Rekindling the Fire:
The Impact of Raymond Harris's Work with the Plains Cree

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ABSTRACT

Rekindling the Fire: The Impact of Raymond Harris's Work with the Plains Cree

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This dissertation documents a recent aspect of Plains Cree oral history that had significant ramifications for First Nations peoples throughout Canada. It focuses on the impact of Raymond Harris, an Arapaho traditional teacher from Wyoming who worked with Cree people from Alberta and Saskatchewan, beginning in 1969 and ending in 1981. Many of the people whose lives were profoundly influenced through their relationship with Raymond Harris were at the forefront of the emerging movements of that time. These movements were centered on the reclamation of Aboriginal rights, cultural renewal, and Aboriginal healing. Some of these same people went on to become highly respected leaders in the fields of healing, education, politics, and the arts. Through a ripple effect, this core group of people have in turn facilitated and supported positive change at the individual, community and national levels. Today this legacy continues through the work of the members of the core group and through the work of individuals whose lives they have impacted.

In the process of conducting this research within the ontological and epistemological context that it exists, the author has articulated *A Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* that reflects the work of Indigenous scholars and his own lived experience within one of the 'spiritual communities that originated out of the work of Raymond

Harris. This research was primarily conducted through the application of Indigenous research methodologies.

Keywords: Raymond Harris, Plains Cree, cultural renewal, Aboriginal healing, self-determination, Indigenous Research, Indigenous Knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have learned that similar to the spiritual journey itself, writing a dissertation is a journey one takes alone in the company of others. Though at times this felt like a solitary experience, I was never alone. Many people were at my side, and I am thankful for their support along this trail.

My parents, Claude and Gladys Hoffman, laid the foundation of my understanding of what it means to be respectful and responsible. They encouraged my desire to learn and continued to do so when it led me in a direction that was unfamiliar to them.

My wife Nan has walked this trail with me since this journey began in earnest in 1990. Without her unconditional support, her guidance, and her love, I would not have made it to this place at this point in time. She has supported the work that went into this dissertation in innumerable ways. Her support has never wavered since the moment I broached the idea of applying to this program and she replied, "When do we leave?"

My daughters, Emma, Kira and Emily, also understood that I needed to follow my vision. That made the journey easier.

The understanding that I have been able to bring to this work stems from my relationship with Joe and Jenny Cardinal. It is they that have taught me the most about this healing way of life. I thank Jack Lacerte for introducing them to me. Joe and Jenny welcomed my

wife and I into their home, their lives and their family. Through them we have met our many brothers and sisters who continue to support and guide us along this learning journey.

This work would not have been possible without the support of the research participants, especially those who shared their stories with me. I hope that this work will be of value to them and their families as a written record of what has taken place.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the support and guidance I received from my co-supervisors, Lynne Davis and Edna Manitowabi, and the other members of my dissertation committee, Joe Couture and Don McCaskill. I especially want to recognize Lynne for the work she put into facilitating the process. I also extend my gratitude to Richard Preston the external examiner.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

The story of Raymond Harris and the impact of his work among the Plains Cree is a story of change and revitalization. It is a story that speaks to the gift of Spirit and the ever present possibility for human change. It also provides us with a powerful example of how important the reclamation of sacred knowledge and practice is to the process of decolonization among Indigenous peoples. The relationship between Raymond Harris and the Plains Cree occurred at a time (1969-81) when the Cree and other Native[1] peoples in Canada and the United States were reasserting their rights and attempting to regain their cultural balance after generations of colonial domination.

The Native peoples of North America were not alone in their struggles against oppression. Peoples all over the world were voicing their discontent and struggling to regain their human and civil rights. At the same time, advancements in communication technology and the growth of electronic news media had increased public awareness of struggles that were taking place across the country and around the globe. Through radio and television, Native people witnessed the public actions of the civil rights movement that unfolded in the United States, throughout the 1960's. This included a range of perspectives from the powerful words of Martin Luther King Jr. to the militant actions of the Black Panthers. According to Deloria (1970), the Black Power movement "spoke not

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[1] I use the term 'Native' to denote those people whose ancestors originated in the Americas prior to European contact, as opposed to people whose ancestors originated from other continents. I use this term interchangeably with the terms 'Aboriginal', Indigenous', 'Indian', 'Inuit', 'Metis', and 'First Nation'.

only to blacks but also to a longing within the other racial minorities to express the dignity and sovereignty of their own communities" (p. 100).

During this time, discontent and struggles for equality were also being voiced within the ranks of the dominant society. Feminism was on the rise as the strength of the Women's Liberation Movement grew. The counterculture movement was also growing throughout North America and Western Europe, as significant numbers of youth began to seriously challenge the values of modern society and the authority of the State. For the members of the hippie generation, non-conformity, public protest, and a search for meaning, became the norm.

Amongst the Native Peoples of North America, the movement away from colonial domination was revitalized[2] in the late 1960's and the early 1970's. Since that time, the ongoing process of decolonization has unfolded on many fronts simultaneously within the inter-related spheres of politics, culture, and education. All across North America, Indigenous peoples began openly to seek change through acts of resistance, and efforts to rediscover their histories, and recover and reclaim their cultures, languages, and identities (Anderson, 2000; Laenui, 2000; Smith, 1999). This myriad of actions sparked the resurgence of cultures, the fight for self-determination, and the Aboriginal healing movement.

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[2] Native people have never stopped resisting the forces of colonialism. In every generation, there have been individuals who opposed the oppression of their people and others who have ensured that the transmission of cultural knowledge continued.

Dark Times

The political and cultural resurgence that began in the late 1960's marked the beginning of a movement away from the colonial domination that had been exerting oppressive forces on the lives of Native People in Canada for almost a century. The Indian Act, which was imposed by the Canadian government in 1876, regulated most aspects of the lives of Indian[3] people in Canada. This legislation was enacted to provide the political and legal force necessary to bring about the cultural and social changes that would lead to the assimilation of Aboriginal peoples into Euro-Canadian society. Beginning in 1884, under pressure from the leadership of the Christian churches, a series of amendments were made to the Indian Act that made it illegal for Native people to practice a variety of ceremonial activities that were integral to their specific societies. Among the people of the plains, the practice of the "Sun Dance" and the "Grass Dance" became illegal in 1895. Later on a "Pass System" was established on the prairie reserves as a means of preventing people from leaving the reserve in order to attend ceremonial activities that were taking place elsewhere. These laws remained in place until 1951 when specific sections of the Indian Act were repealed.

The Indian Residential School system was another powerful aspect of the Canadian government's intentions to eradicate the cultures of the Indigenous peoples whose traditional territories fell within their political control. Working in collaboration with the major Christian churches of the time, the government established boarding schools in order to remove children from the 'negative' influences of their family and culture, and

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[3] The term 'Indian' is a legal term, defined in the Indian Act. It refers to those people who are registered as Indians under the Indian Act.

re-socialize them to the belief system and values of the dominant society. The number of residential schools grew from two in 1867 to eighty in 1930. In 1969, when the federal government officially ended its partnership with the Churches, there were fifty-two residential schools in operation. Though the government and the Churches were not successful in their attempt to eradicate the "Indian Problem"[4], after several generations of Native people had experienced the Indian Residential School system, the disruption to the intergenerational transmission of knowledge had had a serious impact on their cultures. This was especially true in relation to their spiritual traditions.

Despite the combined efforts of the government and the churches, the spiritual fire was never extinguished. Throughout North America the embers were kept alive by individuals and families. Some people defied the laws and continued to practice their spiritual activities; others adapted the ceremonies to make them more palatable to colonial sensibilities[5] (Pettipas, 1994). For the most part, the ceremonies were hidden away from public view and the oppressive actions of government and church representatives during the almost sixty years of official prohibition. This lengthy prohibition, along with the church dogma that was taught in the Indian residential school system, resulted in a widespread internalization of the belief that the practice of traditional spiritual practices were at the very least primitive and wrong and at the other extreme 'devil worship'. This

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[4] Duncan Campbell Scott, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1914 to 1932 said the aim of the Indian Residential School system was "Complete and total assimilation of the Indian race into the general population. Within two generations there will be no Indian problem, because there will be no Indians." (Lane, 1987)

[5] One adaptation that took place on the part of some spiritual leaders was the choice to remove the act of piercing the flesh from the Sun Dance.

'internalized prohibition' to traditional spiritual practice and the fear of legal repercussions, continued long after the actual laws were repealed.

> Even after the regulations were deleted from the 1951 Indian Act, many elders and ritualists remained fearful of performing their ceremonies openly, and some continued to believe that the laws against their ceremonies were still in effect. (Pettipas, 1994, p. 7)

As the Cree Elder Mike Steinhauer has shared with me, "In Canada, in 1970, we felt it [the practice of traditional spiritual ceremonies] was against the law" (personal conversation, June 6, 2002).

Moving Out of the Darkness

In 1967, the first Indian Unity Convention was held on the Tonowanda Seneca and Onondoga territories in upstate New York. One hundred and seventy-five delegates from fifty Native nations, tribal Elders and respected leaders, gathered together to "discuss strategies for surviving the continuing invasion of the Americas" (Treat, 2004, p. 23). Based on its initial success, the Indian Unity Convention expanded in 1968 and 1969 with an increase in the number of delegates and participating nations, as well as being hosted by communities on both sides of the Canadian-American border.

In 1968, a small group of Plains Cree people under the leadership of Robert Smallboy, left their reserve community at Hobbema, Alberta and established a new community in an isolated location on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains in order to lead a more traditionally based life. This action was taken in order to free themselves from the oppression of the Indian Act, the domination of the churches, and the negative forces of

reserve life. For many Native people throughout Canada, Smallboy's Camp became a living symbol of political, religious and cultural freedom.

Strong Native voices began to be a part of the public and academic discourse in Canada and the United States in 1969, with the publication of Harold Cardinal's, *The Unjust Society* and Vine Deloria Jr.'s, *Custer Died For Your Sins.* Each of these books presented damning critiques of the governments' and churches' roles in creating and maintaining the socio-economic conditions that existed in Native communities. Both authors stressed that a positive future for the Native peoples of their respective countries, would only be realized when Indian nations once again become self-determining. According to Cardinal and Deloria, a vital aspect of the movement towards self-governance would involve the incorporation of traditional values and beliefs.

The peaceful occupation of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay in 1969 by a group of American Indian college students, became an international media event (Deloria, 1973) that marked the beginning of the general public's awareness of the discontent felt by Indigenous peoples in America. Soon after, the American Indian Movement (AIM) became the symbol and the voice of Indian militancy in North America. AIM took its place on the international stage with the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, DC in 1972. The movement came to its head with the seventy-three day armed standoff with the US Government at Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1973. AIM activity was not restricted to the United Sates. Canadian chapters sprang up all across the country, mostly among urban Native youth. In 1974, AIM inspired militancy

took the form of an armed occupation of a city park in Kenora, Ontario and the blockading of the Trans Canada Highway at Cache Creek, British Columbia. Later that same year, a cross-country caravan arrived in Ottawa where they were confronted by government troops (Treat, 2003).

In the 1970's, Native people began to exercise control within the educational systems that impacted upon them. In 1970, Blue Quills Indian Residential School, outside of St. Paul, Alberta was taken over by members of the surrounding Native communities and became the first Indian-controlled school in Canada. The first initiative in Native Studies at a Canadian university began in 1969 with the implementation of the Indian-Eskimo Studies program at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. In 1972, it became the Department of Native Studies, offering the first bachelor's degree in the discipline.

Another significant event that arose at that time was the Indian Ecumenical Conference. The Indian Ecumenical Conference was formed with the intent of bringing together "grassroots spiritual leaders", both Native traditionalists and Christians, to address the growing conflict between the faiths in Native communities in Canada and the United States. It first took place in 1970 at the Crow Agency in Montana and continued at Morley, Alberta throughout the 1970's. Over the years it received the support of many highly respected Native religious leaders. The Indian Ecumenical Conference became a place where Native people, especially the youth and those who had been raised in urban settings, would come to learn about Native spiritual traditions.

Interest in learning about and experiencing Native spiritual traditions was a widespread phenomenon that characterized the cultural renaissance that had begun across North America (Deloria, 2003). Native peoples began to travel throughout North America seeking out Elders and spiritual knowledge holders. Many ended up at the Smallboy and Mackinaw camps in Alberta, the Rolling Thunder camp in Nevada, and at Raymond Harris's in Wyoming (Rheault, 1998). It is within the context of these "traditional treatment centres"[6] (Lane, et al, 2002) that many individuals began the process of healing[7] and decolonization. On returning to their home territories, many of these same seekers were able to reconnect with their own traditions through the Elders who had kept them alive. It is within the midst of this cultural renaissance that the Aboriginal healing movement in Canada was born. Together, they have grown hand-in-hand over the last three decades (Warry, 1998).

The first 'formal' alcohol treatment programs run by and for Aboriginal people were opened in Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1973. Concurrent with these developments was the founding of the Nechi Training Institute on Alcohol and Drug Addiction in Edmonton, Alberta in the fall of 1973. Within a couple of years the Nechi Institute led the promotion of a sober ethic within Native communities across the country. A community-based sobriety movement arose out of Alkali Lake, British Columbia beginning in the

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[6] Lane et al (2002) use this term to acknowledge the traditional healing work that takes place outside of healing programs. "There are traditional "treatment centres" which are being run with no external funding, no staffing, or administrative structures and which are undocumented, often at the homes of healers." (p.16)

[7] My use of the term 'healing' incorporates a holistic perspective that includes the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions of an individual. It also refers to healing in a broad sense of the word that is reflected in the following definition, "... healing means moving beyond hurt, pain, disease and dysfunction to establishing new patterns of living that produce sustainable well-being. (Lane et al, 2002, p. 6)

early 1970's. As a result of the documentary film *The Honour of All* (Lucas, 1985), the community of Alkali Lake would become an international symbol of hope and a role model for other Indigenous communities struggling against the effects of alcohol abuse.

The cultural renaissance and the healing movement were also inextricably linked to the movement in Aboriginal communities towards self-determination (AFN[8], 1992; Long & Fox, 1996; O'Neil, 1993, 1994; RCAP[9], 1996; Warry, 1998). The modern resurgence of the struggle for self-determination amongst Native peoples in Canada began in 1969 when the Canadian government attempted to abolish Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Wide scale opposition to the contents of the federal government's White Paper[10] united First Nations across the country in an unprecedented manner, forcing the government to withdraw their plans. This political victory signified the advent of a new era in relations between the First Nations and the Government of Canada.

Prophecies

The time of change that began among Native people in North America in the late 1960's had been prophesized. The Anishinaabe prophecy of the Seventh Fire speaks of a time when a "New People" will emerge from a time of personal imbalance and grief "to retrace their steps to find what was left by the trail. Their steps will take them to the

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[8] The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is the national political body in Canada that represents the interests of Aboriginal peoples who are registered as Indians under the Indian Act.
[9] The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was a massive research project commissioned by the Canadian government in 1990 in order to assess the state of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples and make recommendations regarding the manner in which their needs should be addressed. The extensive results were published in five volumes in 1996 and subsequently ignored by the government.
[10] This infamous policy is usually referred to as the White Paper. Its official name is *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy* (1969).

elders who they will ask to guide them on their journey." (Benton-Banai, 1979, pp. 91-93) Among the Hopi, it was prophesized that the people would emerge out of a long period of darkness and strife when the eagle lands on the moon. The landing craft of the Apollo mission that reached the moon in 1969 was named the Eagle. The first words that were sent back to earth when it successfully touched down on the surface of the moon was "The Eagle has landed."

Rekindling the Fire: The Impact of Raymond Harris's Work With the Plains Cree

This research has been directed towards understanding one of the many synchronous events that took place within this significant time period in the recent history of Native people. It focuses on the impact of Raymond Harris, an Arapaho traditional teacher from Wyoming who worked with Cree people from Alberta and Saskatchewan beginning in 1969 and ending in 1981.[11] Some of the people who worked most closely with him went on to become highly respected leaders in a variety of fields. Specifically, this research answers the question: In what ways did the spiritual teachings that came through Raymond Harris, impact this core group of people and their work within the wider Aboriginal community?

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[11] It is important to note that Raymond Harris was not the only traditional teacher who was working among the Cree of Alberta and Saskatchewan during that time period. The traditional teachings of respected Elders such as Robert Smallboy (Cree), Lazarus Roan (Cree), Abraham Burnstick (Sioux), Albert Lightning (Cree), John Tootoosis (Cree), etc. were also part of the cultural resurgence that took place. The significance of Raymond Harris's work lies in the fact that in the late 1960's and early 1970's the existing spiritual traditions continued to be practiced in relative secrecy. Raymond's work with people from the generations who were disconnected from these practices, and his insistence that they reconnect with their own spiritual traditions, was a catalyst that led to the re-emergence and re-strengthening of traditional spiritual practices that became more widespread in the later part of the 1970's. This is discussed further in Chapter 6, beginning on page 159.

The historical significance of this research is rooted in the cultural re-awakening that began to take place among a group of Cree people in Alberta in 1969. It was at that time, that a core group of individuals began to make what were to become annual pilgrimages to the Wind River Indian Reservation in central Wyoming. The purpose of these spiritual journeys was to begin their personal healing with the help of a gifted spiritual teacher named Raymond Harris. Raymond Harris was a member of the Arapaho Nation. From the early 1970's until the beginning of the 1980's, he was invited to various communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan to conduct ceremonies and to pass on his knowledge. People were given the knowledge and resources to regain their personal balance and were encouraged by Raymond to restore their own cultural traditions. Many of these individuals went on to become leaders of their people. Through a ripple effect, they in turn have been able to facilitate and support positive changes within others at the individual, community and national levels. Some of the original group, who were the first to begin this spiritual journey, are today, highly respected in the fields of healing, politics, architecture, education, academic scholarship and the arts. This story speaks to the importance of culture and specifically spirituality, in the process of healing and decolonization. The impact of Raymond Harris's work is significant because it took place within the context of the broader social and political changes that were occurring among Aboriginal people in Canada at that point in time. It is also significant because several of the core group of people who worked with Raymond were at the centre of the various movements that were attempting to bring about these changes.

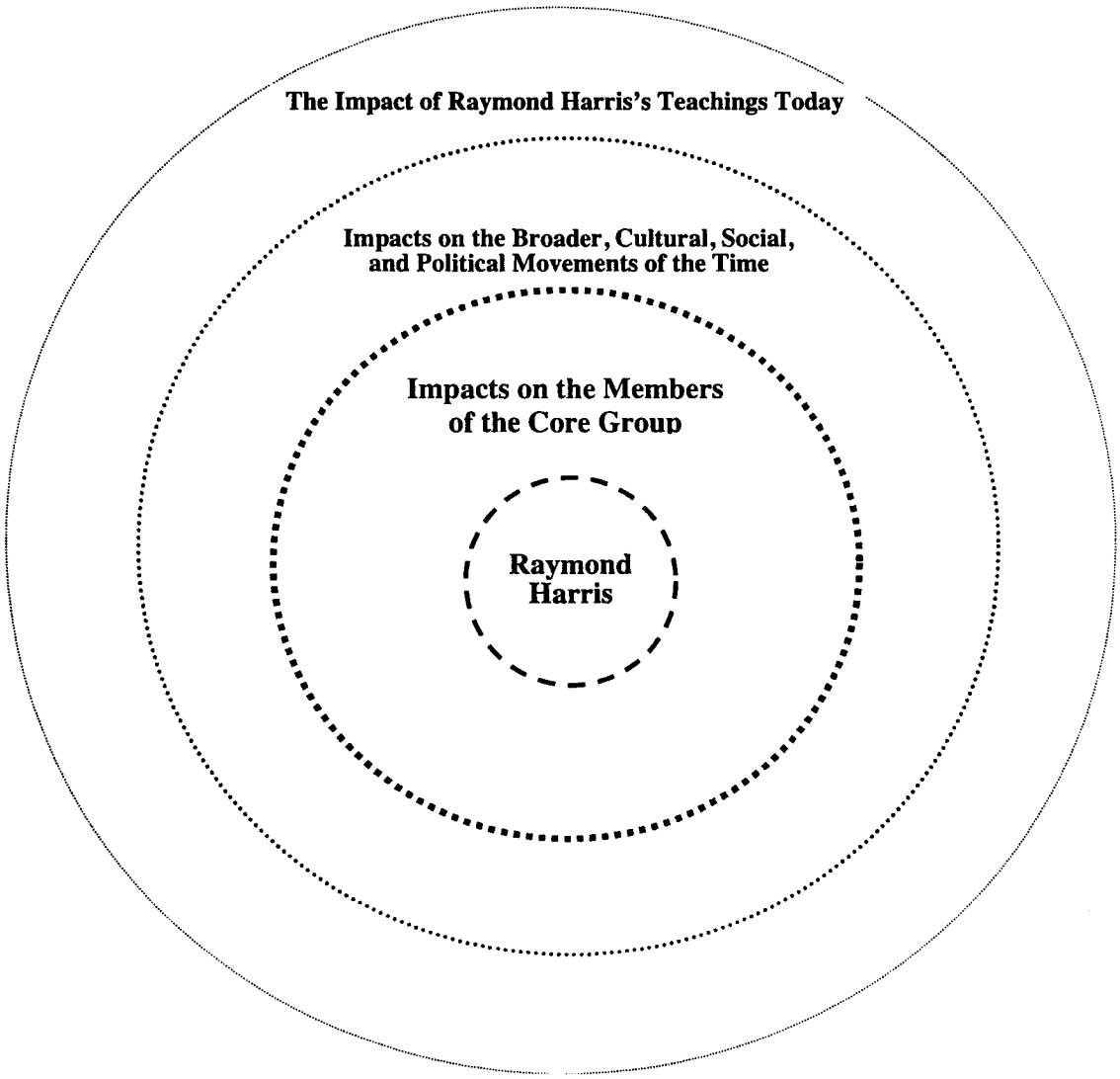
Research Objectives

The overall research objectives for this dissertation included the development of a thorough understanding of the answers to the following questions:

- How were the personal lives and professional work of the members of the core group impacted by their involvement with Raymond Harris?
- How did the teachings of Raymond Harris impact the broader, cultural, social and political movements that were taking place among Aboriginal people in Alberta and Saskatchewan from 1968 to 1981?
- In what ways do the teachings that came through Raymond Harris continue to influence the lives and work of the members of the core group today?

A graphic illustration of the research objectives is portrayed in Figure 1 on the following page. The guiding questions that were formulated to match these objectives are included in Appendix One on page 217.

Figure 1 - Research Objectives



Literature Referring to Raymond Harris

There are no written sources pertaining directly to Raymond Harris and his work with Aboriginal people in Canada. Due to the fact that Raymond passed on in 1981, and his wife Ambey passed on in 1983, the primary sources or texts relating to this subject, exist within the oral tradition of those who knew him well. Therefore this research was

primarily focused on tapping into the oral knowledge base of the individuals who worked most closely with him.

Raymond Harris and the impact of his teachings on others are minimally referred to in the literature pertaining to and written by, two of the people who received spiritual responsibilities through Raymond – Douglas Cardinal[12] and Joe Couture[13]. In Boddy's (1989) biographical account of the work of architect Douglas Cardinal, there is one statement referring to Harris.

> When internal and external pressures disrupted the utopian Smallboy camp, Cardinal began studying under Arapahoe medicine man Raymond Harris in Wyoming, further solidifying the north-south axis that has defined his life. His strength and optimism returned, bit by bit, and his professional life began again. (p. 66)

Boddy is aware that Douglas Cardinal's spiritual beliefs and practice are manifested in his work as an architect. This awareness is demonstrated by a reference to the fact that his vision for the design of what is his most notable project to date, the National Museum of Civilization in Hull Quebec, came to him during a sweat lodge ceremony that Douglas conducted for the purpose of gaining direction for that specific task. This understanding is also reinforced by the inclusion of several of Douglas's essays on spirituality in part two of the book.

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[12] Douglas Cardinal is one of Canada's most renowned architects. His most notable commission to date is the National Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec. He is also the original designer of the Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. Douglas apprenticed with Raymond Harris from 1970 to 1981. His personal story in Chapter Five reveals the profound impact that Raymond had on his life.

[13] Joe Couture is a scholar whose work has influenced the development of the Nechi Training Institute on Alcohol and Drug Addiction, the Department of Native Studies at Trent University, and Aboriginal Justice initiatives in Canada.

Douglas himself has spoken frankly and intensively about the nature of his spiritual life and how it is an integral aspect of his professional work. In an interview he gave in 1989/90 (Cardinal, 1993), he spoke freely about the process and effects of his participation in sweat lodge and fasting ceremonies. In a speech he presented in 1996 (Cardinal, 1998), he describes the relationship between the guidance he received from Elders and his work on the various architectural projects that he is noted for. One overall comment he made was:

> In this work, the Elders are very powerful to me. You know, you can really soar like an eagle when you have that solid spiritual support. (p. 8)

In *Explorations in Native Knowing*, Joe Couture (1991) begins by telling the story of his first experience within a Native ceremony. His journey began in a sweat lodge ceremony conducted by Raymond Harris. Though he does not indicate in the article that the 'ceremonial leader' was Raymond Harris, I am aware of this fact through personal stories that he shared with me in the mid 1970's. The following presents only the conclusion of this story and his comment regarding the significance of it.

> There on the backside of a bright twinkle, something told me that he knew what had happened to me. ... I remained particularly stunned and startled, for, how did he know...?
>
> Since 1971 that intriguing question has kept me in pursuit of the answer. That event began a demanding and arduous quest, a relentless facing of necessary changes, the learning of ways to release blocks to developing a Native mindfulness. (p. 53)

As an educator, psychologist and ceremonial leader, Couture has written extensively about Indigenous ways of knowing and the role of Native Elders (1982a, 1982b, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1996, 2000). In all of Couture's work, this is the only specific example,

of a written reference to Raymond Harris, albeit anonymous, and the impact that he had on Couture's life and work.[14]

Raymond Harris's work in the United States is described in two sources. One is an excerpt from an interview of a physician who attended a night lodge ceremony that was conducted by Raymond in Nevada in 1970. The interview was conducted by an anthropologist who worked among the northern Paiute of Nevada. The value of this particular source is in the fact that it reveals the observations and the attempts to make sense of what was taking place, of a participant with no previous experience or background in this way of life. Like many other earlier records of ceremonial practices recorded by outside observers with little background knowledge and understanding, the description is accurate but the interpretation is far from correct. This source is not cited because it violates the Harris family's explicit wish that ceremonies not be written about.

The other source is found in a piece of popular literature that is an autobiographical description of one individual's spiritual journey into 'Native American ways'. Though the author uses a pseudonym when referring to Raymond Harris, the descriptions in the book include details that relate to the stories that are told by those who knew him. I have chosen not to identify this source for ethical reasons. I am aware through discussions with Raymond's family, that this book was published without the consent and against the wishes of their father. According to them, the author abused their father's trust by

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[14] Joe Couture apprenticed with Raymond from 1971 to 1981. During that time period, he also worked with Cree Elders in Alberta. When he speaks of Elders' teachings in his written work he does not denote specific teachings to specific individuals.

describing what took place during the ceremonies, when he had asked the author not to do this. In a later book, an excerpt from a journal entry indicates that the author consciously betrayed that trust. I did not draw from this source because I believe its overall validity is questionable, based on the fact that it violates the fundamental ethical principles of respect, responsibility and reciprocity that are fundamental to Indigenous research.[15] I have refrained from naming this source, because I feel that by talking about this author and their work I give it power, in a sense. There is no need to add one more name to the list of writers whose writings have the potential to impede the work of researchers who work with Indigenous knowledge in a respectful and responsible manner.

Locating Myself in the Research

> The most admirable thinkers within the scholarly community... do not split their work from their lives. They seem to take both too seriously. You must learn to use your life experiences in your intellectual work. (Mills, 1959, p. 2)

Though I never had the good fortune of meeting Raymond Harris, his teachings have had a profound impact on my life. I am, in my own description, a member of the second generation or wave of people whose lives have been enriched by Raymond Harris' work. My spiritual training and practice is rooted in the teachings he shared. Over the last fifteen years I have been learning from Elders/spiritual knowledge holders who worked closely with Raymond from the late 1960's until his passing in 1981. My personal, cultural preparation for this research has involved more than a decade of apprenticeship with Joe and Jenny Cardinal, including more than ten fasts under Joe's guidance. The very fact that I, a non-Aboriginal person whose ancestors are of English and German

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[15] A complete explanation of these guiding principles and their place within Indigenous research is contained in Chapter Two – A Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing.

descent, have been able to be a part of this tradition is reflective of the inclusive nature of the 'Old Man's'[16] teachings.

Where does that place me in relation to this research? According to the typology put forward by Banks (1998), I would fit into the category of the External-Insider.

> The External-Insider has been socialized within a different culture from the one where the research is conducted, but through particular experiences (perhaps of marginality in the original community) comes to identify strongly with an adopted community that becomes the research site. (p. 196)

Though my research is not specific to one geographic community or site, I am part of a 'spiritual' community, the roots of which lead back to the 'Old Man'. My place within this particular community has informed the theory and guided the practice of this research.

I began to hear stories told about Raymond Harris and his teachings in 1975 when I was an undergraduate student in Native Studies at Trent University. Dr. Joe Couture was the new chair of the department and one of my professors. Joe, who at that time had made several journeys to Wyoming to fast under Raymond, shared stories about Raymond, his teachings, and the impact these had had on his life. When Joe returned to Wyoming to attend ceremonies the following summer, he was accompanied by Don McCaskill another member of the Native Studies faculty. Don too, returned home with stories to share about his experiences. As a young man thirsting for an understanding of Native Spirituality, I

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[16] Raymond Harris was often referred to as the 'Old Man' . This term reflected the respect he engendered in those who knew him. Many of the people who referred to him this way were older, or similar in age to him.

was eager to listen to them both. After completing my studies at Trent in 1978, many years passed by before I would once again hear anyone speak of Raymond Harris.

In the spring of 1990, I was struggling to find my balance and rebuild my life after the breakdown of my marriage. On one particularly dark morning I cried out for help. I asked the Creator to help me find a spiritual teacher. I promised to devote myself to a spiritual way of life. (Looking back, I realize now that I had next to no understanding of what it meant to live a spiritual way of life.) Then it occurred to me that I should contact Joe Couture. I went to work that day with a renewed sense of hope and meaning. That evening I dug out Joe's phone number and called him to ask for his help. The answer I received was simple and direct, "I am sorry, the number you have called is not in service." I phoned the telephone directory services for Alberta in the hopes of finding his new number, but there was no listing. The beauty of that moment for me was in the deep sense of faith that I felt. I calmly accepted the fact that I had no way of contacting the one person who I thought would be able to help me in my quest. Four days later, in a community an hour and a half away, I was introduced to a spiritual teacher named Jack Lacerte.

Jack Lacerte is a member of the Carrier Nation from the reserve community of Nautley, BC. At the time I met him he was a constable with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Within a couple of weeks of our meeting I would experience a sweat lodge ceremony for the first time in my life. For several years I was a regular at Jack's weekly sweats at his home in Decker Lake, BC. He was my first teacher, and the one who welcomed me into

this way of life. I soon learned that Jack ran an Arapaho sweat and that he had earned the responsibility to run a sweat after many years of fasting under someone who he described as 'a powerful medicine man" from Wyoming. I did not make the connection between these stories and the ones I had heard fifteen years earlier, until later that year at the coming out feast after my first fast. Jack and the Elder who had led the fast, Joe Cardinal, were reminiscing about the past, remembering stories about the person who had opened the door to this way of life for them. The details of one of their stories led me to realize that they were referring to the same man that Joe Couture had talked about more than a decade earlier. Upon asking, it was confirmed by Joe Cardinal, that he and my former professor, Joe Couture, had "made many spiritual journeys together."

At the end of that same year, I had a deeply personal experience that led me to the understanding of what is meant by a 'calling'. The following excerpt from my journal describes that experience.

Dec. 27, 1990

After experiencing another bout of pain and confusion I took the time to meditate yesterday morning. Sweetgrass smudge, eagle feather in hand, the calming had begun. As I traveled inward I managed to let go of the menial thoughts that were hindering the process.

I don't know why, or how, the thought came to me, but it did. It was not a flash of insight that came from beyond me, it flowed from me in a gentle peaceful way.....

Who was the Holy Man, Raymond Harris, who taught Jack, the two Joe C.'s and many, many others? He kept the spiritual knowledge alive and made sure it didn't die with him. The world should know the story of this man. I could be the one to write this story.

This thought excited me as I put my feather and sweetgrass away. I was starting to think about some of the things that a task like this would involve, when the Eagle came to me. Glancing out the kitchen window I saw him soaring towards me from the south, so close, so low. I ran to the dining room window and had to look up because he was so close as he soared past the house. I ran outside as he circled above the deck and then swooped down and soared past, right above me. He was large and mature. He returned the way he came and I watched him disappear out of sight.

I saw it as a sign. I wanted to call Jack to ask him about it. I didn't. I thought about it all day. That night Jack had come to Smithers. I went to see him and told him what had happened. He gave me advice. He said it would take a long time and I would need to be prepared.

That experience sprouted the seed that has grown into this present endeavour. Since that time I have heard many stories about the 'Old Man' and the teachings he shared with the people.[17]

At the time of the eagle's visit, I was not yet ready, at several levels, to turn my life towards this work. At the same time, this work had a way of finding me and reminding me. Some would describe it as synchronicity. On two occasions during the summer that

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[17] Through those stories I learned that the Eagle Spirit was one of the spirits that assisted Raymond in his work, and was often present in the ceremonies that he conducted.

followed the eagle's visit, people who I had just met and who had no idea who I was, told me a story about Raymond Harris. The first time it occurred was between rounds at a sweat lodge ceremony in Lethbridge, Alberta. I was sitting outside the back of the lodge with the Blackfoot Elder who was leading the sweat, when he turned to me and said:

> My life wasn't always like this. I was pretty wild in my younger days. One day this guy offered me some money to drive him to Wyoming to see a medicine man. I didn't know anything about that stuff. I only took the guy because I wanted the money. When I got to Wyoming and met this medicine man it changed my life.

In that moment I knew that he was speaking about Raymond Harris, but I asked if that was the case. Being conscious of knowing something in a deep way was new to me at that point in time, and I had not yet learned to trust it.

In the spring of 1992, I approached Joe Cardinal in a traditional way, in order to ask what he thought of my idea to record the story of Raymond Harris and the impact of his work. Joe told me that he thought it was a good idea. In his own words he said to me, "It is something that people should know about. He was a great man." From that day forward, I have received ongoing support in so many ways from Joe and his wife Jenny. They have taken every opportunity to share with me their personal experiences with Raymond and his wife Ambey. They have opened their hearts and their home to me. Most importantly they have provided me with the opportunity to live the way of life that Raymond shared with them. And for that I will always be grateful.

It was not until 1997 that I made a commitment to do this work and began acting upon it. At that time I saw the writing of this story as a personal research project, something that I

hoped would one day be published in the form of a book. I had no intentions of this work becoming a Ph.D. dissertation. Though at that time I did have a lingering dream of one day completing a doctorate degree, it never occurred to me that these two visions were in any way related, since one was rooted in the personal and spiritual aspect of my life, and the other arose out of my professional ambitions. That year I journeyed to Alberta and began to ask people, in a traditional manner, to share the stories of their experiences with Raymond Harris, with me. On my visit to Joe Couture in Calling Lake, he conducted a pipe ceremony with me, through which he received the message that I would complete this work.

In the summer of 1998 I journeyed to the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming for the purposes of continuing my research, and in order to meet Raymond and Ambey Harris's children. I wanted to explain my intentions and hopefully receive their blessings for the work that I had begun. Once again, I was allowing myself to be led by that deep knowing that I have come to realize is Spirit, not by reason. I arrived at Wind River, one of the largest Indian reservations in the United States[18], with no previous directions as to where I would locate the Harris family, filled with a certainty that defied logic. It never occurred to me that it might be difficult to find them. Within a couple of hours I would have the pleasure of sweating with Raymond and Ambey's son Patrick, and his family, in their prayer sweat.

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[18] The Wind River Reservation is 2.3 million acres in size. At that time the total population was 13,000 people 6,000 Arapaho and 4,000 Shoshone, and 3,000 people not registered to either tribal group.

A couple of days later, Patrick arranged a meeting at his home with the other members of his family who were living in the area. I met with three of Raymond and Ambey's sons, one of his daughters, as well as a daughter-in-law and a son-in-law. I presented them with a traditional offering and explained who I was, my intentions, and why I wanted to do this work. A strong concern was expressed by one of Raymond's sons regarding the revealing of what went on in the ceremonies. He said their father had been very upset by an author who had described what went on in the ceremonies and had not asked permission to write the book. In his words, "she had taken the information".[19] I agreed not to write about what took place in the ceremonies. I also told them that they would have the opportunity to review and comment on my work before it was published.

The following summer I returned to Wyoming in order to demonstrate my commitment to this work, strengthen my relationship with the family, and learn more. Once again I was welcomed by Patrick Harris and his wife Clarisse, who were very supportive of the work I was doing. That was not the case with another member of the family, who I had met the year previously. That individual expressed that she was not comfortable with the idea of there being a book about her parents' lives. She was worried that the information in the book might be misused. That meeting left me unsure of how to proceed. When I expressed my concerns with Patrick and Clarisse, they explained that there were differences of opinions amongst the siblings – especially when it came to the legacy of their parents' work. They said that all of them had been impacted by the ongoing intensity of their parent's work, their early deaths and the resulting void that was created. Pat and

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[19] He was referring to the work of the author that I have discussed previously on pages 16-17.

Clarisse reassured me of their support and encouraged me to continue. They both thought that having a written record of Raymond's work would be good for their grandchildren. Patrick assured me a couple of times that "it will all work out" [20].

On the return trip home I decided for two reasons that it would be best to focus my research on Raymond's work in Canada. This was because at that time, gaining the support of the entire family for a biography of Raymond Harris was uncertain. I was also beginning to realize through my research in the United States, the extent of Raymond's work south of the border. I would move away, from a biographical account of Raymond's life and work and concentrate on the impact of his work in Canada. Even with this shift in focus, it is still necessary to provide the reader with a basic understanding of Raymond and his work in order to provide the necessary context for the focus of this study. Therefore I have endeavoured to keep the family informed about this work. It is my hope that this dissertation will be a step towards doing more to honor the work of Raymond Harris.

I made the decision to apply for entrance into the Native Studies Ph.D. program, in the fall of 2000. Though I hoped to be able to bring together my goal to continue to research the story of Raymond Harris's work in Canada and one day write it, with my academic goal of earning a doctorate degree, at the start of doctoral studies I kept the two separate. In my entrance application I made no mention of my ongoing research. It was not until I was six months into the program that I spoke about my primary research interest. My

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[20] One of his father's favorite expressions was, "It'll be alright."

initial choice to remain silent about this work, stemmed from the fact that I wasn't sure if bringing it into the academy was the right thing to do. There were many things that I was unsure of. Was it safe? Would the information be respected? Would I be expected to lactate this story in order for it to be palatable within the western academic world? Could I find the support I needed to do this work in a manner that respected the teachings that Raymond shared? It soon became apparent to me that it might be possible to pursue this research as the topic of my dissertation, but in order to have my questions answered I would have to open up and share my research interests with a couple of the members of the faculty. Their response was very positive and reassuring. From that point on, the two goals became one.

The Conceptual Framework and Research Methodologies

My location in relation to this research required me to undertake it from as close to an Indigenous perspective as is possible for a non-Indigenous researcher like myself[21]. In order to conduct my work responsibly, it was imperative that I continue to learn and respect the Indigenous ontology and epistemology within which this work is grounded. This required me to balance my lived experience within and my present understanding of this particular Indigenous paradigm, with the present academic pursuit. I am well aware of the potential dichotomy between Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, that looms below the surface of the discipline of Native Studies. I have chosen not to address this particular dichotomy that expends a great deal of scholarly energy. Like Brant-Castellano

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[21] I am a Canadian of mixed heritage. My great-grandparents on my father's side immigrated to Canada from Germany in the 1880's. My mother immigrated to Canada from England in 1946. The role of non-indigenous researchers in Indigenous research is discussed in Chapter Three in the footnote on page 65.

(2000), I think "the challenge is to translate the well-honed critique of colonial institutions into initiatives that go beyond deconstruction of oppressive ideologies and practices to give expression to aboriginal philosophies, world views, and social relations" (p. 22). Therefore, through this research, I have attempted to articulate an understanding of the inter-relationships between Indigenous ontology, epistemology, ethics, and methodology that arise out of this particular cultural context.

This research is grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing that arise out of ontologies and epistemologies that are found in worldviews that acknowledge the existence and the inseparable nature of secular and sacred reality. This way of knowing the world has been described as "primal vision" (Dumont, 1976, p. 39); "multidimensional knowing" (Couture, 1991, p. 57); and "complementary ways of knowing" (Battiste, 1988l, p, 18). My understanding of these ways of knowing is a result of what I have learned through my long-term involvement within this particular spiritual community, the published works of Indigenous scholars, and my lived experience of this research. In the process of conducting this research I have articulated a *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*. This framework is based on an understanding of Indigenous perspectives of the following: The Nature of the World and Ways of Knowing; The Nature of Time; The Nature of the Individual and Ways of Knowing; Indigenous Ethics; and The Characteristics of Indigenous Knowledge Transmission.

The methodologies I chose to conduct this research arose out of my life within this particular spiritual community, and resonated with my lived experience of doing research

with Aboriginal people. This research incorporated a variety of strategies that are found within Indigenous research. It began within a Cree traditional approach to learning through the use of traditional protocol and the development of relationships built on the principles of respect, responsibility and reciprocity. It included a variety of forms of data collection including: Plains Cree methods of inquiry; research as conversation; research as chat; and formal interviews. The information gathered was analyzed through self and collaborative analysis.

Presentation of Findings

My goal in the writing of this dissertation was to present my findings in a manner that spoke "meaningfully to Native, scholarly, and general communities" (McBride, 1996, p. 405).[22] Therefore, the results of this research are presented in a variety of forms that reflect the varied contexts and methodologies from which the data originates. This includes: the scholarly format typical to the western academic tradition; the words of the research participants; excerpts from my reflexive journal that reflect the lived experience of the research; and a narrative format that weaves together the many strands of the story that were shared by the research participants. Following Sarris's (1993) lead, I have attempted to "open the world people share with each other", by weaving together "a myriad of voices with autobiography and theoretical discourse" (p. 6). The words of the research participants are presented in quotations in each chapter except in the instances where their personal stories constitute the body of the text. This occurs throughout

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[22] Within Indigenous research, one way in which reciprocity is demonstrated is to ensure that the results of the research are meaningful and useful to both insiders and outsiders (Haig-Brown & Archibald, 1996; Martin, 2001; Smith, 1999; and Smith, 2005).

Chapter Five, and in one section of Chapter Seven. The excerpts from my reflexive journal can be identified by the fact that they are contained in shaded text blocks.

Chapter Two of the dissertation presents an articulation of my present[23] understanding of what constitutes a *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*. This chapter is presented through a combination of academic explanation, the words of my teachers[24], personal narrative and excerpts from my reflexive journal.

Chapter Three contains a discussion of Indigenous Research and a description of the methodologies that I used to conduct this research. This chapter is also presented through a combination of academic explanation, personal narrative and excerpts from my reflexive journal.

Chapter Four contains a brief biographical sketch of Raymond Harris's life and a description of his work among the Plains Cree in Canada. This chapter is presented in the form of a narrative. It is the result of my weaving together the consistent bits and pieces of information that I learned from all the research participants. It was done with the intention of creating a cohesive story that respects the lives of those who were involved.

Chapter Five tells the story of the impact of Raymond Harris's work on the members of the core group. The voices of seven research participants telling their own personal stories

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[23] I situate this understanding at the point in time in which it is being written, since within the context of this research, learning is an ever unfolding, life-long process.

[24] I use the term 'my teachers' to refer to the many people who have helped me on this learning journey.

of the changes that took place, is the means through which the reader will have the opportunity to gain an understanding of how powerful an impact that Raymond Harris had on their lives.

Chapter Six addresses the impact of Raymond Harris's work on the cultural, social and political movements of the time. It illustrates the fact that members of the core group were key facilitators in pivotal processes of change that occurred within the broader Aboriginal community, as they were simultaneously engaged in a process of personal transformation through their relationship with Raymond Harris.

Chapter Seven speaks to the ongoing story of the impacts of Raymond Harris's work. It describes the 'ripple effect' that is still being felt today in Cree communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan and elsewhere. This chapter provides example of how the legacy of Raymond's work has continued through the ongoing work of members of the core group and the second wave.

In Chapter Eight I conclude the dissertation with a discussion of how the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* that I have articulated in chapter two, is central to this research endeavor and my overall understanding of this way of life.

Conclusion

Raymond Harris's work among the Plains Cree in Alberta and Saskatchewan between 1969 and 1981 is one of the many synchronous movements that were prophesized and

unfolded amongst Aboriginal peoples in North America in the later part of the 20th Century. It arose within the context of the wider political and social movements that had arisen within Native communities, and the broader struggle for equality and human rights that was occurring throughout the Americas and around the globe.

The impact of Raymond Harris's work among the Plains Cree had a profound effect on those who experienced and learned from his gifts directly. Through their work the impact has rippled out to affect the lives of others. My years of personal work within one of the spiritual communities that originated out of Raymond Harris's work in Canada, is what prepared me to undertake a study of this nature; it allowed me the opportunity to gain an understanding of Indigenous knowledge as it pertains to this particular cultural context.

The following chapter delineates the conceptual framework of Indigenous knowing that forms the foundation of this research. It is presented with the intention of facilitating a fuller understanding of the story of Raymond Harris's work among the Plains Cree within those readers who do not have the understanding that comes from prolonged lived experience within an Indigenous knowledge tradition. The following excerpt from my reflexive journal speaks to the reality of the varying levels of understanding that readers will bring to this work.

Nov. 8, 2002

Dissertation as Ceremony

Doing my research is "doing the footwork". It's like the preparation for ceremony.

For some who read my dissertation, it will be as if they arrived just before the ceremony 'begins' and they are new to it. They won't understand the work – the preparation that went into it.

Others will be able to bring understanding to it from their own knowledge and experience.

Others will know exactly because they have lived it. They will be able to see by my actions, by my words, what it is I understand and what I have as yet to learn.

Everyone will bring something to it.

Chapter Two

A Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing

> What is crucial for researching in indigenous contexts is that it necessarily will take place within the cultural world view and discursive practice within which the research participants function, make sense of their lives and understand their experiences. (Bishop, 1997, p. 11)

Introduction

In this chapter I present my understanding of a *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*. The conceptual framework is developed through a discussion of the ontology and epistemology of Indigenous knowing; Indigenous ethics or guiding principles; and the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge transmission.

From the beginning, I have tried to conduct this research in a respectful and responsible manner. I have applied the ontological, epistemological, ethical, and methodological teachings that I have come to understand as a result of being part of one of the spiritual communities that attributes its awakening to the work of Raymond Harris. It is through my relationship with the late Joe P. Cardinal and his family that I have been given the opportunity to understand this way of knowing and being in the world. My overall understanding of Indigenous ontology, epistemology, ethics, and methodology, is a reflection of two broad sources of knowledge, traditional and academic. My primary source of understanding originates out of my lived experience within this particular spiritual community over the last fifteen years. I have also followed an academic trail that has been established by the following scholars: Jim Dumont (1976), Joe Couture (1987,

1989, 1991, 1996), Marie Battiste (1988), Pam Colorado (1988), Robin Ridington (1988, 2000), Celia Haig-Brown (1992), Walter Lightning (1992), Greg Sarris (1993), Willie Ermine (1995), Jo-ann Archibald (1997), Leanne Simpson (1999), Linda Smith (1999), Roxanne Struthers (1999, 2001), Marlene Brant-Castellano (2000, 2004), Gregory Cajete (2000), Kiera Ladner (2000), Cora Weber-Pillwax (2001, 2003), Evelyn Steinhauer (2002), Donald Fixico (2003), and Manulani Meyer (2003).[25]

The Ontology and Epistemology of Indigenous Knowing

The Nature of the World and Ways of Knowing

Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies are rooted in worldviews that are inclusive of both the sacred and the secular. The fundamental ontological principle is that the world exists in one reality comprised of an inseparable weave of secular and sacred dimensions. Stemming from this is the epistemological principle that knowledge is gained through interaction with the physical as well as the spiritual aspects of the world (Battiste, 1988; Beck and Walters, 1977; Bopp et al, 1984; Brant-Castellano, 2000; Cajete, 2000; Colorado, 1988; Couture, 1989, 1991, 1996; Dumont, 1976; Ermine, 1995; Fixico, 2003; Meyer, 2003; Irwin, 1994; Kawagley, n.d.; Simpson, 1999). Dumont (1976) described this way of seeing the world as "primal vision". According to Dumont,

> This way of seeing recognizes two different realities which though separated by a seemingly tremendous gulf, are concurrent and simultaneous as well as impinging upon one another constantly. (p. 39)

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[25] The vast majority of these scholars are Indigenous people. This is a reflection of the fact that it is primarily Indigenous scholars who are engaged in academic work that gives voice to Indigenous ways of knowing.

Couture (1991) refers to physical and spiritual reality in terms of "inseparable realities" and "multidimensional knowing".

> The mode of indigenous knowing is a non-dualistic process – it transcends the usual oppositions between rational knowledge and intuition, spiritual insight and physical behavior. It is inclusive of all reality. (p. 57)

Meyer (2003), uses the term causal (spirit) to describe this "level of consciousness" that is inclusive of what she sees as the two other ways of knowing - gross (physical) and subtle (mental). Similar to Couture, Meyer says that at this level of consciousness "all dualities merge" (p. 253). Similarly, Battiste (1988) uses the expression "complementary modes of knowing" in order to describe the nature of the world and how it is known.

> Fundamental to Aboriginal knowledge is the awareness that beyond the immediate sense world of perception, memory, imagination, and feeling lies another world from which knowledge, power, or medicine is derived, from which the Aboriginal peoples will survive and flourish. The complementary modes of knowing in the tribal world form the essence of tribal epistemology ... (p. 18).

Speaking directly about the practice of research, Dumont (1976) informs us that it is only through this "fuller way of viewing the world" that we as researchers, especially non-Indigenous researchers, are ever to "understand and sensibly appreciate" Indigenous ways of knowing. In Dumont's words, if we are not able to do this "we limit ourselves critically". Vine Deloria Jr. also addresses this paradigmatic necessity in the forward to Irwin's (1994) study of the visionary traditions of the Plains.

> The greatest difficulty in exploring the religious world of the Plains Indians is getting the reader and/or scholar to take the material seriously. What do we make of a vision account wherein a person experiences the transformation of a bird or animal into one of several forms in sequence, offers them a plant, root, or claw, and the dreamer, coming down from the hill, holds in his possession *the actual physical thing* granted him? It is not, of course, very believable in western intellectual circles, yet it happens, and if the scholar is going to understand the experience, he or she must grant that an event far out of the paradigm of western materialistic science has occurred. (1994, viii)

Joe P. Cardinal addressed this issue directly when he cautioned me in regards to the futility inherent in attempting to explain spiritual occurrences to people who had no experience of spiritual reality. His advice to me was,

> You can't talk about what went on in the ceremonies because people will not understand. It will only confuse them. I knew Raymond for years, yet I would not try to explain what happened in the ceremonies to others, those who were not there, because they would not understand. They can't be explained. Yet I experienced them. (personal conversation, Sept. 25, 2003)

The Nature of Time

> But in the Spirit World, time cannot be compared to time on earth.
> (Benton-Banai, 1979. p. 64)

Feb. 11, 2003

In thinking about the nature of time, I am reminded of what Joe said about the nature of time in the spirit world. At different times in the 'coming in' sweat at the end of a fast, when Joe was relaying a message from the spirit world to a faster- he said, "_____ will happen, but I can't tell you when. Time is different in the spirit world. They have been around so long that a year is like a second to them. So when they say something will happen, it could be next week, a year from now, or even longer.

Within an Indigenous ontological perspective, the concept of time is not linear (Meyer, 2003). The past and the future co-exist with the present. The awareness of the sacred nature of the world, "collapses time and space" (Colorado, 1988, p. 54). Dumont, (1976) describes myth as not being "historical in the sense that it happened in the past (mythical past). It can and does re-occur continually as long as we recognize the sacred." (p. 38). This is what Doxtator (2001) refers to as "continually moving continuities", when she describes the nature of time and history in Native oral traditions. It is within the realm of

the Sacred, that gifted individuals are able to access, the past and the future through ceremony, dreams and visions.

The Nature of the Individual and Ways of Knowing

Another fundamental tenet contained within this Indigenous paradigm is that humans are comprised of a body, a mind, a heart and a spirit. Humans are physical, mental, emotional and spiritual beings (Archibald, 1997; Bopp et al, 1984; Couture, 1989; Lightning, 1992).[26] Couture (1989) refers to these aspects of the self as "levels or dimensions" (p. 25), whereas Lightning (1992) refers to these aspects of the self as "domains" (p. 232). It is through each of these inter-related dimensions or domains that one acquires knowledge. Within this holistic understanding of the nature of the individual is the belief that the more these aspects of the self are in balance or harmony with each other, the greater the potential is for a person to access the various sources of knowledge. The human senses are the primary means of acquiring knowledge of oneself and the surrounding world. Physically and mentally, knowledge is gained empirically through observation and experience (Colorado, 1988; Kawagley, n.d.; RCAP, 1996). Through the heart, the emotional part of the self, individuals have the opportunity to acquire a higher level of knowledge and understanding. According to Kawagley (n.d.), all thoughts and actions need to be tempered, "with the 'heart,' which is on a higher plane than knowledge of the

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[26] Some Indigenous traditions speak of only the body, mind and spirit. (Meyer, 2003; Thrasher, 2002) According to Thrasher (2002), the emotional part of the self is not a separate entity; it is as an aspect of the mind. What I am presenting is a reflection of the teachings that have been shared with me. These differences in perspective are another example of a characteristic of Indigenous scholarship that Newhouse (2002) refers to as "complex understanding".

mind." Not accessing and applying emotional knowledge, whether by ignorance or by choice, creates a potential imbalance at the individual and societal level.

> Feeling is connected to our intellect and we ignore, hide from, disguise, and suppress that feeling at our peril and at the peril of those around us. (Hampton, 1995b, p. 52)

Joe P. Cardinal shared his understanding of the importance of heart in the following way:

> The heart is one of the first things that is developed in the fetus after life begins. Everything else comes later, is formed around it; revolves around it. ... We have lost touch with our heart. ... For many people their mind is in control. ... The journey from the heart to the mind can be a long one.
>
> (personal conversation, May 17, 2000)

Indigenous theory also acknowledges the spiritual nature of the self and the spiritual dimension of knowledge (Battiste, 1988; Beck and Walters, 1977; Bopp et al, 1984; Brant-Castellano, 2000; Cajete, 2000; Colorado, 1988; Couture, 1989, 1991, 1996; Dumont, 1976; Ermine, 1995; Irwin, 1994; Kawagley, n.d.; Meyer, 2003; Simpson, 1999). Spiritual knowledge is revealed through a variety of means such as prayer, meditation, intuition, dreams, visions, and ceremonies. Simpson (1999) refers to spiritual knowledge as the "foundation of Indigenous knowledge". According to her, "It is at once context, content and process." (p. 60).

The four aspects of the self and four ways of knowing are inter-related parts that comprise a whole individual and the ways in which they are able to acquire knowledge. Through his work with the late Cree Elder Louis Sunchild, Lightning (1992) learned that in order for a person to achieve balance and harmony, he/she must achieve a state of being which

Sunchild referred to as "compassionate mind". In order for compassionate mind to be achieved

> ... we have to rely for learning on our total self, our whole self, our mental capacities as well as our emotional capacities. ... the unity of the process is not just cognitive and emotional, but physical and spiritual; the total, the unity, includes all of those. (p. 244)

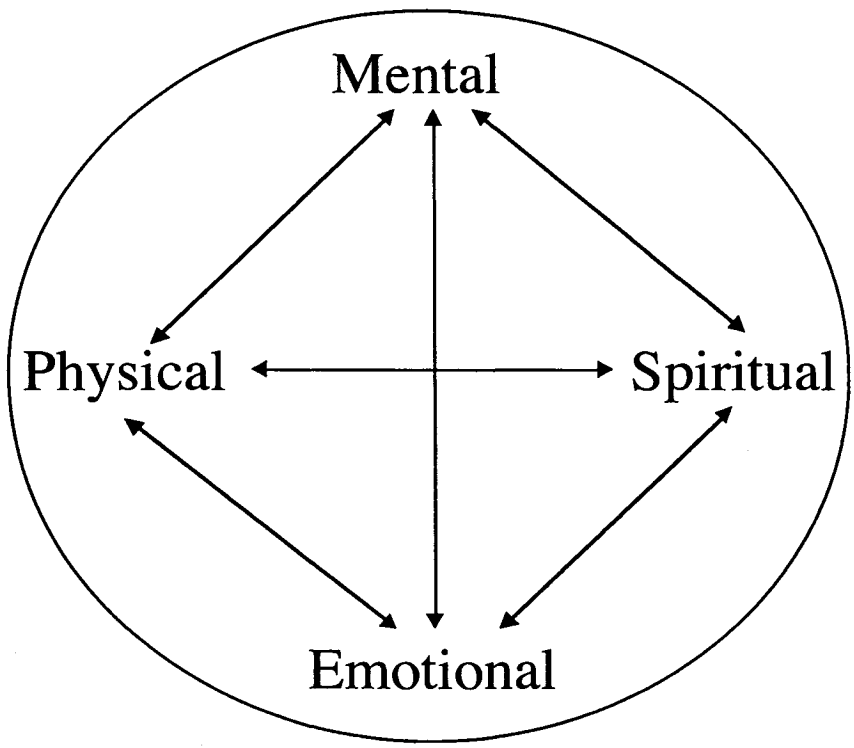
Weber-Pillwax (2001b) refers to this way of knowing as full understanding. "By full understanding is meant a capacity, an ability, and a willingness to immerse oneself totally in the events as it is enacted or unfolds." (p.156) One way, in which this way of knowing is experienced, is through participation in traditional ceremonies. Couture (1991) refers to ceremonies as "primary oral literature" (p. 58).

> It is true that the whole Cosmos teaches, but it is through oft-repeated ceremonial participation that one enters the root experiences, concepts, and teachings. (Couture, 1989, p. 148)

In Figure 2 on the following page, I have graphically illustrated the *Nature of the Individual and Ways of Knowing*. The illustration is circular because a circle is the best way to represent the holistic qualities of balance, equality, and inter-relatedness that I wish to convey. It is also intended to respect the circular nature of native philosophy in which "the concept of the circle is fundamental to understanding knowledge" (Fixico, 2003, p. 45). This illustration, and the one's that follow in Figures 3 to 6, are not intended to represent, or be an example of the Aboriginal paradigm and teaching tool known as a Medicine Wheel. The similarities and areas of congruence between the elements that make up this *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing,* and Medicine Wheel teachings, are a reflection that both address Indigenous ontological, epistemological, and ethical principles. Medicine Wheels are circular symbols/paradigms/tools, but not all

circular representations of Indigenous ways of being and knowing are a Medicine Wheel. That is the case in this work. The Medicine Wheel is not applied in this research because it does not reflect my lived experience within this particular spiritual tradition. It was not a part of the teachings that I received from Joe Cardinal, nor was it a part of the teachings that Raymond Harris shared.[27]

Figure 2 – The Nature of the Individual and Ways of Knowing



[27] In the early part of my learning journey, prior to being welcomed into this tradition, the eclectic teachings presented by Bopp, et al, (1984) in *The Sacred Tree*, helped me begin to understand the powerful paradigm inherent in Medicine Wheel teachings.

Conclusion

It is only through operating within this Indigenous paradigm that one has the opportunity to grasp the nature of Raymond Harris's work and the impacts of his teachings on the lives of the individuals who came into contact with him. The stories shared by many of the research participants document the personal shifts in awareness that were necessary in order for them to comprehend their initial and ensuing experiences within the sacred traditions that Raymond shared. The majority of the research participants were from a generation that had had very little or no exposure to their own cultural traditions within their families and communities. They had also been indoctrinated into the European-Christian thought world as a result of attendance at Indian Residential Schools throughout their formative years.

> I was raised a Catholic. I knew nothing about my traditions. I believed that traditional spirituality was pagan or heathen. When I was introduced to them I was a skeptic, even after meeting Raymond and some of the old people.
>
> (Harold Cardinal, personal conversation, June 4, 2002)

Indigenous Ethics: Guiding Principles

Within this particular cultural context I have identified four ethical or guiding principles – relationship, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity. These same principles have been identified by Archibald and Weber-Pillwax.

> I have to argue that three essential cultural principles; respect, responsibility, and reciprocity must have a central place in First Nations story research.
>
> (Archibald, 1997, p. 57)

> A researcher must make sure that the three R's - Respect, Reciprocity and Relationality - are guiding the research.
>
> (Weber-Pillwax as cited in Steinhauer, 2002. p. 73)

In the process of working with Native Elders in order to understand the tradition of storytelling, Archibald (1997) identified "seven principles which provide the beginnings of a theoretical framework" (p. 16).[28] The principles she identified are respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, wholism, inter-relatedness, and synergy. Archibald's work stresses the importance of four of these: respect, reverence, responsibility, and reciprocity (pp. 91 & 157). In the conceptual framework that I am presenting, the discussion of reverence (spirituality) and wholism is placed within the context of the nature of the individual and the nature of knowing. Inter-relatedness is discussed within the principle of relationship. The four guiding principles of relationship, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity are identified in whole, or in part, in the literature pertaining to Indigenous ways of knowing discussed by the following Indigenous scholars: Battiste (1988); Brant-Castellano (2000); Cajete (2000); Couture (1987, 1989,1991); Fixico, 2003; Hampton (1995a); Lightning (1992); Simpson (1999); Smith (1999); Steinhauer (2002); Struthers (2001); and Weber-Pillwax (2001). I will discuss each of the four guiding principles separately and then address their inter-relatedness.

In Figure 3 on the following page, I have graphically illustrated the *Indigenous Ethics: Guiding Principles.*

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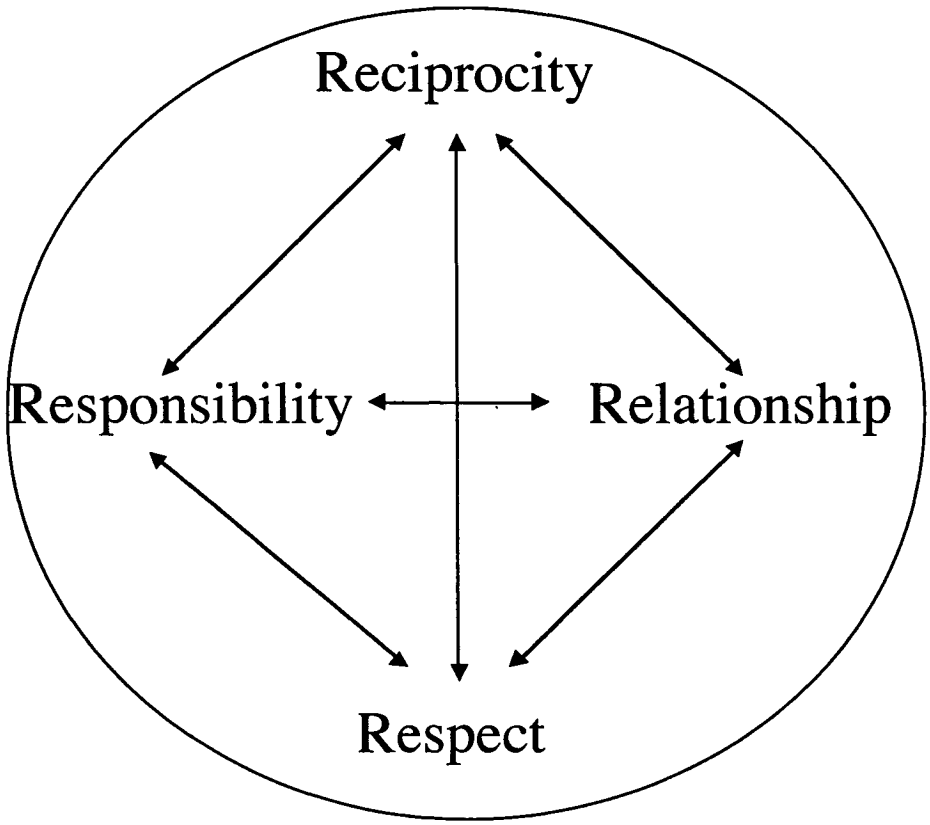
[28] Archibald did not proceed to construct a theoretical framework, She also "resisted doing an expositive thesis summary of the seven-storywork principles" (p. 215).

Figure 3 - Indigenous Ethics: Guiding Principles



Relationship

> Native American knowledge is based largely on the understanding of relationships—the interrelationship between human beings, animals, plants, societies, the cosmos, the spirit world ... (Holm et al, 2003, pp.17-18)

The principle of relationship[29] is the essence of what comprises Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies, ethics, and methodologies. It is central to an understanding of the nature of the world, what can be known, and how one goes about knowing. The principle of relationship embodies context, conduct and process. It is omnipresent. In fact it is the

[29] My use of the term 'relationship' is inclusive of the terms 'inter-relatedness' and 'relationality'.

omnipresence of relationality that makes the task of attempting to discuss each of the guiding principles separately, a challenge.

All of life is inter-related. People are related to all living things[30] (Black Elk & Brown, 1953; Bopp, et al, 1984; Fixico, 2003; and Ladner, 2000). The relationships people have with the world around themselves are both secular and sacred and are inclusive of all living things. Knowledge stems from an understanding of these relationships (Colorado, 1988; Fixico, 2003; Holm et al, 2003; and Cajete, 2004), as well as being derived from them (Meyer, 2003). According to Shawn Wilson (2001), knowledge itself is relational and it "is shared with all of creation" (p. 176). Quality of life is a reflection of the relationships a person has with others and all aspects of the world around him/her (Weber-Pillwax, 2001). This is why the importance of place, territory, 'the land', clan, nation, and 'the Ancestors', is inherent in the words of Indigenous people when they speak of Indigenous life and ways of knowing.

The primacy of the principle of relationship within Indigenous research, has been voiced by Stan Wilson (2001) and Shawn Wilson (2001, 2003). Weber-Pillwax (2001) and Shawn Wilson (2001) speak of relationality in terms of the accountability of researchers towards the individuals and the communities that they work with. It is through relationships that knowledge is shared between those who participate in the research and researchers; and between researchers and those who will hopefully benefit from the

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[30] From an Indigenous perspective, a living thing is that which contains a spirit. This includes minerals, plants, animals, other natural elements and spirits.

results. It is also within the context of relationships that one learns and demonstrates/actualizes the principles of respect, responsibility and reciprocity.

Respect

> Respect means "to feel or show honor or esteem for someone or something; to consider the well-being of, or to treat someone or something with deference or courtesy". Showing respect is a basic law of life. (Bopp, et al, 1984, p. 76)

The principle of respect provides the context and describes the manner in which all positive relationships are established and maintained. This includes one's relationship with self, others, and all living things. The importance of respect is stressed in many Indigenous cultures. Within various cultural contexts it is referred to as a law (Bopp, et al, 1984), a sacred gift, (Benton-Banai, 1979), a fundamental principle (Archibald, 1996) and a teaching (Michell, 1999). Respect is demonstrated to 'all our relations' through the acknowledgement and honoring of all aspects of Creation that provide the gifts that sustain our lives.

Within the context of Indigenous research, respect is a fundamental principle, which must guide researchers' thoughts and actions. The ethical imperative of respect, and the importance of establishing respectful relationships within Indigenous research, has been addressed by Archibald (1997), Haig-Brown & Archibald (1996), Michell (1999), Ridington (2000), Smith (1999), Weber-Pillwax (2003), and Shawn Wilson (2001, 2003). Through her work within the Native storytelling tradition, Archibald (1997) was able to articulate the ubiquitous nature of respect that ideally exists in a research relationship

with an Elder. Archibald's description speaks to the mutual nature of respect that is evident in a respectful research relationship. She also addresses the fact that it is the responsibility of the researcher to be ready to receive cultural knowledge.

> ... respect must be an integral part of the relationship between the Elder and the researcher. Respect for each other as human beings, respect for the cultural knowledge, and respect for cultural protocol for honouring the authority and expertise of the Elder teacher. The principle of respect includes trust and being culturally worthy. [Footnote - Being worthy means being ready, intellectually, emotionally, physically, and spiritually to fully absorb cultural knowledge.] (Archibald, 1997, p. 69)

Responsibility

> Our sole reason for being here as Indians; as whites, as any race, is to recognize our responsibilities to our Creator ... (Cardinal, 1977, p. 221)

Responsibility is the guiding principle that articulates the accountability that is inherent in our relationships with 'all our relations'. An individual's responsibilities begin with the self and extend outwards to family, community, nation, and the natural world (Archibald, 1997). This includes the Ancestors and the people who are yet to be born.[31] Indigenous peoples have also been given responsibilities to care for the land and the life forms that comprise their traditional territories. Balance and harmony at the individual and collective levels reflects how well people understand and actualize all their responsibilities.

Within the context of the transmission and internalization of knowledge, varied levels of responsibility exist. Those who possess knowledge, e.g. Elders, have the cultural

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[31] In some Indigenous cultural contexts, people are asked to consider their decisions and their actions in terms of how it will possibly affect the next seven generations.

responsibility to caretake the information (Rasmus, 2002) and also to share it (Armstrong, 1997; and Makokis, 2001). At the same time it is individuals who are responsible for their own learning (Couture, 1982) and the application of what has been learned (Couture, 1987). Over time, it is ideally a cyclical process (Archibald, 1997). Those that acquire knowledge and demonstrate responsibility through their actions are given the responsibility to pass that knowledge on to others.

In Indigenous research, the principle of responsibility is viewed in terms of those actions that support the maintenance of personal, community and cultural integrity (Archibald, 1997; Haig-Brown, & Archibald, 1996; Rasmus, 2002; Smith, 1999; Steinhauer, 2002; Weber-Pillwax, 2001a, 2003; and Wilson, 2003). The onus of responsibility lies with the researcher to frame, conduct and disseminate the research in a manner that is conducive to the social and cultural values of the people involved.

Reciprocity

> To be in harmony with oneself, others, members of the animal kingdom and other elements of nature requires that First Nations people respect the gifts of each entity and establish and maintain respectful reciprocal relations with each.
> (Archibald, 1997, p. 78)

In the Indigenous world, these respectful, reciprocal relations are established and maintained through the use of protocols, ceremonies and other ritual acts (Michell, 1999). Prayer is one means by which reverence is demonstrated towards all the gifts that sustain our lives. The act of making an offering to another person, a member of the spirits of the animal kingdom, an aspect of the natural world, or the spiritual world, is another means

by which respectful, reciprocal relations are established and maintained. Reciprocity between people is often demonstrated through the act of giving. Giving back can take the form of material gifts, or the giving of one's time and effort to provide assistance to someone. Reciprocal relationships between Elders and members of younger generations which involve the giving of oneself, are often the manner in which traditional knowledge is shared inter-generationally. Public acknowledgement of what one has received from someone else is another form of reciprocity in Indigenous communities.

The importance of the application of the principle of reciprocity within Indigenous research, has been addressed by Archibald (1997); Atkinson (as cited in Wilson, 2003); Michell (1999); Weber-Pillwax (as cited in Steinhauer, 2002); and Shawn Wilson (2001). The principle of reciprocity is practiced in Indigenous research in several ways. Michell (1999) sees the incorporation of the Cree cultural protocol of offering tobacco to an individual who you are seeking knowledge from, as an acknowledgement of the wider ethic of reciprocity. Archibald (1997) uses the term reciprocal action to describe the cyclical process of responsibility in the relationship between an Elder/teacher and a researcher/learner. She also describes the acknowledgement of cultural property – the act of stating the cultural, territorial and personal origin of a story, song, or dance – as a form of reciprocity. Another way in which a researcher can demonstrate the principle of reciprocity is to ensure that the results of the research are meaningful and useful to both insiders and outsiders (Haig-Brown & Archibald, 1996; Martin, 2001; Smith, 1999; and Smith, 2005).

The Inter-relatedness of the Guiding Principles

> Each principle has a separateness which is like a long flat piece of cedar bark used for weaving a basket. As each piece is woven together, it may lose its separateness ... (Archibald, 1997, p. 215)

As has been previously stated, it is difficult to speak of the guiding principles of relationship, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity separately. They are interrelated. The principles of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity, exist in the context of a relationship. Respect, responsibility, and reciprocity are also functionally related. The qualities of one depend on the relative qualities of the others. A fully respectful, responsible or reciprocal relationship can only exist when the other two principles are being demonstrated as well. In Indigenous research, the actualization of these inter-related principles is an integral aspect of success. In her discussion around the successful collaborative work of Robinson and Wickwire (1989 & 1992), and Cruikshank, Sidney, Smith and Ned (1990), Archibald (1997) describes the four guiding principles of relationship, respect, responsibility and reciprocity, in practice.

> The relationships between the Elder-teachers and academic researchers were developed over a long period of time and respect for each other was evident. Each eventually agreed upon their responsibility and their work with story – storywork – was reciprocal. The Elders were given knowledge through stories and had a cultural responsibility to pass it on to others. The academic researchers were given knowledge through the Elders and their stories and gained an appreciation of their ethical responsibility to represent the knowledge and stories in a respectful textual manner. (p. 63)

Primary Characteristics of Indigenous Knowledge Transmission

Indigenous knowledge transmission can be characterized in the following manner. Firstly, within the cultural context that it originates, Indigenous knowledge[32] is primarily shared between people by means of oral transmission. Secondly, it is gained through experiential learning processes that facilitate understanding through, and within, the mind, body, heart and spirit. This includes knowledge that is gained empirically through observation, as well as that which is learned within the spiritual realm of ceremony and dreams. The other primary characteristic of Indigenous knowledge acquisition, is that it is a subjective experience that occurs within the collective.

Indigenous systems of knowledge are rooted in their respective oral traditions. It is through these various oral traditions that knowledge has been continually transmitted from one generation to the next (Battiste, 1988; Brant-Castellano, 2000; and Couture, 1991). Couture (1991) refers to the "traditional indigenous mind" as "an oral literature dependent mind as compared to a mind that is print literature dependent." (p. 58). The ever- increasing proliferation of literacy among Indigenous peoples has not replaced what Weber-Pillwax (2001b) refers to as a "consciousness of primary orality" (p. 153).[33] Oral literature includes all aspects of the oral tradition such as oral history, stories, teachings,

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[32] Some say that it may not be possible, or desirable to produce a comprehensive definition of the term Indigenous knowledge because of its complex and diverse nature (Battiste & Henderson, 2000). I use the term Indigenous knowledge to denote the various ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies that Indigenous peoples have used to understand and organize their way of being in the world, throughout time. There are thousands of Indigenous knowledge systems throughout the world. Each one is a reflection of the human, ecological and spiritual diversity of Indigenous peoples around the Earth.

[33] According to Weber-Pillwax (2001b) one indicator of the continued presence of primary orality among the Cree of northern Alberta, is the fact that ceremonies are primarily conducted in the Cree language. The importance of Aboriginal languages within Indigenous knowledge systems cannot be overstated. It is the central issue in any discussion of the retention and/or revitalization of Indigenous languages (Battiste, 1988; Cantoni, 1996: Kirkness, 1998).

song, dance and ceremony.[34] Sarris (1993) broadens the parameters of what constitutes the oral tradition even further. Through his work with the Pomo elder Mabel McKay, his understanding of oral texts became more inclusive.

> Again, by talk I include all speech categories---responses to questions, gossip, idle chitchat, stories---that Mabel may use in conversation with others, since as I hope to demonstrate, the various categories engender the same effect. The talk establishes the premises on which an understanding of her world can begin... (p. 18)

The oral transmission of knowledge takes place in a relationship that involves active participants – speaker(s)/listener(s), teacher(s)/learner(s), practitioners/observers, etc. It is an experiential learning process.

Experiential learning is the primary mode by which knowledge is gained within an Indigenous system of knowledge (Couture, 1989, 1991, 1996). Ermine (1995) goes as far as to say that from an Aboriginal epistemological perspective, "experience is knowledge" (p. 104). Within the context of this research experiential learning is seen as a way of life.

> We got to learn these ways by living with Raymond and Ambey. By being shown it. This way of life. (Harvey Tootoosis, personal conversation Oct. 2, 2003)

Within Indigenous knowledge systems, subjective experience is considered an integral aspect of the learning process (Brant-Castellano, 2000; Cajete, 2004; Colorado, 1988; Couture, 1989, 1991; and Ermine, 1995). It is through subjective experiences that one is able to gain a fuller understanding of both the sacred and the secular nature of the world (Couture, 1991; and Ermine, 1995).

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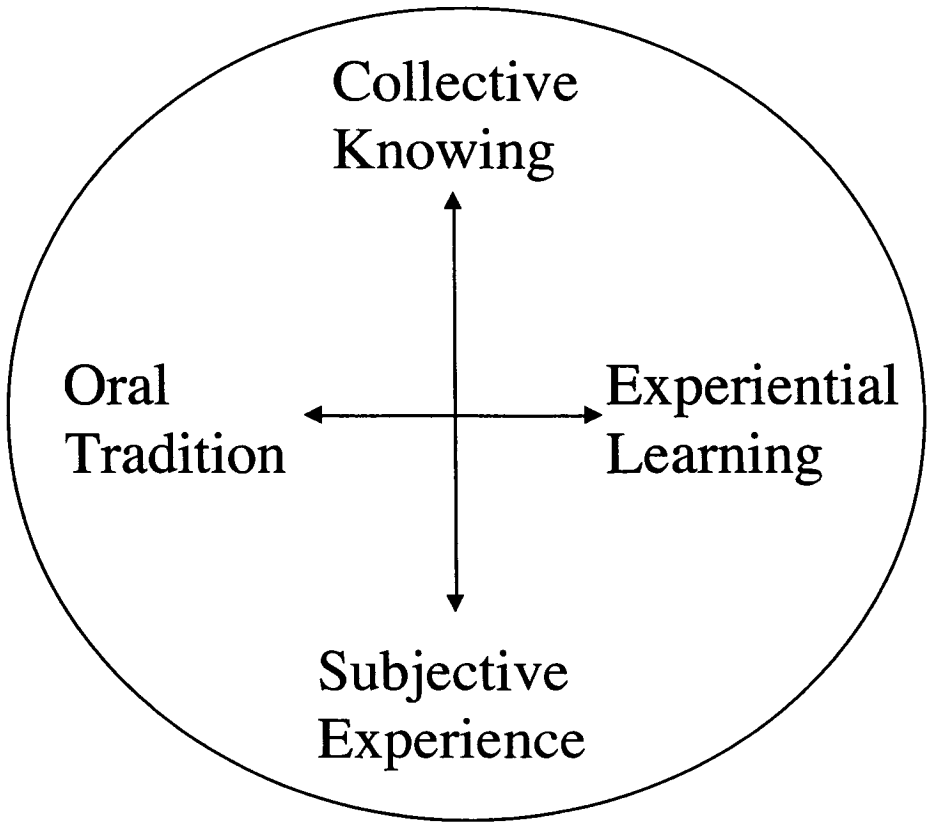
[34] As stated earlier, Couture (1991) refers to ceremonies as "the primary oral literature" (p. 58).

Within an Indigenous social context these personal subjective experiences are valid in their own right. They become part of the collective knowledge of a people through a process of "collective analysis and consensus building" (Brant-Castellano. 2000, p. 26). This collective process is what Newhouse (2002) refers to as "sensemaking" (p. 6) and Battiste (1988) describes as a "collective cognitive experience" (p. 18). In the same manner that ceremonies provide an opportunity for individuals to come to knowledge through their whole self – physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually – ceremonies are also a means by which an individual can experience the collective thought (Lightning, 1992), the collective energy (Ermine, 1995), and the collective living history (Weber-Pillwax, 2001b) of the people.

Figure 4 on the next page is a graphic representation of the *Primary Characteristics of Indigenous Knowledge Transmission.*

Figure 4 – Primary Characteristics of Indigenous Knowledge Transmission



Indigenous Knowledge Transmission and Indigenous Research

The characteristics of Indigenous knowledge transmission, orality, experiential learning, subjective experience, and collective knowing, are factors that need to be considered in the process of conducting Indigenous research. The continued prominence of orality as the primary means of knowledge transmission speaks to the importance of listening. There is an expression that I have heard given as advice within an Indigenous learning context that speaks to this: The Creator gave each of us two eyes, two ears, and only one mouth. Therefore, if one wants to learn, one should watch and listen more than speak.

The same point, "Titiro, whakarongo ... korero (look, listen ... speak)" is articulated in Kaupapa Maori practices (Smith, 1999, p. 120).

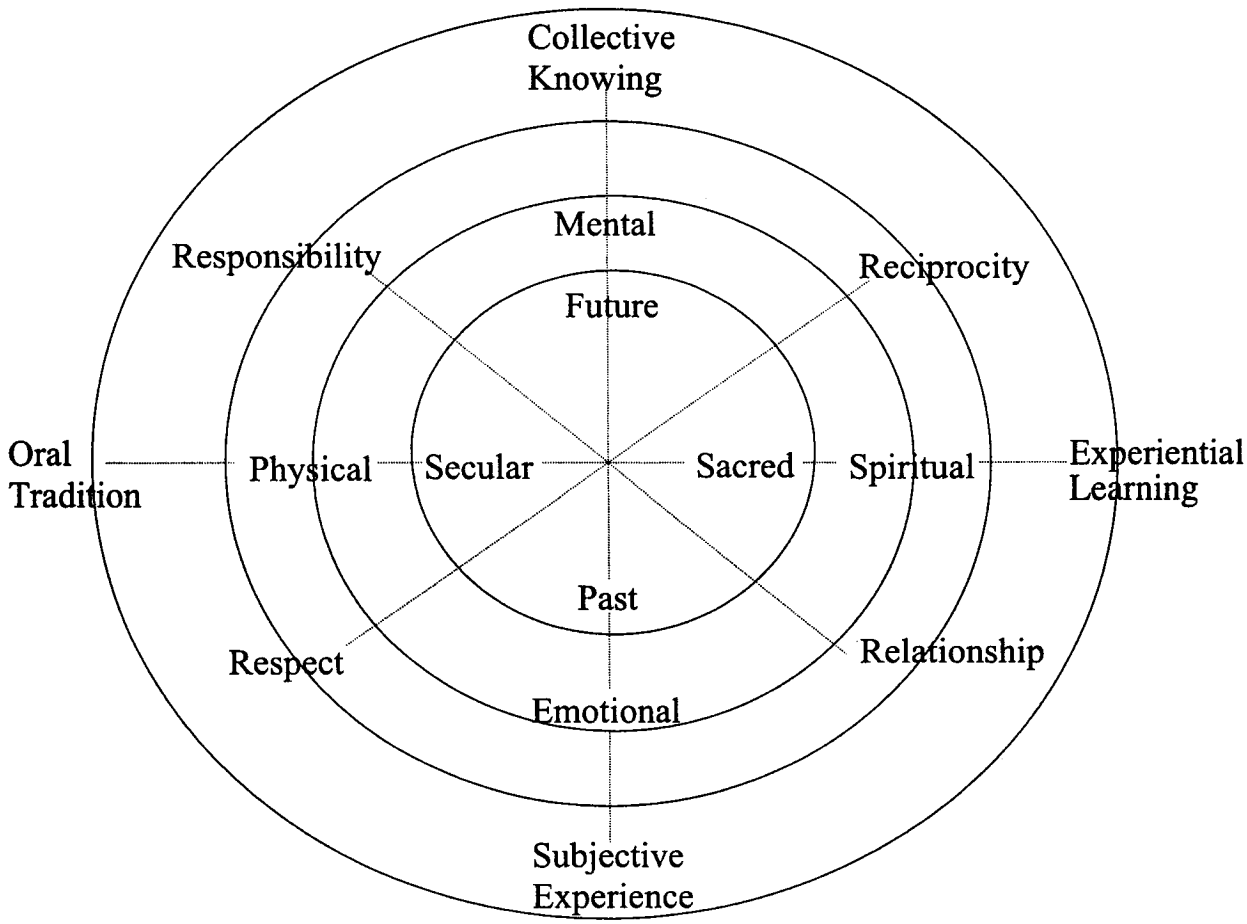
There are also limitations and potential risks inherent in the written recording of knowledge that is based in an oral tradition. Couture (1996) describes the complex challenge of such an undertaking and concludes that even if one is knowledgeable and adept enough to keep "in hand an immense oral 'reference bibliography'" it is "virtually impossible" to capture the essential non-verbal aspects of the event. (p. 43). When Indigenous knowledge is written down, it is removed from the experiential context from which it was originally shared. In an experiential learning context, the knowledge holder gauges what is shared on his/her awareness of the cultural readiness of the learner(s) (Brant-Castellano, 2000; Lightning, 1992; and Sarris, 1993). There is a potential risk that those that access Indigenous knowledge in a written form will not be able to fully understand it, or will not be able to use it in a respectful and responsible manner.

There are other potential risks in removing Indigenous knowledge from its oral and experiential contexts, and attempting to transmit it through written forms of expression. There is a potential for the loss of its collective nature. Brant-Castellano (2000) cautions that written forms may be removed from the necessary process of collective analysis that leads to validation at the community level. Written forms of Indigenous knowledge may be misconstrued outside of the community of origin as a reflection of individual as opposed to collective ownership (Rasmus, 2002).

A Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing

The components of Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies, and ethics, as well as the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge transmission form the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* that guides this work. This is graphically illustrated in Figure 5, which is a composite of Figures 2 to 4.[35]

Figure 5 – A Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing



[35] I reiterate the fact that this illustration does not represent a Medicine Wheel, as discussed on pages 39-40.

The placement of each of the concentric circles that make up this composite drawing reflects their conceptual significance within the overall framework. The framework is meant to be read from the centre outward. At the centre, lie the primary ontological and epistemological understandings regarding *The Nature of the World and Ways of Knowing* and *The Nature of Time*. The second circle represents the understandings regarding *The Nature of the Individual and Ways of Knowing*. This is followed by the third circle, which represents the understandings regarding *Indigenous Ethics* or *Guiding Principles*. The outer circle represents the *Primary Characteristics of Indigenous Knowledge Transmission*.

The six intersecting lines are placed within the framework to indicate inter-relationships at two levels. First, they exist within the framework in order to indicate the inter-relationships between the elements within each of the individual spheres that have been previously discussed: the secular and the sacred; the past, present, and future; the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual; relationship, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity; the oral tradition, experiential learning, subjective experience and collective knowing. Secondly, the intersecting lines are meant to indicate the inter-relationships between each of the spheres of understanding that comprise *The Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*. The intersecting lines have not been placed within the conceptual framework in order to indicate a relationship between individual elements within different spheres. Nor are they meant to divide the overall framework into quadrants or octants.

Considerations for Indigenous Research

The following summarizes the key dimensions of Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies, ethics, and the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge transmission, that comprise the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*. I would suggest that Indigenous research be grounded in an understanding of the following statements:

- The world exists in one reality comprised of an inseparable weave of secular and sacred dimensions.
- The nature of time is not linear. The past and the future coexist in the present.
- The individual is a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual being. Knowledge can be accessed through each of these modalities.
- All actions must be guided by the principles of relationship, respect, responsibility and reciprocity.
- Indigenous knowledge transmission is characterized by the existence of an oral tradition, experiential learning, subjective experience and collective knowing.

Indigenous Research: A Way of Life

Dec. 6, 2003

Just as spirituality is "a way of life", Indigenous research is a way of life.

March 9, 2004

Looking back at my journal entry of Dec. 6, 2003, from the vantage point of several months, I was initially struck by the place and time of its origin. Why there? Why then? The realization expressed in that entry occurred on one of the last days that I would have the pleasure and the honor of spending time with my dear friend Joe Cardinal. Why did I have this thought about the nature of Indigenous research at a time when I was having to face the possibility that this would be my last visit with Joe?

Further thought has made me realize that the time and location of that realization makes sense. For it is through my interactions with Joe that I had learned that my life was a whole and I should not try to separate my academic life from my personal life.

The goal of Indigenous research is for the researcher to be able to be, and act from, the point of balance and harmony that is represented as the axis point at the center of the concentric circles in Figure 5 on page 55. To act from that place of balance is far greater than an academic exercise, it is a way of life. As researchers our responsibility is to apply tools and methods that complement and enhance this "way of life". That responsibility is what guided my choice of research methodologies.

In the following chapter I discuss Indigenous research and the various components of the research methodology used in this study. The Indigenous methodologies that were applied in this research are presented as examples of the conceptual framework in practice.

Chapter Three

An Indigenous Research Methodology:

Epistemology and Ethics in Practice

> Indigenous methodologies tend to approach cultural protocols, values and behaviors as an integral part of methodology. They are 'factors' to be built in to research explicitly, to be thought about reflexively, to be declared openly as part of the research design, to be discussed as part of the final results of a study and to be disseminated back to the people in culturally appropriate ways and in a language that can be understood. (Smith, 1999, p. 15)

Indigenous research methodologies are processes that originate from, take place within, and honour, Indigenous ontological, epistemological and ethical realities. In Indigenous research the process must be considered specifically in relation to the values and principles of the people the researcher is working with (Bishop, 1997; Martin, 2001; Slim and Thompson, 1993; Smith, 1999; and Wilson, 1997).

In my case, it was essential on both a personal and a professional level that I worked within the ethics and the protocols inherent to this particular context. The methodologies I chose to conduct this research are ones that reflect my understanding of Indigenous epistemology and ethics in practice. As stated earlier, the primary source of this understanding is derived from my experience within this specific spiritual community as well as my personal and professional experiences within a variety of other Aboriginal communities over the last thirty years. Academically, I have learned from the work of other Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars who have led the way in the field of Indigenous research.

Indigenous Research

Indigenous research has existed since the dawn of time. Yet within the confines of academic discourse, it is only relatively recently that attempts have been made to articulate what it is. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's recent *Dialogue on Research and Aboriginal Peoples* describes Aboriginal research as

> ... more a *method* of study than an *area* of study. In its emerging conception, "Aboriginal research" is research that derives its dynamic from traditions of thought and experience developed among and in partnership with Aboriginal nations in Canada and other parts of the world. (McNaughton & Rock, 2003, p. 4)

The academic literature on Indigenous research begins with Colorado (1988) and her efforts to articulate a bicultural research model to bridge Native and Western science. She recommended the use of participatory research because of its "collaborative, endogenous, heuristic and experiential" nature and its "sensitivity to the process-orientated, communally-based indigenous methodology" (p. 61). According to her, participatory research could "accommodate Native scientific theory and practice" that she described as qualitative and subjective inquiry based on "observation, experience, information and prayer" (p. 56). Colorado also saw participatory research as having the potential to decolonize both Native and non-Native consciousness.

In her doctoral dissertation, *Coyote Weaves a Basket,* Archibald (1997) documented her own personal process of moving from a western academic to an Indigenous research paradigm. Archibald's methodological journey reminds me of a person crossing a stream. She begins on the western academic bank and attempts to look at her research through the lens of ethnography. She then steps onto the rock in the middle of the stream, which she

describes as "a view of critical ethnography through the lens of First Nations cultural and ethical considerations" (p. 44). She then completes her crossing by stepping onto the bank that she refers to as "a Sto:lo and Coast Salish story approach with Elders" (p. 44). As a result of her work, Archibald identified seven principles –respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, wholism, inter-relatedness, and synergy – that she felt "provide the beginnings of a theoretical framework" (p. 16).

The most extensive work to date on Indigenous research comes from the Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999). Smith outlines an Indigenous research agenda that involves the processes of transformation, decolonization, healing, and mobilization. The ultimate goal of this agenda is the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. Smith also presents a set of culturally-based ethical guidelines for Maori research, which are known as Kaupapa Maori practices. They are as follows:

1. Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for the people)
2. Kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to face)
3. Titiro, whakarongo ... korero (look, listen ... speak)
4. Manaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous)
5. Kia tupato (be cautious)
6. Kaua e takahia te mana itte tangata (do not trample over the mana of people)
7. Kaua e mahaki (don't flaunt your knowledge) (p. 120)

The fact that these ethical guidelines arise out of Maori knowledge and experience does not limit their application to that particular context. Ladner (2000), a Cree scholar, "adopted them as general guidelines" for her research, because she found them applicable to her work within Blackfoot society (pp. 60-61).

Smith's work marked the beginning of an extensive discussion regarding the nature of Indigenous research, and what constitutes an Indigenous methodology (Brant-Castellano, 2004; Martin, 2001; Steinhauer, 2002; Weber-Pillwax, 1999, 2001; and Shawn Wilson, 2001, 2003). What is consistent throughout this discourse is the primacy of identifying the principles that must guide the practice of Indigenous research. Shawn Wilson (2001) stresses that an Indigenous research paradigm is composed of ontology, epistemology, methodology, as well as axiology – " a set of morals, or a set of ethics" (p. 175). In his subsequent paper, Shawn Wilson (2003) presents two examples of sets of principles that delineate an Indigenous research paradigm. Atkinson (2001) provides a perspective arising out of Australia that states that the following principles should guide Indigenous research:

- Aboriginal people themselves approve the research and the research methods;
- A knowledge and consideration of community and the diversity and unique nature that each individual brings to community;
- Ways of relating and acting within community with an understanding of the principles of reciprocity and responsibility;
- Research participants must feel safe and be safe, including respecting issues of confidentiality;
- A non-intrusive observation, or quietly aware watching;
- A deep listening and hearing with more than the ears;
- A reflective non-judgemental consideration of what is being seen and heard;
- Having learnt from the listening a purposeful plan to act with actions informed by learning, wisdom, and acquired knowledge;
- Responsibility to act with fidelity in relationship to what has been heard, observed, and learnt;

- An awareness and connection between logic of mind and the feelings of the heart;

- Listening and observing the self as well as in relationship to others;

- Acknowledgement that the researcher brings to the research his or her subjective self.

(Atkinson, 2001, p. 10 as quoted in Shawn Wilson, 2003, pp. 173-174)

Another Aboriginal perspective arising out of Australia was presented by Martin (2001). Her discussion of the development of a theoretical framework and methods for Indigenous re-search and Indigenist research included the following ideas:

- Research question: A researcher's worldview shapes the types of inquiries made, defines the assumptions underlying this and planning for research.

- Research design: ...For Indigenist researchers design is driven by our Ways of Knowing and Ways of Being and Ways of Doing...The design then being responsive to the protocols of the group (or groups) will feature methods that reflect this.

- Research conduct: Again this will be driven by our Ways of Knowing and Ways of Being to observe protocols and respect relations and earn rights to continue the research. This requires a high level of skill to ensure it is culturally rigorous and meets demands for validity.

- Data analysis: ...making meaning from the collected data, categories, themes and patterns based on western ontological and epistemological criteria, lack[s] 'cultural' rigour... The Indigenist researcher draws upon his/her Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing to identify and categorise data, using internal logic as criteria and referents.

- Data interpretation: For the Indigenist researcher, data interpretation is more an issue of according respect to the people and country involved to allow them to tell their own stories, in their own ways. It has less to do with capturing 'truth' or drawing general conclusions, than checking and re-checking interpretations with participants.

- Reporting and dissemination: Too often research reports and findings are written in languages and produced in styles that are not understood. They are produced to suit specific audiences and rarely the research participants.

- Research ethics: ...ethical behaviour needs to occur throughout the research program. It's about gaining trust and maintaining integrity. To be truly ethical requires the researcher to recognize and respond to the duality of the research contexts and act in culturally safe ways. It expects the researcher to observe codes of ethical behavior of his/her own professional and personal worlds, and also the world in which the research is conducted. (pp. 5-6)

The Cree scholar Cora Weber-Pillwax, began exploring a definition of what constitutes an Indigenous research methodology in 1999. At that time, she put forth a set of principles for consideration that she later refined in the process of conducting her doctoral research among the Cree and Metis of northern Alberta. In her dissertation, Weber-Pillwax (2003) defined the following principles for Indigenous research.

- All forms of living things are to be respected as being related and interconnected.

- "The measure of the land and the measure of our bodies are the same," said Chief Joseph (McLuhan, 1971, p. 54). Respect means living that relationship in all forms of interactions.

- The source of a research project is the heart/mind of the researcher, and "checking your heart" is a critical element in the research process. The researcher insures that there are no negative or selfish motives for doing the research, because that could bring suffering upon everyone in the community. A 'good heart' guarantees a good motive, and good motives benefit everyone involved.

- The foundation of Indigenous research lies within the reality of the lived Indigenous experience. Indigenous researchers ground their research knowingly in the lives of real persons as individuals and social beings, not on the world of ideas.

- Any theories developed or proposed are based upon and supported by Indigenous forms of epistemology. We as Indigenous scholars who wish to participate in the creation of knowledge within our own ways of being must begin with an active and scholarly recognition of who our philosophers and prophets are in our own communities. These are still the keepers and the teachers of our epistemologies.

- Indigenous research cannot undermine the integrity of Indigenous persons or communities because it is grounded in that integrity. Clearly this is both a test

- and a statement of definition for Indigenous research and is made simply as a response to the argument that Indigenous research poses the same threats to the Indigenous community as does non-Indigenous research.

- The languages and cultures of Indigenous peoples are living processes. Research and creation of knowledge are continuous functions for the thinkers and scholars of every Indigenous group, and it is through the activation of this principle that Indigenous university scholarship is conducted. Indigenous scholarship reflects inherited Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies and it is the responsibility of Indigenous researchers associated with a university to maintain and continuously renew the connections with our ancestors and our communities through embodiment, adherence, and practice of these.

(pp. 49-50)

In *Ethics of Aboriginal Research*, Brant-Castellano (2004) presents a set of principles for the development of ethical codes of conduct. Through the metaphor of a tree, she presents a framework that recommends that within each cultural context the development of ethical codes must take into account the following:

- The Earth that Supports Us: The Unseen World of Spirit
- World View: Conception of Reality
- Values, Deeply Held Beliefs About Good and Evil
- Ethical Rules Governing Relationships
- Protocols and Customs
- Individual Behaviours (Brant-Castellano, 2004, p. 101)

When I compare the principles set forth by Smith (1999), Atkinson (2001), Martin (2001), Cora Weber-Pillwax (2003), and Brant-Castellano (2004), to the way in which this research was designed and conducted, I feel confident that this research falls within and respects the principles and practices of Indigenous research as described in the literature.[1]

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[1] Some authors have delved into the question of whether or not a non-Indigenous researcher can do Indigenous research. Shawn Wilson (2001, p. 179) and Steinhauer (2002, pp.72-73) do not believe it is possible. Smith (1999) on the other hand sees that it may be possible if the researcher is not working on his or her own (p.184), meaning the non-Indigenous researcher is working with, in her case Maori people.

Components of my Research Methodology

My methodology incorporated a variety of strategies that are found within Indigenous research. It began within a Plains Cree traditional approach to learning through the use of traditional protocol and the development of relationships built on the principles of respect, responsibility and reciprocity. It included a variety of forms of data collection including: Plains Cree methods of inquiry; research as conversation; research as chat; as well as formal interviews. The information gathered was analyzed through self and collaborative analysis. The components of my research methodology are graphically illustrated in Figure 6 on the following page.

The components of my research methodology are grounded in the epistemological and ethical principles that make up the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* presented in the previous chapter. As indicated in Figure 6, the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* is located at the center of the research methodologies that were implemented throughout the process of conducting this research. A complete acceptance of this way of knowing and being in the world is the fundamental starting point for all that follows. It is not a point of departure from which I move away. It is at all times ubiquitous within the context, process, and content of this research. It is the way of being

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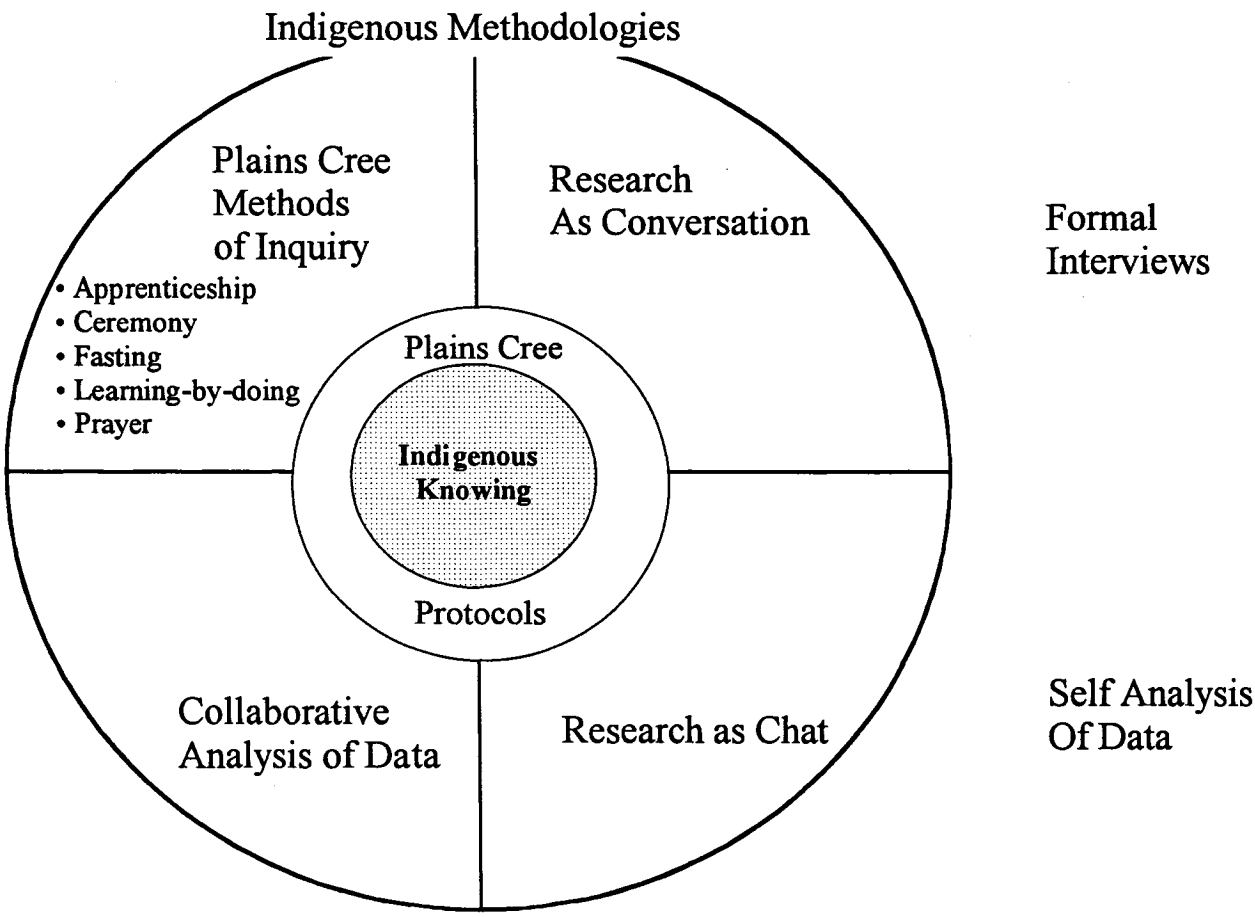
According to Ladner (2000), the work of Russel Barsh (1986) indicates that it is possible because "he has an extensive knowledge of traditions and a demonstrated ability to work respectfully within the confines of Indigenous thought" (pp.191-192). Fixico (2003) believes that it is possible for non-Indians to "'see' in an Indian way like a traditionalist", "if the non-Indian learns the traditional ways of an Indian community and accepts the values and beliefs of the indigenous culture" (pp. 7-8). From the outset I have been conscious of the fact that this research is what Davis (2004) has described as a 'Risky Story'. It is risky because I am telling a story that embodies Indigenous knowledge and experiences. I chose to work in this manner because of the ongoing support I have received from my friends and family within the Cree community. It is to them that I hold myself accountable.

and knowing that guided my actions as I entered into the various Indigenous research methodologies that comprised this work.

Figure 6 – Components of my Research Methodology



Before I begin to discuss the various components of my research methodology, I must reiterate that my research is part of a living, inter-related whole that is a way of life, my life. It is important to understand that what I describe as *Plains Cree Methods of Inquiry* are research methods, in the sense that they are ways of coming to knowledge; at the same time, their cultural, social and spiritual significance within this way of life is far

greater than that. Therefore, I never considered my relationship with Joe and Jenny Cardinal, my participation in pipe, sweat lodge, and fasting ceremonies, my experiential learning, and my daily prayer, as research. Yet, at the same time, all of these things were essential to my understanding within the contexts and processes of knowing of how to go about this research, the actual process of doing it, and my ability to grasp what the research participants shared with me. A deeper explanation of the relationship between my understanding of *Indigenous Knowing* and the lived experience of conducting this research can be found on pages 187 to 202 in Chapter 8.

Plains Cree Protocol: A Guiding Force

> ... protocol, refers to any one of a number of culturally ordained actions and statements, established by ancient tradition, that an individual completes to establish relationship with another person from whom the individual makes a request. (Lightning, 1992, p. 216)

In doing this research work, I was at all times cognizant of the personal, cultural and spiritual nature of the information that I was asking others to share with me. Therefore, I respected and followed the cultural protocols inherent to Plains Cree tradition that relate to approaching others for information. These included: waiting for an appropriate time to approach a potential research participant; making a tobacco and material offering to them: respecting their decision in regards to whether or not they wished to talk about their experiences, and what and how much they chose to share.[2]

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[2] Free and informed consent was obtained from each of the research participants in the following manner. All the research relationships were initiated through the Cree protocol of an offering of tobacco and cloth. In each case where my offering was accepted and the individual agreed to participate in this research they

The Plains Cree protocol that I followed to initiate all of my research relationships included the offering of tobacco and material. The fundamental and underlying understanding that guides this protocol is that the acquisition of knowledge is a sacred process. It is a gift from one being to another. Therefore it must be respected. Respect for knowledge, the act of acquiring knowledge and the person that may give the knowledge, is demonstrated through the act of offering tobacco. Tobacco is a sacrament.

In the same way that the burning of tobacco is a means by which an individual makes their intentions known to the Spirit World and to other non-human beings, a tobacco offering from one individual to another makes it possible for the recipient of the tobacco offering to become aware of the intentions of the supplicant[3]. Because the giving and receiving of tobacco is a sacred act, it allows Elders and spiritual knowledge holders (as recipients) the opportunity to sense beyond the supplicant's spoken words, to gain an understanding of whether or not the request should be granted. Is this person ready to receive this knowledge? Are they responsible enough? Can they be trusted?

Indigenous protocols, such as the offering of tobacco, are a means of establishing, developing and ensuring trust. Within Indigenous communities this trust necessitates the development of a personal relationship between the researcher and the research

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were given a *Statement of Research Purposes and Commitments* that was signed and dated by myself. This process allowed me to meet the ethical standards inherent in the cultural protocol as well as those required by the university (Tri-Council, 1998, p. 2.2). A copy of the *Statement of Research Purposes and Commitments* is contained in Appendix Two on page 219.

[3] Supplicant - "Somebody who addresses a humble but heart-felt appeal to somebody who has the power to grant his or her request." Encarta World English Dictionary, 1999

participant. Smith (1999) observed this taking place among Maori researchers who were conducting research in Maori communities.

> The relatively simple task of gaining informed consent can take anything from a moment to months and years. Some Indigenous students have had to travel back and forth during the course of a year to gain the trust of an individual elder, and they have been surprised that without realizing it they gained all the things they were seeking with much more insight, and that in the process they gained a grandparent or a friend. (p. 136)

This phenomenon is not restricted to Indigenous researchers only. It reflects my own experience and it is also well documented in the literature (Archibald, 1997; Black Elk & Brown, 1953; Boyd, 1974; Fire & Erdoes, 1972; Fools Crow & Mails, 1979; Mills, 1994; and Young, Ingram & Swartz, 1989). Within the practice of Indigenous research the development and maintenance of this trust relationship is guided more by a researcher's actions than their words. "Every meeting, every activity, every visit to a home requires energy, commitment and protocols of respect" (Smith, p. 140). I would also add that in the case of Indigenous knowledge, this trust relationship must extend beyond the researcher and the research participant to include the research participant's family and the wider Indigenous community as well.

Another important aspect of this particular Cree protocol is that it initiates a relationship between the researcher and research participant that is best viewed as that between a teacher and a learner. The research participant is the teacher and the researcher is the learner. Archibald (1997) stresses the necessity of establishing research relationships with Elders that are based on this form of respectful relationship.

> This is where the researchers' role of outside "experts" ought to quickly change to one of "learners" and where their job begins with getting to know the teachers

> and learning to listen, learning to watch, and then being challenged to make meaning and gain understanding from the Elders' talks and actions. (p. 65)

In the initial stage of this relationship, the research participant has more control of the research/learning process. It is the research participant who decides what the researcher needs to learn about the topic at hand. Sarris (1993) articulates this form of relationship very well in his descriptions of his work with the Pomo Elder Mabel McKay. The student-teacher relationship is also how Preston (1999) describes his ethnographic relationship with the Cree Elder John Blackned. Celia Haig-Brown (1992) identified a similar teaching/learning relationship as a broad characteristic of ethnography.

> The behavior of the trained ethnographer is in some ways congruent with the behavior expected of learners in many traditional First Nations cultures. Learners are expected to listen and observe. (p. 106)

Elizabeth McIsaac (2000) states that the role of researcher as learner is a fundamental necessity, for work conducted within the context of Indigenous knowledge systems.

> Therefore, for those who participate in producing knowledge that concerns indigenous peoples, there is a moral imperative to become resituated as learners, and to engage in a process and relationship of learning that is based on indigenous knowledges. (p. 100)

It is the researcher's responsibility to demonstrate that they are capable of taking on the responsibility for the knowledge that may be shared through the learning process. For both the researcher and the research participant it is an act of faith. The researcher hopes to learn enough to fully understand what he or she seeks to know, and the research participant hopes that the researcher will use the information that has been shared in a respectful and responsible manner. It is an organic process, a living protocol that cannot be prescribed by research outcomes and time frames.

> When you seek knowledge from an Elder, you offer tobacco or other appropriate gifts to symbolize that you are accepting the ethical obligations that go with received knowledge. In each case, the exchange confirms a relationship that continues beyond the time and place of the exchange.
>
> (Brant-Castellano, 2004, p. 104)

Lightning (1992), speaks to the importance of protocols from an even deeper perspective. His work with the Plains Cree Elders of his community has led him to the understanding that traditional protocols are more than an act of respect - they are a means of ensuring that the truths the Elders share remain with the recipient forever.

Plains Cree Methods of Inquiry

Simpson (1999) and Struthers (1999, 2001) are examples of Indigenous scholars whose research methodology begins and remains rooted within, their respective Indigenous paradigms. They don't feel a need to justify or validate their methodologies in relation to mainstream academic practices. According to Simpson, she is not developing something new; she is "simply acknowledging the existence and validity of knowledge creation and transmission in Indigenous Knowledge systems" (p. 23). In her research, Simpson applied the following Anishinaabe methods of inquiry: "Anishinaabe collaboration, apprenticeship with Elders and community experts, learning-by-doing, ceremony, dreaming, story-telling and self reflection" (p. 25). My present understanding of Plains Cree methods of inquiry includes most of these strategies.[4]

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[4] Intellectually, I am aware of the importance of dreaming as a Plains Cree way of knowing, but I have as yet not come to an understanding of it through experience. My use of the term 'dreaming' refers to my experiences within the state of being asleep, not to my experiences within ceremonies.

In the context of this research, Plains Cree methods of inquiry included: apprenticeship with an Elder; participation in ceremony, such as fasting, sweat lodge, and pipe ceremonies; experiential learning; story-telling; collaboration; self-reflection; and prayer. These methods of inquiry are inter-related and to various degrees are inclusive of the other. Within this method of inquiry one learns certain knowledge when one is ready, open, and sufficiently knowledgeable to learn it. An individual can gain knowledge, or the responsibility to hold certain knowledge, through experiential, spiritual acts, such as fasting. My personal, cultural preparation for this research involved more than a decade of apprenticeship with spiritual knowledge holders and more than ten fasts. It is through these ways of learning that I have been given the opportunity to begin[5] learning this 'way of life'.

These methods of inquiry have provided me with the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual learning experiences that lead to an understanding of this 'way of life'. These methods of inquiry are the means by which I have been able to come to a fuller understanding of the content, context and the process of this work. Within the context of apprenticeship, ceremony, experiential learning and collaboration with others I have learned about Raymond Harris, his teachings, and the impact that they have had on others. As well, it is through these methods of inquiry that I have experienced the transformative nature of these teachings and processes.

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[5] Within this context I know enough to know how little I know. This learning is a life long process.

My personal involvement in Plains Cree methods of inquiry also helped facilitate the development of relationships with the research participants. I believe their willingness to trust me, and support this work was strongly influenced by several factors: the fact that my work was based on respect for this 'way of life'; my close relationship with Joe and Jenny Cardinal; and the level of congruence between certain aspects of my life story and theirs. The fact that I possessed foundational knowledge through my experiential background with these cultural methods of inquiry, and the fact that the research participants were aware of my background,[6] allowed us the opportunity to engage in deeper conversations. According to Ridington (2000), shared knowledge and experience is an essential prerequisite to conversation.

> Conversation is possible only when storyteller and listener respect and understand one another through shared knowledge and experience. (p. 99)

Research as Conversation

Haig-Brown (1992) used the term 'research as conversation' to define the informal ethnographic interviews she conducted within a First Nations educational setting. In her experience these interviews resembled "intense personal talks" where the "emphasis is clearly on one side of the conversation" (p. 104). According to Haig-Brown, 'research as conversation' possesses the following characteristics:

> It provides, like all open-ended interviews, an opportunity for the participant to direct the willing interviewer in mutual exploration. ...a schedule of questions loosely guided our talk. ...the interviews often became very intimate. (pp. 104-5)

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[6] In the process of making my initial offering to them, I would speak to them about my background in relation to this research and how this research was being conducted.

Several Indigenous scholars have noted the effectiveness of applying informal interviewing processes similar to conversations within Indigenous research. Archibald (1997) implemented 'research as conversation' in her work with Sto:lo and Coast Salish Elders. Struthers (1999) incorporated "informal, free-flowing, ...open-ended" interviews in her research with Cree and Ojibwe women healers (p. 46). As a Cree person conducting research within her own community, Makokis (2001) identified the appropriateness of a methodology that included interviews that were loosely-structured and similar to conversations.

> The nature of the study, cultural expectations, and personal knowledge of all participants called for a loosely-structured format. This format was complementary to First Nations cultural practices, and the conversational process provided time for reflection and dialogue natural to the participants. (p. 61)

Bishop (1995) stresses the importance of collaborative interviewing processes that are not controlled by the researcher's agenda.

> The 'researcher in abeyance' is willing and able to participate in a 'conversation' that is more directly related to the intents, concerns and agendas of the research participants. Such a position is respectful ..... (p. 12)

I chose 'research as conversation' as a component of my methodology because it reflected my previous lived experience of doing research with Elders and other cultural knowledge holders. Research as conversation was the most prevalent methodology employed in the conduct of this research. The primary setting in which this took place was in the homes of the research participants. In a few cases it took place in a restaurant or the participant's place of work. In one instance it occurred over the phone. The list of questions that 'loosely' guided my conversations with the research participants is in Appendix One on page 217.

Research as Chat

Haig-Brown (1992) coined the term 'research as chat' to describe informal interviews that were like "everyday conversations" (p. 105). 'Research as chat' can occur at any time after the researcher has developed a relationship with the research participants and they interact on a frequent basis (p. 105). 'Research as chat' is initiated by a research participant. Often it occurs because they want to follow up on an earlier conversation, or they have thought of something else that they want to share with the researcher. In my experience, 'research as chat' occurs in the context of close relationships that are built on trust – often when one is involved in family and community activities.

Oct. 6, 2003

Getting the sweat ready for Cal today meant putting aside my plans for a return visit to Howard's. Through the process of preparing the sweat I knew that that was what I needed to be doing at that point in time – it is all part of Indigenous research. Before I was finished, Leo arrived and we had a conversation about the impact of Raymond Harris. This was another synchronous moment. Just like at the memorial feast yesterday. The conversations I had with Neva and Phyllis quickly came around to what I'm doing now. They ask what it is I am researching. I tell them, and they offer something up to me from their memories of Raymond. This happens because these people know me and trust me. We have done ceremony together, or we have hung out together, or I have been to their home, or their place of work and/or they have been to my home.

Research as chat was often how Joe Cardinal shared information with me. It occurred when we were alone together and within a group setting. It occurred in the midst of a formal activity such as ceremony, but it was just as likely to occur when we were driving somewhere, or watching television together. Sometimes when I was with Joe in the presence of other Elders, and they were conversing in Cree, he would turn to me at

certain points in the conversation and tell me what had been said, because he thought it was something I should know.

Formal Interviews

In this research, a formal interview is one that is led by the researcher and contained within the structure of a defined set of questions. In the process of conducting this research, three formal interviews took place. One was conducted through the medium of email. This was necessitated by the fact it proved very difficult to have a face-to-face meeting with an extremely busy research participant. In this particular case, it was a follow up meeting after a relationship had been initiated through cultural protocol and a previous research conversation.

Recording of the Data

In this research the recording of the data took place through a variety of means depending on what form of inquiry was taking place. Indigenous methodologies require the researcher to be sensitive, patient, and flexible. In each situation the researcher must consider which means of recording the information being shared, is appropriate. Since one may not always know ahead of time what form the research will take with any given participant on any given day, one must be prepared for all possibilities at all times.

In Plains Cree methods of inquiry such as apprenticeship with an Elder, participation in ceremony, and experiential learning – watching, listening and doing are the means

through which one learns. Recording what is taking place through the taking of notes, audio recordings, photographs, etc. is not allowed.[7] During 'research as conversation', I usually made notes of what was being said while the conversation was taking place. In some cases during my initial meeting with a research participant, I did not take notes during the conversation because I sensed that it may not have been respectful[8] and I did not want to detract from the establishment of a positive relationship. In each case I relied on my intuition to guide me. If it felt right I took notes, if I felt that it was inappropriate, or if I was unsure, I would listen deeply and then immediately after our meeting make notes from memory, or record my memory of what had just taken place on an audio tape that I would transcribe at a later date. Information gained through 'research as chat' was necessarily recorded in this same manner because it was unplanned and organically arose out of the research process. In the context of this research I found that making notes from memory, immediately after meeting with a research participant was an accurate method of recording data. This was validated through the collaborative analysis that took place with the research participants later in the research process.

June 13, 2004

When Harold reviewed the transcript of our first meeting, I sat and watched him read it closely, wondering what his reaction would be. I was sensitive to the fact that what he had shared was really personal and I had not made notes during the conversation. When he finished he lay down the paper and said, "This is right." He only wanted me to change one word. Listening deeply is so important. It's connected to the protocol and what Lightning said about the truth sticking with you. Making notes right afterward also helps too. Even when I am transcribing the notes I have made during a conversation with a research participant, I often remember something that was said that I had not written down.

[7] An exception to this would be that sometimes one is allowed to record a song outside of a ceremony, in order to help them learn it.

[8] In previous learning experiences with Elders and other knowledge holders I had been told that taking notes gets in the way, or prevents one from fully hearing (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually) and therefore understanding what is being shared.

In the process of conducting this research I rarely employed the use of an audio tape recorder to record the words of the research participants.[9] I felt that it would introduce a level of formality into the research process that might hinder the overall process in a couple of ways. I thought that using a tape recorder during 'research as conversation' might make some of the research participants uncomfortable and therefore it might consciously or unconsciously inhibit them from speaking freely. Most importantly I thought it might detract from my intention to conduct this work from within the Indigenous paradigm that it originated. It simply did not feel right in relation to how I had learned to learn within this community. That being said, it is important to note that I always carried a tape recorder with me when I met with a research participant in case it was needed.

Self Analysis of the Data

I analyzed the information gained from the research participants after each of my sessions in the field. In this initial analysis I noted what questions had been answered and what had not been addressed. I also noted the similarities and differences in the information provided by the various participants. Though their personal stories were unique to their own life experiences, there were many common threads. Differences and discrepancies between specific pieces of information were also noted. This initial analysis of the data provided me with direction for my follow up meetings with the research participants.

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[9] I used a tape recorder to record one of my sessions. In this instance the research participant was involved in her own academic research and suggested the use of a tape recorder.

As the research process unfolded I organized all of the data into content areas that related to the questions contained in my research objectives. This allowed me to analyze all the information I had that pertained specifically to each objective. It also allowed me to gain a clearer sense of the common themes that were emerging and to get a sense of where I lacked information regarding specific topics. As a result of this analysis subsequent field sessions became more focused, as I asked specific questions in order to gain a better understanding of those areas of the research that remained unclear.

Collaborative Analysis of the Data

Collaboration between the researcher and the research participants in the process of interpretation and analysis is documented by Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Cruickshank, 1990; Haig-Brown, 1992; Lightning, 1992; Bishop, 1997; Ellis and Bochner, 2000; and Shawn Wilson 2001.

> I had a discussion last fall with some of the other participants in my research, and it was not just about gaining knowledge from them, it was like mixing information, gathering, sharing, and analysis. .... "Am I on the right track?" It involves coming to an agreement about a mutually understood idea. (Shawn Wilson, 2001, pp. 178-9)

Walter Lightning (1992) describes collaborative analysis as a practice that can be placed within traditional Plains Cree thought.

> That kind of collaboration has a long history. The collaboration is in fact "the indigenous mind in action." In Cree terms, this may be expressed "maskikiw mamtonehicikan," which reflects that in thinking, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. (p. 228)

In this research, collaborative analysis took place with the research participants in several ways. During follow up visits, I discussed with them my understandings of what I had learned from them during our previous meeting. This was a means for me to check my accuracy in recording the information that they had shared. I also discussed with them my overall understanding of what I had learned to that point in time in the research process. These discussions served as a means of gauging and validating my emerging understanding of the research topic. These discussions also provided an opportunity for the research participants to correct, add to, or bring further clarity to my understanding of the research topic. Research participants were given a copy of the sections of the first draft of the dissertation that were relative to their contribution and were asked to comment on its accuracy. They were also sent a copy of the second draft of the dissertation and asked to give feedback on the work.

Collaborative analysis also took place with several knowledgeable friends from within the Plains Cree community who are part of what I have defined as the second wave. (The second wave is discussed in more detail on page 85.) This collaboration took two forms. It took place on an informal basis throughout the research process during discussions that were usually initiated by their ongoing interest in this research. These discussions were collective knowing in action.

Sept. 30, 2003

In a discussion with Ruth tonight we talked about how the people who took on ceremonial responsibilities through Raymond either have continued to conduct ceremonies Raymond's way (Arapaho), or over time they brought in their own Cree traditions. She posed the following question: "Maybe those who continue the Arapaho way (strictly), didn't have people at home to show them their own cultural ways?" I see how that probably holds true for _____ and _____ but I am not sure if it is valid for everyone.

They were also given a copy of the second draft of the dissertation and asked to comment.

The Nature and Length of the Research Relationships

> "In Indigenist research, methods for data collection are demonstrations of Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing. This entails following codes for communication and protocols for interacting that expects different behaviour in different settings with different participants. This will vary in each setting and must be respected as part of the research activity, not just as a means to acquire research outcomes. (Martin, 2001)

In this research, the nature of the relationship with each of the research participants varied. It was not a linear or a cyclical process, progressing from one research modality to another. In the majority of cases my entire research with a given participant took place within the context of 'research as conversation'. With other participants, the research took place within the context of a variety of forms at different times. For example, my longstanding apprenticeship relationship with Joe Cardinal provided a variety of learning opportunities throughout the years. Within a ceremonial setting such as a sweat lodge, he would share a teaching with me that came to him through Raymond Harris. On other occasions I initiated 'research as conversation' with him. There were also many other times when we were together, that he would mention something to me regarding his experience with Raymond Harris, 'research as chat'.

The length of the research relationships between the research participants and myself varied. At one end of the spectrum, as previously stated, I had been apprenticing in a traditional sense with one of the Elders for more than a decade. Several other participants

I had known for as many, or more years. With others, our relationship was established within the process of this research. With the exception of three individuals, I had face-to-face research conversations with each of the research participants in the core group and the family and friends group, a minimum of two times.[10] These research conversations varied in length from one to five hours. On average, they were two hours in length.

The Research Participants

This research was community-based in the sense that I worked directly with those people who were a part of what I describe as the 'spiritual community' involved with Raymond Harris between 1969 and 1981. The total number of participants involved in this research was thirty. The people involved in this research were classified into four groups that I defined as the core group, family and friends, the perimeter and the second wave. The various groupings that make up the research participants are illustrated in Figure 7 on the following page.

The members of the core group were the primary sources of information in this research. The core group is made up of the people, from Alberta and Saskatchewan, who had a close and prolonged relationship with Raymond Harris between 1969 and 1981. The members of the core group are primarily Plains Cree people. Of those who participated in this research, there are two individuals who are from other nations. In both those cases their involvement with Raymond Harris took place within the context of the wider Plains Cree community in Alberta. Some of the members of the core group 'apprenticed' with

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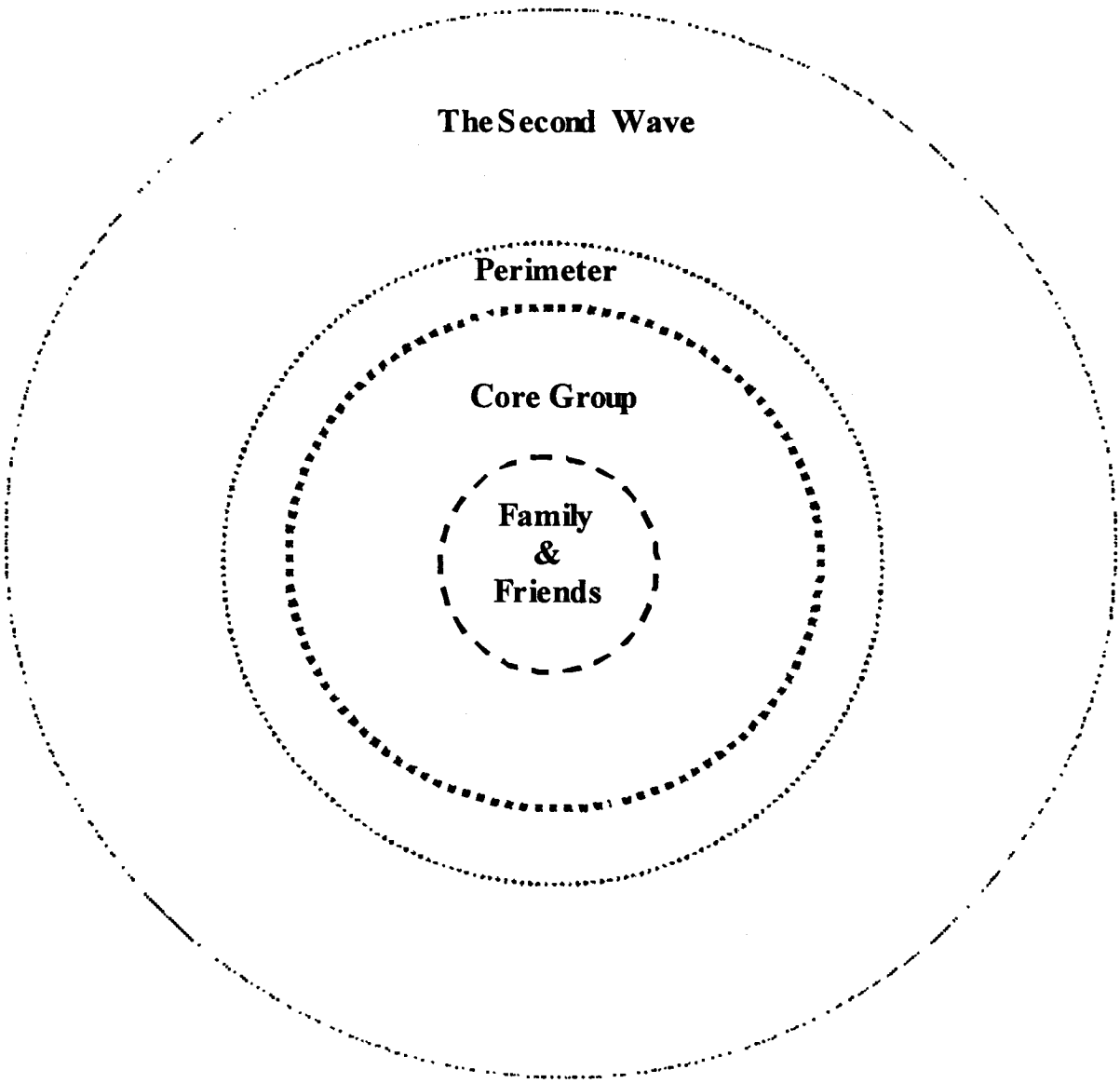
[10] The exceptions were the result of two factors: Time constraints on the part of the research participants and geographic distance.

Raymond and took on spiritual responsibilities. Most of the members of the core group are today considered Elders and spiritual knowledge holders within their respective communities. I identified twenty-five people who fit into the definition of the core group. Three of those people had passed on before this research began. Sixteen people who I have identified as members of the core group participated in this research. In the process of conducting this research, a total of thirty-four research conversations and one formal interview took place with the various members of the core group.

Figure 7 – The Research Participants



In this research there are four participants that are in the family and friends group[46]. Two are members of the Harris family and the other two are close friends who worked with Raymond prior to and during the time that he was working with First Nations people from Canada. This small group of people provided important information regarding Raymond's life and his work in the United States, before Native people from Canada became involved. In the process of conducting this research, a total of seven research conversations and one formal interview took place with the members of this group.

The perimeter group includes people who participated in the events of the time (1969 - 1981) to a limited degree. These people knew Raymond Harris and experienced what took place, but they did not have a close and prolonged relationship with him. The total number of people who could be classified in this grouping is unknown. Five people who fall into this group participated in this research. In the process of conducting this research, a total of three research conversations and one formal interview took place with members of this group.

The second wave describes people whose lives have been impacted through a close and prolonged relationship with a member of the core group. These people did not know Raymond Harris and did not participate in the events of the time (1969 - 1981). As it is with the perimeter group, the total number of people who could be classified in this grouping is unknown. Five people who contributed to this research are part of the second

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[46] Though I used the term family and friends to describe this specific group of people, it must be noted that all of the members of the Core Group were close friends of Raymond Harris and some had been adopted, in the Native way, into the Harris family.

wave. In the process of conducting this research, one member of the second wave participated in a research conversation. Members of the second wave primarily contributed to this research through their involvement in collaborative analysis. They also provided information on the ongoing impacts of Raymond Harris's teachings. Members of the second wave who are Cree, and who have experienced the impacts of Raymond Harris's work over the last two decades, had the most to offer to this research.

There were several members of the core group, who were potential research participants, but who felt strongly that information about Raymond and his work should not be written down. They felt that to do that was not Raymond's way, and it would be doing him, his work, and consequently their work as healers a disservice. I respect their decision to not participate in this research.[47] Their thoughts on the matter reflect their understanding of the teachings that Raymond shared. One of Raymond's expressions was "It's up to you", a teaching that speaks to the inherent power of individual choice. The vast majority of those people who were members of the core group, each with their own experience and understanding of Raymond's teachings, gave their full support to this research.

What follows is a list of the names of the research participants that made this work possible. Their names are presented as a means of acknowledging and showing respect for the contributions that they made to this work. [48]

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[47] Therefore I have avoided any reference to their names and their participation in the events of the time. In the cases where they have been referred to within the stories of others their names have been left blank.
[48] They gave permission to be identified publicly. The one exception is Eddie Belrose who spoke with me in 1992. He passed on before I was aware that this work would became part of a dissertation. In this case traditional protocol was followed.

Core Group

Eddie Belrose	Edmonton, Alberta
Don Cardinal	Seven Sister Falls, Manitoba
Douglas Cardinal	Ottawa, Ontario
Harold Cardinal	Sucker Creek, Alberta
Howard Cardinal	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Joe P. Cardinal	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Jenny Cardinal	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Theresa Cardinal	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Joe Couture	Wetaskiwin, Alberta
Jack Lacerte	Burns Lake, British Columbia
Lawrence Large	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Eric Shirt	Edmonton, Alberta
Pauline Shirt	Toronto, Ontario
Mike Steinhauer	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Harvey Tootoosis	Poundmaker, Saskatchewan
Helen Tootoosis	Poundmaker, Saskatchewan

Family & Friends

Patrick Harris	Ethete, Wyoming
Clarissse Harris	Ethete, Wyoming
Hazel McMaster	Schurz, Nevada
Jr. McMaster	Schurz, Nevada

Perimeter

Mona Cardinal	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Clayton Harper-Shirt	Toronto, Ontario
Don McCaskill	Peterborough, Ontario
Elsey Whiskeyjack	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Francis Whiskeyjack	Saddle Lake, Alberta

Second Wave

Louise Halfe	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Harold Isaac	Nak'azdli, British Columbia
Nan Kendy	Smithers, British Columbia
Leo McGillvery	Saddle Lake, Alberta
Ruth Morin	Edmonton, Alberta

Conclusion

Like Struthers (2001), I have worked from the perspective that, "indigenous knowledge stands on its own and does not require constant comparison(s) to other ways to be understood or validated" (p. 127). This same understanding is also shared by Cajete (2000). Attempts to compare, understand and validate Indigenous ways of knowing, through the theoretical constructs of European based knowledge systems are often a means of consciously, or unconsciously, occidentalizing the knowledge. Smith (1999) refers to this as 'intellectual imperialism' and Battiste and Henderson (2001) describe this action as 'cognitive imperialism'. This does not mean that I do not see the value in Western forms of inquiry. Many of the theoretical and methodological perspectives inherent to naturalistic inquiry, resonate with Indigenous perspectives. Relationships can also be drawn between Indigenous ways of knowing and work within the fields of ethnography and oral history. A brief discussion of the areas of the Social Sciences that are congruent with Indigenous research can be found in Appendix Three on page 221.

My decision to conduct this research within the epistemological and methodological context in which it exists, was based on my knowing that it would be the most effective and respectful means by which I could successfully complete this work. This knowing was the result of more than a decade of experiential learning within the spiritual traditions that had been shared by Raymond Harris. This decision was not the result of weighing the merits or possible limitations of other theoretical standpoints and methods. It did not entail not choosing to use naturalistic inquiry as a reference point, or the application of other research methodologies. I believed then, as I do now, that the imperative of

situating my work within the paradigm that it exists, was the only way that I could begin to fully understand the depth and breadth of this story.

Conducting this research in the manner I have described was possible because of the support and trust I received from the research participants, and the groundwork that was laid by the scholars who have articulated their experiences in conducting Indigenous research. It is my hope that this work will serve as another example of how Indigenous epistemologies and ethics can be respectfully applied within scholarly pursuits.

The results of my research into the impact of Raymond Harris's work with the Plains Cree are presented in the next four chapters.

Chapter Four

"He was a great man."[49]

Raymond Harris and his Work in Canada

Introduction

This chapter contains a brief biographical sketch of Raymond Harris's life and a description of his work among the Plains Cree in Canada. The biographical sketch is by no means a complete description of Raymond Harris's life, since that is not the focus of this study. Its purpose is to provide the reader with enough background information to understand who Raymond Harris was in the context of his work with the Plains Cree of Alberta and Saskatchewan. This chapter is presented in the form of a narrative. It is the result of my weaving together what I learned from the research participants who were members of the core group. It was done with the intention of creating a cohesive story that respects the lives of those who were involved. I have intentionally refrained from presenting information on the details of Raymond's spiritual gifts and his ceremonial practice. To do so, would be disrespectful and irresponsible, and a violation of the promise I made to the research participants and the Harris family.

The recording of oral history, especially in a written form, is an inherently serious task; the importance of which is not lost upon this scribe.[50] Written drafts of this chapter were

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[49] This is how Eddie Belrose described the work of Raymond Harris during a conversation we had on May 17, 1992 at Saddle Lake, Alberta.

[50] A discussion of the field of Oral History and its relationship to Indigenous research can be found in Appendix Three on page 221.

given to each of the research participants whose words contributed to my understanding of this story. Their comments and the discussions that ensued, allowed me to gauge the accuracy of my work, and where necessary, make revisions. That being said, it is equally important to recognize the limitations of such an act. This truth has been voiced eloquently by Greg Sarris.

> One party may write a story, but one party's story is no more the whole story than a cup of water is the river. (Sarris, 1995, p. 40)

Raymond Harris: A Biographical Sketch

Raymond Harris was born on March 5, 1923 at Ethete on the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming. His parents were Carlos and Berte Harris. Raymond was not exposed to Arapaho spiritual traditions while he was growing up. He was raised a Catholic and attended the Indian boarding school at the St. Stephen's Mission on the Wind River reservation. Raymond married his wife Mary Ambrosia Chavez, known as Ambey, in December of 1940. Ambey was also from the Wind River Agency. As a child she had been raised in the Episcopalian church and attended the boarding school at St. Michael's mission in Ethete. Raymond and Ambey had nine children of their own and raised many foster children. Raymond had tried to enlist in the armed forces during WW II but he was not accepted because he was pigeon-toed. During his lifetime, Raymond was employed in a variety of professions. According to his son Pat, "He was an all around hand – farming, mechanics, carpentry, heavy equipment." [51]

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[51] Personal conversation, Aug. 6, 1999

The Calling

> The calling to doctor, and the ceremonies associated with healing, form a distinct and exceptional vocation. (St. Pierre, M., & Long Soldier, T., 1995, p. 28)

Raymond did not choose to seek out spiritual knowledge and responsibilities. He was called to this vocation by the spirits. This occurred in the mid 1950's when he was in his early thirties. Raymond began to hear voices and he thought he was going crazy. He didn't want to tell anyone, because they would think he was losing his mind. He started drinking because the voices were getting louder and telling him to do certain things. After a while he told his wife Ambey. With her support he went to see an old man to ask for help. The old man told him that it was the spirits who were talking to him and he couldn't ignore it. The old man sent Raymond to see Robert Blue Hair. Robert Blue Hair was a Lakota traditional healer from the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota[52] (St. Pierre, M., & Long Soldier, T., 1995).

It is not known in what way Raymond was assisted by Robert Blue Hair and what, if any, direction he received from anyone else in his quest to understand his gifts. There is one account that states that he fasted at Rocky Boy, Montana where he was watched over by a man whose last name was Small. Several other research participants insist that he was taught directly by the Grandfathers[53], that he fasted under their direction. It was through

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[52] Hulkrantz(1992)describes a relationship between the Arapaho and the Lakota peoples that was occurring during the 1950's.which was related to spiritual traditions. Hulkrantz attended a "Spirit Lodge" (Yuwipi) hosted by an Arapaho family in 1955 that was being conducted by a Lakota named Mark Big Road. According to the report of the Indian Agent of the time, a Lakota ceremonialist reintroduced what Hulkrantz refers to as the "Spirit Lodge" (Yuwipi) to the Arapaho people in 1954.

[53] The 'Grandfathers' and 'Grandmothers' or "Old Men' and Old Women' are the spirit entities that assist and guide people. Individuals who are gifted spiritually have a personal connection with specific

these fasting ceremonies, one lasting as long as seven days, that he earned the spiritual gifts that enabled him to serve the people. These gifts included the learning of songs, the knowledge necessary to conduct the ceremonies, and the power to facilitate healing within others. Throughout this process, he was supported by his wife and his close friend Connie Denver. Connie Denver was a member of the Ute nation who lived in Bishop, California. Ambey and Connie continued to work very closely with Raymond in the spiritual work he conducted throughout the rest of his life. Other family members also supported Raymond's work. When he first started conducting sweats his father and his uncle were his singers. Later on, his sons and his son-in-law fasted in order to prepare themselves to become his singers and his helpers.

Sacrificing to Serve Others

"My parents did without many things to do what they had to do."[54]

Through the process of fasting, Raymond earned and took on the responsibilities of a doctoring sweat, a fasting ceremony, and a night lodge. Taking on these responsibilities, involved a great deal of sacrifice – not only for Raymond, but also for Ambey, and their children. When Raymond began practicing the ceremonies he was told by the priest, that he would have to make a choice between one way, or the other – he couldn't practice the ceremonies and still be a Catholic. Raymond chose to serve God under the direction of his 'Grandfathers'. As a result, he and Ambey were excommunicated from the church.

'Grandfathers' or 'Grandmothers', who assist them in their work. The more powerful spiritual knowledge holders have a number of 'Grandfathers' or Grandmothers' watching over them.

[54] Patrick Harris, personal conversation, Aug. 6, 1999

Though Ambey was allowed to return to the church after Raymond's death, none of their children ever did.

Over time, Raymond's ceremonial responsibilities became the focus of his and his family's life. As word of his gifts spread, more and more people began arriving at their home from all directions, requesting Raymond's services as a healer and a spiritual teacher. The majority of people that participated in the ceremonies he conducted came from outside of the local communities at Wind River.[55] Raymond never turned anyone away. He would lead fasting ceremonies whenever people came to fast under his guidance. Sometimes he would sweat day in and day out because people kept arriving to be doctored. Through traditional protocols, Raymond was also asked to conduct ceremonies in other communities in the western United States. In the early 1960's, Raymond, Ambey, and members of their family began traveling to California, Nevada, Montana, Utah, Idaho and South Dakota. Throughout the 1960's Raymond traveled regularly to work within Paiute communities in northeast California and northwest Nevada. Because Raymond's whole life was devoted to his spiritual work, he had to depend on people's offerings in order to support his family. There were times when the family experienced hard times and had to rely on government food rations.

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[55] Two varying perspectives exist relating to the level of local involvement in Raymond's work. When the 'Canadians' traveled to Wind River to participate in ceremonies, the majority of people who were present were other Aboriginal Canadians and Native Americans from outside of Wind River. Joe Couture, was told by Ambey, that locals stayed away when visitors were present in order to give the visitors a chance to participate in ceremonies. At a meeting with several of Raymond and Ambey's children, I was told that not many local people were connected with Raymond's work. This is an example of a characteristic of Indigenous scholarship that Newhouse (2002) refers to as 'complex understanding'. In this case, I have chosen not to "seek to replace one view with another but to find a way of ensuring that all views are given due consideration" (p. 5).

Raymond the Man

> Raymond Harris used to say, If you are helped, don't thank me. Thank the Creator. He is the one who did it.[56]

Irrespective of his phenomenal spiritual gifts and his stature as a powerful healer, Raymond Harris was very much a human being. He was a humble, quiet man – a man of few words. At the same time he was known for his sense of humour and his fondness for playing tricks on people. Raymond was a very positive person. His favorite expression was, "You'll be okay." or "It'll be alright." Raymond welcomed all people, Native, non-Native, male and female into his home and his ceremonies. He was completely dedicated to serving those in need. At times his work ethic and the neediness of the people would compound to create a situation that required amazing fortitude on the part of Raymond and those who assisted him.

> Once there were twenty-eight people who were being doctored by Raymond in the sweat lodge. He doctored two at a time for fourteen rounds. Ambey had to get out after a while. I wanted to get out after eleven rounds but Raymond asked me to sing for the twelfth round. I ended up staying for the whole thing.
> (Jr. McMaster, personal conversation, Aug. 9, 1998)

> Sometimes he would do a sweat and a ceremony [night lodge] twice in one night, four days in a row. He would start in Schurz, Nevada then go on to Yerington later in the evening. The communities were about an hour apart, but they were divided. The next day he would start in Yerington and go on to Schurz. When two ceremonies occurred in one night, my mother had to tie over 200 tobacco ties, for each one. (Patrick Harris, personal conversation, Aug. 5, 1999)

Raymond was not only respected as a healer and a spiritual leader, his responsibilities also included the related role of teacher. He passed on the knowledge he had gained to those who were ready and had earned it. Being ready meant two things: The person could

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[56] Joe Cardinal, personal conversation July 5, 2000

live up to the responsibility that carrying that knowledge entailed; and they had demonstrated a willingness to help the people. Individuals from a variety of First Nations in the United States and Canada earned the rights to sacred pipes, prayer sweats, doctoring sweats, fasting ceremonies, and in a few cases night lodges, through the successful completion of numerous fasts.[57] Like all traditional teachers, Raymond taught his apprentices through experiential learning processes.

> He started people off by having them doing things, but the learning took place within them – that's the important thing. It was their growth, their personal development through the action of doing the ceremonies. That's where the growth took place. (Harold Cardinal, personal conversation, June 4, 2002)

Raymond suffered a stroke in 1973 that left him paralyzed on one side. His speech was impeded, he lost the use of one arm, and it forced him to walk with a limp. These physical challenges caused him frustration but they did not slow him down. He did not allow his handicaps to become an impediment to his work. He continued to conduct all the ceremonies he had been given – at home in Ethete, Wyoming, and in the growing number of communities where he was invited to come. Raymond's perseverance, and his insistence that he would face these obstacles on his own was another source of inspiration for those who knew him.

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[57] A prayer sweat, doctoring sweat, and a night lodge have similar purposes. They all facilitate healing at the spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental levels. In extremely simplified terms, the difference between them can be explained in terms of the degree of spiritual intervention that takes place. In a prayer sweat ceremony a sacred space is created in order to facilitate communication between the individuals present and the 'Grandfathers' and 'Grandmothers' who watch over them. In a doctoring sweat, an individual, or individuals have requested doctoring for a specific 'sickness' and the 'Grandfathers' and 'Grandmothers' who guide the ceremonial leader, work through him/her to facilitate the healing process. In a night lodge ceremony, the 'Grandfathers' and 'Grandmothers' who guide the ceremonial leader, enter the room and work directly on the individual(s) who have asked for help. The night lodge is sometimes referred to by its Lakota name, Yuwipi.

> You would never think of asking him if he needed help with his coat and boots, it would be an insult – disrespectful.
>
> (Jack Lacerte, personal conversation, April 28, 1998)

> The last time I fasted in Wyoming it was early spring and there was snow on the ground. When he was taking us out to our lodges he kept falling and he wouldn't accept help to stand up. He insisted on doing it himself.
>
> (Douglas Cardinal, personal conversation, Jan. 24, 2004)

The one area in which Raymond did rely on others after his stroke was in speaking. Ambey became his voice. He would communicate to her what needed to be said and she would voice it.

Ambey

> Ambey was working very hard, all the time, to serve the people.[58]

Ambey had always been an important part of the work that took place; after the stroke she took on an even greater role in making sure that the ceremonies ran smoothly. Ambey ensured that those who came to participate in the ceremonies understood their responsibilities. This was an ongoing task, since new people, unfamiliar with these traditions, were always arriving. Those who came to be doctored, or to fast, needed to know the necessary preparations that were an essential aspect of the ceremony itself. Ambey also taught the women the knowledge associated with the responsibilities that were specific to them.

> She was strict about what needed to take place around the ceremonies. After Joe's first fast I went down to Wyoming with him every time. She only showed

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[58] Jenny Cardinal, personal conversation, Sept. 27, 2003

> me once how to tie the pouches that had to go around the fasting lodge, and then I was expected to do it for Joe.
>
> (Jenny Cardinal, personal conversation, Sept. 27, 2003)

Raymond Harris's Work in Canada

Raymond Harris's work in Canada was part of the multi-faceted awakening that began to take place among Aboriginal people throughout Canada in the late 1960's. Individuals from many nations began personal journeys towards social, political, cultural and spiritual renewal. Among the Plains Cree, these synchronous movements were personified by the actions of Robert Smallboy. In 1968 he led a group of people who left the reserve community of Hobbema, Alberta, leaving behind their homes, ranches, and future oil royalties in order to establish a traditional community in an isolated location known as the Kootenay Plains on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. They had consciously chosen to free themselves from the oppression of the Indian Act, the domination of the churches and the negative forces of reserve life. They returned to their traditions of living off the land, following the guidance of the Elders, and openly practicing the ceremonies that had to be hidden in the past. It is through the Elders at Smallboy's Camp that the relationship between Raymond Harris and the Plains Cree was expanded.

At the same time that Robert Smallboy and Lazarus Roan established Smallboy's Camp, a small group of political and social activists who were working for the Indian Association of Alberta, the Alberta Native Communications Society and the Metis

Association of Alberta, set up offices in the same building in Edmonton, Alberta.[59] This included the late Eugene Steinhauer who was the director of the Alberta Native Communications Society; Harold Cardinal, the newly elected president of the Indian Association of Alberta, who worked with Howard Cardinal, Joe Cardinal, Joe Couture and Mike Steinhauer. The architect Douglas Cardinal, whose office was in Edmonton, was also connected to the activities of this group, through his support of their efforts to improve Native rights in Canada. This small group of people shared a physical space, and supported each other's struggles towards political and social justice. Their personal relationships with each other would also be the means by which each of them would be reconnected to the spiritual traditions of their people.

In 1968-69, several of this group, Eugene Steinhauer, and his brother Mike, Harold Cardinal, Douglas Cardinal and Howard Cardinal, began to participate in the ceremonies that were being conducted at Smallboy's Camp. A variety of ceremonies were taking place at the camp during that time, including sweat lodges, fasts, and the sun dance.

Many of the ceremonies taking place at Smallboy's Camp, were being conducted by a young, spiritually-gifted individual, named Wayne Roan. When Wayne Roan was injured in a car accident while traveling to the camp, he was brought to camp and it was decided that a messenger would be sent to Wyoming to ask Raymond Harris to come and doctor him. The Elders at Smallboy's Camp knew about Raymond Harris and his work. It is believed that they knew each other through their mutual relationships with the Cree at

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[59] Seven members of who I have defined as the Core Group were among the people who worked for these organizations.

Rocky Boy, Montana.[60] Raymond arrived with Ambey and Connie Denver and proceeded to doctor Wayne in the sweat lodge. Wayne recovered from his physical injuries, but the accident had shown him that he needed to take a break from his ceremonial responsibilities and focus on his own healing. As a result of that decision, Native people from Canada began to go to Raymond Harris for healing and spiritual direction.

In 1969, Eugene Steinhauer, and his wife Alice sought healing for the problems Eugene was having with his kidneys. After an unfruitful experience with a 'healer' in California, they traveled to Raymond and Ambey's home in Wyoming. Eugene had met Raymond and Ambey previously when they had come to Smallboy's Camp. Eugene received doctorings through Raymond in the sweat and the night lodge. When Eugene and Alice were ready to return home, he asked Mike Steinhauer and Joe Cardinal to drive down and pick them up, because they had originally flown to California and left their car at home. Joe and Mike asked Howard Cardinal to help with the driving. When they arrived at the Harris's, they met Raymond and Ambey and their family and over the next couple of days participated in ceremonies. This would be the first time that Joe, Mike, and Howard would experience the power of the night lodge. For all five of these Cree people from the Saddle Lake First Nation in Alberta, this would be the first of many annual journeys to Wyoming.

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[60] Many of the people from Hobemma, Alberta have relatives in Rocky Boy, Montana as a result of a small group of Plains Cree people seeking refuge at Rocky Boy after the events of the 1885 uprising in Canada. Family, social and ceremonial relationships have been maintained between the two communities since that time.

In the spring of 1970, the number of people from Canada making the journey to Wyoming increased. This is the point in time where more women became involved. Those that traveled to the Harris's to participate in ceremonies that year included: Eugene and Alice Steinhauer, Mike Steinhauer, Joe and Jenny Cardinal, Howard and Jean Cardinal, Douglas and Marilyn Cardinal, and Harold and Maisie Cardinal. It is in this year that Eugene, Joe, Douglas and Harold began fasting and apprenticing with Raymond Harris. It was also in 1970 that Eugene Steinhauer earned the responsibility of a prayer sweat. Eugene put up his sweat at his brother Mike's on the Saddle Lake reserve, northeast of Edmonton. Though the old people had kept the spiritual traditions alive by practicing them underground, this marked the beginning of the reemergence of traditional spiritual ceremonies being conducted openly within the community of Saddle Lake.[61]

The spiritual community around Raymond Harris continued to grow in 1971. That year Joe Couture and Don Cardinal made their first journey to Wyoming with others who had travelled from Alberta the year before. Joe Cardinal became the second person to take on the responsibility for a sweat at Saddle Lake and Harold Cardinal would assume that same responsibility in his home community of Sucker Creek. In the summer of 1971, at the request of the group from Saddle Lake, Raymond came to their community to work with those who needed healing and those who wanted to learn. That first year Raymond and Ambey and his helpers came to Mike Steinhauer's where they conducted doctoring sweats, night lodges, and put people out to fast. Over the five days that they were there,

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[61] The perseverance of Plains Cree spiritual traditions throughout the era of prohibition, and their subsequent public renewal as it relates to the work of Raymond Harris, is discussed more fully in Chapters 5 and 6.

word of what was taking place spread to other First Nations communities, and hundreds of people came and participated in the ceremonies. Many people received doctorings through Raymond. The number of people who participated in this event was not the only significance. These ceremonies were being conducted openly for the first time in decades, and for most of the people who participated, this was their first experience with traditional spiritual ceremonies. When the ceremonies were completed in Saddle Lake, Raymond and his entourage travelled to Sucker Creek to help Harold set up his sweat lodge.

In the decade that followed, this annual cycle continued. Each year, people from Canada traveled to Wyoming in the spring to participate in ceremonies and Raymond traveled to communities in western Canada to conduct ceremonies during the summer. In 1972, Raymond and Ambey returned to Mike Steinhauer's at Saddle Lake and Harold and Maisie Cardinal's at Sucker Creek. In the following three years, Joe and Jenny Cardinal hosted Raymond's work at Saddle Lake. Throughout the 1970's, the number of people whose lives were impacted by the work of Raymond Harris grew exponentially. More people were introduced to this way of life through their relationship with a member of the core group. They in turn developed a close relationship with Raymond and Ambey. This included the late Louie Halfe and his wife Rina, the late George Kehewin, as well as Pauline Shirt, Eric Shirt, Lawrence Large, and Harvey and Helen Tootoosis. As the core group expanded it included people from other Cree communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan. This led to Raymond being invited into the community of Kehewin, Alberta, and later to Poundmaker, Saskatchewan. At the same time, more members of the

core group began to take on the responsibility of conducting ceremonies in their own communities. Therefore, people had even more opportunities to access the healing and learning potential of these spiritual traditions.

> Every year for four or five years he [Raymond] came. After Saddle Lake he travelled on to Sucker Creek, Kehewin, and Saskatchewan. I followed them everywhere they went up here.
>
> (Howard Cardinal, personal conversation, Oct. 7, 2003)

The increasing numbers of Canadians[62] who were becoming involved with Raymond and Ambey during the 1970's resulted in more and more people arriving at their doorstep in Wyoming. It also meant that Raymond would make more than one journey to Canada each year because he could not be away from his home for too long a period of time. Raymond and Ambey and his helpers would travel to one or two communities in Canada to conduct ceremonies, and then return home. At another time they would return to the other communities in Canada that Raymond had committed to helping. The time between his trips to Cree communities in Canada would not be a period of rest. His work with Native Americans was ongoing. He continued to hold ceremonies at home, whenever people arrived asking for help, and traveling to communities in other states, when people asked him to come.

Raymond's Passing

Raymond Harris passed away peacefully at home in December of 1981. He was fifty-eight years old. There are people who apprenticed with Raymond who feel that he was worked, or he worked himself to death. That perhaps Raymond fell prey to the things that

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[62] The term "Canadians" is used because that is how research participants referred to themselves in the context of sharing the events of this story.

he had cautioned them about when they took on the responsibilities associated with doctoring – to be careful not to take in some of the other person's sickness and to take care of your self. Hundreds of people, from the four directions, came to pay their respects at his funeral. When he died, the church changed its mind and was willing to take him back. The priest who led the service said, "There had been a misunderstanding." Raymond was buried on the fasting grounds by his home. Many people from Canada were in attendance at Raymond's funeral. For most of the Canadians who had worked closely with Raymond that was the last time they made the journey to Wyoming.

The Impact of Raymond's Passing

Raymond's death created a tremendous vacuum in his family. Ambey's life, and the lives of the younger members of the family, had revolved around assisting Raymond with his work. Due to his untimely death he had not passed on his ceremonial responsibilities to a member of his family, therefore it was uncertain if anyone would be able to pick up the mantle. The sheer magnitude of Raymond's spiritual legacy, and the legendary reputation that followed him, meant that it would be virtually impossible for anyone to fill his shoes. Less than four years passed before Ambey lost her struggle with diabetes and passed on in 1985.

The period from 1971 to 1981 marked an intense time of healing and learning for the members of the core group. They were hungry to understand, what was to them, a new way of life. They traveled to Wyoming, and they followed Raymond from community to community when he traveled in Canada. Many of them fasted every year. Some had

begun to serve people through the practice of the spiritual traditions that Raymond shared. Those who were in the core group were very close to each other while Raymond was alive. Five or six families would often travel as a caravan to Wyoming. They supported each other, especially in the early years, when they were an anomaly amongst their own people, and in some cases ostracized for revaluing traditional spiritual practices. When one of them earned a sweat lodge, the others would help them get started. They supported each other by attending each other's sweats.

After Raymond passed on, the members of the core group continued to practice the traditions that had been reawakened through his work. As a whole, the members of the core group did not remain as close knit as they had been in the past. While specific relationships that had existed prior to the advent of Raymond's work in Canada continued to be close, others did not. Over time, segments of the group drifted apart and continued their work in their home communities, separately from the others. In some cases, the work of the members of the core group began to have an impact outside their own communities. Throughout the 1980's and 1990's, more and more people began coming to them for healing and to learn traditional spirituality as part of their personal journey towards an understanding of their cultural identity. Members of this second wave of people invited these spiritual knowledge holders to their communities, to share this way of life. The cycle had begun to repeat itself.

Chapter Five

"He brought us back to life."[63]

The Impacts of Raymond Harris's Work on Members of the Core Group

Joe's Story

> My healing began in the 1960's. I was working in Edmonton for the Indian Association of Alberta. One of the guys I was working with said he was going to see a 'medicine man' in Wyoming. Some of the other guys who worked there, and myself, decided to go check it out. I didn't know anything about Native traditions. I didn't even know where Wyoming was! We drove for two days to get there. When I met Raymond he asked me, "Who are you?" I didn't know how to answer that question. I took out my wallet and handed him my Status Card. He handed it back to me and said, "You need to learn who you are. Out there [on the fasting grounds] is where you will learn that."

When I first heard this story from Joe Cardinal, more than a decade ago, it brought an uncertain smile to my face. Not because it pleased me, or I found it humorous, but because at the time it seemed so absurd to think that there was a time when Joe did not know anything about Native traditions and could not answer the question, "Who are you?" I knew him as a highly respected Elder, a wise and loving human being who helped many people find their way back to themselves and their cultures. Over the years, as our relationship grew, and he shared more of his life story with me, I developed a greater understanding of the significance of that brief, but powerful story.

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[63] This is how Joe P. Cardinal summed up the impact that Raymond had on the people in a personal conversation I had with him on Oct. 23, 1997 in his home on the Saddle Lake reserve.

Joe never sat me down and told me his life story. It wasn't his nature to spend a lot of time talking about himself. My understanding of his life came in pieces that were for the most part intertwined in stories to help those who were listening to understand something, or to simply have a good laugh. Most often his stories were about his work with others, characterized by the use of the word "we" rather than "I". There are two sources where Joe was recorded speaking about his life story. One is a letter that I scribed for him in 2002 and the other is an interview he gave for a book on Alberta's Native Elders (Meili, 1991). Excerpts from both of these sources[64] explain, why prior to working with Raymond Harris, Joe Cardinal was unsure of who he was.

> I was born in 1921 on my parent's trap line in the Birch Mountains between Ft. McMurray and Ft. Chipewyan. That was, and still is, a beautiful place. It was a healthy life. We had lots of food. We worked hard and the land provided all that we needed.
>
> As a boy I was sent to an Indian Residential School. In the boarding school I never had freedom. I had to follow everything that everyone else did. Every day was the same. I spent seven years there.
>
> "When I got out of school, I guess I must have been about twelve, I honestly almost hated my parents because I'd learned they were bad people. I remember not wanting to have anything to do with them.
>
> We were not human, because we didn't know about Jesus. I can't believe how much fear they put into me. Everything was 'Jesus will punish you' and 'God will do this to you.' All I knew is I could never do anything right." (Meili, 1991, p. 252)
>
> It was the same thing on the reservation when I got out of boarding school. The Indian Agent and the priests were in charge. I needed to get a pass to leave the reserve. Passes were for a maximum of two weeks.
>
> I joined the army after WW II broke out. Before going to the army, I lived in a tent. At first, I was kind of scared, having to live with all those other people. We

[64] The primary source is the letter I scribed for Joe in June of 2002. The one section that was derived from his interview with Meili (1991) is cited.

> were stationed in Edmonton, and then we were sent to Shiloh, Manitoba for advanced training. I gradually worked into this new way of life. For the first time in a long time I was free. I could go to town, shop, and go have a beer if I wanted to. I was in the anti tank regiment of the artillery. One day the Third Canadian Division in England wanted reinforcements, so I signed up for it. The first thing I knew I was in England. It was 1941.
>
> I was stationed around London, at the bases at Whitney and Guilford. At first I was kind of confused when I went on leave. I had never seen buildings like that in my life. I like watching architecture. In my mind I thought, how could man make a building like that? Finally, I even had white soldiers as comrades, as friends. I started to think differently about white people, especially when we got our orders to invade Europe. We landed on the beach at Normandy, France on D-Day. I didn't even know where I was. My comrades told me it was France. That was the time that I started to learn. I was told that white men were sober men, yet on that battlefield when I saw the blood and heard people screaming, I learned that was not so. Learning on the battlefield was a hard way to learn. I was in Europe for five years. I was in England, France, Belgium, Poland and Germany. All this time I was learning about humanity. All I knew was war. Everything was war, my mind, my being, and where I was.
>
> I always promised myself that I would never be captured as a prisoner of war. I was scared of being shot, if I was captured. I pulled through the war. Over there I was free. Being a Cree Indian didn't matter. There was no discrimination.
>
> Finally I came home. When I got home I found out that I was a prisoner of war on my own reservation, in my own country. I wasn't allowed to leave the reservation without a pass. I tried to join the Legion, but I was told no. The man said that if I was accepted, I would spoil the Legion, nobody would come. I wanted to buy a trap line, but the Indian Agent wouldn't let me. He said I was supposed to become a farmer. I couldn't understand why Indian Affairs and the Legion were so mean. I think sometimes they were worse than the boarding school.

Though Joe Cardinal was the only member of the core group who was a war veteran, they all were products of the Indian Residential School system. For all the members of the core group, their association with Raymond Harris was a profound experience that developed and strengthened their understanding and their pride of their cultural traditions. More importantly, for each of them it was a journey towards understanding themselves.

Personal Stories

This chapter tells the story of the impact of Raymond Harris's teachings on members of the core group. The voices of seven research participants telling their own personal stories of their lived experiences, is the means through which the reader will have the opportunity to gain an understanding of the impacts of Raymond Harris's work. Though all of the members of the core group who participated in this research contributed to my understanding, some were not as explicit about their own personal journey. These particular stories were chosen because of their depth and their detail.[65]

The personal stories that follow are edited transcripts. They are not a record of the entire conversations that took place between the research participants and myself. Specific parts of the original transcript were not included in these personal stories for the following reasons:

a) The information that had been conveyed was not part of the research participant's personal story.
b) Information regarding the details of Raymond Harris's ceremonial practice had been shared.

In some instances the order in which the information was remembered and shared with me, was shifted in order to maintain the narrative flow. This occurs in cases where the research participant remembered and shared more details about a specific instance either

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[65] As previously noted, sixteen members of the core group participated in a total of thirty-four research conversations. Fourteen people shared information, to varying degrees, on how their work with Raymond impacted their personal lives. Though some of the information shared was very brief, all spoke of physical, and/or mental, and/or emotional, and/or spiritual transformation.

later in a research conversation, or during a subsequent meeting. Working with peoples' words in this way, brought the guiding principles of respect and responsibility to the forefront.

May 4, 2004

I have begun working with the transcripts and pulling out the personal stories. This process brings up some interesting thoughts/questions. Once again I am reminded what an honor it is to do this work. These stories are so powerful! I want their voices to be heard. But when I decide what stays and what doesn't, and if I shift the order, whose voice is it? I wonder what they will think when I take their stories back to them?

Each one of the following personal stories was brought back to the individual research participants in order to ensure that I had recorded them correctly and to get their permission to include them in this work.

The personal narratives that follow are presented chronologically according to when the research participant began their work with Raymond Harris. I have introduced each of the personal narratives with a brief description of the speaker in order to provide the reader with a better understanding of who these individuals are and the contexts from which they speak. Their words speak for themselves.

Harold Cardinal

Harold is from Sucker Creek, Alberta. He was a young man when he began working with Raymond Harris. At that time, Harold was president of the Indian Association of Alberta and an influential member of the National Indian Brotherhood. He was known as an astute and feisty politician who ushered in a new era of Aboriginal politics in Canada. Harold also authored two seminal texts "The Unjust Society" in 1969, and "The Rebirth of Canada's Indians" in 1977. Harold earned his Doctorate of Laws at UBC in 2005. It was a great loss when he passed away on June 3, 2005. He shared the following with me during our first meeting together in his office at the Athabasca University complex in Edmonton, Alberta on June 4, 2002.

Two things are important. The first is don't deify Raymond. That would go against who he was and it wouldn't be respectful of the Traditions. The other thing is that the traditions were still alive. Some of the old people had kept them underground because of the pressure of the church and the law. People had kept them alive secretly. It was the generation, like myself who had been to residential school, the one or two generations who had been indoctrinated and who were Christians who felt that those traditions were evil, because we had been separated from them, the culture, the spiritual traditions. We were the ones who benefited from Raymond's teachings, because in Eugene Steinhauer's words, when asked by the Elders why people were going to Raymond, he said, "Because he is willing to teach us." For the young people like myself, here was a person who was willing to talk about these things, he was willing to teach them and that was the difference.

I attended residential school for 10 years and then went on to high school in Edmonton away from my home community of Sucker Creek. Then I went on to university at Carleton in Ottawa. I was raised a Catholic. I knew nothing about the traditions. I believed that traditional spirituality was pagan or heathen. As a student at Carleton I had attended a Longhouse Ceremony at Tyendinaga and I had visited Akwesasne. When I was introduced to the traditional ceremonies I was a skeptic – even after meeting Raymond and some of the old people.

I returned home to find summer work and that's when I was asked to head the Indian Association of Alberta. Probably because I had gone to university, very few native people had at that time. It was 1968. I was 22 or 23 years old. I really didn't know much.

I was responsible for the whole province so I thought it was important to get to know the whole province. It was at that time that Robert Smallboy had taken the people from Hobemma into the mountains. Smallboy was their chief for life. I think he was from Ermineskin. I thought I should go visit them to see why they were there, since there was talk about them. They were in the news and it was a concern to both the provincial and the federal governments. When I visited Hobemma and asked one of the leaders there why the people had left the community, this man, who was a devout Christian said, "They think the world is going to end. They're living in tents, as soon as Winter comes they will be back."

I drove out to Smallboy's Camp. I can't remember who I was traveling with. At that time it was a logging road, now it's the David Thompson Highway. It was one of the most beautiful places on Earth. It was on the North Saskatchewan River with mountains all around. When I drove up to it, here was a circle of tipis. I was meeting with Robert Smallboy and the old people came in. They started talking. I spoke Cree so I was able to understand them and to speak with them. They talked with me about why they were out there. It was my first introduction to talking with Elders. Robert and these Elders made an impression on me. I returned to Smallboy's and strengthened my connection with them. They would talk with me about the culture and the traditions and the importance of them to the people, and the importance of that way of life. This is what I found interesting. I moved towards this very slowly because I was a skeptic and I very much thought like a white man and this was all new to me. I questioned it.

There may have actually been a connection between Raymond Harris and these old people from Hobemma. Smallboy had spent his youth down in Montana at Rocky Boy. There might have been an earlier connection with Raymond, but that was definitely the connection that brought Raymond into Canada.

It was these old people at Smallboy's that recommended to me that I go to Wyoming and meet Raymond Harris. It was Eugene Steinhauer who brought me down to Wyoming the first time. I went down to Wyoming, and I fasted. I think it was after my first fast that Raymond said to me, "You should lead a sweat up there, you should lead one of my sweats. I'll come up and show you how to do it. I'll help you out." So Raymond came up

to Sucker Creek with Connie Denver, his sons and Ambey the next year. I think when Raymond came up to help me set up my sweat that may have been the first time that Raymond came.

My community was devoutly Catholic and there hadn't been a sweat for probably 50 to 30 years. My parents were devout Catholics, so there was a bit of concern. The sweat was in Sucker Creek on my parents' property. and I worked in Edmonton, so my family and I only went out there for weekends. My mother had shielded me from a lot of the community gossip and pressure. I didn't realize how strong it was and what a concern it was for her, as a very devout Catholic.

Raymond gave us our start. Raymond didn't offer teachings, it was more by doing, that we were expected to learn – like traditional teachers. The traditional teacher makes you do it and that's how you learn. By giving me the sweat then I had to do the sweat and that was a source of knowledge for me. He didn't come out with these teachings. His favorite expression was, "It'll be alright." He wasn't a man of a lot of words. I remember having a conversation with him one morning in Wyoming at the breakfast table, over morning coffee. Raymond said, "I'm only giving you a start so you can go back and find out the ways of your people, because they exist there. I can't make you an Arapaho – you are a Cree. You must go back and talk with your own people, the traditionalists." That was the direction he gave me. I don't know if others were told to do it that certain way - Arapaho? It was a start for those people who had been raised in the residential school system, disconnected from those people who had kept the tradition alive. Raymond started us on a

journey where we would now value our history, traditions, and culture, as a people. Our own people were reticent to teach us because of the church and the law.

When our son was a very small baby, less than a year old, he had a hernia and was in the hospital in Edmonton to have it removed, but he got sick and the doctor said he would have to wait until he was better to have the surgery. He was getting sicker and sicker so I took him from the hospital. I had to sign papers to take him out. The doctor was against it. It was an act of faith for me to take him out of the hospital to have him doctored, to rely on Raymond's gifts, because my son was getting worse and worse. He was first doctored at Joe's place by Raymond, but he wasn't getting better, he was getting worse. We moved with Raymond to Small Boy's Camp for more doctoring. We were traveling on to Wyoming and our son was in very bad shape. My wife and I thought we lost him when he gave one deep breath and then there was silence from the back seat of the car. Then he started to breathe again. We saw that as the turning point. It took almost a year for him to get better. Raymond had explained that the baby had gotten sick in the hospital because some juice had been left on a heater all night and the nurses had unknowingly fed it to him and it was bad. He had some type of food poisoning. The hospital didn't believe me, but I went back to the hospital and showed the doctor a blood test that had been done by the community health nurse that indicated the poisoning.

There was no doubt that Raymond had great gifts and had been called to this. Raymond taught many people and it became a very important part of their lives. I didn't go down for Raymond's funeral and I never saw Ambey after that. I have not been back to

Wyoming. I haven't talked with some of those earlier people to know how they are, how they have incorporated it into their lives.

Learning that every culture had their own ways helped me when I went out around the province and ran into things that were conflicting with my teachings. I found it very helpful to respect other people's way. Those were their ways of doing things. There were other approaches and there wasn't just one way, a right way and a wrong way.

Raymond started people off by having them doing things, but the learning took place within them, that's the important thing. It was their growth, their personal development through the action of doing the ceremonies and that's where the growth took place. Not by someone talking to them. As a young man who just came out of university, when I first went down there, I was expecting someone to give me the answers – like a lecture, or writing them on the board and that's not the way that Raymond taught.

I think it's important that that story be told. Keeping in mind that he started people back to regaining their cultures, to seek out the old people. A lot of the ceremonies that our here today are because a lot of the people went back and started to ask the old people.

Douglas Cardinal

Douglas Cardinal is Metis of Blackfoot ancestry. His search for his Native heritage took place within the Plains Cree community as a member of the core group of people who learned from Raymond Harris. Douglas is one of Canada's most renowned architects. His most notable commission to date is the National Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec. Douglas's work is deeply influenced by his spiritual practice that is rooted in his apprenticeship with Raymond Harris. Douglas shared the following aspects of his personal story during two conversations we had in Ottawa, Ontario. The first took place on Feb. 18, 2002 and the second on Jan. 24, 2004.

Raymond never saw race. He was color-blind. Like Willie Commanda. Raymond didn't discriminate against people like me who are half white. Willie Commanda ends his prayers with "All my relations". Meaning that all races are included, all living things. Raymond was like that. When I lived in the white world I was looked down on for my Indian-ness. In the Indian world I was looked down at for my Whiteness. I was subject to that when I searched out my roots. Raymond had none of that. Raymond made everyone feel respected and welcomed.

I had a lot of stress in my work, a tremendous amount of stress that used to make me sick. I started to hang around with Eugene Steinhauer and Harold Cardinal and began to fight some of the political battles. I had become an Indian in the politician's eyes and so I was no longer to be trusted, because Indians could not be trusted with money and were drunks. My career as an architect was being seriously hampered by my political activism as a Native person, and I would get very sick from the stress of that.

Eugene took me to Smallboy's with Harold Cardinal to get doctored by the old people and Wayne Roan, the first time. At that time I really didn't believe in anything. I was very sick – stressed out. They did a ceremony. During that first experience I was very sick. I was semi-conscious. I had trouble with my kidneys. The songs they sang during the ceremony took me away. I was floating along. I could see the animals. I felt part of the land. An eagle slammed into my body. I became the eagle. I was terrified. I was falling out of the sky. The feathers were fluttering in the wind. I realized that all I needed to do was spread my wings. I did and at that instance the ceremony stopped. The drumming and singing stopped. It was over and my kidneys were functioning. What happened there went against all my training [university] and understanding.

I get extreme stress attacks as a result of my work, that lead to vertigo and extreme sickness. When I got these panic attacks, Marilyn would take me to Smallboy's Camp. Wayne Roan would work on me. I really relied on Wayne for this.

One time when we were in camp, Wayne had gone to town and on the way home there was a car accident. The car rolled and Wayne was thrown from the car. He was severely injured with internal injuries and people did not know what to do. Eugene suggested that they bring Raymond in. They pooled their money and sent for Raymond. When he arrived with Ambey and Connie, we built a sweat with him. It was the hottest sweat in my life; I thought I'd die in there. Raymond doctored Wayne with the eagle wing. Wayne walked out of that sweat. I told Wayne I needed him, but Wayne said you are going to have to ask

someone else. I asked Raymond to teach me. Raymond said, "I'll teach you everything you want to know."

It was Raymond who gave me a pipe. I went to Wyoming to fast. I first fasted at Wyoming and later at Saddle Lake. I followed him exactly – the preparations. Some people had forgotten something. Raymond said they were not ready to fast. Some got angry. The first day was very hard; there were ants and mosquitoes. When Raymond came, he said it was a commitment you made and you must be in harmony with your surroundings. Raymond said you have to honor the life all around you. To relate to a blade of grass is an accomplishment. On the second day a lot of butterflies were around. I started to communicate with them and one came into my lodge at night when they closed the door. Then I made peace with the ants. I said to one that would not back down that, "I'll respect you if you'll stop biting me." On the third day, I asked the Creator for strength. I received it from the earth and the trees. I was so full of energy that I felt that I didn't need to fast any more; I was ready to come out. When Raymond came he said you have to watch the voices – at first they will give you a hard time – then they will start to sweet talk you – and talk you out of the fast. On the fourth night, the energy totally left me. I was pulled out of my body. I saw myself lying there. I tried to rationalize it. Then I saw a light, a being, and I said I would surrender to it. It replied, "As if you have a choice." I tried bargaining, crying and then I surrendered. My life rolled back. I saw all that had gone wrong in my life. I felt terrible pain. The being said, "Why are you judging yourself so harshly, you are just a human being. What you need to do is forgive yourself". The being helped me to wade through all my shit. I said [to the being], "I come to you

with the knowledge of my life." At that moment I was at one with everything. Raymond opened my lodge. I said, "I'm not coming back from spirit. I'll only fuck up again." Raymond said, "You have to come back; you should see this beautiful morning." He just kept describing it. I said to the spirit, "Can I go back for an instant to see the day?" The spirit said, "You are a free spirit." I opened my eyes to the day and I never saw anything so beautiful. I told Raymond I was only back for a while. Raymond said, "We're all only here for a short time." Raymond asked me if I feared death. I said, "No, I am scared of not living right." Raymond said, "Then you are a fearless warrior." The coming out sweat was very hot. When we were given a drink of water, Eugene, Mike, and Joe, we were all retching. Raymond said, "It's tough to be an Indian."

Eugene put his first sweat up by my place [at Stoney Plain]. The priest at Saddle Lake wouldn't allow the sweats. Eugene would help me with the vertigo. Then Eugene wanted to go to Saddle Lake with his sweat. Joe and Jenny [Cardinal] opened their place up to him and he ran the sweats up there. That's when the church was coming out and saying that it was devil worship. Later he moved his sweat to Mike's [Steinhauer] place and later Joe fasted for his own sweat. At that time it was considered black, evil medicine, and the priests definitely controlled the reserves at that time. When I got a stress attack I found that if I could remember a sweat song, then I could sing the song all the way out to a sweat. If I got to a sweat it would help me. If not, it would usually take me two weeks in the hospital to get better. So I fasted for a sweat when Raymond came to Saddle Lake. Now I could sweat anytime I needed to.

I never had the intention of sweating with others – having others come. People heard that I had a sweat. That it was one of Raymond's sweats. People started to come. Raymond told me, "Your sweat has to be open to anyone who needs it." Then people were coming more and more to the sweat and bringing me offerings. I explained that my time was an issue – so if they did the fire, and the rocks, then I would do the ceremony, Almost every night when I drove home from my office in Edmonton, I would come over the crest on my property and there would be a fire going outside the sweat. That got to be a lot.

Someone came for doctoring. I asked Raymond what I should do. He said that I would have to fast again for a doctoring sweat. I went to Wyoming to fast for a doctoring sweat. On the third day of my fast I noticed that there were more cars down by the house. Raymond said that they were people from Alberta. Raymond said that some of them want to see you fail. Some were asking, "How can you have a doctoring sweat and be a successful architect?" Raymond said, "You can be anything if you are an Indian. These ways can empower you to be the best person you can be. The others see limitations. I don't want to carry you down the hill tomorrow, I want you to walk down with me."

I moved here to build the museum. I was shocked that I had won the contract, because I had fought Trudeau with Eugene and Harold for years. When I presented my proposal I just spoke from the spirit about my vision. It was a spiritual vision. I received it in the sweat lodge at my home. When Eugene and Mike Steinhauer and Joe Cardinal visited [the museum], Joe said that no man could conceive of this alone. Eugene said that it was the Grandfathers, and Joe said he must have had the help of the Grandfathers to do that. I

had to work seven days a week, 12 to 14 hours a day in order to finish the museum because Trudeau had made the commitment to me, and I had more importantly made a commitment based on a vision. Raymond had taught me that you speak your vision, you live your vision, and you need to be your words.

The last time I fasted in Wyoming it was early spring and there was snow on the ground. When he was taking us out to our lodges he kept falling and he wouldn't accept help to stand up. He insisted on doing it himself. Raymond died shortly after. I never fasted under anyone else. I have fasted by myself and asked Raymond for help.

Howard Cardinal

Howard was raised on the Saddle Lake reserve. He and his wife Jean lived in Edmonton from the late 1950's to the mid 1970's when they returned to their home community. Howard experienced the impact of Raymond Harris's work throughout the time that Raymond was involved with the Plains Cree. Howard took on the responsibility of his own sweat lodge after supporting the work of his close friend Eugene Steinhauer for many years. Howard serves as an Elder to the National Alcohol and Drug Addictions Awareness Program (NADAAP). Howard shared his story with me on Oct. 7, 2003 in his home at Saddle Lake, Alberta.

I was born in 1933. I lived with my grandparents from 1937 to 1946. My grandfather had a sweat in the bushes, out of the way. They always took it down afterwards. They couldn't do it in the open. They hid them from the police and the Indian Agent, and the

priests. My grandfather, on my mother's side, was naturally gifted. He held sweats and Tea Dances. He was guided by the spirits. During that time there was a person who had a Shaking Tent. I seen some of that in my day. When I was a kid I used to fall asleep when the lights went out and then the rattles started.

I went to residential school for four years. They tried to take away my culture and my language. I left with a grade four education. After that I went to live with my parents. It was a lot of hard work farming. There was no welfare. It was a good life. We were never short of anything – we raised pigs, cows and horses that we could sell for the things we needed. We worked the farm into the 1950's.

In the 50's a man called Old George Bull used to come and teach us songs and dances. He was one of the biggest teachers here. In the 50's we started a two-day powwow at Christmas time. There were about eight dancers, not like it is today – a competition. In the 50's we had Round Dances. I saw a Sundance here in 1951, led by Old Stony. It was the last one. He had a Shaking Tent as well. He was laughed at. No one had respect for him. My grandparents would offer tobacco for him to hold a sweat or Shaking Tent. My uncles Clark and Lloyd used to hold sweats. When they passed away no one held a sweat in the family. The people who did it [sweats] were laughed and sneered at by others. It completely went underground.

When they released the travel ban in the 1950's, people started traveling to Sarcee, Hobemma, Saskatchewan. The Tea Dances and Chicken Dances got revived. Powwows got revived.

My wife and I lived in Edmonton from the late 50's to the 70's. I worked in the oil patch. On weekends we traveled to powwows, baseball games and did lots of drinking. We had no children. We only visited the community [Saddle Lake]. We attended the odd feast that took place when we were visiting. In the 60's my wife and I never went to church. She is United and I am supposed to be Catholic. My schooling was all church, church, church. My father was a truly brainwashed catholic. He traveled with priests and bishops. He got well indoctrinated, but I myself didn't.

In the early 1960's we were in the process of us adopting a child. It was 1964. We couldn't have children of our own. We had various tests but we didn't go as far as my wife having an operation. I got a job in Edmonton because adoption was based on stability, income, your house. I had to settle down for a year, so I did. I stopped traveling around and in 1966 we adopted a baby girl, two and a half months old. My wife took a year off work to raise the baby. It fulfilled our lives. Prior to that I was a full time alcoholic. No responsibilities. Easy come, easy go. I really cut back when we had the baby.

My father was charged in 1966 with killing a police officer in a drunken rage. He went to jail for five years. My mother came to live with us. I experienced stress and depression. I

was questioning life. And church was not my thing. I started drinking more and I left my wife and child in 1968/69.

In 1968/69 Smallboy moved out to Kootenay Plains. I wound up there in a drunken state and saw the tranquility of the place and the easy life they had. I arrived there again, drunk, but we were not welcome there, in that state. That's one of the things they were trying to get away from.

In 1969, my wife gave me a choice between the bottle and her and our daughter. She said, "Make your choice today. Do you love the bottle more than us?" I chose them and I stuck with my commitments.

Eugene [Steinhauer] got sick in the late 60's. His kidneys were failing. He went to see 'Simmel' a movie star in California who was practicing doctoring. It was a bad experience. He left there and somehow, someway, someone told him about Raymond and Ambey. He went to their place and went through doctorings – sweats and nightlodge. One time Joe [Cardinal] and Mike [Steinhauer] said, "We need a driver. We're going 1050 miles. We have never been there, but we have directions. We will cover your expenses, we have money." [Eugene had phoned them and asked them to drive down and bring them back home.] I drove two-thirds of the way. It was new country. We got to meet Raymond and Ambey and the whole family. The following day there was a doctoring. Eugene and his wife were there. Eugene said you are going to be doctored, Joe and I both. We laid down in the sweat. That was a heavy duty sweat for me. That time we met a guy

from Schurz, Nevada [Jr. McMaster] and Connie Denver from Bishop, California. When those guys were in the sweat, Oh Boy!

[*"Was that your first time in a sweat?"*][66]

We used to sweat at Smallboy's. At Smallboy's it was men only in the sweats. I went to ceremonies at Smallboy's Camp with Eugene and Mike, when they worked at the Indian Association of Alberta. They [the people at Smallboy's] were the only ones practicing the ceremonies in the 60's.

Raymond first came to Mike's. It was the start of it being out in the open. It was the first time I had seen a fast – men and women. I helped out. During the fast there were doctoring sweats. It was a full house all the time – 30 to 35 people. Boy was it hot. I panicked and when the doors opened I was literally thrown out of the sweat. I was practically knocked out. The spirits must have thrown me out because I had been making too much noise. He held night Lodges – mass doctorings. They were held in a garage. I was the guard during the ceremonies.

Every year for four or five years he [Raymond] came. After Saddle Lake he traveled on to Sucker Creek, Kehewin, and Saskachewan. I followed them everywhere they went up here.

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[66] I asked Howard that question at that point in our conversation.

Eugene took the pipe and then the sweat. That winter we had a sweat at 32 below. My two uncles Lloyd and Clark were there, Joe and Jenny as well. It heated up and the frost dripped off the willows onto us. Later we learned to preheat the sweat with a torch. Joe took on a sweat in the early 70's. We sweated there every week. We had lots of fun there. If Joe didn't lead, Eugene would lead.

Eugene asked me to be his singer. Raymond gave us four songs on our 1969 trip. We each had a tape. We would practice them. Raymond said "In time when you fast and sweat you will get back to your own Cree sweat and songs – they will come back to you." Eugene gave me my sweat. It is a Cree sweat.

In the mid 80's I was a councilor [Band Councillor] Eugene was Chief. We got our guidance from the sweat. It also helped with our stress. We had lots of emergency sweats.

There are probably a good 40 sweats still here. At one time there were 60. More and more young people are doing it.

In my thirty-five years of searching I found it there.

The way that Raymond taught us was that you had to earn it. Fasting to know yourself, then fasting for a pipe, then fasting for a sweat. You need to learn how to splash, how to treat your pipe, the flags. I still think a lot about Raymond. When he sat down to talk he talked in a quiet, understanding way. You could tell he was talking from the heart in a

sincere way. He was a humble, gentle man. I learned a lot from him. In fact I sing the healing song I learned from him in the sweat. It's a prayer sweat.

Raymond said that at one point in time you will see a lot of people doing sweats and doctoring. A lot of people will come to seek these ways. If they follow the protocols they will eventually get there. They will want to doctor. Some will do it for money, but in between you will see those who do it by protocol – tobacco and flags. It's not for money. It's the life and spirit of a person you want to help. If you help one, you have served your purpose. If you try and help everyone, it may hurt you.

To go through this process you must fast – to know yourself, for a pipe, for a sweat, for songs. If you want to go further you need to fast to see if "someone" will look over you [a Grandfather]. You must have this if you are going to doctor, or take over a night lodge, or a shaking tent.

Raymond told me: "Are you prepared to put the ultimate, your life, on the line? That's the commitment you will need to make – to help a complete stranger – to put them first, their healing. When you come down to that – are you prepared? If you are, you will be strong – the spirits will help you. When you achieve that, you can be of help to the people. There are no shortcuts, no easy way. After you get into that position, are you going to be spoiled or be humbled? People will shower you with money and possessions. Can you put a price on life? No amount of money or property can buy a life. Those things come and go. The

life of a millionaire and a beggar are made from the same things – Sunlight, Winds, Water and Earth."

This is what they told me. That's what they gave me.

Theresa Cardinal

Theresa Cardinal is the oldest daughter of Joe and Jenny Cardinal of Saddle Lake, Alberta. She was a young woman when she first came into contact with Raymond and Ambey Harris in 1971. Since that time, Theresa accompanied her parents on a spiritual journey that has spanned more than three decades. She is a respected educator and one of the founders of the Amiskwicy Academy, a public school based on Plains Cree values in Edmonton, Alberta. She shared her story with me on May 17, 1998 at the Cardinal family's home on the Saddle Lake First Nation.

I first met Raymond and Ambey, when they first came into Canada, about 20 years ago. They came to Mike Steinhauer's. I was brought there because I had suffered a nervous breakdown. The doctor had given me Valium and I was sleeping almost 24 hours a day. My mom had come to get me, she threw away all the pills and put me in the car and took me over to this place. I was in a daze. I thought nothing of it.

I remember they put me in the sweat. I was sitting in the sweat and I did not know what this place was since I had never been in a sweat before. I remember not knowing what to do - nobody really knew what to do, it was everybody's first or second Sweat. We sat up and were practically suffocating. It was really hot. We had our little face cloth because

that is all they tell you to bring. I just sat up because I was still feeling sickly and it didn't bother me. When you're sickly and you go in Sweats you don't feel the heat. That has been my experience anyway.

That night I don't think I slept. I could keep hear Ambey singing, far away all night. Slowly I would go towards the singing. It would get louder and louder as I went towards it in my sleep. At least I thought it was in my sleep. That went on for a few nights. On the third day I believe I woke up and all of a sudden I felt I was alive. I began to notice where I was, who was around, and what was happening.

Ambey told me what had happened was that I was dying. The only way they could keep my spirit here was by her singing. She had stayed up all night singing to make sure that I went towards that singing, to her, to make sure that I was alive. That was the way that I began to know and understand our own way of life that was many centuries old already. From that day on I was hooked, literally, I began to want to know more and understand more. That was my first experience in Raymond and Ambey's arms. That is how it felt like, like being welcomed in Raymond and Ambey's arms. Ever since then that is what it has felt like. It always feels so very special when I hear their names being mentioned.

Then they started coming here. They camped where the summer sweat is now. Many people started hearing and coming about their pains and aches. It was such a nice time here because they were such open and friendly people. They just welcomed you. It was

such a sense of belonging as soon as you entered their circle. There was no holding back for them in terms of trying to help their own people, and they took us as their own people.

You know I don't even know how they got here, who called them here, or how they came to be a part of our circle, because of the state that I was in. It just was natural after that, it didn't matter you know. Now that I think back on it I wonder how they got here? But it was meant to be - because that was over 20 years ago and they have helped many people from that time on.

You see where this house is, I remember fasting once there and down there on the Arapaho Nation too. It was hot during the day and then cold at night. There are very little trees, very, very, hot, very fast - and then you would get cold at night. Then I started fasting here and I had to come out after one night, then I had to go to Kihewin because that is where they were to finish off there. I think I fasted every year since that time, except this year and maybe one other year.

It was always about this time, the green leaves, the warm weather, when they were here. You could hear Ambey laughing if you were sitting here, [by the old house] joking or laughing, or teasing with someone down there. [Where they camped, by the summer sweat.]

They had a daughter the same age as I, her name is Debbie and we became really good friends, maybe you will meet her over there. It was literally through her that I became

very bonded with Raymond and Ambey. When she was growing in my stomach, my baby here [Naomi], I decided to go live with them for about six months. I didn't even know that I was pregnant at the time, but Raymond knew. All the way down there he made sure that I didn't get into any lifting. or any heavy kind of work. He also knew that I was going to have a girl. There were always people there. Only a few days during the week was quiet around there, and Ambey was able to organize her house and get everyone to do the housework and that.

There have been so many things that I have been a part of. I was a part of their lives for such a long time that I guess I have just taken it for granted that it was meant to be. I was just there when it happened I was lucky. I was part of the lucky ones who became part of that circle and saw the humanness of their efforts in trying to help people.

Those are the stories that I can remember the most about of what they brought back to us, and how they brought it back to us. And how proud I'm sure he is now of seeing that it is still carrying on, even though my father has changed some of things because we are Cree. But that was always the intent. I know Raymond in his humbleness just wanted people to get started here, back to doing this kind of thing, because we are a different tribe. I'm sure that he is up there today smiling along with Ambey.

It is gratifying to see that even the younger ones now, even in school, they talk about "my *Moosum* [grandfather] has a sweat", or "my dad is going to a sweat", or "I'm going to sweat today". You never heard that 20 years ago, you never heard nothing. Now I have

my grandsons and it is no problem talking about it. A large part of that is because of him, Raymond Harris, being able to bring that back to us here and being proud of it and not being ashamed of it anymore. So that I think is his legacy. He initiated that process for us. It was in us all along but we just didn't know where to start and how to start it. He just became the instrument by which we could begin. A lot of lessons that he showed us, they have stayed with us and I think we have just modified it because we have learned some of our own Cree ways again. And that is all he wanted, to be able to do that for us.

Harvey and Helen Tootoosis

Harvey and Helen Tootoosis are from the Poundmaker reserve in Saskatchewan. They lived for many years in Saskatoon where Harvey worked as a civil engineer. Throughout the years they have always maintained their home at Poundmaker. Harvey and Helen were introduced to this way of life through Eugene Steinhauer and Joe Cardinal. They began their work with Raymond Harris in 1973. Harvey and Helen continue to serve people through the ceremonial practices that they learned through Raymond Harris. They shared their personal story with me during two conversations. It began in Edmonton with Harvey on October 2, 2003 and it continued the next day with both Harvey and Helen at their home in Mundare, Alberta.

It is important that my wife Helen be here, since she can fill in some of the spaces that I may not remember correctly. I will only proceed so far without her.

I met Raymond in 1973. Before that I was introduced to ceremony through Eugene Steinhauer. I was raised a Catholic and I went to boarding school. Before that I knew nothing about ceremony whatsoever. I was a greenhorn.

I was educated as an electrical engineer. I was working as a civil engineer in Saskatoon. My wife was working for the federal government. We had a big home and two cars. My cousin asked me if I would be interested in helping with the building of a treatment centre in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. We took a year's leave from our jobs. While we were up there, Eugene Steinhauer was asked in to do a sweat. I had never done a sweat before. I knew nothing about it. I didn't know what to do so I followed everything that a young man from Saddle Lake did. It was hot. I felt like I got burnt. It was not a pleasant experience. There was a young boy about five years old sitting beside Eugene, singing the songs. I thought, as soon as this young boy leaves, I'm out of here too. The little boy stayed for the whole sweat, so I ended up staying as well.

After that Eugene invited us to sweat in Saddle Lake. My wife was not well, so it was suggested that I bring her for doctoring. We went to a doctoring sweat and she got better, so we became interested in this way of life. We moved from Meadow Lake to Bonnyville to work on a treatment centre there. We sold our house in Saskatoon and did not return to our jobs there. While we were in Bonnyville we would go to Eugene's sweat and sometimes to Joe's [Cardinal] as well. That was in the early seventies – 71-72. The first sweat up at Joe's was the first time that I had a profound spiritual experience. It was then that I made a commitment to follow this way of life.

Some families were heading south to Wyoming. We had heard the stories of Raymond and Ambey. We were very interested in meeting this man. The first time that we went, there were about five or six families who traveled to Wyoming in a caravan: my cousin and his wife, Eugene and his wife, Joe and Jenny, Louie Halfe and his wife, and Joe Couture and his wife Corrine. Raymond wasn't the person Helen and I expected to meet. He was part cowboy, and part construction worker. He was a quiet man.

The next year Raymond came into Saddle Lake and I fasted there. I got a Sweat right away. Then I took on a doctoring sweat, and then a night lodge. This December it will be thirty years that I have been running my own sweat. Raymond was a simple man. He told me that in the Creator's eyes you do not have to be perfect, you just have to try your best. My wife and I have devoted our selves to this work – this healing work.

After meeting Raymond, and the treatment centre was built in Bonnyville, we sold our house in Saskatoon and moved back to our home on the Poundmaker Reserve. That is where we built our sweat lodge. We had all the time in the world. We didn't have jobs, but we had money from selling our house. So we travelled to Wyoming as much as possible.

Later on we went back to Bonnyville to work at the treatment centre for short terms. We would travel each weekend to Poundmaker to put up a sweat and then go back to work during the week. Working in Bonnyville gave us the money and the time off to continue traveling to Wyoming. It worked out quite well for me and my wife and our learning

process. We would save up money for awhile then we would go and live with Raymond and Ambey for a few weeks at a time, then come home and save up some money, then go back to Wyoming again. We did that for years. We traveled to Wyoming so many times that he knew the way by heart. We felt like part of the family. We learned these ways by living with Raymond and Ambey. By being shown it – this way of life.

My wife and I went down to Wyoming for the funeral in 1981. We have not been back since. We had plans to go last summer but my mother passed on. In the early days we were close as a group. Whenever anyone else got a sweat we would go and help them build their lodge the first time. I haven't seen or heard from any of them in about twenty-five years.

[Do you practice the Arapaho way or the Cree way?]

I do it the way that Raymond taught me. I see no need to change the ceremony. That's the way the helpers came to me, that's how I do this work. I learned Cree spirituality from the old people, but my ceremonial practice follows the way that I learned from Raymond. I was given a choice as to whether I wanted to learn songs or do healing. When I presented my pipe, I said that I wanted to learn how to help the people. I have kept up my end of the bargain – I help the people.

A lot of people have and continue to come for doctoring. There is a ripple effect. Someone will come and find their healing, then they will go home and all of a sudden a

bunch of people will show up from that community. It has happened several times. One time there were twenty or thirty people who arrived from a northern community. They camped at our place and there was just one day in the whole month when we didn't have a sweat, when I wasn't doctoring.

After that early time, I ended up back in Saskatoon working with the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology. (SIIT) I worked with them until I had to retire this year because I am 65 years old. I was 35 when I began doing the sweats. I was younger than some of the others.

I have passed sweats on to others, as Joe and others have done, trained others to do sweat. It is a ripple effect. The ripple keeps going out. If someone trained two or four people and they went out and did healing work with another ten people, then it grows exponentially.

Pauline Shirt

Pauline Shirt's home community is Saddle Lake, Alberta. She has lived in Toronto since 1969. Her relationship with Raymond and Ambey Harris began in 1977. Pauline was instrumental in the formation of Wandering Spirit Survival School in Toronto. Wandering Spirit was the first urban-based cultural survival school in Canada. As an Elder, Pauline continues to serve the Aboriginal community in Toronto. My conversation with her took place over the phone on Oct. 26, 2004.

It started for me the day that Elvis Presley died. [August 1977]. I was living in Toronto at the time. I had gone home for a visit. I took my children and went without my partner. My sister Lillian took me to Joe and Jenny's place. She told me that there were people there who were doing ceremonies, and I should go there and fast. That was my first Fast. Raymond and Ambey were there with their whole family. I got ready to fast. I went to see Ambrosia to tell her that I wanted to fast. She was standing by a fire. She looked at me with the most beautiful, kind eyes. She radiated beautiful energy. I was expecting a stern person. She was so kind. She just embraced me. I felt at one with her. My sister told her that I had come to fast. Later, I presented pipe to Raymond. When I shook hands with him, it was like shaking hands with a beautiful entity. He radiated beautiful energy. I felt like I was home. He embraced me. He just welcomed me.

That was my beginning. Every summer I would go fasting [in Wyoming] and take my little ones, and the other children who I took care of. I got to know the songs and how things were done. I began to deeply learn the ways. Before that I had been in the American Indian Movement; all that seemed immaterial when I began to learn these ways. I learned a lot – songs, healing work. I found out who I was. Raymond called me his Florence Nightingale because I brought so many sick people to them. Sometimes I would bring people from the east in buses.

Raymond helped me out when I was starting Wandering Spirit Survival School. He showed me how to deal with children who needed healing – everything about Native spirituality. I learned who Pauline was in all that.

Raymond and Ambey, they had a big family. I was amazed how they opened their house to everyone. When we went there people were camped all around the house. I used to call the people who came from Alberta in their trailers and RV's, 'The Alberta Oil Sheiks'. The Grandfathers took care of us; we became one family, all of us. Raymond was the first, the strongest force that helped me. We had a good relationship. I respected Raymond, and Ambey, and the family. They opened their home on a high spiritual level. Sometimes there would be 200 people camped out at their place.

In Saskatchewan they would have a night Lodge and there would be 100 to 150 people. It was amazing. He [Raymond] was able to tell everyone what they were there for. What they could do to help themselves. It was amazing what a great healer, medium, he was. Ambey was the spokesperson for him because of his condition [the stroke]. He gave us the spiritual tools we needed to help ourselves.

My children were part of it all.

When I met Mother Theresa in Toronto, I gave her a medicine bag that I had made for her. She embraced me and it was the same feeling that I got with Raymond the first time I met him. Raymond and Mother Theresa, and my children of course, are the only people who I felt as pure white energy. Raymond gave me so much. I always give him thanks and feed him.

When Raymond died. Joe Couture called me. I just felt so empty, so sad. My children helped me get back on my feet. I did go to the funeral. I flew down. It was so sad. The first couple of days I stayed alone in Lander at the Holiday Inn. My relatives from Saddle Lake came and we went to see him in the funeral home. The family was taking him home, so we followed the hearse. I remember sitting in the front seat and my brother was driving. My sister-in-law was between us. When we got near their home I saw something large and grey out the window. I said, "What's that?" It was an eagle. It was maybe six or seven feet high, sitting in the field. That eagle just bowed his head to Raymond when the hearse went by. It was a Spirit. It was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen in my life. It was an amazing Spirit. We got to the house and it was so sad. There were people from all over the world. People from North and South America came. It was so sad.

The funeral mass was out at a church, with a priest. They sang in their language. We all followed the hearse back to their home where he was buried. There were miles, upon miles of cars. That day was so beautiful, sunny and warm. People took their jackets off. We said our goodbyes. When we were throwing the dirt in, all of a sudden you could feel the cold right to your bone. When I looked up, there was an eagle and a whirlwind. It was so cold that people ran to their cars. Only three or four of us stayed, including Ambey and my sister Lillian. The wind blew so cold. When it was over the sun came out again.

It was a heartbreak. I will never forget the hurt, the loss that I felt when he was taken away. I came home alone. I got home on Christmas day. Everyone was celebrating. I had never celebrated Christmas with my children. I told my children what had happened.

Life went on and I thanked him.

After that, Ambrosia started to go down hill. She just shrank. She became a tiny little woman.

I went back to fast the year after. In 81-82 I had separated from my partner, so I had a lot of heartbreak. I went for two weeks for my healing. I was a single parent. I had used what money I had to get there. When I was there I was told that I needed more flags, but I didn't have any money, nor did my girlfriend who had come with me. We did not have much time to get the flags before the start of the fast. So we prayed. I started praying to Raymond for help. When I was done I found several crisp, brand new $20 US bills in my wallet. It was a gift from Raymond. I got to fast and made it home.

After Raymond died things were not the same.

I got closest to Raymond Jr., 'Jowie' [Raymond & Ambey's son]. He was adopted into the Shirt family. He helped my daughters heal themselves. He taught my son how to run a good lodge.

Working with Raymond gave me back the essence of my life, since I almost died of cancer. His Grandfather helped me be a good parent and continue working for the Grandfathers. Today I continue to do the Grandfathers' work. My son has one of his

sweats. We sing his songs. We continue Raymond's work. His spirit lives in us – my family, my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren.

Closing

Every member of the core group has a personal story of profound personal change resulting from their relationship with Raymond Harris. Everyone experienced the personal healing of themselves, their loved ones, or others. Some apprenticed with Raymond and earned the spiritual responsibility to conduct specific ceremonies within their own communities. Most of the members of the core group continued to be, or over time became, respected as leaders in the fields of politics, healing, education, architecture, and the arts. The contributions of some of the members of the core group have been recognized locally, provincially and nationally. Three members of the core group have received honorary doctorate degrees. Three people have been recognized through National Aboriginal Achievement Awards. Two have been awarded the Order of Canada.

It is difficult to separate the stories of the impact of Raymond Harris's work on the members of the core group and the impacts on the broader cultural, social and political movements of the time. Many of the members of the core group were intricately involved in the facilitation of the changes that were occurring among Aboriginal peoples between 1969 and 1981. Therefore, their personal stories are intertwined in the events of the time. In the following chapter this relationship is discussed in relation to the re-emergence of

cultural traditions among the Plains Cree, the ongoing political struggles, the rise of the Aboriginal healing movement and Aboriginal education.

Chapter 6

"He gave the movement Spirit."[67]

The Impacts of Raymond Harris's Work on the Cultural, Social and Political Movements of the Time

> Spirituality is not like going to church, it involves all of your life, all aspects of the self, the mental, physical, emotional and the spiritual.
> (Joe Cardinal, personal conversation Sept. 24, 2003)

This was Joe Cardinal's succinct response when I asked him about the connection between the spiritual awakening that took place and the broader political movement of the time. In the moment of silence after the question had left my lips, when our eyes met, I wished that I could have reeled my words back in before they had been heard. Before he spoke, his eyes had already answered. In his mind the question was redundant and I should already know the answer. Spirituality involves all of your life and all of your relations: the self in relation to self, the self in relation to others, the self in relation to creation. Personal change occurring at the individual level impacts the collective. Corollary to that, would be, that which impacts the collective, affects the individual. This holds true, regardless of the nature of the change.

By the late 1960's the negative forces of oppression wrought by the colonial institutions of the state and the church had had a cumulative impact on Plains Cree society. After a state of prolonged "individual assimilation" within the Catholic residential school system,

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[67] This is how Joe Couture described the impact of Raymond's work on the political and social movements of the time during a personal conversation that I had with him on Oct. 3, 2003 in Wetaskiwin, Alberta.

and decades of "collective cultural repression" of traditional spiritual practices, the members of the core group were existing in what Boldt (1993) describes as a "cultural void" (p. 168). It is through their personal work with Raymond Harris, which was occurring simultaneously with their professional activities within political and social organizations, that they were able to begin to move towards a more positive reality as they reclaimed their individual and collective identities. In the following quote, Harold Cardinal explains very powerfully the relationship between personal change and the collective movements of the time.

> There are some core themes.
>
> It was a hard journey. My parents had done as much as they could to make me know who I was. They had seventeen kids. My father was a hunter, a trapper and a Chief. He provided for us and never once was on welfare. All of his generation were like that. I knew Eugene's father, he was the same. At seven years old we were taken away to residential school. Day in, day out, we were told to forget all that – to become white. If they could have coloured our skin white they would have. It was a fully systematic and thought out system of brainwashing. It was well thought out by the bishops. There was never a question of what they were going to do. It was condoned by Canadian society. There was death. Some died in the schools, others died afterwards from various causes. All were affected.
>
> There was nothing, no university that would validate what our parents had given us. This experience [Raymond] validated us, because we were fully brainwashed. We needed to find a validation for who we were – our language, our culture. We had been taught that we came from an evil people. Through this process we became aware that we had been brainwashed. For many political leaders, the Harris/Smallboy influence was that it validated our core identity. It legitimated who we were. It validated that our direction was the right one – our political direction. Not only in this province, but nationally. It validated our desire to form organizations. The influence of Harris mushroomed, and validated us to develop institutions like Blue Quills, SIFC [Saskatchewan Indian Federated College], and Maskwachees [Hobbema College]. Certainly in the area of healing that pointed the way to be able to incorporate the ways of our people in our development. Poundmaker's/Nechi were strongly influenced by that validation.
>
> (personal conversation, May 28, 2004)

The impacts of Raymond Harris's work on the cultural, social and political movements of the time were part of an array of synchronous events that were occurring within the intertwined spheres of culture, healing, politics, and education. Each of these spheres were/are[68] made up of a multitude of relational moments, and simultaneously, each sphere was/is an integral aspect of a whole movement away from cultural, social and political bondage. The challenge inherent in trying to define the impacts of Raymond Harris's work were described by Joe Couture in the following manner:

> The events of that time cannot be explained in scientific terms. It's not a linear event. It's organic. It unfolded like a river flows - various sources moving around obstacles, like rocks, continuously moving forward.
>
> (personal conversation, Oct. 5, 2003)

August 11, 2004

How do I tell this aspect of the story in a way that is true to the lived-experiences of those whose story it is, and meaningful to those who will come to it for insight into the events of that time? How do I actually present this series of non-linear events?

Building on Couture's metaphor of the flowing river, I will present examples of movement that occurred within several streams: healing, culture and tradition, politics, education, and the arts. Streams that were a part of the river that moved around and in some cases wore away that which was blocking its natural flow. But as it is with water, streams merge and lose their separate identity when they become part of a greater whole.

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[68] The terms "were/are" are used because to speak of these actions only in the past tense is to imply that this 'movement' is no longer occurring, and that I purport the view that we exist in a post-colonial world. The degree to which colonial ideology continues to exist in the minds and hearts of many of the descendents of both the colonizers and the colonized, leads me to believe that this is not so. Progress has been made, but the process is far from complete.

The Reawakening

There was a reawakening, a time of great change, among Aboriginal people in Canada beginning in1969 and continuing throughout the 1970's. It was a time of cultural renewal, social and political activism, and the start of the healing and wellness movement. Many of the key figures in these initiatives were members of the core group who were simultaneously working with Raymond Harris. When asked about the relationship between the work of Raymond Harris and the broader movements of the time, Joe Couture and Harold Cardinal explained it in a similar manner.

> Raymond's work brought a spirit, an attitude to what had already started politically and through social organizations. He gave the movement Spirit.
> (Joe Couture, personal conversation, Oct. 3, 2003)

> His and other Elders' work made certain that the renewed political awakening in Indian Country would be rooted in the spiritual and traditional roots of First Nations. (Harold Cardinal, personal correspondence, Oct. 19, 2003)

From a political standpoint, the reawakening is generally associated with the reaction of Native people to the 1969 release of the federal governments infamous *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy,* more commonly referred to as the White Paper. Across Canada, Native people formed a united front to denounce the proposed legislation and its recommendations to dissolve the unique status and rights of Native people as defined in the Indian Act and in the Treaties. The fight to oppose the White Paper was led by Harold Cardinal, who at that time was the president of the Indian Association of Alberta (IAA) and a pivotal representative of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB). Harold was supported in this fight by other members of the core group, such as Eugene

Steinhauer the director of the Alberta Native Communications society, Joe Couture[69], the architect Douglas Cardinal, and others such as Eddie Belrose, Joe Cardinal and Mike Steinhauer who worked for the IAA. In 1970, the Indian Association of Alberta released, *Citizens Plus*, a formal written response to the White Paper that is often referred to as the Red Paper. As opposition to the recommendations in the White Paper increased throughout the country, the federal government was forced to back down. The defeat of the White Paper marked the turn of the tides in relations between Aboriginal political organizations and the federal government of Canada.

Indian Control of Indian Education

The first major fight over the control of education for Native people in Canada, was led by people from the community of Saddle Lake, Alberta with support from the Indian Association of Alberta. The sit-in at the Blue Quills Indian Residential School in 1970 "was the first political occupation, by Indians, of any federal building in this country" (Cardinal, 1977 p. 208). They succeeded in stopping the transfer of the building to the local school district, and the Blue Quills Native Education Centre "became the first school in Canada to be officially opened and administered by Indians" (Bashford & Heinzerling, 1987, p. 129). Mike Steinhauer, a member of the core group, was the director of the Blue Quills education program for its first ten years of operation. During that time it evolved from serving elementary and junior high students, to becoming a high school, and eventually it provided post-secondary programming through affiliation

[69] In 1969 Joe Couture was hired by the provincial government to work with the Alberta Native Communications Society, the Indian Association of Alberta and the Metis Association of Alberta, who all shared an office in Edmonton. In 1970 he began working for the Indian Association of Alberta.

agreements with the provinces' universities and community colleges. Today in 2004, as Blue Quills College, they are a post-secondary institution that has recently begun to offer a Ph.D. program in Cree Studies.

Buoyed by the results of the successful takeover of Blue Quills, the Indian Association of Alberta launched a province-wide strike in 1971 against the government's policy of integrating Native students in off-reserve public schools. Native people in Alberta demanded control over the education of their children. The long drawn out battle that gradually wore down resolve at the community level, was settled in 1972. Later that same year, the federal government and the National Indian Brotherhood would sign an agreement-in-principle on *Indian Control of Indian Education.*

The Elders' Think Tanks

> The work which Raymond Harris did stimulated a renewed effort on the part of other Elders and traditional leaders to redoubling their efforts to reach out to young aboriginal persons. The timing was of critical importance in that it came at the same time as the political reawakening which was occurring in Indian Country.
>
> (Harold Cardinal, Personal communication, Oct. 19, 2003)

From 1970 to 1972, several members of the core group, Joe Couture, Don Cardinal and Harold Cardinal, were involved in the organization and facilitation of a series of twelve Elders' Think Tanks that took place in various communities in Alberta. These twelve workshops brought together Elders from each of the tribal groups in the province with members of the younger generations, in order to discuss the issues of the day that were of importance to Native people (Couture, 1982b). Over a period of three to five days,

dialogues took place around the topics of culture, identity, education, economic development, etc. Today, the inherent merit in bringing Elders together with those who are under fifty years of age would be considered obvious. The Think Tanks were important because they played a role in revitalizing that essential, age-old relationship.

> ...it provided the opportunity for many younger Indians to discuss the particularly vital issue of cultural identity. It also provided the Elders with the opportunity to reassume their traditional role of teacher/advisor/historian/ philosopher. (Couture, 1982, p. 14)

The members of the core group, through their personal relationship with Raymond Harris, understood the inherent potential in reconnecting with their traditional teachers. Through the Think Tanks, members of the core group, provided opportunities for others to experience the teachings of Elders on a much wider scale. The "consciousness raising" that participants of the Think Tanks experienced, in many ways mirrors the experience of those who were concurrently working with Raymond Harris.

> For many, if not all, a new sense of self, and thereby a new sense of power and direction developed, which subsequently influenced individual and group endeavor at the home community level, or within the various political and service organizations of the day. (Couture, 1982, p. 15)

The success of the Think Tanks led Joe Couture to implement the practice of tapping into the knowledge and counsel of Elders within the programming of the Nechi Institute and the Native Studies department at Trent University. These two initiatives are discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Politics, Spirituality, and Leadership

Individual members of the core group also took on political leadership roles within their home communities. Joe Cardinal was the Chief of the Saddle Lake First Nation for two terms from 1969 to 1975. He was followed by Eugene Steinhauer, who carried out the responsibilities of the role of Chief into the early 1980's. Howard Cardinal served the community of Saddle Lake as a band councillor during the time that Eugene was Chief. At the same time that Joe Cardinal and Eugene Steinhauer were serving their communities politically, they were also serving them spiritually. It was Eugene and Joe who were the first to take on the responsibility of running one of Raymond's sweats, in 1970 and 1971 respectively. In the early years, Joe Cardinal was instrumental in helping his community begin to break free from the controlling influences of the church and the government.

> When I first became the Chief of Saddle Lake I went up against the priests, the Indian Agent, and the bureaucrats. I told the priests to stay in their churches, their area. They could do their work there, but they had to stop interfering with my work and the business of the community. This was one reason I was excommunicated from the church.[70] I also told the DIA people who came that if they didn't have anything for us, then just go back where you came from. I often chased them away. (Personal conversation, May 22, 2002)

In later years, Joe and Eugene worked to support development in the wider Aboriginal community. As a community development officer for Alberta Newstart, Joe Cardinal worked to empower other northern Native communities to take control of their own affairs. As a representative of the Indian Association of Alberta, Eugene Steinhauer was

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[70] The other reason why Joe and his wife Jenny were excommunicated from their local Catholic Church was because they were openly practicing traditional spiritual ways.

involved in the talks that led to the entrenchment of Aboriginal rights within Canada's constitution when it was repatriated in 1982.

Harold Cardinal was the most publicly known Aboriginal political figure in Canada during the 1970's. During his tenure as president of the IAA (1968-72), and while he sat on the executive (1972-77), he forcefully brought the issues of Aboriginal and treaty rights, as well as social and economic development, to the forefront of discussions with the federal government (Drees, 2002). His recognition also stemmed from the fact that he authored two books that addressed the issues facing Native people in Canada at that time. The thoughts he expressed in 1969 in *The Unjust Society* and the understanding he shares in his 1977 publication *The Rebirth of Canada's Indians*, provide insight into Harold's growing awareness of the essential relationship between Native spiritual traditions and governance. The *Unjust Society* was his personal response to the White Paper and it reflected the angry sentiment of the times. He does however, touch on the subject of spirituality and cultural renewal in his conclusion to the chapter where he addresses the impacts that the churches have had on Native people.[71] He suggests that the church should,

> ...encourage the restoration of native beliefs and religions. Many Indians once again are looking toward the old as the hope of the future. Many Indian leaders believe a return to the old values, ethics and morals of native beliefs would strengthen the social institutions that govern the behavior patterns of Indian societies. (pp. 88-9)

He concluded *The Unjust Society* by addressing the issue of identity.

> Only by being Indian, by being simply what he is, can he ever be at peace with himself or open to others. (p. 170)

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[71] The chapter's title "Bring Back the Medicine Man" foreshadows what is to come,

Though Harold had not yet begun working with Raymond Harris, his words indicate that his involvement with Robert Smallboy had given him "the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Indianness in the twentieth century." (p. ix)

In 1977, after working with Raymond for seven years, Harold Cardinal concluded *The Rebirth of Canada's Indians* by speaking directly to the important relationship between spiritual values and practice, and Indian nationhood.

> Indian leaders and Indian organizations will instead be judged on their strength and determination in adhering to the principal basis of Indian nationhood. This basis comes most strongly through religious ceremonies that have for century upon century, defined the reason for the existence of Indian nations in this country. (221)
>
> Our sole reason for being here as Indians; as whites, as any race, is to recognize our responsibilities to our Creator.... (221)
>
> The most important of all our rights, without which there can be no rebirth, is the right of our elders to define their centuries-old perception of our Creator, and to perform the centuries-old religious rituals from which all the true values of our Indian society stem. Only then is the right to follow the path shown to us by our Creator sacrosanct. Then and only then, will our rebirth be complete. (222)

The Healing Movement

Another essential stream of the reawakening that began to occur among Native peoples in North America after 1969 is the healing movement. The personal stories that make up the previous chapter address the fact that healing was an important aspect of the overall movement of the time. Raymond Harris was a spiritual teacher and a healer. For many, their first introduction to Raymond and his gifts occurred when they sought out healing for themselves or their loved ones. Raymond's work was healing in the broadest sense of

the word. Through the teachings and ceremonies he shared, people were shown how to restore their balance physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Many people today attribute their well being to the spiritual gifts that Raymond Harris exercised, and/or the knowledge they learned through their relationship with him. Raymond demonstrated to them the healing potential that was inherent in the faithful practice of Native spiritual traditions. According to Joe Couture, Raymond's work was a part of the overall shift that was taking place at the time.

> The events of this time clearly launched the healing movement. Raymond wasn't the only instrument of this. Medicine people were still active, but they were in the closet. ..... There were synchronous moments that took place all across North America at the same time. They involved witnessing healing, being healed yourself, and knowing how to live in a good way.
>
> (personal conversation, Oct. 3, 2003)

Where a relationship can be seen between Raymond Harris's work and the Aboriginal healing movement in Canada is through the work of the members of the core group. In the early 1970's alcohol consumption was drastically affecting the health of Native people, as well as their social and political development. According to Couture (1982), the prevalent use of alcohol among Native leaders, hindered effective political action.[72] Members of the core group were actively involved in the earliest initiatives that were developed to address this pervasive problem. In 1973, Aboriginal treatment centres[73] were established at Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, as well as at Bonnyville and Edmonton, Alberta. Harvey and Helen Tootoosis were involved in the development of the center at

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[72] Prior to working with Raymond Harris, some of the members of the core group had themselves struggled with the problems associated with alcohol.

[73] Aboriginal treatment centres are distinct from mainstream treatment programs in their inclusion of both western therapeutic and Native healing traditions.

Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan and were later asked by Eugene Steinhauer to assist with the development of the centre at Bonnyville, Alberta. Four members of the core group were involved in the establishment of Poundmaker's Lodge in Edmonton, Alberta. Harold Cardinal and Eugene Steinhauer were instrumental in lobbying for funding support. Louie Halfe[74] was one of the original board members and Eric Shirt was involved in the development of the program.

The second initiative developed to address the problem of alcohol consumption among Native people, was the Nechi Training Institute on Alcohol and Drug Addiction. It began in 1973 as the Nechi Native Alcohol Education Program in Edmonton, Alberta, Its goal was to "promote sobriety amongst Aboriginal people through addiction counsellor training".[75] In 1974, it evolved into the Nechi Institute. Members of the core group were involved with the development of Nechi from its very beginning. Once again, Eugene Steinhauer and Harold Cardinal were involved in establishing political and financial support for the centre. Eric Shirt was the first director and Joe Couture was the program coordinator/trainer. The first group of Nechi trainees included, Jenny Cardinal, and Harvey and Helen Tootoosis.

What made Nechi training unique was that it was a culturally-based training program that was developed, implemented, and administered by Native people. The training was designed to reflect Native cultural values and attitudes, traditions, and spirituality. Elders

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[74] Louie Halfe, now deceased, was one of the early members of the core group. He was one of the first people to run one of Raymond's sweats in the Edmonton area.
[75] Retrieved from www.nechi.com, Nov. 29, 2004.

were present in all the training workshops, "as models of the kind of human being traditional Indian education develops, and as exceptionally effective teachers and counselors in their own right" (Couture, 1982, p. 17). Traditional modes of learning, i.e., experiential learning, were an important medium of the training process. Nechi training was instrumental in promoting a sober ethic in Alberta Native communities and training a generation of people who took on leadership roles in social service and political organizations. Today it is estimated that "approximately 40% of all Aboriginal leadership in the Province of Alberta are abstainers" and that the sobriety rate amongst Aboriginal people in Alberta is 60%.[76]

Over the years Nechi training evolved and expanded. By 1991, 2,500 people had completed Nechi training, and studies indicate that the Nechi program continued to be successful in meeting its cultural objectives (Merrithew-Mercredi, 1992; and Paratacharya, 1993). The number of Nechi trainees had reached 3,000 in 1996. Today, the Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute, continues to play a leading role in the Aboriginal healing and wellness movement in Canada.

The Discipline of Native Studies

In 1975 Native Studies was a new discipline within the academy. The Native Studies department at Trent University, the first to be established in North America, was entering its fourth year of operation when Joe Couture was hired as the Chair of the department.[77] Under Joe Couture's leadership, what we refer to today as Indigenous knowledge, became

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[76] Retrieved from www.nechi.com, Nov. 29, 2004.
[77] Joe Couture took over from Walter Currie, who had been the first Chair of the Native Studies department.

an essential aspect of the discipline. Joe promoted the merits of both academic and culturally-based experiential learning within the Native Studies program. He had recently completed his PhD in Educational Psychology that he had begun at Fordham and completed at the University of Alberta, and he had been apprenticing under Raymond Harris since 1971. Joe also brought with him the lessons he had learned through his experiences developing the Nechi training program and facilitating the Elders' Think Tanks. His understanding that Elders were scholars and exceptional teachers in their own right, coupled with his ability to facilitate that understanding within the wider university community, led to the establishment of a two track approach to tenure that formally recognized the knowledge that Elders brought to the university.[78] Apart from the Elders who were members of the faculty[79], Joe began bringing in Cree Elders from Alberta such as Abe Burnstick and Eddie Belrose as a means of extending the department's cultural offerings. This led to the establishment of a highly successful Elders' gathering that continues to this day on an annual basis.

Joe Couture encouraged the students and the members of the Native Studies faculty to expand their own understandings of Native cultural traditions.[80]

> Joe believed in and brought an experiential base to Native Studies. He thought that people who worked in the discipline should have an understanding of spiritual traditions through the experience of them.
>
> (Don McCaskill, personal conversation, Jan. 9, 2002)

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[78] "Trent remains the only university in Canada that will grant tenure on Aboriginal knowledge criteria." (Newhouse, McCaskill & Milloy, 2002, p. 63)

[79] The late Fred Wheatley, a teacher of the Anishinaabe language and culture from Parry Island, was already on staff when Joe arrived. During his time at Trent, Joe convinced the late Jake Thomas, a condoled Onondoga Chief, to join the faculty at Trent.

[80] My first opportunity to participate in ceremony occurred during that time, when I was an undergraduate student in the Native Studies program at Trent.

In the summer of 1976, Don McCaskill, a member of the Native Studies faculty, joined Joe Couture in Wyoming at Raymond Harris's to witness what was taking place. The following summer Don would return with Joe to Wyoming in order to undertake his first fast. In his own words, "It started me on a major path – the Path, meaning a spiritual life." (personal conversation, Jan. 9, 2002) The following year Don would fast with Eddie Belrose who had earned his fast under the direction of Raymond Harris. When Joe Couture left Trent and Don McCaskill became the Chair of the Native Studies department, Don continued to support the development of the pedagogical precedents that had been established under Joe Couture's leadership.

Architecture as a Sacred Act: The Work of Douglas Cardinal[81]

Due to the public nature of his work as an architect, Douglas Cardinal is probably the most well known member of the core group of people who worked closely with Raymond Harris. Douglas apprenticed with Raymond from 1970 to 1981. He described the profound impact that Raymond Harris had on his life, both personally and professionally in the personal story included in the previous chapter. Throughout the years, Douglas has been very open about his spiritual beliefs and practices and how they are integral to his professional work (Cardinal & Melnyk, 1977; and Cardinal, 1998). His 1977 publication, *Of the Spirit: Writings*, was a means of sharing the spiritual insights he was gaining through his work with Raymond Harris.

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[81] In Hamm (2004) Douglas describes his architecture as "a sacred act".

Douglas began to gain recognition for his unique design styles throughout the 1970's, but his most well known commission to date is the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC), in Hull, Quebec. Resting on the bank of the Ottawa River across from Canada's parliament buildings, the CMC is regarded by many as Canada's signature building. According to the federal government it is, "Canada's largest and most popular cultural institution".[82] Douglas received his vision of the design of the building during a sweat lodge ceremony that he conducted for that purpose. At the opening ceremony of the museum in 1989, Douglas Cardinal, using a hand drum and accompanied by his wife Marilyn, sang what is known as Raymond Harris's Searching Song. Though the significance of that act would have been unbeknownst to the many dignitaries present, it was a most fitting way for Douglas to recognize the influence that Raymond Harris has had on his life and his work.

Cultural Renewal

> Raymond revived the ceremonies. Many of the ceremonies they were there inside of the people, the songs, but he brought them back out.
>
> (Joe Cardinal, personal conversation, Oct. 23, 1997)

By the late 1960's, the spiritual traditions of the Plains Cree were for the most part only being practiced in private by some members of the oldest generation. Though the ban against their practice had been lifted in 1951, sixty years of prohibition and the psychological processing of two generations within the residential school system, had relegated them to the recesses of Plains Cree society. As children, some of the members

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[82] Retrieved from www.civilization.ca Sept. 1, 2003

of the core group had witnessed their grandparents, or other relations, practicing the spiritual traditions, but as adults it was not a part of their lives. Throughout most of their lives, the church, the state, and society as a whole, had constantly reminded them that their culture was of no value. It was not until the members of the core group went searching for an understanding of their core identity, that they reconnected with the cultural practices that would give their lives meaning. The fact that they conducted their search outside their home communities is indicative of the gap that existed between the Elders who had retained the cultural knowledge and those who were searching. This very same gap, between the generations, may also have been a factor in the level of receptivity of the members of the core group to Raymond's teachings and ceremonial practices. Those who sought out Raymond were eager to learn and he was willing to teach them. The fact that they were not versed in their own traditions may have leant them to being more open to Raymond's practices in the areas where they differed from the Plains Cree ways.

In a general sense, Raymond's ceremonial practices were not foreign to the Plains Cree. The Arapaho and the Plains Cree cultures had both arisen out of the buffalo hunting traditions of the Plains. The sacred pipe, the sweat lodge, and the sun dance had been central to both of their ceremonial traditions. When Raymond came to Canada, the Sun Dance songs he sometimes sang in the sweat lodge were familiar to some of the people. However, specific aspects of the way in which Raymond ran his sweat lodge and his fasting ceremony, differed from the Plains Cree tradition. For example, in the case of the sweat lodge this included such elements as his songs, the direction the sweat lodge faced,

the seating in the sweat lodge, and the order of the different aspects of the ceremony. Though these elements are important aspects of ceremonial practice, the greatest difference between Raymond's traditions and the Plains Cree traditions was that both men and women participated in Raymond's ceremonies.

> When I was a girl, my grandfather had a sweat. Only a few men would go inside. My grandmother would sit outside the sweat and pray and sing with them.
>
> When Raymond came, that was when women started to sweat. His sweat was about the family. At first I didn't like to go in, but Raymond told me that I needed to support Joe when he got his sweat. He said that Joe wouldn't be able to do the work without my support.
>
> It was also with Raymond that women began to fast.
>
> (Jenny Cardinal, personal conversation, Mar. 24, 2004)

March 26, 2004

Yesterday, after having discussed with Jenny the role of women in relation to the events of the time, I searched the database to see what other research participants had said about this. Harold and Douglas had said that Raymond practiced equality. In writing this, I am reminded of another journal entry where Leo spoke of the participation of women as a result of Raymond's teachings. Through a discussion with Nan at supper I was able to articulate, and in the process make sense of what I had been wrestling with for a long time.

The fact that within the core group men were the ones who for the most part took on ceremonial responsibilities, does not mean that Raymond's work perpetuated a patriarchy. In fact it is just the opposite. Raymond's work among the Plains Cree initiated change with respect to men's and women's roles.

In traditional Cree culture men and women had different roles and responsibilities that complemented each other. This included different spiritual roles and responsibilities. Women did not go into the sweat lodge with men. Cardinal's (1997) research indicates that in traditional times both men and women could be healers, but women did not perform the Sundance or go out on vision quests (pp. 49-50). Cree women took on responsibilities as 'medicine' people after their childbearing years had passed. Makokis (2001) learned from her research participant Skywoman, that though the women did not perform the ceremonies, their responsibilities included ensuring that the men led them correctly.

> The grandmothers sat there in the outer circle of the ceremony and watched for years and years because it is their role to straighten men out. Especially in the instance if the men are doing something wrong within the ceremony, they are not allowed to take shortcuts. It is the women's responsibility to say to the men, "You have to do this or do it this way, kweyask (the right way)."
>
> (Makokis, 2001, p. 131)

The important role that the older women filled ceremonially was a reflection of their overall responsibilities in traditional Plains Cree society. "Leaders were men who voiced group decisions made by women elders." (Cardinal, 1997, p. 49)

Men's and women's roles gradually changed after the Plains Cree were forced to abandon their traditional lifestyles. The assimilative forces of the Canadian government and the Christian churches pressured each succeeding generation to take on the patriarchal values that were the norm in Euro-Canadian society at that time. By the 1960's, the role of Cree women was subservient to that of the men.

Raymond Harris's teachings and spiritual practices in regards to the role of women were different then both the traditional Cree and the norms of the dominant society. He expected men, women and children to sweat together. Men and women fasted. Women earned the responsibilities associated with carrying a pipe and running a sweat lodge. He treated men and women equally. This was demonstrated by the fact that his wife Ambey played an essential role in his work. It was also demonstrated through the teachings he shared which emphasized the balance of men and women's roles and the importance of both. People were not given the responsibility of a sweat lodge or a fasting ceremony unless they were in a long-term healthy relationship. Conducting these ceremonies required men and women to be living and working together in a healthy, balanced way. The sweat lodge itself was physically divided into a male side and a female side, reflecting the fact that men and women are each only one half of the greater whole.

> Raymond saw all people as human beings and it wasn't about culture and it wasn't about race at all. He practiced it with gender. He truly saw people as humans first and not those other things. This was something very new.
> (Douglas Cardinal, personal conversation, Feb. 18, 2002)

> Raymond Harris did not discriminate on a gender basis. His ceremonies, and the assistance he and his family provided was not gender based. Any person, male, female, White, or Indian was welcomed both to his home and to his ceremonies. Men and Women were given equal importance both in terms of receiving the healing powers of his ceremonies and in terms of the guidance necessary for spiritual growth. (Harold Cardinal, personal communication, Oct. 19. 2003)

> Before Raymond, women did not sweat with men. In the sweat he said, "How can you separate Mother Earth and the spirit world. It is part of the circle, like this sweat. We all came from a mother, so we owe lots to the mother. By sweating and smoking [the pipe] together we give thanks for that. By working together we choose the whole. We demonstrate equality. They give us birth. We honor and respect women by walking side by side as partners." That is the basic fundamental teaching.
> (Howard Cardinal, personal conversation, May 27, 2004)

The greatest impact that Raymond Harris's work had on the cultural renewal among the Plains Cree is that it was instrumental in reconnecting members of the lost generations with the Elders who held onto the cultural knowledge. This came about in two ways. First and foremost, Raymond encouraged some of the members of the core group to seek out their own cultural knowledge and practices.

> He started people back to regaining their cultures - to seek out the old people. A lot of the ceremonies that are here today are because a lot of the people went back and started to ask the old people.
>
> (Harold Cardinal, personal conversation, June 4, 2002)

Secondly, when Raymond was invited into the various Cree communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan, the old people saw that the younger generations were once again valuing their cultural heritage and that they were hungry to understand the ways of their people.

> When R. came to Mike's it was the start of it being out in the open. As a result, the old people of Saddle Lake came out of the woodwork and began to do the ceremonies, sweats and doctoring.
>
> (Howard Cardinal, Personal conversation, Sept. 27, 2003)

As members of the core group began to take on ceremonial responsibilities in their home communities as a result of their work with Raymond Harris, they were supported by the old people who understood the value of this way of life.

Another way in which the cultural traditions of the Plains Cree re-emerged was through the individual and collective ceremonial practice of the members of the core group and those who participated with them. Raymond had told some of the people, that by practicing what he could teach them, their songs and their ways would come back to them. Through participation in sweats and fasts people began to remember.

> When Raymond set out a fast, I started to remember the sacred songs. The songs came to me in the sweat lodge.
>
> (Francis Whiskeyjack, personal conversation, May 18, 1998)

People remembered songs and traditions they had experienced as small children when they were being raised by their parents or grandparents. Others received songs, and knowledge of their traditions through ancestral memory, or as spiritual gifts from the Grandfathers and Grandmothers. Joe Couture described this phenomenon occurring in relation to the healing movement.

> The healing movement brings along things behind it. People began to discover, stories, ceremonies, songs, dances, drumming, traditions –they got resurrected. The healing movement is the front end, the spearhead that brings along all that explains why it is healing. It led to an explosion of sorts.
>
> (personal conversation, Oct. 3, 2003)

All the people who took on spiritual responsibilities through their work with Raymond, conducted the ceremonies in the manner in which they had learned them from him, when they began to lead the ceremonies on their own. Some of the people who apprenticed with Raymond, continued to conduct the ceremonies in the way in which they were given to them, while others, over time, incorporated their Cree traditions into the various ceremonies that they had earned. Today there are those who run "one of Raymond's sweats" or "an Arapaho sweat," and others who run sweats that are a blend of both the Arapaho traditions that they learned through Raymond and the Cree traditions that they learned from their Elders. The people who make up both of these groups of practitioners are resolute that their intent and their practice reflects the direction they received from Raymond Harris. The words of Harvey Tootoosis reflect the sentiment of those who have continued to carry on the ceremonies in the manner in which they were given.

> I do it the way that Raymond taught me. I see no need to change the ceremony. That's the way the helpers came to me, that's how he did his work.
> (personal conversation, Oct. 2. 2002)

The people who over time blended aspects of the Arapaho and the Cree traditions, were told by Raymond that they would start out by performing the ceremonies in the manner in which he had trained them, but over time they should seek out, learn, and put into practice their own traditions.

> Raymond said, "I'm only giving you a start so you can go back and find out the ways of your people, because they exist there. I can't make you an Arapaho – you are a Cree. You must go back and talk with your own people, the traditionalists." That was the direction he gave me. I don't know if others were told to do it that certain way - Arapaho? (Harold Cardinal, personal conversation, June 4, 2002)

> Raymond said "In time you will go back to your own songs and traditions, these ones will leave you. These are what the Grandfathers gave me."
> (Mike Steinhauer, personal conversation, June 6, 2002)

This important difference in perspective in regards to Raymond's teachings, was the source of misunderstanding and tension between some members of the core group in the years following Raymond's death. This dissonance occurred to the greatest degree in the community of Saddle Lake, Alberta which had been the central location of Raymond's work within Canada between 1970 and 1975. Joe Cardinal was the first of those who had apprenticed under Raymond to change his sweat so that it incorporated the Cree ways.[83] This took place in 1983, more than a year after Raymond had passed away. After running an Arapaho sweat every week for twelve years, Joe was directed by the 'Grandfather' who guided him to change his sweat to be more reflective of the ways of his people.

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[83] Joe's sweat continued the Arapaho tradition of being a family sweat. The seating remained the same. The Cree traditions he blended into it involved changing the direction it faced, the timing of the pipe ceremony within the larger ceremony, and the use of primarily Cree songs.

When he changed the manner in which he conducted his sweat, some of the members of the core group who worked from the perspective that the ceremonies Raymond brought to them should not be changed, felt that what he was doing was a violation of Raymond's teachings. This misconception resulted in Joe and Jenny being ostracized by some of the people they had worked closely with for years. Though this schism initiated a very difficult time in their lives, Joe never waived in his resolve to bring the Cree traditions into his ceremonial practice. At the same time, Joe and Jenny Cardinal continued to support the work of those who did things Raymond's way. By demonstrating through their actions that it was possible to respect and honor both Raymond's teachings and the Cree traditions, their efforts helped perpetuate Raymond's work and the ways of their ancestors. That original tension has long since subsided, and today in Saddle Lake the Arapaho ways that were passed on through Raymond Harris exist alongside the Cree traditions and other forms of ceremonial practice that have been incorporated into the community.[84]

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[84] For example, Mike Steinhauer, who was a member of the original core group of people working with Raymond Harris, earned his sweat and his fasting ceremony through his work with the Anishinaabe Elder Peter O'Chise. There are also some members of the community who follow the ways of the Native American Church that uses peyote as a sacrament.

A River of Change

> What triggered who and when? It was a time of emerging insight. There's a silver thread connecting all these things. The spiritual awakening, Think Tanks, changes to the Indian Act, etc. It is probably impossible to trace all the connections. (Joe Couture, personal conversation, Oct. 10, 2003)

When observing a river it is impossible to know the exact source of the water that flows by you. There are many sources that have flowed together to become what you are experiencing in that moment. In that situation, a topographical map can broaden your understanding of the river's sources. In Figure 8 on the following page I have drawn a map of the river of change that has been addressed in this chapter. It illustrates the significant events of the time and notes the known involvement of members of the core group, concurrent with their spiritual unfolding.

It would be misleading and disrespectful to claim that the work of Raymond Harris was the sole source of the cultural, social and political movements that began among the Plains Cree in 1969. He was not the only spiritual knowledge holder working among the Plains Cree at that time. As well, the members of the core group were not the only individuals who provided leadership in the cultural, social and political spheres. That being said, there is no doubt that the work of Raymond Harris was a pivotal factor in the various movements of the time. Many of the key people whose efforts were responsible for facilitating cultural, social, and political change at the local, provincial and national levels, were at the same time gaining personal, cultural, and spiritual understanding through their relationship with Raymond Harris. As Harold Cardinal so aptly described,

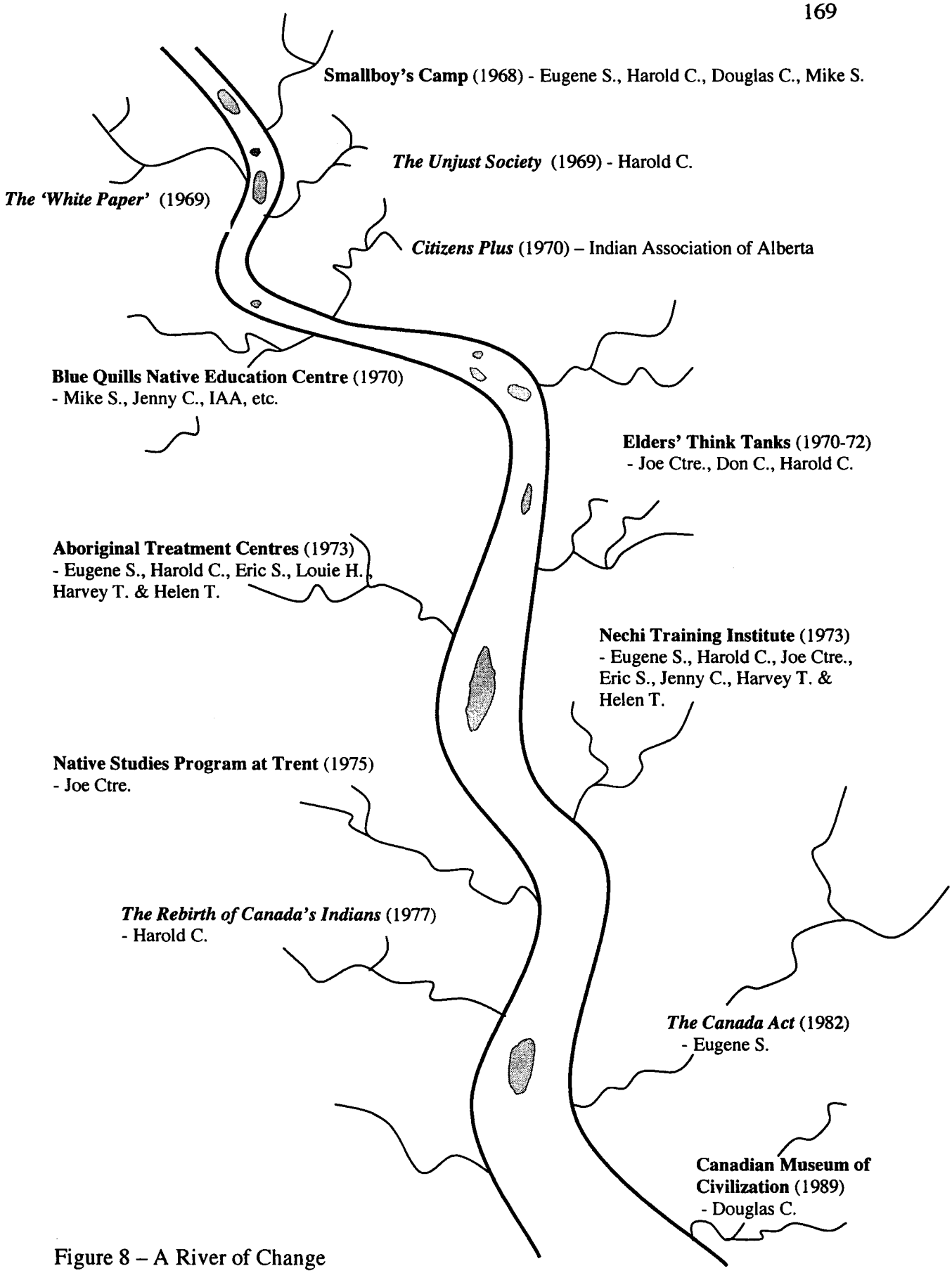

Figure 8 – A River of Change

their work with Raymond Harris validated their core identity, which in turn provided validation for their work in the wider community.

The waves of change marked by the cultural, social and political surges that took place after 1969, continue to be felt today. Members of the core group continue to influence the evolution of developments in their respective fields of agency. Most importantly, after Raymond's passing in 1981, members of the core group became the role models and the mentors for other individuals who were seeking an understanding of their personal and cultural identity.

Chapter Seven

There was a 'ripple effect'.[85]

The Legacy of Raymond Harris's Work in Canada

Introduction

Throughout the decades of the 1980's, the 1990's, and up until this present day, the members of the core group have continued to provide leadership within local, regional and national spheres. Their leadership has facilitated developments in the related fields of culture, healing, education, governance, justice, and the arts. Today, the legacy of Raymond Harris's work continues to ripple out through the work of the members of the core group, those who were on the perimeter, and those who are part of the second wave. This chapter discusses several examples of how that is taking place.

The Ripple Effect

Raymond Harris's work in Canada can be described metaphorically as being like the series of ripples that radiate across the surface of a pond from the point where a stone is dropped into it. That is how I envision it.[86] Raymond and the impact of his work on the various individuals and communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan that he came into contact with, is like the initial impact of the stone hitting the surface of the water. The first ripple, or wave, that is created would represent the members of the core group and the work they have done with others. The next ripple would coincide with what I have

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[85] This is the way in which Mike Steinhauer described the ongoing effects of Raymond Harris's work during a personal conversation we had on June 6, 2002 at his home in Saddle Lake, Alberta.
[86] This is how I have attempted to illustrate this research in Figure 1 on page 13.

termed the second wave – people whose lives have been impacted through a close and prolonged relationship with a member of the core group. After that will come the third wave, people whose lives will be impacted through their relationship with a person from the second wave. Two of the members of the core group, Mike Steinhauer and Harvey Tootoosis, used the term 'ripple effect' in describing the long term effects of Raymond's work in Canada.

> Raymond helped thousands of people. There was a ripple effect. He trained people and they helped others. (Mike Steinhauer. Personal conversation with author, June 6, 2002)

> I have passed sweats on to others, as Joe and others have done, trained others to do sweat. It is a ripple effect. The ripple keeps going out. If someone trained two or four people and they went out and did healing work with another ten people, then it grows exponentially. (Harvey Tootoosis, personal conversation with author, Oct. 2, 2003)

In each community that Raymond Harris was invited to in Alberta and Saskatchewan between 1970 and 1981, he passed on the knowledge and responsibilities associated with the sweat lodge ceremony to at least one person. Many of these individuals, mentored others, who have in turn earned the responsibility of a sweat lodge. In the case of Saddle Lake, Alberta where much of Raymond's early work was centred, he passed on sweats directly to at least four people. They in turn acted as mentors to others. Today, the legacy of Raymond's work is seen as an important aspect of the community's eclectic spiritual character.

> Raymond awakened stuff up that people didn't remember. There are over 30 sweats in Saddle Lake now. Many of them leading back to Raymond. Raymond has a lot to be thanked for. (Mike Steinhauer, personal conversation with author, June 6, 2002)

These traditional mentoring relationships between members of the core group and those from the second wave, have occurred within extended families, communities and with individuals from outside the Cree culture. The traditions which were rekindled by Raymond are not only continuing in the communities of the core group members, they are rekindling fires in other communities, other Nations.

Through my relationship with Joe and Jenny Cardinal I have been able to witness directly how the impact of Raymond Harris's teachings have rippled out through the work of the members of the core group; with individuals within their home communities, the wider Plains Cree community, and from other Native Nations. The following section provides an example of how the legacy of Raymond Harris continues to unfold today.

Ormond Lake, BC

On June 16, 2004, I had traveled to Najeh Boyoh, a culture camp that is located on a traditional site of the Carrier people of Nadleh Whetun. The camp is situated in a most beautiful setting on the shore of what is now called Ormond Lake. That afternoon in the sweat lodge, almost everyone who was participating was from one of the Carrier communities in the area. It was a good size group of people of all ages that included several Elders. The sweat was not being conducted in the Cree/Arapaho way that I am most familiar with. Most of the songs that were sung were Carrier songs. I knew that I was witnessing a transformation; a process that had begun years before, and that would continue to unfold in the years ahead. It was a beautiful day. I felt blessed to be a part of that sacred circle.

I had come to Ormond Lake, as I had many times before, to be a part of the annual fasting ceremony that was hosted by Carrier Sekani Family Services. I was there to support my wife who was fasting, to help around the camp, and to visit with friends. I knew before I arrived that this year the fast would be different than previous years, because Joe Cardinal would not be with us and the fast was to be led by Harold Isaac. Harold is a member of the Carrier Nation from the community of Nak'azdli. He had begun fasting with Joe Cardinal in 1990. Over the years, he had earned the responsibility to carry a pipe and then to run a sweat lodge. Harold also worked with the Elders of the Carrier Nation to develop his knowledge of his own culture. On Joe's last trip to Ormond Lake the previous summer, Joe had asked Harold to take over the responsibility of overseeing this fast. Joe had said that he would come back the next year to support Harold in that work. Joe passed away before he was able to make the return journey, but Jenny Cardinal had traveled to Ormond Lake to fulfill her husband's commitment to support Harold as he led his first fast. Jenny was also joined by her great grandson Jordan Lee, and Butch Campbell, an adopted member of the Cardinal family who had been asked to oversee the fast at Joe and Jenny's the month before. Together they were there to assist Harold, whenever he asked.

The transformation of the fast had taken place over a period of seven years. In 1997 when Joe and Jenny Cardinal from Saddle Lake, Alberta had first been invited to the camp to hold a fasting ceremony, there were very few people from the surrounding communities involved. Most of the people who were in attendance, those fasting and those who had come to help, were people from Saddle Lake and those who travelled to Saddle Lake in May of each year to be a part of the ceremony that took place at Joe and Jenny's. The fast

itself, and the sweat lodge ceremonies that are an integral part of the larger ceremony, were conducted in the same manner as Joe conducted them at his home.

From the beginning, Joe had acknowledged that he was a guest in this territory, and that he was there because he had been asked to come and share this way of life with them. He always asked if local Elders would be coming out to participate in the camp. It was several years before that happened. When it did, Joe was pleased. He asked them to lead us in prayer and to offer up their songs. Over time, more and more of the local ways were brought into the ceremony. Also, more local people came out to participate.

On the last night of this particular fast, two women and several girls from the community of Nautley, sang for the women who were fasting. Jenny wept. Afterwards she said to me, "I couldn't help myself. It was so beautiful to hear those girls singing. Do you remember when we first started coming here? None of the people from around here seemed to have any songs. Now look at all the singers that they have." The next day in the closing sweat Jenny talked about her and her husband's journey within this way of life. She shared some of the joys and the challenges they had faced along the way. She acknowledged the changes she had seen taking place at Ormond Lake over the years, and she expressed her confidence that this way of life would continue to grow among the people of the area.

What has taken place over the years at Ormond Lake is a reflection of the process that had taken place with Joe and Jenny Cardinal during the 1970's and the early 1980's when they were learning from Raymond Harris. They began traveling to Wyoming in 1969,

where Joe fasted under Raymond. In the early 1970's, they hosted Raymond's visits to their community. This provided an opportunity for more of their own people to experience the fasting and doctoring ceremonies that Raymond conducted. Over the years Joe earned a pipe and then the responsibility of a sweat lodge. In the early years Joe ran an Arapaho sweat.[87] He followed the protocols and sang the songs he had learned through his work with Raymond. Over time the Cree ways came back to Joe, and in 1983 he stopped leading an Arapaho sweat and began to run his sweat in a manner that was more aligned to the ways of his own people. It was that tradition that Harold Isaac had been introduced to in 1990.

Harold Isaac

Harold shared the following with me during the fasting camp at Ormond Lake, BC on June 17, 2004.

I fasted with Joe for a pipe and then a sweat. I wanted to build a sweat in my own community so I went and asked the chief. He said, "Ask the Elders." I asked a few of the Elders and they said, "Don't bring that stuff here. That's not our ways." Some even said that what I was trying to do was 'the devil's work'. I went to see another Elder, an old lady. I brought her tobacco and asked her if I could talk with her. When she asked me what I wanted to talk about I told her that I wanted to talk about sweat lodge, about putting up a sweat in the community. She asked me, "Why do you want to do that?" I said, "To help the people to heal themselves – so we can work on some of our issues."

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[87] A discussion of some of the differences between the Arapaho Sweat Lodge ceremony passed on by Raymond and the Cree Sweat Lodge can be found in the previous chapter.

She said, "Go ahead." I told her that other Elders had told me not to do it. She said, "In time they will come around." And that's what happened. A guy from Alkali Lake came for four days and helped me put up the sweat. Young people and a few older people came out for the first sweat. That old woman came. She didn't come in the sweat but she sat outside.

And she was right. Over time the Elders started to come and support this work. Now the people around here are asking for healing and ceremonies. I have been asked by four communities, by the band councils, to come and cleanse their communities. One of our Elders told me how to do it. I've done two communities already. The Elders have also taught me songs. Right now I am learning a song that was my grandfather's. It is a medicine song.

A Demonstration of Respect

Another indicator of the level of impact that Joe and Jenny Cardinal's work at Ormond Lake has had on the people involved, was demonstrated when Joe passed on in December of 2003. Harold, several Elders, and others from the Carrier communities of Nautley, Stellaquo, and Burns Lake traveled to Saddle Lake to join the hundreds of others who had come to pay their respects. This particular group of people, one of several from BC, had driven all night to make it to the service. With the exception of Harold, their relationship with Joe and Jenny had centred around the week of ceremonies that were conducted annually at Ormond Lake. That demonstration of respect was a testament to the fact that

by passing on the way of life that he had learned through Raymond, Joe had in turn impacted the lives of others.

Further Downstream on the River of Change

The impacts of this phenomenal rippling effect are not only felt within the contexts of ceremonial practice, they also continue to manifest within the practices of Aboriginal organizations. Two organizations that exemplify the ongoing legacy of Raymond Harris's work are the Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute and Amiskwaciy Academy. The Nechi Institute emerged during the early years of Raymond Harris's work in Canada while Amiskwaciy provides an example of a more recent development. Both these organizations are in Edmonton, Alberta.

The Nechi Institute

As pointed out in the previous chapter, in 1974 members of the core group were instrumental in the founding and the development of what was then called the Nechi Training Institute on Alcohol and Drug Addiction. Over the years Nechi expanded its mandate to include research and health promotion. In the process of serving the needs of Native peoples throughout Alberta and across Canada, they became internationally recognized as leaders in the field of health and wellness.[88] Throughout its more than thirty years of operation, members of the core group, the perimeter, and the second wave have

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[88] While developing healing initiatives for Indigenous peoples in Australia, Hazelhurst (1994) made two visits to Canada in order to benefit from the knowledge and experience that existed within organizations such as the Nechi Training Institute. Abadian (1999) also worked with Dr. Maggie Hodgson, the former director of the Nechi Institute, as part of her research on *Trauma and the Renewal of Indigenous People and Their Communities.*

continued to be involved with the Nechi Institute as Elders, advisors, trainers, and students. Since1997, Ruth Morin has been the CEO of the Nechi Institute. Ruth is a longstanding member of the second wave who has worked very closely with Joe and Jenny Cardinal since 1983.

Amiskwaciy Academy

In 1999, people from the core group and the perimeter, were instrumental in establishing a public secondary school in Edmonton that is founded on Plains Cree values. Since that time the school has expanded to include students from the junior secondary grades as well. Joe and Jenny Cardinal were two of the five founding Elders that guided the initial development of the school and they continued to sit on the larger Elders board that was established when the school opened its doors. Phyllis and Theresa Cardinal were the driving forces in bringing the vision to fruition. Their work was supported by Elders, the Aboriginal community in Edmonton, and the surrounding reserve communities; as well as the Edmonton School Board and the Alberta Ministry of Education.

At the Amiskwaciy Academy, the core curriculum of the Alberta Program of Studies has been made more relevant to Aboriginal students through the application of Aboriginal examples and experiences. Cultural relevancy has been further enhanced through the development of options courses that reflect Aboriginal traditions and values. Another fundamental aspect of the educational program at Amiskwaciy, one that reflects the understanding and the values of the founding members who were impacted by the work of Raymond Harris, is the recognition of the importance of establishing a spiritual foundation.

> In order to create a supportive learning environment, Amiskwaciy ensures spirituality is a vital part of every day. Each day begins with a smudge and morning prayer, while teachers use guided imagery to help students focus on the day's studies. As part of our commitment to spirituality, we provide sweat lodge ceremonies for students and staff at our sweat lodge, located behind the Poundmaker and Nechi Institute in St. Albert. We also incorporate other spiritual ceremonies throughout the school year, and encourage students to explore and reclaim their Aboriginal spirit. (Retrieved from http://amiskwaciy.epsb.net/non-flash/staff.html, Oct. 4, 2004))

In its early stages Amiskwaciy Academy has proven to be an educational success. A high percentage of students are graduating and entering post-secondary programs.[89] As a result of their success, this unique program has gained recognition both nationally and internationally.

May 30, 2002

Today I drove Joe to Edmonton because he had been asked to perform a Pipe Ceremony for the Amiskwaciy students who will be graduating tomorrow. Joe spoke very powerfully to the students about the importance of education - how they will be the leaders of tomorrow and how Native people will finally become part of Canada. Using his experience in WW II as an example, he talked about the importance of practicing self-discipline, communication, and comradeship. His final message to them was that they have to find out who they are as Indian people.

In her closing words to the students Phyllis said "We love you all." In my twenty years as an educator, that is the first time that I have ever heard a school principal say/use the word "love". And she means it!

[89] At the graduation ceremony I attended in May 2002, all twenty-seven members of the Grade 12 class had successfully graduated. Some had already been accepted into university and college programs.

Equality of Practice

The gender equality that Raymond Harris demonstrated within his work with the Cree people of Alberta and Saskatchewan, continues to be manifested in the work of the members of the core group and the second wave. Men, women, and children, regardless of their ethnic origins are welcome to become active participants within the various ceremonial practices. Over time, there have also been more women who have taken on the responsibilities associated with ceremonial leadership. Among the members of the core group, it was primarily men with the support of their spouses who took on ceremonial responsibilities,[90] whereas in the second wave, the number of women who are earning ceremonial responsibilities is increasing. In a general sense this is a reflection of the shift away from patriarchal attitudes across Canadian society as a whole. More specifically, this is indicative of the leadership that Native women have demonstrated within the Aboriginal healing and wellness movement.

> Women got started first. It took about 20 years to show the results of this. They are ahead of the men. They learned to forgive [themselves], stop blaming others, and to move forward. We see the fruits of that now. (Joe Couture, Oct. 10, 2003, conversation with author)

The leadership of women is further demonstrated by the fact that at the time of this writing, three of the organizations whose origins were strongly influenced by members of the core group, Blue Quills College, Nechi Institute, and the Amiskwaciy Academy, are being led by Cree women.

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[90] The teachings that Raymond shared emphasize the balance of men and women's roles and the importance of both. In this tradition the conducting of Sweat Lodge and Fasting ceremonies requires men and women to be living and working together in a healthy balanced way. I am not aware of Raymond passing on the responsibility of a Sweat Lodge to a person who was not married. Nor have I seen this occur among the members of the second wave. Through my research, I am aware of two women, who were given the responsibilities of a pipe through Raymond.

Raymond's Continuing Presence

Though Raymond passed on more than twenty years ago, his presence continues to be felt. The work of Raymond Harris is part of the oral history of the families of the core group. Stories are often shared about Raymond when people gather together for ceremony. This is especially true when old acquaintances, members of the core group who share this common history, get together. The teachings and songs that he passed on are acknowledged when they are given voice within ceremonies. For several members of the core group, Raymond's presence has been experienced within dreams. A common theme in these dream encounters, is that Raymond was there to support and encourage them in their efforts to continue their work within these traditions.

Summary

The late 1960's and the early 1970's marked a significant time in the recent history of Native peoples in North America. On the heels of the civil rights movement in the United States, came a rise of social and political activism among the Native peoples of North America. Struggles over the jurisdiction and protection of lands and resources, and the achievement of social justice, began to unfold in protests, blockades, occupations, and courtroom battles. Simultaneously, a cultural renaissance was taking place in a myriad of forms throughout the various Native nations of the continent. This political, social and cultural resurgence was a multifaceted movement towards change that appeared in many forms and occurred within a variety of contexts. It arose out of the knowledge left and efforts taken by those who had gone before, and it continues to this day.

The impact of Raymond Harris's work in Canada began in 1969. In that year the winds of change began to pick up speed as they blew across Indian country. For those among the Plains Cree who were being moved by the spirit of change, the establishment of Smallboy's Camp the previous year was a tangible political action that spoke to the necessity of exercising political freedom and returning to their own cultural traditions. It was a harbinger of the changes to come. In fact it was through their involvement with the ceremonial practices at Smallboy's Camp, that Eugene Steinhauer, Harold Cardinal, Douglas Cardinal, and Mike Steinhauer initiated their relationships with Raymond Harris. When they began, what were to become annual pilgrimages to the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming to fast under Raymond, they were joined by their friends and colleagues from the Indian Association of Alberta and the Metis Association of Alberta. This included Joe P. Cardinal, Howard Cardinal, Eddie Belrose, Joe Couture and Louie Halfe. These men did not undertake this spiritual journey alone. They were accompanied every step of the way by their wives: Alice Steinhauer, Maisie Cardinal, Marilyn Cardinal, Jenny Cardinal, Jean Cardinal, Gena Belrose, Corrine Couture and Rina Halfe, respectively. The support of their partners was an essential aspect of their spiritual growth and integral to their accomplishments in the public sphere.

In 1970 when Raymond began to make his yearly visits to Plains Cree communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan, the number of people who were impacted by his work began to grow. For most of these people, it was the first time that they had participated in ceremonial activities that would have been familiar to their ancestors. They, and the core group of people who worked closely with Raymond, were representative of a whole

generation of Plains Cree people whose ties with the spiritual traditions of their ancestors had for the most part been forcibly severed by the concerted efforts of the Canadian government and the churches. The Elders who kept the Cree spiritual fire alive, had for the most part kept the ceremonies hidden from public view due to fear of reprisal.[91] When Raymond shared his gifts in the various communities that he was invited to, it reawakened the people to the healing power of their traditions and to the awareness that it was their birthright to practice them.

Beginning in 1970, members of the core group began to take on the responsibilities of conducting the ceremonies in their home communities. This widened and firmly grounded the impact of Raymond's work among the Plains Cree. In a practical sense, it made it much easier for members of the core group to continue to incorporate spiritual practice into the personal and professional aspects of their lives. They no longer had to journey to Wyoming, or wait for Raymond to visit, in order to practice this way of life. Others, such as Harvey and Helen Tootoosis, Lawrence Large, and Jack (John) Lacerte, were introduced to this way of life when they began attending sweats led by members of the core group. They in turn began training under Raymond Harris, and over time they took on the responsibility of running sweats in their home communities. This resulted in even more people becoming involved in this way of life.

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[91] Though the legal ban had been lifted with the revision of the Indian Act in 1951, and 'official' church doctrines were becoming more receptive to non-Christian practices, e.g. Vatican II, in essence the prohibition still existed. At the community level, most church leaders were not receptive to traditional practices and generations of Cree people had been indoctrinated in the residential school system to believe that traditional spiritual practices were akin to the work of the devil.

Most importantly, as members of the core group began to take on ceremonial responsibilities in their own communities, they reconnected with their own Cree traditions through the old men and women who had kept those teachings alive. This in itself is the most significant impact of Raymond Harris's work among the Plains Cree. As a result of the steadfast determination gained through their work with Raymond, and the support of the Elders in their own communities, the members of the core group facilitated the reemergence of the open practice of traditional spirituality in their own communities. Today, the practice of these spiritual traditions continues to be prevalent among the Cree.

What is also significant about Raymond Harris's work with the members of the core group, is the fact that concurrent to their lives being deeply impacted by their work with him, members of the core group were instrumental in ground breaking initiatives in the fields of Indigenous governance, health, education and the arts. This includes the following: the pivotal work of the Indian Association of Alberta in the early 1970's; the take over and development of the Blue Quills Education Centre; the development of Aboriginal treatment centers; the development of the Nechi Training Institute; the development of the Native Studies program at Trent University; the constitutional talks leading up to the Canada Act; and the creation of innovative architectural designs. The deeply personal changes that came as a result of their spiritual work with Raymond Harris were reflected in their efforts to serve others. Warry's (1988) description of the integral relationship between internal personal change and external public action within Native communities, aptly describes what took place then and continues to take place today.

> Individual healing fuses self-actualization and political commitment through a deeply spiritual understanding of one's cultural identity. This process of

> individual healing produces people who are firmly committed to the idea of cultural revitalization and self-determination. Those who have experienced personal recovery understand how the history of colonial relationships has negatively affected their lives and their communities. Many of these individuals are leaders in their community; their actions over time are providing important models for the next generation of children and youth. (p. 256)

The impact of Raymond Harris's work in Canada continues to ripple out through the ongoing work of the members of the core group, and through the members of the second wave whose lives have been impacted through a close relationship with a member of the core group. These impacts are not only felt within Plains Cree communities, they are also felt within other First Nations communities across western Canada.

Fools Crow, the Lakota Holy Man said, "The greatest miracle is not something incredible, it is the thousands of changed lives" (Fools,Crow, F. & Mails, T. E. 1991, p. 42). This is undoubtedly the case when one considers the impact of Raymond Harris's work with the Plains Cree. The members of the core group witnessed incredible events during the time they worked with Raymond, but the greatest miracle was the changes that occurred in their lives and the legacy that continues as a result of their work with others. Just as it was for Raymond, these life changes were not given; they were earned through deep commitment, hard work, self-discipline, and personal sacrifice.

Chapter 8

The Centrality of Indigenous Knowing within this Research

Introduction

In the introduction of this dissertation, I discussed at length my personal history as it relates to how I came to be doing this research. In the second chapter I presented my understanding of the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* that encompassed this work and led to my understanding of *Indigenous Research: A Way of Life*. Guided by this understanding, I conducted this research primarily through the application of methodologies that resonate with my lived experience within one of the spiritual communities originating out of the work of Raymond Harris. In this concluding chapter, I discuss how the elements that make up the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* were evident in the process of this research journey.

The Centrality of Indigenous Knowing within this Research

My intentions surrounding the articulation of a *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* within this work, originated from what I perceived to be a practical necessity. It was essential, personally and professionally, that I conduct this research within the ontological, epistemological, and ethical reality within which it exists. In order to facilitate that within the context of doctoral research, I felt it was necessary for me to attempt to create an interface of understanding between that reality and the academy. Based on the work of Indigenous scholars and my lived experience within a spiritual

community rekindled by Raymond Harris, I synthesized different dimensions of Indigenous knowledge to develop a *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*, as a means for readers to come to a better understanding of the nature of this research. I believe this conceptual framework will be of value to those who wish to conduct research with Indigenous peoples in a respectful and responsible manner. At the same time, I respect that others who practice Indigenous research will bring their own understandings and cultural practices to their research endeavours.[92]

The concepts delineated within the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* are central to the Indigenous research methodologies that were implemented throughout the process of conducting this research. The essential nature of the relationship between these two aspects of my research, both of which were presented separately in Figure 5 (p. 55) and in Figure 6 (p. 67), is illustrated in the composite drawing, Figure 9, on the following page. The *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* is located at the centre of the Indigenous research methodologies that make up this research. A complete acceptance of this way of knowing and being in the world is the fundamental starting point for all that follows. It is not a point of departure from which I moved away. It was at all times ubiquitous within the context, process, and content of this research. By acting from the point of balance at the centre of the concentric circles of the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*, it became a way of life: a way of being and knowing that guided my actions as I entered into the various Indigenous research methodologies that comprised this work.

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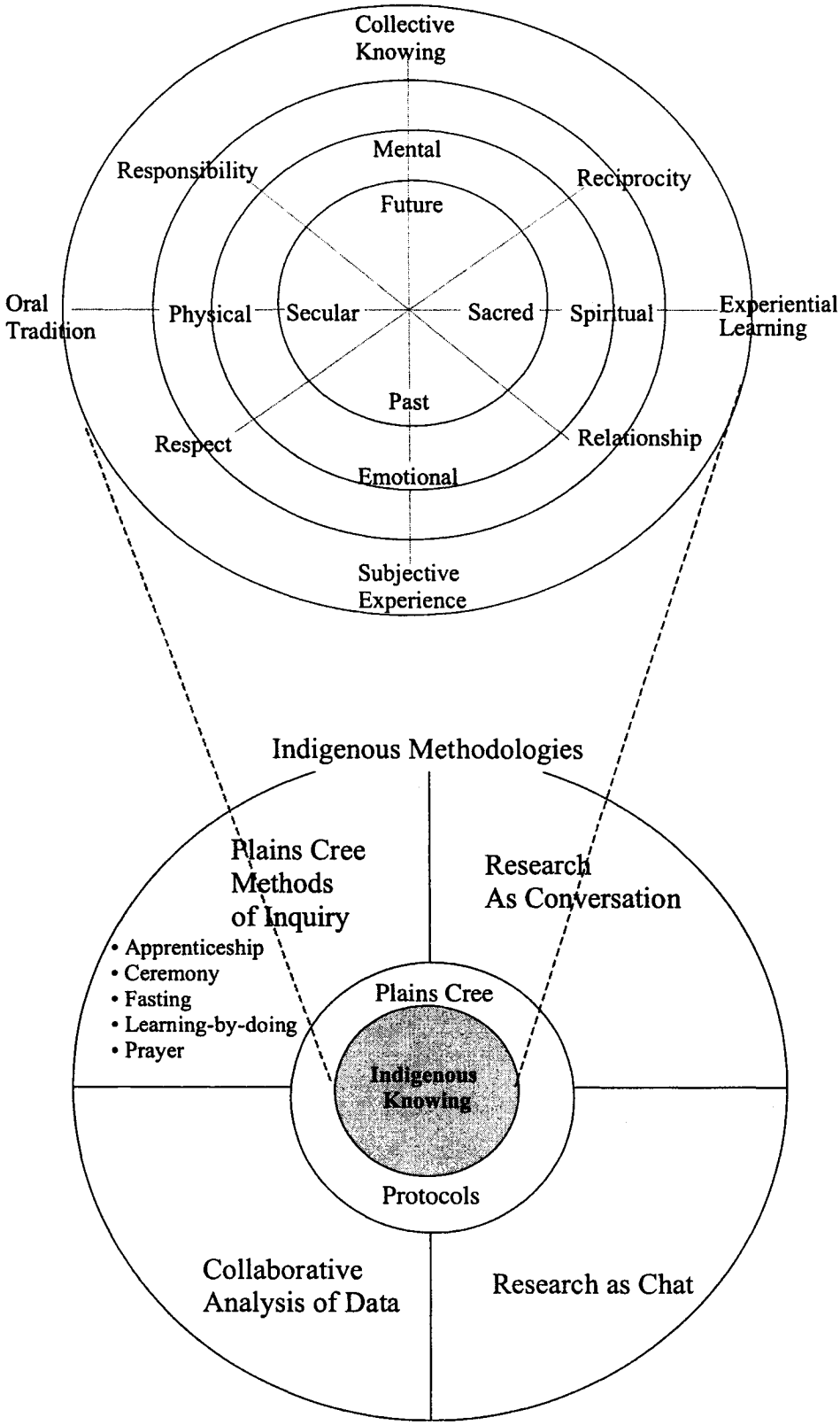
[92] There are thousands of Indigenous systems of knowledge throughout the world. Each one is a reflection of the human, ecological and spiritual diversity of Indigenous peoples.

Figure 9 – The Centrality of Indigenous Knowing within this Research



As indicated in the illustration of the components of my research, it is the Plains Cree protocol associated with asking another[93] for assistance that is the interface between the elements that make up the concepts inherent in this *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* and the various Indigenous methodologies that were a part of this research.[94] Initiating each of the research relationships through this protocol, the act of making an offering and its acceptance, established my intentions to conduct the research in this manner and acknowledged the Indigenous nature of this research. Within the context of establishing those relationships, I made a sacred commitment to conduct this research within the guiding principles of respect, responsibility and reciprocity.

Throughout this research I demonstrated respect in my relationships with each of the research participants by acknowledging and acting upon the fact that they were the experts. They had lived this story. They were my teachers and I was there to learn. The success of my research hinged upon their willingness to share their stories with me. My responsibility was to listen deeply to what they were willing to share, and to bring back to them a record of what I had heard, in order to ensure that what I wanted to share with others was both accurate and appropriate. Acknowledging the essential nature of their contributions to this research, and acknowledging their individual contributions throughout this work, is another means through which I have attempted to be respectful and responsible. This research process will not be complete until I have reciprocated each

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[93] I use the term 'another' to denote all my relations. This includes human beings, as well as all other life forms in the secular and sacred dimensions of the world.

[94] A full description of the significance of this protocol is found under the heading *Plains Cree Protocol: A Guiding Force* on page 66.

of the research participants for their contribution to this work. Reciprocity will include a hardbound copy of the dissertation and an appropriate gift in recognition of their support.[95]

Working from the understanding that Indigenous Research is a way of life, meant that throughout all the aspects of this work, my responsibility was to do my best to work from the point of balance at the centre of this *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing*. Therefore, the *Considerations for Indigenous Research* that I outlined on page 57, have guided all of my actions, not only in my work with the research participants, but also in my relationships with the members of my dissertation committee, and my relationship with this text.

Experiencing Indigenous Research as a Way of Life

I have always been aware of the powerful connection between my personal journey and this research. When I began writing this dissertation, I made the conscious decision to locate myself in relation to the research, and then move on to the story of Raymond Harris and the impact of his work. At the completion of my second draft, I was quite surprised to have the following comment relayed to me from one of my co-supervisors: *"This whole dissertation is your journey yet you disappear after the first chapter."* I reacted defensively and did not take the time to ask which of the committee members felt this way. Later that week during a phone meeting with my committee, I would learn

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[95] In the process of conducting this research, several of the research participants indicated that having this story in written form would be a means through which their grandchildren could come to an understanding of this piece of their family's history.

directly that this sentiment was shared by both the Elders on my committee. More importantly, when they, Edna Manitowabi and Joe Couture, spoke to this issue, their words touched me deeply. Their words re-minded me of a time years ago when Joe Cardinal had described my work as "your story", and I had not understood him.

Within this experience, I was once again reminded that my work was much more than an academic exercise. A shift had taken place. For me, it was no longer simply an academic discussion. Their words had touched my spirit and now I was speaking from the heart as my mind observed. I was filled with the experience of what I have come to understand as deep knowing. When the committee meeting had begun, I naturally perceived it as a secular event. Joe and Edna had helped me to once again be conscious of the spiritual nature of my research. I had asked Edna to be a co-supervisor and Joe to be a member of the committee because of my respect for each of them as Elders and scholars. I had followed traditional protocol in asking them to provide guidance to me as I undertook this research journey. They were providing me with the guidance I had asked for.

Indigenous Knowing

The previous story is an example of one way in which one comes to know something within this Indigenous way of knowing. Joe Couture and Edna Manitowabi are gifted Elders. When a gifted Elder speaks, their words are like a mirror being held up. They provide people with an opportunity to see them selves as they are now and to see what is behind them, both their personal history and the collective history of the people. It is up to the individual whether or not, or to what extent, they are able and willing to look and

learn from the *mirror* that is being held up. Even when an individual is willing to listen/look they may not yet be ready, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually, to fully comprehend what they have heard/seen. In that case the teaching stays with them, and as their level of readiness increases, so too does their level of understanding. Joe and Edna had helped me begin to see what Joe Cardinal had tried to show me years previously – now that I was ready to understand. Their words in the present helped me to re-experience the past, which in turn affected the future of this work.

This non-didactic, very personal way of coming to knowing is also part of the experiential learning that takes place within the ceremonies that are part of this particular Indigenous tradition. In the total darkness of the sweat lodge we are able to see ourselves better. And as Joe Cardinal used to say, "Out on the fasting grounds, we have to face our greatest enemy, our selves." The difference between listening to the words of gifted Elders and ceremonial participation, is that within ceremony, the primary facilitators of the subjective understanding that may come about, are the spiritual entities whose guidance has been sought. Once again, readiness on the part of the learner is a pre-requisite to moving towards understanding, and sometimes that readiness actualizes in a moment of awareness. Then, from that point of understanding, a new learning cycle begins. The importance of being ready, and the cyclical nature of the learning that takes place with a gifted Elder and within the fasting and sweat lodge ceremonies that I am familiar with, are what I tried to express in the following poem. It came to me as I was immersed in the reflection that accompanies my annual journey to the fasting ceremony.

Four Times

Four times he prayed to the Grandfathers,
Four sacred songs were sung.

Four times he stopped on the way to his lodge,
Three nights he faced alone.

Four times he prayed to the Grandfathers,
Four sacred songs were sung.

Twice he was given the answer,
but he stumbled on the road.

Four times he prayed to the Grandfathers,
Four sacred songs were sung.

Once he faced the knowing,
The journey had begun.

Four times he prayed to the Grandfathers,
Four sacred songs were sung.

(Hoffman, 2000)

Doing the Footwork

In the process of conducting this research, my level of readiness – physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually – was an important factor in the determination of whether or not the time was right to initiate research relationships. I was most aware of this at the times when I was at either end of the spectrum of readiness. Often when I was in good balance, I intuitively knew that the time was right to go and visit someone, or to pick up the phone and arrange a visit. When I was able to act from this place of faithful knowing, the research process accelerated and was most fruitful.

In those times when I was not ready, my awareness of that reality was usually precipitated by a lack of success in making contact with research participants. This was the case in the summer of 2003 when this research was becoming the focus of my life. It was a time of transition from my life on campus to my work in the communities. While I was still in Ontario I had difficulty contacting two research participants.

July 21, 2003

After a couple of weeks trying to set up a meeting with Douglas – phone messages and faxes – and trying to find Pauline..... [I asked myself] One week left in Ontario, should I keep pushing or simply 'accept and layback'?

After coming off finishing the program am I in the right place? It has been strange after the two years of intense work. Also I'm teaching, packing up to move, connecting with family before we leave, etc. It may not simply be the 'right' time. In Indigenous Research, being sensitive to/knowing when the time is right is very important – especially work with Elders.

I remember previous work, and the place from which I knew that the time was right – inside of me. And how it flowed. Working from a deeper knowing/faith, e.g. Driving into Wind River in 1998.

On my drive back home to British Columbia I had intended to do research as I passed through Saskatchewan and Alberta. After a disappointing contact with a potential research participant, I accepted the fact that it wasn't working because I wasn't ready. I needed to go home and prepare myself for the work that lay ahead.

Aug. 5, 2003

This theme continued in Alberta – 'The right time'. I chose not to pursue Elders because I didn't feel ready. I need to go home and put my 'house' in order (externally & internally) and return in the Fall – focused on the work I need to do.

Jumping out of 2 years of academic work, then moving across the country. IT IS A TIME OF TRANSITION at many levels – Physically, Mentally, Emotionally, Spiritually. My preparation must take place on all these levels!

I need to clear some things away in order to make a place for the things I need to learn.

I need to prepare myself to be ready for when the Elders/Knowledge Holders are ready to talk with me. By lessening my load I will be more agile – more sensitive to and responsive to the 'right' time and the 'right' place.

The following is taken from a letter I sent to my supervisors, before I headed back to Alberta six weeks later:

Sept. 18, 2003

Lynne & Edna,

On the way back home through Alberta and Saskatchewan, I did not get very much research done. I struggled with this for quite some days, until I realized that the time was not right. My head, heart and spirit were making the journey from Trent back home. Once that I realized that I was not ready, I understood. I needed to go home, [to] do the work that was waiting for me here and prepare myself at many levels for the work ahead. And that is what I have been doing.

This has involved re-establishing my home, collecting medicines, preparing gifts, and thinking and praying about the work that lies ahead. It has also involved some writing and some work with the information that I already have. I pulled together all the information that I have collected over the years on Raymond Harris, and put it into themes as a means of coming to grips with it. ....

All the work in preparation for this journey has given me a clearer perspective about my work and my place within in it.

Ultimately, my overall readiness to undertake this research was directly related to my own personal spiritual journey within this tradition over time. My 'being ready' was the result of many diverse, subjective and collective learning experiences that occurred within a variety of contexts over the last fifteen years. These varied contexts included my relationship with Joe Cardinal, my participation in ceremonies, my life within a spiritual community made up of many teachers, and my personal practice. This myriad of learning experiences facilitated my acceptance and understanding of the sacred nature of reality. It also led to my realization and experience of the spiritual nature of my self and my ability to act from a position of deep faith and to respect my intuition as another way of knowing. It is within this complex milieu, that I broadened my understanding and practice of the guiding principles of relationship, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity.

Though all of these understandings have been expressed in the past tense, it is essential to emphasize that all of this learning continues to be an ongoing process. My preparation towards understanding this way of life was/is not a linear process that can be separated into stages. I did not complete a readiness stage and then proceed into a research stage. Viewed from within the perspective of the way of being and knowing that I have described as *Indigenous Research: A Way of Life*, this research is seen as a part of my personal journey, not the other way around. The learning which prepared me to undertake this research, the learning that took place within this research, and the learning which continues today, was/is for me an organic, multi-faceted, inter-related, cyclical, spiraling process. This learning process exists within the context of the elements that make up the

Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing as illustrated in Figure 10 on the following page.

My learning process involved movement through a cyclical process of not knowing to knowing, to not knowing again. It began with the accumulation of information. Over time, through subjective experiences that included participation in the oral tradition and other experiential learning processes that engaged my whole being,[96] I would come to a point of understanding, the validity of which would be gauged both internally and in the realm of the collective[97]. The experience of coming to an understanding, often felt like the completion of a large cycle. In reality, it was but one small aspect of a larger circle of understanding, which in itself is one aspect of a larger circle of knowledge, which in turn is one aspect of a larger circle that is wisdom. At any given point in time, depending on the matter at hand, I spiral between having information and understanding, and in some cases perhaps knowledge. Wisdom is something I have only witnessed in the presence of gifted Elders.

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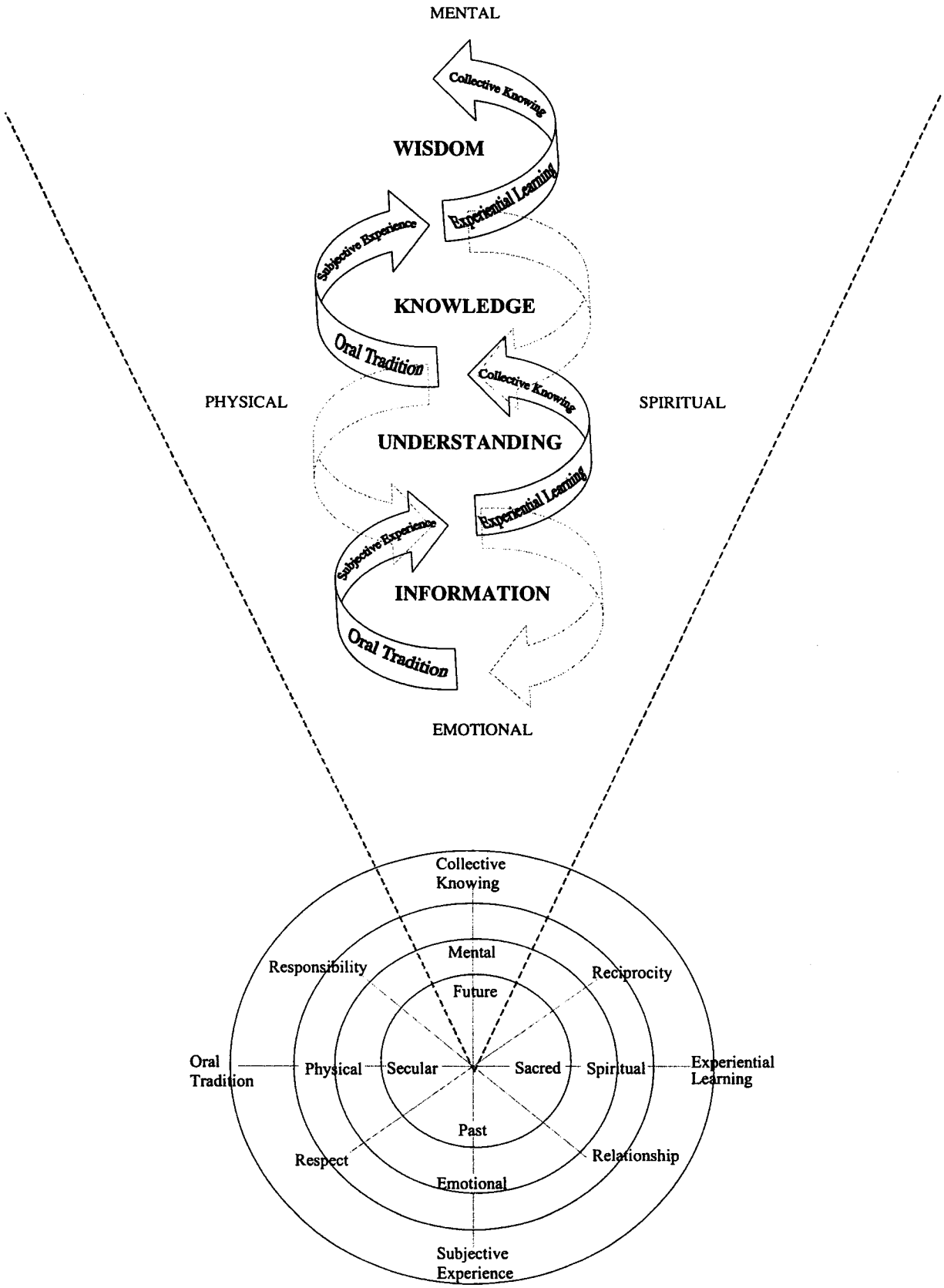
[96] By whole being I am referring to the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of my being.
[97] Depending on the context, the collective refers to my relations in the spiritual community, the research participants, or my relations in the natural world.

Figure 10 – My Experience of the Cyclical Spiral of Indigenous Knowing



Faith and Trust

Looking back on the research process, I think it can be best described as a journey of faith and trust. I brought both of these things to the process and through it my understanding of each of them deepened. I began with the faith that this work could be done and that it could be best accomplished within the ontological, epistemological and ethical reality within which it exists. That led me to develop a respectful research process that was centered within that reality. Then I had to trust the process. Though there were instances when I let fear creep into my thoughts, and I wondered: "What if I disappoint Joe and Jenny and my friends? What then?" and "Is it possible to balance my responsibilities to the research participants, their families, and meet the standards of the university?" What I experienced in the process of conducting this research led to a deepening understanding of what it means to have faith and trust.

My faith in the inherent power of the traditional Cree protocol to initiate my relationships with the research participants, was fundamental to the research process. Each time I introduced my self, my work, and my intentions in this manner to a potential research participant, it was a pivotal point in the research process. When my offering was accepted, the effect was immediate.[98] Total strangers welcomed me into their lives. Many of the deepest and most personal conversations that took place within the context of this research, occurred the first time that I met with a research participant. The following

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[98] I must strongly emphasize that this protocol is much more than a physical act, or a gesture of cultural respect. It is a sacred act. Therefore, before initiating this protocol, a researcher needs to consider if they are prepared and able to act within the principles of relationship, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity.

excerpts from my reflexive journal provide insight into two of my experiences initiating a research relationship.

Feb. 18, 2002

Drove to Ottawa to meet with Douglas Cardinal over lunch. A little bit nervous the night before since he is such a well-known (famous) architect. Had faith that if I spoke from the heart all would be as it should be.

[I] Just wanted to initiate a relationship. A beginning. Heard that he was strong-minded.

Douglas was warm and gracious. A gentleman. He wanted to talk. He was very articulate. [He] Started at the beginning, told side stories, but always managed to come back to the point [where] he had left off to continue about Raymond and his relationship to him.

He was very open about his life and spoke for most of the time – one and a half hours. I never asked a single question! I felt very comfortable in his presence.

[He] Shared his work, his personal life. Invited me to sweat with him.

[He] Appreciated the sweetgrass [I gave him]. I shared my challenge to respect the traditional protocol/teachings and meet the requirements of academic rules and regulations.

June 4, 2002

Met with Harold Cardinal in his office at Athabasca University Learning Centre in Edmonton.

Soft-spoken man. He left the beginning up to me. I introduced myself and talked about my work, my intentions. He was quiet. Then he asked me where I fit into this. [He said,]"Tell me about yourself." I went deeper about my background (personal) and my intentions, personally and academically. He was silent. I offered the tobacco and flags, which he accepted. Then in his quiet, thoughtful manner he proceeded to think back and tell me his story. He talked for over an hour and I listened. He received calls on his cell phone, but seemed to delay his work in order to talk with me. He was articulate and very detailed. He smiled and laughed quietly at things that were humorous. He seemed to enjoy revisiting his memory of these past events in his life. He was very detailed, talked slowly and softly. He gave me direction about what he thought was important. I thanked him and told him I would be in contact with him when I was through next year to focus on my research and writing. I promised that I would not share this information without his approval.

I trusted that I would receive the guidance necessary to complete this work. I trusted the oral tradition. I trusted that if I listened deeply to the people's stories my questions would be answered. I had faith that the many individual stories that I heard would form a cohesive collective story that respected individual truths. I trusted that if validation of this work rested with the research participants themselves, that validity would extend to the wider community and beyond. I had faith that those who have been entrusted with the discipline of Native Studies would be ready to understand that we can honor Indigenous Knowing in our work.

A Leap of Faith

> The discipline of Native Studies straddles the space between Indigenous ways of knowing and western academic traditions. At the best of times the gap is narrow, and it can appear to be non-existent. At other times it can be excruciatingly wide.
> (Hoffman in Bell, et al. 2004)

The process of doing this work, learning and sharing this story, was part of a larger learning journey within my life. A circuitous, spiraling journey that was made up of the interwoven strands of my personal, spiritual, and academic understanding. My work takes place at the interface between two cultural ways of knowing: Indigenous and Western. Therefore, the inherent tension that is characteristic of that relationship exists within my work.

The sacred fire has been rekindled. Raymond Harris clearly demonstrated to the Cree people he worked with, the validity and inherent power of the spiritual traditions that are their birthright. I have shared with you stories that I have heard around this fire and some

of what I have learned as a result of internalizing the flame. My teachers never attempted to tell me what I would experience when I chose to stand by the fire. They knew that is not possible. We come to this way of knowing through our own personal, subjective experience within it, the validity of which is established through the collective understanding that arises through our relationships with 'all our relations'. Thicker descriptions, comparisons with other traditions, and deeper analysis, will not provide a fuller understanding for those who have not come to an understanding of this way of knowing through experience. It is unnecessary for those who have. This is the sentiment that is conveyed within the excerpt from my reflexive journal titled *Dissertation as Ceremony* on page 32.

Looking back at my personal and spiritual learning journey, from the clearer perspective of hindsight, I can see times when I clearly did not understand. My inability to understand at those points in time, were fuelled by previously held misconceptions, apparent paradoxes, and the limitations of my rational mind. Through a process that involved the recognition and letting go of these mental blocks my learning became possible. In many instances this has been a lengthy and ongoing process, facilitated by experience and reflection. At other times, it has been a much more direct, intense process. I remember clearly the crucible of my early experiences in the sweat lodge, the last night of my first fast, and my first experience in a night lodge. In the depth of those powerful experiences, I came to the realization that my ability to understand what I was actually experiencing, rested on my willingness to let go of the very thing that I was relying on to preserve what in those moments I believed to be my sanity; my futile attempts to make sense of what I

was experiencing through analysis and reason. In those moments, I learned that embracing this other way of knowing involves a quantum leap of faith.

Conclusion

My primary intention in writing this dissertation, telling this story, was to honor the work of Raymond Harris. My secondary intention was to ensure that this work respected the lives of the research participants, those who have passed on and those who are still among us. I hope that this written record will be of value to the Harris family, and the research participants and their families. Academically, my intention in conducting this research has been to demonstrate my learning, understanding, and knowing (Rasmus, 2002), "in a manner that incorporates cultural respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and reverence" (Archibald, 1997, p. 65). In doing this work, I hope that I have maintained and perhaps widened the trail of Indigenous scholarship, so that others can extend it further.

I began hearing stories of Raymond Harris and the impact of his work in 1975, when Joe Couture first shared stories with me. Almost thirty years later he would say to me,

> "One thing leads to another, which leads to another and another..." That is what happened at that time and continues to happen today.

This story began long before I first heard it and it continues to unfold today. It does not have an ending. As you read this, people's lives are being impacted by people whose lives were impacted by someone who was impacted through their experiences of working with Raymond Harris.

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Appendix One

Interview Questions

Personal Questions

How and when did you first hear about Raymond Harris?

When and where did you first come in contact with him?

Had you participated in traditional ceremonies before that time?

What can you tell me about Raymond Harris and the traditional work that he did?

In what ways did your experiences with him have an impact on your life?

Were you working with other traditional teachers at that time?

How were Raymond's teachings the same, or different from the teachings of others?

How have you carried Raymond's teachings into your work?

How do you share what you have learned with others?

How is your spiritual practice today, related to Raymond's teachings?

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me regarding Raymond Harris and his work?

General Questions

What were the social, economic and political realities/conditions of the Cree people in the late 1960's?

How important a role did the traditional spiritual practices play within the Cree culture during the late 1960's?

Why were the people who came in contact with Raymond's teachings so receptive to them?

What message did Raymond bring? What were his teachings?

It appears that most of the people who took on ceremonial responsibilities as a result of fasting with Raymond were men. Why do you think that was so?

What impact did this healing movement/cultural re-awakening have on the wider aboriginal movement in western Canada at that time?

How are the effects of this movement/re-awakening still being felt today within the Aboriginal community?

Appendix Two

Statement of Research Purposes and Commitments

Title of Research: Rekindling the Fire: The Impact of Raymond Harris's Teachings in Canada

Researcher: Ross Hoffman

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This research focuses on the impact of Raymond Harris's work with people from Alberta and Saskatchewan from 1968 to 1981. Some of the people who worked most closely with him went on to become highly respected leaders in a variety of fields. Specifically, this research asks: In what ways did the spiritual teachings that came through Raymond Harris, impact this core group of people and their work within the wider Aboriginal community? The purpose of this research is to document this story in order to create a written record of this important piece of Aboriginal history in western Canada.

The information gained through this research will be used in the writing of the researcher's Ph.D. thesis.

At this point in time there is no intention of commercializing any part of the research findings. The commercialization of any part of the research findings would not take place without the permission of the research participants involved and the children of Raymond Harris.

Research participants will be involved in this project through conversations and/or interviews with the researcher at agreed upon times. The research participant and the researcher will mutually determine the number of times it is necessary to meet. The researcher hopes to complete the research by the summer of 2004.

The involvement of research participants is voluntary. It is up to them what information they would like to share. Research participants may discontinue their participation in the research at any time.

The researcher intends to use names and identifying information in the thesis. All research participants will be given the opportunity to review a draft of the thesis and give their consent to the inclusion of such information in it.

The information provided by the research participant will be stored in secure files. The researcher will provide copies of that information, or destroy that information, at the request of the research participant.

The researcher will record the information provided by the research participants through the taking of notes, or with permission, the use of a tape recorder.

Research participants will have the opportunity to review the thesis prior to its completion, in order to assess its accuracy, and to have information removed if they deem it inappropriate.

Date	Ross Hoffman

Appendix Three

Areas of the Social Sciences Related to this Research

Introduction

Due to my location within this research, and the nature of the research itself, it was most suitable to situate my work within the ontological, epistemological, and methodological context of Indigenous research.[99] Had I not chosen to work in this manner, I could have availed myself entirely to western methodologies that are congruent with Indigenous research.[100] Indigenous scholars such as Archibald (1997), Struthers (1999), Ladner (2000), and Makokis (2001), relied on this congruence to practice respectful and responsible research within an Indigenous context. The areas of the Social Sciences that are congruent with this research are naturalistic inquiry, oral history, and ethnography. Many of the theoretical and methodological perspectives inherent to naturalistic inquiry, resonate with Indigenous perspectives. Relationships can also be drawn between Indigenous ways of knowing and work within the fields of oral history and ethnography. I view these relationships in terms of areas of overlapping applicability. This is illustrated in Figure 11 on the following page.

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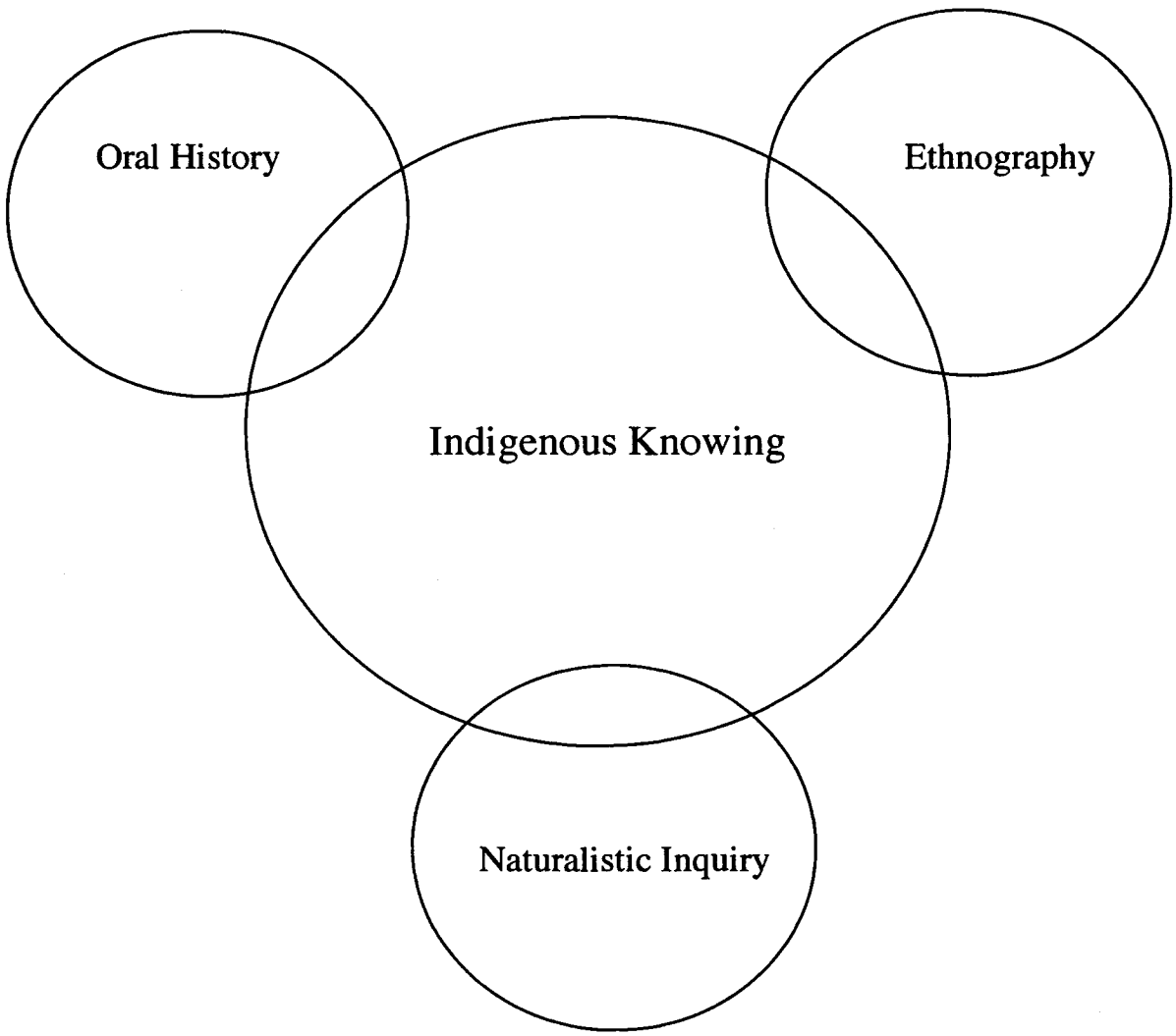
[99] A full description of my relationship to this research is discussed in Chapter 1, beginning on page 17.
[100] Due to the nature of this research, I believe that this would have limited the potential results of my work. It would have inhibited my ability to develop essential research relationships and to fully understand the nature of this story. The effectiveness of the Plains Cree methodologies used in this research is discussed on page 231.

Figure 11 – Areas of the Social Sciences Related to this Research



The Indigenous methodologies found within *The Components of my Research Methodology* (Figure 6 on p. 67), include three specific methodologies that can be found within the overlap between Indigenous knowing, naturalistic inquiry, oral history and ethnography. These include *Research As Conversation, Research As Chat and*

Collaborative Analysis of Data. [1] *Research as Conversation* and *Research as Chat* are methodologies that exist within both Indigenous research and ethnography (Archibald, 1997; Haig-Brown, 1992; Makokis, 2001; and Struthers, 1999). *Collaborative Analysis of Data* is a methodology that is found within Indigenous research and is applied across the Social Sciences (Bishop, 1997; Connelly and Clandinin1990; Cruickshank, 1990, Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Haig-Brown, 1992; Lightning, 1992; and Shawn Wilson, 2001).

Other Areas of Overlapping Applicability between Naturalistic Inquiry, Oral History, Ethnography, and this Research

Naturalistic Inquiry

My research into naturalistic inquiry (Erlandson et al, 1993; Glesne, 1999; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Kirby & McKenna, 1989) indicates that it is situated in a paradigm that is sensitive to, and open enough, to incorporate Indigenous worldviews within the practice of research. The characteristics of naturalistic inquiry that allow it to be applied adequately within Indigenous research are to be found within its ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives. Naturalistic inquiry acknowledges the existence of multiple realities and accepts that not everything is verifiable and can be known by scientific means. Subjectivity, as well as tacit knowledge and values, are recognized as important factors in the research process. Research participants are seen as

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[1] A fuller discussion of these methodologies can be found in Chapter 3 on pages 74, 76, and 80 respectively.

the prime sources of information and credibility. The research design and theory, emerges from and is grounded within the research process itself.

If I had attempted to do this research from within a positivist paradigm, I would have been limited in the types of information that could be considered valid or 'true'. The topic of this research revolves around the effects of the reawakening of traditional Indigenous spiritual beliefs and practices. Therefore, a basic premise of the research has to be an acceptance that multiple realities exist, and that not everything is verifiable and can be known by scientific means.

Within a naturalistic paradigm, my relationship to the research topic is not considered a detriment. In fact it is considered an asset that I share a similar set of ontological and epistemological premises with the participants. Within a naturalistic paradigm, if participants are willing to share stories of their healing, of their spiritual rebirth with me, I will be able to listen to them as truths. I would not have to attempt to explain them, or frame them, in terms of metaphor or a psychological reaction to ritual, in order to make sense of them. Within naturalistic inquiry my understanding would be based on empirical and tacit knowledge as well as an open mind. The previous understandings that I bring to this research would also be of value to the analysis and interpretation of data, and the writing of thick description (Geertz, 1973).

Values are also acknowledged as a factor within naturalistic inquiry. The more my values resonate with the underlying values of the research and the context within which it is

conducted, the more likely the research will be a successful endeavor. This is articulated in the following quote by Guba and Lincoln (1985).

> To the extent to which the inquirer's personal values, the axioms undergirding the guiding substantive theory, the axioms underlying the guiding methodological paradigm, and the values underlying the context are all consistent and reinforcing, inquiry can proceed meaningfully and will produce findings and interpretations that are agreeable from all perspectives. (Guba & Lincoln, p. 178)

Another element of naturalistic inquiry that makes it conducive to Indigenous research is the perspective it has towards the participants. Participants are respected as the prime sources of information, as the ones who hold the answers to the research questions. Credibility is determined by assessing how well the research results interpret the realities of the participants. Do the results "ring true' for them. One way this is established is through member checks. Member checking can take place on an informal and formal basis throughout the research process (Erlandson et al, 1993; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In my research, research participants were asked to review my understanding and presentation of the information they shared, prior to considering the research complete. This provided an opportunity for them to assess its accuracy, and to have information removed if they deemed it inappropriate, or added if necessary. This is part of my responsibility as a researcher, especially in the context of conducting research with Indigenous people.

Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) is another approach of naturalistic inquiry that is conducive to Indigenous research. Rather than beginning with a preconceived theory and setting out to prove or disprove it through the research process, grounded theory is generated through the process of inquiry. The 'grounded'

theory arises out of the ongoing process of gathering and analyzing the data (Erlandson et al, 1993; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glesne, 1999; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Makokis (2001) used a grounded theory approach in her research with Cree Elders in her home community of Saddle Lake, Alberta. She applied the grounded theory approach because it gave voice to research participants and it allowed her to interpret and apply the findings of her research from a cultural perspective (p. 59).

In an overall sense I would describe naturalistic inquiry as an organic, living process that is reflective of the reality of human interaction. Through the concept of emergent design, it allows for and expects the research process to evolve as a result of the interaction between the researcher and the participants. It recognizes the difference between research-as-planned and research-as-lived-experience. This expectation that the research process will unfold in relation to the context and the people involved, fits well within an Indigenous setting in general and specifically with the Indigenous research methodologies that guided this research.

Oral History

Oral history refers to personal accounts of historical events that have been witnessed by an individual and passed on orally. It differs from the broader discipline of history, which focuses on the analysis of written materials. The use of oral history as a means of understanding the past is a fairly recent approach to historical research within the western

academic tradition[102]. The application of oral history has enriched the social sciences by acknowledging the reality of those whose voices had not previously been a part of the historical record ((Perks & Thompson, 1998). In Indigenous societies, whose systems of knowledge are orally based, oral traditions are fundamental to the understanding of history. The concept of oral history in an Indigenous context goes beyond the empirical evidence of an individual. It includes a broader, collective perspective that is inclusive of ancestral memories that have been passed on from generation to generation.

There is a range of controversy surrounding oral history and its relationship to the field of history. Within the western academic tradition in general, literature-based knowledge is valued over oral-based knowledge. The legitimacy of oral history is still questioned and it is not deemed to contain the same level of validity as written historical analysis. In 1991, in the Supreme Court of British Columbia (Delgamuukw and Gisday Wa vs. the Attorney General), it was ruled that oral history was hearsay evidence and that only written documents constitute history (British Columbia, 1991). This ruling was later overturned in the Supreme Court of Canada in 1997, but has yet to be tested in a court of law.

Another argument is that oral history is biased compared to written history. This has been refuted by Binney (1987) in her comparison of Maori oral narratives with the written texts of European settlers in New Zealand. She contends that the two traditions share a great many characteristics.

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[102] The use of oral history as a source of documentation arose within the discipline of history in the last half of the twentieth century. (Perks & Thompson, 1998)

> All are structured, interpretive, combative, and subjective as well as objective. ... History is the shaping of the past by those who live in the present. All histories derive from a particular time, a particular place and a particular cultural heritage. (Binney, pp. 27-28 as quoted in Cruickshank, 1994, p. 410)

From an Indigenous perspective, Doxtator (2001) expresses the concern that when historians attempt to place Indigenous oral history into a western historical paradigm by selecting only the aspects that fit, they are distorting the historical truth. Wilson (1996) contends that a true American Indian History can only be told by an historian who has a thorough understanding of the oral traditions of the people whose history he is attempting to tell.

Another one of the debates within the field of oral history revolves around the reliability of memory and the relationship between memory and history (Perks & Thompson, 1998). Frisch (1998) asked the oral history researcher to consider the following questions:

> What happens to experience on the way to becoming memory? What happens to experience on the way to becoming history? As an era of intense collective experience recedes into the past, what is the relationship of memory to historical generalization? (p. 33)

Borland (1991) discusses the issue of interpretive authority in the presentation of oral narratives. According to Borland, when oral narratives are written down and presented in a new context, i.e., academic literature, "we construct a second-level narrative based upon, but at the same time reshaping, the first." (p. 321) The example of misinterpretation that Borland uses to explain her point arises out of work with her own grandmother. This potential for misinterpretation becomes even greater in a cross-cultural context. Sarris (1993) takes this point even further and addresses the complexity inherent in the

interpretation of American Indian texts, especially those that have been written down. In Indigenous traditions, orators (Elders) gauge their words relative to the context in which they are being shared and the audiences' ability to understand the meaning of what is being said. Cruickshank (1994) cautions us that it is problematic to treat orally recorded accounts as "though they are equivalent to written documents that can be stored now and analysed later". (p. 414)

The oral history methodology described by Slim and Thompson (1993) is very respectful and resonates with the Indigenous principle of respect that guides this research. The authors describe the researcher's role in the interviewing process as that of listener and learner.

> Interviewing is not just a practical mechanism for gathering information. It needs the human skills of patience, humility, willingness to learn from others and to respect views and values which you may not share. (Slim & Thompson, p. 4)

As a Cree scholar doing research on Blackfoot governance, Ladner (2000) applied Slim and Thompson's oral history methodology because it was consistent with decolonizing methodology and her own ethical guidelines (p. 47).

Ethnography

> Whatever else an ethnography does, it translates experience into text. There are various ways of effecting this translation, ways that have significant ethical and political consequences. (Clifford, 1986, p. 115)

In the last two decades, the field of ethnography has undergone a great deal of self-analysis and change as it moved away from its structural–functional orthodoxy towards a

more de-colonized form of praxis (Clifford, 1986; McBride, 1996; Rosaldo, 1989; Rose, 1990; Stocking, 1983; Turner & Bruner, 1986; Van Maanen, 1988). In the last two decades we have begun to see examples of ethnographic work within Indigenous contexts in Canada that have incorporated the ontology and epistemology of the Indigenous people from whom the research originates (Brody, 1981; Powers, 1982; Ridington, 1988, 1980; Robinson & Wickwire, 1989, 1992; Young, Ingram & Swartz, 1989; and Goulet, 1998).

This "dialogical enterprise in which both researchers and natives are active creators" is a far cry from the earlier ethnographic work that was characterized by the researchers belief that they could "speak as an insider on behalf of the community's truth or reality" (Clifford, 1983, pp. 147-148). These examples of ethnographic practice that are reflexive and dialogic (Ridington, 2000), and experientially based (Goulet, 1998), resonate with the specific methodological practices found in this research. They also provide examples of a variety of narrative forms of representation that are respectful of the Indigenous contexts from which they arise. According to Guedon (1994), this may be influenced by the researcher's experiences.

> ... even the form of our research might be shaped by our field experience and the theory of learning of the people with whom we work as anthropologists. ... the tendency found among many of us, contemporary Athapaskanists, to present our findings in the form of narratives rather than in the format of systematic reconstructions of structured systems of beliefs, norms or practices, may also reflect our field experience, i.e. a successful enculturation process. (p. 62)

McBride's (1996) discussion of her ethnographic challenges in respectfully documenting the life and work of Molly Spotted Elk, addresses the issues inherent to her position as a non-Native researcher whose subject of research was a Native American who she never

met. Like myself, she has explored "the issue of responsible representation and the search for a voice that translates across the ethnic divide to speak meaningfully to Native, scholarly, and general communities" (p. 405).

The Effectiveness of Plains Cree Methodologies within this Research

> "The teachings don't come like some people think. You can't sit down and talk about the truth. It doesn't work that way. You have to live it and be part of it and you might get to know it. I say you *might*. And it's slow and gradual and it don't come easy." (Rolling Thunder in Boyd, 1974, p. 37)

Though it would have been possible to conduct this research through the application of perspectives and methodologies found within naturalistic inquiry, oral history and ethnography, it is the Indigenous research methodologies that were applied in this research (See Figure 6 on p. 67) that allowed me the opportunity to more fully understand that which I sought to know. It is my fifteen years of participation, within what I have described as *Plains Cree Methods of Inquiry*: Apprenticeship; Participation in Ceremony, i.e. sweat lodge, fasting, pipe, etc.; Learning-by-doing; and Prayer, that prepared me intellectually, emotionally, spiritually and physically to conduct this research. These 'methods of inquiry'[103] led to my understanding of the components of the *Conceptual Framework of Indigenous Knowing* that lie at the centre of this research and which guided my thoughts and my actions throughout this study. (See Figure 9 on p. 189.) Though

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[103] It is important to reiterate that these *Plains Cree Methods of Inquiry* are far more than research methods, they are aspects of a way of life. My apprenticeship, my participation in ceremonies, and prayer, were initiated for my own healing and growth, and to support others in theirs. In the process I have been fortunate to learn this way of life. This multi-faceted learning process has extended over a long period of time and continues to this day.