cultures, the child was taught through a means of observation, participation, experience, and practice in the performance of daily skills rather than through verbal instruction. Harp (in Stiffarm, 1999) maintains that this method, called modeling, is grounded in culture and has relevance in today's classroom:

Although it may not be totally relevant to learn exactly the same skills that were required in years past to survive in the natural world, the modelling approach remains relevant for teaching skills that are essential for the personal and professional growth of Aboriginal children. Teachers must be cognizant of the fact that, in teaching Aboriginal children, the educational process extends beyond the act of transmitting book learning's of ideas and concepts that are foreign and out of the cultural context of the children. The modeling approach is culturally relevant and would be in keeping with traditional Aboriginal perspectives. (p.49)

Goulet's (1998) research among the northern Dene reveals similarities:

Social competence among the Dene that begins with the recognition that learning ought to occur primarily through observation rather than through instruction, a practice that is consistent with the Dene view that true knowledge is personal knowledge. (p. 247)

There are several important considerations when including Indigenous Knowledge and knowledge transmission, such as the role of family and extended family. The role of the family in the teaching and learning context is central in Native communities; however, the family has a different meaning from the Eurocentric definition. The family includes extended members, including aunties, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Grandparents not only include immediate grandparents but their brothers and sisters as well. More recently the role of family has been impacted by modern influences:

Traditionally, the responsibilities of the kinship group were an important factor in maintaining and sustaining the culture. This concept can be expanded into the school by giving back the responsibility of teaching and learning to the parents, thereby acknowledging that the educational system is not capable of providing all the knowledge and wisdom that is required to sustain the culture in a changing world that is constantly being bombarded by outside influences: forces that can negate parental and cultural values and are not easy to deal with. For example, cable television and the telephone systems in the north have effectively removed the need for people to visit and exchange ideas. (Stiffarm, 1999, p.56)

On the issue of motherhood Anderson (2003) describes a more inclusive role of who is recognized as mother:

In the Aboriginal ideology of motherhood, all women have the right to make decisions on behalf of the children, the community and the nation. The

Aboriginal ideology of motherhood is not dependent on whether, as individuals, we produce children biologically. Women can be mothers in different ways. I have heard many stories of magnificent "mothers" who have adopted children as well as adults and provided them with the guidance and love that they needed. (p. 171)

Harp (2000) states that schools, especially within Northern and Native communities, should be obliged to revitalize the cultures and must integrate valuable aspects of community, including the value of the extended family.

Métis author and professor of literature, Kristina Fagan (2002) presents some interesting challenges to the topic of Native Literature. In her discussion of "native literature" Fagan identifies two problems. The first problem is that it implies a constant link between the category *Native* and the topic *Literature* that is not particularly liberating. Citing that work is interpreted as a transparent chronicle of oppression, dispossession, and suffering. This she attributes to a widespread lack of knowledge about tribal identities and traditions. Fagan is referring to literature written by non-Indigenous peoples. This could be attributed to the fact that sometimes institutions emphasize getting the literature to the institution and not thinking about the impact of institutionalizing of it. The fact that much Native Literature refers to the process of colonization is easier to handle than studying specific tribal histories and traditions, which are complex and are often not written down. Finally, Fagan states that she believes balance is required and can be accomplished by paying attention to the diversity of Native people, whether they be individual, tribal, regional, or political. Most literature has been written for its human value, the betterment of community, and to support a

greater understanding. Episkenew (2002) describes hegemony in the world of literature which keeps Indigenous canons out of the public eye:

Writing by Canadian Aboriginal authors still occupies the literary margins of the canon. While the works of Native American authors, such as Silko, Momaday, and Erdrich, appear in every new anthology of modern American literature, the works of Canadian Aboriginal writers, such as Clutesi, Campbell, and Culleton, are absent. (p. 53)

This omission is prevalent in the academy where academics feel that native literature is not complex enough for university courses:

Many academics believe that Canadian Aboriginal Literature is inferior in that it is flawed in its lack of complexity and, therefore, is not “teachable.” After all, how does one handle a simple narrative when one has been trained to analyze and deconstruct complexities? (p. 53)

Much of Native literature is written, Episkenew claims, for the community and not solely academia; “they write in a way that their works are accessible to a variety of educational levels and not solely for an academic audience. (p. 53)” It is an unfortunate situation for all students when our non-Indigenous colleagues overlook some of the great Indigenous literature which. In addition Indigenous students do not see their realities reflected in the curriculum as official knowledge. The absence of Indigenous literature reinforces their invisibility. In most respects, Native Literature has not given way to the production of pulp fiction as Anderson (2000) explains:

We exist because of and for the relationships we hold with everything around us. Knowledge is therefore of no use if it does not serve relationships. My goal has been to write a book that would serve Aboriginal people, but also a book that

would grow from and evolve within the context of my relationships as a member of the Aboriginal community. (p.46)

CULTURAL LITERATURE

Some writers such as Ken Carriere (2002) have used their writing to preserve the Swampy Cree's old terminology and knowledge. Carriere states that it is necessary for those who have the writing skills to preserve as much as we can in print of our elders' ecological knowledge of the marshland. Carriere's book *Otawask Wicihtaw Tawanipeyanik, The Bulrush helps the Pond* (2002), is a nature book written in Swampy Cree accompanied by an English translation. This book captivates the essence of Indigenous Knowledge by describing all the interconnected animal life that exists in a pond. That life includes *pipiciwansip*, "the widgeon"; *apiscimosos*, "the white tailed deer"; *ocacaganiwak*, "blackbirds"; and others. The book highlights the seasons and the work the animals do during each season:

Sigwan

Sigwan Paskwahk

Naspici pisim mesci-tigisew koniwa.

Ati-mostapiw maskami wanipeyahk.

Spring

Spring in the Prairies.

Gradually, the sun melts all the snow.

The ice sits bare on the pond.

Atamipek pesagigiw otawask.

Egwani ati-mestaso maskamiy

Wanipeyahk ohci.

Sagimesak maci-moskiwak

Egwa ati-ayawewak sagimesisa.

Under the water, the bulrush is growing.
The ice on the pond melts away.
The mosquitoes start to move
And have little mosquitoes. (p.11)

The book features the Swampy Cree seasonal cycle, or calendar, and explains the traditional food gathering that is conducted during the animals' seasonal activities. All three names, in Swampy Cree, English, and scientific terminology, are given for the animals and seasons. The reader "is left with an appreciation of the fragile prairie wetland ecosystem and the interplay of the pond animals with replenishing bulrush" (p. 2). The book is intended to help young readers appreciate not only the diversity but also the fragility of prairie wetland ecosystems. In words and pictures, the book illustrates that traditional Aboriginal culture is at least parallel if not superior to the dominant paradigm of Western science. Using colourful photography Carrier created an award-winning book that serves an important role in documenting Indigenous Knowledge. When featuring nature as the classroom the book demonstrates the depth of knowledge in simplified concepts.

Some literature such as the work of pioneer Dr. Freda Ahenakew goes right to the source. Ahenakew has produced books such as *Stories My Grandmother Told Me* and *Cree Tales of Curing and Cursing* (2000). Many of her books are interviews with elders and all of them include the Cree translation. She has collaborated with linguist Dr. Chris Wolfart from the University of Manitoba to produce many seminal books on the structure of the

Cree language. “*Waskahikaniwiyiniw-acimowina, Stories of the House People*” (1987), is a series of interviews with three elders who have now passed on, Peter Vandall, Joe Duquette, and Ida McLeod. These stories, translated from Cree, include history, teachings, and humour. The old men, Vandall and Duquette, recall experiences from their youth and warn of the loss of traditional values. The first four stories describe Cree identity and what life used to be like when they were young. They talk about the role of community in social control and the absence of violence within community:

And it was rare for the Crees to commit any crimes against one another at that time, even though there were so many people of different tribes, they did not very often commit violent crimes against one another, they lived together peacefully. (Ahenakew, 1987, p.47)

The next three stories contain humour as a teaching method to describe the foibles of humanity, such as alcoholism, youthful foolishness, and the inevitable aging process. The storytellers tell about their own misfortunes and mock their own failures, which are seen as an admirable trait in Cree society:

It takes a very self-reliant, mature person to tell about his own misfortunes, to mock his own failures. This sovereign attitude is highly regarded in Cree society, and of such a person one can say with admiration: *e-nihtawahpihisot* 'he/she is good at joking about himself/herself. (p.xiii)

Ahenakew has produced several children's books as well. She wants to capture the stories of elders in their own Cree language before they passed on. Her children's stories speak to the power of storytelling. Ahenakew's work is the historical heart of written Indigenous Knowledge. This prolific woman has made academia work for her in

capturing knowledge from her community and, like Carriere, in her first language of Cree. Books like Carriere's and Ahenakew's provide an important voice and valuable information for cultural continuity. They remind us of our culture's valuable contributions to literature and education in general.

TEACHING THROUGH STORY

Storytelling, *achimowin*, is a central feature of my dissertation. Storytelling is an important aspect of Indigenous Knowledge as it embodies life's lessons and shows how knowledge is transmitted to all. Stories are the cornerstone of our culture and need to be an essential part of learning in order to ensure cultural survival. Stories have much more importance in oral cultures. In many First Nations, stories are not unidimensional but are told to convey several different lessons depending when and where they are told and by whom (Cruikshank, 1999). In oral cultures, storytelling is a powerful medium of life instruction and a means of conveying values, which are important links to the past and a means of surviving into the future:

If storytellers were old, their stories were much older. The Grandmas and Grandpas were the living repositories for all those wonderful stories told them by their elders from generations before. The stories I heard and learned provide lessons that I can apply in the present; but they also connect me to the past-to a way of life that has endured far longer than I can imagine-and to the people who walked the land and left old trails to follow. And because I and others like me were, and are, hearing and remembering the stories, that way of life will remain viable through us. (Marshall, 2002, p. xiii)

Esther Jacko (1992) recalls the role of storytelling in her upbringing and how it helped her understand her Ojibwa cultural beliefs and value systems in a fun way. This view approaches life with a totally different interpretation and offers unique explanations of our relationship with nature, animals and the spirit world. The focus of these explanations cannot be found or learned in any non-Aboriginal system in the larger society:

Ojibwa stories and legends are learned from within Ojibwa society. They are found within the traditional storyteller who loves to share ancient memories that have been passed down, in a way that is warm, entertaining and lots of fun!

Storytelling improves speaking skills and listening skills, and provides a novel way to learn. I think people can learn more from something if they are able to enjoy what they are learning, as well as participate in it. Storytelling allows listeners to participate by asking questions throughout the recital and by contributing their personal interpretation of what they have heard afterwards. (p.42)

Of all the arts, storytelling is the oldest and can serve as a methodology for cultural liberation:

It is the basis of all other arts—drama, art, dance and music. It has been and is an important part of every culture. It is necessary for the revitalization of First Nations cultures and can be a starting point for moving way away from assimilationist to liberationist education. Stories provide the intergenerational communication of essential ideas. Stories have many layers of meaning, giving the listener the responsibility to listen, reflect and then interpret the message. Stories incorporate several possible explanations for phenomena, allowing listeners to creatively expand their thinking processes so that each problem they encounter in life can be viewed from a variety of angles before a solution is reached. All people, young and old, love stories. (Lanigan, 1998, p.113)

In her classroom of young Cree learners, Lanigan (1998) found that storytelling was an effective teaching and learning tool that improved speaking and listening skills.

Archibald (1998) describes the importance of learning to listen:

Many First Nations gatherings open with a prayer, song, or ceremony like burning sweetgrass or sage to symbolize cleansing the mind/body/spirit to get ready to listen in the manner described above. Centering, quieting oneself, is one way to get ready to story-listen. When people have a hand drum they will beat it after some of the speaker's words to show their appreciation of the thought and some will say "Ho!" which means that they are listening. I think these are examples of how one can take care of and show respect toward the speaker. The speaker/storyteller appreciates these signals of listening. Reciprocally, the storyteller can take care of others by selecting an appropriate story to tell. Sometimes, one's intuitive power helps with the selection (p. 134).

Storytelling is a powerful technique in teaching young children about life and reciprocity. Often, stories do not have a conclusion but are told in a way to develop children's critical thinking skills. In 1995, the *Kisewatotatowin* project in Saskatoon collected the stories of elders fearing that many were being lost:

These stories were open-ended to allow children to interpret their own truths and arrive at their own conclusions. Usually a number of truths (possibilities) would be presented to indicate that one way was not the only way. Children learned to be patient and to be good listeners because some of the stories were long, depending on the lesson to be learned. It was customary to present a gift to the storyteller for his or her words of wisdom. This also reinforced the teaching that one does not take without giving something in return. (*Kisewatotatowin*, 1995, p.74)

The *Kisewatotatowin* study was a community-based Saskatoon project that resulted in a manual for educators. It is an example of how Indigenous Knowledge and stories of elders can be used to strengthen community relations. It is a story similar to how I try to tell Henry McKay Settee's story and how that story has been multilayered in my research journey.

Storytelling in a contemporary setting combines the teachings of the past and adds a new dimension of the political, cultural, and environmental challenges faced by our communities today. Everyone has a story, and honouring those stories will provide an important community-healing aspect to our lives and drive the formal learning process. In fact, some feel that this is the only way as it is a liberating means of giving everyone voice and of ensuring that everyone's voice is heard. Honoring the oral is an essential part of storytelling. For those fortunate to be able to speak their original language, they have the added dimension of nuance, meaning, and context, but non-Indigenous speakers' experience with stories are no less important and instructive. Culture is always changing, adapting, and rebirthing to add new cultural, linguistic, and transformative experiences. All of these adaptations and transformations must be included in storytelling, especially in cases where the culture has been deeply impacted by social, political, and economic forces. For people who have been marginalized by formal schooling, storytelling is a teaching and learning legacy. It is a tool for analysis, hope, and the essence of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. It is an essential aspect to the rebirthing of nations.

Does the Indian story as it is told now end in rebirth of Native nations as it did in the past? Does it help in the development of worthy ideas, prophecies for a future in which we continue as tribal people who maintain the legacies of the past and a sense of optimism? (Cook-Lynn, in Mihesuah, 1998, p.134)

THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY

The Cultural Conservancy is a non-profit Indigenous rights organization whose home is in the Presidio in the heart of San Francisco. In 1998, the Cultural Conservancy established the “Storyscape Project” to assist Indigenous communities in safeguarding lands and cultures. The project was motivated by the fact that Indigenous songs, stories, and languages are vanishing at a rapid rate:

It is estimated that nearly 89% of the Indigenous of North America are moribund (not currently taught). Elaborate oral literatures are disappearing as older generations pass on and young people become assimilated into western industrial society through the pressures of cultural, political and economic colonization and homogenization, in schools and other institutions, which fail to teach traditional ways to younger people. The storehouses of ethnic-biological knowledge on the healing properties of natural resources, harmonious ways of living with the natural world and time tested sustainable land management practices are threatened. For many tribes, there are no organized cultural preservation programs, due in part to the paucity of materials. As elders pass on, without a systematic program of cultural preservation, the life body of cultural material is severely diminished or lost. (Cultural Conservancy Web Site, <http://www.nativeland.org/projects.html>, accessed January 15, 2006)

The Cultural Conservancy's project, “The Indigenous Language Restoration Project”, is engaged in the storage and repatriation of 67 languages, stories, and song tape recordings of 22 Native American languages. All tapes were recorded by an amateur ethnographer named Guy Tyler who conducted audio recordings of primarily American Southwest Native Americans over a 40-year period. Tyler worked to record the last speakers of endangered language and songs, which described ancient lands and native landscapes, to

serve as guides. "He recorded the sacred song cycle from the last of the Mohave Creation Song singers":

The songs begin by recounting the death of the great God Mutavilya and contain his instructions to the Mohave people for his own cremation thereby establishing Mohave death rituals in practice today. The rediscovery, restoration and translation of the songs are a major contribution to Mohave culture and have helped the tribe in their efforts to defeat the proposal for a nuclear waste dump on their sacred Aboriginal lands by establishing historical evidence of sacred lands through a description of the landmarks described in the songs. (Cultural Conservancy Web Site, <http://www.nativeland.org/projects.html>, accessed January 15, 2006)

The Storyscape Project is in the process of repatriating these recordings to the appropriate tribes so that Indigenous communities can use the songs, stories, and languages in their language immersion and cultural education programs. By remembering their music and histories, they ensure their Mohave cultural survival. According to project director Philip Closky, an interesting issue of tape ownership arose. Competing interests surfaced that reflected issues of ownership, power, the place of the voice of the deceased, and the disposition of the actual tapes. Some tribes wanted exclusive control, but academic interests felt that access should not be restricted. Eventually, a plan was established in consultation with a board of advisors made up of Indian elders, cultural workers, Indigenous scholars, and human rights activists, as well as linguists and anthropologists. With the help of the Berkeley Language Center at the University of California, state of the art equipment will transfer the recordings onto a digital format and will archive the recordings in climate controlled vaults. The recordings will be available for listening, but they cannot be used for commercial purposes and duplication is permitted only with the

permission of tribes of the people recorded. Closky describes the thrill of listening to ancient songs:

In the darkness of the south studio I watch an ancient song transformed into a sound wave on a computer screen as we transfer the aging tapes onto a digital drive. I listen to a deeply aged voice recount a shared history. The song has a memory rooted in granite mountains and wide fans of sand and its age is like the furrowed lines in the palm of a hand. I find the nature of the story in the landscape of the song, meaning in the texture of its sounds. The image on the screen reminds me of a heartbeat, a current that has persisted through history and is now seeking its future. (Cultural Conservancy Web Site <http://www.nativeland.org/projects.html> , accessed January 15, 2006)

Storytelling and the work of the Cultural Conservancy add important cultural dimensions and help to redefine what constitutes knowledge. Through the establishment of community-based organization such as the Cultural Conservancy, Indigenous peoples help to validate and institutionalize Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

EXPRESSIONS OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE THROUGH THE ARTS

In recent years culture has taken on a new importance in the effort to understand power and domination. Giroux (1997) argues that culture has to be viewed as a domain of struggle where the production and transmission of knowledge is always a contested process. Popular culture, with its television, video games, computers, and music plays a critical role in the discourse on power and domination for Indigenous peoples. What is of critical concern is not only the expanding spaces of popular culture in the lives of Indigenous families but the tacit rules that guide cultural production. Mass media has changed the ways culture operates which is different from productions of a few decades

ago. New forms of culture and cultural domination are produced as the distinction between the real and the simulated is blurred. This blurring effect of hyperreality constructs a social vertigo characterized by a loss of touch with traditional notions of time, community, self, and history. New structures of cultural space and time generated by bombarding electronic images from local, national, and international spaces unseat our sense of space. This proliferation of images and texts in the mass media function as a mechanism of hegemony in Western society and continually threatens Indigenous ways of knowing through its corporate domination of transmission.

Indigenous knowledge is not only transmitted through traditional means, such as the spoken—and more recently the written word, but it is also being transmitted by relatively new counterhegemonic means such as contemporary music, drama, video, and more recently television with the establishment of the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network which is located in the web of reality. The primary objective of examining various Indigenous art forms is to understand how each are an expression of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and how they contribute, as they always have, to the well-being of community:

What do we bring back to the People, to the well-being of future generations and the honor of the ancestors? How do we create art for life's sake? I believe that the taproot of this art, our Indigenous aesthetic, has been here all along. Yet we don't always listen. It may speak differently to us today than in the past, but it's still here. It's our stories—those of ages past and the ones that are given voice today. It's our families, our lands, our ancestors, ceremonies, languages. It's the Fourth World made manifest. Native literary scholars bring important skills with us to discussions about nationhood and decolonization, and we can engage the issues through the power of metaphor, or poetry, of symbolism, and of the

transformative powers of language. (Heath Justice, in Miheshuah, & Cavender Wilson, p. 117)

Because they contribute to the well-being of community and often critique the forces of cultural domination, the arts need to be included as a legitimate source of knowledge that is capable of creating positive change and supporting cultural continuity within Aboriginal communities.

Music has long been a traditional method of entertainment and ceremonial accompaniment providing soothing sounds and teaching valuable stories for social and community enhancement. Traditional music and songs, some thousands of years old, still bring a community together for social activities, such as powwows, ceremonies, feasts, weddings, births, deaths, and other life events in which our music had a function. It was, and still is, used in the ceremonies of every medicine society from the *False Face* of the Rotinoshoni (Iroquois Confederacy) to the *Haatali* of the Dine (Navajo) people. Music was a medium for passing on values, history, and news. It was a form of communicating thoughts and feelings. Music required people to develop social skills and engage in community activities. Through music, we collaborated, co-operated, co-coordinated, laughed, and healed (Anderson, 2000, p.145).

Traditional honor songs are sung to acknowledge our people when they made outstanding contributions for their community, or when an important milestone is passed. Traditional

teacher Margaret Paul, who is Passmoquady from Nova Scotia, talks about teaching youth traditional values through the medium of music, dance, and songs:

That's the way I think, because that's how I think you can reach young kids is through songs, through dancing, through singing. I mean you can't reach them by talking, and talking about you know, Mother Earth and Father Sky or whatever. You can't reach them because we all see it, you know. But they don't see it that way. And I think that is the way we can get back to expressing ourselves, what comes from in here, your heart. (Kulchyski, McCaskill, Newhouse, 1999, p.10)

Elder Wilfred Tootosis, now deceased, describes the eagle whistle, the sacred aspect of music, and their importance in ceremonies:

Every eagle whistle is different in the Sundance, every one sounds different and it sounds beautiful from a distance. But that's for ceremonies, the sacred whistle. The other instrument we play, in the spring- you cut about two or three inches of white poplar bark, two pieces about the same size of bark. And in between the two pieces of bark you put a leaf, in between, and you blow into that, you play some tunes. Any other kind strictly for entertainment, I can't discuss those that were sacred for ceremonies. (Kulchyski, McCaskill & Newhouse, 1999, p. 345)

Within the realm of traditional music, women are beginning to claim their role; however, some women have experienced discrimination in terms of whether they will be permitted to participate. Some women state that discrimination arises from the influences of colonialism and ranges from being ignored by powwow announcers to the denial of payment at public events. As Cherokee traditional singer, Zainab Amadahy claims, to deny women participation in this aspect of culture is to deny the community their need to heal and become whole:

Let us hope that we all are honoured with opportunities to recognize, encourage and support the development of women's music with as much vigor as we support

the recovery of our languages, ceremonies and men's music. (in Anderson, 2000, p.155)

Today, modern Indigenous music has taken our community to new levels of awareness of our history, critical thought, and instruction. I can remember being deeply moved and politicized by the early works of Ojibway singer Willie Dunn, Lakota singer Floyd Waterman, and Cree singer Buffy Sainte Marie, originally from Saskatchewan. In many ways modern musicians popularize our history, radicalize and instill pride in us, and also use a medium to teach that does not involve books. They create a thirst for knowledge that books do not. They sing about social issues and help to educate wider audiences about historical injustices, such as land grabs, genocide, and life on the street. Ladner (1996, p. 110) refers to this as offering "a counter discourse to the colonial discourse." Buffy Sainte Marie's "Universal Soldier" made wide audiences think about the horrors and social injustice of war and genocide. Today's mainstream music videos, which are produced and consumed by most youth, are little more than a crass sexual exploitation of youth, bereft of human values, and only intended for commercial purposes. Today's mainstream music does not offer anything in terms of new visions and only serves to direct youth towards base values and to teach them to value themselves only for their physical looks. In the Indigenous world, today's new musicians and singers, such as Andrea Menard, Kashtin, Chester Knight and the Wind, Mishi Donovan, Susan Uglukark, and others are exploring important identity issues for contemporary Aboriginal youth. Menard's "Métis", from her CD "Velvet Devil", is reflective of her initial struggle

with her Métis identity. Chester Knight implores his young native brothers to acknowledge their suffering, call on the ancestors, to have heart, pride, and be strong:

I am only one man. From a people beaten down. Trying hard to stay strong. Inside this skin so brown. But I still hear the voices. Of those heroes of the past. Whispering so softly. In the silence of the fast. Hear me call, hear me call. Hear me call, hear me call stand strong never fall. You can count on me you can count on me. You must rise above it all. You can count on me. You must rise. Here's a call to everyone Whoever felt ashamed. Or took that wintery midnight walk. That nearly killed the flame. Courage oh my brothers. Find that spirit voice. That calls you back to freedom. It's time to make a choice. (Wintery Midnight Walk, 2002)

The *wintery midnight walk* refers to the incident where several young Aboriginal men were dumped outside of town and left to perish by the Saskatchewan police in freezing temperatures in the middle of the night. In addition to singing about social problems, these musicians also instruct youth to have pride in their culture, put their community before themselves, and work towards social justice. Music also builds bridges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities:

By building bridges, contemporary Aboriginal music also serves as a healing mechanism, in several ways. By building bridges between Native society and the dominant society, that is by facilitating an understanding through the telling of stories about history, traditions, spirituality and problems, contemporary music attempts (intentionally or otherwise) to heal the rift of misunderstanding, mistrust and negative stereotypes. (Ladner, p. 111)

Singers Joe Naytowhow and Cheryl L'Hirondell use the name *Nikamohk*, Cree for “we sing”, along with a hand drum and voice to create beautifully harmonized songs about creating peace among humanity. “We Are All One People” calls out for humanity to acknowledge that they are brothers and sisters despite the skin colour:

We are all - one people
We all come from one creation - way on high
We are all one nation
Under one great sky - you and I
We are all one people
We are all one colour - in her eyes

We are all one people
We all come from one creation - way on high
We are all one nation
Under one great sky - you and I
We are all one people
We are all one colour - in his eyes

We are all one people
We are all one nation
We are all one colour - if we try
(All One People, 2000)

The hand drum and the larger powwow drum have been described as the heartbeat of Mother Earth. In *Pimatisiwin, the Celebration of Life*, Anna Leigh King (2006) tells the story of the drum:

The drum sounds four thunders and then
The singers sing
Four thunders to honour the drums origin
The first vibration travels to the centre
Of the earth
The second reaches the furthest star
A third moves our heart
And the fourth calls us home to dance. (p.5)

When songs are sung using either drum, the tonal scale and sound are different. Sometimes words are not used. The lyrics in the songs of Indigenous peoples speak to

the issue of the survival of Indigenous peoples within systems of marginalization in the broader society.

Radio has been a medium to communicate values. The CBC's *Dead Dog Café* radio program is an insightful and humorous look at contemporary Aboriginal culture. Edna Rain, Floyd Favel Starr, and Thomas King use wry humor and political satire to create insightful commentaries on contemporary and timely issues facing Canada's Indigenous peoples. The characters of Gracey Heavyhand, Jasper Friendly Bear, and Thomas King, as himself, act as somewhat bumbling, naïve characters. Underneath the façade of naiveté, they use brilliant political satire to convey understanding and poke fun at Canadian politics and political leaders. They do this through a dialogue format on the radio often using the Cree language. Part of the one-hour program involves telephone calls with famous Native people. *Dead Dog Café* is a compelling program that explores serious issues by using traditional methods of humor, such as laughing at oneself; it has many Aboriginal people glued to their radio feeling the program was made just for them. These cultural workers have challenged the notion of the “single culture narrative”, how society defines culture and whose culture is recognized. Indigenous artists, like non-Indigenous artists, are integrating their culture into the mainstream and rewriting the definition of cultural arts:

A number of theorists and groups are arguing that culture does not consist of a single narrative, that the division between high and low culture is itself a historical and political construction, and that the production and reception of culture is constituted within a variety of forms and audiences. These new forms of cultural opposition are rewriting culture as a historical and social construct that

can be made and remade within not outside a myriad of traditions, artistic forms and experiences. (Giroux, 1992, p.238)

Similarly, drama is a teaching method that involves understanding ones culture and acting out situations that may be problematic, cathartic, or joyful (Knowles & Mojica, 2003). Drama is a powerful tool, which teaches people to have comfort with their bodies, to feel power in their voices, and to express pain, confusion, and joy. It has been a way of focusing on and valuing people as well knowing that wider audiences appreciate them. Too many Aboriginal students experience failure with formal education, and mediums such as drama have helped create literate, confident, and empowered students. Native theatre has given students authority and recognized their personal and political history. An excellent example is the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company, which was established in 1999. According to the Artistic Director, Kenneth Charlette, theatre is a powerful tool for communication, expression, education, and even healing—it's not just about entertainment. It has turned many young lives around. Twenty years ago in New York, three sisters of Kuna and Rappahannock ancestry founded the Spiderwoman Theater. It is the oldest continually-running women's theatre company in North America. The company has been a training ground for Native actresses, who have gone on to develop their own careers. Since its inception, Spiderwoman has offered performers a space to explore and examine their own issues and ideas, in their various transformations. Lisa Mayo, one of the founders, describes what Spiderwoman theatre embodies:

It wasn't that different from the way I worked. It was a different approach but I was getting to the truth, which is what acting is about: getting to the truth of the character and what is real. It wasn't anything put on or forced or phony. That was the beginning of *Spiderwoman*, *Women in Violence* was about violence in women's lives in their homes or in a marriage, as children, in a workplace, anywhere. That was the first piece and we did it by finding our clown. We became clowns, so it was a slapstick kind of piece, but we addressed subjects that were, for the time not discussed. We were talking about incest and child molestation and abortion and that kind of thing. We were working with subjects that were not very palatable to people. People sometimes didn't want to hear that but we continued. I think our saving grace was that we were comedienne. We were very funny and so even though our main message was a heavy one, we were funny and very entertaining. (Abbott, 2000, p. 169)

As *Spiderwoman* demonstrates, Native theatre has the ability to take serious issues such as child abuse and violence, and get the community to name them so that the issues cannot be dismissed or ignored.

Aboriginal video and filmmakers have produced some tremendous audiovisual productions. Early Abenaki filmmaker, Alanis Obomsawin did much to raise political and social issues through the production of her "Mother of Many Children" film. Filmmakers Doug Cuthand, Tasha Hubbard, Linda Jaine, and Maria Campbell have produced powerful videos on residential schools. Both videos include moving images and voices that have not been previously heard. Cuthand and Hubbard have co-produced videos on contemporary issues, such as Aboriginal housing, youth, and the legendary Cree Chief Big Bear. Hubbard recently won a Gemini Award for her documentary *Two Worlds Colliding*, the story of the young men dumped outside of the city of Saskatoon. Alberta's Gil Cardinal documented the tragic story of Richard, a young man who had been placed in 40 foster homes and eventually took his own life. Journalists Ken Noskiy

and Doug Cuthand write weekly columns for the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and the *Saskatoon Sun* educating readers on contemporary Indigenous issues.

After many years in planning, the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) became a reality just over eight years ago. APTN has produced programs in many Canadian Indigenous languages including Cree and Inuktituk. APTN has an array of programming that covers youth's, children's, environmental, social, linguistic, music, artistic, cultural, political, and international Indigenous issues. APTN has regular current news coverage. Additionally, they have an impressive youth component that is well researched, youth driven, and also a very modern and attractive program. This program covers contemporary issues that youth face and profiles young professionals in art and music. *Cooking with the Wolfman* is an educational and humorous cooking program that uses traditional plants and foodstuff to teach the importance of traditional foods and their relationship to balanced nutrition. It also educates the broader public about the origin of many of today's food. Many of the world's foods trace their origins to Indigenous peoples (LaDuke, 2006). While none of the above mediums are considered teaching methods in the formal sense, they all use those informal methods to powerfully teach about Aboriginal realities, historical and contemporary, and undo Native stereotypes. They challenge mainstream media messages and give the dominant society an understanding the rich and varied cultures of Indigenous peoples.

ART AND VISUAL REPRESENTATION

In the Native world, art has been a force representing the constancy and timelessness of Aboriginal values and beauty, and it has also been a force for social change and community betterment. Art is not separate from everyday existence. Art is both a utilitarian expression and, at the same time, socially and aesthetically therapeutic. Native artists testify to the healing powers of art. My own beadwork and fabric art has served as a great source of healing, inspiration, creativity and relaxation. Art is a great teacher of human values, such as patience and trust and also scientific ones, such as balance, colour, technique, and creativity. Art is not simply art, but it has a deeply spiritual and sacred purpose within the Native world:

A design on a teepee or a horse is a very sacred thing, you just don't choose the design, or your own bird or the colour of the teepee, its something that gets passed on to you and you get an artist to do it. A lot of art on horse designs you can see pictures of it way back, what they considered a war pony. They had those artistic designs on the rump, hip, forehead, and around the eyes. Those are sacred things, you just didn't go out there just for the sake of entertainment, no. They had people who were allowed and passed on to them to do these, but it includes Native prayers, and you just don't go and fool around with a teepee. (Kulchyski, McCaskill & Newhouse, 1999, p.345)

Videographer and media artist Reuben Martel, from Saskatoon and originally from Water Hen Lake First Nations says, "It's the next venue to be taken in terms of artistic expression. The oral tradition is the first step in transmitting information and knowledge. The next step would to elaborate in terms of visual and interpretive" (personal communication, July 20, 2006).

The artistic group, Native Women In the Arts (NWIA) is an excellent example that combines creativity and social change. It was established over 10 years ago by Sandra Laronde and has a membership of over 3000 women and arts organizations. It represents First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women in artistic disciplines. These women share a common interest in art, culture, community, and the advancement of Indigenous peoples. NWIA encourages artistic and cultural expression through activism, creativity, and social responsibility; and it focuses on the Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Literary Arts, and community development projects. To date, NWIA has published the work of over 150 women and has established a national role in promoting and publishing women's literature. NWIA most recently published *My Home as I Remember*, which celebrates the talents of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women artists. Stories include Indigenous women artists from New Zealand, Hawaii, and Mexico. The book represents a total of 62 writers and visual artist from 25 nations who speak from the heart on identity and place in the new millennium. NWIA encourages Indigenous peoples to write by offering workshops. Other workshops have included creative administration development and strategic planning based on Aboriginal models, national arts gathering within reserve communities, and youth workshops. In honour of 10 years of existence, NWIA hosted "Igniting the Spirit", a cultural festival which featured some of Canada's most accomplished Aboriginal women artists, such as Susan Aglulark, Lisa Odjig, world champion hoop dancers, Inuit girl throat singers, internationally acclaimed filmmaker Alanis Obomswin, poet Chrystos, and Inuk singer Lucie Idlout. In 2003, Idlout won the

best female artist at the fifth annual Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards. Music can be a means to create social change.

Métis artist David Hannan's work includes historical references and issues of identity. His work reflects research from written histories as well as the oral history of family and friends. Through his work, he hopes to contribute to the discourse based on Métis needs that are marginalized by the mainstream. Hannan explores the relationship of history to the present, and how it impacts Métis knowledge. Christi Belcourt, a Métis artist, describes her art in powerful words. She replicates beadwork to affirm that Métis culture is not fossilized, but alive. She chooses flower patterns to "offer a counter-balance to the overwhelming negative forces of destruction, despair, violence and death we are exposed to on a daily basis. I want to offer respite for tired eyes and weary minds." For Belcourt art is a celebration of the mystery and beauty of life:

Further, I use my paintings to assert that life is beautiful. There is an incomprehensible complexity found in a simple, single blossom, stem or bud. I am infatuated with plants because they have taught me so much about life, about myself, and about the soul. I stand in awe of life. As some people feel overwhelmed standing beside a large mountain; I feel that way seeing a solitary milk weed seed for example or the fine hairs on stems that glow pure white in the sunlight they absorb. (Belcourt, In Indigenous Bar Conference Proceedings, 2003, p.6)

CRADLEBOARD TEACHING PROJECT

The arts can be a powerful tool for teaching Aboriginal values and identity. The arts can focus on those values that should be preserved and highlight conditions that need to

change. Scholar and musician, Buffy Saint Marie has used technology as a teaching tool in her creation of the “Cradleboard Teaching Project”. The name refers to a device which is common to many Native tribes and aids in childrearing. A cradleboard, made from wood and cloth, holds a baby secure and safe while traveling or being still next to kin. A baby is swaddled and can observe activity all around her. Saint Marie's Cradleboard Teaching Project contains both lesson plans and an interactive component. The project involves new technology, using computers alongside standard tools, and was established—and is still developing—with the help of several American Indian Colleges. Saint Marie’s Cradleboard Project is designed for both native and non-native students and is a project of the Nihewin Foundation for American Indian Education. The Cradleboard Project provides four kinds of curriculum at three grade levels—elementary, middle, and high school—in five core subjects. Included are tribe specific curriculum, such as Cree, Native Hawaiian, and Dakota. For a fee, educators can subscribe to partner interactive curriculum, which includes discussion boards and chat rooms. The five core curriculum areas are geography, social studies, science, history, and music. The social studies unit is free to website visitors, while other units are available to powwow subscribers. The online units use culturally appropriate maps, videos, charts, tests, lesson plans, and activities. An example is the geography unit, which describes ancient North American trade routes and cities. The science unit provides help pages, printable PDF files, activities, lessons, and experiments using scientific concepts of sound from a Native perspective. Saint Marie’s Cradleboard Project gives children critical skills through modern technology; It uses Indigenous Knowledge to survive in modern times. It helps

children learn how to be critically aware of their surroundings, identify place names, and the links to Indigenous culture. They feel valued as young Indigenous people whose cultures have made significant contributions to the world around them. For her many educational achievements in improving the native world Saint Marie was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Saskatchewan at the spring convocation in 2003.

The arts have been a liberating cultural tool for Indigenous communities. The many forms of Indigenous arts have provided voice and hope in the face of dominant cultural arts. The arts accommodate the storytelling aspect of Indigenous peoples' culture and recognize the rich and diverse artistic expressions that have survived our colonial history. Giroux (1992) would describe this process as a "deepening of cultural democracy" (p. 247).

NATIVE LANGUAGES SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Language is at the heart of First Nations culture and knowledge retention. Indigenous peoples, especially elders, believe that without language we have lost our culture and the essence of who we are. Language is the most fundamental way that cultural information is communicated and preserved, especially in those that until recently did not use written expressions. Language's important relationship to knowledge and the survival of a culture requires that any discussion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems must include language

retention. The deliberate and state-imposed destruction of Indigenous languages has caused the loss of traditional knowledge systems. It is estimated that only 3 out of fifty-two Canadian Indigenous languages will survive this century. Today many Indigenous youth are not speaking their native languages. Historically, children were taken out of their homes to attend schools for 10 months of the year. Many of these children received corporal punishment when they spoke their language in boarding schools. As a direct result of historical processes, but also the hegemony and racialization that pervades present education, both formal and informal Indian languages have been slowly disintegrating. This language disappearance trend is happening in other Indigenous communities throughout the world. The loss of language means the loss of human diversity and all the knowledge contained therein. It is important that both community-based and higher learning institutes, with the support of communities and governments, work together to preserve the cultural diversity of Indigenous communities through the support of Indigenous languages. This can be achieved by valuing Indigenous languages enough to offer them at mainstream universities. Indigenous languages should be recognized as official national languages and resources identified to make that statement a reality. Recognizing that all learning does not happen within four walls and that Universities must consider some new pedagogical shifts can save languages. Individuals and communities deciding to strengthen traditional forms of learning can revitalize languages. A group of educators organized a Cree language immersion summer camp at the Sturgeon Lake First Nation, which I attended. For 5 days we sang, exercised, cooked, performed skits, and learned in the outdoors without formal classrooms. The learning

lent itself to much laughter and room for discussion about visioning future language strategies. We had the opportunity to pick sweetgrass and sage and participate in a sweatlodge that was led by a highly regarded Indigenous Knowledge holder who used the ceremony as an opportunity to explain Cree teachings. At the camp, many activities were presented that did not involve lectures and note-taking. There are many ways to learn languages. Activities as simple as turning off the television and returning to visit each other using Native language are excellent examples. This is one aspect of Indigenous sovereignty that no one can take away. It means that as Indigenous people we have to walk our talk.

Verna Kirkness (1998), an Indigenous Language proponent who has been highly recognized for her work, states that the question in Canada should not be whether we should have only 1 or 2 official languages of English or English and French. Kirkness maintains that language is key to identity, and Aboriginal people are more likely to maintain their identity if governments give the same support to Indigenous languages as they have to French language retention:

Language is the principal means whereby culture is accumulated, shared and transmitted from one generation to another. Language expresses the uniqueness of a group's world view. (Kirkness, 1998, p.4)

In order to quell the disappearance of Indigenous Knowledge and languages, Kirkness advises her communities that they must establish banks of knowledge to preserve the language and the stories of elders. Storage is of utmost importance and storage,

according to Kirkness, does not have to be fancy or complicated. A tape and tape recorder is a good beginning.

Kirkness cites the successful revival of the Maori language in Aotearoa as an example that could be applied here in Canada. Disgruntled with the socio-economic standards and the loss of their culture, Maoris forced governments to establish language programs beginning with toddlers in language nests called *Te Kohanga Reo*. The Te Kohanga Reo movement is based on holistic principles of Maori culture, *Kaupapa Maori*. In addition to successfully instilling the Maori language, the process led to a broader based Maori cultural revitalization. Te Kohanga Reo used the community inclusivity principles, which are based on the belief that every community member has a purpose and skill and these skills need to be used when designing language programming. It has been referred to as the Family, *Whanau*, Development Model. The use of traditional cultural values and elder knowledge was foundational to the Te Kohanga Reo programming. In addition to learning the languages, participants also learned administration, catering, financial management, building, and teaching:

The selection of the whanau model was the essential feature of this training because it provided a means whereby the whanau could work together locally and progressively strengthen its ties. In this way the traditional values of the whanau were being actively fostered and practiced, thus stopping the fragmentation, which has been a progressively deteriorating feature of Maori society in the wakes of the drift to the cities. This model accredits the Maori educational experts: the kaumatua, koroua and kuia (elders, elderly men and elderly women, respectively), who are the respected repositories of traditional knowledge and wisdom. Their role as educators is central to the whanau learning programme, providing an opportunity for Maori educational professionalism to be affirmed. This learning, under the guidance and tutelage of the Kaumatua (elders), has been accepted by

the whanau as the most appropriate for the te Kohanga Reo movement in the first instance. (Kirkness, 1998, p.108)

Some had language training at university, some learned from their parents, and others took it up in tertiary institutions and made requests for language classes wherever they found themselves. The Maori people have a distinguished reputation of entrenching their language and of challenging New Zealand's cultural hegemony.

Just as the devaluing of Indigenous languages has been structural, so too must the revitalization. For example, the early Christian churches, with the support of the state, were brutal in their language extermination policies. Children were beaten and humiliated if they spoke their language. Some religious order members stuck pins in the tongues of students who spoke their language. The governments and agencies in the position to support languages must be as intent on reinstating these same languages and ensure that resources match that commitment. The document *Policy Options for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* (1976) recommends full government support for languages: "Governments, with international cooperation, should provide the necessary financial resources and institutional support to ensure that every indigenous child has the opportunity to achieve both fluency and literacy in his/her own traditional language" (p.5).

There is no one magic formula to support language strategies. The Canadian government has committed to support French language acquisition. This same support should be

extended for the founding languages of pre-confederation Canada, such as Cree, Inuit, Siksika, Ojibway, Sto'lo, Dakota, Okanogan, Dene, and more. The demand for language preservation is another means of challenging the cultural hegemony that exists within higher learning. When we ask for space to teach our languages, it is a means of ensuring our cultural continuation as First Nations and Métis peoples.

CANADIAN INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

In Canada, the Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) was established in 1999 with few resources and lots of commitment from its partners, including the Indigenous Peoples Program at the Extension Division at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Alberta and the host communities. CILLDI was inspired by its American counterpart, the two-decade-old American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) at the University of Arizona (Blair, Paskemin, & Laderoute, 2001). Cree scholars and language specialists, Dr. Freda Ahenakew and Dr. Verna Kirkness also helped inspire the development of the CILLDI. The CILLDI's vision comes from recognizing the shortage of teachers, curriculum developers, researchers, and community linguists prepared to work in Indigenous language education. Despite the existence of teacher education in Saskatchewan, limited attention has been paid to the development of bilingual and biliterate teachers. In many universities and public schools, more attention is given to the romance languages than Indigenous

languages. The CILLDI recognized the need to address this aspect of linguistic hegemony and to work to preserve Canada's Indigenous languages. CILLDI was first hosted at Onion Lake in 2000 with one course offering in the Cree language. In subsequent years, CILLDI took place at Blue Quills School near Saddle Lake First Nations in 2001 and at LaRonge, Saskatchewan in 2002.

The CILLDI is an example of what determined individual faculty members are capable of producing. However, most mainstream academic institutions do not take adequate initiatives for Indigenous language studies. Some, such as the University of Saskatchewan, have chosen to hand the major responsibility for Indigenous languages over to centers such as the First Nations University of Canada. Other departments; which traditionally overlap in language related disciplines and worldviews, such as music, art, psychology, and history; are ill-equipped to offer courses on Indigenous worldviews and practices. Even when the courses are offered in the university calendar, they are not taught because of the lack of Indigenous faculty or because other faculty are not trained in the discipline. It is not a priority area for a mainstream university. This was best exemplified when I tried to communicate the need for the Music Department to offer an Indigenous music course for our annual Indigenous languages institute. I was told this was not possible, as the Music Department had no one that could supervise our proposed music instructor. Rather than see this as an opportunity and a challenge, most departments simply ignore the opportunity to do things differently. The English-only

attitude remains problematic for First Nations peoples and ensures that the predominant and colonizer worldview is seldom diversified:

It is our experience that, even now, there is a constant tension within academic and professional programmes and policies to resource and privilege Indigenous languages sufficiently to maintain indigenous world-views, concepts and values, balanced against the need for English to effectively access mainstream higher education and careers. (Odora Hoppers, 2002, p. 228)

TERRALINGUA

Terralingua is an international non-profit organization that was established in 1996 to preserve the world's linguistic and cultural diversity. In addition to supporting the preservation of the world's linguistic diversity, Terralingua also explores the connections among linguistic, cultural, and biological diversities. It accomplishes this through research, applied work, and advocacy. Two of Terralingua's findings are of particular interest to Indigenous researchers:

1. As with biological diversity, linguistic diversity is facing rapidly increasing threats that are causing a drastic loss of both languages and the knowledge of which they are carriers, including knowledge about the environment and sustainable resource use.
2. That the continued loss of linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity will have dangerous consequences for humans and the Earth.

Terralingua estimates that many, of the more than 10,000, of the world's languages are at grave risk of extinction for a number of reasons, including suppression by hostile governments and the influence of large economically-dominant cultures and their languages—the last largely brought on by the process of globalization. Terralingua's work includes promoting linguistic human rights. It works tirelessly to challenge the colonizer-language-only mentality that follows the education policies of educational institutions. In her presentation at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Dr. Tove Shutnabb-Kangas, Vice-President of Terralingua, stated that the conditions that erode Indigenous languages are nothing short of human rights abuses:

Unless action is taken to support and foster linguistic diversity, some scholars have estimated that perhaps 50% of the extant oral languages--conceivably as many as 90%--may become extinct, or doomed to extinction, as native tongues by the end of the century, (Terra Lingua website <http://www.terralingua.org/AboutTL.htm>, accessed February 2006)

It is predicted that the loss of these languages will create a cultural monopoly and a loss of cultural diversity, which will have grave consequences for Indigenous peoples:

Our research has shown strong correlations between areas of biological mega diversity and areas of highest linguistic diversity, represented mostly by Indigenous languages. It has been estimated that there are at least 300 million people worldwide who are indigenous. This constitutes only about 20% of the world's total population, yet these peoples probably represent the largest portion of cultural diversity on earth. If we take language distinctiveness as a measure of cultural diversity, estimates suggest that 4,000 to 5,000 of the over 6,000 oral languages are spoken by indigenous peoples(or 57% to 70% of the world's languages), strongly implying that such peoples constitute most of the world's cultural diversity.

(Terra Lingua website <http://www.terralingua.org/AboutTL.htm>, accessed February 16, 2006)

Terralingua claims that the fate of Indigenous languages, lands, and cultures is key for the preservation of biodiversity and linguistic and cultural diversity. To this end, they organized the “Endangered Languages, Endangered Knowledge, Endangered Environment” conference in 1996 and a published book based on the proceedings. Their other works include an electronic newsletter called *Langscape*, an organization of community workshops and seminars on language preservation, and advocacy activities for the protection of indigenous languages and traditional knowledge. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) first international instrument devoted entirely to linguistic rights will include Dr. Shutnabb-Kangas’ Declaration on Indigenous Rights. Terralingua’s contributed to the work on the “Convention on Biological Diversity” including the 1998 workshop called “The Interrelationships between Cultural and Biological Diversity” and to statements aimed at the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice. Terralingua has over 200 members throughout the world. Indigenous language retention work will ensure that diverse cultures can continue to exist in the future. When languages die Indigenous cultures lose their unique essence and the world loses cultural diversity. The work of Terralingua and the CILLDI ensure that academic institutes support Indigenous world views, philosophies, biodiversities and knowledge through the preservation of Indigenous languages and literacy development.

Preserving Indigenous Knowledge Systems work is being supported with new media, such as television, radio, drama, and book publishing. One of the most important means of preserving Indigenous Knowledge is through the preservation of language. The literature reflecting the many efforts to save Indigenous Knowledge Systems has increased dramatically in the past few decades lending optimism that this trend will continue into the future.

This chapter reviewed the literature that supports and reflects Indigenous Knowledge Systems. It continued, from Chapter One, to develop the issues that impact and influence Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Some of the literature reviewed is new, and some of it represents landmarks in the development of Indigenous literature and contributions to Indigenous sovereignty. As knowledge survival is contingent on confronting hegemony, this chapter includes voices from what is known as “the margins,” or the voices of people who are systematically disempowered. Literature is the most important mainstay of higher learning, and the supreme power of that literature as official knowledge was examined in this chapter. The range of literature that has been produced by Indigenous scholars and those from the community has great potential to help Indigenize and enrich the academy. Literature that provides a critical analysis helps to democratize the academy. Storytelling is a key link to unlocking Indigenous Knowledge, improving literacy, and legitimizing Indigenous Knowledge sources. This chapter described the work of several community-based groups and also international organizations that work to challenge dominant linguistic practices and to preserve Indigenous languages. Some

work that is being done to challenge the hegemony of mainstream culture, within the arts—for example, has also been included in this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

CRITICAL METHODOLOGY

In naturalistic inquiry, researchers position themselves in their research projects to reveal aspects of their own tacit world, to challenge their own assumptions, to locate themselves through the eyes of the “other”, and to observe themselves observing. This lens shifts the observer’s gaze inward toward the self as a site for interpreting cultural experience. The approach is person-centered, unapologetically subjective, and gives voice to those who have often been silenced. When I started my research, I wanted it to reflect and maintain Indigenous worldviews, philosophies, and ways of knowing and apply those to teaching in a contemporary context. It was apparent from the start that I would not use the same methodologies, paradigms, ways of knowing, and worldviews that are problematic for Indigenous communities. I wanted my research on how Indigenous Knowledge Systems can contribute to the quality of life and learning within extended communities and institutions of higher learning to reflect the concerns that land-based peoples face as a result of Western incursions on their lands. I wanted to do research and create scholarship that would address some of these challenges, and I carefully chose communities and institutions whose work was exemplar or emerging. I knew I needed to view mainstream research through a critical lens so I could understand how Indigenous

Knowledge can overcome its exclusion by Western forces and give a voice to my people. I was careful not to replicate research in terms of style and content.

Throughout history, critical theorists such as Gramsci (1975), Marcuse (1972), Habermas (1962), Giroux (1983), and others have identified issues of power, knowledge, and their impact on society and the human condition. I feel it is important for Indigenous peoples to consider these early theoretical works in order to contextualize contemporary Indigenous struggles and draw on that literature. While some of the early literature contextualizes “tribal” peoples’ conditions, it is equally important for Indigenous scholars and their communities to develop their own critical theories built on Indigenous human conditions. In Canada, Indigenous peoples have a political drive toward self-determination. It enables us to read the social practices of the world clearly. *Critical literacy* means that we understand how and why knowledge and power are constructed. As a researcher, I see critical theory as a map or guide to the social sphere. In a research context it does not determine how we see the world but helps me devise questions and strategies for exploring it.

I drew much of my inspiration to view the creation of knowledge from a non-Western, non-dominant, and critical perspective from work being done in other regions of the world. I had heard of the African Indigenous Renaissance and was eager to learn from their experience. The African Indigenous Renaissance in South Africa reflects the hopes and aspiration of its people. Africanists conceive of the renaissance as a return to an

African past that is regarded as a Golden Age of peace, prosperity, and authentic social living. Others appear to think of it as a fruitful synthesis of both African and Western values that will allow blacks to take their rightful place in the modern world (Hammond-Tooke, 1993).

Until recently, Indigenous peoples have been skeptical of, mostly disinterested in, and critical of mainstream research. “Research” has been problematic for many reasons. Indigenous people can see little relevance in research that benefits the larger society while their communities still lack basic infrastructure, such as housing, sewer systems, and full employment. Indigenous communities wonder, why spend money on research when capital needs and developmental needs are at an all time high? Research that is driven by and serves our community is still a rare commodity. Historically, research, from Indigenous eyes, has delivered little. If anything, it takes valuable resources away from the dire needs of the community. Another reason why research is problematic for Indigenous peoples is that while there are growing numbers of Aboriginal people in Master's programs and PhD programs nationwide, this is a fairly recent occurrence. Aboriginal university graduates are in great demand and are very busy in their communities, teaching in classrooms, and working as mentors. Many of them have little time for further research. As a result, Indigenous peoples infrequently conduct research. Also, Indigenous academics have been trained in universities that utilize mainstream research methodologies and protocols. Furthermore, research that is non-Indigenous directed or does not include Indigenous consultation and participation has traditionally

given Indigenous communities poorly-established social and economic policy and practices. This is evidenced in the poor quality of life in Aboriginal communities.

Native communities have different approaches to knowledge acquisition and research, and many have different ideas for research topics, methodologies, and protocol. As evidenced in one Dene community:

Investigators who cling to research methods that clearly separate observer and observed stand to lose, because in the eyes of the Dene, they distance themselves too much from what the Dene consider the authoritative source of true knowledge. If the investigator seeks an explanation, he or she is offered one according to the Dene estimation of his or her experiential learning and understanding. This estimation of the ethnographer's knowledge, not the investigator's research agenda, determines the flow of information, which is, preferably, provided in the form of stories between Dene and anthropologist. (Goulet, 1998, p. 247)

All of these reasons reflect concerns that Indigenous peoples have with research.

To alleviate problems associated with research, Indigenous communities need to be involved in the full range of the research issue. Research can be a very powerful and liberating tool. It can educate both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and it can lead to positive changes in communities. However, Indigenous peoples need to be involved identifying research funding criteria and goals to securing research dollars to disseminating the findings of the research. There is a great need for those within higher learning to step out of the privilege of the ivory tower and learn the teachings from the community so as to better define the goals of research, both locally and globally. There

is a need to recognize the vast knowledge that exists within community, and this is precisely where my research took me. A critical error that outside researchers commit is entering communities thinking that no knowledge exists among people who may not be literate in the English language, and knowledge that exists has no value in directing development:

The question that requires further discussion is the need for a non-Eurocentric definition of intellectualism, scholarship, science, and professionalism so that culturally different systems of knowledge can be validated and used as resources for self-managed indigenous development and autonomy. (Smith, 1999, p.123)

For Indigenous scholars, work that is valued by and useful by to their Aboriginal community is not necessarily the work that earns publication rights or that are deemed meritorious by Western academic standards. While there is a need to do academic work and initiate leadership on policy work, there is as great a need to work with communities to promote social change and to improve the quality of life, which in many Indigenous Canadian communities parallels that in so-called “developing nations”.

This critical perspective of knowledge and ways of knowing is reflected in Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies* (2001), which is often required reading for Indigenous pedagogy courses. Tuhiwai Smith outlines the many concerns that I have as a person working in a mainstream university. My research includes specific examples in the Vanuatu and African Indigenous context; both countries went through bloodless revolutions and have directed a national strategy of Indigenization of research and policy

development. While acknowledging that mainstream research often did not work for Indigenous communities, I felt a need to identify why and how research might work.

STORYTELLING AS A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

I take the position of a critical storyteller (Barone, 1992) so as to awaken the consciences of others by inviting a re-examination of the values and interests that undergird the subjugation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (MacLaren, 1998). The aim of a critical storyteller is to “empower the powerless and transform existing social inequalities and injustices (p. 160). My rich and varied experiences throughout the world have transformed my identity as an activist/learner/teacher. The many human rights challenges that have faced my colleagues and my collective Indigenous global community offered me unique experiences that I felt compelled to share within the framework of a doctoral dissertation. I also wish to share these stories in order to honor the teachers that I have been privileged to know. My academic journey has been both a liberating and, at times, oppressive experience. In many ways, my methodology is much like a storytelling of this very full experience. *Storytelling as a methodology* is about reclaiming and honoring Indigenous ways of knowing, understanding, and passing on to future generations important life stories. As Fyre Jean Graveline (1998) states:

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 European colonizers in the destruction of our communities. Through voice we are gaining our own sense of conscious reality and providing another lens through which Eurocentric educators may view themselves. (p.41)

First Nations people are rooted in oral society. I feel that by using this methodology I honour my ancestors and the traditions of our people. Storytelling compels me to bind memories by documenting stories “in the spirit” of the ancestors. In other words, I feel that my methodology forces me to remember our ancestors, traditions, and culture throughout the entire process of this research. In addition to the methodology, this is a retrospective narration of the many formal and informal educational, experiences that I have created, experienced, and been invited to be an observer participant.

In using storytelling, the dissertation relies on subjective accounts and meaning, as it is constructed by people in everyday situations. Storytelling focuses on life as it is lived. It assumes a dynamic living past, a past open to interpretation and reinterpretation, to meaning-making in and for the present. In some communities, there were little, if any, written records. How are these communities to then have their histories recorded? Accordingly, storytelling allows for the ‘other’, or those voices that have been erased, to be included in the dominant discourse. Storytelling has the ability to fill the gaps in the present documentation of the lives of First Nations and Indigenous peoples as they strive to shed their colonial past.

A storytelling approach becomes an essential way of knowing and transmitting culture within Indigenous cultures. Sharing narratives can lead to questioning the ideology that

controls non-Western peoples—countering the master narrative. Baskin (2005) sees the storytelling approach as one that challenges dominant forms of research:

I view myself as both a storyteller and an academic. My natural writing style tends to weave these two roles together. I see this style as complementing both Aboriginal worldviews and anti-colonial discourse. By choosing to write this way, I am enjoying my space in the margins while ensuring I take up the responsibility of pushing my work closer to the centre. My own voice questions and challenges dominant voices and the status quo while advancing Aboriginal knowledges as equivalent to any other knowledge. The long-term goal is to sit comfortably within the academic and research centre with all the other world views, including the Eurocentric one. Pushing my Aboriginal worldview into the centre does not include pushing other world views out; instead, my intention is to take space that will require Eurocentric world views to move over. (p.1)

I also voice my retrospective thoughts as a tenured and senior faculty member within a mainstream, predominantly-white university in order to include concerns about research within that institution. My perspective is from within the Extension Division and as a woman with northern Cree roots with deeper and more direct ties to the social realities and consciousness of that community. In mutuality with feminists like bell hooks and Patricia Hill Collins, I have come to herald feminist research that recognizes the epistemological value of using women's experiences as a resource for discovering new theory. It poses questions that lead to social changes in oppressed conditions, usually by "un-silencing" women in subjugated life-roles. In this framework, feminist researchers unsettle traditional assumptions about knowledge as they challenge familiar beliefs about women and social life.

WHAT COUNTS AS KNOWLEDGE

Most of my present scholarly work takes place within the community—with youth in an Aboriginal high school and as a community-based researcher. My work also comes from the perspective of having taught and worked at a number of institutions of higher learning, namely at the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Manitoba, and Canada's first Aboriginal University. While at the University of Manitoba, I worked first as an academic advisor for mature students and later as the Director of the Engineering Access Program. In the mid-1970s, I was one of the first Indigenous instructors at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, now called the First Nations University of Canada. All of these experiences gave me an inside and outsider's view of higher learning and community-based needs as I developed a critical consciousness of the needs of Indigenous peoples in higher learning.

It is difficult to separate knowledge from data in my present study, because what constitutes Indigenous Knowledge is not always seen as quantifiable in the Western knowledge paradigm. Much Indigenous Knowledge has not been researched, does not fit into tidy data boxes, and may stay out of mainstream research agendas in perpetuity. How can you quantify *pimatisiwin*? Many elders will not talk to researchers and some Indigenous research institutes such as the Vanuatu Cultural Center have a policy of not allowing outsiders access to certain bodies of knowledge. In other instances, any research is done expressly for the benefit of the *ni-Vanuatu*, "citizens", and this protection is reflected very clearly in their research protocol guidelines.

Despite the fact that our Indigenous Knowledge is ancient, the discipline of Indigenous knowledge is a developing field within the higher learning context and sometimes appears developmental and reflective of our colonial history. Early Indigenous education was problematic because it followed the colonial world view and was often developed by non-Indigenous people using “teaching as transmission” methods and offering little opportunity for critical discussion. For example, the Indigenous Knowledge Center at the University of Pretoria represented the works of early anthropology departments, work that was done by whites from a non-Indigenous perspective. All of my research involved information that was in the public domain, so that no knowledge that was collectively owned by particular Indigenous communities could be expropriated. Aspects of Indigenous Knowledge that are not for the public domain, such as Creation Stories, are often referred to as sacred knowledge. This knowledge is given only after a person *earns* this privilege. In Indigenous cultures, *earning* refers to going through specific protocols and ceremonies in order to learn knowledge. Even though knowledge is in the public domain and is sometimes referred to as local knowledge, much of this knowledge is not recorded or written. In many instances the Cree words and concepts used in this dissertation focuses on teaching values embedded within the language and culture, such as love and respect for the human and extended community. I believe that the strength of this dissertation has been to bring the issues of values and Indigenous respect for the land and life into light so that others could benefit and learn from those values. This sharing is at the heart of Indigenous values globally and locally. Currently there are few

research protocols, which I am aware of in Saskatchewan, that have been developed to serve particular First Nations intellectual and cultural property rights. Some in the health sector, such as in Canadian Indigenous Health Research, have been developed to protect First Nations and Métis people generally, rather than for specific pieces of knowledge or specific communities. Some Indigenous protocols, as in the Mikmaq example, have the potential to prevent possibly harmful aspects of research by inquiring who is paying or sponsoring the research. How Indigenous peoples fit within the protection of the domain of the public good is a vexing problem. When foods that have been developed by Indigenous peoples over many millennia are patented by the private sector, how will the rights of the originators of that knowledge be protected? Who takes responsibility when peoples' knowledge is seeds that become genetically modified so they no longer produce?

My academic life took a turn in the mid-1970s—when I was young and one of the first First Nations faculty members for the Saskatchewan Indian Federated Colleges—my daughter was born and I took a teaching job in a high school in a First Nations community. I worked with Plains Cree people, and I took part in their strong cultural experience; we challenged their living conditions of extreme poverty, and then saw the impact on that community. Fast-forwarding to the early-1990s where events had changed and been taken to a different level of challenges, First Nations Peoples were then on the cusp of social change. First Nations peoples in Saskatchewan were not willing to stand still, in the educational sense, so they created educational opportunities that are anti-

colonial and political in orientation and firmly rooted in traditions of their communities. In my research, I narrate these dynamic events that I have been a participant.

Several years ago, I hosted a conference on Indigenous Knowledge Systems that resulted in important scholarly contacts that eventually led to my research. In all, I have coordinated four of these conferences. These contacts led to an invitation to attend an Indigenous Knowledge conference at the University of Venda in South Africa in 2001 while I was attending the United Nations Conference on Racism. The Venda conference was part of a series of events to plan how governments, communities, and scholars would define the new African Renaissance based on Indigenous Knowledge Systems in a post-apartheid South Africa. The following year, I again traveled to South Africa where I attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in August 2002. The WSSD provided a venue where I had the opportunity to meet with individuals, agencies, non-governmental, and civil society organizations from throughout the world. These organizations were involved in promoting sustainable development, poverty eradication, or simply bringing to public attention the state of the world's vanishing biodiversity. The summit was a critical moment in my journey. I exchanged ideas with people working on Indigenous Knowledge projects and made contacts that I did not have prior to traveling to South Africa. We discussed..."A web of liberation strategies Indigenous Peoples can employ to disentangle themselves from the oppressive control of colonizing state governments (p.384) and to a considerable degree to the political drive toward self-determination. Additionally, I had the opportunity to learn about projects that rely on

Indigenous Knowledge, provide a dignified income for people, and are environmentally sustainable. I joined a Global Peoples Forum, a parallel event that supported the civil society global community. Our collaborative conversations became an exchange and reformulation of ideas, and reflective questions. By sustaining and extending these conversations, we were able to identify and understand our stories of learning in order to create the spaces necessary to recover our Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Our implicit questioning and tentative knowing about activism in these contexts became voiced and connected.

Between September and November 2002, I interviewed and spent time with academics from the Universities of the North-West and Pretoria in South Africa. I sat in on classes and gave lectures on Indigenous Knowledge Systems at the University of the North-West. While at the University of Pretoria, I visited the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (CINDEK) and met with the Director Dr. Herman Els, a white South African. Eager to expand my horizons, I sought out book stores and other peoples' libraries in order to find resources that would contextualize Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the African Renaissance for me. Knowledge transfer is fundamentally a social process; the power of increased interaction between academics and practitioners for generating new knowledge should not be underestimated. I learned that the quest to have Indigenous Knowledge Systems respected and integrated within higher learning and public policy was well on its way to recognition and integration in that landscape.

In drawing parallels between my research and the South African context, I visited some of the poorest township communities in Johannesburg, Alexandra, and Soweto. I also visited the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg and the Hector Peterson Museum in Soweto. Hector Peterson was the first youth to be killed by the South African police in the famous Soweto uprising. Visiting the museum was a reminder of Indigenous peoples' genocide worldwide and will remain with me forever.

CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEWS

To learn about colleagues' perspectives on Indigenous Knowledge Systems, I used critical inquiry. Since knowledge is not fixed, I used in-depth conversational interviewing (Mishler, 1989). In-depth conversational interviewing was designed to elicit a rich understanding of the participant's way of thinking. These interviews are less structured than a typical interview and involve probing into topics that the participant may bring up. With a growing awareness of the ways that research interviews might constrain participants' accounts of their experiences, collaborative conversations allow a mutual-sharing focusing on the existential moments in peoples' lives. In *Storytelling Circles: Reflections of Aboriginal Protocols in Research*, Baskin describes her similar approach in doing research:

I did not ask participants direct questions, nor did I have research objectives. Rather, I put the topic of each research project to the participants and invited them to tell their stories about the topic. I did not develop any goals other than collecting their stories, and so I did not consider objectives. My approach was not to plan, but to allow the process to happen in whatever way it was meant to

develop. I chose not to control the process, but rather to allow myself to be controlled by it. I believe that, when conducting research, as in all else that I do, I am guided by the spirits—a belief that is, of course, part of my Aboriginal worldview. (Baskin, 2005, p.12)

The question of who holds the knowledge is irrelevant. Who is the researcher or the researched becomes less important because we concern ourselves with questions of collaboration, trust, and relationship to live and narrate and re-narrate our collaborative research as Indigenous peoples. Baskin describes this as following the Indigenous process of relation building:

I do not want the work of research to be much different from the relationship-building processes of my culture, nor do I wish to transgress from the ethical guidelines outlined by other Aboriginal researchers. It is not so much about me choosing the participants for a particular project, but about them deciding whether they want to work with me. (2005, p.12)

In keeping with Indigenous tradition of seeking wisdom, I presented tobacco to and spoke with elders who work within educational institutes, such as the Joe Duquette Aboriginal High School and ones that work within higher learning, such as the First Nations University of Canada. Speaking with the elders was more cultural communication than interview. Tobacco is always presented to people before you ask them to share their knowledge. Then, you need to be prepared to listen intently and deeply. I sought protocol as prepared by Indigenous elders and was advised that information that was not public was not to be used. This information would include information about some ceremonies and lessons from creation stories. In addition, I sought permission from the University of Saskatchewan Ethics Committee for the research and was granted

permission. I followed the guidelines for ethical research that are established by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and adhered to by the University of Saskatchewan. The letter is contained as an appendix.

From Africa I traveled to Asia and the Pacific region in November 2002. I worked with colleagues from both regions. Originally, I had not intended to include either the Philippines or Hawaii, but both regions have rich biodiversity and have been in the forefront of protecting that biodiversity and relating it to Indigenous Knowledge Systems. I began both formal and informal conversations with others who had a common orientation to recovering Indigenous Knowledge. Our conversations focused on gathering the interpretive insights of the extrication of Western colonization. Therefore the conversational interview is the method I chose to elicit opinions and values that the participant deemed relevant or meaningful to the topic. Such conversational questioning alerts a researcher to aspects of their topic that are otherwise overlooked. The interviews were scribed, or audio taped and transcribed. In keeping with respectful research, participants had the opportunity to read the transcribed interviews for clarification and sign a date transcript release. If direct quotes were used, the participants had the opportunity to read what was said about their participation. Participants chose to identify their words in the dissertation.

In my community I interviewed, widely consulted, and highly regarded male and female elders. As much of the focus on Indigenous biodiversity knowledge exists in the global

south, part of my research took place in the geographic south. All of my participants are people who are known as international scholars or community activists within what I call the Indigenous Knowledge network of people. Some, as in the case of elders, are people who are known as knowledge-holders and are not published. In the global community, I interviewed people who were consultants for public policy and Indigenous Knowledge. I interviewed practitioners and those that had established cultural centers whose goals were to preserve Indigenous Knowledge. In the case of South Africa, I interviewed two people who are the foremost consultants on integrating Indigenous Knowledge into public policy. Dr. Odora Hoppers, originally from Uganda, has been widely consulted for her knowledge within her adopted country of South Africa and within the United Nations. Odora Hoppers wrote the first African Indigenous Knowledge book featuring prominent African scholars. I spent several weeks learning from the founder of the Indigenous Knowledge degree programs at the University of the North West, in South Africa through observation, careful listening, and questioning. Perhaps, what I learned is how one can live a meaningful, gathered life in a world that seems broken and scattered. The answer has to do with understanding my place with community on my own land. To be centered, as I understand it, means to have the land, to be attached in a web of relationships with other people, to value common experiences, and to recognize that one's life rises constantly from inward depths.

My invitation from the University of North-West in the northern part of South Africa provided me with a vibrant center whose mandate is to develop Indigenous Knowledge

courses from the undergraduate level, to the graduate level, to the doctoral level. I was fortunate to work with Dr. H.O. Kaya who provided leadership in the development of the range of Indigenous Knowledge curriculum. Dr. Kaya is originally from Tanzania and was educated during the exciting era of social and political transformation under the leadership of Julius Nuyere. Dr. Kaya's work is indeed impressive and has provided much inspiration for my own curriculum work at the University of Saskatchewan, as well as for my visions of possibilities. My research also took me to the University of Western Cape, where I met with members of the Khoi San tribe, South Africa's oldest Indigenous peoples. I visited the University of Pretoria and interviewed Dr. Herman Els, Executive Director of the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge, which is also in Pretoria. Participating in many global education forums—where much of the discourse on and practical application of Indigenous Knowledge is being generated—helped me to identify the areas of developing knowledge and also the participants.

In Vanuatu, I interviewed the Director of the Vanuatu Cultural Center and the director of women's research. In addition to spending time at the Vanuatu Cultural Center, I also visited Tanna, one of the many islands, and met with local leaders. I chose to visit Tanna to see communities away from the center of the country's capital. I had a youth internship placement working with the Halau Ku Mana, an Indigenous Hawaiian high school located at the University of Hawaii. The intern conducted an interview with one student at this high school in which I learned about the training of future Indigenous leaders—although some of the interviews were done previously, I used telephone

conferencing to re-interview those participants who elaborated and augmented some of the initial ideas. They have all given informed consent and signed a data transcript release to use their words in this dissertation.

The interviews followed a conversational format and included elders, academics, and community workers. In keeping with cultural traditions, most times, I began my interview with an informal conversation and then moved into the questions with a tape recorder and notepad. Conversation is the central location of pedagogy for the democratic educator (hooks, 2003, p. 44). African scholar Njoki(2005) claims, “to learn Indigenous perspectives requires a different method of research--such as extended conversations with elders, a willingness to put aside judgments, and take up the responsibility to apply the knowledge in daily practice”(p.4). Not all interviews followed that pattern. My knowledge of how Indigenous peoples react to interviews kept me from playing the role as researcher all of the time. If I felt intuitively that people were not comfortable being interviewed we would begin by having a conversation and later while alone I would assemble my thoughts and notes. Similar to Baskin (2005) I followed my Indigenous relation intuition and protocol.

I brought all of these teachings and cultural protocols into my work. This involved spending time with potential participants prior to gathering information so that they could get to know me. It also involved my explaining what the project was about, how information would be gathered, and what would happen with the information. I was open in terms of self-disclosure, as participants' questions went far beyond those about my education and "qualifications." Rather, as Aboriginal community members, participants were more interested in who I am. They wanted to know where I am from, who my family is, if I have children, what my

spirit name is, where I live, what my clan is, whom I know, what I believe in, and what my life experiences have been. (p.12)

In both South Africa and Vanuatu, I collected cultural artifacts and written materials from universities and cultural centers describing curriculum and protocols during my on site visits. As an active participant in Indigenous Knowledge retention and creation, I helped create and also taught in programs, such as with the Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) where I developed courses and documented how this institute was developed. Later, I used document analysis to understand mission statements, program goals and content.

My objective in learning about Indigenous Knowledge Systems is ultimately to focus attention on the preservation of the natural world and to demonstrate how curriculum can be created and improved. Having witnessed first hand the tremendous contributions that Indigenous Peoples are making throughout the world within international venues such as the Permanent Forum within the United Nations my plan was to document this information. My research is not separate from my work locally or globally, and some of the data for this dissertation has provided materials for two papers that I wrote. One is called "Species at Risk" (2005) and was commissioned for the Native Women's Association of Canada. Another paper I wrote and presented for a symposium at the Center for Regionalisation and Globalization at the University of Warwick, England called "Indigenous Knowledge Systems Global Food Systems and Indigenous Sovereignty" (2005). This past year I have entered into a project with the University of

San Marcos in Lima Peru to help that university improve the retention rates of Indigenous Amazonian students. In addition to improving the reading and writing skills of Indigenous students, we are working at encouraging the University of San Marcos to consider the nature of scholarship, academics, power structures, and the role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. I recently returned from projects in the *selvas* of both Peru and Panama, where Indigenous peoples continue to live their lives uninterrupted from western development, and they are living proof that Indigenous Knowledge has a life-sustaining capacity on intellectual and practical levels. As Indigenous peoples, we are committed to sharing our knowledge with mutual respect and reciprocity.

FIELD TEXTS

To capture the essence of my research experience, I acquired field texts from multiple perspectives, including ongoing reflective writing and ongoing *analytic memoing* (*reflective writing to myself and analyzing what I was learning*) I used field texts derived from field notes, personal retrospective narratives, memories, journaling, and centering on my years of teaching and working in the community. Recording events as they happen or shortly afterwards ensured that details, and indeed the entire event, was not lost from memory. My own preferred schema included several types of field notes:

- Structural and organizational features—what the actual institutions looked like and how they are used
- People—how they interacted in a context

- Events—The daily process of activities
- Special events—such as a multidisciplinary team meeting
- Dialogue
- An everyday diary of events as they occur chronologically, both before entering the field and in the field
- A reflective journal—this includes both my thoughts about going into the field and being there and my readings and reflections on my own life experiences that might influence the way in which I filter what I observe.

Field observations were essential to my research as they provided insight into interactions between groups, illustrated the whole picture, captured context or process, and informed me of the influence of the physical environment. Field observation also captures the whole social setting in which the participants function and records the context in which they work. Following Van Manen's (1988) *Confessional Tales*, I included my personal experiences and methodological confessions alongside, but separate from, the descriptive fieldwork account. Using the first person, projects a certain perspective that emphasizes the personal experience of the self as researcher and the self's particular concerns. Writing in the first person is particularly effective where the researcher is a member of the group they are studying (Van Manen J., 1988).

I was constantly aware that analysis and interpretation were ongoing, not summative. Meanings were building then shifting as the study evolved. There was a continual

liminal tension between the research experience and what I understood it to be. This tension provided a dynamic that moved the study forward, generated questions, and invited ongoing analysis throughout the data gathering phase.

ANALYSIS

Analysis was ongoing as I sifted through the data looking for patterns and connections using a constant comparative methodology. Through analytic induction, I was able to infer that events or statements were instances of the same underlying theme all the while keeping the research question in focus. As a researcher, I continually asked, "*Is this pattern similar to or different from other patterns?*" A similar technique was used in looking for patterns between categories by using my own researcher's insights and knowledge of the topic. Using a critical lens, I asked hard questions of the data. I self-questioned, placed myself in opposition to the data, and read against the texts to discern subtextual meanings, absences, and inconsistencies. The intent was that the research would work toward social transformation.

INTERPRETATION

Rendering the interpretation of the study was more intensive than the summary of the patterns, and this required me to think in new, dialogical ways. The interpretation will be useful to universities and colleges because it challenges hegemonic practices within those

institutions. It was critical that the findings of this study relate to broader theoretical frameworks in order to explicate what the study means outside of the one context and make recommendations to transfer knowledge to the community and policy-makers. It is my intention that this study contribute to the many disciplines where Indigenous Knowledge intersects.

Writing the research text was a recursive process, involving rewriting, rethinking, and reconceptualizing as I tried to draft many layers of meaning. For me, writing entailed the process of juxtaposing others' voices in order to adopt a position of my own. Van Manen (1997) argues, "writing teaches us what we know, and in what way we know what we know" (p. 127). The writing of the final text is the research:

“...there is a subjectifying and an objectifying moment in writing and in the way that the word allows us to understand the world. Research is writing in that it places consciousness in the position of possibility of confronting itself, in a self-reflective relation. To write is to exercise self-consciousness. Writing plays the inner against the outer, the subjective self against the objective self, and the ideal against the real”. (p.129)

As a field study, this dissertation has two stories to tell, twin narratives. One is about the culture itself, what it means from the perspective of my participants. The other story is about myself as the researcher and how I did the research. Consequently, what emerged was a descriptive narrative that aims to render an accurate portrait of the interpretive narrative accounts, which individuals or groups used for ordering events in their lives and organizations. Often, the narrative contains tacit layers that are below the awareness that

makes up the interpretive schemes a person or community uses to signify past or future events. The descriptive narrative is both a story and an argued essay for it accounts for the participants own motives, reasons, expectations, and memories.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Indigenous symposiums became a critical tool where knowledge was shared and distributed. I was invited on two different occasions to present papers at two different symposiums. The first was the *Mapping Insurgencies Conference* at the University of Arizona. The second was an Indigenous think tank at a retreat centre in Southern California. I met with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars working within communities that were experiencing hardships integrating, namely gays, lesbians, transgendered or two-spirited people, and people experiencing psychological health problems. In participating, I became aware that the collective listening to one another's reflections affirmed the value and uniqueness of each voice. In this way, our dialogues highlighted experiences without privileging the voice of any particular individual or group. In each instance, it helped the group create a communal awareness of the diversity of our experiences. As collective problem solving groups, we were not just convenient mediums to accumulate the individual knowledge of members, but our conversations gave rise synergistically to insights and solutions that would have not otherwise come about. This experience provided me with the opportunity to consider new bodies of knowledge that involved Indigenous peoples outside of the norms of some

Indigenous communities. This required revamping my Pedagogy of Healing section, but, more importantly, these meetings reinforced my belief that losses are epidemic and happen at both personal and community levels, and therefore they must be addressed as a social and community issue, not just an individual one.

“Reading the world” (Freire, 1970) is like being a critical researcher. Critical researching is about achieving a deeper understanding of events and developing your own theories about your work from the information you have obtained from your personal research. Some of my information comes from working in my community in an educational context and feeling that critical facts and a critical analysis of the situation was not being documented or even performed. At an early age, I became aware of the need for the development of critical pedagogical and theoretical work through my readings of the work of Paulo Freire (1972). Freire’s work on the role of *conscientization*, the power of consciousness to transform reality, and the role of local knowledge struck a chord with me. Critical theorists share aspects of their personal histories, such as early understandings of oppression and conflict with established educational institutions and an often-difficult career path. Within academia, Indigenous peoples face marginalization and various pressures to conform, to abandon critical work, or to become polemical and risk being removed.

My awareness of the elders' view of research was a reminder that I did not want to replicate research that did not serve my people. I continue to approach my research as a life-long learning process. In the late-1970s when I became aware of writers such as Paulo Freire, my work took an international perspective. His work and my experience in the international context together expanded my critical awareness of the power of education to honour Indigenous worldviews and to transform the education process. . This chapter described the approach that I took in my research in three regions, Vanuatu, Hawaii, South Africa, and my home territory. My research follows the concepts of Indigenous communication, such as storytelling and *wahkotawin* “the importance of establishing good relations”, and it highlights other researchers who strive to follow democratic Indigenous principles in their research.

CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter begins with an examination of some of the critical issues relating to Indigenous Knowledge Systems. I have referred to a number of conferences and events which provided me with opportunities to deeply examine the nature of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and how they are integral to the issues of Indigenous scholarship and community well-being. I have asked the questions, such as what is the nature of Indigenous Knowledge Systems? How can these systems improve the situation for Indigenous peoples? How can this knowledge influence the development of curricula? I have used critical theory to explore Indigenous peoples place within the status quo.

Other questions—such as whose voice gets heard in higher learning, and what or how is the nature of *capacity-building* useful for Indigenous communities—relate to the role of Indigenous research and the improvement of community life. The questions that I identify run parallel to questions that have been asked by others, who have felt marginalized by the academy and whose needs within the context of the academy, and beyond, are unacknowledged. Feminists and scholars of colour (hooks, 1984, 2003; Hill Collins, 1986; Miheush and Cavender & Wilson, 2004) have opened the dialogue on the illusion of inclusion within the academy. They talk about the silencing of their voices and the interconnectedness of various oppressions based on race, class, and gender. They

describe how their knowledge and ways of knowing have been left out of academic discourse, as Belenky (1986) states, “Most of the institutions of higher education in this country were designed by men, and most continue to be run by men” (p.190) . If the various marginalized groups have common challenges and impediments within the academy, it is important to examine the commonalities so as to strengthen strategies for change. If capacity-building is the method we will use, I believe it is capacity-building both ways—by the impacted and also by the one(s) that impact. Capacity-building is about increasing the peoples’ confidence in themselves and their ability to enable them to fully take part in education. Ultimately, the issues go beyond more than just building capacity, which is a deficit model suggesting that the problem lies solely with the learner. Indigenous peoples, peoples of colour, feminists, gays and lesbians, and others have ways of knowing and knowledge bases that need to be included in the academy. Indigenous nations have much to contribute. We represent the first ecologists, political democrats, linguists, astronomers, navigators, mathematicians, scientists, feminists, and environmentalists. All of this knowledge must be reflected in the places that produce official knowledge. The academy must change and adapt to become more inclusive rather than expect Indigenous peoples to conform. The academy has often been called a place of privilege, nepotistic, hegemonic, a seat of white male power, and a gatekeeper. Universities have been identified as social clubs where people hire their spouses or other members of the “boys’ club”, and give preferential hiring to those that agree with their rank, race, and philosophy. According to Dale Spender, gatekeepers are “the people who set the standards, produce the social knowledge, monitor what is admitted to the systems

of distribution, and decree the innovations in thought or knowledge, or values” (1981, p. 187). So nepotism and its weaker cousins, cronyism and favoritism, are important sources of corruption of the academic ideal of equability of procedures and treatment.

Antonio Gramsci (1995) has inspired many with his analysis of social and political structures through the concept of hegemony. Hegemony dismisses and excludes certain cultures, preferring that of dominant cultures. Powers of domination mean that social, economic, and cultural institutions wield power over the lives and conditions of “minority” cultures, or those without power. Indigenous peoples, peoples of colour, and marginalized cultures are dismissed and ignored by dominant, largely white, male culture. This discrimination follows Indigenous peoples throughout broad aspects of society. This discrimination is reflected in increasing poverty and the lack of services that other people take for granted. Although universities embrace the discourse of inclusion, they reflect the rest of society and those in their sway, often failing to recognize their influence or corrupting the principles they profess to believe. Thus, many people in academia would argue that this is the part of modern society that is most welcoming to Native people. A line of study of what is called “Aversive” or “Modern Racism” (Devine, 1995), however, sheds light on the accuracy of any protestations that discrimination rarely occurs in academia. That research indicates that many people who consider themselves to be tolerant of group differences still engage in discriminatory behavior and prejudicial thinking when circumstances allow them to justify those actions

as unrelated to group membership, or as James so cleverly stated, “a great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices” (1993, p.2).

The silencing of Indigenous voices is summed up by Bud Hall:

Year after year since the arrival of the Europeans on this continent, the nonaboriginal education system has been erasing the stories, the histories, the cultures, the languages, and the ways of knowing of aboriginal peoples. This project of silencing Canada’s first peoples has reinforced the appropriation of land, the degradation of the environment, the creation of assimilationist residential schools, and the continuation of racist stereotypes about people of Aboriginal descent. And through curriculum design, program planning, school reform, textbook adoption, language policies, limitation of language provision, and thousands of smaller ways, many nonaboriginal educators have participated knowingly or unknowingly in this educational silencing. The accumulated result of this systematic exclusion has been that information about aboriginal life has not been easily accessible to students, teachers and adult educators. In particular, the perspectives of aboriginal peoples, expressed in their own voices without the mediation of Western culture, have been largely absent. (2000, p. 203)

Added to these problems, universities knowingly, or unknowingly, resist diversity in hiring (Mihesuah, 2004). This resistance needs to be identified and confronted. In many cases the change that feminists, Indigenes, and visible minorities ask for will only be partly realized through a united voice about the structural changes that are needed within the academy.

This second part of this chapter is organized by countries and regions to include interviews with key people in educational institutions within Canada and abroad and also includes the focused observations of the participants’ practices. A major advantage of

direct participant observation is that it provides in depth here-and-now experience so as to reveal tacit practices. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), “observation...allows the inquirer to see the world as his subjects see it, to live in their time frames, to capture the phenomenon in and on its own terms, and to grasp the culture in its own natural, ongoing environment...” (p. 273). To do this, I became an “active member-researcher” (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 380) immersing myself within the central activities of the groups being studied where I focused my observation on group process rather than my role. In Canada, I spoke with elders from Joe Duquette High School, now called Oskayak, an alternative school for First Nations students, and faculty and elders at both the First Nations University and the University of Saskatchewan. In Hawaii, the Philippines, and South Africa, I interviewed people working within the universities, community cultural centers, and cultural schools. I focused the inquiry on how education institutions were developing Indigenous Knowledge Systems as resistance and also as a way to enable better quality of life for communities. During the conversations, I also asked participants to describe the Indigenous Knowledge components and courses within each of their institutions. In most instances, personal storytelling became the medium for learning about developments at the different sites. Storytelling is a way of creating knowledge that is fundamental to Indigenous peoples, who for the most part originated from oral cultures. Storytelling remains a method of teaching life lessons (Jolly, 1995) in present day Indigenous communities.

During the time that I was writing my dissertation, I was invited to participate in several meetings intended to discuss issues by Indigenous people whose professions were delimited by their training within mainstream academic institutions. I presented a paper at the *Mapping Insurgencies, Sex, Race and Globalization Conference* at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Spring of 2003. Scholars from various universities throughout Canada and the United States presented papers on the impact that globalization on communities of colour, women, and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) groups. This conference introduced areas of thought as well as new bodies of research, new literature, and perspectives that I had not previously considered. Indigenous communities have always had "Two-Spirited" people, meaning those that are born with one sex but can have the spirit of the other sex. In our conversations, we raised in our own consciousness that Indigenous Knowledge Systems wording need to be inclusive and reflect this reality. During the conference a small group of faculty from the University of Arizona engaged in dialogue about contentious issues setting a good example that other universities might follow.

During a second event, Indigenous professionals from medicine, psychiatry, and academic institutions identified gaps faced by Indigenous peoples in higher learning and professional training at a retreat think tank that took place in May 2003. It was organized by Native academics from the Healing Conservancy and the Woodfish Institute in California. The participants included Indigenous scholars, medical doctors, and traditional healers primarily from the United States who gathered together because of

their linked roles in community healing. We discussed the full range of illnesses within our collective communities, including the impact of our colonial histories and development on present day well-being. As colleagues, we engaged in conversational interchanges, where we spent time together in order to deepen and enrich our understanding of critical health issues. In creating and negotiating meaning, we had conversations similar to Van Manen's (1977) notion of conversations, which he describes as "a type of dialogue which is not adversative but as Socrates expressed it, 'like friends talking together' about their ideas" (p.218). We agreed that development within community usually meant that development was for outside interests and usually at the cost of community well-being. For myself, the Cree concept of *wakotawin* came to mind—it reminds us that we are all related despite the miles that separate us, and that we are relatives with collective visions, knowledge, and shared challenges. We agreed that suffering was at epidemic levels in reservation communities, and that Indigenous peoples continued to suffer when they left their homes to live in large American cities. We discussed the role of traditional spiritual ceremonies and knowledge in the physical, mental, and spiritual health of Native Americans. From the perspectives of their professional, community, and spiritual work; all participants gave testimony to the fact that Native Americans' spiritual ceremonies, including traditional songs, were central to healing illness. One of the participants, Dr. Eduard Duran, who led the discussion, has written extensively on postcolonial psychology (Duran & Duran, 1995). Another speaker-participant, Dr. Lewis Mehl-Madrona (1998), a Lakota/Cherokee, has written specifically about cases of healing involving traditional Indigenous medicines in cancer cases. As

both a physician and an academic, he argues that the use of traditional knowledge, including traditional medicines and ceremonies and the close support of family and extended community, worked to promote a difference (personal communication, May, 2003). Both Duran and Mehl-Madrona stated that Western medicine and psychiatry alone do not work to heal Indigenous peoples. The participants agreed that healing communities is a hugely complex issue beginning with individuals, families, and communities; and that healing cannot just be done individually within a vacuum, as the Western medicine paradigm operates. Nor can the healing be placed solely within a ceremonial or romantic context, “but to reconnect the powerful and transformative capacities of traditional theory and practice with the problems of our times” (Dei, Hall, & Rosenberg, 2000). Healing will occur when people having power over their social, cultural, political, and economic realities—a situation that doesn’t apply in most cases. Within the healing professions, many Western-trained Indigenous doctors and psychologists felt that important aspects of Aboriginal spirituality were left out of clinical diagnosis. Similarly, many of the plants used by Indigenous peoples are also being replaced by synthetic Western medicines. Some of these medicines, interestingly, do have the basic properties of plants that were used traditionally by Indigenous peoples. The group agreed that there is a great need for Indigenous professionals like us to continue to network and share ideas and methodologies in order to develop a critical mass for the healing of our communities and link the issues to higher learning. As critical thinkers who want to change institutions, it is crucial that we collaborate in a dialogue that crosses boundaries and creates spaces for alternatives and possibilities. Gatherings

like these have helped in the development of courses in our own institutions that link community pathology, health, teaching, and learning.

The group of Indigenous scholars felt that working within the safety of a think tank with a mingling and multiplicity of voices helped us to position and strengthen our views on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Consequently, the thoughtful dialogue among empowered professional peers strengthened our work and leadership roles in our various faculty positions and communities. The need for such a space, in this case a retreat centre overlooking the Pacific ocean and providing healthy foods and quiet comfortable cottages, comes out of the relative isolation that we experience within the academy. For Indigenous peoples, there is an empty space between the transfer of knowledge coming from the community to the academy and back again. Think tanks can be intellectual and emotive spaces where one does not need to feel pressure, embarrassment, or ridicule when discussing social and intellectual challenges, which we face with the status quo. Perhaps it is not so much that change is created within the academy by such meetings, so much as our personal and intellectual spaces are inspired, supported, and nourished to prepare us for the academic battles that we invariably encounter. The stories that colleagues told, the successes they recounted, and the frustrations and dilemmas they face became a significant resource for ideas for change and activism. However, I believe there is obviously a need to go beyond personal and political nourishing and include structural change, as South African scholars, Vil-Nkomo and Myburgh note:

Effective think-tanks throughout the world are based on continuity, the recognition of the importance of research and the desire to break into new frontiers. Given the opportunity, think-tanks would make a significant contribution to the renaissance, advance international co-operation, and allow South Africans to unleash a brain power commodity beyond that of the country's mineral resources. It has been acknowledged in research that the work of think-tanks must also be the development of the technical know-how in policy implementation and analysis. In other words, the renaissance in the context of South Africa must suggest the contribution of best practices emerging from this country and being made available to the rest of the world. As the Negro College Fund would put it, "the mind is a terrible thing to waste". (in Makgoba, 1999, p.276)

Our think tank of May 2003 allowed us to envision how Indigenous Knowledge Systems could strengthen Western medical training. It also demonstrated that the gains we have experienced in the humanities could be extended to the social sciences, sciences, and beyond. The compartmentalization of disciplines within higher education has a negative impact on Indigenous peoples whose world views are holistic, and it has meant that tiny gains in certain areas are overshadowed by the lack of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge bases in other disciplines. While most Indigenous academics are convinced of the relevance and usefulness of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, many other faculty members resist change. For Indigenous peoples and others whose realities have been marginalized by the academy, such as feminists, gays, lesbians, and transgendered; it is about having our voices recognized as essential pillars of intellectualism (Mihesuah, 1998; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Heath Justice, 2004). Indigenous cadres need to take the initiative to start the process of curricular and pedagogical overhauls focusing on increasing the level of connectivity and complementarity between

the formal education system and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the communities (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). Of equal importance they need to be models of academic inclusivity. I believe that as the critical mass of Indigenous academics continues to grow, there will be tremendous opportunities for an emerging field of scholarship that has, at present, started to make important contributions (Cook-Lynn, 1998). Thus, think tanks serve as a tool for Indigenous groups for “reframing” (Smith, 1999), which is to take “greater control over the ways in which Indigenous issues and social problems are discussed and handled” (p.154). Reframing occurs within the way Indigenous peoples engage in conversation about what it means to be Indigenous.

This scholarship cannot overlook the important parallel scholarship that has been developing with Indigenous peoples in the global south as demonstrated by my research. Another forum I attended was a meeting of South Pacific leaders in Tonga in early 2003. This meeting was non-scholarly, but representative of community-based concerns. As Freire postulated, “Dialogue with others therefore not only has the ability to accomplish social goals; it also ‘humanizes’ the individual through creating the “role of man as Subject in the world and with the world” (p. 46). Meetings are held infrequently, but participants learn about Pacific regional issues of community governance, well-being, and the self- determination of Indigenous Peoples. Very little of the cutting-edge content of these community-based meetings ever makes it into scholarly publications or university curricula. However, social change at the community-level is evident. Grounding work in a contemporary issue, community members made a decision based on

their experiences, traditions, values, and motives, as they developed deeper understanding and even greater control over their circumstances. At that meeting, a resolution was passed that directed the assembly to create greater links between higher learning institutes and Indigenous Knowledge holders and their communities. The resolution was driven by the view that most Indigenous Pacific youth who attended universities seldom learn their history and their communities do not benefit from their university training. Typically for Indigenous peoples in the Pacific region, the curriculum is not decided by community needs but is largely driven by the academy. This has been referred to as one aspect of academic and cultural hegemony:

Also in this category are professors who are well aware of the concerns Native scholars have over their propensity to ignore Native voices yet require their graduate students to write according to the status quo (that is, to ignore Native versions of the past and present and not to focus on tribal concerns), and they tend to dwell excessively on Euroamerican theory and will not approve students' theses and dissertation unless they adhere to those standards. These professors are particularly difficult to combat because of the established power base that has been created from their politicking abilities and published works about Native peoples that make money for publishing houses. (Mihesuah, 2004, p.35)

In May 2004, an Indigenous Knowledge symposium sponsored by the Indigenous Peoples Program occurred as a result of bringing forth some of the thoughts and concerns that came out of the Tonga meeting. This Indigenous Knowledge symposium brought together Indigenous scholars to discuss the many ways in which they were transforming the academy; such as curriculum development, including elders and storytellers; and to dialogue about our common challenges vis-à-vis the academy. As an observant

participant (Tedlock, 1991), I recognized that strategies must continually be changed, reinvented, and reconceptualized to address each new issue that surfaces.

In the 2004 Indigenous Knowledge symposium, there were also discussions of the various expressions of Indigenous Knowledge from the various regions of Canada and Southern Africa in which we recognized critical links in our parallel struggles for autonomy. Recently Indigenous scholars and traditional foods experts have come together to explore the food crises facing many Indigenous peoples. Freire would suggest our gathering was "problem-posing" where all become "cognitive actors" who "cooperate in perceiving the same cognizable object" through dialogue becoming "co-investigators" towards "emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality" (1970, p. 60-62). The food crises, in both urban and rural settings, have resulted in health problems, such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease for Indigenous peoples as Western foods are not as compatible. We believe that one of the cures for these illnesses is the reintroduction of traditional Indigenous foods by promoting and reintegrating Indigenous food knowledge within the community (LaDuke, 2006). Within the broader social and economic spectrum, these issues must also be considered in the dominant discourse with the goal of poverty reduction. It is of critical importance that nutrition departments, colleges of medicine, and community health and epidemiology departments include Indigenous food sources in their knowledge base and identify some of the food security issues, such as environmental destruction and poverty that face First Nations and Indigenous communities.

All of these networked events have provided inspiration and information, which I have used to develop undergraduate and graduate courses to teach within several Canadian universities. In participating in those events, I have gained confidence in my own ability as an activist to make a difference. Always, I am anchored by the words of Belenky et al (1986), “Every woman needs to know that she is capable of intelligent thought, and she needs to know it right away” (p. 193). The message many of the women receive from the institutions educating them is that they are not the same as—and therefore not as good as—men. Most women know much more than they suspect; but because of the contexts in which knowledge is traditionally displayed, women's authority rarely achieves recognition. In theorizing women’s knowledge, Belenky et al. would argue that constructed knowledge involves awareness that the procedures and frameworks for establishing truth are not absolute, and one has a responsibility for the creation and choice of the frameworks and procedures used. Constructed knowledge is when one integrates their own opinions and sense of self with reason and the outside world around them.

I believe that it is important for our communities and our students to inform us about what the urgent issues are and for academics to integrate this information into the learning, teaching, and scholarship process. Many of our food symposiums have taken us to communities that are actively growing their traditional foods for local consumption. These beginning steps of addressing health issues and community sovereignty are

severing the dependence upon Western foods as the staples of Indigenous diets. As my research and curriculum development has demonstrated, it is important to teach students what is happening with Indigenous peoples within different regions of the world so that they can see the interconnectedness of their common strengths, oppressions, and resiliency and then pose solutions. These Indigenous Knowledge perspectives from the field need to influence curricula in a major way. We must continue to remind ourselves in bold ways of the collective work that we have done to create change so as to stay encouraged, inspired, and build on our successes:

We must give an honest and thorough account of the constructive interventions that have occurred as a consequence of our efforts to create justice in education. We must highlight all the positive, life-transforming rewards that have been the outcome of collective efforts to change our society, especially education, so that it is not a site for the enactment of domination in any form. (hooks, 2003, p. xiii)

Many Indigenous scholars, within both Canadian and American universities, have risen to the challenge and are contributing to the Indigenization of the academy (Miheesuah, Cavender, & Wilson, 2004). At the University of Saskatchewan, we have had a small critical mass of Indigenous scholars. Most of them are in the Department of Native Studies, the College of Education, and a few in the College of Nursing and other Arts departments. Recently a new field has widened its doors. The Faculty of Medicine has hired two Indigenous medical doctors to take leadership in the field of medicine and Indigenous peoples' health and health research. These doctors have contributed in a major way to the discourse, scholarship, and curriculum development on with Indigenous

ways of knowing and healing and potentially impacted Western medicine (Mehl-Madrona, 1997, Smylie, 2000). Initially, research generated by these doctors will sensitize practitioners in the field of medicine and higher education, where there is currently little curriculum development on Indigenous peoples' perspective on healing. Through their research and practice, they will promote a synergistic relationship, such that the previously disparate systems join to form a more comprehensive holistic system. A more comprehensive holistic system, in turn, can better serve all students while at the same time preserving the essential integrity of each component of the larger overlapping system. Our future physicians will have a more grounded and holistic perspective in healing others.

Despite our advances, we have a long journey ahead. Since making our way into the halls of academia, my colleagues and I have experienced a slow road to the indigenization of curricula and workplace. For some, academia is our chosen path, so we wonder how to use it to prepare our students for the future and which materials to use. Curriculum production is a slow and isolating job that requires resources, time, and institutional support. Mission statements are not action plans. To be effective in curriculum development, I believe what is needed is an evaluation of existing curricula, both in terms of quality and quantity, and an identification of areas, or faculty departments, that require development. This needs to be done University wide, within the science and arts departments within all disciplines. Changing a curriculum requires a vision, a plan, and communication. Even before developing curriculum, the questions

(Smith, 2005) that reflect the changing nature of the needs of our communities must be developed. For Indigenous peoples, *asking the questions* means inquiring about the essence of knowledge creation and how will it benefit our communities. Asking the questions means determining what knowledge needs to be kept as is and which new knowledge is required to meet current challenges. Asking the questions also means, in some cases, challenging academic hegemony and listening deeply to our students and our communities. These are questions that require community solutions and the voice of an ordinary person (Belenky, 1986). It is only important to change the way we do things in the academy if it also makes a difference in the broader community. This is a thought that has driven feminist thought (hooks, 2003):

We believed then and now that the most important measure of the success of feminist movement would be the extent to which the feminist thinking and practice that was transforming our consciousness and our lives would have the same impact on ordinary folks. With this political hope we made commitments to seek to write theory that would speak directly to an inclusive audience. (p. xi)

The trend tends to be individual Indigenous faculty members working on their own in an environment that does not prioritize “Indigenous education issues” as part of the baseline University funding. This is the case with the network of Indian teacher education programs delivered in the academy but only sustained year to year on soft monies. Until university administrations treat Indigenous education seriously by ensuring that it becomes part of the baseline funding, it is difficult, if not impossible, to integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems fully throughout the University and to do any long-term planning. Like other Indigenous academics, I have sat on endless university committees

to advise peers and have seen very little change (Deloria, in Mihesuah, 2004, p.28). Words evaporate into vapor. We have a better chance of hiring more university administrators (non-Indigenous) than Indigenous faculty. Meaningful change cannot take place until we hold the administrative bodies and faculty associations accountable by asking what steps are taken to recruit, support, and retain young Indigenous faculty. There is no recruiting process for Indigenous faculty and staff, such as the “shoulder tapping” of young Indigenous graduate students or invitations to “grow scholars” from the communities. At present, there is no institutional vision or plan of what an Indigenous-friendly university would look like. There is scant reference to Indigenous matters in the University of Saskatchewan’s mission statement.

Universities need to get on board and realize that international agencies, such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, are grappling with Indigenous Knowledge issues. This is not due to academics but mostly to the Indigenous leadership within communities. There are models we can examine and issues we can focus on. Ultimately, the slow road to academic indigenization is probably felt most by our students. Most universities have a dismal retention record in regards to Indigenous students. Dialogue about Aboriginal pedagogy or culturally responsive teaching is absent. First year classes are more about shoe-horning students into new learning without building on their strength or experiences. If the academy is truly Indigenized, faculty and all students will feel the positive impact. Universities are brutishly competitive workplaces. Individual academics vie for research grants and opportunities to be

published in prestigious journals. Indigenous scholars struggle with advancing their personal goals and coming from collective societies that promote the collective good. These are workplace disparities and tensions that need to be addressed.

RESEARCH

Not only has history proven that it is important for Indigenous people to do their own research, but Indigenous scholars are also demanding this right (Mihesuah, 1998; Ten Fingers, 2005; Baskin, 2005). Doing our own research and listening to our stories of oppression, domination, and also of hope is one way of achieving a voice that gets heard in the building of public policy that impacts our daily lives. Indigenous peoples do not want the same old variety of research that has had no direct benefit and rather resulted in the same deplorable conditions in many of our communities. Increasingly, more North American Indigenous scholars are taking control of their community research. Indigenous scholars have begun focusing their research on decolonization, child rearing, traditional governance, the environment, health, midwifery, culturally appropriate methodologies, and more. As both a citizen activist and scholar, I believe research needs to reflect the needs and to be the voice of those who are most marginalized. It has been described as unshackling ourselves from colonialism and making a strong call for sovereignty and self-determination:

Indigenous researchers are equally subjected to this systems, but we can only get so far before we see a face-our Elder cleaning fish, our sister living on the edge in East Vancouver, our brother hunting elk for the feast, our little ones in foster care-

and hear a voice whispering, “are you help us?” This is where Indigenous methodology must meet the criteria of collective responsibility and accountability. In protocols for Indigenous research, this is a central theme. As Indigenous research enters the academy, this principle needs to stay up close and personal (Kovach, in Brown & Strega, 2005, p. 31).

Unfortunately, most of the “spadework” research needs of Indigenous communities are overshadowed by the research agendas of the corporate sector, who are driving the agenda at Canadian universities in health sciences, agriculture, and physical sciences.

The important role of Indigenous stories is overshadowed by the corporate agenda:

If our definition of the academy is the hierarchical, institutional structure that enforces an understanding of “knowledge” as that body of mores that have emerged more from a clash of ideas than a thoughtful consideration of them, I’m not entirely certain that this goal (Indigenizing the Academy) is even appropriate. Such a goal turns our attention away from lands and cultural traditions and into the inequitable power dynamics of an increasingly corporatized academic world. Such an academy may well be beyond redemption. (Heath Justice, in Mihesuah, & Cavender Wilson, 2004, p.101)

As Indigenous scholars who originate from collective societies and worldviews, we must ensure that our research and our roles in the academy serves our communities, builds strong nations, and places story at the center.

In the midst of my PhD work, two colleagues (non-Indigenous) and I were awarded a significant Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and Community University Research Agreement Grant to do research on Aboriginal housing needs. This was my first experience of securing a major research grant. Mobilizing support from the Aboriginal community to take part in a SSHRC proposal seemed like a

fairly straightforward event. We could not have predicted the type of preparation that was to follow, which ideally should have been done far in advance. Unlike other communities who hold suspicions about research, the major Aboriginal organizations wrote letters of support, but that support was not enough. The really difficult and unexpected work, which was needed to make our Indigenous communities true participatory research partners, took a year and that was to prepare our communities to take an active interest in our research resources and to produce written proposals. In an ideal situation the community would help prepare the proposal. In other words, I believe that our collective community had not been properly prepared to knowingly enter into meaningful research partnerships. Initially, we were remiss in not inviting community partners to the original drafting of the letter of intent as full research partners. This has been evidenced by the fact that after we received funding, a major part of our work was spent in identifying research capacity within the Aboriginal community. Capacity identification is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive over the long-term in the fast-changing world. Often, the concept of capacity-building is a deficit model and has connotations that those that are being researched only need to be made right by the experts. *Capacity-building* means recognizing the paternalistic attitudes and practices and the notions of superiority that lay claim to the idea that Indigenous people need to develop capacity. I believe that capacity-building should begin with recognition of the vastness of knowledge that exists within Indigenous communities—in other words, working with community and strengthening capacities

through the identification of the knowledge that exists already within Indigenous communities. In the words of Paulo Freire (1970), we are not beginning with a blank slate. The other side of capacity identification is to examine the deficits within Western or Euro university-centric research models that have a very narrow view of knowledge.

As a means of identifying community research capacity, a first step in our SSHRC project was to establish a committee of experts made up of key people in the Aboriginal community. The committee met regularly and represented many major First Nations and Métis organizations, and it contributed advice, feedback, and direction. Initially, we invited this group to develop research projects and to share these resources with the extended communities. During our regular meetings, we updated committee members on the research project developments and some of the challenges that we faced. The research always needed to be reciprocal, that is, communicated back to, and returned to the community:

In all community approaches process – that is, methodology and method – is highly important. In many projects the process is far more important than the outcome. Processes are expected to be respectful, to enable people, to heal and to educate. They are expected to lead one small step further towards self-determination. (Smith, 1999, p. 128)

Another challenge we faced on our SSHRC project was the time between the announcement of the research funding and the date that the proposal had to be in. There was no time to factor in adequate community consultation. This makes the case for establishing ongoing working relationships with the extended non-academic community.

While I have deep roots in my urban community, none of them had academic backgrounds. While I am aware how most Indigenous communities view research in general, the SSHRC experience reinforced my belief that the communities in greatest need of research are the ones that require thoughtful and respectful mobilization, capacity identification/building, and the development of respectful partnerships. Good research can result in the development of policies that work in the development of Indigenous communities. The final outcome of our SSHRC project will no doubt be felt for years to come. Many excellent research projects and new information developed because of the face-to-face meetings, respectful environments, and relationships we fostered during the project. While there were many steep learning curves for all involved, I believe the project produced many pieces of research that highlighted Indigenous development issues and focused on Indigenous knowledge issues within an urban context.

INDIGENOUS RESEARCH AND PRACTICE VERSUS STATUS QUO

In order for Indigenous peoples to survive and create a nurturing environment in academia, one is required to question the status quo of mainstream academia. It is a place where the politics of research are seldom broached. In the words of a medical doctor colleague, "we need a new ethics of how we use or do medicine within our communities" (Eduardo Duran, personal communication, May 2003). There is also an issue of demanding our rightful place and the resources to exist in the academy. However, challenging the culture of the academy can be a very isolating experience. When

Indigenous academics challenge the way of the academy, or do the work that is required by our communities, we run the risk of being denied promotion and can suffer from being treated dismissively. My own personal story is one where I had to launch an appeal when I was denied promotion. Puzzled by why I was denied promotion and aware of the volume of my work, several colleagues convinced me to appeal the promotion denial. I appealed the decision, which meant several weeks of valuable time spent meeting with my faculty representative and pulling together documents to “prove” my worth to the academy:

While every scholar faces annoyances in the university, some face much more than others, and all of us in the anthology have tales to tell about unfair evaluations and promotion and hiring decisions. Worse, many of our stories are labeled by our privileged colleagues as “unbelievable,” which results in a lack of action on the part of our administrations. While we can think of no Indigenous scholar who is actually destitute, we can say that many of us have achieved our positions and promotions only after many arduous, frustrating confrontations with those in power. (Mihesuah, 2004, p.8)

When the case was put before the appeal committee they were perplexed by the fact that I was denied promotion because they recognized my professional and scholarly practice. The committee overturned the recommendation by my department colleagues and recommended promotion. Sometimes the denial for promotion is a case where ones work includes a major component of professional and community practice and does not fit into the square boxes of the university requirements of promotion criterion. The majority of our academic colleagues feel little commitment to community service, which many Indigenous scholars prioritize, hooks describes university attitudes to community service:

In the academic world of colleges and universities the notion of service is linked to working on behalf of the institution, not on behalf of students and colleagues. When professors “serve” each other by mutual commitment to education as the practise of freedom, by daring to challenge and teach one another as well as our students, this service is not institutionally rewarded. The absence of reward for service in the interest of building community makes it harder for individual teachers to make a commitment to serve. (2003, p.83)

As Indigenous people, our work is often judged by peers who have no understanding of the value or type of work that we pursue. The people who constitute the committees that assess our work often do not have an understanding or appreciation of the nature of the work that is being assessed. This is also the case when we are peer-reviewed for journal articles or our project proposals are assessed for research grants. More often than not, these committees have no Indigenous members, partly because Indigenous scholars on campus are few in number and highly sought after for committee work. Whether the committee work leads to institutional change, or whether it is window dressing is a question that remains. Devon Mihesuah (2003) explains:

Most minority women scholars know that (1) the academic playing field is not always level when it comes to race and gender; (2) politics of identity and power are major factors in publishing, course approval, hiring, merit, and promotion decisions; (3) identity and power politics exist among Natives within the realm of American Indigenous studies; and (4) when we complain about racism in the curriculum and in promotion processes-no matter how legitimate the claim-we often are labeled the problem. (p.22)

Most Canadian universities do not have a critical mass of Aboriginal scholars, which makes the Indigenous academic experience very isolating and demanding, but it is more than just the numbers within the academy. Shifts within thinking must include

Indigenous Knowledge and ways of knowing, and we must be able to critique the status quo, which does not work for us and our communities.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE: A PEDAGOGY OF HEALING

It is acknowledged in some circles that Indigenous communities have suffered from centuries of oppression caused by the dominant society. This oppression is a colonial expression that is misunderstood by the same dominant society that perpetuates the oppression. Oppression is often referred to as *colonialism* and is a shared experience of Indigenous groups globally. I believe that Indigenous Knowledge Systems will once again thrive, but only when we heal from our collective oppression, which has deep and complex manifestations. Structural and complex pathologies have impacted our communities, which in turn ripple throughout larger society. In addition to internalized oppression, we also face hatred and misunderstanding from outside our communities, and our communities continue to suffer from historical events exacerbated by colonialism under the control of dominant governmental structures. Religious institutions imposed physical, sexual, and emotional abuse on our people through the Residential School experience. As a result of years of unresolved and intergenerational abuse, our children drop out, or are pushed out, as some prefer to say, from schools and from society. Added to this, our people are marginalized, economically and socially, by the ongoing colonial structures present in public policies, formal schooling, and the employment practices of the dominant society. Our communities experience violence and are in desperate need of

healing and rebirth. The prisons are filled with our people who have lost hope and who have turned to crime to alleviate poverty. Urban Indian gangs create communities where there are none, but base these on violence, exploitation, and death. Drugs and alcohol numb the pain of daily living. Our research as Indigenous scholars must drive the educational experience to help heal the abuse, pain, and community breakdown because they are a fundamental impediment in our ability to develop our nations. Some have referred to these oppressive conditions as a lack of full democratic rights (Giroux, in Macedo & Gounari, 2006). Our literature and our curriculum must help our students and others to develop a critical awareness of colonialism and its impact on daily living. It has fallen on our shoulders to help explain and deconstruct our colonial history so others do not continue to blame the victims of colonialism. I believe the deconstruction and reconstruction should be a collective academic undertaking and part of the role of knowledge creation. The role of knowledge creation must take a central role in deconstructing the tragic situation of the oppressed; “the understanding of the oppressed exposes the real relations among people as inhumane: Thus there is a call to political action” (Hartsock, 1998, p. 241). Finally, our research must direct policies that will develop social and economic systems to support the marginalized. This is one way to ensure a shift of power to the community. These are some of the challenges that we face as scholars working for our communities.

Saulteaux Elder Laura Wasacase attributes community dysfunction to unresolved residential school abuse and to the breakdown of community and family structures

created by the residential school process (personal communication, May 2003). Elder Wasacase talks about the need for community healing and the creation of balance in our lives. She states that there are many people in our community who are wounded from generations of abuse. I organized a youth wellness retreat and invited Elder Wasacase to conduct the healing circle. In that healing circle, Wasacase used the medicine wheel concept and model to address how our communities need to create balance. She described the need for balancing the four parts of the human psyche, the physical, mental, spiritual, and intellectual forces. In healing circles, Wasacase uses talking circles in which individuals are encouraged to talk about their abuse in a circle of confidentiality. Fundamental to youth healing is the need to be listened to and to be acknowledged. Our communities have many youth who have never belonged or are seldom listened to. They join gangs in their quest to satisfy their need to belong. Wasacase maintains that healing from past abuses and trauma and returning to sacred ceremonies are fundamental to community well-being. Witness the hate literature of a few years back (Windspeaker, January 2003) that was circulated in Saskatoon by an infamous Member of Parliament, in which he clearly singled out First Nations as objects of attack. The posters implied that all Natives are criminals and hate mongers. Acts like these clearly speak to the need for greater understanding and community healing, not divisions and hatred. Also witness the case of three men sexually assaulting a 12-year-old Native girl in which two of the men are acquitted (Buydens, N., 2005). These issues are not isolated events but occurred during the time when many Aboriginal men and women were found dead as a direct result of white police actions as reported in the Saskatoon Star Phoenix (February 23,

2000) and white misogyny against Native girls was also in the news, as in the Crawford murder case (Goulding, 2001). Both cases have irreversibly damaged both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and these cases speak to the need for healing within the communities.

Graveline (2004) describes the impact that our storying can have on the healing of our nations;

Our Elder say. More voices give same Messages. Repetition.
One MedicineStory will empower. Somebody.
Another Medicine Story will Inspire. Somebody else
We can Heal through Story.
I Story. Daily Lived experiences for others to learn.
Elders value Oral Tradition. To recreate situations.
To help someone Live through Life's challenges
For other to benefit Directly. From my.our. experiences
Sharing our Stories in Circle.
Intensifies our Connections to our Authentic selves.
To others who can Support us. (p.220)

Likewise, there are spaces for healing in higher learning. In her book *Too Scared to Learn: Women, Violence and Education*, Jenny Horsman (1999) describes her work with women, trauma, and the inability to learn. In 2001, I invited Dr. Horsman to the Extension Division to do a workshop for the community on unresolved trauma. Over the years as an educator, I have had concerns regarding some Aboriginal students' ability to succeed within formal learning. While Horsman is not Aboriginal, I felt that her work regarding trauma was groundbreaking and could offer important information for our community. Horsman is of the firm belief that learners cannot learn until life traumas have been addressed. She believes that education for the abused must involve a "...reconceptualization, a new model of thinking and not merely individual practical

changes” (Horsman, 1999). In the past, some of Horsman's students have been Indigenous learners and most are women. Horsman’s work is groundbreaking on the issue of healing. Like Horsman, I believe that until our collective community has named and worked through our historical abuse and residual abuse, we will not succeed in academia and will continue to live broken lives. The learning process must consider the brokenness of lives. Given the forms of structural violence that have been imposed on us, I believe that we must be concerned about and act on issues such as abuse and trauma. Our communities are full of broken people, and, as educators, we must begin with the fundamental steps of healing. Horsman's approach to working with abuse and trauma victims involves the creation of a safe place to learn and new teaching approaches and curriculum.

I have suggested a series of themes for training, the value of new connections with counselors, even new possibilities that could be created by the organization of the classroom. A myriad of new teaching approaches and curriculum content must follow the recognition of the needs of survivors. (Horsman, 1999, p.300)

Part of Horsman's future plans include an intensive women's group in a community-based literacy program which explores the impact of trauma on the whole person, including body, emotion, spirit, and mind:

A variety of resource people will bring this program to life. A Native elder, a musician, a yoga teacher, an artist and a body work specialist who might teach "grounding" and help students explore their identity through mask-making, are some people I hope to bring wisdom and imagination to the process. I will work with a counselor, who will lead workshops and be available for individual counseling when learners need support, and for advice when I need to debrief. Through such a creative and innovative process, I believe learners will discover

strength to envisage future possibilities and become ready to delineate and take on new goals. (Horsman, 1999, p. 304)

Dr. Martin Brokenleg (1998) also echoes these sentiments and beliefs. I first heard this Lakota psychologist from South Dakota give a keynote address at an Indian education conference. Dr. Brokenleg begins his powerful presentation by displaying a slide of his parents. He proceeds to tell audiences that his strength as a balanced professional originated in the belonging he first experienced within his nuclear family and his large extended Lakota family, referred to as *tiyospaya* in the Lakota language. He states firmly that the reason so many of our people are despairing is because of our need to belong and because of our collective need to recover our lost values of caring, sharing, community and belonging, which have been the principles of Indigenous philosophies. I believe that these are values that all of humanity needs. Too often in education, we attempt to work with the intellect at the cost of the emotional, mental, and spiritual. Dr. Brokenleg bases his work with troubled youth on the native model of the medicine wheel. The medicine wheel teachings tell us that human beings need balance to live productive lives. This *being in balance* is based on emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental well-being. Brokenleg states that communities suffer because individuals' needs are not being met, and this eventually means that whole communities are in discord.

The historical and systemic abuse is now manifest in multi-generational symptoms and community conflict. Many communities suffer from inter-family and community discord. There is a great need for healing. In *Strong Women Stories, Native Vision and*

Community Survival (2003) the words of Shelley Bressette, whose cousin was shot and killed by police on her reserve community of Ipperwash, Ontario, during a land dispute in September 1995, reverberate:

Healing is letting go of our pain, whether that be personal pain inflicted upon us or the kind of collective pain or trauma we experienced during the Ipperwash Crisis. Letting go means to resolve it or understand it and see it for what it is, and to move beyond it, so that it no longer takes a hold on our daily lives. Recently, at a gathering, I heard a teacher say: "We all experience great suffering in our lives, and we don't know why. But if we look at these times as teachings and ask ourselves what can we learn from these painful moments, then we can give them new meaning." (In Anderson, 2003, p.240)

OSKAYAK HIGH SCHOOL – A MODEL FOR COMMUNITY HEALING

Hegemony permeates all Canadian schools and marginalizes Indigenous students and others who do not represent the status quo. The Joe Duquette High School, now called Oskayak, in Saskatoon is an example where learning focuses on the important role of culture and healing and establishes connections to the land through the restoration of traditional ceremonies and practices. The urban Aboriginal High School's annual *Big Bear Walk* takes place in northern Saskatchewan. I interviewed school Elder Simon Kaytwayhat about the walk. Elders, staff and students were the originators of the walk, which has been taking place annually since 1998. It was named after the honoured Cree leader Chief Big Bear, who was wrongfully jailed in 1885 for defending the land sovereignty rights of his people (Dempsey,1984). In 100 years, human rights for

Indigenous peoples have not improved. Big Bear's political struggle inspired the annual walk whose goals include:

- Remember the 4 peoples of the world and that representatives of each walk with us
- the recognition of our people as a Nation
- the spiritual renewal that comes from sacrificing something of ourselves for our families, our community, our nation, ourselves and all of humankind because we are all related
- to honour Big Bear's memory as a man of peace and a spiritual leader who was wrongfully imprisoned
- to ask Big Bear's spirit for help in our healing from the diseases of drug and alcohol addiction, family violence, childhood sexual abuse and incest and the dark legacy of residential school atrocities
- to inspire and motivate spiritual leadership(with Big Bear as our role model)
- to hear from our Elders of the history of that time (1885), those places and those events so that we, in turn, will be able to share that knowledge with others
- for the return of Big Bear's Sacred Bundle from New York's Manhattan Museum to our Indian Nation
- to create a Healing Lodge to be built on the battle and massacre site

- to express our gratitude for life, breath, prayer, consciousness and choice to the Creator of us all because we are all related

Every four years, the healing staff (a symbolic pole which represents healing) is carried by the group that organizes the walk. Oskayak carried the staff at the beginning, then passed it to the community of Loon Lake and it is now given to the community of Onion Lake. As part of the walk, youth voluntarily choose to walk over 80 kilometres cross country to learn about their own limits, test their patience and ability to live in close quarters with their fellow students and teachers, and to be connected as a whole. They spend one week on the walk and along the way they learn about the land and plants, and also listen to oral traditions and take part in spiritual ceremonies, such as the pipe ceremony, sundance ceremony, and sweat lodge. Students are expected to be active participants in the daily activities of setting up camp, cooking, cleaning-up, and breaking up camp. Elder Kaytwayhat states the trek is an example of learning that involves all four aspects of humanity: the physical, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional. He describes it as a healing journey for youth. He talks about the seven healing fires, which are singing, dancing, laughing, talking, listening, playing, and crying. A person can heal when they participate in these seven activities. Oskayak just celebrated its 26th year of operation and was established in 1980 as a Native Survival School by a group of parents to help students who did not cope in the regular school system (Permission granted by elder Kytwayhat, personal communication, April 2006). Oskayak High School is an example of how healing must be central to the process of Aboriginal learning and also an example of how Indigenous Knowledge, Aboriginal culture, and ways of knowing

become central to student activities and learning. Connecting is about establishing good relations, or *wakotawin*.

LEARNING FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

This section describes three Indigenous communities in three countries, the United States (specifically the state of Hawaii), Vanuatu, and South Africa. The state of Hawaii represents a plural culture. Vanuatu and South Africa are Indigenous cultures with vestiges of colonialism. I examine how higher learning and community-based institutes and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) use Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Hawaii, Vanuatu, and South Africa. International scholars and activists have referred to these regions as the *global South*. My research involved spending several months in total at various centers of Indigenous Knowledge, including the University of Hawaii campus, the University of Pretoria and North-West University in South Africa, and the Vanuatu Cultural Center (VCC) in the South Pacific. Vanuatu was previously called *New Hebrides* and is located west of Fiji. The purpose of my visits were to understand, as a participant observer, the process of Indigenization of formal educational institutes, such as universities, high schools, and cultural centers and to learn about the curricula that have been developed at these centers. I also wanted to know how governments were supporting the process of Indigenization through the development of public policy as in the case of South Africa. I believe that many models, curriculum examples, and methodologies can be replicated or adopted as we Indigenous peoples share similar,

world views and ways of knowing, as well as face many of the same developmental issues. Much of the international dialogue, in addition to taking place within local and Indigenous communities, has taken place within the United Nations Permanent Forum of Indigenous Peoples. This Forum has, since the early 1970s, worked at establishing certain standards of treatment for Indigenous peoples by nation states. Forums on Indigenous rights echo Freire's words, "Dialogue with others therefore not only has the ability to accomplish social goals; it also 'humanizes' the individual through creating the "role of man as Subject in the world and with the world" (1970, p.46). The projects, which I visited for my research, gained some inspiration for development from the Permanent Forum and also from the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

HAWAII

Hawaii is a chain of volcanic islands with mountainous regions that spill into rich vegetation and beautiful coastal waters, all of which provided a complete way of life for the Indigenous peoples. Today, the impact of the military industrial complex and high-rise luxury tourist hotels leaves the Indigenous peoples as landless paupers on their ancestral lands.

Prior to the overthrow of their Queen, Liliuokalani, in 1898 by the United States, *Kanaoka Maoli*, Hawaii's Indigenous Hawaiian population, had resource-rich nations

with complex knowledge systems (Allen, 1982). The overthrow of the Queen and the replacement of their government by the United States sent the Kanaoka Maoli into a socio-economic, cultural, and spiritual decline, from which they are only now beginning to recover. Part of their recovery involves the rediscovery and revitalization of ancient Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, which has become the basis for rebuilding mighty nations. Since the late 1990s, Hawaiian Charter schools were established to address the hegemony of the “all-American” brand of education in Hawaii. In addition to my research at the University of Hawaii, where the charter school is housed, I also use the work of Mika Settee Usiskin who spent 6 months on an international internship at Halau Ku Mana Charter School immersed in the environment. Settee Usiskin interviewed one student of Halau Ku Mana who provided the information on the school and its curriculum and methodology.

HALAU KU MANA

Halau Ku Mana , one of many Hawaiian Charter schools that were established in 2001, teaches traditional Hawaiian values and incorporates them into the state of Hawaii’s required curriculum:

One of the fastest growing areas of public school reform is the charter schools movement. Charter schools are public schools under contract - or charter - between a public agency and groups of parents, teachers, community leaders, or others who want to create alternatives and choice within the public school system. Charter schools create choice for parents and students within the public school system, while providing a system of accountability for student achievement. Charter schools also encourage innovation and provide opportunities for parents

to play powerful roles in shaping and supporting the education of their children. As a result, charter schools can spur healthy competition to improve public education. (<http://www.k12.hi.us/~bwoerner/hacs/whycharters.html>)

The school embraces the traditional Hawaiian spiritual, physical, and intellectual values. Its vision is to empower learners to think, feel, and act in the Hawaiian manner of balance, harmony, and fairness in order to meet the challenges in their local, regional, and global communities. The Hawaiian teaching method at Halau Ku Mana is very family-oriented, and the school is like one large and inclusive *ohana*, “family.” The students refer to the teachers as *auntie* and *uncle*, which helps create a nurturing family atmosphere. When the leadership of the Hawaiian Islands was overthrown by the United States, a form of cultural annihilation followed, with the imposition of the American system of education and other social systems. The Hawaiian language, along with many other traditional aspects of the people, was lost. Hawaiian charter schools, such as Halau Ku Mana, are a way for the people to regain many cultural expressions that they once had and to put Indigenous Knowledge systems into practice. Charter schools are a community effort and a way to rebuild and strengthen community through the creation of new and prospective leaders, the students, who are the future generation. These schools also challenge the dominant ideology of mainstream schools. As Freire states,

The overarching goal of Education as a Practice of Freedom is to outline the ways democracy is best achieved in the face of non-democratic oppressions using critical consciousness and dialogue. Educational dialogue is involved not only at a literacy capacity, but also, and perhaps more significantly, by “helping them

move from naïve to critical transitivity, facilitate their intervention in the historical process.” (1970, pp. 44-45)

Manulani Aluli Meyer (2003) describes how mainstream and status quo education systems impact Hawaiian youth and what she sees as the need for Indigenous education, such as Charter schools with Indigenous epistemologies:

It has boiled down to jobs and income. Everything. The philosophy of capitalism shapes our epistemology and all the idealistic rantings I can muster will make little difference unless we also link this epistemological movement with sustainable economics, creativity and with the land movement currently under way. This is how I believe we will survive in these next hundred years. We will have to shape alternative ways of existing. We have always had this option, but as we live in one of the most expensive destinations in the world, we have not had the chance to really stretch our minds into it. Now, let us begin. (p.6)

Reflective of an interview Settee Usiskin (2002) did with Hawaiian student Namahana Baldwin, Settee Usiskin states that Halau Ku Mana has three guiding values. The first, *Ho'okumu*, refers to grounding and foundation and is the source Hawaiians draw upon to establish foundations, such as strength, wisdom, and experiences of communities, land, and the ancestor. The second, *Ho'okele*, refers to direction and connections. It represents keeping a strong foundation and living with respect and yearning for multiple sources of knowledge. Ho'okele provides Hawaiians with direction and the connections necessary to bridge between cultures and communities. Through such networking, Hawaiians are prepared for the challenges of their life voyages. The third, *Ho'omana*, refers to sustenance and empowerment. Ho'omana is our learning 'ohana (family), *Mana Maoli*, means to strive for self-empowerment by nourishing and balancing all three *piko*, “body, mind, and soul”. At the same time, humanity must seek systemic change through

community empowerment and active participation within our regional, national, and global communities. In the words of school participant and classroom assistant Mika Settee Usiskin:

Every morning the school starts out with an *ole* (chant/prayer). The students stand outside of the *Halau* and ask permission to enter by *Oleing*, and then the teachers reply with an *Ole* giving permission for the students to enter the Halau. After *Oleing* the students begin their day with Hula class. Hula is not only traditional dancing but a way of telling ancient stories and legends of the Hawaiian people. Hula is a form of physical education. So instead of having gym, the school does Hula. After Hula the students break off in to their focus groups. At Halau Ku Mana instead of having classrooms they have focus groups, which are a lot smaller than classrooms. (Settee Usiskin, personal communication, March 20, 2006 approved)

Students are supervised by at least two teachers, or one teacher and one teacher's assistant. They have more one-on-one time with their teachers, which create a better learning opportunity. In focus groups, students are taught subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and English. After their focus groups, the students come together to form a circle in the *Halau*, school. They hold hands and say another *Ole*, "prayer", about coming together to eat and converse with each other. After lunch, the students have a variety of afternoon projects, where groups of students go out of the classroom with their *kumu*, "teacher", to participate in an off-campus cultural learning experience.

The students are working at conserving traditional *Heia* fishponds. They are learning how their ancestors kept fresh fish inventories. Fishponds range in size from small individual family ponds, to large community-sized ponds that have the capacity to feed the entire community. The fishponds are constructed by forming a barrier out of stone in the

shallow water. A large gate separated the deep end of the ocean from the shallow end, where smaller and younger fish would enter easily by passing through the gate bars. The people then would feed the fish and as the fish grew bigger they couldn't pass through the gate that they first came in through. Because of the Hawaiians ingenuity, they were able to have fresh fish. Not only the students are learning what their ancestors did to survive, these Indigenous Knowledge activities have been incorporated into the formal schooling process as part of the formal curriculum.

The school shares a place with another charter school, along the beach about an hour away from the school, called *Kualoa*. Halau Ku Mana was given the parts of a *Kanehunamoku*, "canoe", and the students assembled it as part of their formal instruction. Canoes are very sacred to the Hawaiian people because they were the vessel that brought them to the Islands. According to Hawaiian legends, the gods taught the people to build these canoes so that they could travel the vast seas in search of many lands. The canoe connects the people of Polynesia to one another. The students of Halau Ku Mana worked on this canoe for about a year, and, when the construction was completed, all of the charter schools gathered up at Kualoa to launch the canoe. Based on their scholastic achievements and community service, some students were chosen to sail the canoe. A great navigator, Mau, from the islands of Micronesia, taught these students the ancient ways of sailing. Because of the cultural disintegration, the ancient way of sailing was almost lost with the arrival of foreigners in Hawaii. However, with the help of Mau, cultural revitalization is beginning, whereby Hawaiians of today can learn to sail just like

their ancestors. Using traditional navigation means Mau taught Hawaiian navigator, Nainoa Thompson, who then led a sailing expedition tracing back the old Polynesian sailing routes following tradition ceremonies. During the launch, Elders blessed the canoe with *oles*. All of the students did *Hula* and ate traditional foods such as *taro*, *poi*, *kalua*, and pig. Leftover food was given to the ocean as an offering. Another project, *Malama Aina*, “care for the land”, is where one of the teachers takes the students upstream on campus to a *loi*, or a traditional garden. It is a Hawaiian belief that if the land is cared for, then the land will care for the people. In an interview she did with Hawaiian student Namahana Baldwin, Settee Usiskin (2002) states:

The students go up to the *Loi* a few times a week where they water and take care of their garden in the traditional ways. The students form a line from the stream to the garden and pass the buckets of water to each other until the whole garden is watered. In the garden they have plants such as taro, sweet potatoes, lulu, papaya, kiwi, kuku tree, and chili peppers. The *loi* consist of rows of taro (*kilo*) that was individually planted and set in a way that more taros can be produced. The taro was the main staple in the ancient Hawaiian diet. It’s important that these students learn about growing what their ancestors grew especially in these modern days where some Hawaiians don’t even know what a *loi* is. (Settee Usiskin, personal communication, March 20, 2006 approved)

The school uses off-campus sites as resources, such as holding science classes at Waikiki Aquarium where students benefit from observing plants and animals of the ocean ecosystem. The identification of fish species and observing fish movements are more meaningful experiences than reading about it on the pages of textbooks. They watch the way the animals feed and survive in the ocean, including learning about the native plants of Hawaii and their relationship to oceans, as well as learn Indigenous contributions in the form of Hawaiian foods. In ancient times, the ocean played a major part in Hawaiian

culture. Today, the oceans of Hawaii are a tourist attraction. Halau Ku Mana stresses the importance of taking good care of the ocean, land, and nature; so it may provide for the future in addition to providing a healing process for students. Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer, a strong supporter of Charter Schools, states that their strength lies in the incorporation of the teachings of the land and nature:

We will heal and we will be educated by “aina”(land). This is key. We will, once again, be fed by the tides, rains and stories of a place and people made buoyant because this is how culture survives. This is how children learn best. This is how we all will survive. We will survive because excellence of being is found in the practice of aloha and that, believe it or not is an epistemological point. So let us shape our school lessons by this ideal and let us shape our lives accordingly. (Meyer, 2004, p. 59)

Hawaii has one of the most diverse reefs that attract fish found only in Hawaiian waters. The school ensures that the youth of today learn about this ecosystem and about the responsibilities of stewardship of a natural resource, in order to protect it for future generations. In accordance with the state curriculum, the students also learn the educational basics, such as mathematics and how to work with and maintain computers. They also learn how to make résumés and databases. The school supports skill development so that students will be successful in today’s technological age. Finally, Hawaiian language training is central in what is referred to as *Olelo Hawaii* at Halau Ku Mana. *Olelo* is where the students learn about the importance of language within the community. Once almost lost, the Hawaiian language is now thriving and growing, not only amongst the Hawaiian people but also amongst those that love the culture.

Ceremony, which includes songs, is very much a part of the connection to ancestors. It is through song that students learn their history and obligation for the protection of the land and natural resources. For the students at Halau Ku Mana, the school day finishes with everyone gathering back in the Halau and once more joining hands for a closing *Ole*. The *Ole* conveys thankfulness for the day. At this time everyone shares announcements about their day or the upcoming days. They circle ends with a *Mahalo*, “thank you”, song.

The Hawaiian Charter Schools, including Halau Ku Mana, have become an important piece of community. Because of their cultural and linguistic revival, they have become a model for Indigenous rights with their rekindling of Hawaiian land rights and human rights and their challenge to the dominant pedagogy. Because of their “political training” in Hawaiian rights, in recent years, charter schools have come under attack by members of the public and politicians who criticize their sovereignty work. This apparent undermining by the state requires ongoing capacity-building to inform students of their rights to self-determination through the imparting of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (Trask, 1993).

The emphasis on nationhood, self-determination, sovereignty, student healing, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems at Halau Ku Mana Charter School parallels the practices that are in place at the Joe Duquette High School in Canada, where teaching is culturally

responsive instruction is consistent with the values of students' own cultures and aimed at improving academic learning and reflective of community needs.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is an amazing land of contrasts of plains, mountain ranges, vast farming areas, and vistas leading to rugged and tranquil coastal regions. The discovery of diamonds, in 1867, and gold, in 1886, encouraged economic growth and immigration, intensifying the subjugation of the Indigenous populations. Despite the end of apartheid, millions of South Africans, mostly black, continue to live in poverty. My invitation from North-West University in the city of Mafeking, which is located in the north-eastern part of South Africa, provided me with a vibrant center whose mandate is to develop Indigenous Knowledge courses from the undergraduate level, graduate level, to the doctoral level. North-West University is a black university. I was fortunate to work with Dr. H.O. Kaya, who provided leadership in the development of the range of Indigenous Knowledge curriculum. Dr. Kaya is originally from Tanzania and was educated there during the exciting era of social and political transformation under the leadership of Julius Nuyere. Dr. Kaya's work is indeed impressive and has provided much inspiration for my own curriculum work at the University of Saskatchewan Through this experience at North-West University. I realized the important contributions that graduate and doctoral programs could make in Indigenous Knowledge Systems. However, as a primarily non-teaching faculty member, I have not had major opportunities for

curriculum design. My research also took me to the University of the Western Cape, where I met with members of the Khoi San tribe, South Africa's oldest Indigenous group. Finally I visited the University of Pretoria with Dr. Catherine Odora Hoppers and Dr. Herman Els, Executive Director of the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge, also in Pretoria. It has been an enriching experience to learn from all of these individuals. I noticed the parallels in the African concept of Indigenous Knowledge, healing and community empowerment known as *ubuntu*. This concept runs analogous to the Hawaiian *mana* and *aloha*, and to the Cree *wakotawin*; and it describes how humanity is interconnected and must work for good of all:

In Ubuntu/botho we can draw sustenance from our diversity, honoring our rich and varied traditions and culture, and act together for the development, protection and benefit of us all. This philosophy recognises the indivisibility of human nature and the commonness of purpose of human beings which make our interests, aspirations and objectives intertwined. It believes in the totality of human effort and a holistic involvement in the quest for love and peace in the family of man, in the universal order of things. (Teffo, in Makgoba, 1999, p.169)

Ubuntu had been deeply and negatively impacted by the South African brutal apartheid system. But in 1994, South Africa's history of apartheid came to a close with the free elections of that year. A tripartite agreement, which included the Government of South Africa, the coalitions of South African Unions (COSATU), and the African National Congress, ended a racist and brutal regime in South Africa's history that has left many deep psychological scars among the people. One of the means of closure to apartheid was the 1995 Truth and Reconciliation Commission headed by the renowned cleric Archbishop Desmond Tutu. This commission heard the testimonies of the victims of

apartheid as well as the perpetrators. A record of some of the horrors of the apartheid era is recorded in Antjie Krog's (1998) *Country of my Skull*, her report of the Truth and Reconciliation process that started in December 1995. Following are the words of a woman who survived an attack by whites. She lost contact with her husband whom she later learned had died in the attack:

The undertaker took us to his mortuary. I saw him; I was with my elder daughter. When we got there, his eyes were hanging; we could see that there were dots, black dots all over his body. And we could see now the big gash on his head, the gash cause by the ax. I am still sick...my feet were rotten and my hands were all rotten, I have holes, I can't sleep well. Sometimes when I try to sleep, it feels like something is evaporating from my head until I take these pills, then I get better. All this is caused by these bullets that I have in my body. My son Bonisile, who was smeared with his father's blood on him, was never well again after that, he was psychologically disturbed. (Krog, 1998, p.101)

Theoretically, after 1994, the black people of South Africa gained their political independence, but in many ways economic power still rests with the white population and much poverty remains:

The socio-economic legacy is summed up by a single fact that the United Nations Development Program published a few years ago. If white South Africa were a country on its own, its per capita income would be 24th in the world, next to Spain; but if black South Africa were a separate country, its per capita income would rank 123rd globally, just above the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (Mamdani, in Makgoba, 1999, p.127)

For South African blacks, land is the essential issue regarding development. Whites continue to own and occupy the most productive land; they own most of South Africa's businesses and natural resources. White universities still enjoy better funding and produce knowledge that promulgates white superiority and hegemony. While a

significant number of blacks have been incorporated into various levels of government and public service, the majority continues to live in substandard conditions. A common feature of South Africa is crowded townships, such as Alexandra and Soweto, which I visited, and which borders wealthy communities such as Sandton. There is a disparity between living conditions of the black and white populations. These townships have no resources, such as good housing, clean drinking water; and, often, these townships become the fertile grounds for crime, poverty, and desperation. The cost of living in South Africa has escalated by 18% in one year, and the average wages are far below “Western” expectations. Violent crimes, a legacy of the apartheid era, are commonplace. Rather than blaming these conditions on the will of politicians only, they must be viewed within the complex process of cultural domination and globalization, which plagues other parts of the world. Many black academics have made Indigenization a priority in their effort to reclaim their country, politically, intellectually, and practically. Similar to other regions of the world, several conferences have been organized on the topic of the Indigenization of political, civic, and educational processes. Eager to meet some of the people involved, learn of the process within universities, and their link to public policies, I attended two meetings that introduced me to many new Indigenous Knowledge colleagues, ones that I subsequently interviewed in my research.

Like other countries, South Africa's social and economic growth is hampered by the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPS), which are conditional to money lending by the

major funders, such as the World Bank, and undermine the support for social sector programmes:

Specifically under SAPs countries were required to reduce government spending in general, but in particular spending on social sector programmes. (Vil-Nkom and Myburgh, in Makgoba, p. 273)

In addition, much of the wealth that has been created in South Africa through gold and diamonds, such as DeBeers', is located in foreign banks as a byproduct of the apartheid era. The wealth remains in the hands of old colonial powers. That being said, opportunities exist for formal educational institutes, such as universities, to become engaged in the cultural and social reconstruction of South Africa. There is also a dire need for training that responds to the material conditions of South Africa's impoverished and marginalized communities. This section includes a description of African Indigenous Knowledge and projects that use Indigenous Knowledge. Africans believe that the ingenuous and life-giving knowledge force of *ubuntu* needs to be re-established at the center of the formal learning and community revitalization movement. According to African Renaissance scholars, there is a need to build on the ancient strengths of the many African cultures:

Embodied in the African philosophy of *ubuntu*, a new universalism, which seeks to affirm a concept of development in which fear is replaced by joy, insecurity by confidence and materialism by spiritual values, promises to emerge. *Ubuntu* is humaneness, care, understanding, and empathy. It is the ethic and interaction that occurs in the African extended family. The *ubuntu* concept is found in proverbs from many African societies and communities such as "the stomach of the traveler is small," "a home is a real one if people visit it" (Zulu): "a bird builds its nest with another bird's feather and "the hands wash each other" (Xhosa). (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000, p. 114)

Ubuntu values the contributions of other cultures and integrates similar values. *Ubuntu* recognizes the interconnectedness of human kind and celebrates all we hold in common.

Dr. Catherine Odora Hoppers, a world-renowned black scholar, states that this philosophy differentiates African society fundamentally from European and Western societies in that it emphasizes reciprocity, responsibility, and the embracing of the stranger. ‘I am because you are’ is very different from ‘I am because I think’. *Ubuntu* is a philosophy that emphasizes a ‘turned toward-ness’ just like the plant turns naturally towards the light, so as human beings we should see ourselves in each other’s eye. It is very different from a worldview in which no kind of psychic or spiritual communication or communion between humans and Earth or nature is possible, or where nature is seen as consisting of inert, random, machine-like processes and which had to be conquered, subdued, controlled, and dominated. It is this philosophy, as it underpins human relations and extends respect for nature that distinguishes the African worldview from the Western one, in which the reified inclination has been to exploit until decimation, promote untrammelled competition, and establish relationships with “others” through conquest. This Africanist philosophy spoke to my own Cree worldview of *pimatisiwin*.

The University of Pretoria is where I met Dr. Catherine Odora Hoppers for the second time. I had met her at the University of Venda at the Indigenous Knowledge Systems conference a year prior, where she delivered the keynote address. Catherine was

originally born in Uganda and lived there until she was exiled under the brutal regime of General Idi Amin Dada but not before many of her family members were viciously murdered. None of their bodies were ever recovered. Because her family organized politically against and criticized the Dictator Amin, Catherine's life was also under threat. This forced her into exile, first in Zambia, and later on, with her children, to seek asylum in Europe. She managed to escape to Europe after being forced at gunpoint into the back of a truck with her 3 month-old son. The upbringing she had received from her father, a respected chief and leader, and from a mother who was an outstanding women's leader and political mentor to several generations, would form the basis for her strong African indigenous identity. Sweden became her home for the next decades. In between, she took up posts overseas in Zimbabwe and, later, in South Africa where she has, since then, become central to the struggle for the implementation of Indigenous Knowledge within government policies, in the research community, and in institutional practices. Researchers have long been aware that cultural understanding involves making sense of the means by which others make meaning. Listening to the story that she crafted to depict her life gave me an understanding of her personal autobiography alongside her institutional biography. She has worked as chief research specialist at the Human Science Research Council in Pretoria from where she led the national transdisciplinary initiative to take the question of Indigenous Knowledge and the integration of knowledge systems to the scientific community. Concurrent with this, she has served on the United Nations interagency Steering Committee on Education for All, provided technical expertise on education policy to the Organization of African Unity, on community

intellectual property rights to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), as well as the World Economic Forum. She was a Professor at the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, South Africa, and is presently a visiting professor at Stockholm University in Sweden. Odora Hoppers remains a leading and respected scholar of Indigenous Knowledge Systems throughout all of Africa. Not surprisingly, Dr. Odora Hopper's perspective on honoring Indigenous Knowledge Systems takes on a critical perspective of the process of globalization and, specifically, global market place mentality, which Africa and other regions are today thrust into.

What follows are highlights from an interview I did with Dr. Odora Hoppers at her home in South Africa on her views of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and its development within the African context. I asked her how the South African government was accommodating Indigenous Knowledge Systems. She started by describing her role as Technical Adviser in supporting the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Arts, Culture, Science and Technology as it grappled with this complex issue, and moved on to her work within the national steering committee and her contributions to the articulation and delineation of the issues during and after the first national workshop to a wide cross-section of the academic and policy audiences.

In 1997, in preparation for the National Year of Science and Technology, the then Chairman of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr. Wally Serote, and the national steering committee, made up of political

leaders, community holders of knowledge, and the top people in the science councils had undertaken an audit on Indigenous technologies as a first step towards documenting the living technological knowledge of local communities. This was undertaken in order to initiate the process of identifying some of the knowledge for further value addition in order to improve the quality of life in the rural areas.

Odora Hoppers had strong words for the classical research-led models of extracting knowledge from communities as it led, whether intentionally or not, to the theft of knowledge in national and regional systems. These systems had neither infrastructure nor organized authority to demand negotiations on ownership rights to such knowledge or to demand compensations in the event of acts which were already committed. She insists that the usual prepackaged argument that the 'stolen' knowledge is not lost as it recycles itself back as medicines that serve the wider global community is just not good enough given the acute disparities in the benefits that accrue to the multinational corporations from this knowledge. But even worse, is the fact that the sources of knowledge are never officially recognized. This is a double insult to community holders of knowledge who have to persevere against consistent denigration as 'backward and primitive' while their intellectual property rights are sucked out through the backdoor! It is, therefore, a case of stolen knowledge reaching humanity but by wrong methods, with wrong protocols, with wrong intentions, and definitely with pretentious consequences. Moreover, the assimilationist model places profit-making over the purposes of sharing. The issue of integration is therefore a challenging one and needs to be looked at with vigilance, with

sensitivity, and with empathy on a continual basis. Odora Hoppers describes the need to include the lost generations of Africans who have a right to dialogue and to exist in multiple identities, including a global identity. They should not feel inferior but should be anchored with an ancestry and a culture within a system that helps form their backbone as the future citizenry of Africa. Like hooks (2004), Odora Hoppers sees real value in listening to voices of the extended community and sees their citizenship as essential.

The South African Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology played an instrumental role in laying the groundwork for the Indigenous Knowledge Systems policy. Study teams were organized to travel to India and China to examine the issues of integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems into formal national systems. This built on the previous work of the National Steering Committee, which had organized a task team made up of sector ministries and members of the scientific community and arranged for public hearings in all the provinces of South Africa. Odora Hoppers led the Task Team that prepared the policy background document from which the White Paper and legislation is evolving. From this a Directorate was created in the Department of Art, Culture, Science and Technology, which is leading an ongoing inter-ministerial task team and projects. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism are involved in the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity to ensure the millions of African farmers, who use a subsistence model, mixed cropping, and sustainable types of farming methods, concerns are considered. From a continental

perspective, the Organization of African Unity has developed a model legislation for the protection of Indigenous Knowledge Systems that highlights several groundbreaking issues, such as Prior Informed Consent (PIC), provides guidelines for other national systems, and takes into account local situations. The continental strategy of Indigenous Knowledge Systems protection is developing with other African countries, whereas before, culture and knowledge were considered separately. The continental approach has made it possible to look at culture in a deeper, lateral, and longer-term way. This has enabled more complex debates to be fostered, such as jurisprudence and legal systems, post-conflict healing and reconciliation systems, intellectual property rights, value addition and benefit sharing protocols, sustainable development and poverty reduction questions, and most importantly, situate it within the international arena.

In the area of the need for Indigenous Knowledge Systems to be centrally located within the context of higher learning, Odora Hoppers states that higher education is the authority mandated by the state, and hopefully by the citizens, to generate, to develop, to legitimize, to accredit, and to disseminate knowledge. Higher education is responsible for defining what constitutes legitimate knowledge. Yet, in South Africa, as it is the case with so many parts of the world in which colonizing and colonized elites unilaterally established the conquering worldview as the unquestioned 'norm', entire education systems have found it almost impossible to develop methodologies and instruments with which to respond to the knowledge base existing within the original society.

“Knowledge” is defined in a way that cuts off the knowledge that the majority of its citizens actually has and own, and which they have perpetuated for centuries. Instead, within the African context, that knowledge is largely Western-based, and is not reflective of knowledge systems of African people, and appears to have no intention whatsoever, of ever valorizing and validating either that local knowledge or the technologies that sustain as much as 80 per cent of African people. Yet, it is the people who emerge from these education systems that hold senior positions in state and international governance systems. The situation is thus maintained in which the definition of Knowledge is so skewed and where the routinized violation of cognitive rights of people is built deeply within the heart of the academy. Research—as a knowledge-generating instrument,—therefore, has a lot to answer and to learn if it is to serve the basic needs of the majority of the people in Africa. Odora Hoppers argues that as it stands, researchers never see the need to build transparency into their research ethics when doing research in local communities, leading to a double exploitation. The first level of exploitation is in terms of the extraction being one-sided, with research conclusions never finding their way back to the communities. The second relates to the situation in which the research for instance involves disclosures of knowledge of plants or herbal products with commercial value to researchers who then siphon off this information to a pharmaceutical company without any memory of who gave that information and what should accrue to such a source. She claims that the only way the higher education sector is going to have to deal with Indigenous Knowledge Systems is by approaching it from a human rights perspective and

to reconstruct the bridges that it burnt. Odora Hoppers describes her relationship with research:

I discovered the ambiguity of my presence in a research establishment because I said; I can not go to the field because I am the field. I am she that you would all go to research. I am African child. I am from a rural part of Africa; I am the classical object of research. How should I participate in research without us clarifying the ethical grounds for what we are going to do? (Odora Hoppers, personal communication, February 2006, approved)

Odora Hoppers links her personal situation and that of her people within the framework of cognitive subjection and ascribed poverty. She locates her work on Indigenous Knowledge Systems within heuristic tools she has consolidated from gender, peace studies, from international relations, and from scrutinizing the problems of education and the academy.

She describes the healing aspects of Indigenous Knowledge Systems.; the wounded person wishes to be healed but to also heal, to be the brother/sister-healing of other. We want the world to recover its humanness. It is like a dance, the healing is both for the victims and also for the perpetrators. Any person who can perpetrate so much violence and inflict so much pain on others can never be free. The weaker person may not have the opportunity to enter the places where they can speak with their oppressors about the need to heal and mend relations, but our connection with humanity is maintained only through the empathetic attention to the faint echoes of those cries of anguish. Odora Hoppers is poetic when she describes the need for a healing process between the colonizer and the colonized, the oppressor and the oppressed:

I think we have to carry on and bang on these doors and say come out and heal because there's something qualitatively you know, amiss, with the way things are really going. So I think that when we now look at what this kind of trajectory means for global linkage, what we begin to see is the recovery of humanity occurring in different, if you think of it like you're looking at the stars above, you see the twinkle, see how they twinkle and its like its occurring in different points. In terms of the bigger template of the world, it is really occurring; human spirit rejecting certain kinds of afflictions; certain kinds of inhumanity. Human spirit rebelling. And here it is not something to say it is only for the Indigenous communities; it is also for the broader group we refer to as the colonized people, but also within the colonizing groups. Human spirit rebels wherever it is. And as for me, I have derived a lot of insights and a lot of wisdom in relating with people across the globe... Across the globe in actually finding people who are similarly seeking to heal. People who are similarly committed to reconstructing broken relations. Similarly committed to usurping back, you know faith in the future, faith in the future and really rebuilding the therapy. (Odora Hoppers, personal communication, February 2006, approved)

She describes the struggle for re-establishing Indigenous Knowledge Systems as the struggle to recover and reclaim our humanity. Parallel to Odora Hoppers thoughts, Gramsci (1995) in Selections from the Prison Notebooks describes the chaos in schooling and larger society to be met with humanistic goals. In his discussion of vocational versus classical schooling:

A rational solution to the crisis ought to adopt the following line. First a common basic education, imparting a general, humanistic, formative culture; this would strike the right balance between development of the capacity for working manually (technically, industrially) and the development of the capacities required for intellectual work (Gramsci, p.27)

What I learned from Dr. Odora Hopper's story and others, like that of my father's story, is that if our stories of self are to help us reform institutions or recover communities, we need to be willing to reinvent them. We must replace time worn renditions of "who we are" that in Toni Morrison's words, are "unreceptive to interrogation, cannot form or

tolerate new ideas, shape other thoughts, tell another story, fill baffling silences” (1994, p.14). Instead, our scholarship and activism must tell new stories in many voices. My efforts to contribute a majority of the research dollars back to Saskatchewan’s Métis and First Nations communities were my contribution to giving our communities voice and serving their research needs. As an academic I have always chosen to serve my community rather than only work with the square boxes of tenure and promotion requirements. Some of this service includes developing courses that respond to local development needs to truly reflect the conditions in our communities and to provide liberation tools from all oppressive conditions. I believe our local conditions warrant and require this support from people within higher learning. As academics, I believe, we must always be guided and inspired by the local conditions of our people.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

The land in this region is hot and dusty and borders on a semi-arid desert-like conditions. South Africa has nine provinces and North West province (appendix 2) is the home of North-West University, which was established in 1980 by the then Bophuthatswana black homeland government. North-West University (NWU) was established to provide university education to the black communities in the homeland of, primarily, the Batswana (Botswana) people. The University falls under the jurisdiction of the National Department of Education, which, apart from student tuition, is its main source of funding. The university houses the faculties of Education, Human and Social Sciences, Law,

Agriculture, Science and Technology, and Management and Commerce. It has about 6000 students. A second campus was established in 2001 in Mankwe, about three hours from the main campus at Mafeking. Formally, the Indigenous Knowledge Systems Program was established in February 2001 to contribute to the human resource needs of its Indigenous peoples, who are mostly rural. However, its roots were established in 1997-98 with sociology students who were registered in honours and masters degrees in Indigenous Technologies. According to Kaya, when the South African government took initiative in Indigenous Knowledge Systems, the NWU already had a practical background. The collaboration took place in 1998, and a proposal for conferences and seminars was developed on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. In 2001, seven South African scholars traveled to the University of Saskatchewan to present at the Indigenous Peoples Program Indigenous Knowledge Conference, which was chaired by myself, Priscilla Settee. In 2000, NWU was asked by the South African government to come up with new programs and when they were accredited finances would be secured.

The Indigenous Knowledge Studies program at NWU offers courses at the undergraduate level, with space for 192 students, the honours level, with space for thirteen students, the graduate level with space for eight students, and the PhD level, with space for one student. Courses that focus on Indigenous Knowledge, which are largely taken by black students but intended for all, include:

- *Introduction to the Nature and Patterns of Indigenous Knowledge Systems* enables the student to define and explain major concepts and practices, such as cultural and bio-diversity.
- *Introduction to African Social and Political Thought* presents the development and characteristics of African social and political thought before and after Africa's colonial period.
- *Indigenous Land and Water Management Systems* promotes indigenous water and land management systems for sustainable development.
- *Comparative African and Western Political and Social Theory* prepares the student to compare and analyze the foundations of western and African political and social theory, including the patterns and ideologies of liberation movements. Gender reflections in liberation movements are also included.
- *Comparative Healing Systems* examines the difference and complementarity between western and traditional healing systems.
- *Comparative Patterns of Indigenous Knowledge* presents the nature and significance of Indigenous knowledge in sustainable development.
- *Indigenous Approaches to Peace and Conflict Resolution* equips learners to facilitate conflict resolutions using Indigenous approaches.
- *Indigenous Knowledge, Cultural-Bio-diversity, Conservation and Sustainable Development* will qualify students to have a critical knowledge

of the relationship between cultural biodiversity and sustainable development.

According to Dr. Kaya, the program is growing tremendously and is integrated across disciplines. Students can take law, sociology, economics, and peace studies. There are future plans to teach Indigenous Knowledge Systems in schools and in the College of Education. There was resistance and many of the ideas did not become institutionalized. North-West University is primarily, but not exclusively, for black students; however, both Kaya and Odora Hoppers state that Universities which are primarily for black students have historically enjoyed less governmental funding:

But Indigenous knowledge is far more than the binary opposite of western knowledge. As a concept, Indigenous knowledge benchmarks the limitations of Eurocentric theory-its methodology, evidence and conclusions-reconceptualizes the resilience and self-reliance of Indigenous peoples, and underscores the importance of their own philosophies, heritages, and educational processes. Indigenous knowledge fills the ethical and knowledge gaps in Eurocentric education, research, and scholarship. (Battiste, 2002, p. 5)

Some challenges faced by the program include the need for networking and collaboration with other institutions and the need to expose students to other Indigenous parts of the world. More challenges include the teaching capacity of current instructors. There are not enough faculties equipped to teach Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Capacity-building for the current program is limited. The existence of teaching materials is a critical problem; and, while NWU is trying to be self-reliant, there is a great need to collaborate and share resources. The interest in the Indigenous Knowledge Systems

program at NWU is growing. This is evidenced by the fact that numbers have grown from 10 students to well over 200 since the late-1990s. The university administration remains very supportive, as does the National Research Foundation, a niche area led by Dr. Kaya. Black universities, such as NWU, which were state controlled, have had major impacts on civil society and have resulted in a racialized democracy. The African scholar Mamdani sums up those impacts:

The white universities were islands of privilege, in which intellectuals functioned like potted plants in greenhouses. They had intellectual freedom but lacked social accountability. In contrast, black universities coming out of apartheid were the intellectual counterparts of Bantustans. They were designed to function more as detention centres for black intellectuals than as centres that would nourish intellectual thought. As such, they had little tradition of intellectual freedom or institutional autonomy. They were driven by the heavy hand of bureaucracy. And yet they were far more socially responsive than their white counterparts. (Mamdani in Makgoba, 1999, p. 131)

Despite the revolutionary social transformation of 1994, many power structures within South Africa are slow to change, and universities are no exceptions. Many of the blacks-predominantly and whites-predominantly structures remain the same.

The clustering of Indigenous Knowledge courses has made an impact on the university community, in both a negative and positive sense. Students see Indigenous Knowledge as something to take pride in and can relay that back to their home communities. According to Dr. Kaya, the act of establishing systems of study in this area has also created some resentment among some of his colleagues. According to Kaya, this has been reflected in the limited resourcing of the program of studies.

**CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE (CINDEK), UNIVERSITY OF
PRETORIA**

I met with the Executive Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies (CINDEK), Dr. Herman Els, a white South African. This centre has the vision to be a leading force in the national recognition and application of Indigenous Knowledge. The mission states that CINDEK will:

Facilitate, implement, and manage national and internationally supported multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional research and praxis-orientated community development programmes based on the heritage and IKS of the cultural diversity of the peoples of Southern Africa, while adhering to scientific and ethical standards of international excellence. (CINDEK Bulletin, February 2002)

CINDEK conducts informal training, research, and development praxis in the rural communities of South Africa. It focuses on development, environment, Indigenous Knowledge as a knowledge system, Indigenous property rights, and appropriate technologies. CINDEK is part of the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology in the School for Social Sciences of the Faculty of Humanities. A proposed advisory committee will be made up of twenty non-ex-officio members, including the Vice-Principal of the University of Pretoria, the Deans of the Faculties of Humanities and Engineering, and the Chairperson of the School for Social Sciences. Other members will include the Heads of the Departments of Anthropology and Archaeology, and Information Science, two senior persons representing the Indigenous Knowledge Systems initiative of the National Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, and the

Director of CINDEK. In addition, a management committee, consisting of the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, the Chair of the School for Social Sciences, the Head of the Department of Anthropology and Archeology, and the Director of CINDEK, oversees the functions of the centre. From the makeup of the advisory committee, it appears that much of the advice the centre receives will be coming from white South Africans and, probably, traditional anthropologists, who will not be embracing *participatory action-*related research. I surmised from my interview with Dr. Odora Hoppers that the CINDEK had little accountability to black South Africans and provided a professional niche for people like Dr. Els.

The move to establish Indigenous Knowledge Systems within the Africa context has been more structural compared to other examples I have visited. Perhaps this is because the South African government, with the membership of African intellectuals, has taken some initiative in the process. In KwaZulu-Natal, work to establish a center for the African Renaissance speaks to the institutional need to address imbalances in the education system. Only time will tell if there will be a substantial overhaul of the existing courses, and if there will be additional new courses added to fill the gap, such as in the case of North-West University. The KwaZulu Natal Center is a proposed idea that recommends the creation of a body of African contemporary and Indigenous Knowledge Systems. It will include the creation of a directory of 'experts' with the plan to link with other international organizations. This will be achieved partly through the development of a documentation centre and website. A second recommendation is to create core courses

on African Renaissance perspectives, including methodologies, and to offer them in all university faculties, similar to the programming at North-West University. There is a need to create links between institutions, government structures, and the community in order to make policy development meaningful and to provide feedback. These links will facilitate the production of position papers, seminars, and other symposia. In the case of South Africa, a post-apartheid legacy causes much violence. Another recommendation is the establishment of a think tank, made up of African scholars and those who act in solidarity with them, to identify areas of potential conflict or crisis and to devise preventative programs in those areas using African-derived methods of conflict resolution. Mentorship programs, involving leadership and management, have been suggested for women and youth. Finally, the development of the philosophy of *ubuntu* and the creation of programs for its application in practice is a major priority. "Its link to development, crime and moral renewal will be the focal point of the centre" (Ntuli, 1999, p. 199).

In Canada, much lip-service is paid to having Indigenous peoples at the table in discussions with various levels of government. While some leaders may actually be present, much of the impact within communities actually reflects economic marginalization with high rates of unemployment, loss of traditional livelihoods, and a resultant demoralization. This may parallel to the situation in South Africa; but, here, it is a more complex issue, reflective of neo-colonialism, a lack of awareness or inspiration, and possibly also a lack of resources and willingness. It is essential to overhaul many of

the courses within the University context and to provide Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing and doing. A critique of status quo knowledge, which marginalizes a large percentage of citizens, is necessary.

VANUATU

Vanuatu is one of the mountainous islands in an archipelago (appendix 1) that is considered a terrestrial eco-region or rain forest. Vanuatu, officially *the Republic of Vanuatu*, is a Melanesian island nation, which was previously called *New Hebrides*, and is located west of Fiji. I traveled to Vanuatu in January 2003 to meet the Director of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VCC), Ralph Regenvanu. Regenvanu came to Canada in 1996 to attend a conference on Indigenous Knowledge Systems called *Honouring Indigenous Science Knowledge*, hosted by my office—the Indigenous Peoples Program. Regenvanu and his colleague Francis Hickey, a biologist, presented information on their marine project housed in the VCC. Regenvanu and I kept after the conference, and the work of the VCC on Indigenous Knowledge sparked my interest to set up meetings in that country. My trip to the region was expedited as I was attending a South Pacific leaders' meeting hosted by the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre in Tonga in January 2003. This Pacific meeting introduced me to more *ni-Vanuatu*, “people of Vanuatu”, and people from the Pacific region working on Indigenous Knowledge and other related issues. While I went to Vanuatu specifically to visit the VCC, I had an opportunity to meet with its sister organizations.

Vanuatu, “the country that stands up”, is the name given by the Indigenous peoples when they gained independence in 1980; it was previously named the *New Hebrides* by Captain Cook in 1774. The Republic of Vanuatu is located in the southern hemisphere, in the southwest region of the Pacific Ocean and had formerly been a British and, later, a French colony. Vanuatu stretches for about 900 KMs and is made up of more than 80 islands and islets, forming a Y shape, running from north to south. The official population statistics of Vanuatu as of the late 1980s totaled just over 142,000 people, but presently, the population is over 200,000 (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2815.htm>). The ni-Vanuatu are also called *Melanesian*, a reference to skin pigment, but the term is an over simplification as Vanuatu is known for human diversity. While some ni-Vanuatu languages have died out, over a hundred still survive. They belong to the large Austronesian family of languages found throughout Southeast Asia and as far away as Madagascar. Despite their linguistic kinship, the various languages are indecipherable from one another. The islands of Vanuatu are young, in terms of geology, and originate from volcanic activity and coral formations. Vanuatu has a mixture of exceptional natural beauty, ranging from dense tropical forests on the islands of Malekula, Santo, and Efate to grass-covered plateau on Tanna Island and fertile, coastal plains that slope gently into the turquoise sea. The most populated towns are the capital city, Port Vila on Efate ,and Luganville, on Espiritu Santo. The VCC is located in Port Vila, but its fieldwork exists in many of the outlying islands.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the islands received an influx of foreign visitors, mainly from Europe. Traders, referred to as *blackbirders* in the latter part of the nineteenth and the early-twentieth centuries, used force to take people away to northern Australia to be used as a cheap source of labour on sugar plantations. During the colonial period, the British and French brought people from other Pacific countries, Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Vietnam, Wallis, and Futuna to work as semi-skilled and unskilled labour. Vanuatu went through a virtually bloodless, but difficult struggle for independence. It was mainly through respect for customs that chiefs maintained law and order in communities during the independence struggle. While some lives were lost, more would have been lost without respect for peaceful, traditional ways. To this day, disputes are still settled in the traditional Indigenous method of exchanging hand-woven mats, food, pigs, and other articles of value. Land ownership is a central part of customs and traditions and is provided for in the Vanuatu Constitution. The National Council of Chiefs, or *Malvatumauri*, was established in April 1977 to protect customs, cultures, and traditions. These chiefs are rulers within their communities. In addition, chiefs from all of the islands are represented and advise the government on matters related to custom, culture, and tradition. Some discussions I have had with ni-Vanuatu have described the Council of Chiefs as more of a government body, and not particularly effective in addressing peoples concerns. The same concern was voiced about the Vanuatu's Council of Women. This could be a case of individual opinion rather than fact. While most of Vanuatu is Christian, traditional spiritual practices and customs play a big role in daily life, especially in the villages. According to tradition and legend, people live in a world

of spirits. These spirits are associated with particular objects, such as the moon, rivers, or trees. Spirits are contacted when food, healing, or power over an enemy is needed. Similar to many tribal groups throughout the world, animals continue to play an important role in custom and ceremonies (Bonnemaison, Huffman, Kaufmann, & Tyron, 1996).

Custom, or *Kastom* as it is known in pigeon English, is a very important tradition that has existed for centuries. According to Regenvanu:

Without them [sic kastom] there would be no respect for anyone in the community. The role of the chiefs would be difficult; parents would have no control over their children. There would be no community effort in project for development. Problems would not be solved in the time-honoured way through meetings convened in the men's meeting place (nakamal) and an exchange of gifts which is a form of paying fines. We have grown up with these ways and it is through them that we learn about leadership roles, whether these be in the systems of chiefs, the church or government. (personal communication, January 2003, approved)

LAND

Local Indigenous communities, according to their traditional customary land tenure systems, hold all land in Vanuatu. The land tenure regime is enshrined in the National Constitution, which was adopted during independence in 1980. Because of their Revolution of 1980, Vanuatu is a country where the highest rate of traditional land ownership exists. Regenvanu states that the majority of ni-Vanuatu live in their cultural, kin-based communities on their ancestral land where most of their food requirements are

met using traditional methods. The ni-Vanuatu continues to practice traditional forms of land and resource use. In addition, many ni-Vanuatu still speak their Indigenous language and are involved in traditional customary rituals to some extent. Like many other Indigenous cultures throughout the world, it is an intangible culture because it is not literate and because all material forms of their cultural expression use organic biological materials. The many villages that I visited were testimony to this fact. As an observer participant, I saw no visible signs of garbage, such as plastic bags, aluminum cans, bottles, or paper refuse. All communities were tidy, beautiful places showing great pride in stewardship and having aesthetic appeal. The villages were collections of tiny, thatch-roofed, wooden houses with gardens and public spaces where visiting between community members took place.

Some legal measures are in place to protect and promote cultural heritage in Vanuatu. For example, within an institutional framework, the matters of cultural heritage management are the responsibility of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Cultural heritage management is also supported by the National Archives and the Culture and Religion Liaison Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. While the Council of chiefs works with and promotes cultural heritage management, the Vanuatu Cultural Center is the main implementing agency for cultural heritage management. An Act of Parliament in 1988 established the Vanuatu Cultural Council to provide for the preservation, protection, and development of various aspects of cultural heritage of Vanuatu (Ralph Regenvanu, personal communication, 2002). It also made provision for public libraries and for the

preservation of public records and archives. The VCC works with the National Museum, the National Library, the National Film and Sound Unit, and the National Cultural and Historic Sites survey.

THE SITUATION FOR WOMEN

Just before Vanuatu's political independence in 1980, 60 women organized the first National Conference of Native Women and decided unanimously to establish a National Council of Women (NCW) despite opposition from the Pentecostal Church. There are 13 branches and 74 sub-branches of the NCW (Bowie, 1995). Traditionally, women participated in decision-making processes. In northern Vanuatu, women could attain status in a graded-rank system parallel to a similar system for the men; women had the right to speak in the *nakamal*, "men's house," and had equivalent status to men in many decisions. In the south, there were mechanisms for women's participation. The process of colonialism brought European men-only recognizing local men with status, which resulted in the denigration of women's status across the board. In 2003 the Department of Women's Affairs commissioned a report into the causes of women's subordinate status in Vanuatu, and this report concluded that, traditionally, women had higher status than today, and that colonization and "missionization" were the primary causes of the denigration of their status. While there is no standard treatment of women in Vanuatu, in many village communities the women still do not fully participate in decision-making. I did not ask about their rights to vote, but it would appear that their rights reflected non-

voting status. Today the NCW is trying to overcome gender imbalances by identifying issues. The objectives of the NCW are:

- to determine the proper place of women in local and national development; to promote unity between women so that they can be of benefit to the community;
- to establish communication between women's groups and government departments;
- to present women's opinions to all decision making groups, including parliament;
- to encourage women to take an active role in society;
- to advise women of their rights and responsibilities;
- to provide information to women;
- to advise the Office of Women's affairs; and
- to provide women with assistance and training.

A report (Bowie, 1995) by this council paints a rather bleak reality for women because of the patriarchal society that exists within Vanuatu.

In Canada, much rhetoric is given to the rights of women; however, women are still vastly under-represented in various levels of government. While it is improving, the field of research and development is still, largely, a white male field. In the Indigenous world,

the opposite is true, as Indigenous women far outnumber males in the area of research, and there are increasingly more women who are elected to the role of Band Chief. I believe that there are not enough women who hold position of leadership both in mainstream and Indigenous political systems.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Like many other South Pacific countries, the tiny country of Vanuatu faces many development issues; and, to help address them, it has established organizations such as the Vanuatu Non-Governmental Organization (VANGO) and Pacific Island Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (PIANGO). VANGO was established in 1994 to act as the umbrella group for the islands' over-1000 NGOs. It includes local NGOs registered in Vanuatu and international organizations that work in countries or territories outside of Vanuatu. VANGO supports NGO efforts to achieve equitable and sustainable development. Its major goal is to build an NGO sector which represents the interests of indigenous people and marginalized groups and promotes local development issues. They achieve their goals through increasing the capacity of VANGO to govern and manage its operation, and by increasing co-operation and skills among NGO workers in Vanuatu. VANGO also strengthens relations between NGOs, government, and donors, and it increases the public profile of NGOs in Vanuatu.

Within the Pacific basin, strengthening NGO capacity, in areas ranging from the development of management expertise to policy and advocacy skills, has been identified as a critical priority. Since independence, ni-Vanuatu has assumed many senior positions in government, and semi-government institutions and statutory bodies are generally managed by ni-Vanuatu, sometimes with the assistance of expatriate experts and advisors. In the urban private sector, the majority of expert and advisors managerial positions are held by expatriates, who either own businesses or manage them on behalf of large companies. In November 2000 in Port Vila, a conference was held called *NGO Capacity Building in the Pacific, Towards Greater Inter-agency Co-operation*. This was a regional stakeholders' workshop that included the participation of PIANGO and a number of European, Australian, and New Zealand funders. The forum provided a venue for donors, NGOs, and other stakeholders to share information on current plans, activities, and experiences in order to develop a more strategic and coordinated approach in this critical area. Many factors dictate the need for strengthening NGOs, including their important and growing role in areas of Pacific development, and their vital role in strengthening civil society and promoting good governance, human rights and the resolution of conflicts. Another factor is the fragile nature of NGOs, especially during the time when they play a very important role. PIANGO has been instrumental in developing and implementing regional NGO capacity-building strategy and various Pacific-wide, regional, and national projects. In our dialogical forum, we reached back into our own past, remembered experiences, and considered a future of new visions and new ways of understanding ourselves as Indigenous peoples in a wider society. During

these network meetings, we began to identify with in-group variation, a similarity of issues, and the need for our own participation in culture, power, learning, and change. These experiences, such as the ones in Vanuatu, have enriched my own work.

VANUATU CULTURAL CENTER (VCC)

The VCCs major project is the audiovisual documentation of traditional and cultural activities (Regenvanu, personal communication, 2002). Documentation is key to the preservation and promotion of customs and culture, and the VCC is recording all ni-Vanuatu traditional activities including rituals, such as initiation, pig killing, funerary rituals, traditional marriages, alliance ceremonies, seasonal agricultural rituals, and traditional activities such as weaving, gardening, fishing techniques, village festivals, historical events, and myth re-enactments. The project helps to educate ni-Vanuatu about the value of their own, and related, cultures. The islands of Vanuatu are geographically distant from each other and the people have been widely dispersed. It will be through the audiovisual documentation, that culturally diverse future generations can learn the histories of their parents' and grandparents' generations. Audio-visual documentation has a dual role, one is to preserve the culture so that future generations can learn from it, and the other, equally important role, is to promote interest in the community in their own traditions and in learning them. Documentation is an advocacy tool encouraging the community to re-evaluate and re-value their own traditions; they see outsiders interested in filming these traditions, so think they must have value.

The Vanuatu National Film Unit is part of the VCC and provides services free of charge to communities in the outer islands in order to document important ritual and historical events. Communities retain a copy of the video. One hundred cultural fieldworkers spread throughout the islands, collect and tape record oral traditions and rituals. Interest has become so great, it is impossible to fulfill all requests because there is not enough video equipment to distribute throughout the country. Despite this, some communities have permanent VCC film unit bases, which are stored within the VCC in Porta Vila. The videos are available for use by the people of Vanuatu.

In 1992, a major long-term project of women's culture was established. It now has a full-time ni-Vanuatu staff to audio-visually document women's traditional activities.

The film unit looks after the unique and irreplaceable archive of films about Vanuatu. It also stores material records collected earlier this century, which have been returned to Vanuatu, as well as 3000 hours of footage recorded by the VCC staff and volunteers. Copies of the *non-tabu* (sacred or taboo) films are regularly shown with permission to schools, and village communities, and sometimes they are used at local meetings, courses, and workshops, and taken to overseas conferences by government representatives. An Oral Traditions Collection Project, designed to keep oral traditions alive, was begun in 1976 with assistance from UNESCO and the South Pacific Commissions using expatriate facilitators, Peter Crow and Kirk Huffman of the

Australian National University. Many materials from this project deal with ritual, art, and material culture. Since 1980, the Australian Government South Pacific Cultures Ministry has provided essential equipment and funding for this project, as well as funding the annual two-week VCC fieldworkers' workshop. There are 70 male and 50 female VCC fieldworkers, and all are based in their own linguistic and cultural areas in the outer islands. They document the culture and history of their neighbouring areas. All fieldworkers are volunteers, none receive wages, and their numbers grow each year.

The Oral Traditions Collection Project is the Pacific's most successful grassroots cultural documentation program. It is ni-Vanuatu-oriented and is seen as one of the ways to assist in the local preservation, promotion, and development of Vanuatu's rich linguistic and cultural heritage. The major aim of the Oral Traditions Collection Project is to build up a bank of Indigenous Knowledge to be used by future generations of ni-Vanuatu wishing to learn of their roots and to retain and develop their own identity. A long-term goal is to eventually produce dictionaries of their languages, local ethnographies of their culture, and transcriptions of selected, non-tabu myths, legends, and histories for potential use in the educational system. Regular radio programs are produced based on non-tabu selections from the audio collections.

With the arrival of video in Vanuatu in 1984, the VCC began filming. Holders of a particular ritual will try to ensure the best performance of that ritual so as to not offend the ancestral spirits. There have been at least two incidents of ritual participants being

fined, requiring pigs for payment, for mistakes in performance that had been picked up by the ritual leaders when they viewed the video. According to custom, people who have pigs are considered very wealthy. Ni-Vanuatu priorities are different from that of an overseas audience, and they might look to details of the exchange or payment content of the rituals, such as how many taros, yams, and kava roots were exchanged, or how many pigs were killed and what tusk curvature of the pig existed. Tusk curvature holds great cultural significance in Vanuatu. For example, many videos are 28 hours in length providing as complete a record of minute details as possible. The 1990 Women's Cultural Festival and the 1991 second National Arts Festival are other examples. The VCC also contains much tabu material, access to which is restricted. Tabu videos can be made on the condition that they not be shown to the general public or to women, it must be material intended for men-only, or material intended for women-only. The ultimate rights to the videos of certain rituals belong to the traditional sponsors or 'copyright holders' of those rituals. Audiovisual documentary of traditional activities enables one to appreciate the arts of song, music, dance, and body painting. Art is defined as the whole rich living complex of ceremonial life. Despite the fact that much information has disappeared, much has also survived and will come to life again through the audiovisual means. The audiovisual collection totals approximately 2500 hours of audio tape, 2300 hours of videotape, 23 hours of 16 mm film footage, 30 hours of 8mm film footage, 3000 (up to the 1950s) black and white photographs and 4000 colour slides, colour negatives, and black and white negatives. The latter were taken since the 1970s. Some of those films include a revival of women's traditional activities, particularly weaving and dying

techniques, a revival of fire-walking and fire-jumping rituals initiation, and marriage, grade, and funerary rituals.

Vanuatu was interesting for me because it underwent, and is still undergoing, a major political restructuring, which began in the 1980 with a bloodless coup. Vanuatu has had the benefit of establishing its own government and policies more or less free from colonial influence. They have used this opportunity to develop and drive research for their own benefit. Being a very poor country has limited some of Vanuatu's progress but has given them autonomy in many other areas, such as cultural and land rights. These are areas that limit Indigenous sovereignty rights and self-determination in other parts of the world. Vanuatu has determined that national growth with an eye on the international picture is critical.

To be sure, the line of development is towards internationalism, but the point of departure is "national", and it is from this point of departure that one must begin. Yet the perspective is international and cannot be otherwise. Antonio Gramsci would see the situation in Vanuatu as establishing the essential conditions for deep social change.

VANUATU CULTURAL RESEARCH POLICY

The VCC is responsible for facilitating, administering, and coordinating all research projects in the country, and it has been vigilant and thoughtful about the terms and

conditions of research agreements, including storage and distribution of research materials. They have produced a research protocol document that lays out the terms and conditions and approach of research. The most recent version (2001) of the research policy is available on their website, www.vanuatuculture.org. Research is defined as written and printed materials, audio and audiovisual recording, illustration, photographs, computer databases, compact disks, artifacts, and specimens. The VCC concept of traditional copyright means the right of individuals and communities to control the ways in which information they provide is used and accessed. This knowledge can include names, designs or forms, oral traditions, practices, and skills. Their concept of *Kastom* is central to all VCC research and refers to the knowledge, practices, relationships, and different cultures of Vanuatu. Research uses the following guiding principles:

- *Kastom* embodies and expresses the knowledge, practices and relationship of the people of Vanuatu and encompasses and distinguishes the many different cultures of Vanuatu
- The people of Vanuatu recognise the importance of knowing, preserving and developing their *kastom* and history.
- *Kastom* belongs to individuals, families, lineage and communities in Vanuatu. Any research on *kastom* must, in the first instance, respond to and respect the needs and desires of those people to whom the *kastom* belongs.

- Research is the documentation and creation of knowledge. As such, research results incorporate the particular viewpoints of researchers.
- Research in practice is a collaborative venture involving researchers, individual and groups of informants, local communities, chiefs and community leaders, cultural fieldworkers, cultural administrative bodies and local and national governments, and must be approached as such.

All responsibility for research is vested in the Vanuatu National Cultural Council under the Laws of the Republic of Vanuatu. The research priorities for 2001–2005 for the VCC are language and documentation, including cultural and historic site documentation. Fees are charged to the researcher. Traditional copyright protocols, which are covered under the Copyright Act of Vanuatu, must be adhered to by the researcher. There is a requirement of Indigenous involvement, including scholars, students, and community members in research, as well as a requirement of full recognition of their collaboration and training to allow for their participation. Research training should involve cultural research and documentation skills with long-term benefit for the trainee. Of central concern to all research is the benefit to community:

Where research is undertaken with a local community, the research will include a product of immediate benefit and use to that community. This product will be decided upon by the researcher, the local community and the Cultural Center in the early part of the fieldwork, and the Cultural Center may have a role in assisting the researcher in its provision. Such products could include booklets of kastom information, photo albums of visual records, simple educational booklets for the use in schools, programs for the revitalization of particular kastom skills in the community, training workshops in cultural documentation, etc.(VCC Research Guidelines, 2001)

The situation in Vanuatu is much more demanding of community benefits from research than Canada. Communities in Canada have begun to demand more derived benefits from research, largely because of awareness-building work and the fact that Indigenous peoples are now becoming researchers. All research products must be deposited in the VCC without charge; and, in as far as possible, research results will be made accessible to local communities, preferably in the local language. A six-month interim research report is required, and copies of field notes and unpublished maps and diagrams must be deposited upon project completion. If the researcher fails to comply with any conditions, the Cultural Center Council can terminate the research. No artifacts can be removed from the country. Where research does not involve a *kastom* community, it must provide a benefit to the nation. The VCC council takes on responsibility to educate local community members and the researchers about intellectual property rights under the Research Agreement and the Traditional copyright Agreement. As well as helping the community, the VCC Council identifies the benefits of research and informs area councils of chiefs, local government, and other bodies, of the research that is being undertaken. They also help distribute research to schools and assist in curriculum development that is based on research. The VCC Council takes responsibility to publicize the research protocol. If any commercial benefits arise out of the research, the terms and conditions will be decided in an agreement between the VCC Council and the researcher.

VANUATU YOUNG PEOPLES PROJECT (VYPP)

Youth have been an integral part of the VCC programming. According to current statistics, 50% of the total population of Vanuatu is under the age of 18. In Vanuatu, young people are the largest and the most vulnerable age group in a time of rapid socio-economic change. These reasons were the impetus behind the VYPP, which was started by the VCC in 1997. The VYPP project provides a forum for young people to speak about their lives, their dreams and their problems:

The project is multifaceted, featuring the ideas and work of young people through research, video production and advocacy. The emphasis on young people complements and extends the existing work of the VCC in the areas of contemporary and traditional culture or *kastom*. Turning attention to the needs of young people is timely as Vanuatu has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is committed to reviewing progress in meeting the needs and ensuring the rights of children and young people.(VYPP booklet, p.iii)

The project interviewed over 1000 youth between the ages of 13 and 25 years of age. They were interviewed in the streets and places of Port Vila and in the settlements. A video, entitled *Kilim Taem*, which is vernacular for “Killing Time”, was produced to document the concerns of young women and men. A comic book based on the experiences of the youth was also produced. All three projects involved a participatory process in which the content decisions were undertaken in collaboration with young people. The video production provided video training and also a forum for young people to speak about their lives.

All of the recommendations for action include providing education, good health, fair access to media, and employment and training opportunities for youth. The issue of minimum wage legislation and addressing gender issues to ensure fairness for young women is also recommended. The *Kastom* issue is highly regarded by the youth and is evident throughout the recommendations for action. The recommendations strongly support the view that youth are not the problem, but the resource, waiting to be tapped if only given the support. This support must be provided largely by community agencies, funders, and the forward vision of the adults. The Young Women Video Training Project is an offshoot of the VYPP, and it took place from September 2001 to July 2002. The project focused on hearing young women's opinions about issues, such as *kastom*, relationships, religion, and money. In total, seventy-nine young women were interviewed and or took part in video-training workshops. Like Halau Ku Mana in Hawaii and Joe Duquette High School in Canada, youth training has been an important goal of the revitalization of Indigenous communities and the exploration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

WAN SMOLBAG THEATRE GROUP

The Wan Smolbag (WSB) Theatre Group is another group working within Port Villa working to use Indigenous Knowledge and bring attention to ni-Vanuatu issues. The WSB was established over a decade ago to educate ni-Vanuatu and other Pacific islanders about local issues. The name is a vernacular word translated as “one small

bag.” It is intended to convey to listeners that you only need one small bag and not many props to start a theatre group. Some local issues include environmental degradation, family abuse, and reproductive health issues, like teenage pregnancy, AIDS, and sexually transmitted diseases. WSB uses a popular theatre approach, which works with the knowledge base of the youth involved. Despite the sensitivity of the materials within a predominantly Christian country, the theatre group has been welcomed in communities and often works with local health clinics. A health clinic is attached to the WSB facility and has a community nurse who advises locals on reproductive and other health issues. WSB has created educational videos on their work and, in addition to operating audio visual media, have set up similar projects in neighbouring islands. In 1999, the United Nations Population Fund in partnership with the WSB launched the "Development Theatre for Reproductive Health Education and Capacity Building in the Pacific" project:

The main purpose of the project is to use Wan Smolbag's experience in development theatre to build the capacity of other Pacific island countries to use drama, song and dance as an effective method for communicating reproductive health information. As part of this initiative, Wan Smolbag will tour other Pacific island countries and train drama groups, Ministries of Health and selected non government organisations (NGOs) in the use of theatre for reproductive health education. (Wan Smolbag Booklet, p.3)

Part of this regional training initiative is the production of a publication that incorporates simple drama techniques, which can be used by teachers, youth workers, or health educators. The theatre group has used different languages and song, drama, and dance to

make meanings. Over the years, their work has been supported by funders from the United Nations, Australia, and New Zealand.

TANNA

One of the highlights of my Vanuatu visit was the opportunity to visit the Southern island of Tanna, in the province of Tafea. Tanna is approximately one hour by air out of Port Vila. I toured the island with the Director of the Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organizations and a project coordinator of a World Vision project. I was able to accompany a team that was responding to a disaster, involving landslides and floods. In December 2002, Tanna was hit by flooding that resulted in massive mudslides throughout many of the smaller inland villages. The mudslides took out many of the local gardens, leaving communities with no produce. All gardens are built on the sides of hills to prevent pigs and other wild animals from eating them. The floods and landslides also destroyed most inland fresh water sources along with the fresh water fish. Because the roads remained impassible, delivery vehicles were unable to deliver any foodstuffs. Most of the roads that I traveled were damaged and were being dug out by hand by local villagers with picks and shovels, removing felled coconut trees and others and tons of dirt washed down from the hillsides. According to locals, this is the first mudslide and flood in the history of Tanna. This storm was accompanied by hailstones the size of baseballs, which was another first. While some international aid was received, it was obvious from my visit that a lot more help was needed.

Outside of the main village, Lenakel—where I stayed and also where the islands' only doctor, a Canadian, was stationed—none of the outlying villages had access to electricity. Prior to the devastating flooding and mudslides, some telephone service was available. Reliable electricity came to the island in 2001. Prior to that, some electricity was available by transformer and only sporadically. Despite the hardships that these people face, it is apparent from their obvious health that their *kastom* lifestyle provides them with a quality of life not found in more urban areas, such as Port Vila. Traditional foods—such as taro and fruit such as pineapples, bananas, coconuts, and guava—grow abundantly. One day, our visit to the rural area consisted of frequent stops to harvest and eat local fruit from trees. Most of the imported food consists of rice and canned fish. Tanna is famous for its coffee. Vehicles are not plentiful, so most people walk in the villages for markets and visiting. I saw no obese people. However, the people are not without health problems. The Canadian doctor stated that most of the major illnesses that he has seen and treated include malaria, malnutrition, tuberculosis, respiratory diseases, and asthma caused by cooking fires and ash from the islands active volcano, Yasur. Tanna has about 1000 chiefs. Each village has one chief and a more senior chief oversees a group of villages. In the islands interior, minor offences are dealt with by *kastom* law. A council, made up of chiefs, has the power to penalize law-breakers. Compensation to the plaintiff is made with pigs or kava, a plant that produces a drink with a slightly narcotic effect. I had the opportunity to see a village's government school and meet three of their teachers. The school I visited was poorly equipped and had no

desks and very few teaching aids, such as paper and books. Private schools, where they exist, are much better equipped but are very expensive and not accessed by poor people. My conversations with some of the local leaders of the villages that we visited revealed that many of them are concerned with the out-migration of youth from the villages to the capital and also with the loss of language, kastom, and culture. Women that I met with expressed concern that there were no medical facilities within their communities. They also expressed concern that community decisions were made entirely by men. Local leaders have identified leadership training as a key issue for their communities. While kastom leadership provides all of the village leadership, it is apparent that some health issues and emergency measures relief could be improved with local leadership training and needs identification. I found that some studies had been done by outside agencies with the help of the VCC and NCW, however, time did not permit me to review all documents.

LESSONS LEARNED

Throughout this dissertation, the stories of our Indigenous relatives from the South were heard. Their issues are complex and, in almost all cases, include development by large trans-national corporations, land rights, and human rights. For the most part, the link, between what is happening on the ground and in community and what happens in higher learning, is not made. Thus, most Indigenous peoples have not adequately benefited from higher learning, particularly in the global south. Despite—or perhaps because of—this

reality, many articulate voices have developed from the southern and "least developed" regions. The responses have been varied. In some parts of the world, Indigenous peoples' access to technology has meant the rapid communication of their situation. In their words, research and development stems from the insatiable appetites of the developed regions of the world. Indigenous peoples, from the least developed regions, have clearly stated that it is imperative that people from the developed regions reduce their patterns of consumption. From the "Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Capacity-Building" at the Prepcom IV, WSSD, in Bali, Indonesia in May 2002, participants stated their views:

It is unacceptable for us that the Chairman's document proposes to establish mechanisms for regular communication between the decision-making bodies and the scientific community in order to give and receive scientific guidance and technology with a view to implementing Agenda 21 and establish and strengthen scientific and educational networks for sustainable development at all levels in order to exchange knowledge, experience and best practices, without taking into account or ignoring the contributions we can offer to the international community with respect to traditional knowledge and experiences based on a harmony with nature.

The fact that I was able to do research within the global south deeply enriched my perspective on Indigenous Knowledge. I have been deeply moved by my experiences and by the tremendous teachings that I received through my travels and associations with colleagues from these regions. The information here can help us to develop some of our strategies and adapt our curricula to enhance our teaching and learning within the local context. The building of curricula, and the changes that will ensue within the academy, will help build a welcoming home for future scholars both Indigenous and non-

Indigenous. It has been my experience that where education was improved for Indigenous students, the benefits were shared throughout the entire student body.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The interviews provided rich information in answer to the research questions that guided this dissertation. In review these questions were;

1. What do you know to be Indigenous Knowledge?
2. How have these Indigenous Knowledge Systems influenced higher learning and community development?

From all interview sites, there is agreement that Indigenous Knowledge Systems are universal and share similarities. Nature and relationship to land has an important and fundamental influence on the local knowledge base. This knowledge base may differ from region to region according to local needs and ways of life. Universities without Indigenous Knowledge Systems programs have been problematic for Indigenous peoples and working within these creates many challenges. Combined with discrimination in regards to both racism and sexism, women experience the greatest challenges. Universities working towards “indigenization of the academy” described a range of courses from undergraduate to graduate programs. Community-based organizations focused on working on the immediate needs of Indigenous communities, including the

social conditions of youth, elders, and women. Creative and cultural work with youth is central to community-based institutions, as well as high schools. Language and cultural expressions, such as the arts of music, drama, storytelling, and new multi-media, art forms, are important means of communicating Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Healing is a central feature in preserving and promulgating Indigenous Knowledge Systems and healing is a response to the colonial experience that Indigenous peoples have undergone as a global phenomena. Women's knowledge is fundamental to the well-being of the community, as it is women who are keepers of knowledge around food production, community sustainability, and family life. Research has been problematic for Indigenous peoples, and they are addressing the issue through developing research protocols and methodologies that are more respectful and respond to the needs of Indigenous communities. Indigenous peoples are also increasingly becoming "the researcher". As the Indigenous researcher, my entrance into this research project was facilitated by my work within the global and local context. More doors were opened to facilitate the research. The nature of the research, I feel, did facilitate delays from the time when the proposal was submitted until the time the proposal was actually approved. The nature of the information was problematic for some academics in my initial PhD committee. Institutions that make no place for Indigenous participation are oppressive and reminiscent of the colonial era. There is a clear indication that community-based groups see the importance of higher learning and its ability to improve the quality of life. This approval is not a given, and communities want respectful discourse and meaningful participation. Some academic research has, in the past and may continue in the future,

worked against the sovereignty of Indigenous communities unless discussions between both communities took place.

The methodology used in this dissertation approached the ideals of participatory action research (meaning the overarching research question has come from the communities of Indigenous peoples), focused participant observation, and story telling. I used critical theory to problematize and critically analyze Indigenous participation within the academic community. I am a scholar of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and I was clear about my position during the interviews. My contacts were possible because of the many networks that I have helped to create and been part of over the last decade, as both an academic and a community activist. I chose the research locations based on my knowledge of sites that were making important contributions to the field of Indigenous Knowledge and deeply valued their community knowledge. Research participants were involved as protocol advisors and provided feedback to my interpretation of the data by reviewing the transcriptions. This research has led to a new project with an Amazonian-based people at the University of San Marcos, in Lima Peru. My research has led to the development of three new courses that integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems and present information on related topics at the University of San Marcos. This new curriculum will lead to the development of the North American Indigenous Foods Symposium in May 2007. Indigenous Knowledge Systems are not the sole realm of Indigenous peoples. They have always existed to share and contribute to the well-being of all of humanity. While these knowledge systems originated within Indigenous

communities to provide a good life, their knowledge is urgently required to help repair a time in history that is capable of destroying much of life on earth. I have placed storytelling as a prominent feature within my dissertation as I believe that it has a centre role to play in research and telling the truths about community. My advisory committee is predominantly composed of Indigenous academics, but it is not entirely. To truly appreciate the information contained within the dissertation, one must share a commitment for the need for sovereignty and human rights improvement for Indigenous peoples and, in effect, for all peoples. This commitment knows no skin colour.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION — SEVEN GENERATIONS AND BEYOND

In writing the conclusion, I chose this heading because in the Indigenous world view we are all related. We are instructed that whatever decisions we make, we should consider the next seven generations of humanity, and not just Indigenous humanity, but all humanity. The title is reflective of our Anishnabe cousins' teachings about the seventh fire. The Anishnabe teaching states that the fifth fire is the time of the arrival of the non-Anishnabe. The sixth fire is a time of difficulty and suffering for the Anishnabe. The seventh fire will be a time of healing for communities and individuals and a celebration of our survival and rebirth. The reintroduction of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, locally and globally, is about honouring life-giving systems, developing healing capacities from all forms of oppression, and celebrating *pimatisiwin*, "the good life". Having identified the beauty and symbiotic nature of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, we must, at the same time, keep our eye and our intellect on the forces of domination, clearly identify the academic illusion of inclusion, and relegate it to the dustbins of history. *Pimatisiwin* must be our goal and driving vision.

The writing of this dissertation enabled me to make sense of the tensions, contradictions, doubts, hopes, and visions involved in my role and responsibility as an academic. This

dissertation resulted from my desire to explicate Indigenous Knowledge Systems and posit strategies for utilizing these systems. The outcome for this interrogation is to enhance teaching and learning within an academic setting and to create links within the broader Indigenous communities so as to impact research and, ultimately, community development. By focusing on my home community and some of my extended communities, I wanted my research to reflect the concerns that land-based peoples, like Henry McKay Settee, faced, and still face, as a result of Western incursions in their lands. My social, political and personal circumstances are interwoven throughout the final document. As a First Nations woman who has had interesting life experiences as well as many challenges I feel the document reflects my ability to read these circumstances with tools that widened with my life experiences and the rich knowledge and experiences of colleagues and friends. This all contributed to my story and the stories of my peoples throughout the world. My passion for telling stories was a liberating event to share the sometimes terrible human suffering visited onto Indigenous humankind.

I focused on regions that are seldom in the North American research radar, the South Pacific and South Africa. They were exemplary regions because they have established degree programs entirely based on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. I situated, as I have noted, mainstream research in a critical lens as a precondition to understanding how Indigenous Knowledge could overcome the exclusion from Western research and education and give my peoples voice. I was careful not to replicate Western methods in my research, in terms of style and content, and chose instead to use an Indigenist method

of storytelling, beginning with the story of Henry McKay Settee and our northern isolated Cree community. The parallel between my father's story through my eyes became a twin narrative with the stories that I heard from other places.

This dissertation documents many projects from multiple locations and also the diverse experiences that have engaged me during my work as a professor and activist. The research reflected my desire to bring attention to deepening social, economic, cultural, and political crises occurring as a result of systems of power, which disadvantage many at the hands of few. My Cree world and the concept of *pimatisiwin*, as described earlier, have been deeply impacted by history. Therefore, in researching my experiential knowledge, I added to the literature that challenges the status quo—the literature of feminists, anti-imperialists, and decolonizing scholars. I have examined critical theories generated by Indigenous researchers that respond to the question of how to improve the human condition. My research has been enriched by the critical works of Mihesuah, & Cavender Wilson (2004); Giroux (1992); Smith (1999); hooks (1984, 1994, 2003); LaDuke (2006), Hartsock (1998) and others. Their writings encouraged my critical awareness and supported my effort to articulate what I already know and directed me to topics that I want to learn more about. Research was not just an academic exercise; instead, I turned my own struggles into a topic of intellectual pursuit and while working in the field with many of my colleagues. Our problem-posing dialogues contributed to thoughts and discourse that could feed people's minds; we made decisions about which varieties of seeds would feed people. However, knowledge must feed more than the

minds. It is an organic exercise, whose end result must change conditions in order to also feed the hungry stomachs, especially the ones in Indigenous communities. My readings on feminism and other critical literature confirmed for me that our Indigenous knowledge should not be viewed as disruptive or subjugated but as one who's time has come. Indigenous literature creates liberatory and emancipatory discourse for Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.

I located my research in settings where Indigenous people were interested in changing their circumstances, in removing obstacles to their self-determination both on the land and in the academy. This entailed supporting my colleagues and participants as they empowered themselves. My research is among the first to show some of the broad global struggles of Indigenous communities who are emerging from the oppression of colonial powers and globalization and linking it to academic responsibility. As such, it describes the Indigenous situation within a theoretical analysis of power. It includes the scholarly, non-scholarly, and community based-voices of people from the global margins who are fighting to stave off Western imperialist expansion on some of the last pristine lands and waters in the world. It includes scholarship from feminists, anti-colonialists and anti-racists moreover, it adds rich cultural stories which are based on ancient Indigenous knowledge. Just as Henry McKay Settee's lands were devastated by a dam over forty years ago, Indigenous people today are still faced with a struggle for community self-determination (Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2005). Marginalized voices are seldom reflected in literature or in research. For Indigenous peoples, their thoughts, opinions, and visions

have historically been set apart from intellectual endeavors as academic research chose instead to perpetuate power relations and maintain the status quo.

As a student, only none of the texts in my courses for my undergraduate work provided me with a critical perspective of the world around me. I believe my student experience was no different from other young Indigenous peoples. My critical awareness of the world happened during my solitary travels in the Indigenous jungles of Guatemala and Peru, the communities of the Sierra Madres in northern Colombia, and the irradiated islands of the Pacific.²

In faraway places, I heard stories of genocide and rape, witnessed the killings of Indigenous peoples, heeded the recounts of and felt the impact of imposed development policies on the lives of ordinary people. As a young woman, the knowledge I gathered in the international sphere helped me to analyze my local Indigenous conditions of poverty, marginalization, and social tensions within a framework of social justice, human rights, and relationships of power and domination where I resided and taught. It also reminded me of the power that I had as a university classroom teacher to impact students' consciousness:

I am reminded of the power we have as teachers as well as the awesome responsibility. Commitment to engaged pedagogy carries with it the willingness to be responsible, not to pretend that professors do not have the power to change the direction in our students' lives. (hooks, 1994, p.206)

² For years, both the US and France tested nuclear weapons and lobbed missiles at various Pacific islands under their "trusteeship," dislocating the Indigenous peoples. Sometimes natives were returned prematurely to their irradiated homelands, which resulted in birth defects and cancers.

It was during this time that the work of Paulo Freire (1970) helped me to interrogate local conditions and become a critical educator.

My work is a critical scrutiny of the domination of Indigenous communities by largely non-Indigenous structures, such as universities, which serve the status quo. But it is not so blind to realize that critical work will be advanced when practiced in solidarity with those who work to eradicate all forms of domination and discrimination and who stand up for social justice and human rights.

Mihesuah et al. (2004) describes the difference between those who defend and those who work to combat the status quo, "the major difference between the camps is that Native and non-Native scholars fighting the status quo are concerned about the welfare of tribes, empowerment for indigenous peoples, inclusive stories of the past and present and overturning the colonial structure. Indigenes who do not strive for those goals only help to reinforce the power structure that subsumes all natives" (p.35). My research examines the resistance and dissent that has developed within our communities and developments that have created the bases of power for social change.

STORYTELLING, NARRATIVE, AND DIALOGUE

In authoring this chapter, I realize the complex and arduous process of *coming to voice*, a process of critical consciousness which involves reminiscence of the past and vision for a future. As an Indigenous woman, voice has not been given to me by those in power. Voice is not always honored in the academy. Voice requires struggle, resistance, and the recognition of its possibilities and limitations. This dissertation work is framed within a narrative so as to story retrospectively and experientially on some of the events in the Aboriginal world. The research focused on culture as a manifestation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. I included literature, the arts, women's knowledge, languages, and storytelling. Storytelling is a methodology that has been used among Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. My research intentionally uses storytelling as a method of deep surfacing truth and providing a framework that is relevant and necessary for scholarship about Indigenous peoples. Storytelling is central to the preservation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and should be an accepted, if not a required, aspect of research. In the Indigenous world, storytelling is also about resilience, endurance, cultural survival, and resistance to the elements and forces that challenge us and create hardships for us. Storytelling is about precision and using the cycles of nature to ensure our survival as peoples and the seven directions—the east, west, north, and south, above in the celestial heavens, below in our Mother Earth, and the inner direction of our body and our heart. Storytelling and culture represent Indigenous resistance as well as a framework on educating for truth and discovering what lies within peoples' heart.

So, in these times of hardship, it is imperative that we bring out the cultural strengths that have endured us for millennia, our Knowledge Systems, our stories, and our ability to survive in extreme adversity. In the Indigenous research world, storytelling is an approach frequently used to captivate key elements of people's lives (Baskin, 2005).

In this research have described the merits and challenges of Native Studies Departments. For me, it is about moving one step further to integrating within the political and intellectual with the cultural. Politics is about power (Hartsock, p. 15), so when we challenge notions of power within our working and living conditions it necessarily involved politics. Always, I am cognizant that both intellectual and political has been reflective of Indigenous humanities, values and survival, which is embodied in the concept of *pimatisiwin*.

I have emphasized the liberating impact of non-scholarly learning methods, such as drama, songs and dance, for transmitting Indigenous Knowledge. These are powerful methodologies that can serve to inspire the marginalized and unleash their voices and their potential for social change. I have described the urgency and documented the ways in which Indigenous peoples are working to preserve Indigenous languages locally and globally. These are new and innovative projects, which come out of a strong commitment by people who deeply appreciate the magnitude of what is at risk in term of culture and knowledge. These projects are also swimming upstream in the face of an English-only, hegemonic mentality that is powered by globalization. However, by living

up to our reputation as word warriors, we are reclaiming our words, our languages, and our knowledge. I have included important developments, mostly grassroots activities, that Indigenous peoples are currently engaging in to preserve community biodiversity. I have included the important contributions of women's knowledge, but I acknowledge that much of this knowledge has been undermined as a result of our colonial history, in much the same way that other women's history and knowledge have been unacknowledged. The status of Indigenous women is reflective of many women and is an indication of a much deeper crisis. A crisis which has left many women and their families in desperate conditions. Nonetheless, The Joe Duquette and Halau Ku Mana schools focus on the future by healing of Indigenous students and addressing the concerns that Dr. Odora Hoppers talks about in the healing of the human spirit in South Africa:

Dialogue was the hallmark of my interactions with Indigenous activists as “it is a humanizing speech one that challenges and resists domination” (hooks, in Collins 1991 p. 212). In networking with persons of diverse understandings and commitments, “the give and take of dialogue makes struggling together to make meaning a powerful experience of self-definition and self-discovery” (p.212).

Our work as Indigenous intellectuals must lead to greater sovereignty and self-determination for Indigenous peoples. This is what is being demanded by grassroots and traditional Indigenous communities in Canada, as well as by Indigenous academics as reflected in the literature. It is also being demanded at international forums, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples. As academics, together with our community relations, we must look at the conditions of the traditional homelands of people like those of Henry McKay Settee and others and take our cues from these desperate conditions to

honour the culture, the politics, and the wisdom that is inherently ours. This requires us to develop a critical view of our roles as educators, to assess the socio-economic and cultural domination of both our homelands, and our academies, and to reflect this in our work.

Global research was a voyage of discovery meanwhile meeting a range of new colleagues, having encounters with unfamiliar voices, and developing a new sensitivity to what we call “otherness.” I saw exclusion and domination masked by the illusion of equality, and it left a lasting mark. Writing the dissertation anchored my thoughts and allowed me to document events that left me, at times, saddened and, other times, inspired and hopeful. I have described how many attributes of Indigenous Knowledge Systems are deeply impacted through the role of loss, loss of formerly self-sufficient communities, near loss of language and culture, loss of family and children, loss of human rights and lands, loss of dignity, and loss of a sense of community and nationhood. Nowhere is this loss demonstrated greater than the poverty and homelessness of Indigenous peoples in Canada’s major cities. Indigenous homelessness is a metaphor for the many losses that embrace too many of our people. For Indigenous scholars this loss follows us into the academy:

One of the dangers we face in our educational systems is the loss of a feeling of community, not just the loss of closeness among those with whom we work and with our students, but also the loss of a feeling of connection and closeness with the world beyond the academy. (hooks, 2003, p.xv)

Despite their damaging impact, the losses have not been terminal. The critical understanding of loss has helped us to see the importance of deep healing using Indigenous way. I have chosen to write about Indigenous cultures and Indigenous Knowledge Systems that have survived and sustained communities through many losses. Knowledge Systems and methodologies are the first step to a new understanding of what remains intact of Indigenous knowledge systems, so we can learn how to build our communities from there. These are the stories that must be taught to our young because the current academic discourse is failing our students. Students fail because educational systems do not acknowledge or honour their history and their knowledge. The mainstream universities use our Indigenous student numbers to create both wealth vis-à-vis tuition and statistics that labels “others”. In reality only some students are admitted, but few matriculate. As marginalized people, Indigenes must claim the educational process to serve our needs.

In writing my findings, I have been trying to tap the historical record. I was trying to make somehow audible silenced voices, and to bring visibility to invisible faces. The writing emerged “from my passion of experience, my passion of remembrance” (hooks, 1994, p. 90). My research reflected my personal needs and journey, which required me to look within myself and my community for answers as to how Indigenous cultures could contribute meaningfully to higher education. My research, and the travels which it entailed, has helped me cope with my frustration with Euro-centrism and the square boxes of the university brand of knowledge and ways of knowing which have been a

barrier to Indigenous peoples when they have entered the academy. There have been parallel impacts the world over, as reflected in relations of power, power over human lives, communities, and cultures.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Worldwide, Indigenous peoples are contesting the prevailing social texts in which social norms are made and remade. Since the late-1970s, my cultural world has been expanding to other regions of the world, which created the original inquiry that has inspired my life's work, including this dissertation. I continue to develop a vast network of colleagues, who are engaged in similar academic work and who have provided encouragement, an intellectual community, and inspiration for this scholarship. Their stories, their wisdom, and their experiences, visions, sadness, and victories are included in here. The experiences I had within the international context drew on a deep emotive part of me and compelled me to include those stories in my dissertation. In fact, the stories became the reason for the dissertation. As an Indigenous person, I wanted to be wide-awake, to refuse passivity, and to refuse to be a mere functionary. My dissertation documents colleagues' personal, political, and intellectual struggles and demonstrates how they translated them into Indigenous Knowledge Systems degree programs and community-based projects. As North American Indigenous peoples, we can look at their stories and their struggles and use them to inspire change here.

In the 1980s, I worked in solidarity with South Africans, and helped them celebrate when the fascist apartheid South African regime was toppled. My family had worked with the African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions to boycott South African products, an action which eventually helped to topple the Botha apartheid government. It was always a dream of mine to work in South Africa because I had learned a tremendous amount about power relations and human liberation from meeting and reading the work of African American scholars/teachers, such as Angela Davis, Maya Angelou, Steven Biko, Frederick Douglas, bell hooks, and Malcolm X. North-West University demonstrated to me that entire degree programs from undergraduate to doctoral programs in Indigenous Knowledge Systems were possible. African scholarship combined with words like renaissance and *ubuntu* demonstrated that the scholarship was recognized as fundamental to social and political movements. *Ubuntu* strengthened, affirmed, and drew parallels to my concept of *pimatisiwin*. They are human values which are based on ancient Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and they represent resistance which could build a visionary political voice.

Creating networks with African Indigenous scholars was an organic experience. This experience became a critical contribution to the framework that Freire's work afforded me, and my rich culture also gave to me as a birthright. Instead of speakers on raised platforms addicted to harmony, complacency, and fear of contradiction—who seem to respond with arrogance, aggrandizement, and hunger for power—I listened to great orators like Odora Hoppers. She spoke of our mutual Indigenous quest for liberatory,

emancipatory and intellectual democracy, and knowledge that is based on the great and ancient Indigenous knowledge of the world. As Shope states, “the renaissance of our Africanness is not about rediscovering, but about reiterating who we are and what we as Africans are all about”(in Makgoba, 1999, p.xii). The fact that South Africa had taken the first step in assuming power of its political system has provided a context where Indigenous Knowledge Systems could once again thrive, albeit in the specter of international globalization and with the limitations which that imposes on national governments. The political situation in Vanuatu, who gained independence from France in 1980 and, earlier, Britain, allowed me to experience a country free from the vestiges of colonial influence. Hawaii was a natural learning centre as I worked along with *Kanaka Maoli*, Indigenous Hawaiians, on land-based struggles, women’s and youth’s rights, and educational issues. It was here that I saw hope become possibility.

CULTURAL HEGEMONY

I believe that Indigenous Knowledge Systems cannot be viewed solely within a cultural context, but that they must also be considered within an historical framework that looks at colonialism, imperialism, racism, and other structures of power that have undermined Indigenous cultures. My research challenges the hegemony of the Euro-centric institutions by raising expectations for full academic membership for Indigenous scholars with intact cultures and a home that honours the Indigenous worldview. Recognizing the power that rests in places that develop official knowledge, within my circle of colleagues

(Mihesuah & Cavender Wilson, 2004), many have been asking how they can better serve their communities within higher learning and through that process create important scholarship and practice. Most Indigenous programming within the context of higher learning continues to depend on soft monies that could disappear in the blink of an eye, or an Indigenous-unfriendly government. Given the current Conservative Canadian Government's Indian Policy Advisor Tom Flanagan, a known right-winger, our survival is not guaranteed. Already this government has targeted women's groups, literacy groups, and others who are marginalized in society. In *Indigenizing the Academy*, Heath Justice states, "we can undermine the destructive aspects of academia through changing curricula, increasing access to more Natives and other marginalized peoples, and advocating change through substantial and strategic intellectual engagement and publishing"(in Mihesuah et al., 2004, p.112). Others make further demands for more fundamental changes within the academy, "because we are dissatisfied with the status quo, because we are tired of the tremendous injustices occurring around us, and because we are hungry for a change that will bring respect to our rights as Indigenous peoples"(Mihesuah et al., 2004, p.5).

In my experience, academic citizenship requires that we remain silent on research and development that ultimately marginalizes our communities. An example is the growing dissent among Indigenous farmers against the science that creates terminator seeds, which undermines citizens' rights to seed-save (LaDuke, 2006). As the first agriculturalists, seed-saving is at the heart of Indigenous food sovereignty and food

security. Another science having negative impact in terms of culture and self-determination could be the technology of mining and forestry, depleting our valuable resources and leaving behind scarred landscapes. If we agree to business as usual, we qualify for merit pay and promotion, if not, we become “brown-listed,” Indigenous blacklisting. Our history has shown us that if we dissent and question the authority of white male science or scholarship, we pay the ultimate price in our academic careers. Or worse yet, our training does not even give us the critical analysis to identify status quo research as the problem. I found there were hurdles in my university tenure and my graduate work. In the beginning, I experienced difficulty finding an academic home where I could place my PhD research. A scan of our course catalogue reveals that Aboriginal courses are minimal at best, which reflects our status as marginalized scholars. Further into my PhD work, I advocated for the transparency of scientific research that I felt posed problems for my extended community on the issue of food security and food sovereignty. This was not met with encouragement. Mihesuah et al. has called these academics gatekeepers:

They take advantage of the oppression of Indigenous peoples, and from their positions of power they decide who is amiable enough to be hired, neutral enough in their writings to be published, and Euroamerican enough in their outlooks to earn awards or qualify for grants and fellowships. In other words, in order to be acceptable to gatekeepers, Indigenous scholars and their work must be nonthreatening to those in power positions. (Mihesuah et al., 2004, p.32)

Our institution celebrates the contributions that science and technology have made to Western lives but rarely mentions the starvation, malnutrition, and, technically, easily curable diseases that impact our Indigenous citizens. This is at the time when food

research and production in this province is reaping profits. As Indigenous scholars, we must retain the right to write our history and critique the forces of domination that impact our lives. As more and more of our grassroots community understand the potential link between research, development and the development of our communities, they are naturally looking to Indigenous scholars to be their advocates.

I have analyzed the situation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems using the concept of cultural hegemony, as described by Gramsci and others who have been influenced by him. Gramsci helps us to view ourselves as an ensemble of social relationships rather than as peoples whose realities have been separately constructed. One tension that Gramsci identified was that the culture of the dominated is diminished in a hegemonic context. Antithetical to his view, the situation of Indigenous peoples is unique because, despite the many forces working against our community, our culture in its many forms is alive and thriving. The songs, stories, dances, ceremonies, and *wahkotawin* are all knowledge systems that have endured and have sustained our people in the face of bigotry, extreme discrimination, and genocide. Through our cultural continuity and resiliency we continue to create alternatives that challenges the dominant culture. Despite the impact of cultural hegemony, Indigenous Peoples have not only endured, but the voices, stories, and movement forward by my colleagues and relatives grows stronger daily. Our powerful orators, Simon Kytwayhat, Winona LaDuke, Oren Lyons, Oscar Temaru, Vicky Tauli-Corpuz and Mililani Trask inspire hope and inspiration. In many ways, “our time has come” and we are leading the way in many spheres. We are

recognized as a model to emulate with our stories of survival and resiliency. Many non-Indigenous are coming to our fires, recognizing that they need to be liberated from dominant forces which have placed all life on earth in a precarious situation. Indigenous communities' colonial history has left a trail of destruction, and we are engaging in deconstructing colonialism. The role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems is to provide a process for deconstruction and reconstruction and recognizing that; "each of us has an epistemology contained in our practical activity"(Hartsock, 1998, p. 222). We are deconstructing hegemonic practices and reconstructing new horizons, and we are recognizing ancient knowledge, values, and relationships of equity, equality, and democratic values. We are offering our epistemology. Indigenous Knowledge is a global movement of people who are challenging many forms of oppression, including war, injustice, hunger, and monetary greed which destroys cultures and forces people to live in extreme poverty. We are moving beyond challenging, we are "using what we know about our lives as a basis for critique of the dominant culture and second, creating alternatives"(Hartsock, 1998, p.223). We are part of a global movement. As Arundhati Roy so eloquently stated at the World Social Forum, "Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing" (cited in Rebeck, 2005, p.257). The academy must join us. In order for our Indigenous Knowledge Systems to survive, we need to understand the intellectual tools that critical theorists such as Gramsci, Freire, and others have given us and to unite with the intellectual powers for survival that is unique to us as peoples of the land.

PEDAGOGY OF HOPE AND PIMATISIWIN

My writing has reflected the hope that I feel in relation to the natural world and all of her resources and to all life on earth. Culturally, I found rest and respite in the stories of the elders, the ceremonies, and the community cultural celebrations, such as powwows, round dances, feasts, educational forums, and language festivals. I observed that this traditional knowledge provided a needed *pimatisiwin* for our community. Culturally and esthetically, I would return to my northern roots to be nourished by the beauty and the tranquility of the land that had remained pristine and untouched by Western development. Politically and culturally, I found my home and part of my soul in the struggles and stories of my international colleagues. This home included a developing analysis of the international roots of power relationships and their impact on Indigenous communities throughout the world, in Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, Peru, and elsewhere. In these places, I found the work of Gramsci and Freire (1970), as well as that of newer contemporary writers who spoke about the future as one of struggle and of hope. For Gramsci, real democracy could only happen when “everyone has the capacity to deliberate thoughtfully” (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p.134). I felt an academic kinship with writers who analyze power structures from a race, class, and gender perspective (Collins, 1991; hooks, 1994; Grande, 2003). But much of the scholarship did not go far enough. In one sense I wanted to integrate story. I wanted to include multi-layered stories from throughout the globe and to talk about cultural survival, cultural resiliency, and Indigenous rights to claim power of self-determination and dignified lives. Life and story are closely intertwined. Life is lived through story, and story lives in life.

What I have learned is that story often lives tacitly in people's lives, it is frequently told other ways, without words. I wanted my story, Henry McKay Settee's story, as well as stories of our extended communities, to give voice to oppression and to mobilize the complacency, anomie, and, at times, sorrow that has gripped our Nations.

It is my intention to expand the cultural aspect of Indigenous Knowledge to include a political aspect and a critical perspective of dominant forces. By creating spaces for Indigenous standpoints, which are grounded in the interests of my people, I want to establish a culture of dissent. Cultures of dissent are about seeing the academy through the lens of power and domination and having the academy adapt to meet the needs of communities. This political aspect would explain how and why much of our culture is subject to political forces that threaten Indigenous Knowledge Systems and do not allow full membership into post-secondary institutions.

Despite many of the challenges, we, as collective Indigenous communities are creating change and developing important projects based on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. For example, since starting this dissertation, I have noticed many more symposia, conferences, workshops, and research relating to Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Writings, such as mine, continue to raise the profile of the topic. My dissertation research has motivated me to develop curricula on the range of Indigenous Knowledge Systems on such topics as food security, food sovereignty, language usage, community development, human rights, and Indigenous self-determination and to organize other

Indigenous Knowledge events in partnership with local, national, and global colleagues. Perhaps, the most vital aspect of Indigenous Knowledge Systems is how it can be used in the reconstruction of communities, which are being rebuilt on a reawakening of political, social and cultural consciousness, and a return to democratic practices (Silver, 2006).

LIMITATIONS

A dissertation does not allow one to research in detail the great number of topics surrounding Indigenous Knowledge Systems. One limitation is that, in the international arena, I have focused on two regions only, South Africa and the Pacific region, in addition to parts of Canada. However, focusing on only a few regions allowed me to spend significant time in the field visiting sites where Indigenous Knowledge Systems have recently documented their struggles and the resistance that they faced. Nonetheless, this dissertation did not go into the important work that is taking place within the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples. It did not examine the whole range of research issues as they relate to Indigenous peoples, including the international aspects of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. It has not documented the variety of Indigenous Knowledge courses that exist within higher learning here in Canada. There are many stories of people on the land who face extreme environmental destruction, which this dissertation also does not address. Finally it does not analyze the role of race contributing to the oppression of Indigenous peoples.

RESEARCH THAT COUNTS

I have looked critically at the role of research and development and shown how it can be liberating and an impetus for social change, both at home and in what is known as “developing regions”. Research is a powerful tool that commands valuable resources. I have found that although research is still the domain of white scholars, there is a burgeoning Indigenous critical research literature. I believe that those of us who work at research institutes have opportunities to direct and influence research for social and community responsibility. The stories of our peoples, told first-hand, need to be integrated throughout the many layers of knowledge production and research, the various departments, and the emerging research institutes, foundations and partnerships.

The safe-keeping of our planet is at the centre of the preservation and continuation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. I have conveyed that the biggest challenge facing our communities is the post-colonial experience of our people. Other Indigenous scholars have stated similar thoughts (Smith, 1999; Mihesuah et al., 2004). I have included in my critique the impact of globalization and an overview of international trade agreements and global financial institutes, which are largely directed by and prioritize the desires of developed countries over the needs of underdeveloped regions and countries. This position reflects the efforts of my colleagues and fellow activists in anti-globalization struggles (Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006; LaDuke, 2006). Some of this information reflects the stories I have documented in Africa, the Pacific region, and areas that are referred to as developing. While we have potential within our communities to develop to

full capacity, we are faced with what seems like insurmountable challenges and competition in the form of corporate interests, which wield tremendous powers over the lives of ordinary people. The impact of concentrated power over peoples' lives has become even worse than what the early theorists, such as Gramsci, have predicted. This power has increased since the 9/11 experience in New York City. To say that fascism could erupt is no exaggeration. In fact, during the World Trade Center destruction in New York City, hooks (2003) commented:

It was a moment of utter chaos where the seeds of fascist ideologies were bearing fruit everywhere. In our nations, schools, and colleges, free speech gave way to censorship. Individuals lost their jobs, or lost promotions because they dared to express the right to dissent that is a core civil right in a democratic society. All over our nations, citizens were stating that they were willing to give up civil rights to ensure that this nation would win the war against terrorism". (p. 10)

On my own path of reflective work within the academy and community, I believe that Indigenous peoples throughout the globe are on the cusp of a Renaissance, similar to the peoples of South Africa. Similarly, I have worked with some very committed non-Indigenous peoples who were respectful towards our struggles and our cultures and were driven by our mutual human condition. I have included work that engages non-Aboriginal scholars and grass-roots activists, because I feel that it is important to build links and acknowledge the important work that each of us is doing. It is through a united voice and respectful relationships that we can work in solidarity and overturn the imbalanced power structures. to serve the needs of all peoples.

IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

Indigenous peoples have a great deal to learn from each other. From the Canadian perspective, the lessons from Vanuatu can teach us how the research of outsiders will work for us. My connections with Vanuatu continued after the Director and I met at an Indigenous Knowledge Conference hosted by my office. The Vanuatu research protocol has been inspirational and used as a community based prototype for other communities. Vanuatu has shown the possibilities when political independence is achieved. The verdant gardens of Halau Ku Manu locates learning in a natural landscape away from the confining walls of school. The garden is a metaphor for life and demonstrates that tenacity in the interconnectedness of humanity and plant relatives; it is also Indigenous Knowledge in practice. The global examples provide inspiration for us and assurance that our local work, like that of others in the international sphere, is important in reclaiming our democratic rights. In *Teaching to Transgress* (1994) hooks states that sharing commonalities reinforces our work and strengthens our resolve:

It is crucial that critical thinkers, who want to change our teaching practices talk to one another, collaborate in a discussion that crosses boundaries and creates a space for intervention. It is fashionable these days, when “difference” is a hot topic in progressive circles, to talk about “hybridity” and “border crossing,” but we often have no concrete examples of individuals who actually occupy different locations within structures, sharing ideas with one another, mapping out terrains of commonality, connection, and shared concern with teaching practices. (p.131)

This dissertation is not a “how to Indigenize” document that can be read to transform the academy. So much of the work depends on the willingness of communities to address the

power structures and inequities that are often the very foundations on which communities were established. The task is daunting as it is these inequities that hold up the structures, which create power and privilege for the status quo. But the stories give us hope and impel us forward. When we only name the problem, when we state complaint without a constructive focus on resolution, we take away hope (hooks, 2003, p. xiv). I have reported on projects of hope. The voices and actions of Kanaka Maoli, South Africans, and ni-Vanuatu, as well as many North American Indigenous scholars, demonstrate that we are building social change within institutions, developing capacity among our governments, and waking up the democratic process.

Some have stated that the tools of the master will not dismantle the master's house (Lourde, 1982), but we are using Indigenous Knowledge with new-found tools to begin the reconstruction process of the "master's" house.

If universities take credit for or lead much of the research and development, then we can say that in terms of Indigenous development, universities can improve greatly. The creation of new Aboriginal scholars will be positive only when they are part of the solution and not handmaidens for the current mode of development. Learners need to have a theoretically critical perspective which gives them voice and analysis of their realities to create a power shift that is based on equality and poverty eradication. This is a difficult and complex task as Indigenous scholars are neither monocultural, monolingual nor unpolitical any more than other scholars. There is also the lure of

complacency and a certain amnesia that strikes individuals who have made it into the comfort and privilege of the status quo. There is an urgent need for creating a critical mass of Indigenous scholars, that represent many tribal groups, linguistic groups, many regions, many research interests and many perspectives. The development of new knowledge based on analysis of the political, economic and cultural realities is overdue. Using the same knowledge that got us into the predicament of global warming, failing energy sources, unsustainable development, the loss of human rights, and the pursuit of individualism will lead us directly to the demise of the natural world and all of us. The creation of the status quo found its birth place within higher learning and it continues to be a pseudo happy arrangement. As colleague, Linda Tuhiwai Smith remarks, “the insulation of disciplines, the culture of the institution which supports disciplines, and the systems of management and governance all work in ways which protect the privileges already in place” (Smith, 1999, p.133).

The root word for university is universe, yet, somehow, the definition of what takes place within the walls of academia is less than universal. If anything, it is an exclusive domain reflecting the power of a few, rather than a rich universe reflecting brilliance and creativity to serve, engage, and inspire humankind. Further, it is anti-cultural, or monocultural, when people must learn to march only to the beat of the one drummer. In this case, it is not an Indigenous drum, which is the drum of a heart; it is the rote and mechanistic drum of the corporate autocracy. Indigenous peoples need to claim our rightful places and make the *universe-ity* reflective of its original goals, which were to

reflect the universe's and its inhabitants' knowledge and truths. We should not feel frightened to, as hooks (1994) states, "disrupt the academy" (p. 136):

My dissertation work has made a case for the inclusion of concepts of *wahkotawin*, *pimatissiwini*, and *miyo-wichitowin*, as well as the African sister concept *ubuntu* and the Hawaiian, *pono*. These concepts are reflective and parallel the thought and action of the works of Indigenous Knowledge scholars throughout the world. The concepts have deeply spiritual roots and a soul as old as humanity itself, but they are manifest and reflect in intellectual and physical domains. I have been privileged to be invited to work in institutions whose partial mission is to recognize and create scholarship in Indigenous world views. I have built on the work of great scholarship and added new dimensions to the growing field of Indigenous scholarship. I have pressed the fact that Indigenous Knowledge Systems continue to thrive, despite the long way they have to go within higher learning. These were the original goals of the dissertation, which I believe have been accomplished.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Western forms of knowledge have, at times, conflicted with or were irrelevant to Indigenous needs and have failed many of our students. If the major Canadian and American universities are Indigenous-friendly—as they profess to be, then teaching, learning, and scholarship must reflect Indigenous contributions and provide the space,

encouragement, and resources to deconstruct colonization, hegemony, genocide, and loss. The concept of *interface* is used in New Zealand to combine Indigenous Knowledge and the more standard university brand of knowledge. Durie (2005) claims that interface is a means where Indigenous Knowledge can be used in collaboration with other bodies of knowledge to the benefit of teaching and research at academic institutions. By raising the profile of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, interface becomes a possibility:

Two broad approaches to teaching at the interface have been advocated in New Zealand. The first adds a Maori perspective to a course usually by inviting a Maori scholar or elder to offer an indigenous viewpoint. In the second approach, however, two models of learning are introduced into the course. Apart from being exposed to conventional academic methods, students are also able to engage in other forums where learning outcomes depend on active involvement in indigenous formalities and participation in experiential learning modes. A stay on a marae (a tribal centre for culture and learning) has become an accepted component of many tertiary courses in New Zealand. Sometimes the two styles of learning create confusion for students, especially where there has been inadequate preparation or where the marae visit has not allowed sufficient time for any meaningful appreciation of its relevance to the course. However, more often the result has added greater understanding to the wider learning objectives. (p.7)

Future research must reflect a meeting of minds, the researched and the researcher, and include the marginalized and the voiceless. Status quo research, reflecting the dominant voice, is omnipresent and inexhaustible but what is not, is the voice of indigeneity, the marginalized and the disenfranchised. The validation and recognition of Indigenous Knowledge Systems by the academy will help level the playing field for Indigenous communities. For millennia, Indigenous Knowledge has meant the ability for Indigenous peoples to live in harmony with their surroundings and utilizing the resources for their survival. That survival is diminishing daily because of the imposition of Western

development, the market economy, and the hegemonic knowledge that fuels them. In an ideal world, the role of research and development is to critically assess and correct the problems it has created. This is not the case for Indigenous peoples. Research must ensure equal partnerships involving Indigenous peoples to benefit from the rich experience of their Indigenous Knowledge. Further, public accountability in terms of all aspects of civil society is required—public accountability for the billions of dollars spent on research that has not addressed the conditions from the margins. Despite some gains that Indigenous peoples are making in terms of research and accountability within the past few years, much more is required before they will be masters of their own destiny. Reflection, assessment, dialogue, and action need to happen within public policy to ensure that *pimatisiwin* can once more thrive.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The situation of research reflecting mainstream, status quo goals and negatively impacting Indigenous peoples has been exacerbated. We need to move to bold, common sense themes and methods of research and development, research that can put Indigenous peoples in control of their destiny, where no one is left behind. Currently, billions of research dollars provide prestigious positions for faculty so that they can rise quickly to full professorships and, eventually, retire with emeritus status. At the same time that these monies are acquired, governments are increasingly taken off the hook to publicly finance universities and also to hold them publicly accountable. The fact that industry

and commerce is influencing much of the research at universities poses problems for Indigenous communities whose research needs are not the same as those of industry and commerce. In fact most times, they are diametrically opposed. Indigenous peoples need research and development in which all peoples' voices are heard in order to ensure that our communities are brought up to healthy standards that respect local needs and sustainable development standards. These are practices which reflect the days when Indigenous Knowledge Systems were fully engaged. These are practices which are driven by social and economic egalitarian principles of full pursuit of sovereignty, self-determination, and democratization for Indigenous peoples. These practices do not consider only market economies and maintaining the power of the status quo. I have outlined below the areas where research that responds to communities is required:

- Research on the impact of western development on Indigenous lands
- Participatory research on the deplorable state of Indigenous peoples living, working, and health conditions, locally and globally
- Research on the need for respectful and collaborative research in fields where Indigenous peoples do not have a critical mass of scholars
- Research on poverty with consideration for documents such the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. These documents represent the collaborative work of hundreds of Indigenous academics and community activists over many decades
- Research on Indigenous contributions and threats to world food supply

- Research on how to contemporize and indigenize other university departments and administrative bodies
- Research on Indigenous languages. In order for research to have meaning and have a qualitative impact on the lives of Indigenous peoples, it will have to be action-oriented and take a critical perspective of the status quo. Anything else would be meaningless or irrelevant.
- Research on the impact of war on Indigenous Peoples
- Research on the role of traditional customary natural laws, the role of clans and similar family-based structures, and their role in Indigenous sovereignty
- Research on the impact of human rights on Indigenous children, women and elders
- Creation of linkages between non-formal information and curriculum needs
- Interface used in New Zealand to combine Indigenous Knowledge and more standard university brand of knowledge
- Creation of links between the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples and universities
- Research on political reform to accommodate the socio-economic situation of Indigenous peoples and other marginalized peoples as a contribution to citizenship/sovereignty
- The role of art and culture and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in social change

- Role of nationhood, Indigenous sovereignty, and equity
- Creation of a clearing-house of global Indigenous literature

CONCLUSION BUT NOT CONCLUDED

As First Nations peoples in Canada, we are situated somewhere between the horrors of genocide that other Indigenous peoples have experienced and with whom we share much in common, and the illusion of justice that Canadian society purports. In doing research, I have learned to hear and respect the voices of others and do not speak for “them.” I have chosen to become an instrument to channel the unstated ideas, or words, or meanings people share when using their own voices. Stories help us witness and understand the hurtful aspects of colonization through the eyes of those who suffered in silence through subtle and overt discrimination. Stories help us appreciate the informal structures that help people heal from and resist the hurtful features of Western domination. Stories help us see how processes of knowledge-generating either support or thwart the legitimation of Indigenous peoples. It also helps us see how Indigenous resist and redirect constraining currents of thought in the field.

As a person influenced by the daily rhythm of a conflict-ridden and discriminatory white world, I now strive to create opportunities for Indigenous peoples in my research and community work. I am motivated by the world of Henry McKay Settee, my mother Clara Dorion Settee, and others who came after them. My father and my family did not

have the tools that I have today. Like many others, Henry McKay Settee and many of his family and extended community died in poverty or languished in prison. It is a well-documented fact that many Indigenous Peoples are displaced by the devastation caused by the diversions of the waterways and other environmental disasters throughout the globe. To add insult to injury, the dam near my community had originally been called the Squaw Rapids Dam. I am frustrated that the illusion of justice allows Canadians to blame the victim or turn a blind eye to the many examples of human rights abuses. Canada has the resources, largely garnered from our homelands, and we need to do better. Structural unemployment and structurally racist systems that over-incarcerate Indigenous youth and allow school dropout rates to skyrocket should not exist in a wealthy resourced-base country like Canada. It is discouraging when we see research not only propping up white cultural hegemony but also further entrenching it.

In the midst of increasing poverty, the grassroots projects of so called “least developed” nations are inspiring and gives us reason for hope. Scholars have tremendous opportunities and influence to build and to inspire hope, as Indigenous peoples we should accept our responsibility to the next seven generations. Our research should challenge and transform conditions that promote inequality and socially unjust conditions. We must continue to acknowledge, celebrate, revitalize, and entrench the tremendous range of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and do all that is possible to claim our place in the academy. We must listen to voices of our ancestors to create a path of hope for the hungry and destitute children in our city, in our country, and in the world. We must

gather our courage to challenge systems of knowledge, including research and development that threatens or undermines our very existence. Therein lays the answers for the seeds needed in the collective survival of humanity and the natural world. *Pimatisiwin, wahkotawin*, our interconnectedness and survival, in the good life, require it.

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APPENDIX I

Map of Vanuatu



APPENDIX II

Map showing Mafeking & Pretoria, South Africa

