Conversations with First Nations Educators: Weaving Identity into Pedagogical Practice

by

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Abstract

This study addresses how the identity of contemporary First Nations educators weaves into their *praxis* as educators. It simultaneously tackles authenticity of cross-cultural research approach, in particular the relationship between academic research and Native peoples. The methodology chosen is the hermeneutic conversation, specifically, Gadamer's use of Aristotle's *phronesis* and Socrates' dialectic. Principles for future research conduct with First Nations people are adduced; collaboration was a key element. The crux is contained within the conversations the researcher had with six First Nations educators from five different nations. The educators' words are organized into four voices: a voice that affirms the contemporary applicability of traditional teachings (the affirming voice), a resistant voice that quietly rages against systematic racism and persistent stereotyping, an ironic voice that reminds First Nations educators of the distance yet to be traveled, and a bridging voice that encourages Canadian society to be taught by First Nations thought.

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I dedicate this study first and foremost to the First Nations educators in this study. Their words continue to exert a powerful and uplifting effect on me, an effect that I anticipate will also reverberate within readers of this study. I acknowledge Ruth Cook, Janice Simcoe, Lyn Daniels, Frank Conibear, Nella Nelson, and Maggie (a name she adopted for the purpose of this study). Thank you for the gift of your words and the time you have given me. Thank you for your trust and acceptance. I hope my words strengthen that human bond and go some way to fostering good relations between academia and First Nations people.

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I dedicate this study to my children. Fiona and Thomas, I hope that by the time you grow up, the world will be more open to First Nations teachings and recognize in it a human knowledge that speaks to all of us.

Prologue: A Way In

This study is about prejudices: the kinds of prejudices that foreclose dialogue and the kinds that enable it to take place. I am using prejudices inGadamer's (1975/1998) sense of pre-judgments and fore-understandings. Gadamer (1975/1998) maintains that we can never entirely get away from ourselves, that even as we gain a new understanding at the expense of an outdated or inaccurate one, the newer knowledge is itself steeped in prejudice, awaiting to be opened up and disclosed to us at the next opportunity. As Maxine Greene (1986) says, all of our sights are partial. This study is about horizons gradually and partially disclosed: my own as well as those of the six First Nations educators who I conversed with. The horizons opened up through a trust in what Gadamer (1975/1998) calls the linguisticality of understanding. The trust was focused on the question of what it means to be a First Nations educator.

Dialogue is interwoven into the substance of this thesis from beginning to end: from conversation to post-conversation to interpretive conversations to conversations on my writing. It has been essential in establishing the authenticity of this thesis; my other research question, this one for myself, is: How can I as a non-Native educational researcher approach First Nations educators authentically? For example, Janice Simcoe remarked that she does not want her voice to be misinterpreted as a contemporary noble savage voice. Upon reading the fifth chapter, which compiles the educators' words into four tonalities of voices, she detected the potential of being identified primarily with an affirming voice, and the possibility of an affirming voice thrown into a box Francis (1992) calls the myth of the noble savage. Janice Simcoe then told me about her quietly raging voice, an aspect of which is anger at society's stereotyping. She added, shuttling from one box to another: neither do I want to be perceived as an ignoble savage. Because hers is not my experience, I didn't and couldn't entirely see what she saw until she told me. Then I saw.

The best thing that could come out of this thesis, she and I agreed, is if the boxes could be thrown away altogether. The boxes correspond in part to the unconscious prejudices we bring; those are the ones, says Gadamer (1975/1998), that we especially need to question. The unsettling part about any cross-cultural study is that, to import Paul de Man's (1983/1971) thesis, through insights we are blinded by new prejudices. How do we know which prejudices to question? How do we recognize them? One powerful answer is through risking dialogue with one another; the form such a dialogue might take is elaborated on throughout this thesis. The remarkable fact is that even though Janice Simcoe's perspective is not directly within my realm, through dialogue a shadow of an outline of an understanding began to take shape, and when that shape was formed, I understood in my own terms what she meant and what that felt like. Added to the lingusticality of understanding that occurs in dialogue, then, is the experiential aspect, which consists in applying knowledge and questions to our own selves.

To assist the reader in understanding my purpose in this cross-cultural study as well as to reassure First Nations readers, in as plain a language as I can muster: the affirming voice is not a contemporary noble savage voice. The resistant and ironic voices are not contemporary manifestations of an ignoble savage. The bridging voice is not a complacent assimilative voice. My purpose is instead to broaden horizons, cultivate understanding behaviours, listen attentively and be affected and involved. This is the frame of mind that shapes this study and that I am hoping the reader will bring as well.

The first chapter focuses on the how of doing research in a particular context. It represents a revision of my original research proposal and documents the decisions I made in choosing a methodological approach that suited my ethical purpose. Chapter two stands back from the particular research situation and presents a theoretical framework and argument for the place of ethical reasoning in research. In chapter three, I draw on those theoretical insights so as to be able to write 'about' First Nations identity. Chapter four is an elaboration of my emergent interpretive process. Chapter five is organized as a community of First Nations voices, and presents the four modalities of voice that I hear in the conversations: affirming, resistant, ironic and bridging. The educators' voices are predominant in this fifth chapter, both in terms of the space their words occupy and their metaphors that helped to organize and present the knowledge. The organization nevertheless represents my own interpretation.

A Note on Terminology

I adhere to two positions on terminology. One conclusion I have reached is that a word's acceptability depends on the context in which it is used: for what purpose, addressed to whom, spoken by whom (see: Garver, 1998). For example, the word, Indian, carries a nationalistic meaning affirming the survival of Indian people when Ortiz (1981) uses it, whereas for Clifton, the same word is provisional. Clifton's (1990) thesis is that the contemporary Indian is a front manufactured by modern Indians for the purpose of extracting public funds; only rarely does it authentically correspond with tribal identity. Whereas tribal once carried from anthropology the meaning of pre-literate or primitive culture, its accurate meaning is the distinctive tribe to which an individual belongs; its meaning has been reappropriated by indigenous peoples. Tribal connects with traditions or (a word First Nations people often prefer) teachings, and is also associated with self-determination and resistance to colonization. Indigenous carries similar meanings to tribal, but in a global context: the teachings that speaks across nations to all indigenous peoples as well as the experiences of oppression that bind them together in the aim of liberation.

I am using the word 'First Nations' in an inclusive sense, which is the meaning that it had prior to the legal redefinition of Canada's indigenous peoples as First Nations, Inuit or Metis (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; Conversation, Nella Nelson). First Nations is also the horizon that I carried into this study; it is the word that has surrounded me in my own relationships with Native people and it has become integral to my way of speaking. Like Janice Simcoe, who chose not to convert to the more politically correct 'Aboriginal', I believe that words become our own by the way in which we use them; this is also Bakhtin's (1981) view. As long as we are responsible in using those words and do not set out to deliberately exclude any group, we should not be swayed by fashion. Each individual speaks from his or her own perspective; diversity of usage flows from that multiplicity. Many Native people use more than one word to identify who they are. Reclamation of terminology is becoming more complete; the way in which words like Indian, Native, Aboriginal, First Nations, indigenous, Native American and tribal circulate within Native communities and among Native scholars suggests to me that Native speakers have liberated them into movement, freeing them from a constricting context until such time when meanings become consensually defined and mutually respected.

My second position on terminology is that some words may be inappropriate in particular contexts if they undermine another person's usage. For example, out of respect for Lyn Daniels, one of the educators, whenever I am elaborating on her conversation, I follow her usage of Aboriginal. It is respectful to signal awareness of an individual's distinctive tribal nation, such as by putting it in brackets beside the person's name. The rubrics of Native and First Nations I reserved for general statements, First Nations when I am speaking of Canada, Native when I am wanting to include Native American and First Nations peoples. The same applies to my use of the term, non-Native, which is roughly synonymous with adjectives like Western. If a more specific appellation of identity, such as British, German or Canadian, was appropriate in a specific context, then I used it. Non-Native is not meant to be derogatory. It is also embedded within my own self-reflexive research question.

Textual Conventions

Underlined words within the text indicate emphasis; I have modified authors' published writings to reflect this practice. Any words that I or another author ironically deflect emphasis from are in apostrophes. I see this irony as an aspect of voice central to cross-cultural qualitative research.

All selections from the conversations are in italics, with the exception of single words or short phrases that are incorporated within the body of the text. The reason for the italics is to emphasize that they are spoken words or continuations of conversations. It is also my way of respectfully acknowledging the source, rather than merging the educators' words into the corpus of 'my' text ('my' being an example of an ironic use of the apostrophe since I do not see this text as solely mine).

When I cite from a conversation, it appears as: (Conversation, Frank Conibear). When the reader encounters the following: (Conversation, Frank Conibear, Reflective commentary), this means that the educator has "augmented" (Terry Johnson, ED-B 331 lectures, University of Victoria) my comment note to a particular line or my chapter writing; the augmentation is a written comment that the educator wrote in the margins.

For any words in a language other than English, I used italics.

Chapter I: Methodological Deliberations

Introduction

Two research questions are the focus of my inquiry. One broadly identifies my focus and is addressed to educators who are First Nations: What does it mean to be a First Nations educator in contemporary Canadian society? The other question is an ethical one. It pertains to the kinds of reflections I will engage in while researching with First Nations people. As a non-Native researcher, how can I conduct research authentically with First Nations people? I use the word "authentic" to describe an interconnected constellation of ideas and experiences, where many of the ideas are drawn from Gadamer and Taylor, whose works I closely examine in this thesis. This web of concepts converges on a relationship I posit as between myself, i.e., the self, and the broader human community.

For a people whose "plight" has been their "transparency" (Deloria, 1969, p. 9), the question of how I approach my topic involves making deliberated choices. I do not see my non-Native identity as an impediment to dialogue. I am more interested in exploring how respect and research are, can, or should be connected. My study therefore contributes to cross-cultural research while also addressing a pertinent question within First Nations education and scholarship. I am also hoping that the study will help to create a welcoming space for cross-cultural education: a space within which we can feel a sense of belonging and ease in when we visit there.

Preparing for Research

Deloria (1969), a Standing Rock Sioux scholar, identified the concern Native people have with being made the objects of academic research. Tongue-in-cheek, in what has become a landmark essay, he remarked: "One of the finest things about being an Indian is that people are always interested in you and your 'plight'. Our foremost plight is our transparency. People can tell just by looking at us what we want, what should be done to help us, how we feel, and what a 'real' Indian is really like . . . Because people can see right through us, it becomes impossible to tell truth from fiction or fact from mythology" (p. 9). The main purpose of this chapter is to address scholarly orientation, for only in marking out a research path of what Archibald (1993) calls "mutual respect" (p. 191) can I hope to create a study that is convincing for both Native and non-Native intellectual and education communities. This kind of approach is timely and significant. Native scholars have long been calling for more sensitive research approachs towards native people (see: Archibald, 1993; Clutesi, 1994/1967; Deloria, 1969, 1991b, 1997; Graveline,1998; Johnston, 1990; O'Meara, 1996; Urion, 1991) as have non-Native scholars (see: LaFramboise & Plake, 1983; Lutz, 1990; Swann, 1983, 1994; Te Hennepe, 1993) while some indigenous academics have argued that cross-cultural research problems may be insuperable (Deloria, 1998; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

This chapter traces my research path of how I chose salient questions and designed the study. I defend those methodological choices by exploring roads not taken: approaches that initially presented themselves as logical choices within First Nations educational research. In chapter two, I explore Garver's (1998) distinction between logical and ethical arguments (see the section in chapter two entitled: "*Phronesis* in a First

Nations Context of Cross-Cultural Research"). In retrospect, I recognize that a rationale like Garver's (1998) underlies the research decisions described in this first chapter. I then elaborate on how through this process, I arrived at a methodological approach, one that depends on notions like: 'another' (human equality between researcher and participant), authenticity, hermeneutics, fusion of horizons, and conversation. Approach or methodology is then melded with the research questions, and a guiding framework for the study is set out.

Eisenhart and Howe (1992) connect choice of research design with ethics, which they subsume under the heading of "internal value constraints": "they [internal value constraints] concern the way in which research is conducted vis-a-vis research subjects, not with the (external) value of results . . . Although internal value constraints, or researcn ethics, can be distinguished from more conventional issues of research credibility, they are nonetheless crucial to evaluating the legitimacy of research designs and procedures, and thus we believe to the validity of a research study" (p. 662). In studies involving Native people, the boundaries the researcher draws between her/himself and the participants signal the researcher's ethical views (see: Haig-Brown, 1990; Te Hennepe, 1993).

Knowing where to draw these lines is compounded in a 'post-positivistic', qualitative context where the separation between subject and object is fluid and open to definition (see: Denzin, 1997; Lather, 1993). We need to distinguish the positivistic empirical tradition, which has deeply influenced educational research, from the philosophical tradition within which Freire (1985) writes. For Freire (1985), subject and object are inextricably connected: "If it is true that consciousness is impossible without the world that constitutes it, it is equally true that this world is impossible if the world itself in constituting consciousness does not become an object of its critical reflection" (p. 69). Given that an object of study is necessary for "constituting consciousness" (Freire, 1985, p. 69), the question becomes in what way can or should we come to know about the world? Both Hampton (1993), a Chickasaw scholar, and Gadamer (1975/1998) say that inquiry begins with an interest.

LeCompte (1993) points to a post-modern fascination with the Other, where Other means people, usually groups, who society has silenced or disenfranchised. She suspects that "researchers seek out the silenced because their perspectives often are counter-hegemonic" (LeCompte, 1993, p. 11). LeCompte questions the ethics of such a research stance. The disempowered's voicelessness makes them vulnerable to being misappropriated in the sense Deloria (1969) identified, however benign the researcher's intentions. As long as the Other is perceived as disempowered, the researcher casts him/herself in between one of two roles: philanthropist or mercenary. LeCompte (1993) clarifies what she thinks the researcher's responsibility should be: "ethical research on the disempowered, whether in a social activist or a scholarly tradition, obliges researchers to consider how informants will participate in the disclosure of their situations and secrets, as well as how researchers will participate in the future life and destiny of the people they study . . . Naming something may make it real . . . However, if the naming is done by an outsider - even a sympathetic researcher - the appellation may not feel entirely authentic to the individual or group to which it is affixed" (LeCompte, 1993, p. 11). What counts as authentic research? This is a query I intend to address.

I want to question the assumption that the participant, who may happen to belong to a group that society systematically marginalizes, should be approached as disempowered. Does not that benign homogenizing further entrench the label? I will also suggest that the language of othering is inappropriate to particular research situations such as my own. I will be arguing for a presumption of equality between researcher and participant, who I see as linked by choice in a common web of humanness. This means seeing both participant and researcher as teacher/learner, learner/teacher (Aoki, 1989; Portelli, 1991) and as human beings or actors. Arendt (1958) argues that human action defines who we are:

> With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance. This insertion . . . may be stimulated by the presence of others whose company we may wish to join, but is never conditioned by them; its impulse springs from the beginning which came into the world when we were born and to which we respond by beginning something new on our own initiative (p. 177).

The first part of this chapter addresses how to create mutual respect. The second part focuses on gathering knowledge within this ethical framework. I borrow the word 'gathering' from Janice Simcoe (Conversation, Janice Simcoe).

Convergence on a Question of Significance

The Prior Question

Does the research question precede and direct a choice of method? Or does the method frame the research question? For Eisenhart and Howe (1992), whose view represents a standard approach, the research question comes first: "Research studies *qua* arguments have questionable validity when methodological preferences . . . rather than research questions, drive the study design" (p. 658). Chambers (1989) initially followed the standard approach, grappling to find a suitable question then choosing a methodology to address that question. However in her experience, upon finding a method, a question emerged. Chambers (1989) explains that the "method orients the researcher to the problem in a certain way and decides how she will choose to view, to question, to examine, and to share her findings" (p. 3).

Both of these approaches, Chambers' as well as Eisenhart and Howe's, figured in the way I formulated my question and method. Convergence more accurately describes the process. An "ideal of authenticity" (Taylor, 1992a) guided my efforts within a framework that I now recognize as *phronesis* or an ethics of understanding (see: chapter two). Particularly in my choice of method, my purpose was to not contravene my experiences of living and teaching in a First Nations community, an experience of what Gadamer (1975/1998) calls a "fusion of horizons" (p. 306). Nor did I wish to jeopardize the relationships I had formed there and that continue to influence me in significant ways. The way in which I converged on question and method is germane to understanding how I structured my study. I started with an ethnographic approach; ethnographic methods have been and continue to be influential in educational research.

An Ethnographic Approach

The query I began with was: What do First Nations families perceive as their literacy needs? Auerbach (1989, 1995), who advocates a multiple literacies approach to family literacy, falls within the post-modern tradition identified by LeCompte. Auerbach emphasizes the need for ethnographic studies to confirm the multiple literacies occurring in the homes of families who fall outside of the mainstream literacy model. Because I was interested in literacy from the point of view of First Nations participants, following Auerbach's suggestion, I looked into ethnography.

The roots of educational ethnography lie in anthropology (Wilson, 1975). Deloria (1969) articulates a consensus of Native opinion when he says that anthropology is the bane of First Nations people (see: Hayden-Taylor, 1996; King's (1993) "One Good Story, That One" on the "coyote tracks" left by the anthropologists (p. 10); Westerman's poem entitled "Here Come the Anthros" (cited in Denzin, 1997, p. 214)). Deloria's (1969) main objection to anthropologists' presence in Native communities is that while Native people allowed and invariably welcomed anthropologists into their villages, the motion was not reciprocated. Anthropologists have not helped native people in return. Instead, they have reduced Native people to objects of study, misrepresented them in their publications, created an image that did not correspond to reality and to add insult to injury, government policies were constructed on this false picture. Deloria (1969) rhetorically asks: "Academic freedom certainly does not imply that one group of people have to become chessmen for another group of people. Why should Indian communities be subjected to prying non-Indians any more than other communities?" (p. 99).

Biolsi & Zimmerman (1997), co-editors of Indians and Anthropologists: Vine Deloria Jr. and the Critique of Anthropology, belong to a generation of anthropologists who are attempting to de-colonize anthropology's approach in light of Deloria's 1969 critique. By de-colonizing, I mean divesting anthropology of its presumption that valuable knowledge is gained by extracting information from another culture. Valuable for whom, ask Maori scholar Tuhiwai Smith (1999) and Hawaiian writer Trask (1993). Biolsi and Zimmerman (1997) are frank about anthropology's colonial record:

> The history by which Indian people were made primitive Others, conceptually and materially, subject to economic exploitation, political colonization, and scientific scrutiny - in a word, their disempowerment - is the same history by which generally elite white intellectuals became authorized to study the primitive as professional anthropologists in the academy, in a word, their privilege.
>
> (Biolsi & Zimmerman, 1997, p. 13; their emphasis)

De-colonizing methodologies ask ethical questions in advance: "Whose research is it? Who owns it? Whose interests does it serve? Who will benefit from it? Who has designed its questions and framed its scope? Who will carry it out? Who will write it up? How will its results be disseminated?" (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 10).

Ethnography, despite its roots in anthropology, emphasizes understanding culture in context. It held out the promise of accurate representation from a participants' point of view. Upon examining ethnography's main constructs of participant observation, informant, and researcher as "the primary research instrument" (Dobbert, 1982, p. 6), the intractable question became: Whose voice is speaking?. A participant observer is "a trained recorder" (Dobbert, p. 102) who investigates the actions and beliefs of another culture based on "a number of categories of human behavior" (Wolcott, 1975, p. 113). A phenomenological assumption underlying participant observation is that the researcher engages in a "lived experience" (Van Manen, 1997/1990) somewhat like the participant's, however because this experience happens at a distance, the observations become objective. Culture is mediated through the researcher's eyes, who (after Malinowski) claims to reproduce reality through the participant's eyes but who we now are reassured (after Clifford Geertz) is perceiving the object through his/her own cultural lenses. This contradictory stance is evident in the following excerpt from Wilson (1977): "The participant observer . . . considers the interpretations of his subjects to have first importance . . . By taking the role of his subjects he recreates in his own imagination and experience the thoughts and feelings which are in the minds of those he studies" (Severyn Bruyn (1966) cited approvingly in Wilson (1977), p. 250).

Participant observation continues to be a valid and fundamental method of research (see: Clifford, 1988; Geertz, 1983; Phillips, 1983) despite recognition of its limitations in studying another culture (see: Harrison, 1993; Owubu, 1978 on the Mead vs. Lowie debate). Phillips (1983) conducted a study on patterns of classroom response among the Native children of the Warm Springs reservation using participant observation. As reasons for choosing this method, she cited the proven worth of Malinowski's research experiences, the anthropological truism of "direct untampering observation of human interaction" (Phillips, 1983, p. 14) and her desire to approximate "face-to-face interaction" (Phillips, 1983, p. 20). Geertz (1988) is one of the most persuasive advocates of "being there" or participant observation:

> The ability of anthropologists to get us to take what they say seriously has less to do with either a factual look or an air of conceptual elegance than it has with their capacity to convince us that what they say is a result of their having actually penetrated (or, if you prefer, been penetrated by) another form of life, of having, one way or another, truly 'been there.' And that, persuading us that this offstage miracle has occurred, is where the writing comes in. (p. 5)

Participant observation, or immersion in another's culture, originated as a radical alternative to decontextualized knowledge about so-called pre-literate cultures, the kind of knowledge Levy-Bruhl (1926) relied on in his book, The Native Mind, where he culled information about native cultures from books and not from field experiences. While the field experience raised the profile of 'pre-literate' cultures, it still confined native people to being objects of study. Participant observation, as it was practiced by anthropologists like Boas, rested on constructs of native culture that privileged ritualistic over daily life in purportedly accurate representations (see: Cannizzo, 1983). The degree to which later ethnographic research relies on cultural immersion as a valid undertaking is shown by Malinowski's continued popularity (see, for example: Clifford, 1988; Geertz, 1988, and Phillips, 1983). Wolcott (1975) offered the following advice to would-be ethnographers: "A deceptively simple test for judging the adequacy of an ethnographic account is to ask whether a person reading it could subsequently behave appropriately as a member of the society or social group about which he has been reading, or, more modestly, whether he can anticipate and interpret what occurs in the group as appropriately as its own members can" (p. 112). This comment is precariously close to condoning non-Natives as "going Native" (LeCompte, 1993, p. 21) or acting as "shamans" of Native culture (Rose, 1992, p. 482). The use of informants shares participant observation's dubious ethical validity in a First Nations context.

The term informant connotes as well as enacts an instrumental use of language. In ethnography, the informant is a person who provides the researcher with inside information, and acts as a link or mediator with the culture being studied: "Key informants are strategically placed persons" (Dobbert, 1982, p. 115). The roots of using informants again lie in anthropology. For example, in the early 1900's, George Hunt, Franz Boas' Kwakiutl field assistant and key informant, accelerated the appropriation of Native artifacts, often providing not only the items themselves but in accordance with Boas' strict rules, contextualized documentation, which required Hunt to seek out his own informants for the tales, songs and rights and uses of objects (Jacknis, 1991, p. 190). Unacknowledged informants like Hunt shaped Boas' research, research that has in turn informed our own understanding of pre-Contact native coastal culture (see: Kew & Goddard's (1954) often-used resource, Indian Art and Culture of the Northwest Coast; it has enjoyed six reprintings, the latest one being in 1993). Cannizo (1983) raises the question of how motivation - the informant's and the researcher's - skews the findings and casts suspicion on the validity of the data gathered; she cites, for example, the often turbulent relationship between Boas and Hunt: Boas' manipulation of Hunt, and Hunt's financial dependence on his work as informant.

In current research, the informant continues to be a construct that exists for the sole purpose of the study: an extension or arm of the researcher extending into the community. Spradley's (1979) guidelines for how to establish trust with informants for the purpose of obtaining accurate information is typical of ethnographic procedure and is often cited as a credible source for methodological procedures (see: Ladson-Billings' (1998) study on creating a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy).

Taylor (1992a) points out that "social science explanation", in whose mold ethnography fashions itself, "has generally shied away from invoking moral ideals and has tended to have recourse to supposedly harder and more down to earth factors," most fundamentally, the use of "instrumental reason" (pp. 19-20). By instrumental reason

Taylor (1992a) means "the kind of rationality we draw on when we calculate the most economical application of means to a given end" (p. 5). Instrumental reason has obfuscated "the importance of authenticity as a moral ideal" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 19). The use of informants signifies an instrumental rather than authentic way of approaching Native people. Clifford (1983), one of the theorists to inaugurate interpretive ethnography, continues to rely on traditional ethnographic constructs, yet he hints that the word informant is and was always inappropriate in an indigenous context: "anthropologists will increasingly have to share their texts, and sometimes their title pages, with those indigenous collaborators for whom the term informants is no longer adequate, if it ever was" (p. 51; his emphasis).

Goetz and LeCompte (1984) emphasize the influence the natural science model has had on social science research. Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, a commonplace of empirical research, states that the act of measuring or observing affects the action of what is being observed or measured. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) lament the "misapplication" (p. 57) of this natural science model to the social sciences. The researcher's place in the study is relegated to a methodological hurdle whereas instead, they argue, it should be viewed as a theoretical problem. In cross-cultural situations, they note, participant observation carries "sociocultural belief systems as implicit comparison frameworks", resulting in a third theory of human behavior composed from "the interactive impact of the first two" belief systems, namely, the observed and the observer's (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 57). Phillips' (1983) educational ethnographic study in a Native community is a case in point. When some Indian adults expressed concern over her emphasis on the cultural differences between Natives and Anglos (Whites), arguing with her that "only by stressing the similarities between Anglos and Indians would it be possible to get along with them and improve relationships between the two groups", she persisted in her research design (Phillips, 1983, p. 18). Her theoretical reason, which seems to be a reasonable one, was that only by examining the differences in behaviour could differences in classroom performance be understood (Phillips, 1983, p. 19). A more fundamental belief, however, informed her decision, as she discloses in the following passage: "Some readers may be willing to assume such cultural differences [between Natives and Anglos]. However, it is not clear how much Indian culture remains after generation of efforts on the part of Anglos to eradicate that culture and assimilate the Indians into the mainstream culture" (p. 16; emphasis added; compare this statement with Janice Simcoe's who said: "*How could we get so caught up in the institution that we were attending that it even would occur to us that it was stronger than our teachings*" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; her emphasis). Phillips' allegedly "untampered" (p. 14) participant observation is influenced by her expectation that differences may be less prounounced. She is looking for differences whereas the Native people know there are differences and want to work towards a better relationship, a goal that would require a more social activist approach (see: LeCompte, 1993 on social activist approaches).

While ethnography recognizes that the researcher is part of the study as a participant, the etic (outside) and emic (inside) perspectives are in constant tension. This tension defines an ethnographic study: "These tensions in point of view - between outsider and insider and between groups of insiders - keep the careful researcher from lapsing into subjectivity"; the goal of modern ethnographic research is "to view behavior simultaneously from all perspectives" (Wilson, 1977, p. 259). Interpretive ethnography questions the possibility of attaining this omniscience while grappling with the same tensions in its own admittedly partial perspectives, perspectives which, in a post-modern context of a fall from innocence (Geertz, 1983), Denzin (1997) predicts will focus increasingly on social criticism. The question of whether ethnography may be applied consciousably in cross-cultural research is still being sorted out.

Representation of Others

At this point in the study, a question arose of my own obvious bias towards and for Native people and how to account for it in my research design. I felt it was important not to bracket the influence of my experiences within a First Nation community, and allow these experiences to guide the way in which I was approaching my topic. This created what appeared to be a dilemma. My firm belief is that First Nations people should speak for themselves rather than others speaking on their behalf. I had reiterated this point in community school meetings. Some local teachers and teacher aides who felt voiceless within a context that seemed to favor non-First Nations teachers or non-First Nations approaches to learning sometimes urged me to speak. In speaking my own mind, I was perceived - and perceived myself - to be speaking simultaneously on my own behalf and theirs. The predicament that I had begun to reflect on while still teaching and that directly confronted me in research was: How could I, as a non-Native, speak from a First Nations point of view, which is tantamount to saying, how could I speak as if I were First Nations? The issue of misappropriation of voice is called the representation problem. Sensitive scholars concerned about voice misrepresentation have begun to address this question (on First Nations voice see: Lutz, 1990; Te Hennepe, 1993; for a broader theoretical discussion see: Alcoff, 1991; LeCompte, 1993; Portelli, 1991). The question that later intrigued me even more was: How did another culture's perspective become such an integral part of me?

Alcoff (1991), who writes from a post-modern, feminist perspective, asks: "Is the discursive practice of speaking for others ever a valid practice, and, if so, what are the criteria for validity? In particular, is it ever valid to speak for others who are unlike me or who are less privileged than me?" (p. 7). The presumption of difference is predicated on one's location in society, in particular, social, economic, political, class or cultural differences, and is absolute or ineradicable in that an individual is more or less born into it. The stance taken towards location, however, determines how research is conducted; stance can also diverge from where a person originally started out in society. Alcoff (1991) explores the epistemological implications of adopting various stances: a siding with (for a non-Native person this is a "privileged location" and therefore could be "discursively dangerous"), an "uncritical" following of the Other's lead, a moving over and getting out of the way (which could mean abandoning or forfeiting one's own beliefs), or deconstructing one's own privileged discourse (Alcoff, 1991, pp. 7-8). Alcoff (1991) concurs with Spivak's (1988) a "speaking to": "We should strive to create wherever possible the conditions for dialogue and the practice of speaking with and to rather than speaking for others" (p. 23). She does not elaborate on what that dialogue would look like, but like LeCompte (1993), identifies empowerment of the disempowered as a valid 'excuse' for engaging with the Other. In doing so, she precariously slips into post-modern discourse's fascination with the disempowered, failing to realize the contradiction implicit in moving back and forth between a 'speaking with' and a 'speaking for'.

Like Alcoff, Giroux (1993) advocates a speaking with rather than for Others. He envisions educators as "border crossers," who in traversing into the Other's territory, attempt to "understand otherness on its own terms" (p. 370). There are two problems with Giroux's argument as a model for cross-cultural dialogue. One is the presumption that otherness can be understood on its own terms. While Giroux concedes that educators cannot speak as the Others, he says that they can deepen their understanding and speak to or about experiences of racism, sexism or class discriminations. For example, as a teacher in a First Nations community, even though I have not experienced colonialism, I could speak to the effects of residential school. I can also "interrogate" and "revise" my own hegemonic "narrative" and speak "self-reflectively" (Giroux, 1993, p. 369). Underlying Giroux's argument is the assumption of a vicariously lived through experience. Giroux's border crosser assumes disempowerment in order to generate an understanding. Giroux's argument, however, does raise the pertinent question of what understanding is, and the relationship between self-understanding and understanding of another, a question that I will take up in discussing Gadamer's notion of 'fusion of horizons'.

The second problem is that Giroux's (1993) argument inadvertently homogenizes 'the Other'. Unlike ethnography, which attempts to understand cultural particulars or "local knowledge" (Geertz, 1983), post-modernists tend to lump the disempowered with the disenfranchised, colonized, impoverished and marginalized. These groups share one characteristic that makes them interesting to post-modernists: their difference and therefore exclusion from dominant culture. Taylor (1992b) in Multiculturalism and 'The Politics of Difference' argues that in the politics of difference, a society that Giroux supports, the goal is to maintain and cherish distinctness. The presumption that all cultures or locations are of equal worth and therefore deserve equal say is condescending, Taylor asserts. In the absence of genuine cross-cultural experience, in which one's claim is supported by a transformative change in horizon (a term from Gadamer that I will explain shortly), arguments based on the inherent superiority of the Other are suspect.

As LeCompte (1993) so perceptively says, and Deloria (1969) before her, the tantalizing ease with which the voiceless can be 'given' voice is dangerous. Moreover, any academic who takes up the cause of the Other is placed in the predicament of arguing from a position of power, dominance and safety since academic discourse belongs to the literate class that Olson (1996, 1998), among others, has identified as hegemonic. Thus Gore (1992), a feminist post-modernist scholar, criticizes Giroux for neglecting to deconstruct his own discourse of empowerment, deconstruction being for the post-modernist the only possible logical and ethical grounding of arguments. As the kind of post-modern deconstructionist Gore would likely laud, Kamboureli (2000) details, in a manner parallel to my own, her own struggles with the representation question: "As I went about learning and unlearning, so my 'ethnic project' kept being written and unwritten continuously" (p. 3). She concludes:

> being responsible, in my understanding, means negotiating our position in relation both to the knowledge we have and to the knowledge we lack. It means practising 'negative pedagogy', 'inhabiting . . . that space where knowledge becomes the obstacle to knowing' (Johnson 1982, 166 and 182) . . . Negative pedagogy redefines the object of knowledge as nothing other than the process leading towards ignorance" (p. 25).

A post-modernist problematizes a 'neutral' use of language by challenging its contradictions, rupturing and decentering it, placing it within the broader context of a discourse that is created through relations of power. Foucault's insights into power relations inform post-modern discourse. Power is not a commodity, a thing that can be exchanged or granted. The operation of power is a "net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target. They are always also the elements of its articulation" (Foucault cited in Gore, 1992, p. 58). Gore (1992) criticizes emancipatory enterprises that seek to empower disenfranchised groups or individuals; Foucault's argument "refutes the idea that one can give power to (can empower) another" (Gore, 1992, p. 58).

Foucault's analysis of discourse is useful in de-centering anthropology's colonialism as well in questioning any unsituated emancipatory discourse that claims to empower the Other. The language of empowering and disempowering are implicit, however, in the use of the term, 'the Other'; there is no escaping the question of who is speaking as long as the researcher retains the language of Othering. Upon examining "the rhetoric of othering", Riggins (1997) found that the term's modern use originated with an interdisciplinary group of scholars who shared an interest in postmodernism and cultural studies. The word Other "as a category of speculative thought can be traced at least as far back in time as Plato, who used it to represent the relationship between an observer (the Self) and an observed (the Other)" (Riggins, 1997, p. 3). Post-Reformation uses of the word exist in the context of a disjunction between subject and object, observer and observed, self and Other (on this disjunction see: Olson, 1996; Taylor, 1989).

Gadamer stresses that "the fundamental relation of language and world does not mean that the world becomes the object of language. Rather, the object of knowledge and of statements is already enclosed within the world horizon of language. The linguistic nature of the human experience of the world does not include making the world into an object" (Gadamer 1967 cited in Bleicher, 1980, p. 116). Referring to First Nations people collectively as Other reifies them as an object of study.

Focusing on the ethics of writing and researching as a non-Native broadened the context of my inquiry such that like Chambers (1989), I became preoccupied with deciding "how I ought to conduct myself in the presence of the other", a question that was inseparable from my vision "of how I ought to live" (Chambers, 1989, p. 162). Phenomenology is an approach that says human experience can be known directly; the researcher apprehends that reality by bracketing his/her own presuppositions. The experience of being human is prior to language (Van Manen, 1990, p. 13), whereas for Gadamer, language constitutes being; there is no reality separate from language. Phenomenology shares with ethnography and positivism the presupposition that there is a reality external to the researcher or self that can be described. Two questions that a phenomenological approach could not answer were: how can I as a non-Native person directly experience being Native/Native 'being', if we accept that language and identity are intertwined? Related to that question was: How can I bracket myself as a researcher and as a knowing subject? More fundamentally, do I want to? The ethical question of whose voice would be speaking in my study was central. I concluded that the only lived experience that I could describe in my writing was my own; these are questions that I return to in chapter four, in reflecting on the interpretive process.

Construct of Another

My construct of 'another' posits equality between researcher and participant as human beings. It enacts a relationship that is reciprocal rather than hierarchical, and emphasizes commonality along with difference: "Only equality prepares us to accept difference in terms other than hierarchy and subordination; on the other hand, without difference there is no equality - only sameness" (Portelli, 1991, p. 43). The researcher is fundamentally and inescapably a person speaking with another person, as Mishler (1986) has shown. The interaction patterns of research interviews disclose the formation of a human relationship (Mishler, 1986). Todorov (1984) writes: "Others are also "I"s: subjects just as I am, whom only my point of view - according to which all of them are out there and I alone am in here - separates and authentically distinguishes from myself" (Todorov, 1984, p. 3; his emphasis). The construct of another comes into play within both phases of research: interaction and interpretation.

Interaction takes place in a place of potential agreement and mutual respect, in this study, in a conversation; potential because to presume respect without having granted it or been granted it, is presumptuous, erasing individuality. The purpose of conversation is to reach an understanding through language. Unlike an interview, which is based on the participant's informed consent to the extraction of information and thus is predicated on a 'voluntary inequality', conversation is dialogical; the outcome is unknown and depends upon the human interaction that occurs during dialogue. The construct of another also assumes that I have something I can share with you, the interlocutor, that you might find useful, provocative or self-transforming, while you offer me a similar challenge. The relationship is based on an openness and willingness to reach understanding. The issue of who speaks first is subordinated to the attitude that precedes and is carried into the conversation. The framework of 'another' allows me, as a non-Native researcher, to interact with a First Nations person on an equal plane; equal in our humanness and capacity for understanding one another through language. The only exception is the deference and humility that should accompany speaking with an elder. An elder's wisdom and experience have granted them a perspective on human life that is worthy of being respected from those who are younger and still traveling. Ruth Cook, herself an elder, qualifies that statement in turn by saying the responsibility is reciprocal: the elder has to walk their talk (Conversation, Ruth Cook).

Speaking with one another allows each conversant to bring forward his/her own "horizon", a word that Gadamer uses to describe an interlocutor's "historicity" or "fore-meanings and prejudices" (Gadamer cited in Bleicher, 1980, p. 109). I am thrown back upon an attitude of humility that I learned while living and teaching in a First Nations community. I am not speaking for a Native belief; rather I am speaking for my own beliefs that were and continue to be transformed as a result of my experiences with Native people. Gadamer (1987) comments on this dialogical process:

> Discussion bears fruit when a common language is found. Then the participants part from one another as changed beings. The individual perspectives with which they entered upon the discussion have been transformed, and so they are transformed themselves. This, then, is a kind of progress - not the progress proper to research in regard to which one cannot fall behind but a progress that always must be renewed in the effort of our living. (p. 336)

As Daisy Sewid-Smith, a Kwagiulth teacher and scholar, remarked: Too much head-knowledge and too little wisdom makes a person forget who he/she is. She was speaking of Native students who leave their communities to attend institutions of higher learning and often return disengaged from their communities (Daisy Sewid-Smith, Personal communication, March 2, 1999). My position is similar to those Native students, even though I am not Native. Because I am married into a Native community and have engaged as a participating member in the daily life and struggles of that community, I feel a responsibility to give back my knowledge as a service to the Native community: my own community and by connection, any Native community. The knowledge I learn with and through speaking with First Nations educators is not mine to hoard; it is mine to share. What uses the knowledge will be put to once the study is over is a question that needs to be asked, and I come back to it in the conclusion of this thesis, for the purpose of research is to give it away. Authenticity has become one litmus test for this study's validity: authenticity towards myself as researcher as well as in my conduct with First Nations educators. Authenticity is a word that I borrow from Taylor (1992a).

An Ideal of Authenticity

Authenticity is an ideal, a potentiality, a goal. Taylor (1992a) says "authenticity points us toward a more self-responsible form of life. It allows us to live (potentially) a fuller and more differentiated life, because more fully appropriated as our own" (p. 74). The ethic of authenticity is "relatively new and peculiar to modern culture" (p. 26); its roots can be traced to Rousseau at the end of the eighteenth century. It builds on a Romantic period version of individualism that claimed human beings are endowed with a moral sense, an intuitive feeling for what is right and wrong. Defined in opposition to a rational view of morality as a calculation of consequences, the ideal of authenticity is to hear the voice within. As the ideal for morality became displaced from a norm external to the self to being in touch with oneself, the definition of being human changed. To be fully human meant to act rightly, which was only possible by listening to the voice within. Rousseau articulated the notion of "self-determining freedom": "the idea that I am free when I decide for myself what concerns me, rather than being shaped by external influences" (p. 27). Herder put forward the idea that each of us has an original way of being human. If I am not true to myself, I miss out on the point of life: "I miss what being human is for me" (p. 29; his emphasis). Taylor argues that Rousseau's and Herder's moral ideals have become part of modern consciousness, the attempt to define oneself through self-articulation (p. 29).

Two dangers may impede the realization of this potential: feeling "lost" or disengaged with oneself because of society's pressure to outwardly conform, or taking an "instrumental stance" towards oneself and thus losing the capacity to listen to one's inner voice (Taylor, 1992a, p. 29). The ideal of authenticity states that "not only should I not fit my life to the demands of external conformity; I can't even find the model to live by outside myself. I can find it only within" (p. 29). Kant articulated the notion that to be human is to realize one's potential. In the ethics of authenticity, the only potentiality I can realize is my own. Taylor defines the ethics of authenticity as a "work of retrieval": of identifying and articulating the ideal of authenticity, and of criticising practices from the standpoint of their own motivating ideal (p. 72).

The quest for an approach that I can carry into my relations with First Nations people is why authenticity as a moral ideal is relevant to this research inquiry. The significance of authenticity in contemporary Aboriginal education and culture can be seen in the process of reinstating ancestral languages and traditions to their proper place in First Nations communities, along with people's will to create change in political, economic and educational structures. Regrounding Aboriginal identity in traditional teachings and separating that identity from the external forces of colonization, residential school experiences, addiction, incarceration, mainstream schooling, and bureaucratic structures is a process that continues (see: Fournier & Crey, 1997; Lutz, 1990, 1991; Maracle, 1993; Wiebe & Johnson, 1998). Authenticity is the pivot on which the goals of First Nations education turn. It communicates the importance of: a) accurate representation of the distinctiveness of tribal cultures to Native and non-Native audiences and b) the re-framing of curriculum in a cultural framework that will simultaneously help First Nations students find a place of belonging in public schooling while opening a space of understanding for non-Native students, teachers, administrators and parents (Nella Nelson, Personal communication, February 2, 1999; Lyn Daniels, Personal communication, January 29, 1999). The ideal of authenticity, then, is not simply for Native people to become more fully themselves as Native people/persons, but is also for everyone. In achieving a more complete realization of how another person lives and thinks, the potential exists for any individual to become more completely human. The ideal of authenticity extends to researchers, who are part of that human community.

Cross-Cultural Research: Gadamer's Hermeneutics

Gadamer (1987) emphasizes that hermeneutics is not just a theory; it is also *praxis*: "From the most ancient times right down to our days, hermeneutics quite clearly has claimed that its reflection upon the possibilities, rules and means of interpretation is immediately useful and advantageous for the practice of interpretation" (Gadamer, 1987, p. 328). Central to hermeneutic understanding is appropriation. I will introduce Gadamer's hermeneutics here, and elaborate further in chapter two on Gadamer's notion of applied understanding, including to what degree his use of the word 'appropriation' fits a First Nations perspective. Gadamer (1986) uses the word appropriation when explaining how an adult learns a foreign language or a child learns to speak. Learning happens by appropriation, "a kind of preschematization of possible experience and its first acquisition. Growing into a language is a mode of gaining knowledge of the world" (Gadamer, 1996, p. 180). Because language contains world knowledge, and "the world itself is communicatively experienced", it is already contextualized or "handed down" (Gadamer, 1996, p. 181).

Gadamer holds that pre-judgment or prejudices are required for understanding. Horizons provide a starting point for how we make sense of the world (Smith, 1990, p. 10). Prejudice is superficially like bias. Whereas bias is an entity that needs to be controlled or expunged, horizons create understanding. Unexamined prejudices acquire legitimacy by becoming the objects of dialogical thought (Gadamer, 1998/1975; 1991/1931). The prejudices we bring with us to a situation or a text constitute the horizon of a particular present "for they represent that beyond which it is impossible to see" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 306). It would be a mistake to think that horizons are static and comprise "a fixed set of opinions and valuations" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 306). Rather, the present horizon is continually being formed because it is constantly being tested and challenged by other horizons: those of other people, those we find in texts, those of traditions. Understanding is a continual "fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p.306). If there is no such thing as a distinct horizon, Gadamer asks, how can we speak of a fusion of horizons? Isn't there only one horizon, the one that is continually being constructed? Gadamer conceives of thought as a perpetual conversation with oneself. "Historical consciousness" in the present continually "recombines" what it has "foregrounded" in order to "become one with itself again in the unity of the historical horizon that it thus acquires" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 306). The horizon is transformed or moved along while retaining its connection with past experiences. For the researcher, "the hermeneutic task consists not in covering up this tension [between horizons] by attempting a naive assimilation of the two but in consciously bringing it out" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 306). Hermeneutics potentially apply to cross-cultural studies because two different horizons are meeting. For example, Lutz (1991) brings to his conversations with Native authors his German background. He is continually disclosing and revising his understanding of his own culture and of Native people.

Gadamer (1986) claims that "dialogue lets us be certain of possible assent, even in the wreckage of agreement, in misunderstanding, and in the famous admission of ignorance" (Gadamer, 1986, p. 180). Because hermeneutics has to do with the "universe of the reasonable", the possibility of reaching an agreement can never be denied; the universe of the reasonable is concerned with "anything and everything about which human beings can seek to reach agreement" (Gadamer, 1986, p. 180). This agreement requires an attitude of being open to the possibility of agreement (Taylor, 1992b), which occurs through the act of questioning whose true purpose is "to make things indeterminate" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 375).

Indeterminancy does not mean relativism. Questions must be real; the question must be one to which the asker does not know the answer. Real questions "always bring out the undetermined possibilities" by opening us to "possibilities of meaning"; thus "what is meaningful passes into one's own thinking on the subject" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 375). An "inauthentic" question is one that is "outdated and empty", that has no personal relevance (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 375). Through questions we discover something important, as Ellen White, a Salish elder, explains:

> I always think about education. What is education? What is knowledge gathering? Is it one and the same? Everything we do to make our minds work, to realize, to hear, to realize, to visualize, what we are about to be learning [pause] that is education! Indian education is the same, with a little bit further - the way we look at it, my cousins, my sisters, myself, talk about it, cousins like Nora George, for instance, we talk a lot, Auntie Rose James from Kuper Island. I ask them a lot of questions. They know me very well; so they answer me: "Everything you learn, you should question it." If somebody - you hear, or you feel, or you sense an answer . . . you should never disregard it. There might be a very very, shall we say, helpful [pause] learning from it. (Ellen White in conversation with Jo-Ann Archibald, 1993, pp. 151-2)

Hermeneutics' potential as an interpretive framework for cross-cultural study has been pointed out by several theorists: Chambers, 1987, 1989; Gall, Borg & Gall 1996/1963; LeCompte, 1993; Smith, 1990; Taylor, 1992b. Smith (1990) remarks: "Hermeneutics is able to shake loose dogmatic notions of tradition to show how all traditions open up onto a broader world which can be engaged from within the language of one's own sphere" (p. 13). Chambers (1987) approaches it from the angle of the tension between horizons: "in cross-cultural discourse, there is real possibility for misunderstanding, and thus real possibility for hermeneutics" (p. 28). Taylor (1992b) draws on Gadamer, arguing that "the peremptory demand for favorable judgments of worth is paradoxically . . . homogenizing," for these judgments, in the absence of the kind of transformation that occurs with a "fusion of horizons", can only be based on one's existing horizons (p. 71). In chapter two, I will clarify what aspect of cross-cultural understanding with First Nations people a fusion of horizons can account for.

Convergences

Gadamer's fusion of horizons is a theoretical concept that allows me to acknowledge the horizon I brought with me when I started teaching in a First Nations community. It also acknowledges the transformative experience I underwent as a result of living in a Native village; no other experience in my life has influenced and changed me so profoundly, personally and professionally. I adopted the community's mores within a framework of difference and agreement. I did not 'turn Native' yet the sensitivity (i.e. hermeneutic openness) I felt towards a First Nations point of view created a space for learning. I will elaborate on that space in my second chapter. Reflections on this transformative experience have created the boundaries within which my inquiry moves. A deeper engagement with First Nations issues in education resulted in convergence on a question of significance within my own horizon. The research questions did not emerge from methodology, nor were they entirely dictated by research interest. In their linguisticality, they disclosed converging horizons that I have been discovering through writing this thesis.

Research Question: What Does It Mean to Be a First Nations Educator?

Many First Nations educators are actively engaged in defining contemporary education through *praxis*. Most are aware of their leadership role in imparting authentic and accurate knowledge to the school community: students, teachers, administrators, and parents as well as to Canadian society as a whole: universities, media, politicians, businesses, the public. The evidence is manifold of what Freire (1970) calls "speaking the word": "a human act implying reflection and action"; critical awareness and *praxis* (Freire, 1970, p. 369). The 'cultural framing' of language and curriculum is being actively pursued through partnerships between Native communities, elders, First Nations educators, curriculum experts, non-Native teachers, Ministry of Education representatives and schools. There are numerous recent examples.

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation [BCTF] First Nations Education Task Force (1999) recently published a Policy Discussion Guide that puts forward "Aboriginal Education Teacher Awareness and Commitment Principles"; they comprise "a beginning point for an extended dialogue that includes teachers and Aboriginal communities, and to identify . . . how to change teaching practice in ways that will assist the learning and success of Aboriginal students" (BCTF Task Force on First Nations Education, 1999, [p. 4]). The B.C. Ministry of Education's (1998) Shared Learnings: Integrating Aboriginal Content K-10 focuses on authentic, accurate presentation of Aboriginal people within the existing structure of the IRP's [Integrated Resource Packages]; as such, it is neither a resource nor a supplement to existing programs. It delivers the IRP's through culturally framed eyes and tries to create a "bridge" between First Nations communities and the wider Canadian society (Nella Nelson, Personal communication, February 2, 1999). Nella

Nelson designed a template for a culturally framed curriculum with Karin Clark (Nella Nelson & Karin Clark, 1997). The Planning Guide and Framework for Development of Aboriginal Learning Resources (BC Ministry of Education, 1998) continues these bridging projects. As a direct result of recommendations of the Sullivan Commission on Education, the Aboriginal Education Initiative Branch was created in 1995 to foster Aboriginal education. Its mandate is to improve the success rates of Aboriginal students (Britta Gundersen-Bryden, Aboriginal Education Initiative Branch, Personal communication, January 25, 1999) and has been involved in curriculum design and liaison work between governments, schools, educators and First Nations communities.

The collaborations in curriculum design between Native and non-Native educators would be heralded by LeCompte as a putting into practice of "double-description and double consciousness" (LeCompte, 1993, p. 17). She explains that "double description in collaborative research involves the development of double consciousness. It is not enough to see, and not even enough to understand. Collaboration requires the consciousness, or embrace, of the 'other' in ways that change researchers and those they study so that their destinies are inextricably linked and shared" (LeCompte, 1993, p. 17). Access to more than one perspective is like having "two pairs of eyes", says Urion (1991), a Metis scholar citing Archibald (1990): it "assumes a context in which there is unity and wholeness to be discovered or reaffirmed; people involved in the discourse may disagree in their statements . . . but the discourse is one of discovering the proper ties of the unifying context and thus come to unity" (Urion, 1991, pp. 4-5). This description echoes Gadamer's fusion of horizons. Culturally framed curriculum seeks to build that unity or agreement.

What the Question Asks

The question of 'What does it mean to be a First Nations educator?' is intended: a) for First Nations educators, that is, educators whose identity is First Nations. The question of what constitutes First Nations identity was also a topic within the conversations (see: Appendix A). My focus is on how an educator's identity as a First Nations person has shaped and is continuing to inform his or her *praxis*; b) to ask First Nations educators what it means for them to be involved in First Nations education in a contemporary context. To specify the research question any further would be to preclude a conversation whose precise questions and meanings were as yet "indeterminate" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 375) and depended on individual educators' interpretations and perspectives. Appendix A contains the list of prompts that I carried into the conversations and that guided but did not dictate the course of the conversations; c) to focus on educators. By educators I mean not only teachers, but anyone who is involved in promoting the goals of First Nations education: administrators, curriculum designers, Aboriginal education ministry staff, elders and authors and/or teachers. Elders are central because they are the primary teachers of First Nations culture. In the words of Doug Cardinal, a Metis architect, "our elders are our books" (Cardinal cited in Eigenbrod, 1995, p. 93; see also Stiegelbauer (1996) on the role of elders in education).

Native authors have been influential in indirectly instructing through their books and classroom visits what being Native in contemporary society means. Lyn Daniels turned to Native authors' writings and literary criticism to guide the evaluation of literary resources for the Shared Learnings committee (Lyn Daniels, Aboriginal Education Initiative staff, Personal communication, January 29, 1999). The connection between literature and education is rooted in the link between culture and education, which includes but is not confined to oral storytelling and traditions as vehicles for learning and teaching (see: Archibald, 1993; Wilson, 1999a; Wilson, 1999b).

Selecting Participants

The focus of the study is on First Nations educators that occupy various positions within First Nations education. Given that contemporary *praxis* in First Nations education is being enacted through a network of efforts at multiple levels within the educational system, it makes sense to choose participants from different places within education. I propose the following:

- a First Nations educator who is or has recently been involved in curriculum design;
- a First Nations educator who is or has recently been involved in evaluation of First Nation resources;
- a First Nations educator who is involved in the coordination of First Nations Education programs and services;
- a First Nations educator who is involved in the Ministry of Aboriginal Education or in a government-sponsored initiative;
- an elder who is actively involved in First Nations education;
- an experienced First Nations teacher (more than five years experience);
- a novice First Nations teacher (less than two years experience);
- a First Nations administrator or principal, preferably of a band or tribal school;
- a First Nations author who publishes children's books and/or young adult fiction/non-fiction, and who has been or is active in education

Educators from various levels within the education system were represented: elementary, secondary, college and/or university, adult education.

As I expected, individuals overlapped categories and spoke from connected locations, such as an educator who is teacher, author and generating policy directions. This effectively distilled the number of participants required. My primary purpose was to represent a range of perspectives as well as recognize the connections across positions. I proposed speaking with five to nine participants, with a balance of male and female representation drawn from the Vancouver Island area and coastal BC among educators that I know, know of or that may be referred by other First Nations educators. A further criterion that I added was selecting educators from different nations.

Seven educators participated; one withdrew because of unease with her conversation and the fear of being misinterpreted, which is a valid concern and one that I sought to alleviate with all the educators (see: chapter four on consultation and collaboration). Of the six educators, one is male; I did seek to obtain a gender balance but would have needed more time to achieve it. The educators represented all but one of the categories above. A novice teacher I was planning to ask had moved away. The educators did not include an administrator of a school, but five of the six educators hold or have held administrative positions in organizations. Several educators are authors or storytellers. Frank Conibear has published poetry, and has chosen a narrative format for parts of his Masters thesis. Janice Simcoe writes stories and Lyn Daniels enjoys telling stories. Nella Nelson described her teaching approach as based on storytelling (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Two of the educators are elders.

Acknowledgment or Anonymity

While in the interests of a study's ethical integrity, participants are usually offered anonymity, this practice was challenged in this study for the following reason that is connected to the validity of the research process. Within First Nations traditions, it is respectful to acknowledge the person whose words are being quoted. Acknowledgment is predicated on preserving the speaker's exact words and intent or teaching. I asked the educators to read the transcripts of the oral conversations and revise them in the ways that they wished to; I also involved many of them in reading my thesis chapters. I respected anyone's request for confidentiality; one educator opted to use a different name, but she chose the name herself: Maggie. The educator who withdrew had a pseudonym.

The question of whether the tapes of the oral conversations should be destroyed after a certain period of time, or whether as Portelli (1991) points out, the spoken word should be preserved as a sign of its equal valuation with the printed word (i.e., the transcript), is a matter I handed over to the educators to decide. Portelli (1991) comments: "Oral sources are oral sources. Scholars are willing to admit that the actual document is the recorded tape; but almost all go on to work on the transcripts, and it is only transcripts that are published. Occasionally, tapes are actually destroyed: a symbolic case of the destruction of the spoken word" (p. 46; his emphasis). Because of the high esteem in which Native people hold oral sources, the educators may envision another use of the tapes beyond destroying them, for example, making them available in a cultural or local library (see: Wilson, 1999b). I returned the tapes to the educators at the end of the study. To me, this act also symbolizes that the words are on loan. We take especially good care of things that we realize belong to others or come from a special place.

Conversations

The length, frequency and location of the conversations between researcher and participant were matters I negotiated individually with each educator. The main criteria for judging length and frequency was a sense of completeness. Conversations lasted sixty to ninety minutes and took place between February and March 2000, with post-conversations occurring in March and April, 2000. I explained verbally or in person and in writing the purpose of the study and the place of the conversation in establishing a space of trust and equality. Smith (1990) comments on the importance of trust to a hermeneutic conversation: "When one is engaged in a good conversation, there is a certain quality of self-forgetfulness as one gives oneself over to the conversation itself, so that the truth that is realised in the conversation is never the possession of any one of the speakers . . . but rather is something that all concerned realise they share in together. This is a point well stated by Thomas Merton: "If I give you my truth but do not receive your truth in return, then there can be no truth between us"" (Smith, 1990, p. 18). This notion of reciprocity agrees with an Aboriginal epistemology (see: Deloria, 1969, 1991a, 1997; Hampton, 1995; O'Meara & West, 1996). The listener is expected to take away something of significance and deepen his or her understanding (Archibald, 1993). It is respectful protocol to recognize an elder's imparted wisdom with a gift such as tobacco or a traditional food; this should be given as the conversation is initiated, I learned. In making an inadvertent mistake, I received a teaching as to the reason for this practice. Here is a portion of my conversation with elder and educator, Ruth Cook:

> *Ruth: I guess you've had a lecture on protocols, have you? I don't know if they told you this but you always bring a little gift.*

Teresa: Yes, I did bring one.

Ruth: You know why? Because it proves and solidifies that you are a witness to these words.

Teresa: I didn't know whether to give it right away or afterwards. I brought you a jar of salmon. I'm sure you probably have jarred salmon.

Ruth: Yes but we never turn it down. My husband loves to eat jarred salmon.

(Conversation, Ruth Cook)

While the protocol of a gift will be honoured with elders, the sharing of knowledge is itself a gift. Within a hermeneutic conversation, the sharing is not deferred until after the conversation is over but is embedded within the dialogic nature of the conversation.

The purpose of the study is not to evaluate the effect of a particular method on participants. Nevertheless I will use the hermeneutic conversation consistently because by doing so, I can pull out threads across the educators' words (see: chapter four on the interpretive process). Generally, it has been found that open-ended interviews often turn into conversations (Robertson, 1988; Seidman, 1991) and that an open-ended inquiry is more effective in asking First Nations people the meaning of their experiences (see: Hampton, 1995). Within the research community, First Nations scholars and writers are calling for methods based on mutual respect as a timely departure from how they as First Nations people have traditionally been treated as objects of study or observation (see: Archibald, 1993; Deloria, 1969; O'Meara, 1986; Te Hennepe, 1993).

The conversations were tape-recorded. I practiced with one person before initiating conversations with participants. With most of the educators, I engaged in a preliminary, informal conversation to establish trust; sometimes such a context had been established prior to the study. We talked informally for a few minutes with the tape recorder on to ease into the conversation; the tape recorder is an obtrusive presence, at least initially, and can artificially constrain dialogue (see: Cameron, 1987). I followed Lutz's (1991) practice. Each educator received a word-by-word transcript of the whole conversation for examination before indicating her/his consent to its authenticity and accuracy. They made revisions and clarifications. I asked the educators in their revisions to assist in "smooth[ing] the transition from conversation to written texts" (Lutz, 1991, p. 10). The option existed to contextualize unspoken details of the conversation that are relevant yet absent from the written transcript, for example, intonation, pausing and body language (see: Mishler, 1986; Portelli, 1991; Te Hennepe, 1993). Any matters of a confidential or private nature that arose during the conversation remained confidential and were not part of the selections that the educator and I picked out for inclusion in the thesis, unless the educator requested that those sections remain; in that case, no specific individuals were named.

I asked each educator if he or she wanted to engage in a post-conversation. Its purpose was to reflect on the research process, raise any further questions as well as explore issues in greater depth. This remained an option throughout the study and will remain an option after I complete the study. For LeCompte (1993), one of the main ethical issues facing researchers is longevity of relationship between researcher and participant (p. 16). The conversation should not come to an arbitrary close with the end of the conversations or the end of the study.

Appendix B contains a transcript excerpt from one of the three sources I consulted when looking for guidance as to what the conversations might look like: Te Hennepe's

(1993) conversations with NITEP [Native Indian Teacher Education Program] students at the University of British Columbia (The other two sources were: Lutz (1991) and Robertson (1988)). The researcher's contributions to the dialogue range from extended replies to open-ended questions to specific questions to simple agreement or disagreement. This range of responses on the part of researcher and participant is to be expected as part of the dialogical nature of the hermeneutic conversation and is representative of what happened in my conversations with the First Nations educators (see: Appendix D).

Corroboration by Written Sources

The argument that oral sources cannot stand alone but need to be extraneously supported by documentary evidence (questionnaire responses; written artifacts; journals) is being questioned in current research on orality (see: Cruikshank, 1991; Portelli, 1991; Yow, 1994). This requirement also undermines the authority and authenticity of First Nations traditions (see: Dyc, 1997; King, 1990; Wilson, 1999b). The contemporary reality is that orality and literacy interfuse (see: Portelli, 1991; King, 1990; Wilson, 1999b).

I asked educators if they wanted me to read any written materials that would help me reach a deeper understanding of their roles. From Nella Nelson, I read some recent internal publications of the First Nations Education School District, as well as a newspaper article. Janice Simcoe showed me the section in the Camosun College calendar that defines First Nations identity, as well as suggesting a film for me to watch, The Gods Must Be Crazy; in turn, I provided Janice with excerpts from the writing of Cook-Lynn, Deloria, and Clifton, and she later responded by lending me Janet Campbell Hale's (1987)

The Imprisonment of Cecelia Capture. I asked Lyn Daniels if I could use excerpts from a paper she had recently written for a Children's Literature class, and she agreed. I also provided her with excerpts from Paula Gunn Allen's writings. Frank read me a story from his thesis, but since it is a part of his thesis, and yet to be submitted, it would be disrespectful to include any written portion of it in mine. I was also open to including artifacts the educators may want to share that are symbolic of identity; Janice Simcoe talked about the significance of wearing jewellery, and Nella Nelson and I discussed how she had infused the First Nations Education resource room with a sense of identity and belonging. If an educator was open to sharing their learning not only through the conversation but also through writing, we would have explored that option, but the conversations and collaborative process alone involved a significant commitment of time.

Self-reflexive Research Question:

As a non-Native educational researcher, how can I conduct research authentically in a First Nations context?

Writing as Research

One way to ensure the study's validity or authenticity is for me to reflect on my experiences and 'fusions of horizons' as the study unfolds. Smith (1990) argues that any hermeneutic study should provide a report of the researcher's own transformations undergone in the process of the inquiry (p. 18). Gadamer (1987) agrees that "it becomes more important to trace the interests guiding us with respect to a given subject matter than simply to interpret the evident content of a statement" (p. 332). The way in which that understanding comes about is by recognizing that every "statement is an answer to a question; the only way to understand a statement is to get hold of the question" (Gadamer, 1987, p. 332). I kept two reflective journals. Both generated self understanding and helped me to pose genuine questions to myself as well as to the educators. One journal focused on my impressions and thoughts in informal meetings with the educators, while the other one was more of a wrestling with or writing through issues and questions (see: chapter four on the interpretive process for some journal entries). A journal's contents, Smith (1990) suggests, act as evidence of the researcher's thoughtfulness, attentiveness to language, and transformative experiences. In my experience, writing is a form of energy that moves thought along and is a way of knowing and understanding. Giroux (1978) calls writing a mode of *praxis*, of thought in action:

> Epistemologically, writing must be viewed as a dialectical process rather than as instrumental skill. As an instrumental skill, writing is limited to a static concern with . . . argument, exposition, narration, and grammar usage . . . A dialectical approach . . . means considering writing in its broadest relationship to the learning and communicating process. In this case, learning how to write . . . would mean learning how to think. Writing in this case is an epistemology, a mode of learning. (p. 295)

For Sartre writing was inseparable from thought: "The only point to my life was writing . . . I would write out what I had been thinking about beforehand, but the essential moment was that of writing itself" (Sartre cited in Van Manen, 1997/1990, p. 126).

Authenticity in research approach means writing becomes a conversation with oneself, a way of engaging more deeply with the subject matter. My research question to myself supports a process of authentically conducted research. In chapter two, I have made it an object of reflection in its own right. By authentic I mean acting appropriately with another person (a First Nations person) as well as 'with' oneself (see: Gadamer, 1998/1975; 1991/1931).

Interpretation

Margaret Robertson (1988), who also used a hermeneutic method in her study of nurses' writing, says that the act of writing a thesis or dissertation is "a distillation of understanding as well as communication of its meaning" (p. 100). Interpretation is dynamic and recursive (Robertson, 1988) and in order to be authentic, cannot be reserved for the end of the study but needs to inform it throughout. The researcher's written records of fusions of horizons document ongoing interpretation, as do the conversations where we (researcher and participant/educator) clarify disagreements and seek a deeper understanding of the subject matter. The distillation of meaning involves becoming attuned to connections and differences. Gadamer (1975/1998) explains: "our task is to extend in concentric circles the unity of the understood meaning. The harmony of all the details with the whole is the criterion of correct understanding" (p. 260). The shape interpretation took was emergent (see: chapter four) as well as guided by theory (see: chapter two). In the fourth chapter, I describe four aspects of the interpretive process that were disclosed over time: consultation and collaboration, pulling out connecting threads, fusions of horizon (researcher's as well as the educators') and authenticity in writing as representation.

Limitations of the Study

Every study, no matter what the paradigm or mode of research, has limitations. When I designed this study, I could foresee only one major limitation: the difficulty of capturing the spoken word. Te Hennepe (1993) suggests that co-collaboration by researcher and participant in revising the transcripts can help to re-infuse the conversation with what Olson (1996) calls its illocutionary force. Flatness would have been a significant hurdle in transcribing oral stories. The way in which Johnny Moses recounts stories has been captured on video; it would be difficult to communicate on page the richness of his voice changes, facial expressions, gestures and ways of involving his audience. Similarly, Beth Brant's (1994) prose 'sounds' different on paper than it does when she read it aloud; her reading is punctuated by laughter and embellished by anecdotal asides. This limitation turned out to be a minor one, though, in that our focus - myself and the educators' - was on working through the substance of the argument.

Some of the limitations of conversations that I have noticed are common to much research: poor voice quality on tape, missed or rescheduled appointments, tragic events in the educator's or researcher's lives that make it difficult to sustain a reflective mode. Another factor is the time required for collaborative research. A conversation may only take an hour, but from the educator's point of view, collaboration involves a significant time commitment: reading and further smoothing over a lengthy transcript, wading through selections of the researcher's writing, conversing further on questions raised in the transcript as well discussing the researcher's writing, reading about the researcher's interpretive process and responding to the researcher's invitation to comment on selected themes, helping to select pieces for inclusion in the final document. Educators who are in demanding positions frequently do not have that kind of time to spare, yet many made time or gave whatever time they could spare. I discovered that the greater the mutual involvement, the richer and more meaningful the process and the deeper the interpretations became. It is difficult for me to imagine what my thesis would look like in the absence of that collaboration. I am genuinely thankful for the educators' involvement, time and energy. Whatever amount of time they were able to give was a great gift.

Derrida's fundamental disagreement with Gadamer is that not all conversations or arguments can or should end in agreement (Michelfelder & Palmer, 1989). A researcher may reach a point where he/she decides that Gadamer's approach is more successful with certain individuals or situations than others. I have concluded that educators who reflect on their own identity or who, because of the position they occupy, are conscious or aware of their identity as First Nations and its impact on others, are fluent in articulating connections between identity and *praxis*. Educators who are secure in their identity and have had the benefit of the long view experience provides, such as an elder, can also speak with great ease. A different approach may be appropriate for those educators who are ambiguous about or questioning the role of identity in *praxis*, or who see themselves primarily as educators and not as First Nations educators. Such questions on the link between identity and pedagogy can be provocative in a context where that connection goes largely unquestioned. Yet from a methodological point of view, that disagreement may be better explored using another tack than conversation, particularly in a context where most of the educators share the more widely accepted view, which is that identity and *praxis* are inextricable. The hermeneutic conversation is predicated on Thomas Merton's previously quoted adage: "If I give you my truth but do not receive your truth in return, then there can be no truth between us"" (Smith, 1990, p. 18).

Chapter II: *Phronesis* or the Ethics of Understanding

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on creating a dialogical space of cross-cultural understanding, one that engages with First Nations thought and *praxis* but that some may find could in principle be extended to other spaces, cross-cultural or otherwise.

One of the main criticisms of logical positivism, or the application of a natural sciences model in the human sciences, is its inhumanness. It operates by an instrumental rationality where human beings become means to ends in man-made projects (Taylor, 1973, 1992a). Bernstein (1983) argues that the real enemy of *phronesis* (ethics) is not *techne* (instrumental rationality), but domination. However, domination and an instrumental rationality have historically worked hand in hand. This truth is particularly visible in colonialism (see: Said, 1978). Tesch (1990) claims that from the inception of Education, tension developed between those scholars who believed educational research should model itself on the objective sciences and those who thought the complexity of human consciousness needed to be understood within its own framework. While the logical positivists dominated, having a ready framework at hand in the sciences to emulate (Tesch, 1990), there is now a strong movement to recuperate an understanding of social science research as a human science (Ricoeur, 1971) or an intersubjective undertaking (Mishler, 1986; Rorty, 1998) and even to argue that the natural and human sciences share ethical and humanistic concerns (Bernstein, 1983). Dissatisfaction with existing modes of Western knowledge can incite researchers to seek out roads not taken: ideas lost, passed over, or unrecognized but that potentially carry new meaning in contemporary settings. One such idea is *phronesis*.

The idea of *phronesis* has a particular resonance for me. One of the more significant fusions of horizon I experienced while re-reading this chapter was a sense of being lifted and seeing my own academic/personal beliefs in a broader perspective, precisely in the way that Gadamer (1975/1998) describes it: "To acquire a horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand - not in order to look away from it but to see it better, within a larger whole and in truer proportion" (p. 305; emphasis added). Throughout this thesis, I have been wondering about the place of my own identity: how does it fit, how could I begin to articulate how it has influenced the study, and even more importantly, what is it and how do I know whether or how I am passing it on to my children. I shelved the matter because I was leary of occluding a focus on the educators and turning my gaze too far inward. I now see one of the functions of this chapter as a theoretical autobiography.

Re-reading the chapter after a long interval was like stepping away from a tapestry, from the threads and intricate details, to see the whole picture. The picture constituted my identity or a significant aspect of it. I could perceive myself and the cultural community within which I belonged. That community is made up not so much of individual persons as of crystallizing ideas. The ideas center around a web of human interrelationships and the place of human bonds in creating and sustaining relationships. I recognize those ideas as the philosophical framework that brought me to this study, to an interest in Native people, to Bella Bella, to my personal and professional relationships and friendships. Like Lyn Daniels for whom the personal intertwines with the political, for me the personal intersects with the academic. I have recuperated and gathered ideas from largely Western authors, and engaged them in dialogue with the words and teachings of First Nations people and writers. From the reams of words I've read from Western authors, I have salvaged a community: a community that for me is no longer silent, unobtrusive, inarticulate. It is because of being lifted above myself to see where I stand and where I come from, that I can speak with assurance from what I will call an alongside space. Nella Nelson says that "*it's because you know who you are that you can bridge*" (Conversation, Nella Nelson).

Recent research on de-colonizing methodologies in First Nations discourse has come from one of two locations. Both standpoints evidence a conscious movement towards self-articulated and humanizing structures, which is one meaning of de-colonizing (see: chapter one, page 13 on decolonizing methodologies). One standpoint originates with Native intellectuals engaged in what Freire (1994/1970) calls "decodification" (p. 372): a critical awareness of colonialization, its past and continuing effects. The other standpoint is from non-Native scholars attempting to re-configure a field primarily dominated by an attitude of "they cannot represent themselves; they must be represented" (Marx cited in Said, 1978, p. xii).

Native people can rightfully accuse scholarship and literature of unjustified encroachment (see: Deloria, 1969, 1991b, 1997; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). To assume that the space is open for occupation or "passing through" (Cook-Lynn, 1996, p. 38) is a sensitive point. The epistemological structure of post-contact Western society has counted these incursions as knowledge, and continues to do so, albeit in a beleaguered environment. Native people are speaking about the corrosive effects on themselves and their communities of being objects of domination and oppression in colonial systems (see: Adams, 1995; Alfred, 1999; Todd, 1992). Post-modern disenchantment with metaphysical truths (Aoki, 2000; Krupat, 1992; Rorty, 1982, 1998) and Foucaultian impulses to deconstruct the productions of knowledge, speak to a humanistic desire to divest the world, academic and otherwise, of its colonial trappings.

The two discourses, like two continental plates, overlap and frequently collide. The territory is contested because both kinds of scholars assume they should be jostling for the same crowded space, thus the metaphors used among First Nations writers of clearing a space for themselves (Bruchac, 1992) or requesting non-Native writers to "move over" (Lee Maracle, 1989 cited in Alcoff, 1991; see also: Maracle, 1992). (This is not only a metaphor; the issue of First Nations representation in academia, for example, is a very real one; [see: Adams, 1995; Cook-Lynn, 1996; Gunn Allen, 1998]). Lee Maracle (1992) speaks of the arduous task a non-Native writer faces in navigating this 'common' territory:

> If you conjure a character based on your in-fort stereotypes and trash my world, that's bad writing - racist literature and I will take you on for it. If I tell you a story and you write it down and collect the royal coinage from this story, that's stealing - appropriation of culture. But if you imagine a character who is from my world, attempting to deconstruct the attitudes of yours, while you may not be stealing, you still leave yourself open to criticism unless you do it well. (p. 15)

Maracle (1992) then goes on to elaborate criteria in her Metis/Salish writer's world for 'doing it well', such as the speaker (author) achieving "oneness with the listener" and "empowering the listener" to create and inhabit a "dreamspace" (p. 15), a lens of liberation through which to re-imagine the world. She asserts that "these are my culture's standards" but "until they become standards alongside of yours, colonialism in literature will prevail" (p. 15; emphasis added).

Adopted as a neologism and metaphor, "alongside" points to a location in proximity to, even adjacent with, but distinct from Maracle's such that we as non-Native researchers and writers can imagine a space that does not parasitically hover over or cling to an already occupied territory but develops its own autonomous yet related voice. Wendy Rose (Hopi) (1992) articulates an idea like Maracle's: "A non-native poet cannot produce an Indian perspective on Coyote or Hawk, cannot see Coyote or Hawk in an Indian way, and cannot produce a poem expressing Indian spirituality" (p. 416; her emphasis); the many cannot's denote the intangible yet felt boundaries. She goes on to say "what can be produced is another perspective, another view, another spiritual expression"; for Rose, a perspective "of integrity and intent" wrestles with the question of "how this [research or writing] is done and, to some extent, why it is done" (Rose, 1992, p. 416). Gadamer (1975/1998) expresses a similar thought: "it is enough to say that we understand in a different way if we understand at all" (p. 297). A question that has not been asked loudly or persistently enough yet is: what could criticism or scholarship in an alongside space look like? My purpose in this chapter is to look at Aristotle's notion of *phronesis* andGadamer's (1975/1998) ethics of understanding so as to re-conceptualise the place of ethics or what First Nations people call values in cross-cultural research, here with First Nations people.

Flyvbjerg (1993) remarks on how Aristotle, in his discussion of the intellectual virtues, focuses on three: *episteme*, *techne* and *phronesis*. While "the terms *episteme* and *techne* are still found in current language, for instance in the words epistemology and epistemic, technology and technical . . . *phronesis* has no direct modern counterpart"; "the 'virtues' still with us in words and in deeds are the ones central to scientific and instrumental rationality"(p. 12) whereas *phronesis*, the virtue related to ethics and *praxis*, is "the lost virtue" (Flyvbjerg, 1993, p. 13). SinceGadamer's (1975/1998) incorporation of *phronesis* into his hermeneutic philosophy, attention has been accruing to this word from several quarters: philosophy (Bernstein, 1983; Taylor, 1985), scientific ethics (Flyvbjerg, 1993), literary criticism (Haney, 1999; Schwarze, 1999), and curriculum theory (Atkins, 1988). Although the word *phronesis* has only intermittently made its way into social science vocabulary, words like 'moral' and 'ethical' are being brandished in social science vocabulary (see: Brantlinger, 1999; Greene, 1994; Stotsky, 1992; Taylor, 1989, 1992a). Bakhtin's (1981) The Dialogical Imagination, a work of literary criticism, has been transplanted into the human sciences and widely diffused as philosophical support for arguments grounded in such *phronesis*-like concepts as dialogical understanding and the intersubjective creation of meaning. Following a path that has been described to me as conveying a vision analogous to a First Nations perspective (Janice Simcoe, Personal communication, November, 1999), but which clearly comes from my own standpoint (see above, pages 48-49), my goal is to arrive at a substantive notion of an alongside space of dialogical understanding.

Aristotle's Explanation of *Phronesis*

Of the three modes of knowledge Aristotle identifies - scientific (*episteme*), technical *(techne)*, and practical *(phronesis)* - *phronesis* is the one concerned with human affairs. Aristotle defines *phronesis* by comparing it with the other intellectual virtues. Whereas *episteme* is concerned with knowledge about which we cannot deliberate, in that its truths are unchanging, *phronesis* operates in the area of variable reason, concerned "with things human and things about which it is possible to deliberate" (Aristotle, trans. 1980, p. 146). The 'object' of deliberation for *phronesis* is human action. Arendt (1958) devotes a chapter in The Human Condition to action and its role in what she calls the web of relationships and enacted stories. She observes that the space of appearances that actualizes the web of relationships has both a tangible and intangible aspect. Its tangibility consists in the fact of its reality: being shared with and confirmed by others who are also inhabiting a common space. Its intangible quality comes from its impermanence; once the purpose of people coming together has been actualized and everyone leaves, the space, as it were, disappears. Both Aristotle and Sullivan (1989) have noticed this paradoxical quality of *phronesis*. Unlike *episteme*, which has as its object verifiable truths, and unlike *techne*, which culminates in a product, *phronesis* is concerned with changing human relations. This represents a Western understanding of action. From the conversations I have had with First Nations educators, the experiences I have lived and witnessed in a Native community, and the words of First Nations scholars such as Deloria (1985, 1991a, 1991b), First Nations people have been more successful in creating this web of human actions or behaviours in their communities and approach to living.

Just as there are two parts of the soul (rational and irrational), says Aristotle, the rational part can be divided into two kinds of subject matter, one invariable and one variable. Aristotle calls the invariable one "scientific" and the variable, "calculative" (p. 138). Scientific reason is concerned with discovering eternal truths or what Sullivan (1989) calls verifiable or provable facts: "exact knowledge" (Sullivan, 1989, p. 128). The test of logical coherence is correspondence between fact and empirical reality (Sullivan, 1989).

Phronesis is contrasted with *episteme*, but compared with *techne* or calculative reason. *Techne* has acquired a perjorative modern meaning because of the way in which ends subordinated to means have infiltrated many aspects of modern life (see: Arendt, 1958; Taylor, 1992a), but Aristotle understood *techne* as concerned with things that come into being. He gives the example of art or the act of making something. While abstract truths cannot be directly used, *teche* is applied knowledge. It represents a fusion of different theories whose melding in concrete situations is dictated by pragmatics rather than propelled by theoretical knowledge (Sullivan, 1989). Sullivan's (1989) example is the knowledge a mechanic uses while fixing a car. Again, these distinctions are foreign to an Aboriginal epistemology in which philosophical truths are embedded in language and action (Deloria, 1991a; Conversation, Frank Conibear).

Sullivan (1989) focuses on three different ways of knowing: *episteme*, *techne* and *phronesis* (p. 128). Bruner (1986) identifies two ways of knowing: logical and narrative, as does Frye (1976) who contrasts logical with mythical modes of thought. *Phronesis* has by and large been left out of the equation in Western philosophy. It has not received the same kind of attention that the other two have, even if its presence is implicit, whereas in First Nations thought, values and teachings have always been central (Deloria, 1991a; Johnson, 1994; Nuu-chah-nulth Community Health Services, 1995). Gallagher (1992) argues that *phronesis* has been subsumed under *techne*. Sullivan (1989) maintains that while *episteme* is exact knowledge, and *techne* is knowledge applied, *phronesis* is knowledge of how to get along in the intersubjective human world. Put in this way, the connection between *phronesis* and pedagogy as a human science is immediately apparent.

Aristotle, in asking upon what grounds *phronesis* can be called knowledge, connects choice with deliberate desire: "both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good" (p. 138). Choice cannot exist without reason; intellect cannot exist without a moral orientation. Increasingly researchers are becoming aware of the deliberations implicit in their choices - choices of subject matter, of methodology, of the ways in which participants are approached, of how interpretations are formed, of how worldview shapes interpretations, of how to represent self and others in writing. (The most recent issue of University Affairs contains an article on ethics and scientific research that warns of the dangers to researchers in neglecting ethics within study design; see: Lougheed, 2000). Greene (1996) has called for the infusion of ethical ends into the human sciences: "I want to believe that my own seeking and the seeking, the becoming of many persons I know have fundamentally to do with orienting us to some conception, perhaps a common conception, of the good and the right. The very consciousness of possibility, I am suggesting, is linked to some sense of what ought to be - or to what we ought to make happen in this world" (pp. 31-32). The Heiltsuk have a saying, "what goes around comes around." It articulates the link we in Western society often do not acknowledge between how we act and speak, and what transpires in the human world as a result of those actions. Again, this is a fundamental teaching in an Aboriginal worldview (Deloria, 1991a; Conversation, Ruth Cook).

Aristotle states that "what affirmation and negation are in thinking, pursuit and avoidance are in desire" (p. 138). Since moral virtue is concerned with making choices, "and choice is deliberate desire", or an orienting to one way rather than to another, *phronesis* is the fusion of true reasoning with right desires (Aristotle, 1980/1925, p. 138). Aristotle argues that choice and reason go hand in hand: "the origin of action - its efficient, not its final cause - is choice, and that of choice is desire and reasoning with a view to an end. This is why choice cannot exist either without reason and intellect without a moral state" (Aristotle, 1980/1925, p. 139). The tangible result of our choices are human actions.

Like *techne*, *phronesis* is an applied knowledge but whereas a craftsman starts with an idea, the kind of reasoning that is actualized in *phronesis* cannot be determined in advance. It is situational. Aristotle argues that *phronesis* has an end, which is good action, but the end is embedded in the means; it cannot be conceived as external to the situation. We can see how this kind of knowledge is precarious for situations cannot be predicted in advance, though they may share commonalities upon reflection. *Phronesis* describes both the kind of knowledge that we should practice in the ways we interact with one another as well as the one that unawares comes into play and can be usurped by *episteme* or *techne*. Thus, from an Aboriginal point of view, a Western modern worldview subordinates human values to knowledge and domination.

Frank Conibear talks about how being a good human being is paramount to a First Nations person who wants to follow the elders' teachings (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Whereas in a Western context, we are preoccupied with the precariousness of *phronesis*, in a First Nations context, '*phronesis*' or knowing how to conduct oneself is supported by traditional and tribal knowledge, which is the teachings of the elders. Trust supplants doubt. Coming from a Western perspective, understanding *phronesis* is the first step: an intimation of a broader spiritual universe guiding intersubjective understanding.

Gadamer's Theory of Understanding as Applied Understanding

From Aristotle to Gadamer, we take a giant leap, for Gadamer weaves *phronesis* into his own theory of human understanding, and in doing so, adapts its meaning. All of Gadamer's central ideas reiterate in multivariate ways a fundamental point: all understanding is applied understanding. The ambiguity surrounding the title of Gadamer's well-known work, Truth and Method, was in part deliberate. In an interview, Gadamer (1992) confirmed that while "some would say that the book discussed the method for finding truth, others said that I claimed that there was no method for finding truth" (p. 64). The title plays with and on the modern association of truth with method, where method is usually equated with the empirical method. Gadamer (1975/1998) criticises empiricism at several junctures, arguing not so much that the natural science method, which the human sciences adopted, is in itself wrong or even misapplied but that a fundamental question has been avoided: "The question I have asked seeks to discover and bring into consciousness something which that methodological dispute serves only to conceal and neglect, something that does not so much confine or limit modern science as precede it and make it possible" (p. xxix); Mishler (1986) makes a similar argument. The book's title discloses one of the main threads of Gadamer's work: that truth is created between persons or, what he counts as an equivalent relationship, between an interpreter and a text. Method, an ethical means of arriving at truth, is inextricable from the act of understanding.

The 'and' that separates truth and method seems to me to be more a concession to the approximate nature of language, separating entities that are actually engaged transactively. Truth and Method states in prose what is in fact a metaphorical relationship: truth is method, method is truth. The following discussion draws on Gadamer's explanation of the hermeneutic relevance of Aristotle (Gadamer, 1998/1975, pp. 312-324) as well as Truth and Method as a whole to develop this metaphorical relationship.

How does Gadamer conceive of truth? Truth is a contested word and when used in a contemporary context, usually implies no more than truth for me (Rorty, 1998). Yet that is precisely the sense in which Gadamer develops the notion of truth. Truth is always for me in the sense that I am the one who appropriates a truth. Understanding is an applied kind of knowledge. Gadamer identifies the three traditional prongs of hermeneutics as understanding (*subtilitas intelligendi*), interpretation (*subtilitas explicandi*) and application (*subtilitas applicandi*). The German romantic philosophers like Dilthey intuited that understanding and interpretation are intertwined. Interpretation does not follow upon but is embedded in understanding: "understanding is always interpretation, and hence interpretation is the explicit form of understanding" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 307). In the melding of understanding with interpretation, application was excluded. The premise upon which Truth and Method rests is that "application is an element of understanding itself" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. xxxii). Gadamer arrives at this conclusion by way of his theory of historical effect.

Each of us is historically situated. From Hegel, Gadamer (1975/1998) extracts the notion that "life is experienced only in the awareness of oneself, the inner consciousness of one's own living" (p. 253). The only way to grasp what it means to be alive is to experience it inwardly. From Heidegger, Gadamer (1975/1998) borrows the idea that understanding is an event that happens in time (p. 309): "Heidegger's thesis was that being itself is time" (p. 257). Understanding involves an existential commitment of the self: "there is no understanding or interpretation in which the totality of this existential structure does not function" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 262).

Understanding is projective in two senses; Gadamer draws on Heidegger's notion of throwness or projection: the knower brings his or her whole self into the act of understanding, and this act involves an effort. Gadamer examines two meanings of the German word for understanding, *verstehen*: "a person who 'understands' a text . . . has not only projected himself understandingly toward a meaning - in the effort of understanding - but the accomplished understanding constitutes a state of new intellectual freedom" (p. 260; my emphasis). Understanding is both processual in character as well as producing a new meaning where one did not exist before, bringing the interpreter to a new place.

Historical effect implies an act of active deliberation. Thus Gadamer speaks of tradition (or history) as addressing us. We can only be addressed by things that belong or speak to us. Because we are situated within tradition, a tradition is something that is a part of us, that we have an "affinity" for (Gadamer, 1998/1875, p. 282). Any investigation within the human sciences begins with an interest. Gadamer asks: how does that particular interest arise in us? Even though a topic may seem removed in time, place or culture, its significance or application to me is not accidental; it is the result of an active though perhaps unconscious choice: "in choosing the theme to be investigated, awakening the desire to investigate, gaining a new problematic", the potential exists for something new to come into being (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 282):

> We are certainly interested in the subject matter, but it acquires its life only from the light in which it is presented to us. We accept the fact that the subject

> presents different aspects of itself at different times or from different standpoints. We accept the fact that these aspects do not simply cancel one another out as research proceeds, but are like mutually exclusive conditions that exist by themselves and combine only in us . . . we have, as it were, a new experience of history whenever the past resounds in a new voice. (p. 282)

I have decided not to abandon the word 'appropriation' because it has a central place in understanding. The language of appropriation will probably evoke an eerie feeling for First Nations readers, but later on I will elucidate the meaning I attribute to it.

Gadamer speaks of a correct understanding of content, whether the content is a text or someone's spoken words. Truth-for-me is constrained by the truth of the content. Truth, says Gadamer, is both a truth-for-me and a truth-in-itself. This statement becomes intelligible when we consider Gadamer's departure from Schleiermacher. Gadamer begins his discussion of Schleiermacher with the proposition "to understand means to come to an understanding with each other" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 180). Schleiermacher defines hermeneutics as the art of avoiding misunderstandings where misunderstandings are the norm (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 185). To avoid misunderstandings requires gaining access to the author's original meaning: "Schleiermacher holds that the author can really be understood only by going back to the origin of the thought" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 186). This entails inquiring into the psychological processes that led the author to choose those words (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 187). Since Schleiermacher assumes "individuality is a manifestation of universal life", an author's individuality can only truly be grasped by divination or transposing oneself into the other (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 189). It follows that the interpreter can come to know the author better than he or she knows him/herself. Gadamer poses another alternative to Schleiermacher's version of understanding.

Gadamer (1975/1998) interprets the same proposition "to understand means to come to an understanding with each other" as meaning there is a something that lies inbetween one another; this something he calls subject matter. Understanding is always coming to an understanding about something. Gadamer (1975/1998) says that "from language we learn that the subject matter (*Sache*) is not merely an arbitrary object of discussion, independent of the process of mutual understanding (*Sichverstehen*), but rather is the path and goal of mutual understanding itself" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 180). Gadamer (1975/1998) believes that a primordial relationship exists between speaking and thinking (p. 433), that language contains worldview: "language is not just one of man's possessions in the world; rather, on it depends the fact that man has a world at all" (p. 443; his emphasis). The world is "verbal in nature"; "man's being-in-the-world is primordially linguistic" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 443). To understand the truth of what another person says is to hear the thought that is expressed linguistically.

Like Heidegger, Gadamer emphasizes hearing over sight. To listen to what someone is saying is to be open to the meaning (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 361); reading is an inner conversation. Experience seeks words to express itself. We look for the right word - the word that belongs to the thing - so that the thing can come into language (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 417). To understand the subject matter is a two-fold obligation: to be open to the meaning being articulated while relating that meaning to 'myself' as interpreter:

> Conversation is a process of coming to an understanding. Thus it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says. What is to be grasped is the substantive rightness of his opinion, so that we can be at one with each other on the subject. Thus we do not relate the other's opinion to him but to our own opinions and views. (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 385)

Attempting to relate the opinion to 'him' (the other person) would presuppose being able to cross over, see inside, speak from or speak for: the act of divination that Schleiermacher defends. Gadamer is saying that interpretation is an act of transposing into another's perspective on the subject matter, rather than penetrating that membrane of self or identity: "If we want to understand we will try to make his argument stronger" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 292; emphasis added).

Stotsky (1992) uses the phrase 'principled thinking' to explain how we as academics belong to a civic community where disagreeing carries the obligation to seriously weigh the other thinker's words. This is what I understand Gadamer (1975/1998) to mean by making the other person's argument stronger. Stotsky contrasts two passages from respected published writers, one in which the writer uses demeaning language to describe an alternative view, and another where the writers respond respectfully to arguments they disagree with. She concludes that attempts to weaken arguments through condescension, sarcasm and personal insults "are obstacles to academic ways of knowing"; these sentiments distract "the reader's attention from the ideas at the center of academic dialogue" and make "irrelevant issues appear relevant"

(Stotsky, 1992, p. 806). The key to understanding is to extract the substantive argument of what is being said. This principle applies not only in academic writing but in programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), where the possibility is everpresent of misconstruing of another's meaning based on how that meaning comes across, thus the group's adage for disciplined, properly focused thinking: 'Principles before personalities'. For Gadamer, dialectic means bringing out the strength of an argument, not attacking its weakness (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 367; see also: Gadamer, 1991/1931). I will be elaborating on this point later in the chapter. Given Gadamer's theory of applied understanding, how does Aristotle's *phronesis* fit into Gadamer's scheme?

Gadamer's Interpretation of Aristotle's *Phronesis*

Gadamer's radical interpretation of Aristotle's *phronesis* as an identification of truth with method comes from Gadamer's construal of *phronesis* as self-knowledge, "knowledge for oneself" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 316). The only true knowledge is applied knowledge; knowledge is only truly applied when it becomes one's own. Given the linguisticality of understanding, truth becomes method when words are expressive of thought and thought emanates from self-knowledge. Gadamer (1975/1998) says that knowledge that cannot be applied to a concrete situation is meaningless "and even risks obscuring what the situation calls for" (p. 313). A person who reflects him/herself out of the mutuality of an I-Thou relation changes this relationship and destroys its moral bond (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 360). Eber Hampton (1993), a Chickasaw scholar, expresses a similar thought when advising graduate students on how to choose a research question: "When we try to cut ourselves off at the neck and pretend an objectivity that does not exist in the human world, we become dangerous, to ourselves first, and then to people around us" (p. 52). Gadamer's belief in the moral bond that interpretation invokes becomes intelligible when interpretation is understood as simultaneously truth-for-me and truth-in-and-of-itself: "This state of affairs, which represents the nature of moral reflection, not only makes philosophical ethics a methodologically difficult problem, but also gives the problem of method a moral relevance" (p. 313; his emphasis).

Gadamer suggests three ways in which Aristotle's discussion of *phronesis* can elucidate a moral understanding of method. I will take up each of these points in turn.

First Point : Gadamer (1975/1998) says that we are "always already involved in a moral and political context" and we acquire our "image of the thing from that standpoint" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 320); this is very similar to Taylor's (1989) argument, as we shall see in chapter three. Ethical principles are schemata or approximate guides to action and thought in particular circumstances. These principles "are concretized only in the concrete situation of the person acting" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 320). They are not generalizable but "really do correspond to the nature of the thing - except that the latter is always itself determined in each case by the use the moral consciousness makes of them" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 320).

Second Point : Like Aristotle, Gadamer distinguishes *phronesis* from *techne*. Whereas the craftsman begins with an idea that shapes and guides the process and that he/she hopes will coincide with the actual product, the virtues that guide moral conduct (for example: courage and temperance) cannot be applied in the same sense: "what is right . . . cannot be fully determined independently of the situation that requires a right action from me" (Gadamer, 1975/1998, p. 317). A paradoxical quality of *phronesis* is that while we may already possess moral knowledge and indeed need to possess it in order to apply it, we do not necessarily know how to use it until we have to act (p. 317): "Certainly if technical knowledge were available, it would always make it unnecessary to deliberate with oneself about the subject" (p. 321). This is precisely the point Mishler (1986) makes about interviewing in the social sciences. Reliance on technical procedures in interviewing have obscured the fact that interviewing is discourse between speakers: "Disconnected from problems of meaning, problems that would necessarily remain at the forefront of investigative efforts if interviews were understood as discourse, techniques have [instead] taken on a life of their own" (Mishler, 1986, p. 7). One of the most insightful books on interviewing in the social sciences, Seidman's (1991) Interviewing as Qualitative Research, is, Seidman freely admits, a description of *praxis*, of her experiences as interviewer, rather than a compendium of procedures to follow in a prescriptive manner.

Discourse discloses a deep connection with initiating something new. The connection between beginning and action or experience (*Ehfahrung*) is one that Gadamer (1975/1998) elaborates within his own theory; this connection is also the cornerstore of Arendt's (1958) theory of human action. Aristotle speaks of people versed in the virtue of *phronesis* as those who have experience (p. 146). The reason we need to attend "to the undemonstrated sayings and opinions of experienced and older people or of people of practical wisdom" is "because experience has given them an eye they see aright [with]" (Aristotle, p. 153). Ruth Cook expresses the same thought about acquiring wisdom and the kind of knowledge elders can share (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Gadamer (1975/1998) extrapolates the reason why experience leads to knowledge:

> The truth of experience always implies an orientation toward new experience. That is why a person who is called experienced has

> become so not only through experiences but is also open to new experiences. The consummation of his experience, the perfection that we call 'being experienced,' does not consist in the fact that someone already knows everything and knows better than anyone else. Rather, the experienced person proves to be, on the contrary, someone who is radically undogmatic; who, because of the many experiences he has had and the knowledge he has drawn from them, is particularly well equipped to have new experiences and to learn from them. The dialectic of experience has its proper fulfillment not in definitive knowledge but in the openness to experience that is made possible by experience itself. (p. 355; his emphasis)

An 'experienced' researcher is a person who is 'radically undogmatic' and open to new experiences. Experience is analogous to birth in that it "is an event over which no one has control"; it is unpredictable yet the positive correlate of this incommensurability is its "curious openness" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 352).

Gadamer draws on Hegel to explain the connection between experience and learning. Experience is a negative process; "genuine" experiences are those that "occur to us" rather than ones that confirm our expectations (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 353). In fact Gadamer (1975/1998) confines the word 'experience' to the newness of an event, one that negates previous experiences. The negation "has a curiously productive meaning" because "we gain better knowledge through it, not only of itself, but of what we thought we knew before - i.e. of a universal" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 353). Strictly speaking, we cannot have the same experience twice; we can predict on the basis of experiences we already possess, which are acquired horizons against and within which other experiences will occur, but "the same thing cannot again become a new experience for us; only something different and unexpected can provide someone who has experience with a new one" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 353). Other thinkers have also perceived understanding as an event or experience that is renewed in each transaction (Rosenblatt's (1978) ideas on this subject are shaped by transactional philosophy; see Wilson, 1999a).

Moral knowledge, which requires "self-deliberation" in a particular circumstance, "can never be knowable in advance" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 321): "although it is necessary to see what a situation is asking of us, this seeing does not mean that we perceive in the situation what is visible as such, but that we learn to see it as the situation of action and hence in light of what is right" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 322). Knowing what is right involves an act of self-deliberation in which "knowledge is sometimes related more to the end, and sometimes more to the means to the end" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 321).

Gadamer notes that Aristotle claims *phronesis* is concerned with the means to an end (*telos*) and not with the end itself. Gadamer instead concludes that *phronesis* "is not simply the capacity to make the right choice of means, but is itself a moral *hexis* that also sees the *telos* toward which the person acting is aiming with his moral being" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 321, note 259). Gadamer thus expands Aristotle's *phronesis* to an ontological framework, a way of being, and a worldview articulated in language. Gadamer, in the same footnote, attributes *phronesis*' current limited scope to the Latin translation *prudentia*, "a failure [of translation] that still haunts contemporary 'deontic' logic" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 321, note 259). From his interpretation of Aristotle's *phronesis* as self-deliberation or self-knowledge (knowledge for oneself) (p. 316) or moral knowledge (p. 314), Gadamer (1975/1998) surmises that *phronesis* or "moral knowledge" "contains a kind of experience in itself" (p. 322), thus linking it to his own notion of experience (*Erfahrung*). Gadamer goes further, saying that "in fact . . . that this [moral knowledge] is perhaps the fundamental form of experience (*Erfahrung*), compared with which all other experience represents an alienation, not to say a denaturing" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 322; emphasis added). I do not think he is saying that *techne* and *episteme* are not valid forms of knowing; rather that, without *phronesis*, these forms of knowing lose their human grounding, a point that has been made by others such as Mishler (1986) and Bernstein (1983, 1985). From another perspective, this same point is made by First Nations educators in speaking of staying connected to community (see: chapter five; Conversation, Frank Conibear; Conversation, Janice Simcoe; Conversation, Nella Nelson). In the realm of human affairs, *phronesis* ought to be the dominant form of knowing. As we shall see, in evaluating discourse, Garver (1998) reinstates ethical reasoning to just such a prominent place.

Third point : Aristotle compares *phronesis* with *sunesis*, which Gadamer (1975/1998) translates as "sympathetic understanding" (p. 322). Like *sunesis*, *phronesis* involves transposing oneself "fully into the concrete situation of the person who has to act" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 323), where situation means *Sache*, or subject matter (see: page 64). It involves a desire to reach a common agreement as to the right thing to do (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 323). Reaching such an agreement is impossible for "one who stands apart and unaffected" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 323). The key to understanding is in thinking "along with the other from the perspective of a specific bond of belonging, as if he too were affected" (p. 323; emphasis added). I remind the reader of the suggestive notion of alongside that frames this chapter. I also distinguish Gadamer's point from Giroux's (1993), whose language appears superficially similar to Gadamer's, but whose vicarious experiencing comes from an unacknowledged place dominated by what LeCompte (1993) calls a post-modern fascination with the Other (on Giroux see: chapter one, pages 22-23). In making this third point, Gadamer (1975/1998) creates another phrase synonymous with *phronesis*. As "the virtue of thoughtful reflection" (Gadamer, 1998/1975,

p. 322), *phronesis* connects *sunesis* with a dialectics of understanding. The importance of dialectic to Gadamer's ethics of interpretation will become clear later on.

Aristotle identifies a "debased version" of *phronesis* as the ability to turn any situation to advantage; this has been one of the criticisms of situational ethics, and Gadamer (1975/1998) distinguishes his understanding of *phronesis* from this looser interpretation (pp. 323-24).

Aristotle connects "moral reflection" with "insight", which Gadamer defines as the quality of making "a fair, correct judgment. An insightful person is prepared to consider the particular situation of the other person" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 323). Such a person is open to another's experiences and in judging fairly, makes the other's argument stronger. In this particular section of Truth and Method, it is impossible to tell where Aristotle's words end and Gadamer's begins, but as Bernstein (1983) notes, Gadamer is consistent in carrying out his theory of applied understanding. More important is how Gadamer's understanding extends the relevance of Aristotle's insights into contemporary thought and *praxis*.

Gadamer's Conclusion to his Discussion of Aristotle's *Phronesis* : Gadamer clarifies the contemporary relevance of *phronesis*. He says: "if we relate Aristotle's description of the ethical phenomenon and especially the virtue of moral knowledge to our own investigation, we find that his analysis in fact offers a kind of model of the problems of hermeneutics. We too determined that application is neither a subsequent nor merely an occasional part of the phenomenon of understanding, but codetermines it as a whole from the beginning" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 324; his emphasis). For Gadamer, *phronesis* is another way of saying that all understanding is applied understanding. The intepreter "must not try to disregard himself and his particular hermeneutical situation. He must relate the text to this situation if he wants to understand at all" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 324). First Nations' charges of misappropriation - of being objects of an instrumental logic of domination (see for example: Lutz, 1990) - need to be distinguished from the kind of 'appropriation' First Nations people have been supportive of (though they do not call it appropriation; it is called support): the researcher's honest acceptance of his/her own involvement, the effect of his/her actions on real participants and real communities, and an openness to being affected (see for example: chapter four, pages 162-64). Research is not neutral. In applying Gadamer's *phronesis* within research *praxis* in a First Nations context, I will identify its indispensability as well contend with potentially contestable aspects of his theory.

Phronesis in a First Nations Context of Cross-Cultural Research

A first and necessary task in entering First Nations research from a cross-cultural location is accepting the legacy of misinterpretation (see: Tuhiwai Smith, 1999), a fact that may suggest Schleimeracher's conception of understanding is more appropriate than Gadamer's. Chambers' (1987) words are clearly undergirded by Schleimeracher's hermeneutical approach: "in cross-cultural discourse, there is real possibility for misunderstanding, and thus real possibility for hermeneutics" (p. 28). While to begin there is necessary, I question whether we as researchers can remain and belong there. I see the value of Gadamer's ethics of interpretation as pointing towards a space of potential agreement, one that is continually renewed in each act of understanding. Opening such a space with First Nations educators and writing about it in an academic context requires the kind of thoughtful deliberation that Gadamer (1975/1998) equates with *phronesis* for "without such openness to one another there is no genuine human bond" (p. 361).

Based on Gadamer's theory and my own research *praxis*, I have generated some principles grounded in *phronesis* for research with First Nations people. Afterwards, I will support my claim for the need to articulate such principles with Bernstein's (1985) critique of Gadamer's *phronesis*, and with Garver's (1998) thoughts on ethical reasoning. Principles that have guided my own research *praxis* with First Nations people, then, include:

- consulting and citing First Nations authors and scholars. This is necessary because of the legacy of misinterpretation. It also redresses the unwarranted prejudice against 'Native American intellectual' as an oxymoron (Cook-Lynn, 1996). More importantly, to turn to First Nations authors for knowledge and insight in matters that directly involve them, is a sign of respect. It signals the researcher's ethical integrity. Through our lived experiences of indigenous authors' language (Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978; Said, 1978), we as researchers construct our interpretations. For interpretations to be more authentic, we need to hear indigenous peoples' point of view directly. The alternative is only to read about them, to stand apart from and be 'unaffected' by the speaker's words and worldview. Consulting First Nations voices also shows the author is open to possibilities, in Greene's (1986) sense of "the capacity to look at things as if they could be otherwise" (p. 233), inGadamer's (1975/1998) sense, of the testing and shifting of the researcher's own horizons or in Rorty's (1998) question, "Are there ways of talking and acting that we have not yet explored?" (p. 6).

An example of the kinds of ethical attacks a scholar is open to for whom this principle is not *praxis* is shown by Ward Churchill's (Creek/Cherokee Metis) (1995) review of Mander's (1992) In the Absence of the Sacred. While Mander includes Native voices, they are all "grassroots" voices that are there as "documentation" and not as "intellectual contributions" (Churchill, 1995, p. 344). In the interpretive section, "Mander inevitably turns not to Native sources or 'informants,' but to an all but exclusively white, mostly male, oppositional intelligentsia of which he is a part" (Churchill, 1995, p. 344). The neglecting or exclusion of Native American intellectual voices is further entrenched in the bibliography. Of three hundred and five entries, only seventeen "are identifiably written by American Indians" and seven of those are not books (i.e. they are newspaper articles, interviews, reports or memorandum): "The remainder, more than 280 titles, mostly books and more than a hundred of them about indigenous peoples to one extent or another, are almost exclusively Euroamerican enterprises. Such a glaring skew simply cannot be attributed to a dearth of relevant and appropriate Native American material" (Churchill, 1995, p. 345; his emphasis);

- listening to and conversing with indigenous people themselves in a genuine dialogical situation. Relationships cannot rest on an instrumental use of First Nations people for the sole purposes of research (see for example: Deloria, 1969, 1991b; LaFromboise & Plake, 1983). A dialogical approach to research presupposes being affected and involved, in Gadamer's sense. This criterion also encourages what Ruth Cook calls "reaching out" (Conversation, Ruth Cook) and discourages the tendency to rely on non-Native 'Native experts'. Archibald (1993) speaks of First Nations storytellers' expectation that the listener be affected: pay attention and take away something learned. Johnny Moses (1992), in the live context of Northwest Coast storytelling, waits for the audience to demonstrate they are listening; he regularly pauses as they indicate their attentiveness by saying "We are listening" in the Native language of the nation whose story he is recounting;
- actively seeking out a balanced and comprehensive view of indigenous people. This often involves questioning the legitimacy or applicability of widely accepted social science research methods. This is the topic of my first chapter;
- engaging in dialogical, collaborative and/or participatory research. I have drawn primarily on Gadamer to theoretically justify my own dialogical approach, yet it is a simple expectation among First Nations people that their views not only be considered and represented accurately but that they be involved in the process. In the fourth

chapter, I discuss how that process evolved. Archibald & Bowman (1995), in a study of the University of British Columbia's NITEP [Native Indian Teacher Education Program] graduates, describes how a "process model" authenticated the study: "an organic unity, adaptable and, once again, consistent with the principles of respect and honor that are basic to First Nations peoples' habits of thought. The research process when viewed from this perspective becomes a dialogue that is growth-oriented rather than static, and that allows the central place of other such fundamental First Nations principles as spirituality and a sense of community" (p. 4). Time, for example, is one factor that contributes to and authenticates the research process. Often the interests and needs of the participants to be involved are subordinated to a rigid academic timeline. Allowing sufficient time for an authentic and a meaningful process to take place should be an integral part of the research design (see for example: Nader, 1999). Emerging research in collaborative modes of writing (Forman, 1992) also needs to be enfolded into a dialogical model of understanding (*phronesis*) ;

- the researcher treating his/her past and ongoing knowledge about First Nations matters as prejudices, in Gadamer's sense, and testing that knowledge through collaboration with participants combined with research as reflective *praxis*: "It is only through the dialogical encounter . . . that we can test and risk our prejudices" (Bernstein, 1985, p. 275; his emphasis). This involves becoming aware of one's standpoint as in being raised above it to see it in a "truer", that is, broader, perspective: "To acquire a horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand - not in order to look away from it but to see it better, within a larger whole and in truer proportion" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 305; emphasis added).

- avoiding appropriation or misappropriation. This criterion is one of the most difficult to avoid and I will elaborate further on it in the following sections. It involves beginning and ending in one's own historicity, to use Gadamer's word or, in my words, coming from an alongside space. It requires that the researcher acknowledge that conducting research with First Nations people involves asking permission to come, physically and/or metaphorically, into their nation or territory. It repudiates the deep-rooted belief that the quest for knowledge is universal and pure, in the sense that the gain of knowledge in and of itself is an absolute good (see: Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). If a continuum can be imagined where at one end is the imperialistic assumption of *terra nullis* and at the other end is the sense of belonging to a particular territory as well as notions like cultural and intellectual property, this criterion is more slanted towards the latter end. The recognition that First Nations people have integral ties of belonging to land and culture means research being undertaken that is not only conducted respectfully but more importantly, with permission. Some researchers (Mauze, 1997) see this trend as dangerous, leading to censorship and curtailing of academic freedom. However, in the context of *phronesis*, these dangers ought to be reframed within a reciprocal context. Research is a privilege rather than a right.

What support exists for elaborating *phronesis* principles rooted in research *praxis*? Bernstein (1985) defends Gadamer's "linkage (or fusion) of hermeneutics and *praxis* . . . that all understanding involves appropriation to our own concrete historical situation" (p. 290). Our hermeneutic understanding is "tempered" to that which we are trying to understand (Bernstein, 1985, p. 276). Bernstein's (1985) Aristotelian metaphor of tempered knowledge evokes an image of how the researcher responds in a particular situation: listening, paying attention, remaining open, modifying attitude and stance, being shaped by her/his interlocutors. Meaning is not "self-contained"; it is "realized through the happening (*pathos*) of understanding" in which the researcher's prejudices or historicity come into play (Bernstein, 1985, p. 276). We as researchers are being constituted even as we are engaged in study as dialogue with another person or culture. In a way similar to my own argument, Bernstein (1985) links Gadamer's theory of applied understanding with a re-infusion of contemporary meaning into Aristotle's *phronesis*:

> It is in this context that the problem of application becomes so central for Gadamer. It is here that we can see why Aristotle's analysis of *phronesis* is so important to him . . . What Gadamer emphasizes about *phronesis* is that it is a form of reasoning, yielding a type of 'ethical know-how' in which both what is universal and what is particular are co-determined. Furthermore, phronesis involves a 'peculiar interlacing of being and knowledge, determination through one's own becoming.' It is not to be identified with or confused with the type of 'objective knowledge' that is detached from one's own being and becoming. Just as *phronesis* determines what the *phronimos* becomes, Gadamer wants to make a similar claim for all authentic understanding, i.e. that it is not detached from the interpreter, but constitutive of his or her *praxis*. (Bernstein, 1985, p. 276)

Phronesis, as the form of reasoning applicable to *praxis*, involves "deliberation and choice" (Bernstein, 1985, p. 277). Garver (1998) makes much of these choices; choices are implicit whether we are aware of *phronesis* or not, and if we do not abide by *phronesis*-like principles, we risk making poor, even harmful, choices (see: Conversation, Ruth Cook; Deloria, 1997: "Certainly anthros have Indian friends. If they did not they would know it in rapid order" (p. 218)). The purpose of hermeneutical inquiry, says Bernstein (1985), is not to acquire a theoretical knowledge of an entity foreign to us. Rather, the kind of knowledge hermeneutical inquiry yields is "practical knowledge and the truth that shapes our *praxis*" (Bernstein, 1985, p. 280).

Bernstein (1983, 1985) sees a focus on *phronesis*, generally on practical philosophy, as common to several thinkers engaged in a critique of modern society: Arendt, Habermas, Rorty, Alasdair MacIntyre and Hilary Putnam (Bernstein, 1985, p. 281); some of these authors I have invoked in this study. Charles Taylor is another theorist Bernstein could have included in that company. The notion that we as researchers can be held accountable for our choices in research, and that these choices are rooted more in ethical than logical considerations, is a point Garver (1998) pursues.

In speaking of research as *praxis*, we are alerted to the implicit connection these theorists are drawing between action and research. Arguments and words are seen as forms of action, in the way that Arendt (1958) explains action as: a) originating with an actor, one who does the action; and b) initiating and putting into motion a chain of events. Whereas Arendt (1958) argues that actors cannot know or control the consequences their actions unleash in the world, which is why we as human beings rely on promising and forgiving to bind or release us from our actions, a stricter claim is being made here for argument (Garver, 1998), research as *praxis* (Bernstein, 1985), and my own belief in consciousable choice of approach in the research situation. We as researchers ought to foresee the consequences of choosing certain approaches or arguments over others, of choosing particular words over others. These kinds of deliberations are central to this study. Whereas the link between speech and action is more commonly accepted (Arendt, 1958), connecting discourse with action is much less talked about, for the reason Garver (1998) explains:

> The beauty of logic is the independence of its formal structures from any purposes for which they can be deployed. Logical analysis and evaluation of arguments can be impartial and nonpartisan. The great appeal of restricting the understanding and assessment of argument to purely logical, as opposed to ethical, standards is that logic as a subject for decision is self-contained. When reasoning is self-contained, it can in principle be understood and evaluated by itself. Once that self-contained nature is lost, it seems that anything goes, and relativism looms. (p. 115)

Gadamer (1975/1998) reinstates a primordial relation between speaking and writing, between listening or hearing and being affected, between text and author. This kind of relationship is one practiced by many First Nations writers, who weigh their words, metaphors and constructs in light of their primary affiliation to community (see for example: Alfred, 1999; Archibald, 1990; Cook-Lynn, 1996; Hampton, 1995; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). It also corresponds to a belief that words, like actions, irrevocably project themselves into the world and cause events to happen; recall that Gadamer (1975/1998) refers to understanding as an event, a happening, as does Bernstein (1985). Ruth Cook articulates the power of words: *If you are mean to someone, somewhere on the line [it will come back to you] because you have set it in motion and it will come back to you. Nobody has to punish you. You've set it in motion* (Conversation, Ruth Cook; her emphasis). This belief is widely held among tribal groups (see for example: Gunn Allen, 1998).

Garver (1998) has looked at the substantive content of ethical arguments to see how choice of arguments suggests the speaker's (i.e. author's) character. He examines one author's indictment of Aristotle's "lack of moral imagination" on slavery; a lack of moral imagination is counted as Aristotle's failure to consider that things could have been otherwise (Garver, 1998, p. 110). Garver (1998) does not use the word *phronesis* yet he says that "arguing itself is an ethical act" (p. 109), a phrase that strongly resembles Gadamer's adage: Plato's ethics are not dialectical; rather, dialectics is ethical (Gadamer, 1991/1931; Sullivan, 1989). Ethical arguments count as legitimate arguments: "Who is arguing to whom, for what purpose, and in what institutional setting are part of the argument - of what the reasoning is and so of how properly to characterize it" (Garver, 1998, p. 110). Garver (1998) cites Dewey to support his claim:

> Even when the words remain the same, they mean something very different when they are uttered by a minority struggling against repressive measures, and when expressed by a group that has attained power and then uses ideas that were once weapons of emancipation as instruments for keeping the power and wealth they have obtained. Ideas that at one time are means of producing social change have not the same meaning when they are used as means of preventing social change. (Dewey, 1987,p. 291; cited in Garver, 1998, p. 110)

Bernstein (1985) argues that we need to move beyond Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics in order to reach "the genuinely practical task of concretely realizing in our historical situation what he so nobly defended" (p. 290), which is what I have attempted to distill from my own *praxis* in the principles of research in a First Nations context (see pages 74-78). One of the other ways I have documented this research process, other than in my discourse, is through a research journal.

How do we know when someone is arguing ethically? The challenge is of defining ethical reasoning and saying what it is. I have extrapolated the following criteria from Garver's (1998) discussion: trust, choice of premises, shame, caring and confidence. These concepts are ones that are implicit in the principles I identified or that can be added to that list.

Trust

"Some arguments succeed by reasoning alone, but some succeed, but still *qua* argument, through the ethical effect of making the hearer trust the speaker" (Garver, 1998, p. 114). This criterion agrees with Gadamer's point on how trust deepens the human bond within the dialogical situation rather than being a methodological procedure to facilitate the instrumental gaining of knowledge (see: Spradley, 1979 on how trust is turned into a technical procedure). Ethical trust implies a genuine relationship, or the genuine possibility of one developing.

Choice of Premises

Choice of arguments involves the kind of deliberation that anticipates objections. Arguments do not stand alone; they exist within historically situated contexts as well as within the context of possible ideas, that is, courses of thought and action that the researcher has considered. An argument implies a stance, an orientation, an attitude towards the subject matter. That orientation is arrived at on the basis of previous choices, life experiences, scholarly knowledge: "Integrity, unlike logical consistency, requires an attitude toward rejected reasons and evidence as well as toward the premises that lead to a conclusion" (Garver, 1998, p. 117). Garver (1998) uses the example of *ultra vires* acts by three American presidents, Jefferson, Lincoln and Reagan. Upon examining the reasons each president supplied for adopting this extreme measure, only Reagan relied upon the precedent argument: if Jefferson and Lincoln did it, and they were great presidents, I can too. Garver claims this argument fails because Jefferson and Lincoln considered counterarguments in the particular circumstances whereas Reagan bypassed a substantive wrestling with the issue (Garver, 1998, p. 117). In the dialectics of reasoning, Gadamer (1991/1931) discusses the importance of contending with opposing arguments, as I will show in the next section. Wrestling is also a word Wendy Rose (1992) associates with integrity on the part of non-Native researchers (see: page 54 in this chapter). Garver (1998) therefore concludes that "character is revealed not only in the choices we make . . . but also in the lines of reasoning that we do not even consider" (p. 121). Despite Churchill's (1985) admiration for Jerry Mander's "impeccable" "credentials as a proponent of fundamental and positive social change" (p. 342), his disagreement with Mander's book rests on the lines of reasoning that Mander did not consider, namely, the inclusion of Native American intellectual voices as well as his failure to respectfully treat the Native grassroots voices as sources of interpretive frameworks.

Shame

Related to the criterion of choice of premises is another one that Garver (1998) identifies as shame: "Shame is a property of practical beliefs that can be transmitted from consequent to antecedent: if *p* implies *q*, and if I would be ashamed to assent to *q*, I can continue to maintain *p* only with difficulty and discomfort" (p. 119). Garver (1998) sees Socrates as using shame to test belief: "Someone does not mean what he says if he sees that something else is a consequence of his claims and yet is ashamed to admit it" (p. 119). Shame coincides with First Nations beliefs on controlling behavior (Conversation, Ruth Cook; Rattray, [no date]). It also corresponds to that sense of indignation or outrage I as a scholar may sometimes feel in hearing another's arguments that I disagree with. As I shall show in the following chapter, human reasoning is shaped within what Taylor (1992a) calls horizons of significance; the reason why certain arguments strike us as more important than others is connected to what Taylor (1989) calls our inescapable moral frameworks. These considerations, rather than pure logic, underlie our arguments.

Garver wants to show that ethical reasoning is reasoning. He would therefore disagree with the claim that *episteme* and *phronesis* are different kinds of reasoning; that *episteme* relates to logic and theory while *phronesis* is connected with practical action. That artificial separation has been responsible for excluding ethics from reasoning. Although Gadamer does not express the matter in the same way, he makes the same claim as Garver, as will become clear when I examine the roots of Gadamer's theory in his habilitation thesis on dialectical reasoning. Taylor (1989) has elucidated how Descartes separated thought from emotion. In many First Nations scholarly essays as in many non-Native writings, Descartes is blamed for subordinating emotion to reason. Yet this hierarchical separation is implicit in Aristotle. Even though he treats *phronesis* fairly, the structures he relies on in the corpus of his writings are dominated by *episteme* or logical categories of thought (see: Frye, 1982). The way in which arguments' implications can induce shame is comprehensible within First Nations 'habits of mind': connecting heart with mind, where both partake of thought (Conversation, Frank Conibear). As human beings and as researchers, we cannot choose to practice this principle only when it is convenient to do so. First Nations people see as a fundamental truth that heart and mind ought to be connected, that what is said is what is meant. Frank Conibear explains how this teaching is a philosophical principle of First Nations thought. Heart and mind do not correspond with emotion and intellect; each borrows from the other: *"the way our speakers talk about it, you speak with your heart* *and* *your mind. So it's not an intellectual speaking . . . There's emotion too. All our teachings . . . don't lose their feeling and they're not abstract. They're about our history, and ancestors, and about our hopes and dreams as well as what we do, what makes a good life and what makes a good person, not being selfish, having respect for other people"* (Conversation, Frank Conibear; my emphasis). Creating an argument that does not thoughtfully attend to its consequences in the real world represents a severing of mind from heart, where thought represents the sinew that binds one to the other.

Caring and Confidence

Ethical reasoning shows or enacts caring as well as confidence. The caring is of the subject matter, which is inclusive of who is being addressed and the writer's purpose in writing. It also demonstrates that careful prior deliberation of alternatives and objections where careful does not mean tactful but well thought-through. Caring is also connected to trustworthiness, which Garver maintains is difficult to fake. He tells his students: "Since . . . they are not skilled enough to fake such devotion, they have to be interested. Our true character is often manifested - and developed - in the choices we make about how to appear ethical: "She's not really a bad person; she's just arguing that way in order to win." "Yes, but even in order to win I wouldn't argue that way. Those tactical choices reveal the sort of person she is"" (Garver, 1998, p. 120; his emphasis). The criterion of caring directly relates to Gadamer's of being affected: acknowledging the human bond and the responsibility it carries in the intersubjective world.

Similarly, says Garver (1998), confidence is difficult to fake: "We become truly confident, not by blustering, but by having something to be confident about" (p. 121). Again, Garver's connecting of caring with confidence with careful deliberation echoes similar arguments made by Frank Conibear, who says that to be an effective speaker, heart and mind need to be connected. You need to have something of substance to say; it is that knowledge that provides you with the confidence to speak. If you are blustering, you are wasting everyone's time (Conversation, Frank Conibear).

Garver (1998) argues that excessive logic in practical matters is unethical because it attempts to substitute *logos* for *ethos* by denying personal responsibility (p. 122). Many of the arguments over turf in 'First Nations studies' or 'Native American studies' revolve around this fundamental difference in attitude; Vine Deloria's (1998) argument with James Clifton (1990), proponent of the Invented Indian thesis, is only one example. We need to distinguish, says Garver (1998), between a purely logical argument and one that rests on ethical grounds: the logical argument might "claim a conclusion follows from the nature of the good - a purely logical claim" whereas an ethical argument "infers the same conclusion because of a commitment to the good - a demonstration that is simultaneously logical and ethical. I am making clear my own character and moral purpose, but I am not on that account being illogical" (p. 123). "The logical relation is among propositions" (Garver, 1998, p. 123) or what Frank Conibear refers to as "abstract" reasoning (Conversation, Frank Conibear). "The ethical relation," clarifies Garver (1998), "is among the assertions of propositions" (p. 123). Instead of saying wrongly, in Garver's (1998) view, that "*praxis* has its own logic", what needs to be emphasized is that "we become more ethical, not by being less logical, but by being responsible for choosing our propositional attitudes. Propositions have relations of consistency and implication with each other while assertions have relations of integrity, justice and friendship" (p. 123).

Given this rigorous context, I need to look in greater depth at Gadamer's notion of appropriation, a notion that underlies fusion of horizons. In cross-cultural research with First Nations educators, a potential conflict arises in the implications of using this construct to characterise what happens in a dialogical situation. To wrap up this section, then, Gadamer's arguments on the ethics of understanding (*phronesis*) are supported by Garver's (1998) thinking while the practical application and articulation of *phronesis* in particular research situations is something Bernstein (1985) strongly encourages.

Appropriation: Its Role in Understanding (Fusion of Horizons)

Appropriation is a word that clearly has perjorative connotations for First Nations people. Gadamer (1975/1998) attempted to divest 'prejudice' of what he called the Enlightenment prejudice against prejudice. Gadamer points out prejudice can have one of two meanings: an unfounded assumption or one that has yet to be examined. Prejudices in the second sense enable rather than inhibit understanding. Gadamer borrows the word 'appropriation' from Heidegger, and if pressed to defend his choice of words, Gadamer would probably look not at what appropriation has come to mean, but at the substantive or positive meaning of this word within his theory.

Words that Gadamer often uses in place of appropriation are: belonging, being addressed by, being spoken to, fusion of horizons and *bildung*. *Bildung* is a German word usually translated as culture. Gadamer translates it as formation, the word *bild* being akin to form but combining the notions of image and copy. *Bildung*, an important notion in German Romantic hermeneutics, appears inGadamer's (1975/1998) discussion of the humanist tradition, a section that sets the stage for Gadamer's theory. *Bildung* is "that by which and through which one is formed becomes completely one's own" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 11). Gadamer (1975/1998) connects *Bildung* with Hegel's description of the universal nature of the spirit: "To recognize one's own in the alien, to become at home in it, is the basic movement of spirit, whose being consists only in returning to itself from what is other" (p. 14).

Gadamer sees *Bildung* as central to the human sciences. It articulates the movement of understanding that takes place in the spirit: moving beyond one's boundaries to learn something new ('the alien' or 'the other'). However, in order for the learning to genuinely take place, the other has to belong to or become appropriated by 'me' as researcher: "Thus what constitutes the essence of *Bildung* is clearly not alienation as such, but the return to oneself - which presupposes alienation, to be sure" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 14). Ricoeur (1981) claims that Heidegger did not make that return in his thought: "Have we not learned from Plato that the ascending dialectic is the easiest, and that it is along the path of the descending dialectic that the true philosopher stands out?"

(p. 59). It is on the return route that hermeneutics is likely to encounter critique, particularly the critique of ideology (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 70), or of what I have been referring to as standpoint.

The idea of appropriation implicit in *Bildung* resurfaces in Gadamer's description of understanding as belonging. He talks about how understanding classical texts "will always involve more than merely historically reconstructing the past 'world' to which the work belongs. Our understanding will always retain the consciousness that we too belong to that world, and correlatively, that the work too belongs to our world" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 290). The objection might be raised that Gadamer's insights on historical texts are not applicable to contemporary works or cross-cultural dialogical situations, however not only is Gadamer's hermeneutics shaped by a fundamentally dialogical and conversational model of understanding, but a key component of Gadamer's hermeneutics is its claim to universalism (Bernstein, 1983; Gadamer, 1998/1975). If we transpose Gadamer's insight on how to study classical texts into a First Nations context, Gadamer is suggesting that understanding can be traced by the researcher's consciousness of belonging, where the subject matter spoken of and by First Nations people, speaks integrally to me and me to it. Or, as Janice Simcoe says, the "markers in conversation . . . show you are connected" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe).

This radical claim of 'appropriation' is also at play in Gadamer's explanation of fusion of horizons. Gadamer (1975/1998) defines horizon as "the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (p. 302). Unlike other theorists, Gadamer believes that horizons are not fixed; they can open as well as contract. Nietzsche and Husserl used the word horizon to denote the way "thought is tied to its finite determinancy" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 302): as human beings, we see from within a standpoint and not from a transcendental, omniscient point of view. A horizon is not a finite point, but more like a continuum in that "a person who has a horizon knows the relative significance of everything within this horizon" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 302). A horizon is something into which we can move as well as being something that can move with us. Rarely are there closed horizons (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 304). Gadamer therefore combines Husserl's and Nietzsche's understanding with his own: a horizon is finite, restricted to a particular time and place, yet it can also move.

Following Gadamer's argument, to be able to understand another situation, for example, a historical situation or a First Nations perspective, presupposes that we already have a horizon that leans us, as it were, towards that inquiry: "we must always already have a horizon in order to be able to transpose ourselves into a situation" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 305). When we speak of 'transposing' ourselves or 'putting ourselves in another's shoes' (walk a mile in my moccasins, says Jo-Ann Archibald (1991)), the connotation is that we are imagining ourselves in that situation. The question is: does this take place as if I was the person or is it more of an alongside process? Are these two formulations distinct or only subtle variations on one another? Does putting on another's shoes - or moccasins - imply stepping inside their skin or their perspective or their worldview? Is 'skin' identifiable with perspective or worldview?

Gadamer says that transposing oneself is not equivalent (as it is for Schleiermacher) with empathy (taking on another person's character or 'skin', or what Native people refer to as a 'wannabe'), nor does it mean subordinating another person to one's own historically situated standards (also called ethnocentrism). Rather "it always involves rising to a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity but also that of the other . . . To acquire a horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand - not in order to look away from it but to see it better, within a larger whole and in truer proportion" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 305; emphasis added). This description articulates the requisite openness to new experiences that characterizes *phronesis*. But it is ambiguous on the nature of the universality; the interpretation that would be consistent with Gadamer's writings is that this higher universality is a higher particularlity: a truth-in-itself as well as a truth-for-me. It is that simultaneity that engenders movements in horizon or new learning. The problem arises when the question is asked: what about the other person's horizon? What kind of transformation is taking place there? Is it being moved or changed through this dialogical situation? And is that change being re-appropriated by the intepreter? Applied to a traditional research context of interpreter and participant, Gadamer's theory can account for the interpreter's responsibility, but is silent on the participant's understanding which, to be fully represented, would require the participant to undertake his or her own interpretation or inquiry. In other words, Gadamer's notion of appropriation can only capture an individual act of understanding, and is not broad enough to truly embrace the dialogic spaces inbetween distinct and unique persons or cultures (see: Arendt, 1958 on distinctness and uniqueness as fundamental human traits).

Gadamer's theory can articulate the interpreter's responsibility to be transformed. Says Gadamer (1975/1998): "it requires a special effort to acquire a historical horizon . . . [to] listen to tradition [or argument] in a way that permits it to make its own meaning heard" (p. 304). Gadamer's theory explains why the researcher's insertion of self (rather than, for example, bracketing or removal of self) is necessary for understanding to take place. This orientation is particularly applicable in a First Nations situation, where the interpreter needs to foreground his/her prejudices and existing horizons about contemporary First Nations people. Said's (1978) analysis of the discourse of Orientalism reads like Francis' (1992) account of the Vanishing Indian ideology; the shaping influence of discourse cannot be underestimated. The mark of genuine understanding is a fusion of horizons: "in the process of understanding, a real fusing of horizons occurs - which means that as the historical horizon is projected, it is simultaneously superseded" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 307) such that "the horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices" (Gadamer, 1998/1975, p. 306). My question as to whether what a First Nations person says becomes part of my horizon goes back to appropriation as belonging. The interpreter is responsible for hearing and attending to what First Nations people actually say, rather than projecting his/her own meaning onto those words. What constitutes a correct or defensible interpretation becomes a matter of argument, to be decided within a community of scholars, Native and non-Native, as well as, within a study, by the participants, who are simultaneously participants in the conversation, readers of the transcript and, if researcher and participant are open to it, critics and supporters of the 'write-up': in other words, co-collaborators.

The notion of a fusion of horizons, therefore, is somewhat of a misnomer, in the sense that even 'correct' or (Gadamer's preferred word) 'right' interpretations are just that: interpretations. Interpretations belong to individuals. We are in the domain of the hermeneutical circle, a circle that Heidegger maintained is not a vicious circle, but instead constitutes the grounds of understanding. The fusion takes place within the interpreter's interpretation; it does not take place between people. Rather, fusion is what happens within an individual who is engaged in the process of understanding; this notion of appropriation is irreducible and inescapable in the research situation (Geertz, 1988). The word Gadamer uses to describe the common space between people or between interpreter and text, and which is distinguishable from fusion of horizons, is *sache*, or the subject matter. The notion of fusion of horizons can therefore be clarified to refer to an event of understanding that is necessarily constituted in an individual whose responsibility it is to arrive at a right understanding; by right, Gadamer means being affected by and engaged with the subject matter, for without that, there is no understanding. Gadamer (1991/1931) confirms that this interpretation of his writings is correct: "the understanding that emerges is not primarily an understanding resulting from agreement with others but an understanding with oneself" (p. 65). I want to turn now to describe the common or alongside space, *sache*, of cross-cultural dialogue.

Creating a Common Space of Understanding

Whereas understanding takes place as an individual event (Gadamer, 1991/1931), and internal dialogue provides one model of how a fusion of horizons comes about (Gadamer, 1991/1931), genuine cross-cultural dialogue opens a common space of shared meaning. I am going to rely primarily on Gadamer to support this argument, because he focuses on reaching an agreement within spoken language; others who could contribute to this discussion are Arendt and Vico, whose separate but potentially related notions of a common space, *locus communis*, are central to their theories.

While Aristotelian ethics influenced Gadamer's infusion of contemporary meaning into *phronesis*, Sullivan (1989) argues that Gadamer evinces a stronger pull towards Plato, specifically towards Socrates' way of arriving at an understanding - of the Good - through dialogue. Sullivan (1989) marks a disjuncture between Gadamer's earlier, more 'political' writings influenced by Socrates and his later, more philosophical writings influenced by, among others, Aristotle, Heidegger and Hegel. I see more of a convergence of thought. While these scholarly disagreements may seem extraneous to this inquiry, I need to defend how Gadamer's habilitation thesis contains a distinction crucial to my thesis, a distinction that though articulated in Truth and Method is more transparent in Gadamer's first major attempt to come up with a coherent theory of understanding. That distinction is between understanding (fusion of horizons, or appropriation) and the common space of agreement. Collapsing the two (as I myself originally did in my research proposal) leads the researcher into riddles of representation and misappropriation. Separating them, as Gadamer does, clarifies how a space can open up where agreement belongs to and is created by the interlocutors.

Arendt (1958) points out how the "space of appearances" (p. 199) created by genuine political action, which includes dialogue, is transitory; the space vanishes as soon as the dialogue comes to an end and individuals disperse. Bernstein (1983) objects to the theoretical character of Gadamer's dialogical model; he criticises it an unrealistic approach to how human affairs can be conducted in the 'real' world. The dialogical model in *praxis*, he argues, would be cumbersome and only provisional. My sense of educational *praxis* in the area of cross-cultural research and pedagogy, including curriculum design, is that dialogue is becoming the norm rather than the exception, or at least that is the direction in which many of us as educators are trying to move. The strength of the notion of a common space is its genuine, non-prescriptive nature; it is created in the presence (as opposed to absence) of distinct and unique individuals who come to a shared agreement. Agreement comes about from the desire to arrive at a shared understanding, which is often represented concretely in education in some kind of document or publication, yet the understanding itself arises and relates back to particular individuals. Moreover, the dialogic space is continually being renewed and opened as new questions are foregrounded. So, as Rorty (1982) indicates, the important thing is not that answers are found but that they are sought. Found answers lead to orthodoxy and a narrowing of vision; sought answers lead to dialogue and the serious entertainment of alternative, often competing and equally compelling, points of view.

In Plato's Dialectical Ethics, Gadamer (1991/1931) argues "not that Plato's ethics are dialectical but rather that dialectics are ethical" (Gadamer cited in Sullivan, 1989, p. 120). Gadamer (1991/1931) arrives at this conclusion by examining "conversation and the way we come to shared understanding" (p. 17). He contrasts Aristotle's *episteme*, which is "characterized by its lack of need for any explicit agreement on the part of a partner" (Gadamer, 1991/1031, p. 18), with dialectic. Gadamer's dialectic "lives from the power of a dialogical coming to understanding - from the understanding of others who go along - and is sustained every step of its way by making sure of the partner's agreement" (Gadamer, 1991/1931, p. 18). In a section entitled 'Degenerate Forms of Speech', Gadamer identifies ways in which agreement can be falsified: by complying gregariously with what another says without really attending to the substance of the argument, or by interrupting an objection and thereby foreclosing the possibility of a genuine agreement or, a position commonly advocated in post-modern discourse, taking refuge in the argument that differences are irreconcilable therefore we should agree to mutually and respectfully disagree:

> One asserts the irreducibility of a difference of opinion in order no longer to be faced with the other person's contradiction as something that was meant to be substantive. When one 'understands' the other person's disagreement - that is, explains it as a result of the difference between his assumptions and one's own undiscussable assumptions instead of (precisely) making those assumptions the subject of conversation - one excludes the other person in his positive function, as someone to whose substantive agreement and shared understanding one makes a claim. Then the conversation ceases to be what it was: a process of coming to a shared understanding about the facts of the matter. (Gadamer, 1991/1931, p. 40)

Genuine agreement in true Socratic spirit consists in the weighing of arguments, particularly those that threaten to contradict one's position. On this account, "the inherent tendency of the intention of coming to an understanding is to want to do this precisely with the person whose prior opinion contradicts one's thesis most sharply" (Gadamer, 1991/1931, p. 41) thus its potential usefulness for cross-cultural educational research and *praxis*.

The arguments within a conversation, while they are things that we care about and believe are important to articulate, simultaneously need to be open to revision or refinement. To make headway in a conversation requires confronting or being confronted by "one's own logos in a testing way, oriented toward free agreement or free opposition", something that may even require "disregard[ing] the fact that it is one's own logos" (Gadamer, 1991/1931, p. 42; his emphasis). In this way, the subject matter open to discussion belongs not only to me but to both of us as interlocutors. If the purpose of reaching an agreement is genuine and not simply vocalizing one's own standpoint (listening to the 'music' of one's own voice), the agreement will also belong to both of us:

> Insofar as the search for the grounding that gives an accounting is a shared search and has the character of a testing, it operates, fundamentally, not by one person's making an assertion and awaiting confirmation or contradiction by the other person, but by both of them testing the logos to see whether it is refutable and by both of them agreeing in regard to its eventual refutation or confirmation. All testing sets up the proposition to be tested not as something for one person to defend, as belonging to him or her, and for the other person to attack, as belonging to the other, but as something 'in the middle'. (p. 65)

Within the contemporary historicity of a First Nations context, this exchange may often require a release on the part of the First Nations interlocutor. It demands a trust that his or her words will be heard so the researcher can adduce a right meaning, that is, based on what was actually said and not imputed to be said. It also requires a trust that the researcher will be able to distinguish which aspects of the argument are open to being argued and contested and which are more irreducible, part of what Taylor (1989) calls an inescapable moral framework, here of belief or worldview. These are also principles of *phronesis* in a First Nations context. The kind of dialectic envisioned by Gadamer needs to take place in a context created through awareness of *phronesis*: an awareness on the non-Native researcher's part that "we are not you" (Denis, 1997) and that is not only to be expected but is conducive to understanding (more conducive than saying 'I am you' or even 'I am like you'). Along with this is an awareness on the Native person's part that the conversation takes place in an open space of human understanding rather than one foreclosed by a narrow historical horizon shaped by the desire to vindicate or contradict. Ruth Cook points out how research in her view has been motivated by the latter: *"With all the research, what do they aim to do with it? You know, we've been researched to death. And you know why I think [they keep doing it]? They're not getting the answers they want. "You know, we're just at the animal level." If we said something like that, that would please them, but because we don't, they don't know what to do with us. At least that's how I'm beginning to figure it out"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook).

In a sense, then, *phronesis* is sensitive to the politics of difference (Taylor, 1992b) while dialectic is open to shared understanding. However, the second presupposes the first: "Only people who have reached an understanding with themselves can be in agreement with others" (Gadamer, 1991/1931, p. 65) or as Nella Nelson advises upcoming teachers: Know thyself (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Only researchers who understand they are inhabiting an alongside and not a stolen place, however well-intentioned the occupation, can perceive and enact this difference. In a cross-cultural context, this principle translates into an experience of being moved or transformed by a First Nations horizon so as to be open to further understandings (fusions of horizons). If the researcher accepts the responsibility to be moved, the participant also needs to be open to events of understanding, too. When research is conceived within a human bond, words as actions have reciprocal ramifications. These research experiences constitute for the researcher the *praxis* within which *phronesis* develops, as a way of knowing or approaching another person. In chapter five, I will develop these ideas further in sharing the First Nations educators' thoughts, values and words, while in the next chapter I take up the question of moral frameworks within my own construal of questions of significance for First Nations identity.

Conclusion

Whereas Garver (1998) focuses on ethical reasoning in a textual mode, the Gadamer of 1991/1931 is concerned about the ethics of reasoning within the dialectical situation. Yet the contexts are comparable, for in writing we imagine an audience who will read, ponder and evaluate our arguments, while in a dialectical situation, we are similarly oriented towards another. The real audience for this thesis includes my committee, among whom is a First Nations member, a 'Native American intellectual.' It embraces the whole scholarly community. It is also addressed to the First Nations educators in my study, if they choose to read it, as well as to members of the First Nations community I am involved with. The audience is therefore real, which makes the words and what they mean and what I want them to mean, real as well. The effects or implications are 'authentic'. To an elder like Ruth Cook, this understanding is a simple truth; it is not startling or new. We are responsible for what we say, whether that act/action of saying is spoken or written.

In the dialogical context of a conversation which, despite its looser connotation, shares with dialectic a focus on the subject matter, the purpose is to reach agreement. While the researcher is sensitive to protocols and to the social, political and historical context of dis/agreement, the constructive purpose is to reach a shared understanding, to create that transitory common space, by way of *phronesis* or principles of the ethics of reasoning such as: trust, involvement, caring, attending to premises and being attentive to arguments' implications. In a way, this task is more demanding in conversation than in writing, for in writing, the researcher has time to deliberate whereas in conversation, he/she does not have that luxury. Deliberation precedes the conversation, yet it is also instantiated within it; whether one's deliberations will be tested cannot be predicted or planned beforehand although the researcher is responsible for attending beforehand to the implications of how his or her argument is framed. Fusions of horizon occur within the researcher during the conversation as well as before and afterward; they also occur in the participant although the researcher will only know that for sure if the participant shares about it.

Conversation or dialectic is ethical because, if done rightly, the discussion or agreement is authentic. The genuine aspect of dialectic is that it opens a space - a common space - within which understanding may take place. Yet in order for understanding to take place, the interlocutors' understanding of the subject matter must be moved along, which means that patronizing, coddling, facile endorsement, as well as stilted questioning, work against authentic disagreement and agreement. Avoiding disagreement is as insulting as cultivating it.

Arendt (1958) maintains that at a political level, this common space is only temporary: in existence for so long as the individuals were present and involved. She identifies the few times in history she believes it has been actualized (Arendt, 1958, pp. 192-207). As Sullivan (1989) persuasively argues, Gadamer sees an integral relation between politics and dialectical ethics. A cross-cultural space of potential agreement can be renewed with each encounter. Maintaining good relations and understanding one's place in the interconnectedness of all things is an integral part of an Aboriginal understanding (see: Deloria, 1991a). Given this deeply-rooted belief, the possibilities for cross-cultural dialogue between First Nations educators and any other 'ethnic' educator, are strong, provided the "right attitude" is present (Conversation, Ruth Cook). The integral connection between heart and mind, where both are identified with thought, is a fundamental tenet of First Nations philosophy, and one that came up repeatedly in my conversations with all of the educators. In learning to accept thoughtful responsibility for our actions, whether those actions take place in speech, dialogue or discourse, the creating of common spaces is a potential reality in educational *praxis*. The key, as Janice Simcoe identifies, is 'letting' (viz. inviting and welcoming) First Nations voices in.

Into dialogue.

Chapter III: First Nations Contemporary Identity

Introduction

This chapter is an interlude; a reflective pause; ruminations on contemporary Native identity from a particular, outside perspective. These thoughts carry as much or as little weight as the reader, especially the Native reader, is willing to grant them, but the words have been composed carefully and thoughtfully. The chapter, upon looking back, also supports what I heard in the conversations with educators.

I begin this chapter with my visit to Carr's exhibit at the Vancouver Art Gallery. I was originally attracted to Carr's unique artistic rendition of nature and Native culture. What fascinated me was her outsider status. A marginalized figure, she never fully belonged within Western culture. In hindsight, this attraction was no accident. It relates to my own story and an almost parallel journey into a Native community. What brought me to the exhibition was Daniel Francis' interpretation of Carr's work: Carr the documenter of what society believed to be a Vanishing Indian.

I approached Carr's paintings on this occasion with a contemplative and detached perspective, one informed by my experiences with First Nations contemporaries: living people who I have come to respect and love, not artifacts enclosed within the covers of a book or the walls of a museum. Like a First Nations writer I know who confessed to admiring W.P. Kinsella's stylistic prose while being repelled by his depiction of the Hobeema people, I marvelled at the artistic integrity of Carr's paintings yet also noticed, painfully and irrevocably, the absence of living Native people. Only one painting, stylistically derivative, was graced with the presence of a Native family.

I was particularly struck with two paintings that were physically close enough for me to notice that the same totem appeared in both. The earlier painting shows a totem as one feature among a realistically rendered background of longhouse, church spire and village. Carr's revised painting of the same totem replaces that mimetic background with abstraction: the swaths and deep colors characteristic of her work. Thus thrown into sharp relief, the same totem stands alone in a de-populated landscape. And yet it is alive. It emanates a spiritual energy.

When I began writing this chapter, these juxtaposed paintings resonated in my mind. I wondered how the myth of the vanished Indian could be articulated with such beauty and grace. The paintings were certainly a contrast to Carr's words. From the museum table strewn with Carr's books, I perused a chapter from Klee Wyck. Carr describes in an imaginatively limited and graphic way her perceptions of a Nuu-chah-nulth family. While reading Paula Gunn Allen's (1998) autobiography, Carr's painted images resurfaced. Gunn Allen's prose is replete with references to a disappearing Indian. In surveying the writings of contemporary First Nations authors, I wonder what contemporary 'artifacts' are being composed for future generations, generations like my own children who are Heiltsuk yet also inherit my own unarticulated identity from an 'invisible culture' (Phillips, 1983)? How do modern indigenous writers communicate identity? What spirit or worldview is being narrated? In what language or metaphors? With what intention? With what voices?

Paula Gunn Allen's (1998) autobiographical ruminations as a Pueblo-Lakota woman are interwoven with images of a receding Indian:

> A student said something that forced me to contemplate a world without Indians. He said that the elder people knew that we were disappearing, and when something is ending, it gets smaller. He said it's like a shutter on a camera, the opening grows smaller as it closes. That is why, he said, so many of us have begun to write: to write everything down so that there will be a record.
>
> The student is the second chief of his tribe, the Narragansett . . . readying himself to research and record everything he can about his own tribe . . .
>
> The class let out after five o'clock. I left the U.C. Berkeley campus walking down Telegraph toward the parking lot. As I walked, I saw people going past me. I saw the shops, the goods on display in the windows. I went by restaurants and coffeehouses. Nowhere did I see an Indian, an item produced by or even reminiscent of Indians, a food or beverage for sale that was identified in my mind, or the minds of those others around me, as Indian. Coffee is Indian, but not really. Corn, turkey, tomatoes. Pumpkin, chili, tortillas. So many things. But no Indian visible anywhere, not even me.
>
> Less than twenty-four hours later, I still haven't begun to deal with his remark. (p. 36)

Gunn Allen wrote this piece in the 1960's. Her most recent book, a collection of autobiographical essays that includes this earlier piece, is like a writing of everything down, everything, that is, about herself as a contemporary Native person. In a more recent essay in that collection, she shifts her concern with a receding Indian into another framework: "One of the major issues facing twenty-first-century Native Americans is how we, multicultural by definition - either as Native American or American Indian - will retain our 'indianness' while participating in global society" (Gunn Allen, 1998, p. 6; my emphasis). For Gunn Allen, Indianness, among which she includes tribal affiliations, exists within a multicultural and thus for her, freeing context. Her book is significantly titled: Off the Reservation: Reflections on Boundary-Busting, Border-Crossing Loose Canons.

Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, on the other hand, has been described as "one of the most authentic of Native American 'tribal' voices" (Bruchac, 1987, p. 57). She asks the same question as Gunn Allen but frames it differently: "Does the Indian story as it is told now end in rebirth of Native nations as it did in the past? Does it help in the development of worthy ideas, prophecies for a future in which we continue as tribal people who maintain the legacies of the past and a sense of optimism? . . . What is Native intellectualism . . .? Who are the intellectuals? . . . Does it matter how one uses language and for what purpose? Who knows the answers to these questions? Who believes it is important that they be posed?" (Cook-Lynn, 1998, pp. 134, 135; her emphasis). For Cook-Lynn, the decisive framework is tribal. Cook-Lynn's framework carries the authority of tradition. Gunn Allen's formulation involves a shift in understanding; most Native people I know resist being included under the rubric of a multicultural nation (Janice Simcoe, Personal communication, November 26, 1999; Lyn Daniels, Personal communication, March 19, 2000; see also: Moses & Goldie, 1998, p.xxviii: "most Native writers are . . . speaking first to their own community"). This fact is commonplace at least in Canada, where multiculturalism is official government policy, that is, colonial policy (see: Kambourelli

(2000) on the colonialism of Canada's legislated multiculturalism). Multiculturalism has different nuances and history in an American context, yet the fundamental difference in approach between Cook-Lynn and Gunn Allen remains, even taking this difference into account. With Native people increasingly occupying positions of leadership and influence, how Native identity is being articulated is becoming a focal concern of Native intellectual criticism (see: Alfred, 1999; Cook-Lynn, 1996, 1998; Deloria, 1991a); it is also the topic of contemporary Native fiction (see for example: Wagamese, 1997). For Cook-Lynn (1996), identity ought to be shaped consciousably: First Nations people cannot swim complacently in the waters of Lethe, barely hearing the "soft raindrops on shrouded drums" (p. 146). Like Cook-Lynn, I want to draw attention to how First Nations identity is being articulated: the mediation of identity through language and voice.

In the previous chapter, I spoke of the necessity to attend to the words of First Nations people. Drawing on Charles Taylor, I nevertheless turn to my own Western tradition to frame my understanding of contemporary identity. If I was to turn to a Native scholar, Deloria would be one of my first choices. He has woven an account of contemporary indigenous identity within Aboriginal epistemology (Deloria, 1985, 1991a). However, I am attempting to establish consonances between two different cultures, philosophies, and worldviews. I am acutely aware of keeping my cross-cultural situation in mind so as to make my argument stronger in the way that Gadamer (1975/1998) describes. It is not as if I can stand outside of either tradition, Western or First Nations, and choose when to use one and when to use the other. I begin in Western tradition, travel into indigenous territory, and my bridges get constructed the more I read and reflect. I test how well my bridges are supported against the community of First Nations educators whose voices I hear as I write and re-write.

One of my purposes is to suggest a direction in which a productive dialogue on contemporary Native identity can move. I am not speaking for my participants in the writing of this chapter; I am speaking with my own voice. Yet I am listening to what they say. Knowing how to communicate with one another so as to keep the dialogue open requires that we listen and respond with an open mind and heart. No voice has been excluded. I pray that my own words offer strength, especially for our - my husband's and my - own Heiltsuk children, who also inherit my tradition(s), one(s) that I myself am still in the process of articulating.

Frameworks We Carry

Taylor (1989) identifies how frameworks define a person's orientation towards the world: "identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good" (p. 27). A framework is ontologically basic, and provides answers to the "space of questions" in which we live (Taylor, 1989, p. 29); it even tells us the right questions to ask (Gadamer, 1998/1975; Taylor, 1985, 1989). Selves exist within a set of constitutive concerns or questions (Taylor, 1989, p. 50). These queries are posed within "a horizon of significance" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 68). As Native writers, Gunn Allen and Cook-Lynn stand within the same horizon. Yet they articulate different frameworks. Gunn Allen celebrates hybrid identities along with tribal ones; she has a multicultural focus. Cook-Lynn says there is no Native being if it is not tribally distinctive.

The word or horizon of 'Native' has become a sort of shorthand. It implies there is or can be an equivalent and shared Native identity. This assumption originates, in a positive sense, from a common purpose: we are all in this [fight against colonialism] together. Resistance to colonialism is one of the defining characteristics of a tribal perspective (see: Adams, 1995; Ortiz, 1981). The problem Cook-Lynn (1996) sees is that whereas resistance once took place in a context of outright coercion, Native people now opt to pursue education in academic institutions and voluntarily seek careers within bureaucratic organizations. Alfred (1999) argues that contemporary colonialism exists in a more dangerous guise. The worst thing that can happen is being co-opted or successfully assimilated; a tribal horizon thereby becomes lost or muted (see: Deloria & Lytle, 1985; I first heard the word 'muted' while in conversation with Janice Simcoe). This danger is a real one (Lyn Daniels, Personal communication, March 19, 2000). Another danger is of this happening while paradoxically retaining one's Native identity, in other words, the fear that Native people who are successful within 'systems' are not speaking from a place of the heart. The heart connects thought with emotion and rests on a spiritual connection to land and community. Systems is a word First Nations educators use to refer to mainstream organizations, the kind that overwhelm or "drown"(Conversation, Janice Simcoe) identity rather than support it.

Aoki (1989, 2000) asks why it is that the being in human being stayed and becoming was ousted. Why, he asks, are we not called human becomings, instead of human beings. He was drawing attention to the epistemological and ontological foundations of language; the fact that Western epistemology favors presence over absence, unity over diversity, stasis over transformation. First Nations people understand the close connection between change and tradition (Conversation, Ruth Cook). The present tense of the verb in the phrase "My teachings tell me" communicates the contemporary presence of tradition as well as indicating that First Nations identity can successfully accommodate change.

Metaphors of becoming, of constructing, shaping, weaving, braiding, journeys and migrating abound in First Nations discourse, but not all metaphors come from an Aboriginal framework. Gunn Allen (1998), for example, uses the image of confluence. Confluence is a place where four rivers meet. It is also the four roads she remembers from childhood that met at one intersection. Metaphorically the roads are herself; the four parts of her identity symbolizing her multiple lineage: "Because the course of my family river has been diverse, I have no central myth or legend, no single point of view, to enclose me" (Gunn Allen, 1998, p. 207; her emphasis). Nevertheless she remembers her Lakota mother telling her: "Never forget that you are Indian". At no time, says Allen, was she told: "Never forget you are part Indian" (Gunn Allen, 1998, p. 182). The several parts that make up Gunn Allen - Lakota, Pueblo, Lebanese, Irish, Jewish - are like pieces of a patchwork blanket, another metaphor she uses (Gunn Allen, 1998, p. 209), yet each piece is complete and experienced as one whole. The star blanket does have a sacred significance (see: Medicine, 1983) yet the way in which Gunn Allen (1998) uses it comes more from a modern usage: "There's more than one way to be an Indian" (p. 13). One of those ways is being a whole mixed-blood and having a multicultural Indian identity.

Gunn Allen shares with the early Wagamese a conception of identity as constructed. This identity is in large part constructed by the individual.

Keeper 'n Me is a fictional autobiography of how Richard Wagamese (1994) returns as an adult to his native community after being found by his brother. Social Services broke up the family and placed the young child Richard with a white family. Wagamese (1996) narrates the story of when he was eleven. A cousin in his adopted family asked him: "Did you used to be Indian?" (Wagamese, 1996, p. 135). Wagamese (1996) remembers that question; when he was older, it provoked him to reflect on his identity. Wagamese (1996) admits that his Indianness until he was a teenager had been formed by three sources: television, textbooks and movies. It took him twenty years to re-connect with his "cultural base" (Wagamese, 1996, p. 136). He tells of the many stereotypical images he tried on for size in that journey: "long braids, lots of turquoise jewelry, fringed vests, beaded jackets, moccasins, and an outrageously militant attitude"; "the urban professional image of the Indian", militant but well-dressed; the incarceration period of the "devil-may-care, drugged, alcoholic, I-never-got-a-break-from-society reality", and finally, the person he is today (Wagamese, 1996, p. 136). He writes: "For a number of years I wandered around believing that I needed to find the ONE true Indian reality" (Wagamese, 1996, p. 136; emphasis in the original). He concludes that Indian identity is really what you make of it, although his recent writings show a deepening commitment to traditional teachings: "When I write today, I write as an Ojibway man. When I pray, I pray in the manner of my people. I dance, sweat, offer tobacco and define myself as an Aboriginal man. And in my life, the day-in day-out motions of existence, I draw the perimeters of that life along Aboriginal lines" (Wagamese, 2000, p. 5). On the years of his separation from home, Wagamese (2000) says: "None of us are to blame for history's effects on our families, communities, nations or ourselves. But we are responsible for healing those effects. And we are responsible for each other. That's truth, that's traditional, that's Aboriginal" (p. 5).

Contemporary Native identity is marked by multiplicity. Multiplicity can mean the multiple identities subsisting within one person. These identities can be competing ones, such as white and Indian. But they can also be the successful combining of contemporary gendered and political roles with a Native one, such as Gunn Allen's (1998) self-identification as Lakota, Lebanese, American and lesbian, or Beth Brant's (1992) as Mohawk, political, traditional, and lesbian. Nor do white or Western and Indian need to be competing; Jo-Ann Archibald (1990) recounts the story of Coyote and his mismatched eyes. She uses his eyes as a metaphor for how contemporary Native people are influenced by approaches from two worlds, and need to find a balance or bridge between them, without eliminating their difference. Allen (1998), by nationality or inclination, would disagree with the bi-cultural thesis; "we are global by blood, by law, and by injection. American through and through" (p. 5).

Multiplicity can also mean the multiple ways of being Native, ways that have recently divided Native people from one another, like the Yukon struggle in the seventies and eighties over the government's terminology of status and non-status (APTN [Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network] television program, February, 2000). Eventually, Yukon Native people made their peace with one another and united under one banner. In doing so, they went against current government practices. Thomas King calls Native identity a "pretty nasty can of worms" (in Lutz, 1991, p. 108). He claims the belief in a peculiarly Native identity or reality is chimerical because contemporary Native people come from and live within many different backgrounds, experiences, and realities:

> This definition - on the basis of race . . . makes a rather large assumption . . . It assumes that the matter of race imparts to the Native writer a tribal understanding of the universe, access to a distinct culture, and a literary perspective that is unattainable by non-Natives. In our discussions of Native literature, we try to imagine that there is a racial denominator which full-bloods raised in cities, half-bloods raised on farms, quarter-bloods raised on reservations, Indians adopted and raised by white families, Indians who speak their tribal language, Indians who speak only English, traditionally educated Indians, university-trained Indians, Indians with little education, and the like all share. We know, of course, that there is not. (King, 1990, pp. x-xi)

The "sheer number of cultural groups in North America, the variety of Native languages, and the varied conditions of the various tribes" should belie the notion of a mystical unified Indian identity, says King (1990, p. xi). Yet even the most hybrid of modern articulations presupposes a core of Native identity. This core is tribal. The most basic meaning of tribal is having Native blood and Native family connections; while the word 'blood' carries racial overtones, for a First Nations person, it speaks more to a connectedness to the things that impart a way of life: the spirit world, water, land, family, culture and language (Ron Wilson, Personal communication, March 2000). While I explain one meaning of tribal in the following section, I am later going to develop something called a tribal framework, a way of looking at - as well as experiencing - reality. That framework presupposes an acceptance of tribal understanding.

An Authentic Tribal Core

Cook-Lynn (1996) states in speaking of her own tribe: "One cannot be a Lakota unless one is related by the lineage (blood) rules of the *tiospaye*"; the *tiospaye* are the "real kinship" ties (p. 94). Harry Assu, chief of the Cape Mudge people, reiterates that "you have to have Indian blood in you before you can apply to be a [band] member" (Assu & Inglis, 1989, p. 101). He distinguishes this criterion from the government's creation of "legal Indians": "Indian men who took their share of band funds and pulled out of Cape Mudge to live somewhere else (franchised) [who] can come back now to live here with their families. Most of them live outside where they wanted to be, but a few will come back" (Assu & Inglis, 1989, pp. 100-101); Assu's words intimate the strain legal categories impose on an originally cohesive community. Both Assu (Assu & Inglis, 1989) and Clutesi (1990) speak of a pre-Contact time when peoples were "closely knit" (Clutesi, 1990, p. 165); when marriages and adoptions between tribes were a way of keeping the peace and maintaining relationships (Assu & Inglis, 1989). Clutesi (1990) notes that:

> In the old Indian Act, there was a law which forbade an Indian to live on a neighbouring tribe's reserve if his name was not on that band's book, on pain of a penalty or a jail term. It did not matter about the man's former ties with that tribe. This law alone was most effective in creating a rift between the peoples who were so closely knit together but a generation ago. It engendered misunderstanding, distrust and rank jealousy. It was laws like these that were instrumental in pulling down and degrading a once-proud race. (p. 165)

Native communities had their own ways of saying which traditions, which views, which culture was theirs, while keeping their doors open to relationships of kinship and friendship with other nations.

Janet Campbell Hale's (1993) autobiography is tellingly entitled Bloodlines: Odyssey of a Native Daughter. On a visit back to the Coeur d'Alene reservation where she was born, Hale (1993) responds to a teacher who asks if she was able to maintain her "ethnic identity" while living in New York: "Or, he asked, was that important to me anymore. I answered that I am as Coeur d'Alene in New York as I am in Idaho, that it is something that is an integral part of me" (p. xix). Yet as the subtitle subtly implies, this is a story not of centripetal influences, but a journey, an odyssey, a wandering away from, even a conscious and painful decision to separate from, her native community: "I can never live here, where I came from", says Hale (1993) to her daughter (p. 185); "I don't even know what it's like to have a place in my own tribal community" (p. 186). It represents the story of that unwritten Native person, the enfranchised legal Indian that Assu assumes prefers assimilation over tribal existence, the one who voluntarily left the community and its ties behind. Hale (1993) considers herself "part of an intertribal urban Indian community" (p. 186). Why then is her book called Bloodlines?

Hale journeys into her past, particularly into her relationship with her mother, who left the reserve when Hale was ten: "None of us would ever live there again though my parents maintained strong ties" (Hale, 1993, p. xviii). It is also primarily about her identification with a grandmother she never knew but consciously sought out. She found her grandmother and listened to the story she told, then she visited the place where a massacre took place. Her grandmother, though Coeur d'Alene, happened to be travelling with Nez Perce Chief Joseph. In what was later called the Great Flight of 1877, American soldiers chased the Nez Perce. The chase ended in massacre at the Bear Paw battleground. Her grandmother miraculously escaped. Even though Hale identifies herself with an intertribal community, the significant horizon of her Native being comes from her ancestral blood connections with her grandmother and thus from her own Coeur d'Alene blood. Furthermore, this blood connection is recognized by Hale's home community. When the Coeur d'Alene Tribal School invited her to visit, a Coeur d'Alene teacher at the tribal school encouraged her: "You be sure and come home again" (Hale, 1993, p. xxi).

The way in which blood lines carry an ancestral past is captured by Momaday, whose Kiowa identity is an unquestioned aspect of his being: "*My name is Tsoai-talee. I am, therefore, Tsoai-talee; therefore I am*" (Momaday, 1976, [p. i]; italics in the original to signify spoken words). Momaday calls the "burden of memory" a "racial" memory, a recollection of the past carried in one's genes or blood (Momaday, 1989, pp. 20-21). When asked by Woodard what evidence he has that this burden of memory exists, Momaday replies he has seen it in the old people. It is a memory not within their lifetime but of long ago. The memory is of migration, moving over the Bering Strait and the continent in search of a home. The word Kiowa or *Kwuda* means coming out; the Kiowa origin story tells of the people coming out into the world through a hollow log: "it was their time, and they came out into the light, one after another . . . it gave them to know that they were and who they were" (Momaday, 1976, p. 1). Momaday shares with Woodard that there are times "when I think about people walking on ice with dogs pulling travois, and I don't know whether it's something that I'm imagining or something that I remember. But it comes down to the same thing" (Momaday, 1989, p. 22; emphasis added).

Momaday is most often quoted for saying that being Indian is more of an act of imagination than anything else (Gunn Allen, 1998; Owens, 1992); the source given for that citation is his autobiography, The Names. I read Momaday's words differently. Momaday (1976) says: "In general my narrative is an autobiographical account. Specifically it is an act of the imagination. When I turn my mind to my early life, it is the imaginative part of it that comes first and irresistibly into reach, and of that part I take hold. This is one way to tell a story. In this instance it is my way, and it is the way of my people" (p. [i]; emphasis added). He continues: "I have tried to write in the same way, in the same spirit" as his ancestor Pohd-lohk who started off a story by being quiet and then saying "*Ah-keah-de*, They were camping". Momaday (1976) begins his story in the same way: "Imagine: They were camping" (p. [i]). Momaday is articulating a complex relationship between imagination, ancestry and identity, one that is not the same as saying that imagination and invention are interchangeable, that identity and its metaphors can be pulled out of thin air. The grounding of metaphors in an Aboriginal worldview will become apparent in chapter five, when I look at metaphors the First Nations educators used. Cook-Lynn (1996) agrees that: "It is important to say that the business of claiming indigenousness and inventing supportive mythology is an activity of the human imagination. No one argues that the declaration of one's identity is not an imaginative act . . . All imaginative writing and even nonfictional work defines truth and belief as the particular writer knows it, otherwise it is simply fruitless activity" (p. 37). At issue is the quality or 'authenticity' of the imaginative act, a thesis I will develop as the ethics of voice.

The image of diaspora or migration is expressed differently in Momaday than in Gunn Allen (1998). Momaday's is a description of identity, of how a people dispersed into the world, whereas for Allen, migration is a metaphor, a way of constructing or understanding the coming together of separate identities. Although Allen (1998) identifies migration as a metaphor from her indigenous ancestors, it is interwoven with images from other times and places: "Migration, it seems, was in our blood from earliest times, for some of the people migrated across the trans-Alpine ridge into western Europe, thence to the British Isles, to eventually become the Celt-Scottish, Welsh, Cornish, Somerset, and Irish. Some found themselves on the Iberian peninsula, to eventually become the Spanish. And some would interrupt Odysseus and Aeneas on their journeys as goddesses bent on keeping the heroes from home and empire" (p. 3). Whereas in articulating the "great restlessness" he saw in his father, a different source for metaphor is clear when Momaday (1976) says: "I believe that this restlessness is something in the blood. The old free life of the Kiowas on the plains, the deep impulse to run and rove upon the wild earth, cannot be given up easily; perhaps it cannot be given up at all. I have seen in the old men of the tribe, especially, a look of longing, and - what is it? - dread. And if dread is the right word, it is a grave thing, graver than the fear of death; it is perhaps the dread of being, of having been in some dark predestination, held still, and in that profoundly shamed" (p. 36). Momaday's description discloses a link between identity and the world. Language, myth and being impart a particular Kiowa worldview.

The challenge facing contemporary Native intellectuals and writers, Cook-Lynn (1996) asserts, is reclaiming indigenous metaphors: "Indigenous peoples are no longer in charge of what is imagined about them, and this means that they can no longer freely imagine themselves as they once were and they might become. Perhaps a separation of culture and place and voice has never been more contextualized in modernity than it is for Indians today. This means that the literary metaphors devised for the purposes of illumination belong more often than not to those outside of the traditional spheres" (p. 143). Ortiz (1981) optimistically speaks of actualizing Indian nationalism through the English language, while Maria Campbell, becoming frustrated with expressing herself in English, visited an elder who told her: English has no mother, so what you need to do is put the mother back into it (Lutz, 1991, p. 49). The right kind of imagination or metaphor is a necessary, even a critical component of, tribal identity.

Family recognition that you are indeed who you say you are, necessarily accompanies asserting a blood connection. The significance to Native people of geneologies, oral and written, speaks to the close link between blood ties and names: family names, given names, ancestral names. Geneologies are protocol in feast and potlatch programs; the communal memory, as represented in the community members, acts as witness to the validity of claimed connections. Native people commonly know or come to know one another by where they come from, that is, by which tribe or nation they belong to and who their relations are (Ron Wilson, Personal communication, October 1999). This form of self-identification communicates that for that individual, tribal affiliation is significant. Kinship and family ties matter. I use the word kinship because it connotes closeknit family and extended family connections; the two words - immediate and extended family - are synonymous for First Nations people. Kinship is also a word that Native writers themselves use. Native people instead say 'family'. I am not using the word 'kinship' in an anthropological sense, but as Deloria (1991a) understands it:

> Even the most severely eroded Indian community today still has a substantial fragment of the old ways left and these ways are to be found in the Indian family. Even the badly shattered families preserve enough elements of kinship so that whatever the experiences of the young, there is a sense that life has some unifying principles which can be discerned through experience and which guide behavior. This feeling, and it is a strong emotional feeling toward the world which transcends beliefs and information, continues to gnaw at American Indians throughout their lives. (p. 21)

With blood and family ties also comes a spiritual bond to the land, one that translates into a "moral topography" (Taylor, 1989) of deeply imprinted images of names, ancestors, stories and history. Cruikshank (1990), who interviewed four Yukon female elders, noticed that the women's memories mapped onto ancestral knowledge; they associated particular stories with actual places. Harry Assu's autobiography is filled with names that establish the integral connection between land, history, identity, and contemporary land claims:

> At Menzies Bay, which we call *'ul*, that means Big Bay, there would be three to four hundred people camped on each side of Mohun Creek. That was a big summer camp, and our people came from all over for the fishing. Oh, there used to be a lot of fish there - pinks and coho going up the streams. And it was a great place for berries in the summer.
>
> When I was around twelve years old, I saw two or three carved poles standing in the graveyard on the south side of Mohun Creek in

> Menzies Bay. It was our custom in those early days to put the body in a box with big cedar planks for a lid. There was painting on the top to show the family history. (Assu & Inglis, 1989, pp. 27-28)

Cook-Lynn (1996) documents how the American Termination Act ruptured this link between land and identity for half of the tribes by forcing them to relocate. The Trail of Tears was the direct result of President Jackson's ultimatum to the Cherokee people; Jackson defied Chief Justice Marshall's Supreme Court decision, which supported the Cherokee position. Canadian colonialism also contains many examples of forced relocation that interrupted and destroyed a balance Native people had between themselves and their homelands. Hartmut Lutz and Maria Campbell discussed how spirit is connected with place. Campbell suspects the reason Europeans who emigrated to Canada lost that connection was because of the constant movements and forced relocations, the continual severing throughout history of the bonds between a people and a place (see: Lutz, 1991, p. 59). Janice Simcoe and I had an almost identical conversation, with Janice independently reiterating what Maria Campbell also believes (Conversation, Janice Simcoe).

Alfred (1999), a Mohawk scholar, argues that Native identity flows from three elements: blood connection, family acknowledgement of that connection, and spiritual imprinting from a particular place on earth (Alfred, Personal communication, November, 1999). In contemporary discourse this argument is sometimes reversed. A felt connection with Natives, Native communities or the land originates in "a sense sublime/Of something far more deeply interfused" (William Wordsworth, "Lines Composed Above Tintern Abbey," lines 97-98). In arguments like these, validation of an authentic connection radiates primarily from an inward source. Ermine (1995) explains the spiritual role of inwardness in tribal understanding:

> Aboriginal epistemology is grounded in the self, the spirit, the unknown. Understanding of the universe must be grounded in the spirit. Knowledge must be sought through the stream of the inner space in unison with all instruments of knowing and conditions that make individuals receptive to knowing. Ultimately it was in the self that Aboriginal people discovered great resources for coming to grips with life's mysteries. It was in the self that the richest source of information could be found by delving into the metaphysical and the nature and origin of knowledge. Aboriginal epistemology speaks of pondering great mysteries that lie no further than the self. (p. 108)

A tribal self invokes Aboriginal epistemology, which rests on the interconnectedness of self and community with the human and non-human world as well as with the spirit world and the unknown. Traditional epistemology understood the "remarkable sense of how things worked together" and of the importance of "relationships and correspondences" (Deloria, 1991a, p. 30). The danger lies in an inward journey eclipsing a person's roots and the living connection to them. The ease with which non-Natives claim a shamanistic Native identity comes from their failure to appreciate that a Native understanding relies on a particular epistemology that comes from blood, family and territory. An inwardly felt connection also needs to be accompanied by outward recognition: the public confirmation of an inward identification. Wendy Rose criticizes white shamanism for precisely this reason: as a Native person, she refuses to grant recognition to an identity that rests solely on identification: "It is incumbent upon Euroamerica . . . to make the whiteshamans and their followers understand that their 'right' to use material from other cultures stems from those cultures, not from themselves . . . so as not to confuse their impressions with the real article" (p. 417; emphasis added). This distinction between identity and identification, I think, is one way to clarify what identity means to Native people as opposed to what some people outside Native culture understand by and identify with in Native spiritual beliefs and practices.

Modern Identity: The Dangers of an Individualistic Ethic

The framework that shapes an individual's understanding of identity often remains inarticulate. By inarticulate, I mean that we are unaware of it until impelled to articulate it. Inarticulacy also corresponds with the mysterious inchoate wealth of meaning from which we pull out language to express what we instinctively sense or perceive. Vygotsky, for example, distinguishes between a word's 'meaning' and its 'sense'. Meaning is referential, whereas sense accompanies inner speech: "a word is so saturated with sense that many words would be required to explain it in external speech" (Vygotsky cited in Britton, 1970, p. 63). We can find words to express what we want to say, but the saturation itself, though tangibly felt, remains inexpressible.

Ricoeur (1973) makes a similar distinction in speaking about language and creativity. The intended meaning is what can be "transposed from one semiotic system into another"; the signified "is untranslatable in principle" (Ricoeur, 1973, p. 99). Discourse is an infinite process "in the sense that the boundary between the expressed and the unexpressed endlessly keeps receding" (Ricoeur, 1973, p. 100). Vygotsky calls the inexpressible the "realm of shadows": "I have forgotten the word I intended to say, and my thought, unembodied, returns to the realm of shadows" (cited in Britton, 1970, p. 64). It is this mysterious and spiritual realm of inner thought that informs Taylor's (1989, 1992a) recovery of modern identity. Part of his intention in The Sources of the Self is to "explore the background picture of our spiritual nature" (Taylor, 1989, p. 3). This mysterious aspect of identity is well-known to Aboriginal epistemology and Native people (Archibald, 1990; Deloria, 1991a; Ermine, 1995), except that it is more often referred to in an affirmative way, as a presence (Ermine's (1995) trust in the 'unknown'), rather than as an absence (Vygotsky's 'shadows').

I will describe the interlocking parts of Taylor's argument on contemporary identity: the "slide into subjectivism" that characterizes a "debased" understanding of modern identity (Taylor, 1992a, pp. 55-69); the grounds Taylor provides for authenticity as a concept appropriate to understanding identity; and finally, Taylor's "strong evaluation" of modern identity, which rests on "moral standards based in moral or spiritual intuition" (Taylor, 1989, p. 4). I will distill these ideas from Taylor's (1989) Sources of the Self and his (1992a) Ethics of Authenticity. Taylor's work will provide a background against which to understand Gunn Allen's and Cook-Lynn's questions.

Individualism is the defining mark of modern identity. Individualism enacts a version of what Taylor (1999) calls the "subtraction story". A subtraction story is one that projects the future by rescinding a past horizon, a horizon that a society or individual sees as impeding progress. One of modern society's myths is of the strong self or what Taylor (1989) also calls the "leaving home" story (p. 39). Although Taylor sees this tradition most clearly in American culture, it is a story endemic to modern society. If we could point to a beginning, a 'culprit', it would be Descartes' "disengaged reason" (Taylor, 1989, pp. 143-158; Taylor, 1992a, p. 25; see: Henry Louis Gates (1992) on 'culprits': "You find the body; then you find a culprit" (p. 84)). Descartes conceived of the world as an object of thought, separate from yet only knowable by a knower. The external world is subverted to a controlling reason. The world, including the spirit world, is only knowable through cognition. Descartes inverted the relationship between the self and the not-self, deity and the world, so that certainty can only be self-generated. Instead of the self turning to God, the Creator or spirit (as in Aboriginal epistemology) or the eternal soul (as in Plato and Augustine), in Descartes these words are reduced to concepts that derive their existence solely from being conceptualized by the self: "God's existence has become a stage in my progress . . . God's existence is a theorem in my system of perfect science. The centre of gravity has decisively shifted" (Taylor, 1989, p. 157; his emphasis).

The leaving home tradition says that the self becomes itself only by disengaging with the nurturing ties of community. Birth into a particular society is perceived more as a shackle to be thrown off rather than as a life-long influence that shapes the self. Moreover, this independent stance is culturally expected:

> In early Connecticut, for instance, all young persons had to go through their own, individual conversion, had to establish their own relation to God, to be allowed full membership in the church. And this has grown into the American tradition of leaving home: the young person has to go out, to leave the parental background, to make his or her own way in the world. In contemporary conditions, this can transpose even into abandoning the political or religious convictions of the parents. (Taylor, 1989, p. 39)

Particular developments in the modern articulation of authenticity lend support to this strongman theory of individualism. I will briefly reiterate these arguments here. The sources of modern authenticity are: the Romantic understanding that morality comes from within rather than from without (Taylor, 1992a, p. 26); Rousseau's notion that freedom is equated with self-determination and that "self-determining freedom demands that I break the hold of all . . . external impositions and decide for myself alone" (p. 27); and Herder's belief that a fulfilling human life is an original creation: "There is a certain way of being human that is my way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's" (pp. 28-9; his emphasis). Taylor argues that slides into subjectivism and relativism have occurred because people have forgotten the communal aspect of identity, or the fact that an individual is shaped within a horizon of significance that is not entirely of his or her own making.

Subjectivism consists in the "single-minded pursuit of self-development" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 57). The self's progress becomes the measure of an authenticating identity. While the most extreme form of subjectivism is "the culture of narcissism" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 55), understanding identity formation as an inwardly-directed search of personal development is prevalent in many walks of modern life. The test of the degree to which this motivating ideal constitutes a person's underlying framework is when a conflict arises between our own personal well-being and ties to others, or between the demands of career and connections to family or community. Many Native people experience the difficult choice between leaving or remaining in their home community (Ron Wilson, Personal communications, 1991-2000).

Relativism often accompanies subjectivism. If the self is the prime measure of authenticity, whatever the self authenticates turns into original creations, which cannot be disputed by external standards. Only the self knows if it is being truthful. Taylor (1992a) astutely identifies the artist as the new "paradigm case of the human being, as agent of original self-definition" (p. 62). The central role of writers and writing in creating contemporary Native culture is also reflected in sources I consulted in my thesis.

Taylor argues modern individualism has become more of an ideology than a framework. Cook-Lynn worries that ideology has replaced the articulation of a cohesive framework among Native intellectuals. The recovery of human agency requires making explicit the direction in which their writing as Native intellectuals is moving Native values and horizons. The social forces directing the course of identity formation cannot be enacted "in a fit of absence of mind" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 20): "how the Indian narrative is told, how it is nourished, who tells it, who nourishes it, and the consequences of its telling are among the most fascinating - and, at the same time, chilling - stories of our time" (Cook-Lynn, 1998, p. 111). Cook-Lynn (1998) elaborates: "The question of how Indians claim the story . . . is still a primary and unanswered question. If the works of non-Native storytellers haven't got it right, who says that the modern works written by American Indians, introspective and self-centered, have?" (p. 136; emphasis added).

Simon Ortiz (1981) is one of the indigenous writers who has articulated the broader framework within which he writes: "through the past five centuries the oral tradition has been the most reliable method by which Indian culture and community integrity have been maintained" (p. 9). Ortiz sees this tradition actualized in his Uncle Steve, a subsistence farmer whose Acquemeh name is Dzeerlai. His uncle expresses his

Acquemeh "vitality" on fiesta days by creatively subverting a Catholic Christian ritual "from within the hold of our Acqumeh Indian world" (Ortiz, 1981, p. 7). He registers his opposition to his Spanish oppressors through procession, dance and dress. Ortiz (1981) argues that Native writers have a responsibility to represent this contemporary ancestral resistance in their writing: "Uncle Steven and his partners sang for what was happening all along the route that Santiago and Chapiyuh took into Acqu. It is necessary that there be prayer and song because . . . no one will forget then; no one will regard it as less than momentous" (p. 9); it is "because of the acknowledgment by Indian writers of a responsibility to advocate for their people's self-government, sovereignty, and control of land and natural resources; and to look also at racism, political and economic oppression, sexism, supremacism, and the needless and wasteful exploitation of land and people, especially in the U.S. [United States], that Indian literature is developing a character of nationalism which indeed it should have" (p. 12). An "authentic" national literature, simultaneously Indian and tribally specific (Ortiz, 1981, p. 8), does not let colonialism invade "the dark recesses" of the mind (Ortiz, 1981, p. 9) but instead celebrates resistance, survival and vitality.

Discriminating Moral Ideals

Taking up the cause of a word like authenticity can nevertheless be a risky enterprise. It is a word associated with "essentializing" definitions (Krupat, 1996, p. 3), which are criticised as totalizing or resting on a "reductive" version of truth thus demeaning of the person (Kamboureli, 2000, p. 4). Authenticity is associated with vertical, hierarchical and static modes of thought (Aoki, 2000). Enacted in the political realm, authenticity is equated with an unwarranted desire for power and control (Aoki, 2000). Taylor (1992a) is aware of these criticisms yet defends authenticity as an ethical ideal on the grounds that some ideals are better or higher than others. Given that no standard is absolute or transcendant, how is it possible to discriminate among ideals? Taylor's argument rests on the ground that neutrality is unattainable. Like Gadamer (1975/1998), Taylor (1989) argues that thought presupposes moral assumptions that are necessarily partial, the musings of finite beings. The word assumption is itself deceptive. Assumptions are presumed (assumed) to be foundational, and yet they are provisional; they can be re-evaluated and re-vised. Rorty (1982, 1998) is one of the stronger advocates of the provisional character of knowledge: "We have no idea what 'in itself' is supposed to mean in the phrase 'reality as it is in itself' . . .every belief . . . corresponds to some 'world' - the 'world' that contains the objects mentioned by the belief" (Rorty, 1998, p. 1). The purpose of education is to encourage the student to see the world in non-Platonic terms where "all human disciplines", and not only the one into which the student is being inculcated, are "vehicles of *Bildung*, of the self-formation of the [human] race" rather than a "means for escaping the human condition by grasping eternal truths" (Rorty, 1982, p. 9; his emphasis). For Taylor (1989), "moral argument and exploration go on only within a world shaped by our deepest moral responses" therefore "we should treat our deepest moral instincts . . . as our mode of access to the world in which ontological claims are discernible and can be rationally argued about and sifted" (p. 8).

Taylor distinguishes between stronger and weaker evaluations. Weak evaluations justify preferences; the utilitarian calculation of which outcome provides the greatest return follows this reasoning (Taylor, 1985). Strong evaluations articulate the reason why one mode of action is chosen above or over another; the reason rests on our conceptions of the good: of what constitutes a humanly lived life (Taylor, 1985, 1989). Weaker evaluations presuppose inescapable frameworks; the unarticulated framework works through the human agent rather than being consciously appropriated and expressed. While Kamboureli (2000) has criticised Taylor for advocating an authentic or original self that is whole and complete, Taylor (1985) in fact argues that a stronger sense of self is accompanied by an acute awareness of and openness to the plurality of worlds and thus of the challenge involved in choosing one path over others: to "choose in lucidity" is to be aware of "a plurality of moral visions . . . between which it seems very hard to adjudicate" (p. 33). Taylor (1992a) sees a "flattened world" as one "in which there aren't very meaningful choices because there aren't any crucial issues" (p. 68). The self is defined by the inescapability of making strong evaluations: "For a radical choice between strong evaluations is quite conceivable, but not a radical choice of such evaluations" (Taylor, 1985, p. 29; his emphasis). Evaluating rests on "some kind of vision of our moral predicament"; it is "grounded" in the belief that the act of evaluating or choosing is humanly significant (Taylor, 1985, p. 31). Taylor (1985, 1989) links evaluating with identity: "our identity is defined by our fundamental evaluations" (Taylor, 1985, p. 34); the evaluations come out of "the indispensable horizon or foundation out of which we reflect and evaluate as persons" (Taylor, 1985, p. 35).

Identity

Taylor (1992a) identifies three components of identity: a) the dialogical character of human life (p. 33); b) self-definition as occurring within horizons of significance (p. 40); and c) recognition by others (p. 45). The 'question of identity' arises in response to the query: 'Who are you?' or 'Who am I?'. While Taylor (1989) suspects this question "can't necessarily be answered by giving name and genealogy" (p. 27), for most First Nations people, name and genealogy constitute a crucial horizon of significance: who you are is usually defined by what nation you are from and who your family is (Cook-Lynn, 1996).

For Taylor (1989), identity is predicated on "an understanding of what is of crucial importance"; thus, "to know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand" (p. 27). This criterion may seem flimsy. After all, our stances change over time. Taylor's notion of stance, though, is not epistemological. Instead, it is defined within an ontological moral framework of "what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose" (Taylor, 1989, p. 27). To know who you are "is to be oriented in moral space" (Taylor, 1989, p. 28). Moral space is created through horizons of significance, which cannot be set arbitrarily or by the self alone. The question of Who? is only answerable within "a society of interlocutors" (Taylor, 1989, p. 29) or what Taylor (1985) also calls a "web of interlocution" (p. 30). Arendt (1958) uses a similar metaphor when she speaks of the world as a web of human relationships.

Taylor identifies several ways in which the world outside the self helps to constitute an individual's identity. One way is through language: "A language only exists and is maintained within a language community" (Taylor, 1989, p. 35). Language is a human attribute, in the sense that Gadamer (1975/1998) articulates it: "In language the world itself presents itself" (p. 450). Gadamer (1975/1998) says that: "Language is not just one of man's possessions in the world; rather, on it depends the fact that man has a world at all. The world as world exists for man as for no other creature that is in the world. But this world is verbal in nature" (p. 443; his emphasis). This notion of language as constituting community or world agrees with a First Nations worldview.

Induction into a tribal language and community expresses a First Nations perspective on language community (Kirkness, 1989). Identity and ancestral language are strongly linked. Ojibwe author Basil Johnston (1990) eloquently speaks to this link in reflecting on the slow demise of ancestral languages. Should this tragedy happen, he warns, Native peoples will

> lose not only the ability to express the simplest of daily sentiments and needs but they can no longer understand the ideas, concepts, insights, attitudes, rituals, ceremonies, institutions brought into being by their ancestors; and, having lost the power to understand, cannot sustain, enrich, or pass on their heritage. No longer will they think Indian or feel Indian . . . They will have lost their identity which no amount of reading can ever restore. Only language and literature can restore the 'Indianness' . (Johnston, 1990, p. 10)

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) recently renewed its commitment to preserving tribal languages (see: Black, 2000). Warner (1999), an indigenous Hawaiian scholar, articulates his anger at the theft of Hawaiian sense of self by non-Hawaiians who are controlling the language revitalization process. He comments:

> In Hawai'i, the issue of authenticity as related to identity and voice must be viewed within historical and economic perspectives, given the overwhelming impact that nonindigenous peoples have had in Hawai'i over the last 200 years. Since their arrival in Hawai'i, nonindigenous peoples have disenfranchised Hawaiians from their land, their sovereignty, their language, and their culture and have even redefined their identity. . . this has had devastating results for the

> indigenous people. (Warner, 1999, p. 69)

Brian Maracle (1996), who returned to his Onkwehonwe community after moving away at the age of five, speaks of the significance re-learning his language has had on his understanding of culture and identity:

> there is one thing that all of the old-timers say about the language that I agree with wholeheartedly. They are absolutely right when they say that the language is the key to our culture. Without the language, our ceremonies, songs and dances will cease. Without the language, we will be unable to recite the Creation Story, the Thanksgiving Address and the Great Law the way they were intended. Without the language, the clan-mothers will be unable to 'raise' a chief and the Confederacy will cease to function. Without the language, the people will be unable to receive an Indian name and the names themselves will lose their meaning. Without the language, we will lose our traditional way of thinking and our distinctive view of the world. And, perhaps worst of all, without the language, we will lose touch with Shonkwaya'tihson, our Creator.
>
> The chain of cause and effect is very clear. Once we lose our language, we lose our culture. And once we lose everything that sets us apart from mainstream society, we will surely lose the little land we have left. (p. 275)

An important way in which communities of interlocutors can be defined, then, is by language or sharing of a common world. Many Native people, particularly elders, would say that this horizon is significant; a whole world being eclipsed should it be lost or neglected. Ruth Cook spoke of how she can say certain things in her Native language that fall flat in English: jokes for example. Jokes are instrumental in creating community and a sense of belonging or identity: *There are things in [Native] language that you can speak about and you can't describe it in English. We tell jokes and it falls flat if we say it in English. At home when we're talking our language, everybody's laughing all the time. The language is very very rich and it's tied to your culture, to who you are as a person* (Conversation, Ruth Cook).

In a more modern understanding, communities can also be self-defined "in relation to those conversation partners who were essential in my achieving self-definition" (Taylor, 1989, p. 36). Note the past tense: who were essential. Taylor (1989) remarks on the importance of the notion of genesis in forming a person's modern identity. It is affiliated with the leaving home story but has its origins in the Bible's Book of Genesis: the notion that something can be created *ex nihilio*. It is not that these self-formed communities are only instrumental to the formation of identity. The idea of genesis corresponds more to the modern belief in self-creation: "It . . . wants to confine it [the dialogical in human life] as much as possible to the genesis" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 34); "It's as though the dimension of interlocution were of significance only for the genesis of individuality, like the training wheels of nursery school, to be left behind and to play no part in the finished person" (Taylor, 1989, p. 36). The communities that shape us are family, extended family, adopted family, friends, traditions; textual communities also shape our identities. Some communities we consciously detach from whereas others we leave behind as our attachments change. Because of the greater mobility involved in urban life, people relinquish friendships only to join or be enfolded within new communities. Genesis then becomes a continual process of becoming or re-creation, in which our identity is created anew in relation to where we are with ourselves and others at any particular point in our lives. Connections with the past are not necessarily severed, but neither are they always actively maintained. This view of "passing through" communities is not a part of a tribal framework (Cook-Lynn, 1996, p. 38), although the leaving home story is a narrative that for various reasons has profoundly influenced some First Nations people, such as Janet Campbell Hale. Hale (1993) reflects on her visit to the tribal school in her Coeur d'Alene community:

> If this were not a school visit, if I were with these children in a different context, I might say a few things more. I would say that yes, tribal identity and commitment to the community and family ties are important. But some of you kids, like me and like many other people from all kinds of racial and ethnic backgrounds, don't come from families that can and will encourage and support you. Some families will, if they can, tear you down, reject you, tell you are a defective person. You could end up brokenhearted and broken-spirited.
>
> If you come from such a family and you have no one else to turn to, then you must, for the sake of your own sanity and self-respect, break free, venture out on your own and go far away. Then you will have to rely on yourself and what you've managed to internalize regarding strength, stamina, identity and belonging. (p. xxi)

Hale (1993) nevertheless returns full circle in acknowledging the tribal place of community in self-formation, as she continues:

> Sometimes it will take a lot of courage to want to live and do
> well in spite of it all. But being courageous is part of our heritage.
> The most admired quality among the old Coeur d'Alene was courage.
> Courage has been bred into you. It's in your blood. (p. xxi)

Taylor (1989) identifies another meaning of community, one that in a First Nations perspective is inextricably linked with language, even if many or most community members do not speak the language. A "defining community" (Taylor, 1989, p. 36) is one that predates the individual: Catholic, French-Canadian; we can add to Taylor's examples my children's tribal affiliation: Heiltsuk. The defining community is a locus of constraint on identity-formation. While Kamboureli (2000) decries the limitations a survival policy has placed on minorities within a French Quebec implementing Bill 101, the relationship between survival and identity is central to a people trying to maintain their distinctness; it certainly informs the discussion of Aboriginal languages (Cantoni, 1996; Kirkness, 1989; Maurais, 1996) and now too, of First Nations identity (see for example: Bruchac, 1987). The Mohawk people in Kahnawake recently voted for a Kahnawake Language Law that mandates daily use of their ancestral language; the purpose is to preserve a language that will otherwise gradually disappear with the ten percent of remaining speakers: "The new law does require the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake and all other public institutions . . . to provide services and documents in Kanien'keha . . . The law will probably mean a boom in Kanien'keha language courses, as residents flock back to the classroom" (Roslin, 2000, p. 9). How are the three attributes of identity approached in a defining community: dialogical character, inescapable horizon of significance, and recognition?

Taylor (1989) argues that the self only exists in relation to others; that modern individualism has created the myth of a "strongman" self (see also: Arendt (1958) on the strongman thesis, p. 202). The "fundamentally dialogical character" of human life occurs through an induction into language (Taylor, 1992a, p. 33). In a First Nations context, this can mean growing up amidst original speakers of the Native language, or amidst speakers of 'Indian English' (Skip Dick, Personal communication, February 15, 2000; see also: Leap, 1993), or some combination of the two in which English is spoken in the home while the ancestral language is used in ceremonies. It also means growing up in a worldview constituted in the community's own language practices (see: Hymes, 1996). Another key element in the dialogical character of human life is "exchanges with others who matter to us" or "significant others" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 33). In a First Nations context, this statement would be better put as: exchanges with others who matter. While the significance of family is culturally recognized, certain people are more significant in preserving culture: elders, chiefs, grandmothers, clanmothers. To be raised by one's grandparents often means to be inducted directly into the culture. In Heiltsuk tradition, the eldest or first-born child was given to the grandparents to raise; it was a way of ensuring the accurate transmission of language and tradition (see also: Conversation with Frank Conibear on a similar Coast Salish practice). Taylor (1992a) argues that important issues like identity cannot be self-identified but are defined "in dialogue with . . . the identities our significant others want to recognize in us" (p. 33) or, as First Nations people commonly say, want us to recognize in ourselves. If the archetypal Western story is a heroic leaving home and finding ourselves in other communities, often self-made communities with other diasporic selves, the archetypal tribal story is of returning to, staying or carrying home within us: recognizing the community in ourselves and ourselves in the community; (see: Lee Maracle's (1993) Ravensong and Ruby Slipperjack's (1992) The Silent Words). In an urban society dominated by movement, those connections are often maintained through a back-and-forth movement between one's home community and serving other native communities in urban centers (Conversation, Nella Nelson).

Another criterion of identity formation that occurs in or against a background of community coherence, is horizons of significance. Taylor (1992a) claims that the "presumption of subjectivism" in modern society awards significance to things just because people value them. He finds this reasoning muddled: "I couldn't just decide that the most significant action is wiggling my toes in warm mud . . . Your feeling a certain way can never be sufficient grounds for respecting your position, because your feeling can't determine what is significant" (Taylor, 1992a, pp. 36-37; his emphasis). Rather "things take on importance against a background of intelligibility. Let us call this a horizon" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 37). As inGadamer's (1975/1998) discussion of tradition, Taylor understands horizons as given. This is not the same as saying they are fixed. The givenness of horizons or traditions comes from their being recognized as significant; these understandings can shift over time. Taylor (1989) conceives a given horizon in terms of important questions that are asked: "we take as basic that the human agent exists in a space of questions. And these are the questions to which our framework-definitions are answers, providing the horizon within which we know where we stand, and what meanings things have for us" (p. 29).

Cook-Lynn's (1996, 1998) focus on the kinds of questions that need to be raised about contemporary First Nations identity take on a new significance in the broader context of Taylor's discussion of identity. In a First Nations context, the question of who or what constitutes a Native person arises in response to what Cook-Lynn perceives as the loss of a horizon of significance. For Gunn Allen (1998), the question is posed to inaugurate a new vision of what it means to be an American Indian; her experience of feeling 'vanished' results in a life-long search to articulate a new community: a confluence or hybridization of identities yet nevertheless still Native. While Gunn Allen (1998) sometimes means by 'vanished' how indigenous peoples are marginalized, particularly within institutions, she also uses it with reference to indigenous peoples who recognize "the anguished kinship of extinction with a beast no more seen: quagga. Saber-toothed tiger. Mammoth. Dinosaur. And with a dying planet . . . And with other races: Khmer, Armenian, 'mound builder.' All treading the path of disappearance" (p. 128) . For Cook-Lynn, the loss is not of a people. She indicts Erdrich's writing for its lament of the lost tribes when in fact the tribes Erdrich and others belong to are alive and flourishing: "Erdrich's conclusion is an odd one, in light of the reality of Indian life in the substantial Native enclaves of places like South Dakota or Montana or Arizona or New Mexico" (Cook-Lynn, 1998, p. 126). For Cook-Lynn (1996, 1998), the loss is instead of a significant horizon. The question of what it means to be Native is a question about what it means to be a tribal person. That horizon is what is in danger of vanishing: "What distinguishes Native American intellectualism from other scholarship is its interest in tribal indigenousnes, and this makes the 'life story,' the 'self-oriented and non-tribal story seem unrecognizable or even unimportant, non-communal, and unconnected" (Cook-Lynn, 1998, p. 124). Which community asks the questions, then, makes a substantial difference. Taylor's (1992a) discussion cannot indicate which community is right; only that the act of defining the horizon of significance from the perspective of a defining community does matter.

The third element of identity is recognition. Taylor (1992a) distinguishes between two forms of modern individualism: one leads to anomie and breakdown of a social ethic, while the other "as a moral principle or ideal" offers "some view on how the individual should live with others" (p. 45). The modern or Western form of recognition is a displacement of a notion borrowed from hierarchical societies, that a person's identity is fixed by his/her social position (Taylor, 1992a, p. 47). Herder's idea was that authenticity means discovering 'my' own original way of being: "By definition, this cannot be socially derived but must be inwardly generated" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 47). Given that "there is no such thing as inward generation, monologically understood", Taylor displaces Herder's argument into the theorum that "my discovering my identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation but that I negotiate it through dialogue, partly overt, partly internalized, with others" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 47). Recognition from others is therefore crucial. Whereas in an earlier time of Western society, that recognition was based on given categories that were socially defined, in contemporary society recognition has to be earned: "The thing about inwardly derived, personal, original identity is that it doesn't enjoy this recognition *a priori*. It has to win it through exchange, and it can fail" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 48). We can therefore speak of the need for recognition as a modern phenomenon. The concern with recognition of treaty rights and land claims is made intelligible in one sense by Taylor's analysis, because while mutual recognition of tribes, individuals within tribes and their positions within the tribe were undisputed prior to Contact or at least an agreed-upon procedure existed for working through such disputes, the question of recognition since Contact has become a troubled one. Why is that? Colonialism interrupted the existing constitution and governance of tribal societies by superimposing Western structures on them. Displacement from tribal territory (relocation), residential school, wholescale adoption of native children by white families along with urbanization and what Cook-Lynn (1996) calls cosmopolitanism (an occlusion of tribal resistance by Western aestheticism and tastes) have all conspired to disrupt and alter the ways in which Native identities were formed.

One way of looking at Native identity is to say that the common sharing of these colonial experiences creates an identity-forming bond. This argument is beginning to be displaced by what Taylor would call a stronger contemporary evaluation. The belief that Native identity has a core and that this core is tribal is the place from where arguments over recognition are emanating. Erikson (1959) in an old essay but one that nevertheless speaks to the questions raised here, talks about "this identity of something in the individual's core" as being "an essential aspect of a group's inner coherence" (p. 102). The individual's identity is recognized by the group and the group's identity is sustained and actualized through individuals. Erikson (1959) drew this notion of identity from Freud, who spoke of it in relation to his own Jewish identity (pp. 101-102). While this idea of identity seems outmoded in this post-modern age of fractured, hybrid and plural identities, such an understanding undergirds arguments like Alfred's (1999):

> How do we create a political philosophy to guide our people that is neither derived from the Western model nor a simple reaction against it? In the

> Rotinohshonni tradition, when the people have become confused, we are told to go symbolically 'back to the woods' and find ourselves again.
>
> Working within a traditional framework, we must acknowledge the fact that cultures change, and that any particular notion of what constitutes 'tradition' will be contested. Nevertheless, we can identify certain common beliefs, values, and principles that form the persistent core of a community's culture. It is this traditional framework that we must use as the basis on which to build a better society. I am advocating a self-conscious traditionalism, an intellectual, social, and political movement that will reinvigorate those values, principles, and other cultural elements that are best suited to the larger contemporary political and economic reality. (p. xviii)

Alfred's (1999) position is supported by Taylor's (1992a) criticism of prima facie presumptions of equality based on difference: "just the fact that people choose different ways of being doesn't make them equal; nor does the fact that they happen to find themselves in these different sexes, races, cultures. Mere difference can't itself be the ground of equal value" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 51; his emphasis). What is required is a shared horizon of significance, "some standards of value on which the identities concerned check out as equal" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 52). One of the ways in which "commonalities of value" are arrived at is by "sharing a participatory political life" (Taylor, 1992a, p. 52). The sharing of political life has deep resonances within Native communities, as I will show later with Deloria's explanation of 'nation'. Politics as a shared or common space also connects with a particular Western tradition that defines politics not by a Machiavellian 'power corrupts' model but by the power created between human beings holding a vision in common (Arendt, 1958; Gadamer, 1991/1931). Arendt connects the life of the polis with human agency, while Gadamer, influenced by the figure of Socrates, sees dialectic as fundamentally political (Sullivan, 1989). In such a broader understanding of politics, worlds are created through the web of human relationships.

The Ethics of Voice

Language creates worlds. Cook-Lynn's (1998) criticism of contemporary Native literature is that the world(s) being created through language are not tribal; they correspond instead to fashionings of a new Indian identity, an identity that is more hybrid and multicultural than *pure laine* (Kamboureli's (2000) term for what she disparagingly refers to as authentic identities):

> What popular art and literature have to say about what it means to be an American Indian in non-tribal America is not the essential function of art and literature in Native societies. If stories are to have any meaning, Indian intellectuals must ask what it means to be an Indian in tribal America. If we don't attempt to answer that question, nothing else will matter, and we won't have to ask ourselves whether there is such a thing as Native American intellectualism because there will no longer be evidence of it. (Cook-Lynn, 1998, p. 124)

It would be easy to dismiss Cook-Lynn's sometimes strident tone as excessive, even unethical. She indicts several well-known writers, who all happen to share a mixed-blood heritage:

> In American Indian scholarship and art, the works of writers who call themselves mixed-bloods abound. Their main topic is the discussion of the connection between the present 'I' and the past 'They,' and the present pastness of 'We.' Gerald Vizenor, Louis Owens, Wendy Rose, Maurice Kenny, Michael Dorris, Diane Glancy, Betty Bell, Thomas King, Joe Bruchac, and Paula Gunn Allen are the major self-described mixed-blood voices of the decade.
>
> (Cook-Lynn, 1998, p. 124; my emphasis)

Does this condemnation originate in what Deloria (1985) calls the age-old debate between full-bloods and mixed-bloods, traditional Indians and 'assimilated' Indians? Can Cook-Lynn's argument be reduced to a racial one? Does her use of the word 'voices' depend on synecdoche, where by voices she really means persons? Or can we take the word 'voices' at face value and attend to tonal qualities, where voice means more like: tribal, i.e. ethical, committed and responsible writing: "literature [which] can and does successfully contribute to the politics of possession and dispossession" (Cook-Lynn, 1996, p. 40; on her collapse of fiction with non-fiction see Cook-Lynn, 1996, p. 37 or the quote cited above on page 117).

At the heart of Owens' (1992) Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel, which is dedicated to "mixedbloods, the next generation", is an affirmative tribal voice in a mixed blood context: "Native Americans have fought an unending battle to affirm their own identities, to resist the metamorphoses insisted upon by European intruders and to hold to that certainty of self that is passed on through tribal traditions and oral literatures" (p. 21). Scott Momaday is often identified as a quintessential tribal voice yet his grandfather was white as were his great-grandparents and great-great grandparents on his mother's side (Momaday, 1976). His mother, Natachee, is nevertheless one of the central tribal voices in his formation as an individual (Momaday, 1976). Although Momaday is lauded as a prominent tribal voice (Cook-Lynn, 1996; Momaday, 1989), he has also been appropriated as a mixed blood writer (Armstrong, 1993; Gunn Allen, 1998; Owens, 1992). Maria Campbell is half-breed, with a range of ethnicities represented in her background, yet her autobiography stands out as one of the first contemporary traditional voices in Canada; it inspired other Native writers (Lutz, 1991). Campbell (1973) had a strong connection with her grandmother, 'Cheechum', who instilled traditional values in her. One of those values was resistance to colonization and the promise of regaining lost territories; Campbell's grandmother was Gabriel Dumont's niece and she always told her granddaughter that the battle at Batoche was not lost but yet to be won.

Cook-Lynn's (1998) choice of the word 'voice', which figures prominently in her title, Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays: A Tribal Voice, could be understood in the context of Taylor's (1989, 1995) discussion of the modern self, human agency and morality. Taylor (1995) distinguishes between articulations that are descriptions from those that transform or shape experience. A description attempts "to formulate what is initially inchoate, or confused, or badly formulated. But this kind of formation or reformulation does not leave its object unchanged" (Taylor, 1995, p. 36). Gardner (1977) whose On Moral Fiction Cook-Lynn (1998) cites approvingly, talks at length about the kinds of mimetic articulations that mirror existing reality but are devoid of vision: "abandoning eternal verities for temporary and passing values or for empty imitation, without moral comment, of whatever conditions happen at the moment to exist" (Gardner, 1977, pp. 82-3; my emphasis. Notice that Gardner's language echoes

Cook-Lynn's or vice versa). While not everyone would necessarily agree with the authors Gardner chooses to extol or criticise (just as some would disagree with those Cook-Lynn praises or blights), the substantive point is that not all articulations, that is, voices, are weighted the same. Taylor (1995) provides the following example of articulation: "my characterization of this table as brown, or this line of mountains as jagged" (p. 36). Description brings into being through language "a fully independent object, that is, an object which is altered neither in what it is, nor in the degree or manner of its evidence to us by the description" (Taylor, 1995, p. 36). Mimesis. Cook-Lynn and Gardner talk about the deleterious effects of these kinds of descriptions that condone the ways things are. As Oscar Wilde (1968) pointed out two centuries ago, art (literature) can be divided into the kind that merely imitates life and is therefore 'bad' or 'immoral', and moral or true art, which incorporates life as its object so as to create a new vision. Wilde's distinction, upon which Gardner's argument implicitly rests, has gone by the wayside in an age of writing where prose is automatically judged as worthy as long as the content is persuasively articulated. Cook-Lynn, Gardner, and Taylor are drawing our attention back to the content of what is said. It is not just that the content has to make sense; it has be true, where truth is understood as inseparable from morality, that is, from horizons of significance: a vision of how human life ought to be lived.

The second and decidedly 'higher' or 'deeper' form of articulation Taylor identifies is therefore one that "shape[s] our sense of what we desire or what we hold important in a certain way" (Taylor, 1985, p. 36):

> Our attempts to formulate what we hold important must, like descriptions, strive to be faithful to something. But what they strive to be faithful to is

> not an independent object with a fixed degree and manner of evidence, but rather a largely inarticulate sense of what is of decisive importance. An articulation of this 'object' tends to make it something different from what it was before.
>
> And by the same token a new articulation does not leave its 'object' evident or obscure to us in the same manner or degree as before. In the fact of shaping it, it makes it accessible and/or inaccessible in new ways. (Taylor, 1985, p. 38; emphasis added)

Responsible writing creates something new. New is not the same as original. Newness is connected to human agency: the engagement of the agent in what he/she initiates and the responsibility to write as one who is affected by the subject matter (Gadamer, 1998/1975). Just as actions initiate and engender consequences in the real world (Arendt, 1958; Conversation, Ruth Cook), the act (or action) of writing brings a world into being. Although writers of fiction are not usually taken to task for the moral content of their writing and are instead judged by the originality or persuasiveness of their articulation, Gardner (1977) believes that writing fiction carries a moral responsibility. I have already shown how Garver (1998) and Stoltsky (1992) believe academic writing involves ethics as well as how Cook-Lynn (1996) and Ortiz (1981) tie writing - any kind - with tribal or nationalistic voice. Gardner (1977) believes that artists cannot be "transcribers of the moods of their time"; the mark of moral fiction is an artist that thinks things through (p. 90); "Conviction is what counts" (Gardner, 1977, p. 97). Two components of ethical thinking or *phronesis* that Gadamer (1975/1998) identified were: thoughtful deliberation, and being affected or addressed. Gardner (1977) paraphrases Bernard Malamud who said "that great writing leads constantly into surprises, and that the writer should be the first one surprised" (p. 99). Writing is a process of thought, of finding and crafting the right words to capture what Ricoeur (1973) calls the infinity of thought. In so doing, it communicates an inimitable yet accessible vision; inimitable because it surprises us, awakening us to something we may have lost or forgotten, and accessible because it creates a world to inhabit, a pair of eyes to see with:

> True art . . . clarifies life, establishes models of human action, casts nets toward the future, carefully judges our right and wrong directions, celebrates and mourns. It does not rant. It does not sneer or giggle in the face of death, it invents prayers and weapons. It designs visions worth trying to make fact. It does not whimper or cower or throw up its hands and bat its lashes. It does not make hope contingent on acceptance of some religious theory. It strikes like lightning, or _is_ lightning.
>
> (Gardner, 1977, p. 100; his emphasis)

In the context of First Nations identity, the focus is on an affirmative vision. An affirmative vision is one that articulates a Native way of being, where Native is understood by Cook-Lynn (1996) and Ortiz (1981) as contemporary ancestral voice. The core of Native identity, even in an intertribal or mixed blood context, is ancestral (Janice Simcoe, Personal communication, November 26, 1999). Without that center, Native identity would, as Cook-Lynn predicts, fall apart and simply vanish into the mainstream woodwork (Alfred, 2000). If Native writers mimetically articulate what is happening in contemporary society, then globalization (Gunn Allen, 1998), mediated identities (Ruppert, 1994) and cosmopolitanism (Cook-Lynn, 1996) are indeed what will be represented. Cook-Lynn's 'tribal voice' speaks to a horizon that is in danger of being lost or, more appropriately, flattened.

In speaking of a Plains Indians writers' conference Cook-Lynn attended entitled "Wounded Knee: The Legacy", the question was put to the participants as to whether Wounded Knee should become a metaphor for the tragedies Native people have suffered and endured. Cook-Lynn (1996) is wary of the consequences of turning the reality of Wounded Knee into a metaphor. She asks: Will "our children . . . be able to know themselves in the context of a new history, a literary history rather than an actual one?" And: "Is it possible that poetry flattens value systems, so that what was once not talked about becomes useful only for sensation?" (Cook-Lynn, 1996, p. 144). Any reference to Wounded Knee should be, reminds Cook-Lynn, to the massacre, to the 'lived experience' of what actually happened and the living memory of its contemporary significance to indigenous peoples.

Deloria (1994, 1995) explains how the resistance at Wounded Knee, while usually attributed to the AIM [American Indian Movement], was actually set in motion by the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Association in association with the Black Hills Treaty Rights Council, who asked AIM to come to their aid. The fundamental disagreement was over what constitutes a tribal nation and a tribal person (p. 245). What is that tribal dimension of voice that resides so deeply in Native hearts and minds? What are its epistemological and ontological groundings?

In The Nations Within, Deloria and Lytle (1985) look at why the word 'nation' resonates in contemporary Native understanding. Tribal identity rests on allegiance to a nation that existed prior to contemporary geographical and political configurations.

Nationhood inheres in the people. Deloria and Lytle (1985) note that "in almost every treaty . . . the concern of the Indians was the preservation of the people" (p. 8). Native people understand treaties as "a sacred pledge made by one people to another" that "required no more than the integrity of each party for enforcement" (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, p. 8). Deloria & Lytle (1985) explain that "the idea of the people is primarily a religious conception" (p. 8). It stems from a time when the people were gathered together yet not tribally distinct. People were instructed as to their particular place in the world through creation stories, a holy man's dream, prophecies, or ceremonies revealed by quasi-mythological figures (see: Discovery Networks, 1993). The names of most tribal nations can be translated as the people (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, p. 8). I was told recently that that is what Heiltsuk means (Shirl Hall, Personal communication, August 1999). The tribal name speaks to a special relationship between a people and a higher power.

Because tribes understood their place in the world "as one given specifically to them, they had no need to evolve special political institutions to shape and order their society"; most political transactions took the form of councils representing the whole tribe where the council represented the people's sacred relationship with the cosmos (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, p. 9). This relationship was based on an understanding of the interrelatedness of human behavior and all of creation. Deloria (1991a) comments that "when we talk of the old days and old ways we frequently give special emphasis on the manner in which people treated each other, the sense of propriety, gentility, and confidence which the elders had. Being polite springs primarily from a sense of confidence in one's self and one's knowledge about the world" (p. 57). It also confirms for the individual the importance of maintaining human relationships and thus keeping a balance within the world (Deloria, 1991a).

Deloria & Lytle (1985) argue that with the erosion of territory, the idea of 'the people' has changed. European influences have invaded or diluted the original meaning of nationhood. The clash at Wounded Knee in 1973 "represented the philosophical divisions within all Indian tribes, the collision between the political dilemma of nationhood and the adoption of self-government within the existing federal structure" (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, p. 13). Alfred (1999) advocates "self-conscious traditionalism" to articulate "the indigenous voice" that has been "supplanted by other voices" "even within our own communities" (p. xviii), voices that he identifies as colonially-influenced. Maria Campbell (1973) documents her father's struggles with incipient band councils, which culminated in his despair of being genuinely politically active; her grandmother, repository of the tribal memory, equates politics with resistance, not collaboration.

Jeannette Armstrong's seminal political novel, Slash, contains the character of Chuck, Slash's cousin. This ironic character says Indians are confused: wanting to opt out of patriation and the constitution altogether while at the same time angry about not being included and having equal rights and an equal say. Chuck's argument is that you can't have it both ways; that the first road leads to freedom whereas the other leads away from it. Slash, who alternates between acceptance and anger, is like the Indian that Alfred (1999) describes: dreaming "in the language of his ancestors" and waking "mute to them", dreaming "of peace" and waking "to a deep and heavy anger" (Alfred, 1999, p. 30). Armstrong's protagonist gradually does internalize the integral connection between people and nationhood:

> I learned that being an Indian, I could never be a person only to myself. I was part of all the rest of the people. I was responsible to that. Everything I did affected that. What I was, affected everyone around me, both then and far into the future, through me and my descendants. They would carry whatever I left them. I was important as one person but more important as a part of everything else. That being so, I realized, I carried the weight of all my people as we each did.
>
> I understood then that the great laws are carried and kept in each of us. And that the diseases in our society came because those great laws remained in only very few people. It was what my Pops had meant when he had said, paper laws weren't needed if what you have in your head is right. I saw then that each one of us who faltered, was irreplaceable and a loss to all. In that way, I learned how important and how precious my existence was. I was necessary.
>
> (Armstrong, 1985, pp. 202-3)

Self-government assumes that the relationships within people and between peoples are "included within the responsibilities of the larger nation" (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, pp. 13-14). Nationhood, on the other hand, is predicated on "a process of decision making that is free and uninhibited within the community, a community in fact that is almost completely insulated from external factors as it considers its possible options" (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, pp. 13-14). This insularity may seem like an illusion. Some contemporary Native authors argue that they act as buffers against a harsh world that would otherwise destroy this sacred core. Louise Erdrich claims that writers are "protecting and celebrating the cores of cultures left in the wake of catastrophe" (cited in Ruppert, 1994,

p. 7). Deloria & Lytle (1985) agree a gulf separates a small undisturbed group of people living on an undiscovered continent and "the present immensely complicated network of reservations that constitutes the homelands of American Indians" (p. 14). Yet the challenge contemporary Native people face is "in finding the means by which they can once again pierce the veil of unreality to grasp the essential meaning of their existence" (Deloria, 1985, p. 284).

One of the ways is by returning to traditional teachings that are of poignant contemporary relevance. For example, "the simple fact of being born" established "citizenship and, as the individual grows, a homogeneity of purpose and outlook" (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, p. 18). For Deloria, the colonial version of citizenship is "tribal membership" which "is determined on quite a legalistic basis" (Deloria, 1985, p. 243). This basis is "foreign to the accustomed tribal way of determining its constituency":

> The property interests of descendants of the original enrollees or allottees have become determining factors in compiling tribal membership rolls. People of small Indian blood quantum, or those descended from people who were tribal members a century ago, are thus included in the tribal membership roll. Tribes can no longer form and reform on sociological, religious, or cultural bases. They are restricted in membership by federal officials responsible for administering trust properties who demand that the rights of every person be respected whether or not that person presently appears in an active and recognized role in the tribal community. Indian tribal membership today is a fiction created by the federal government,

> not a creation of the Indian people themselves. (Deloria, 1985, p. 243; his emphasis)

For Deloria, there has to be a "set of criteria defining what behavior and beliefs constitute acceptable expressions of the tribal heritage": "If Indians are going to govern themselves with any degree of confidence, they must begin to define what is acceptable behavior and invoke the conscience of the community to maintain these standards. Otherwise, the internal substance of the tribal community will become solely those people who have been able to get themselves listed on the tribal roll as federally recognized Indians" (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, p. 253; emphasis added). Behaviors is a significant word in the vocabulary of the two elder-educators I conversed with (see: chapter five). Deloria sees an indissoluble link between responsibility and identity:

> Almost everything that can be recommended in terms of cultural revival and consolidation involves the fundamental problem of determining a contemporary expression of tribal identity and behaving according to its dictates. Obviously, the federal government cannot perform this function, nor can the American public. The cultural revival and integrity of the American Indian community depends on the cultivation of a responsible attitude and behavior patterns in the communities themselves . . . Inevitably, cultural self-government and cultural self-determination must precede their political and economic counterparts if developments in these latter areas are to have any substance and significance. (Deloria & Lytle, 1985, p. 254)

While the title of Deloria's book, The Nations Within, ironically refers to an existing reality of nations circumscribed within a geographically larger nation as well as within an 'imperialistic' power, it also points to a potential future: the nations within individuals shaped by tribal memory. The word 'within' reverberates within the context of Taylor's discussion of identity and authenticity: within tribal nations, within community, within the people, within the individual. All meanings are contained, as it were, in that one word, within. The society is contained within the self. Aoki (2000) would point out the definite article. He would be correct in his observation. The notion of nation is in a sense monolithic: there is only one kind of tribal nation, even though nations are plural; one tribal voice even if tribal realities are distinct; one tribal framework even if its expression is individual and multiple. Are there shades of vanishing? Can there be shades of appearances? The point Deloria is making is that there are no shadings of tribal voicing. As Cook-Lynn (1996) says, "We must make hard choices if we expect the plot to keep moving" (p. 149).

Ways of Keeping the Plot Moving

Much contemporary literary criticism has centred on how tribal voices can in good conscience accommodate the English language and Western genres. Beth Brant (1994) says:

> Those of us who are Native and have chosen to write are a fast-growing community. This has not been an easy path to travel. For myself, this entails being in a constant state of translation. Those of you for whom English is a second language will understand some of what I say. Not only am I translating from the spoken to the written, but also writing in a language that is not my own. When I sit in front of my typewriter, there are times I literally cannot find the words that will describe what

> I want to say. And that is because the words I want, the words I 'hear,' are Mohawk words . . . I bend and shape this unlovely language in a way that will make truth. (p. 51)

Simon Ortiz speaks "of the creative ability of Indian people to gather in many forms of the socio-political colonizing force which beset them and to make these forms meaningful in their own terms . . . They [Western forms] are now Indian because of the creative development that the native people applied to them" (Ortiz cited in Ruppert, p. 9). Brant and Ortiz speak of an appropriation of the English language into a tribal consciousness. Gloria Cramner Webster (1991) talks about how prosaic Hudson Bay trading blankets have been transformed by coastal peoples into expressions of beauty, pride and communal membership. In the recent Nuu-chah-nulth exhibit at the Royal B.C. Museum in Victoria, an elaborate sun mask uses alarm clock bells instead of abalone shells for eyes: a distinctive and dramatic effect. I return in chapter five to this question of how to, as Maria Campbell says, put the Mother into the English language and Western genres.

Mediated Voices/Texts

Another Native discourse uses different metaphors to create a transcendental space. Here a mediating language speaks across differences. King (1990) coined the word interfusion to describe how orality is transposed into contemporary Native literature. Ruppert (1994) refers to the mediated text, one that is "substantially Native and substantially Western" (p. 10): "As a participant in two literary and cultural traditions - Western and Native, the contemporary Native American writer is free to use the epistemological structures of one to penetrate the other, to stay within one cultural framework or to change twice on the same page" (p. 11). A mediative text "doubles the contexts and spheres of discourse . . . fusing and realigning the cultural patterns of discourse into the many elements of the text. The writer's sources run both chronologically through one sphere and cross-culturally between fields of discourse" (Ruppert, 1994, p. 12).

Daniel David Moses (1998), Mohawk co-editor of Oxford's Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English, conceives of writing and Native identity as spiritually connected: "I mean spiritual just in the sense of knowing the meaning of your life, what you are doing and why you are doing it . . .Native peoples' traditions, the meanings of their life, are intimately connected to the actual physical world they live in, so they don't have to hold on desperately to their sense of who they are. Unless, of course they come to the city and believe what's going on here but then they are just partaking of the mainstream dilemma" (Moses & Goldie, 1998, p. xxi; emphasis added). He does not elaborate on this dilemma but for Native people it usually means an identity crisis brought on by being unduly influenced by mainstream values: "My image of that mainstream is that it is pretty wide but it's spiritually shallow" (Moses, p. xxi). Moses' image of spiritual shallowness is reminiscent of what Taylor (1992a) calls the flattening of moral horizons. Moses (1998) characterizes Native writing as "the deep currents" (p. xxi). A 'mainstream' literature is itself a misnomer, a negative descriptor. To be a mainstream writer is to have renounced a sense of self (and thus, Taylor would argue, of depth) in favor of conventional, commercialized, and shallow prose. Would a transcendental vocabulary of voices in a mediated, multicultural world also produce this effect of shallowness through the confluence of originally distinct horizons?

This question comes partly out of the realization that most contemporary Native discourse is written by mixed-bloods. The word mixed-blood, which like half-breed started out as a derogatory term, is being reappropriated as a sign of belonging to a particular community (Owens, 1992; Vizenor, 1994) although many Native people who acknowledge that there is mixed blood in their genealogies, would not call themselves by that name (Ron Wilson, Personal communication, February 2000). LaRoque (1975) points out that Metis peoples until recently were called non-Status Indians and except for the Alberta Metis people, did not have a territory to call their own; Maria Campbell (1973) makes this homelessness a central theme in Halfbreed. The accusation of acting or being White accompanied any move towards modernization or urbanization:

> A few decades ago some Native individuals began to venture out from their reserve or Metis communities. Most of them came back to stay and many came back with vehicles, phonographs or other unfamiliar gadgets. These individuals were often greeted with "*Eh-queh-moo-neyakasoochik*" by their people. The word means "They are pretentiously trying to be white." In a similar vein, recent revolutionary rhetoric . . . reverts to the term 'Uncle Tom' which essentially says the same thing as *Eh-queh-moo-neyakassochik*. (LaRoque, 1975, p. 10)

A contentious source of identity crisis for Metis people has been openly acknowledging and celebrating their White side (Janice Simcoe, Personal communication, November 26, 1999). While much contemporary Native writing has been influenced by modern individualism, an inescapable moral framework also informs self-declared mixed-blood writing. That framework has to do with the difficulties in negotiating more than one identity.

LaRoque (1975) says that "although the Metis and the Indians are lumped together in most Native Studies curriculums, their histories and their cultures and even their current concerns are different, even if their social problems are often quite similar" (p. 17). Part of that history has been the tension between Indian and Metis communities or families (Campbell, 1973). LaRoque (1975) notes that while the biggest difference has been legal, "there is also a vast cultural difference" (p. 18). Metis people see themselves as in the vanguard of cross-cultural understanding, as "bridging cultural and language barriers between the whites and the Indians" (LaRoque, 1975, p. 17), although Adams (1985) registers a dissenting view that Maria Campbell would in large measure agree with. The Metis

> were never part of the Euro-ethnocentric society; and most of us can never be an integral part of it. Historically, we were definitely segregated from white society and isolated into our distinct Aboriginal community. For us, it is a world divided in half, in which the Metis are the 'evil, savage half', and the whites are the 'pious, civilized half.' There is no in-between, or cross-over. It is definitely two separate worlds. (Adams, 1985, p. 93)

The relationship between traditional and contemporary cultures, and how to incorporate change and multiple ethnicities have been explored by mixed-blood writers, who live, as Gunn Allen (1996) puts it, in the liminal spaces. The concern is that the push to incorporate or adapt to change is propelling Native people as a whole in an irreversible direction, in which multicultural, hybrid or liminal identities become the norm, and tribal or traditional identities the exception. The two discourses' distinct horizons of significance would thereby become collapsed and flattened.

Dialogue is only possible between distinct and unique individuals or peoples. Rorty (1982) argues that while it is morally questionable for one community to set the standards for all others, a pragmatic view, for example, has no difficulty in recognizing that distinctive communities will want and need to define themselves for themselves:

> pragmatism says the fact that a view is ours - our language's, our tradition's, our culture's, is an excellent *prima facie* reason for holding it. It is not, of course, a knock-down argument against competing views. But it does put the burden of proof on such views. It says that rationality consists in a decent respect for the opinions - or, in Gadamer's deliberately shocking terms, the prejudices - of mankind. With Peirce and Habermas, it sees objectivity in terms of consensus rather than correspondence. (Rorty, 1982, p. 6; his emphasis)

Dialogue is a way of navigating between communities that are articulating competing moral frameworks for identity.

A tribal voice carries the authority of Native myths of concern, as Frye (1976) would call them. This tribal voice is also implicit in hybrid or liminal writings, which draw on this core to maintain their distinctness from mainstream society (Owens, 1992; Vizenor, 1994). An alternative framework simultaneously embedded in mixed-blood discourse is cross-culturalism - the ability of humans to cross over boundaries and break through the constrictions of parochially defined identities (Gunn Allen, 1998). This framework can be construed as influenced by the Western myth of individualism but we can look at it in another way as speaking across to an indigenous framework: the recognition of the value of intertribal relationships and how actively maintaining those good relations connects with and helps to perpetuate Aboriginal epistemology, in which all living things are interrelated. The world has a "moral being" and "disruptions among human societies" create "disharmony in the rest of the world" (Deloria, 1991a, p. 30).

Reflections

I began this chapter with one purpose in mind: to elucidate a territory that I do not inhabit in as respectful and truthful manner as possible. Some of the dilemmas hinted at are nevertheless my own, being a non-Native married to a Native with two children; my husband grew up in his territory, our children have spent part of their young lives in their home community, but we are now living in an urban center, geographically cut off from the web of interrelationships and the close connection to the land. I am one of those non-Natives alluded to by Deloria (1985) who found "the vision of stability of the community" that "glimmers in the Indian communities" and "shines through the Indian anthologies" (p. 292). I would not hold back the verb "shines" from the particular community I was privileged to live in.

Through much of this chapter, I was pursued by - or I myself pursued - a quest for an answer to a riddle that for those whose Native identity is serenely untroubled may seem to be a manufactured query. My intention is certainly not to revitalize a new 'Indian question' and create more fodder for scholarly criticism. My comments or 'findings' speak more to the complex relationship between culture and modern society and, more broadly, to the necessity for more humanistic or moral frameworks that consider the inextricability of self with community. At a certain point when the 'answer' of Native identity was eluding me, I was reminded of Aoki's (2000) observation that we in academe conceive of research as a search, with the word search in research implying that there is an answer to be discovered if we only look or think hard or far or deep enough. He suggests that this way of thinking closes off possibilities that may otherwise present themselves. The thought was liberating for it released me from a self-placed onus and led me to re-evaluate my purpose.

One of the lessons I learned is not to accept things at face value, which is something that we as scholars, particularly those involved in 'participatory research' where the insider's perspective is valued highly, tend to do. Cook-Lynn condemns this tendency on the part of non-Native scholars to peremptorily grant goodwill as an invalid form of criticism because it rests on ingratiation rather than critical thought. And yet her observation itself needs to be tempered within the context of creating dialogic communities, of attending to the importance of maintaining human relationships. Related to that caveat, another lesson I re-learned isGadamer's (1975/1998) adage about understanding as making the other person's argument stronger. By that I take him to mean: a) accepting what another says because understanding can only proceed if the words or the meaning have not been misconstrued or willfully ignored and b) making the substantive claim stronger. For that is what binds us together: not our particular points of view but the substance of what and who we are, enact, believe and articulate. This advice has been particularly challenging to follow in this chapter, where diverse indigenous points of view exist that are equally compelling yet often contradictory; to espouse one over another would mean denying a (Native) identity, which is the highest form of sin in contemporary discourse. In creating an argument, I have taken a side. Yet in the process

I have attempted to consider the several angles. My conclusion is that Taylor is partly wrong, at least in this case. While our arguments ought to be based on the strongest possible evaluations, the matter of deciding between the strong evaluations is necessarily provisional. In other words, we have to accept the finite nature of our judgment and not impose on others the absolute truth of our own evaluations. While the ethics of voice is predicated on resistance and caring and the belief that there is a horizon of significance worth fighting for, its articulation exists within a context of dialogue between communities that hold comparable beliefs. Dialogue makes their articulation meaningful. If the articulation of tribal voice was to dominate and supercede all discussion, its horizon of significance might recede. What I am saying is that while I have concluded a tribal voice is crucial to Native identity, and needs to be listened to and followed, that conclusion does not foreclose all discussion. It is my own feeling that a fundamental agreement can be and in some ways already has been reached on the core significance of tribal voicing.

Postscript: Thinking Things Through

After I wrote this chapter, one of the educators who read it and responded was Janice Simcoe. Included in our post-conversation (see: Appendix D) is a refinement of tribal voicing. Janice Simcoe's criterion for authenticity is: Are one's actions solely benefiting the self and thus undertaken for selfish reasons, or do the actions benefit the community: home community, adopted community, extended family, community of First Nations educators? As Taylor (1989, 1992a) makes clear, we are surrounded by a society that values individualism; the danger of succumbing is everpresent. Authenticity is not something the self achieves; it is, Taylor (1992a) makes clear, a motivating ideal. There have been and are times, Janice says, when she feels as if she has become "mute" to her "authentic" self, a feeling that tells her she needs to journey back to the "source" and get re-grounded (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). The source is family and community. Knowing sources exist is distinct from seeking them out. A person can cease to speak from a tribal place by not actively drawing upon their sources (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). As Ruth Cook says, "If you don't use it, you lose it" (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Janice Simcoe explains:

> *We . . . articulated what you need to have in order to call yourself tribal, or having a tribal voice, but there's something missing in there, and what might be missing is the ability and the knowledge of how to go to the source to get the answer. That's where the problem comes, of an isolated person, with all kinds of understanding of the land and history, knowledge of who they are, but isolated. Something happens to them.*
>
> *Teresa: Like?*
>
> *Janice: That connection. I mean if you go there - and you were alluding to this too - while you're totally isolated, then something starts happening, and it comes from the isolation. So there was a writer that I know I started verbally arguing with and handwriting in the columns, but I can't remember now because it was a paper or two back, but it was about still being able to maintain the tribal voice here in the midst of isolation.*
>
> *If you've lost a source to go to, then you've lost some of that tribal voice. Nella [Nelson] has always, always, always reminded everybody: you have to go to the community. That's the way of articulating it. It's not just about going to events or dinners or watching people dance; I know that she's talking about doing*

> *more than that. More than sharing expertise or bringing your gifts. It's more than that and it's hard to describe. It's creating a source for yourself, to find out answers to questions.* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe)

I think Cook-Lynn would agree with Janice Simcoe. What I understand Janice to be saying is that the things I acknowledged from Native writers as significant to First Nations identity (family connection, land connection and recognition) can themselves become isolating and purely externalizing things. What counts as authentic is the movement back from the self to community, and then moving back into one's role as educator, what Nella refers to as a "back-and-forth movement" (Conversation, Nella Nelson). The movement is instantiated in an individual decision, where an individual chooses to actively maintain that connection. This integral relationship between self and society, or self and community, is a fundamental point that perhaps became lost in the erudite complexity of the chapter but it is embedded in its fabric. The resonance of that word, movement, for First Nations educators will become more clear in chapter five; I also elaborate on connecting with one's sources.

Another point that Janice draws out is that the purpose of having a source is to find out answers to questions. When in chapter five the reader hears Ruth Cook talk about how she persistently asked her mother and the village elders questions, without them ever turning her away, Janice's words leap into significance. Elders are a living source, a perpetual well-spring (to use a conventional metaphor from British poetry) of knowledge and wisdom. A spring is a source. Questions bring the source into being. I recall at the "Delgamuukw: One Year After" conference, Alfred Joseph, a Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chief, spoke of his experiences as a boy asking the elders questions about his people's history. He wanted to know how a war had started between his tribe and another one. The elder told him part of the story, but stopped at a certain point and couldn't tell any more because that was the extent of his knowledge. He pointed out to Joseph that "someday people will depend on you because I'm giving you this information about your history." Alfred Joseph then asked another elder, a woman, the same question and she was able to recount the story's ending. Upon telling him what he had heard from the second elder, the elder pointed to him and said, "There you are. That's how our history is recorded. That's the way our history is handed down." Joseph explained to the conference audience that his role in asking questions was critical to oral transmission, and that each individual holds a piece of the history in memory (Joseph, 1999).

The important message to bear in mind is that the questions are equally important. The kinds of questions that Janice Simcoe, Ruth Cook and Alfred Joseph are talking about, I believe, are not so much intellectual questions, such as how do we define identity, as more humanly fundamental ones like: Who am I? Where do we come from? Who is my family?. The importance that Native storytellers like George Clutesi (1994/1967), Johnny Moses (1991) and Scott Momaday (1976) place on creation stories throws these 'tales' into a different light, as stories that answer contemporary questions of identity: Who am I? Where do we come from? What is my origin? Who am I as a human being? Who should I be? Who do I need to be to be of the most use on this planet? Johnny Moses (1991), with a knowing wink in his eye, introduces the Northwest Coast tales to a predominantly non-Native audience, with the following hint: In these stories, you will hear about Wolf, Raven, Owl, Deer. These animals are not really animals. They are people. Listen.

In going to the source, the reciprocal side of asking questions is knowing when to become still.

Chapter IV: The Interpretive Process

I want to briefly explain the finer points of the interpretive process, the choices that were informed or more accurately, confirmed by *phronesis*. I did not apply theory to decisions; instead, the responsibility to make choices (*praxis*) was influenced by a form of reasoning that, upon reflection, I recognize as *phronesis*. The questions and issues I will address are: consultation and collaboration; pulling out thematic strands; fusions of horizon (my own as well as the educators'), and authenticity of representation in writing or discourse.

Consultation and Collaboration

It is one thing to describe the intention to involve participants and follow through with that intention. It is another thing entirely to experience collaboration, for then I as researcher enter the realm of understanding as an event, of upheavals, eruptions and fusions. The geological metamorphoses signal a felt and tangible paradigm shift on an individual scale. In the absence of collaboration, such movements would have been more contrived and isolated. Authenticity enters here again, reiterating the inextricability of self with society. I am a privileged guest in a community of educators.

Consultation and collaboration were elements of a continuing and recursive process. The educators played one or more of the following roles: a) witness to my interpretive process; b) interpreter of their own words as well as of my words and ideas; c) reader of my academic writing (chapters one to five); d) reader of my interpretive chapter on the conversations (chapter five) and e) a person who reflects on the research process. All roles were supported by a dialogical process.

'Witness' carries a particular meaning in a First Nations context. I am drawing on those resonances while using the word in my own way. In a potlatch, a witness watches and listens to the proceedings and in doing so, assents to the hosting family's rendition of culture. By witness, I mean the act of seeing and hearing and assenting to my thought process; what the educators are assenting to is more the authenticity of my process than an authentic representation of their own truth.

As I transcribed, I found myself continuing the actual conversations in my head. That dialogue began as comments, observations and questions. Once I had transribed several conversations, I found myself in the midst of a community of voices. The educators were all speaking with me but were also speaking a common language to one another across the conversations, with me as a privileged listener or witness. I use the word privileged because even though First Nations educators often meet and speak with one another, very rarely would they be engaged in the kinds of focused discussion around identity that occurred in this study. When meeting with Janice Simcoe after she had read her own transcript, she registered her amazement: if all of the conversations were as rich in disclosures of identity as she recognized in her own, then the study would serve a good purpose.

I started to use comment notes in the transcripts' margins to share with the educators my comments, observations, requests for clarification, interpretations and gradually, connections. Because the comment space is limited, I was forced to be as succinct as possible. My words were addressed to a particular audience, which was not myself, but the person whose conversation I was reading. I therefore consciously phrased the words in such a way as to be as clearly understood. I avoided jargon although I sometimes included, just as I had done in the conversations, ideas from other First Nations educators who are scholars, or concepts that tend to arise in an academic setting, such as authenticity. I also broached alternative or competing points of view, sometimes acknowledging their source, sometimes not, depending on the nature of the comment.

One of the consequences of following this kind of path was that the interpretive or organizing concepts and metaphors grew out of the educators' words themselves. Eber Hampton (1995), I later discovered, proceeded in a similar fashion. I also found that the educators' words overlapped or coincided with vocabulary used by indigenous scholars. I invited and encouraged the educators to respond to my marginal annotations, thereby continuing the dialogue in another form. I've included examples in Appendix C of comment notes. I had moved in transcribing from being a listener to the nuances and expressiveness of spoken language while simultaneously attending to the substance of the arguments to being a reader of the conversation, focusing on meaning and understanding: reliving the event of understanding through reading as a form of "lived experience" (Rosenblatt, 1978). In this phase, I offered the educators the opportunity to do the same: to be readers of their own words as well as of my online thoughts and interpretations. I found this to be a simple yet effective way to demystify (to use Janice Simcoe's word) the interpretive process, not only for them but also for myself. I also discovered that this process confirmed Gadamer's beliefs that: a) interpretation is ongoing; it is integral to all phases of understanding and b) it is dialogical in nature.

Educators signaled their agreement or disagreement with my interpretations by writing directly on the page, ticking the notation and/or engaging in face-to-face conversation. If a conversation ensued, our mutual understanding of a particular issue invariably moved to a deeper level, while often ending in new questions. Interpretive concepts or metaphors were refined or clarified; connections were agreed to or qualified. Lyn Daniels, who lives outside of Victoria, came to town expressly for the purpose of having a face-to-face conversation.

Educators also became witnesses and interpreters of one another's words or ideas as I had represented them in the marginal comments. They articulated their affirmation with one another in several ways: agreement ('Yes, I recognize that' or' I know that' or 'I've heard that'), awe or amazement ('I didn't realize that someone else thought or experienced that'), provocation (pauses, hmms), and thoughtful deliberation on questions. All of the educators read and responded to my marginal comments.

I didn't ask all of the educators to read my academic writing. It depended on their interest and inclination as well as whether they had time or more accurately, if we had time, since it invariably meant at least another conversation. The ones who agreed made the time for in reality, all of the commitment and energy they devoted came on top of prior commitments. Janice Simcoe shared with me that she read the identity chapter (chapter three) three times. For her, taking that commitment seriously meant devoting a large chunk of time to mulling it over and responding (Janice Simcoe, Personal communication, March 27, 2000). In most studies, participants are free to read the final document, yet the thesis or dissertation is excruciatingly long as well as usually expressed in a language that they cannot recognize themselves in. I know that it was useful for me to see, as in Jahari's window, that as an author within an academic institutional setting, I am written by or inscribed with the conventions of the scholarly profession. Discourse, I would now argue, is an irreducible element in academic writing, particularly if that writing takes the form of argument. Two First Nations graduate students that I know have both opted not to rely exclusively on academic discourse but have instead turned to other forms of representation, such as narratives and plays, so as to more authentically articulate from their location as First Nations people. One kind of comment I received on my writing was that, once again, it felt like traveling through a foreign territory (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; on academia as a foreign language see: Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). The form of representation constituted a block, regardless of the message I, as author, was attempting to communicate. I'll come back to this point at the end of the chapter.

Another kind of comment, though, was recognition. For example, Lyn Daniels saw in my description of Taylor's leaving home story a pattern in her life, a pattern that until that point was obscure to her. She had believed that her life choices rendered her unique whereas upon reading that chapter, she recognized in her journey a story parallel to one in mainstream society. That understanding (or fusion of horizons) has in turn influenced her way of thinking about her own identity.

Most of the educators held some point of view on academic research. We often discussed this issue at our first meeting before the conversation even took place. I usually enfolded this debate into the conversations, but I also made a point of turning it over as a recursive question asked periodically along the way: before the conversation, during the conversation, after the educator read the transcript along with my comment notes, after he/she read my writing. This 'checking in' became an ongoing form of evaluation to reassure me that my own behavior was appropriate as well as to engender discussion on academics and research with Native people.

One of the most common comments was usually predicated on the first meeting or upon first reading my writing. I elicited this quietly formulated response almost fortuitously through later informal conversation. The comment confirms my own experience of living in a First Nations community as well as Dolores Stanley's research experiences in an indigenous community (Stanley, Personal communication, November, 1999). The observation can be summed up in the word, acceptance. Acceptance of me and my research rested on the educator's silent appraisal of my approach. Two educators later said to me: I agreed to participate because I could tell that you were not pretending to be someone you're not. In other words, I was not exhibiting the telltale signs of being a 'wannabe'. A 'wannabe', for those readers who are unfamiliar with this word, is a non-Native person who wants to be Native, and therefore acts 'brown' (Native) in order to be 'brown' (Native).

In Wagamese's (1997) novel, Josh, an Indian adopted by a white, Christian family, is immured to his Native identity (his nation is never made clear; he later adopts Ojibwe ways), while his best friend Johnny yearns to be Indian; his father is an alcoholic and mother an exemplar of destructive co-dependency. His friend's indifference to his Native identity enrages him and propels Johnny to overcompensate for its absence in both of their lives. The novel is told in the third person but is interspersed with first-person disclosures, such as this one from Johnny: "How do you tell somebody that you've just become someone else? I just kept it to myself and worked at being a warrior. When I met you I couldn't believe it. I mean, who thinks they're going to meet a real Indian in the middle of the farm belt? When I discovered that you had no real knowledge of yourself as an Indian it confused me. I knew more about who you were supposed to be than you did" (p. 78).

As Wagamese's (1997) novel makes clear, Johnny's 'metamorphosis' stems from a desire to be culturally other than who he is. Johnny directs the following reflection at his naive friend, but fails to perceive how his own words speak to the hole in his own life: "How the hell is a person supposed to defend their self when they don't know what that self is, what it represents or how it's sustained, defined and perpetuated?" (Wagamese, 1997, p. 113). The reason Native people criticise wannabes is because they falsely suppress their own horizon; they do so by adopting the mores of another culture: either by fiat or by a tribe's or a Native individual's gracious indulgence or fellowship. Another comment I heard, related to the first, was therefore "relief" that I was "acknowledging" where I was coming from (Conversation, Lyn Daniels); that I was not claiming to speak from an indigenous perspective.

Geertz (1988) perceptively observes in speaking of anthropologists and ethnographers, and his comments apply equally to other researchers, that the bulk of our energy and thought is put into correctly framing epistemological questions raised by studying or implicating another culture; in hindsight, my first chapter is a stunning example of this kind of scrupulous writing. Scant thought is given to representation which, once the central questions have been wrestled with, researchers assume will take care of itself: "If the relation between observer and observed (rapport) can be managed, the relation between author and text (signature) will follow - it is thought - of itself" (Geertz, 1988, p. 10). This presumption is false, says Geertz. It overlooks the fact that writing is representation: language inescapably mediates author (the individual signature) and culture (social conventions). Geertz (1988) invokes a distinction between signature, or authored and writerly prose (citing Barthes), and discourse or anonymous prose (citing Foucault).

In this light, I want to draw attention to the substantive point that I understand Lyn Daniels to be making. Because I am aware of speaking from my own location, relief follows. Representation and appropriation ceased to be a question in her mind of how am I, as a non-Native person, going to negotiate this difference in identity. Her own feeling of being reassured, however, was not matched by my own. I have concluded that representation can be handled more or less appropriately but is an irrevocable consequence of undertaking academic writing. As Geertz (1988) says, there is no getting around or out of this predicament of representation because it is embedded in writing itself. Whether it is integral to all academic writing regardless of who's writing or whether it is confined to those speaking from within a Western perspective, is an important question: a question that Janice Simcoe and I discussed when broaching the topic of authenticity of First Nations voice within an academic (viz. mainstream education) setting. The burden of representation, wherever it originates, can be alleviated by the presence of a human bond, also known as trust. This trust is necessarily mixed, I believe, with a measure of forgiveness, forgiveness for whatever, due to the inescapable influence of my own perspective, that I didn't get 'right' (see: Arendt, 1958 on forgiveness, pp. 236-243).

Pulling out Thematic Strands

In re-reading the conversations, "it takes the shape of a conversation again, a dialogue, and I'm asking questions and making comments and noting similar stories of my own. The conversation ceases to be a text; I don't really allow it to become a text. I don't reify it. Something happens that always brings me back to who is speaking. That's what it comes down to. That these are not just words, spoken by anyone. The someone is not interchangeable. And that's when that dialoguing happens again" (Research journal, February 24, 2000). In qualitative research, we often speak of grounding ourselves in the data; the way we do this is by steeping ourselves in our participants' words, mulling over the actual phrases and relating them to the whole context. This process belongs to an appropriation phase. Maggie, in re-learning her Native tongue, explains how when she got stuck on a word that she could not remember: "*the word wasn't mine; I knew there was a word but I couldn't pull it out because it wasn't my word. But one day I was sitting down in the office and the word came to me and it was* *so clear* . . . *I couldn't teach it because the word wasn't mine and then when that word came to me, I understood what the teacher meant when she said the curriculum is not the student's until it becomes their word. Because that word wasn't mine until I remembered it*" (Conversation, Maggie; her emphasis). Just as Maggie could not teach that word until she really knew it for herself, we as researchers need to appropriate the data so as to be able to write authentically; we need to know it for and inside ourselves.

While these moments of appropriation are integral to qualitative research, I resisted removing the words from the dialogical context, as my journal entry shows. I wanted to retain that living connection to a person whose words we - researcher and educator - had decided would be acknowledged rather than subsumed. That resistance also came from not wanting to turn the words over into data. I find it odd that qualitative researchers have moved into modes of representation and interpretation that challenge empiricist asumptions yet retain the word 'data' to describe the implied sea of words that they are required to make sense of or bring coherence to. Taylor (1973) argues that data (plural), or datum (singular), is the "basic building block of knowledge" in an empiricist framework; brute datum is the "impression, or sense-datum" that is not contaminated by interpretation but instead "anchored in a certainty beyond subjective intuition" (p. 52): the certainty is rooted in the irreducibility of sense-impressions. Qualitative researchers usually mean 'data' as interpreted, yet retaining the term communicates an ambivalent focus (Ely et al., 1997, pp. 346-354). My own commitment to being affected in Gadamer's sense meant that the words could not become data, which meant they could not be 'coded' or distilled in the traditional sense. I found myself following a path parallel in an uncanny way to a conventional approach, yet the words I chose were different.

I had already begun to organize or interpret the words through the comment notes. The comment notes became a clumsy and cumbersome way of identifying and tracking the multiplicity of connecting ideas. I began to 'pull out' thematic strands; pulling or pulling out is a metaphor that educators used in the conversations yet I've noticed that it coincides with a word I relied on in my journal prior to initiating the conversations. It suggests to me a thread from a tapestry or woven rug, as do 'strand' or 'thread', which are also words I tend to use. The themes began as notes, using the actual words from the conversations. As I moved back and forth, like a shuttle, between the conversation and the themes, fluid connections occurred naturally and spontaneously, to such a degree that I found it difficult to keep up the pace of recording these thoughts. Upon reflection, I decided it was significant that: a) I was experiencing these 'connections'; that these connections constituted 'interpretation' and that once again, the 'authenticity' of understanding was more of an event than an act of analysis; b) connections or convergences better described the process than the more abstract word of 'coding'; and c) this process intensified the human bond rather than diminished it because I was re-grounding myself in the conversation; an essential part of that grounding was the post-conversations. From those thematic strands, which were like strings of connected words and concepts, I pulled out recurring words, paid attention to the nuances between how words were used, identified overarching words that spoke to the same phenomenon, and finally, distilled those into a finite number of topics. The topics became the headings in an outline.

These procedural steps follow the accumulated practice of other qualitative researchers, which is usually tailored to the specific contours of the study and the researcher's own temperament (see: Ely et al, 1997). Yet by not choosing to call the educators' words 'data', and by trusting that the dialogical impulse would carry through into the interpretive details, an interpretive approach became clear. An essential component in that process was choosing my metaphors correctly; by correctly, I mean sustaining the vibrant link between what was said and who said it. I acknowledged the source of the words, including those that I had uttered or thought of. I discussed the themes in informal and formal conversation, and shared my proposed 'theming' of a conversation with the particular educator.

Fusions of Horizon

Fusion of horizon means an event of understanding that happens in the individual (see: chapter two). Outward signs during the conversation alluded to an inward process; these signs are unreliable in that they rest on my interpretation yet are tangible nevertheless: they contributed to the spirit of the conversation and the feelings of movement: of moving toward and moving one another. Thoughtful pauses, prolonged silences, animated expressions, changes in tone, a deliberate slowing of pace in selecting words, reaching out to grasp a metaphor: all of these signified the ongoing presence of thought and interpretation. The deeper undulations were usually articulated after the conversation, once the educators had read their own transcripts and/or my academic writing. There was one particular example that stood out.

While preparing to write the First Nations identity chapter, I experienced that link between the conceptual and the actual: what we say to others and what we do ourselves. I had reached a point of needing to sort through (again) the implications of being a non-Native married to a Native person with children whose identities mediate between the two of us, but whose cultural leanings are most strongly towards their Heiltsuk family and home. I can't honestly say that I reached an answer to the difficult questions to myself and my relationships writing this particular chapter posed. However, challenging a horizon that I had previously felt untroubled about, in the sense that I thought my supportive stance towards Native people and issues was resolution enough, and discussing those issues with my partner, did generate changes in our awareness, and we each came to terms to that new knowledge in our own ways. It has made a difference in each of our relationships with our children. I bring forward this personal event because a similar but even deeper fusion of horizon was provoked in Lyn Daniels in response to the same chapter.

Lyn Daniels is married to a non-Native, and has lately become more acutely aware of the gulf in worldview between the two sides: within her relationship and between the families. This isolation has become more rather than less pronounced over time. Here is an excerpt from our second conversation after she had read her transcript and a draft of my third chapter on First Nations identity:

Teresa: How has this research process and these conversations on identity affected you?

Lyn: Well because I have this political perspective on people and I always ask, "What does this mean for me?", there were a lot of things that you wrote in there [chapter three on identity] that I recognized in myself. The leaving home. That has been a big part of my thinking and my life because I left Saskatchewan . . . Not allowing that part of it to come to the surface but now I realize that yeah, that's what it really is: to find out more about myself too . . . I've been so conscious about not being ordinary, and yet here it was again [she laughs]. I was doing what everybody else does. I was trying to be unique [she laughs again].

Teresa: You realized that you were in the same position as . . .

Lyn: As all of the people who leave home: the pattern for the mainstream society. At the same time, I've been doing all that work with First Nations Studies 12, and just being in a place and a space of mind where I'm totally thinking about knowledge: Aboriginal knowledge and how you want to teach that. It's a really comfortable, exciting, and motivating place.

I'm in a relationship with a non-Aboriginal person, and I started to think about how the politics is personal, that I am not being true to my identity because I am living with and having a child with this non-Aboriginal person. I really began to question whether this is what I really want to do and to question the whole relationship. Just the things that have happened over the past year over family and conflicts over values came to the surface in my mind to the point where I felt that, you know, I have to make a decision about whether this is the right thing to do, whether this is the way I want to spend the rest of my life.

> *With the Aboriginal people [at First Nations 12] the experience was so good [Lyn later amended 'good' to 'rewarding'] that [I thought about what it would be like] to have that experience all the time . . . I feel like in my work I'm always having to be this other person in a way. It's not my true person.*
>
> (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

Several realizations are simultaneously rising "to the surface". One is Lyn's recognition of her own journey in Taylor's (1989) leaving home story. This leads to an implosion of a self-created myth of uniqueness. She also gains insight into a pattern created not out of an Aboriginal perspective but that is more closely aligned with a mainstream or what Taylor (1989, 1992a) would call the modern individualism myth. The leaving home story also connected with her recent experience of a strong sense of belonging with other Aboriginal educators. The comfort of being among a "critical mass" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary) of Aboriginal people while revising the First Nations 12 IRP [Integrated Resource Package] where she could easily be who she is was a "delight" (Conversation, Lyn Daniels). It felt right for her to be involved in talking about and within Aboriginal modes of thought with Aboriginal people. Lyn Daniels' ideal for Aboriginal education is encapusulated by Hampton's (1995) *sui generis* model: Aboriginal education as a "thing of its own"(Conversation with Lyn Daniels). She began to question her own role as First Nations Coordinator where instead of being herself, she is constantly explaining her identity in cross-cultural encounters. Her long-standing belief that politics is personal returned; it led her to doubt the integrity of maintaining a relationship with a non-Native person.

Other First Nations educators have distinguished between two kinds of identity: one false, the other true (Conversation, Maggie). Both notions of identity are embedded in Lyn's words. Her fusion of horizons centers around this polarization: distinguishing the apparent from the real, the illusory from the genuine (see: Frye, 1976). Lyn and I have had many discussions on authenticity and First Nations literature; that common interest was what first brought us together. Authenticity reverberates in the corners of everything that we as educators and researchers do, think, believe, practice, espouse, or at least that has been my experience. Both Gadamer and Taylor talk about fusions of horizon as authentic or genuine: the marks that understanding leaves imprinted on our souls or spirits. For Lyn, authenticity was not only a horizon she brought with her to the conversation, it also became a catalyst for profound change.

Perhaps all fusions of horizons are recognition-scenes. Northrop Frye (1957, 1976) has pointed out the significance of recognition scenes in literature as in life. Fusions of horizon imprint a seal of authenticity: the proof that both researcher and participant are learners as well as teachers. Research can receive teachings as well as give back to communities.

Representation, Writing and Authenticity

"The gap between engaging others where they are and representing them where they aren't" (Geertz, 1988, p. 130) is the perennial dilemma of academic writing. The fact is that virtually any academic writing speaks in an idiom that participants have difficulty understanding or relating to. Part of this has to do with audience. Writing is oriented towards an academic audience; the audience shapes the writing (Terry Johnson, ED-B 331 lectures, University of Victoria). A more fundamental reason has to do with desire and belonging: "I am looking for the calm and serenity writing provides . . . writing - that open space of thought" (Research journal, September 16, 1999); "I need to come back here more often, to this space, to my space. I can feel it as soon as I enter it, that I am in myself, in my own skin, wrapped in my own words, and a certain flow occurs" (Research journal, February 24, 2000). Immersion in words has an aspect of "verbal seduction" (Geertz, 1988, p. 142), of the writer being drawn into a fluid, even embryonic, world of words. But the act of research writing is or ought to be balanced by conviction, which, contrary to what Geertz (1988) contends, is not built out of "glistening towers" (Geertz, 1988, p. 141). Geertz (1998), his metaphors rooted in class distinctions, unfavorably contrasts these towers with mundane, "this-is-a-hawk-that-is-a-handsaw" prose (p. 141). Conviction comes from authenticity, "bringing home what dwells outside of us" (Research journal, October 18, 1999): not only do I like it here (verbal seduction), but this is where I belong. As soon as we talk about belonging, we are propelled back into the world of action, *praxis*, the web of relationships, the human bond. Within Plato's parable of the cave, it is symbolized by the return: "The condition of inhabiting the world makes situation, understanding and interpretation possible" (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 56 on Heidegger).

The question still becomes, as Geertz (1988) astutely points out, which world: here or there? Despite the authenticity that attends on the writing experience, academic prose is a foreign language to those who do not inhabit it. Dipardo (1993), in a study of teachers who entered graduate studies, records their intimidation with academic discourse: "Many . . . recalled being initially 'frightened to death' by the language of graduate school . . . It was like learning a foreign language" (Dipardo, 1993, p. 201, cited in Ely et al., 1997, p. 260). It is one thing to state that the academic treatment of indigenous peoples has been "dehumanizing" (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 11). It is another to say that this "alienation" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, on alienation within academic institutions: "*Everything we do in the academy is done in a foreign language*") is endemic to academic discourse itself. The fact is that DiPardo's teachers eventually claimed theory back for themselves; they came to terms with academic language from their own perspective. Is the same true for indigenous people? Krupat (1996) denies that Native scholars write any differently from non-Native; for Krupat, discourse implicates all of us. I myself am not so unequivocally certain that this is true, but here is not the place for me to substantiate that assertion; it might be better argued by indigenous scholars themselves.

The contortions that pass for thought in academic writing, however incomprehensible the form may be, nevertheless represent (not always, but potentially) an authentic wrestling with the subject matter. As Geertz (1998) says, and I said earlier (pages 164-65) , "the burden of authorship cannot be evaded" (p. 140). I object to Geertz's dichotomizing use of the words 'here' and 'there' to describe real places, especially, as I noted above, when a class and cultural distinction is implicit. But as metaphors, the 'here' is or ought to be "a rendering of the actual, a vitality phrased" (Geertz, 1988, p. 143), where the rendering is of a 'here' that is the writer's own historicity or consciousness or temperament; the 'there' has its own existence separate and distinct from the writer while also being appropriated, understand, fused with the writer's own understanding. The 'there' is simultaneously a thing of its own outside of the writer and a different thing, filtered as through a screen, 'here' inside the writer. As soon as this simultaneity is understood and accepted, on both scholars and readers/participants' sides, the difficulty or 'dilemma' can be clarified. Writing is not a representation, as in a mirror, of who my participants are. It is a representation of what I think as well as of what they say. I am not a "romancer" who has "dreamt it up" (Geetz, 1988, p. 140). The burden of authentic writing mediates a vision: of what it means to be a researcher or writer in a real world of human relationships.

Ely et al. (1997) criticise researchers whose 'findings' confirm theories the researchers themselves identified in their literature review chapters. They applaud writers who are able to modify theory or seek out another theory when the data contradicts a preconceived framework. They encourage researchers to squarely address those transformations through writing. Both processes have happened in my study. I have refined Gadamer's theory to draw out its constructive applications. A significant transformation was coming to terms with an academic yet authentic discourse in my own 'signature' writing. I have noticed that the affirming voice occupies the bulk of chapter five and wondered if this is because it confirms a framework I established in chapter three; I address that question directly in the fifth chapter. An entry from my research journal that best articulates the relationship between theory and the actuality of research was inspired by hearing Beth Brant, a Mohawk writer, read her writing. After the presentation, I wrote: "As I often do, I inwardly test my ideas, my writing, against what I read, what I hear people say, what conversations I have. It's not so much that I am seeking confirmation as that I am testing their [my ideas'] 'authenticity'. In face of these words, these arguments, this way of being, do my own words still carry truth, do they or can they encompass this reality? These are questions I asked myself tonight" (Research journal, February 1, 2000). These are questions that I have continually asked and answered for myself during the process of researching, conversing and writing.

Chapter V: Community of Voices

I have chosen to compose the following chapter as a community of voices, joining the educators' words with those of their scholarly colleagues. I have grouped the voices into four modalities: an affirming voice, a voice of resistance (quiet rage), an ironic voice and a bridging voice; how these are articulated will become clear as the chapter unfolds. The voices represent various angles or "pairs of eyes" (Archibald, 1990) through which a First Nations educator could be looking at First Nations education.

I am picturing a triple mirror, one that has the power to reflect identity: each mirror shows one angle, one aspect, yet each partial perspective is rich and whole. As Rorty (1998) puts it, "instead of asking whether the instrinsic nature of reality is yet in sight . . . we should ask whether each of the various descriptions of reality . . . is the best we can imagine" (p. 6). Each of the four voices runs through all of the educators. An educator switched from one voice to the other as we conversed. Each voice is divulged at the appropriate time. Certain voices through life experiences, temperament or the context of the times or days lived in, are more present in particular individuals than in others. Janice Simcoe endowed my static metaphor with life and movement; she suggested that quiet rage is the fuel firing the mirror of voices (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary on chapter five). The "fuel" sits behind more than among the voices. For the other educators, the fire may come from another source or voice. My argument leans towards the affirming voice, although as the chapter makes clear, each voice is indispensable. In re-reading this chapter in light of Janice Simcoe's comment, I have concluded: a) that the voice of quiet rage is least accessible cross-culturally because it comes from an experience, individual and collective, of discrimination. I come from a place of white privilege (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). By white privilege I simply mean being a white person (as opposed to a "skin" (p. 181) as Janet Campbell Hale's (1987) character of Cecelia calls being Native, with all of the mutual recognition that comes from being of a certain color, class, population) and because of that, my having not experienced discrimination. Privilege also means being economically advantaged in terms of opportunities; b) an affirming voice is closest to a bridging voice, both of which are bridging voices. We privileged non-Natives may be more attuned to these voices because they are something we can more readily relate to. This enabling prejudice needs to be borne in mind.

In my metaphor of community, I am envisioning a circle of voices, joining hands and looking at one another, which is Janice Simcoe's description of what it looks and feels like for First Nations educators to be together with one another (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; see quotation on page 272). I am also reminded of the kind of community George Clutesi (1967/1994) reveals in his story of Raven and Snipe. In Anne Cameron's (1991) Westernized version of the 'same' story, Raven is marginalized: he punishes himself by a self-inflicted exclusion. He takes his rightful place (as Lyn Daniels says in speaking ironically of Canadian society's systematic discrimination of Native peoples) on the periphery as an onlooker rather than as a participant in society (Conversation, Lyn Daniels). George Clutesi's Raven rubs his aching shins and his wife assuages his wounded ego; Raven will never change, but he is still an accepted member of a community tolerant of differences. As a representative of our human intransigence, Raven is a reminder to not copy others: be authentic and be ourselves. Speak from your own truth and your own perspective.

Another aspect of community is that each person has a role to play. Nella Nelson talks about how, growing up, each person in her family had a job to do on their commercial fishing boat. Each contribution was necessary to a successful set. She carries that grounding into her work, emphasizing community and "pulling" people in by "reaching out" (Conversation, Nella Nelson). She is aware of how those teachings have made their way into her everyday language, especially her commercial fishing metaphors: brailing, nets, pulling in, reaching out, that back-and-forth movement that characterizes food-gathering along the water (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Her mom, Ruth Cook, speaks of the confidence that flows from knowing your actions make a difference in the community and contribute to a pervasive sense of balance and harmony.

Frank Conibear talks about his role as a speaker and the responsibility it carries within First Nations education and his Coast Salish community. His voice modulates to the messages his words carry; sometimes reflective, sometimes humorous and "sidewise" (a word Frank uses about teaching), sometimes serious and powerful (Conversation, Frank Conibear). His questions "cut through" to the genuine challenges facing First Nations education (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Maggie, with a "big" voice that is not loud but knows precisely which words to emphasize and when, blends thought with emotion (Conversation, Maggie). Lyn Daniels has a strong commitment to the Aboriginal community, giving back the teachings that she has actively looked for: in literature, in books, in society, in Aboriginal communities, in herself. She questions prevailing practices and generates movement by looking at things askance.

Each educator and each voice (the two are distinct since a person can speak with multiple voices) have an essential role to play in First Nations education which, as Frank

Conibear insistently points out, affects "everybody" (Conversation, Frank Conibear); by everybody he means everyone in education, and everyone outside of it, in the "broader world" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; "broader world" is Janice's expression). Janice Simcoe says that, depending on where their gift lies, some educators take care of the "big picture" of Turtle Island while others work on the "details" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe) or they go back and forth (Conversation, Nella Nelson), as Janice Simcoe does. She grounds herself in the details of being a First Nations educator, while constantly eyeing a broader picture. All of the educators walk through educational institutions enfolded by their ancestors, communities and family.

I emphasize that the voices are not boxes. They are fluid and shifting, often mellifluous, sometimes searing, always subtle, and held still, here, for the purposes of discussion.

Each of the voices can be our teachers if we choose to listen to what they have to say. Each will tap differently into our own voices, minds, and hearts. This chapter - these words on the page - show how they affected and moved me as well as communicating, as scrupulously as possible, what I actually heard.

The following excerpts move us into the affirming voice.

Affirming Voice

I look at my great-grandmother, Jane Cook, and her picture with the Allied Tribes of BC and she was out there with a political voice at that time. So it's been there, that movement, and you do it for your people. I wonder sometimes what it would be like to go to a job, do the job and your job is finished for the day; you just live your own life. I can't comprehend it. It's just not in my realm. (Conversation, Nella Nelson)

I know we interact physically with ancestors every time we step in dust or every time we touch a tree that has grown out of the nutrients that are made from the physical remains of those who are now spirits. I think that there's fusion across the land. That's why I say that if you look in the big sense of Turtle Island that there's winds that carry things, rivers that carry soil and there's fusion even though there's separateness. So there's all of that physical relationship with ancestors that is there, that is way stronger when you're at home.

Lake Superior is home. I've lived out here since I was a little kid. I went back a real lot when I was young and I knew since I was a very little kid that as soon as we got within a certain part of geography that there was something about my feet being at home and they will *only be home* *there. By the way I started writing a story this morning when I was supposed to be reading the paper so it must be a foot day.*

Teresa: Was it connected to what you were just talking about?

Janice: Well I didn't know what it was connected to. It was a line, "In winter I rarely see my feet" and I know that that means something to me and something will grow from it [Laughter]. (Conversation, Janice Simcoe)

A long time ago they did public apologies. They were very public because I know that with my Mom and with my Dad and my grandparents. All I ever heard was: "Just remember who your family is. It's not just you, it's your whole family." That's what I grew up hearing, and so I always was conscious of it and I think we all were when we were growing up. (Conversation, Maggie)

I think if I hadn't done anything on my own, understanding the history and making contact with families or any of that, I would still have no connection and I think that is the main part of having a relationship: that my identity is connected to them, but I have made that connection . . . I really wanted to use literature to get at my experience of how I gained my identity, because in just teaching content, I was missing the mark. There's an experiential component to teaching, and I didn't know what it was, and then I realized that what it is, is family. I have an obligation, a responsibility, I'm part of something. The subtle things that form the basis of identity. (Conversation, Frank Conibear)

I felt safe and happy and contented in our village. I never wanted to go to Alert Bay. That was the big town where we would go shopping. If we had a choice, we would stay with our aunties in the village; we didn't want to go to Alert Bay. A lot of times our parents left us with our relatives and went shopping. We didn't have to have any toys, because we were constantly making up our own games in the village and playing down the beach. It was so clean. The beaches always had those nice white shells. We'd play with the kelps and the shells. We never ran out of games to play. We would go out in the boats. There were small little islands around our village and we would go from island to island picking the fresh plants that were edible and the pretty little flowers. Oh, it was a paradise . . . So together with the strong teachings from my mom and the elders, you can adapt anywhere when you feel good about who you are (Conversation, Ruth Cook; her emphasis)

With . . . Aboriginal people [in working on revising the First Nations 12 IRP] the experience was so good that [I thought about what it would be like] to have that experience all the time, do you know what I mean? It's so difficult all of the time . . . I feel like in my work I'm always having to be this other person in a way. It's not my true person. It's suppressing those other [ironic and humorous] comments. Instead I just always try to be clear. It's always a delight just to be who you are . . . When you are articulating Aboriginal education for curriculum or lessons, your focus is on how to teach Aboriginal students, because that is always what you are asked to do. You have to put it within a framework that has to do with Western education, and you know that it doesn't go there. The structures have to evolve from Aboriginal knowledge.

(Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

An affirming voice affirms traditional teachings. It is oriented towards community. It speaks with a language that faces toward the First Nations community as well as facing toward the broader world. It sees the broader world through the eyes and ears, body and spirit, of First Nations identity. It is a contemporary tribal voice. Not all of its teachings come from a traditional source but they pass through and firmly take root there on their way to being articulated and put into practice. It is a voice of bendable strength and magnanimous wisdom. It corresponds most closely with Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's tribal horizon without which everything indigenous would diminish in significance. I have distilled the several aspects of this voice into three broad groups: literacy, approach, and contemporary identity.

Literacy

A thread that runs through virtually all of the educators' experiences is a positive attitude towards literacy. By literacy I mean reading and writing, books, school; all of the elements that are usually included within mainstream education. The educators' positive memories show another face of literacy. While one kind of literacy has undermined First Nations identity, this other kind weaves it into lifelong learning. A fundamental principle of indigenous education, lifelong learning is more connected with the learning of human values than of amassing knowledge (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972; Stairs, 1993). Curiousity, enthusiasm, initiative, independence, a strong thirst for learning: these are all qualities that shine through the educators' stories of early education, especially in experiences of what we in the education field now call home literacy. The kind of literacy I am talking about is not related to any specific content. It is more of an attitude culled even before school begins.

As an attitude, this literacy links with approach, another aspect of affirming voice. Approach is synonymous with worldview, learning style, perspective, point of view: all of these words, when used by First Nations educators and elders, mean the eyes through which the world is seen. Eyes is a useful but an inaccurate abbreviation. From an indigenous point of view, knowledge is obtained through many openings (see: Black Elk, 1971/1953). For Deloria (1991a) approach corresponds with an Aboriginal epistemology and as a way of knowing, is inseparable from a way of being; this is a belief shared by all of the educators I spoke with.

Curiousity around books and learning is not unique to indigenous peoples. I can remember being oriented towards learning before school even started; school was the daily actualization of a desire to learn and a way to regularly bask in it. However, whereas my own desire to learn was more or less culturally matched by my school experiences, the educators' encounters with an alien system started in childhood with school: the name-calling and stereotypical images and words within books that often made school a profoundly uncomfortable place to be (Conversation, Lyn Daniels; Conversation, Nella Nelson); residential school and the inability to speak or learn one's Native language (Conversation, Maggie; Conversation, Ruth Cook). All the more wonder, then, that this affirmation of literacy persists. Where does it come from? I will draw on four stories: Ruth Cook's and Maggie's, both elders; and Nella Nelson's and Lyn Daniels'. Out of respect, I will begin with the elders' stories first.

Ruth started residential school when she was seven. She was "dumbfounded" when she later heard about "all the abuse" at St. Michael's Residential School in Alert Bay and remarked that her attitude towards literacy may have been different if she would have had the destructive experiences others had (Conversation, Ruth Cook). People ask her: *"Are you in denial?"* She responds: *"I just happened to be very blessed having a good principal."* Mr. Anfield went out of his way to accommodate First Nations students: *" the principal was so respectful of First Nations people and the families that it set the tone . . . Twice he went out of his way to come and visit us, make himself known to us, to tell us about the routine and their expectations of us, what would be going on there at the school. I don't think you get many principals doing that*" (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Experiences of good relations with respectful non-Native people opened a door to learning in school. The village missionaries, Ruth remembers, *"were so respectful of the people that they wouldn't even put their house on land; they put their house on stilts by* *the road"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook). The Indian Agent was a rude contrast to this behaviour. From him the community learned about white people's tendency towards coercion and control in "managing" other people's lives (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Ruth's attending the school at an auspicious time was a bonus; it enhanced her openness to learning but her curiousity preceded school.

Ruth was naturally inquisitive. Her mother and the village elders encouraged this gift by listening to and answering her questions: *"I was fortunate that my mother was always very open-minded. I was always full of questions . . . She had patience and answered to the best of her abilities. I was always visiting the elders and they never chased me away either"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Openness to a child's questions becomes a teaching when the young person or adult "blends" it into his or her own life: *"My values and teachings were very strong. I more or less chose what was good for me from society and blended it into my life. Because of my good experience, I think that was why I could mix with anybody. Any nationality"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook).

Ruth carried this positive attitude towards learning into residential school. From mixing with the missionaries who settled in her village, she had learned English. From her own experiences, Ruth knew how to recognize respectfulness. She could also tell when a question had been answered in a genuine way. One of her first shocks was that the students were prohibited from speaking their Native language, but in a spirit that is still mixed with a defiant sensibleness in "cutting through the crap" (Kirkness, 1998, p. 10; an instance of Ruth's resistant voice or quiet rage), Ruth says *"of course we spoke it when we were out in the yard playing; they couldn't stop that"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook). One day she asked her supervisor the reason for the language rule:

> *I was a curious kid, I was always asking questions so I asked my supervisor: "Why is our language so bad?"*
>
> *My supervisor said, "Well . . . ".*
>
> *She was stumped for a while; for a good answer, I guess.*
>
> *Then she said, "Well, we don't think you'll learn as well if you're still speaking your language."*
>
> *Of course I was bilingual because I was already speaking English and had no problem when I got there. So in my heart, I knew what she said wasn't right.*
>
> (Conversation, Ruth Cook)

Maggie's positive experiences with literacy, like Ruth's, are interwoven with speaking. For Maggie, though, it was learning how to be a good speaker. Maggie felt uncomfortable at first but nevertheless trusted the process:

> *Maggie: You listen and you watch what the kids are good at, and that's the Native way. And then you encourage it. When the elders know there's a speaker, they do everything to help that speaker, if it's in their family.*
>
> *Teresa: Encourage them.*
>
> *Maggie: Yes. Like my mom did to me. She always made me - or more or less almost kind of pushed me - into being her speaker so I always had to speak for my mom. I was very uncomfortable with it, but it's okay. I can speak to you and it's because of what she kept pushing me into. I keep encouraging anyone that I know that can be a speaker, or whatever they're good at.* (Conversation, Maggie; her emphasis)

Maggie talks about her mother's teachings in the same way as she speaks of her own role within the community and school as a Native Language educator: *That's why I think - I don't think, I know - that we're pushing so hard to speak our language* (Conversation, Maggie; her emphasis).

Nella Nelson's enthusiasm for learning came through her family's positive experiences with literacy. Nella's desire to go to school, which meant going away to school when she was a teenager, was fired by her own inclinations: her love of learning and a desire to be independent. Independence does not mean, as it does in Taylor's (1989) leaving home story, a self-genesis and breaking away from community. Independence was one of the teachings that Ruth received from her mother and community, and that she in turn passed on to Nella. Independence is being able to stand up straight. It means the ability to be autonomous rather than being dependant on others. If you are autonomous, you can contribute in valuable ways to the community. Elders, despite a sometimes physical dependency on others, pass on teachings that the younger generation needs so as to be independent and strong in turn.

Nella remembers shelves and shelves of books from her parents' home and the home of her grandparents. When she was a teenager, she was adamant about not attending school in Port McNeil; she insisted on going away to school or else, she said, she would quit (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Literacy is connected with a desire to do things. Nella's great-grandmother, Jane Cook, a female voice of political activism, was a "carrier" of a spirit of optimism that continues through Nella, whose words are strongly associated with movement and change ("Carrier" is Janice Simcoe's word; Conversation, Janice Simcoe):

> *I look at my great-grandmother, Jane Cook, and her picture with the Allied Tribes of BC and she was out there with a political voice at that time. So it's been there, that movement, and you do it for your people . . .*
>
> *I believe that we can make changes and if you emanate optimism, and you can see change happening, then it supports the vision of your staff, the people you work with, and also the community . . .*
>
> *The other aspect I think about our people and how they see the world is the fact that when you go to do your work and you go to do your training, you do it for your people, you do it because you're moving into service for your people.*
>
> (Conversation, Nella Nelson)

Nella's great-grandmother's story "ripples into" her language as a First Nations Coordinator (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Nella's metaphors of movement and rippling are appropriately drawn from the water, water that is integral among the Coastal Native peoples to a way of living, thinking and feeling:

> *The other night my dad was talking about traveling across the sound, it was midnight and he thought we'd fallen overboard. We were on the bow of the boat, looking in the water; we were just getting ready to go to bed. It's a beautiful night. All of a sudden everything shuts down, and my brother and me say: "Gee, what's going on? Sounds like dad is running around". He thought we'd fallen overboard.*
>
> *But what fascinated us was we had our blankets, and we were hanging over the bow of the boat and watching the water that was lit up, you know, the fire-water night, with the sparkling lights in the water. We were so enthralled by*

> *that picture that we were there for hours. My dad was saying: "Oh, how I am going to tell Mother the kids have died." I remember that moment, and I remember the tranquility of the night and the water wasn't rough, it was just beautiful.* (Conversation, Nella Nelson)

Acquiring literacy is connected with developing a voice which is in turn linked with movement and change, including political change (which invokes the resistant voice); movement is connected with the land and water. All of these happen in the context of service: doing it for your people. The reasoning has the shape of a circle, where genuine learning returns to the worldview that shapes you. Worldview and language are linked through metaphors. Stairs (1993) observes that this interwovenness is uncharacteristic of Western approaches to literacy, which tend to be goal-oriented and linear; we have seen that linear pattern in Taylor's (1989) leaving home story.

Battiste (1998), a Mi'kmaq scholar, points out that "through sharing a language Aboriginal people create a shared belief of how the world works and what constitutes proper action" (p. 18); she is specifically referring to how Aboriginal languages mediate an Aboriginal epistemology: "The sharing of these common ideals creates a collective cognitive experience for tribal societies that is understood as tribal epistemology" (p. 18). Frank Conibear has argued, and I hear in the educators' words support for his view, that the Aboriginal metaphors for speaking about the world survive in the English language, if actively sought out and practiced. By practiced he means not only speaking them but living them (Conversation, Frank Conibear):

> *Teresa: You said that you're afraid of Coast Salish culture being lost if it isn't emphasized.*

> *Frank: Well I think that's why I emphasize it. There's a couple of reasons why. One is I wanted to learn more about it, on a personal level; the other is that if we don't speak our own metaphors, like we don't speak our language, we will lose that. I don't speak the language. I don't know if I'll ever be able to.*
>
> *Teresa: What do you mean by metaphors?*
>
> *Frank: Well, there's metaphors that people use, particular ways of saying things: We're a sharing people. That's just a very simple example because I know a lot of people say that. But the context in which it is said comes from our own worldview or philosophies or values . . . It's an image for me, that's probably why I struggle with it, an image of how would the elders say this if they were in this institution, what metaphors would they retain in their speech, how would they structure their speech.* (Conversation, Frank Conibear)

Ortiz (1981) argues for the transformative possibilities of language to mediate identity. Others have looked at how Indian English may be accomplishing that end (Skip Dick, Personal communication, February 15, 2000; see also: Leap, 1993). The metaphors framing arguments of Aboriginal scholars often create a bridge between traditional teachings and contemporary discourse, such as Archibald's (1990) use of Tafoya's (1982), a Pueblo scholar's, story of Coyote's mismatched eyes or Archibald's (1990) ordering of the arguments around who in her own Sto: lo traditions is served first at a feast; Alfred's (1999) use of the condolence ceremony to inspire a contemporary understanding of indigenous political life; Archibald's (1999) editorial comments in the recent issue of the Canadian Journal of Native Education where she explains how the chosen articles honour an elder's prayer and metaphors: hands forward, hands back. Through the Aboriginal metaphors embedded in both spoken and written language, literacy is performing its own affirming role within education. I will return to the role of metaphor when addressing contemporary identity.

From the way in which Lyn Daniels describes her early remembrances of literacy, we get another picture of someone who is eager to learn, whose attitude towards literacy resembles a thirst or hunger, and whose experience of literacy remains essentially positive despite discriminatory treatment in the classroom, despite stumbling repeatedly across books whose unflattering images of Native people repel and embarrass, and despite a dearth of role models in literature with which to identify and feel at ease with (Lyn Daniels, 2000). All of these negative experiences are formative too, and "fire", as Janice Simcoe puts it, the desire for authentic materials (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary on chapter five). Ruth Cook, upon reading this fifth chapter, appended the following comment: "History books of First Nations in schools should be thrown out! Write our own truth" (Conversation, Ruth Cook, Reflective commentary on chapter five). Alfred (2000, February) recounts how reading Deloria's (1969) Custer Died For Your Sins in college transformed his world, confirming an inward knowledge that had to that point been denied or suppressed in the books he read. Lyn Daniels' involvement in literacy and education, unsurprisingly, stems from a search for 'authentic' literature; by 'authentic' she means literature that accurately portrays an Aboriginal perspective (Lyn Daniels, 2000).

Lyn shares Eber Hampton's (1995) views on *sui generis* Indian education. Their memories of experiences with books in school are similar: "Why was I so fascinated by how people deal with misinformation? . . . When the answer came it was in the form of a 6-year-old little Indian boy by the name of Eber, sitting at a desk in a classroom looking at a picture of an Indian on a page in a textbook" (Hampton, 1993, pp. 47-8). In a Children's Literature course that Lyn Daniels took, teachers were asked to probe their childhood encounters with books and trace those reading patterns into later life. Like Hampton, Lyn's experiences with literature confirmed that Aboriginal voices are placed on the margins. She writes in her Children's Literature essay:

> I liked reading books about people who overcame barriers to succeed at something. So I liked reading non-fiction such as the story of George Washington Carver, a black American scientist and the story of Harriet Tubman in The Freedom Train. George Washington Carver overcame racial barriers to succeed as a scientist and he was an African American. Harriet Tubman dreamed of becoming free of slavery and persevered until she achieved her dream.
>
> Why? I believe it was because there were not a lot of authentic books written by Aboriginal authors. There were plenty of books about Indians but they bore no resemblance to my life. I experienced rude questions, taunts and put downs of my peers because of my Cree ancestry. The books about African Americans helped me to understand these experiences and helped me to eventually learn how to respond (Lyn Daniels, 2000).

Lyn's positive attitude towards literacy begins with her family. In speaking of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples and the insensitive way in which testimonies of residential school experiences were solicited, Lyn comments: *"the reason why people are still able to come out of that experience with their dignity in the sense of themselves as worthwhile, is because of their family"* (Conversation, Lyn Daniels). Lyn remembers her mother reading to the family. She also recalls the following story that became self-revelatory and an oral family tradition in its own right:

> *I was just fascinated with school; I could hardly wait to get there because my brother and sister went. I guess when you're younger, you look up to them and you want to be like them, and you figure, why can't you do it right now? My dad was a big teaser; that was what he was like. This one time he said: I'll write a letter to the teacher and I'll tell the teacher everything that you can do and they'll probably let you in school. So here he is writing this letter and all the things I can do: tie my shoes, count to a hundred, and read books. I grabbed the letter and I was running along to school and I can remember getting to the doors. My dad caught me up and said that he was teasing me.*
>
> *So that's how much I wanted to go to school. After that they'd tell that story and I think that's part of the oral tradition. You know, that's an identity forming kind of practice, where you tell the stories over and over again and that helps to form your identity. Well that's the person I am: someone who wants to learn and really goes for it.* (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

It might be tempting to see Lyn's story in the context of another narrative that later figured in her journey: the leaving home story (Conversation, Lyn Daniels; see: chapter four, pages 179-81). Maria Campbell's (1973) autobiography, Halfbreed, recounts a polarization between her own values as a Metis person and her individualistic ambitions. Maria sets off into the world, not realizing until much later that she mistook her Cheechum's [great-grandmother's] advice and exchanged materialistic success for authentic Aboriginal identity, which for Cheechum meant seeing the personal in the political. Halfbreed is another narrative that has influence Lyn's thinking as an educator: "When I was in grade 12, I read a book titled, Halfbreed, by Maria Campbell. There I found a character that was Cree like me. Although my life was not as dysfunctional as hers there was a lot in her life that I could identify with. She was the first Aboriginal writer to write a novel that became widely read" (Lyn Daniels, 2000).

I interpret Lyn's "really goes for it" attitude as part as her energy as a person, an intellectual, an educator and a professional. This impression is based on the many conversations I have had with her during and prior to this study. As in Nella's stories, that energy or movement ties back into a belief in the inextricable link between the personal and political, between identity and community. That thread begins in a naive sense with an intense desire to participate in literacy and moves through experiences of feeling marginalized or disengaged from the world of books and later university studies, but what remains unsullied and constant is the desire to belong: to find a place of belonging within literature and later, within the education field. Finding a place of belonging does not mean assimilation or integration. It means finding a voice within literature, "writing our own truth," as Ruth Cook puts it (Conversation, Ruth Cook, Reflective commentary on chapter five). As I write these words, I recognize a story that Northrop Frye returned to over and over again in writings that spanned decades: a story of belonging and finding one's place in the world (see for example: Frye, 1957, 1976). Bruner (1986) has also identified this narrative. Although I am wary of the universalizing of archetypal stories, this may be one that does genuinely traverse boundaries. It is a question I raise here and pose as potentially significant for cross-cultural teacher education, a way in to 'being affected'.

The key to an affirming vision of education for Aboriginal learners returns to this desire for belonging; Shared Learnings, a recent curriculum Nella Nelson was involved in, resides on this premise (B.C. Ministry of Education, 1998). It is a desire to belong in and to the world: a world seen through and receptive to Aboriginal eyes and informed by an Aboriginal epistemology. Finding such a place means finding a balance personally and publicly:

> The air we breathe in, we must never disrupt the air that is breathed in by everyone, while you're out in public. If all the air is breathing . . . the same way . . . kindly and evenly, it's going to be so safe and everything's going to just ride like a beautiful canoe. (Ellen White, Kwulasulwut Syuth, elder, in conversation with Jo-Ann Archibald, 1993, p. 157; Ellen's emphases)

Approach

The First Nations educators identified certain values important in a child's upbringing and adult's behaviour, where those values come from, how an educator remains grounded in them, ways to practice them, and how to give them back to communities. The common values I identified are: trust, encouragement, confidence, self-discipline and acceptance. Any educator would wholeheartedly endorse these values. In an Aboriginal worldview, they form parts of an interconnected web of concepts. As the learning styles research shows, when a researcher attempts to isolate and correlate a particular value with an Aboriginal worldview in an educational setting, the argument crumbles, appearing tenuous relative to the claim being asserted (for studies on Native learning styles or attitudes, see: Brant, 1990; Clifton and Roberts, 1988; Hartley, 1991; Hurlburt et al., 1990; More, 1989; Ovando, 1984): "Differences in Learning Style occur frequently but are not found with sufficient consistency to suggest a uniquely Indian learning style. However, they occur often enough to warrant careful attention" (More, 1989, p. 15). One sign that these styles or values comprise an indigenous worldview is that First Nations educators do not single them out for instrumental use. Deloria (1991a) has pointed out how *praxis* in Western education is predicated on a "what works" approach (see also: Stairs, 1993).

Rather than attempting to describe trust, encouragement, confidence, self-discipline and acceptance in turn, then, I will show how the interrelationships between these values are enfolded within an Aboriginal philosophy, drawing on the words of the two elders, Ruth Cook and Maggie. Afterwards, I will discuss how contemporary First Nations educators have incorporated these same values into their practice. A key aspect of their *praxis* is attentiveness to language and metaphors.

If you feel good about who you are, you will be open to learning (Conversation, Ruth Cook; Conversation, Maggie). Feeling good about who you are comes from feeling confident. When I asked Ruth where confidence comes from, she said that for her it is rooted in acceptance from her people: *"I can only speak for myself, for my own family and community, of accepting me for who I was. Like I said, going to visit the elders every day. They had time for me and never chased me away. Acceptance. Right in your own home, for God's sake"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Maggie's confidence in teaching, in being a speaker in potlatches and feasts, in saying the prayer at school ceremonies, in being able to talk with me in a interview situation, comes from knowing who she is, where she belongs, being accepted by family and community for who she is. In Janice Simcoe's words, it comes from her knowing where she sits in the continnum or circle

(Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Extended family is very important in creating that web of acceptance: *"All my first cousins are my sisters . . . Even if I have just one biological sister, they're my sisters, so I'm not alone. My sister is sick right now but I'm not really alone because of my other sisters. That's the way of our people. It's a good, good way and it's a good thing that they hung onto that because it's something that our people always do, they always support one another* " (Maggie; her emphasis).

The knowledge of who you are comes from your family; all of the educators reiterated this point, that their "parents' voices walked with them" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). In reminding you of who you are, the family is also often implicitly saying that acceptance carries a responsibility to conduct yourself in a way that benefits your people (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Confidence and acceptance belong to the individual, in the sense that it is the individual who reveals these qualities, but as values, they originate in family and community and return there through the individual's actions and words.

Confidence and acceptance are also forms of discipline: by teaching you who you are, I am also teaching you how to act in the world. A word that I have often hear Native people use is behaviour. Behaving means knowing how to conduct yourself inwardly and outwardly; identity is both social and individual. This is true whether you are in your own community or whether you are a visitor in another nation's territory or whether you are carrying your identity into what Janice calls the "broader world" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; Nella Nelson also makes this point, Conversation, Nella Nelson). The following excerpt shows how for Maggie, confidence, acceptance and identity are intertwined:

> *Teresa: If things go wrong, things go on, the community goes on. That closeness within the community is always there. People will always pull*

> *together.*
>
> *Maggie: A long time ago they did public apologies. The apologies were very public because I know that with my Mom and with my Dad and my grandparents. All I ever heard was: "Just remember who your family is. It's not just you, it's your whole family." That's what I grew up hearing, and so I always was conscious of it and I think we all were when we were growing up.*
>
> *Teresa: So when you say to a child, "Your mom would not like you acting that way", it's not a threat against them, it's . . .*
>
> *Maggie: Who you are.*
>
> *Teresa: Remember who you are and the way you're supposed to act.*
>
> *Maggie: And I know what your mom thinks and what she wants.*
>
> *from you* (Conversation, Maggie; Maggie's emphasis)

For both Ruth and Maggie, knowing one's Native language is linked with identity and knowing you are (Conversation, Maggie; Conversation, Ruth Cook). Knowing that teaching within one's Native tongue, fluent speakers consistently say, makes the teaching even stronger (see: chapter three, pages 132-34), but knowing the teaching is the more important thing. The teachings also survive through what Frank Conibear calls the metaphors (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Confidence in knowing is reciprocal to being open to learning:

> *Maggie: We keep on encouraging using the language, and it made me feel good to hear that on the outside. It makes me feel good when I hear our leaders speaking our languages. That's what they need to keep doing,*

> *to keep speaking our language so that they can know that our language is important and it is a part of us and it is a part of where we come from, who we are as a First Nations people.*
>
> *Teresa: So it's very important to contemporary education.*
>
> *Maggie: It is.*
>
> *Teresa: It's not enough to learn English or do well in school. It's who you are as a person.*
>
> *Maggie: That's right [Maggie says forcefully]. If you don't feel good about who you are, you're not going to do anything. You start feeling good about who you are and then you start learning. But as long as you don't know who you are and you have a block there of who you are, you're not going to have an easy time in your learning.* (Conversation, Maggie; her emphasis)

Maggie and I talked about how confidence or knowing who you are is essential for the teacher building a positive relationship with children:

> *Teresa: Remember how we were talking about how you don't see a student as a student, instead you see them as a whole person and as part of the community. How that's part of the way you teach and part of the learning in the classroom and especially how you teach the native language.*
>
> *Maggie: That's a really big . . . that's a biggee, a big one [laughs]. When the student comes in here, like you were talking about the kinds of things you did to let people know who you are*
>
> *Teresa: Yeah.*

> *Maggie: And that's how it is with the kids or [Maggie's correction] students. You have to get them to know* who *you are, like you're willing to open up yourself and share yourself with them and then that gets to build a trust between you and them. And then when they know that you're real, they start opening up and trusting you to do the things that we're doing in the classroom.* (Conversation, Maggie; her emphasis)

I asked Ruth the same question: how her First Nations identity made a difference to the First Nations students in the classroom she worked in; the children were from different nations. Ruth said that the children accepted her when they knew she was genuine and real, just as Maggie had said. For both Maggie and Ruth, being real means being who you are which is inseparable from the confidence of feeling good about who you are as a Native person; again that comes from and is affirmed by family and community:

> *By feeling good about yourself, you pass that on to the children, saying to each child, you're okay, and you're okay. You can do anything that you want to be like everybody else. You give them that message and try to build more and more confidence that they can do it . . .*
>
> *It has to come from you because the kids will spot a phony. If you yourself are not sincere in what you're doing, in any walk of life, they will know; if you're sincere and honest, it will come out strong.* (Conversation, Ruth Cook)

This confident self-knowledge comes from life experience, in particular the kind of life where the emphasis is on living in a good way or being a good person, which means being oriented towards service for others. The emphasis comes out of a philosophy which, within in an indigenous context, is not just a theory but is a form of disciplined thought and action. Ruth recounts: *"I just had the odd person who looked at me as if to say, "What is she doing here? She's probably not qualified." No I wasn't qualified in their terms but I was qualified in living it, and experiencing it and bringing up my own children. I mean, what better experience and diploma would you need? [Ruth laughs]. I lived it all my life* (Conversation, Ruth Cook).

The other part of discipline is autonomy. Ruth talked at length about how her parents had taught her the value of independence. Nowadays independence means being financially independent. The goal, says Ruth, is to squirrel away money for retirement. Ruth is baffled by this obsession. At sixty-eight years old, Ruth shares, she has time enough still to plan for that. Ruth said she was taught not to want. That kind of disciplined thinking has carried her through the hard times when money was scarce. It is a value she has passed on to her own children. Nella Nelson, Ruth's daughter, recalls this teaching: *"Growing up in commercial fishing. Being involved on a fish boat where you worked as a team. Everybody needed each other to make the set and get the job done . . . the other part of commercial fishing for us was the financial independence that came with it; that strong work ethic was embedded in it* (Conversation, Nella Nelson). For Ruth, independence is fundamentally related to an attitude towards life that places importance on the right things:

> *I used to just be thrilled when I used to watch the tiny little ones that used to run around and fetch things for the elders that were sick and couldn't really move around. They used to run and do it, without [saying]: "How much are you going to pay me?" Those values are important. They were just happy to do it for grandma or granddad. It was so much a part of life and our knowledge, just to*

> *help each other. I think everybody had a chore to do in that home. You felt part of the family.* (Conversation, Ruth Cook)

I often witnessed my nieces and nephews and students that I taught in Bella Bella voluntarily helping out elders. I experienced that sense of playing an important role when cooking for a family (extended family) dinner or feast; it was there constantly in the "small" ways and "large" ways (the words "small" and "large" in this context come from Janice Simcoe, Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Autonomy fosters acceptance and confidence which in turn creates service, which is the knowledge that you play an essential role in family and community. Ruth recounts a story of a young boy who was a bully but was assigned a major part in a school play because of his size; he played the chief. Assuming this important role gave the boy such confidence and pride that Ruth witnessed a transformation in his behaviour (Conversation, Ruth Cook).

Ruth's values stem from her childhood, when autonomy meant, for example, gathering food at the appropriate times: *"we were busy all year round, gathering our food, bartering, socializing, just having a good life"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Maggie makes the same point from the opposite direction, where she links loss of traditional food gathering practices with loss of identity: *"a lot of our identity was taken away, we didn't know our native ways, we never went after our food like our parents did because we were taken away, so when we don't have an identity, that's what the problem is: a lot of people are killing themselves, they're dying because of the loss of who they are. They don't know who they are, where they belong* (Conversation, Maggie). What began as playing when Ruth was young evolved naturally and gradually into playing an important role in the family:

> *We didn't have to have any toys, because we were constantly making up our own games in the village and playing down the beach. It was so clean. The beaches always had those nice white shells. We'd play with the kelps and the shells. We never ran out of games to play. We would go out in the boats. There were small little islands around our village and we would go from island to island picking the fresh plants that were edible and the pretty little flowers.*
> (Conversation, Ruth Cook; her emphasis)

Stairs (1993) comments on a teaching or learning style that is commonly referred to in the research as 'backwards chaining':

> Inuit and other Native children are often taught through a process of 'backwards chaining' in which final steps of essential adult tasks are progressively left undone for children to complete, thus giving them an immediate and important role in community work. A young girl may first complete the final trim on her father's new pair of famiks (skin boots), then the next year sew together several of the cut pieces as well as trimming. She would do the initial skin preparation and cutting only when older, not as isolated early steps in the learning process. (p. 87)

At a screening of a University of Victoria film produced by Christine Walsh (2000) called The Story of the Coast Salish Knitters, I listened as one of the knitters in the film commented: "No one ever showed me how to knit a Cowichan sweater. No one ever taught me. That is not our way. I watched and I watched and then I did it." Commonly referred to as the watch-then-do method (Rodriguez & Sawyer, 1990; Stairs, 1993), its practical complexity is rarely fully appreciated. One of the knitters who was in the film, the former chief of the Penelakut Band, was in the audience. She commented after the film that the most valuable lesson she learned from this induction into knitting was not so much its economic value, as an activity she could always fall back on and make money from in lean times, but its discipline. Learning how to knit taught her respect and focused thought. She was not speaking about the ins and outs of how to knit and all of the different kinds of stitches. From the kinds of examples she offered, it was clear that she was talking about how you behave around knitting: Don't play with the needles; Put your wool and needles away carefully when you're done; Don't play in the wool. Frank Conibear described the discipline involved in canoe pulling in a strikingly similar way. He said: you have to be of clean heart and mind while in the canoe; you have to pray before you get in; you can't say any bad words while you're in the canoe; you have to treat the canoe with respect and put it in the water properly and take it out properly; you have to bless the canoe; you . . . I interrupted him and shared what I had heard the Cowichan knitter say and what I also heard him saying. It is the respectful behaviour surrounding the doing of it that instills discipline. The knowledge of how to canoe-pull is inseparable from the state of mind, heart and thought while preparing for and then engaging in it. He agreed that that is correct (Conversation, Frank Conibear).

Through knitting, through canoe pulling, through Indian dancing, through gathering Indian food, through becoming a speaker, through speaking your Native language, respect is learned as a way of life. To that list, can being a First Nations educator, or learning to be one, be added? (Frank Conibear says: *I suspect that we're all learning* (Conversation, Frank Conibear)). This is a question I address in the next section, contemporary identity, as well as return to in the resistant and ironic voices.

Living a good life and being a good person mean living in and for this moment, paying attention to the time that you have here on earth and with your family instead of deferring the attainment of knowledge (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Autonomy follows from that approach. If you are taught well, you learn well, and you can stand on your own feet. You can then help others in turn, as Nella Nelson says about her family's commercial fishing operation: *"We hired people from the community who had difficulty getting jobs in other areas. Those were the kind of teachings that laid a foundation for me"* (Conversation, Nella Nelson).

Good teaching consists of encouragement. Teaching is also based upon trust: the trust that the child can learn and become autonomous. This is not the kind of teaching that can be directly communicated as content through a program or curriculum. It is an approach to learning that is embedded in a way of living and an approach to life (Conversation, Ruth Cook; Conversation, Frank Conibear). Ruth and Maggie consistently speak of learning as encouragement: if you tell children they can do it while simultaneously showing them how (them watching as you do it), then they will learn. Telling a child that he or she can do it without showing how is isolating the goal of the task from how the task is learned. Telling a child that he or she can do it and expecting them to accept encouragement and become autonomous without instruction will be unsuccessful because the child can tell when words are empty of meaning or when the speaker of those words is not being genuine. Learning is as much about trusting as it is about learning a specific content. As Garver (1998) notes, it is difficult to fake belief (see: chapter two, page 87). The teacher must be able to teach convincingly, that is, with a knowledge of the subject matter or a willingness to learn it, as well as be persuasive, which is an attribute of attitude, philosophy or approach:

> *Teresa: Do you think First Nations teachers have a different manner of teaching, because of the values that they have been brought up with?*
>
> *Ruth: I think most of them, if they apply it, the children are richer for it because you teach the children to be more caring and sensitive to other people around you. By feeling good about yourself, you pass that on to the children, saying you're okay, you're okay. You can do anything that you want to be like everybody else. You give them that message and try to build more and more confidence that they can do it. That's what we would do in our classroom. The kids would say, "I want to do this," "I want to do that". She [the teacher] would say, "Of course I'll show you how to do it." She would never say, "You can't do it." She would allow them to try and would show them how to do it. Anything that the children wanted to do, at any age, whatever they were interested in, we would allow them to do it and show them the steps how to. We would never say, "Oh you're too young to do that." You would show them how to do it, and it's amazing how quickly they picked it up. We encouraged them and didn't tell them, "Oh, it's too much for you." That was a put-down.* (Conversation, Ruth Cook; her emphasis)
>
> *Maggie: We need to begin to raise up strong people, get them to go over to all the schools and tell them who they are and where they are and why they became the way they are.*
>
> *Teresa: Role models*

> *Maggie: Role models. Strong role models. Because it's natural for us as people to have someone to look up to, so we need more of our own people to build up our esteem. It's really important we do.*
>
> *Teresa: I saw that in my daughter when she was in Nursery and Kindergarten. She was always really proud to know her Native language. I learned French. I felt proud to learn French but it was more of a technical thing because I'm not a French-Canadian - and yet my daughter was learning her own Native language. So it's different. It's something that's part of your being.*
>
> *Maggie: But you really need that support from the home too in order for her to be proud of her accomplishments. She needs that support. Every home needs that support of the accomplishments even if they're small. Like when my grandkids would take paintings home, I would tell my girls, "Don't throw it away, hang it up, let them see how proud you are of what they've done"; that's just a little part but it's a big major part and when you encourage them so much they want to do more, always. That's what I've watched the little ones do all these years. It's a really big important thing for them to be praised for their little accomplishments and as they grow bigger, you just keep on praising them and they know when it's natural and they know when it's fake; when it's just words and when you really mean it.* (Conversation, Maggie; her emphasis)

Ruth's comment on the value of positive encouragement echoes Maggie's words that when "*you encourage them so much they want to do more, always: The sky was the limit once the children had confidence and trust in us that we would back them*" (Conversation, Ruth Cook). In education we often speak of building: building on or raising a child's self-confidence (similar toGadamer's (1975/1998) *bildung*). These metaphors take on a deeper resonance within Maggie's words, where to encourage means to raise up and build. She uses these words in related contexts such as raising a family, raising up children who will be good parents, raising a leader (Conversation, Maggie). A leader is a child who is raised in a particular way. A leader is a role model who has a particular gift to share (Conversation, Maggie). Maggie talks about the traditional way of encouraging children was for the elders to see which gift that child was manifesting, and to encourage and encourage and encourage that gift, to nourish it so that it could grow (Conversation, Maggie).

A role model is a person who stands tall and upright, who exhibits that autonomy spoken of earlier, who is able to give back to the community because of that strength. Strength is another word for autonomy. Giving strength is another way of offering encouragement, such as the strength and encouragement I received while transcribing these conversations. When Maggie talks about raising up strong people, I think of cedar trees. Tall and strong cedar trees were once the whole sustenance of coastal communities, providing canoes, the tools to make canoes, clothing, ceremonial masks and clothing, utensils, baskets, weirs, bent boxes, planks and house posts for the big houses; the list goes on and on. I also think of the raising of totem poles: totem pole-raisings, as they are called, are becoming a part of contemporary traditional culture in Maggie's community.

Trust is the foundation on which the values or beliefs of confidence, autonomy, and encouragement rest. Trust is disclosed in a "small way" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe), in the "moment" (Conversation, Ruth Cook) of instruction, in a child's trust; Ruth Cook talks about the importance of the moment within an indigenous perspective

(Conversation, Ruth Cook). That small example of trust is enlarged when seen within a spiritual context and philosophy. In the larger scheme of things, trust is of a greater wisdom that guides our moment-to-moment decisions and actions. It is a caring trust. In a spiritual understanding, everything is interconnected; by everything, I mean people's actions and 'behaviours', the animal world, all of nature, the spiritual world; the virtue of the word behaviour is that it links thought with action, and defines action as expressive of thought or attitude:

> *Teresa: How do you see - and you probably do see - a difference in the way that Native people see things from the way dominant society sees those same things?*
>
> *Ruth: They're different, yes. It's a different way of looking at things than I - we - do. We are apt to always be in the now with our families . . . If you adopted this value every day, no matter what culture, of appreciating each day that comes along and just doing what you're meant to do, the spiritual part used to be so natural . . . It's the Indian spirituality . . . of living it each day. Of thanking the Creator for supplying your needs. And yes, hard times do come, but you also thank the Creator for giving you the strength to walk through it.*
>
> *I used to ask my mom, because my English godmother was Anglican and used to take us to Sunday School in church, I used to ask my mom, "Did you know there was a God before the missionaries came?" "Of course we did. We prayed long before any white man came to teach us. We prayed before we went on any trip. We stopped out in the boat at what was like a sacred point. We thanked the Creator for everything." It was always there.*
>
> *Teresa: That makes up a big part of who you are as Native people.*

Ruth: That's right. Some people say [she says in a conspiratorial whisper]: "What is spirituality?" It's no secret. It's your relationship with your Creator and knowing who he is and who you are and the world around you. It all blends together if you know who the Creator is.

Teresa: Yes, that is what another educator told me too. That Native people are more concerned with raising a good person. Being respectful. That is the highest value. Not being successful in the world or being individualistic or going away from your family and making your fortune on the backs of other people.

Ruth: The Creator created us to care for each other on this planet Earth and to care for one another. But in today's society, do you hear the word 'caring' from the next person, from anyone in your job? It's just: go for yourself. The 'I' . . . Some of our people have learned those ways. But they also don't understand that nobody gets away with anything. If nobody sees you - I remember my mother telling me that she has eyes in the back of her head [we laugh] - it will come back to you. If you are mean to someone, somewhere on the line it will come back to you because you have set it in motion and it will come back to you. Nobody has to punish you. You've set it in motion.

Teresa: In Bella Bella they say 'what goes around comes around'.

Ruth: We say that too. If you do something wrong and even if nobody ever finds out, you have to live with yourself. It's so simple that people don't want to accept it and yet it is so simple [Ruth says with emphasis] [we laugh]. They want it hard and complicated so they set things up that way.

Teresa: Do you remember Lyn Daniels? You spoke with her at one time.

> *Ruth: Yes.*
>
> *Teresa: You told her this, and I have also heard it from other people I've talked with, like Nella, like Janice Simcoe. Things will always be revealed in time. If you don't understand it now, you will understand it.*
>
> *Ruth: When it is time for you to understand it. That's right. That's where you learn, where your maturity comes from, of sitting back and waiting for it to happen. We can't do it now, so wait for the right time for it to be shown. When you're young, you're impatient, you say: "I want to do it now." It's like a lot of times when you read something, it doesn't come, it doesn't come, and then it does. That was one of the teachings that was so important to our people, patience, learning to wait for things. The seasons told us that. Nature told us what to do and when to do it. Today's world: you have to jump ahead, beat it, scramble up. Whereas what you have to do is wait for the right time.*
>
> (Conversation, Ruth Cook; her emphasis)

Nella understands trust on the level of energy: the energy that moves through objects, including people, contains a spiritual power that can never die. It is fundamentally a life-affirming and animating force: *"energy does transform. I mean, the energy moves in a new way but it's still the original energy. It's done in a different way but it still springboards from that original energy"* (Conversation, Nella Nelson):

> The old people, surveying a landscape, had such a familiarity with the world that they could immediately see what was not in its place and if they discerned anything that seemed to be out of its natural order, a nocturnal animal in the daytime, unusual clouds or weather conditions,

> or a change of the plants, they went to work immediately to discover what this change meant . . . Presented with the natural ordering of cosmic energies, when the people saw an imbalance they knew that their responsibility was to initiate ceremonies that would help bring about balance once again. (Deloria, 1991a, p. 30)

This traditional belief in an overriding balance underlies Ruth Cook's remarks, which like Deloria's (1991a), are oriented simultaneously toward restoring that balance and mourning its loss or neglect. In a very pragmatic way, then, an educator's relationship with his or her students or with whichever populations he or she is serving (and often there are several) is a model or example of that larger balance or order. In that perspective, an educator's approach impinges directly on others. Janice Simcoe confirms this understanding: *"If we forget to do that [connect with community] and if we stay in too much isolation we can forget to do it, then we start making mistakes that impact those who we are here to serve"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe).

One of the questions I discussed with the educators is whether it is possible or desirable for an educator to be First Nations without consciously passing on those values. Kirkness (1999/1988), herself a Cree educator, argues that "Indian teachers are critical to the realization of quality education for the Indian population" (p. 57), where she defines Indian as meaning "a person of Aboriginal ancestry whose culture is based on a personal relationship with his or her people and the environment" (p. 57). Indian education hinges on the presence of Indian teachers: "Throughout the literature we witness the concepts of Indian identity, traditions, psychology, culture, language, and history as being important in the education of Indians. It is appropriate to suggest that Indian teachers would be the most effective in transmitting these concepts" (p. 61). Ruth Cook's response to this question was that teaching in a cultural way is preferred because it enriches the students (Conversation, Ruth Cook). A cultural approach is not necessarily content-based; more fundamentally, it is approach-based (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Frank Conibear maintains the same belief: *"in just teaching content, I was missing the mark. There's an experiential component to teaching, and I didn't know what it was, and then I realized that what it is, is family. I have an obligation, a responsibility, I'm part of something. The subtle things that form the basis of identity . . . it's not the content. It's how you teach the content"* (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Frank Conibear qualifies his statement as coming from his particular Coast Salish perspective: *"Not all First Nations people are going to have that, those that were adopted and whatever; that's not their option. I'm sort of torn with that"* (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Janice Simcoe intimated that teachers may unconsciously teach in culturally-sensitive ways because of who they are as Aboriginal people: *"We carry the spirits of our ancestors with us and maybe we carry it in our DNA or maybe we carry it in some physical part of us. I have heard of people who were adopted when they were very young and didn't know that they were Native until they were older, say that their belief is that they carry being Indian in their DNA and they always knew, they always acted like it, they always thought it, they always believed it and then as soon as they found it, it was like, 'Oh!' [Janice exclaims in mock surprise and wonder], 'This is what this is about!'"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Lyn Daniels believes that teachers within her district who recently discovered their ancestral Native roots have been using First Nations values implicitly (Conversation, Lyn Daniels).

This issue of authenticity of identity goes back to questions I raised in the third chapter. The reader will draw his or her own conclusions, but across the conversations, I notice the following threads: a) Aboriginal philosophy comes from a particular place or "source" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe); b) There is a sense of loss of horizon or "isolation" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe) if identity is not actively practiced in, with and among communities; c) A strong understanding and/or practice of this philosophy enables the educator to be open to experiences because he/she is confident of identity; Nella Nelson uses the word "bridge" while Ruth Cook uses this word as well as "blend"; Lyn Daniels uses "bi-cultural". The common message is that "because of who you are" (Conversation, Nella Nelson) you are able to: bridge, blend, be bi-cultural; and d) Educators are careful to speak from their own perspective, and leary of either being exclusionary or of opening all borders. On exclusion, Janice Simcoe said something that linked back into the values underlying an Aboriginal epistemology. She said that we (as Aboriginal people) need to be *"opening our vision wide enough to recognize the gifts that may be coming to us from other sources that we don't understand yet"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). The word 'sources' ties into thread (a) (see above, page 224). In discussing authenticity in First Nations literature with Nella Nelson, she was critical of Native authors who write about First Nations experiences without ever having had those experiences. As Janice says in speaking of the need to return to her communities to see the sights and smell the smells of being among "brown people" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; see quote on page 272), Nella uses the same phrase in speaking of living "on the rez"; those experiences cannot be faked or merely imagined because of the "subtle" sights and smells (Conversation, Nella Nelson). I am pulling in Frank Conibear's word "subtle" that he used when speaking of the "experiential" component of teaching (Conversation, Frank Conibear), to show how the filaments of identity and experience are strongly interwoven for many First Nations educators.

Cross-culturally, the teaching that these human values (encouragment, trust, self-discipline, confidence, acceptance) are inextricably linked, even if and because that worldview belongs to another perspective, is a valuable one. One of the unfortunate tendencies of a certain polite and 'respectful' approach is the default move of surrounding any First Nations perspective with lines and boundaries, in effect, boxing it in, and thus shielding Western culture from being "penetrated" (to turn Geertz's (1988) words around) by another perspective that happens to come from another culture or worldview. To me this is yet another instance of what Frye (1971) calls garrison mentality: "A garrison is a closely knit and beleaguered society, and its moral and social values are unquestionable" (p. 226). Even though the lines are invisibly drawn, they are tangible, reverberating in that web of interrelationships that both Deloria (1991a) and Arendt (1958) talk about as fundamental to and always implicitly at work in human discourse and action.

How are these values of confidence, autonomy, trust, encouragement and acceptance interpreted and carried on by the generation of contemporary educators? In the following section, I focus on identity articulated through language and metaphors.

Contemporary Identity

The title I originally had for this part was: Brightness/Enrichment/Gathering/ Connecting. Each of these words comes from a particular place but I provisionally piled them side by side because of their synchrony. Together they form a constellation. When I was teaching grade seven, I became fascinated with how constellations are human constructs; they have no inherent astronomical significance. All they are is groups of stars whose dots someone's child-like imagination linked with lines to form a shape or picture. Unlike clouds, however, whose Protean shapes shift and reassemble in new guises, once a constellation is given a name, its unique brightness is recognizable as a constant presence. Or at least constant in our time and in the life of the star. The synchrony of this particular constellation of First Nations educators' metaphors reminds me too of the mediaeval author Boethius' reference to music as a harmony of the spheres. Because the same kind of understanding is being reiterated in different ways by individual educators, it creates a strong sense of synchrony and community: a vision that is embedded not in programs or curriculums, but in people: individuals who embody 'the people' in themselves, with all of the resonances that the word 'people' has for indigenous peoples (see: Deloria in chapter three, "The Ethics of Voice", pages 149-55).

Deloria (1991a) uses the word 'bright' to describe a particular kind of educator. I turned his adjective into a metaphor; his treatise on education supports this interpretation and I was also influenced by the images of light in Momaday's (1966) House of Dawn. All of these words - bright, enriching, gathering and connecting - assume a deeper and wider significance when seen in relation to one another, across conversations and within indigenous scholarship. Gathering is Janice Simcoe's word. Connecting is a word that traverses several conversations but the meanings Nella infuses into it propelled it into a metaphorical resonance. Enriching is a word that acquired significance from being used in similar contexts by different educators. As I go through each of these metaphors, it will become clear how they create bridges from one generation of educators to the other.

Most of Deloria's writings are on philosophy, politics, religion or scholarship. He wrote one short book on education in response to yet another of the government's reports on the state of Indian education in the United States. In motivation, Deloria's book belongs in the same tradition as Cardinal's (1969) Unjust Society, which was Metis scholar Harold Cardinal's angry rebuke to Trudeau's The Just Society and to then Minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chretien's, infamous White (Termination) Paper. In his short treatise on education, Deloria brings to bear all of his thoughts on Aboriginal epistemology as he reflects on what the role of indigenous educators should be in contemporary society. I begin with his book because, like the elders' words that we just heard, Deloria (1991a) places the question within (he would say) an appropriately broad context, the context of an Aboriginal epistemology or what he also calls "the traditional Indian perspective" (p. 50):

> Establishing the Indian context, in view of the absence of clearly defined tribal goals and philosophies, can be easily done by present Indian students. The primary question which they should ask themselves is whether or not what they are learning will have some meaning to tribal people. And the answer, at first glance, will be a resounding "No". We presently do not know how to bring knowledge and information back to the tribe because we have not paid sufficient attention to the history and culture of our people. We have been deluded into thinking that there is no applicability of information on behalf of the tribe or no possibility of making our knowledge meaningful. So we must use what we learn about the scientific understanding of the world to ask questions of our people about how our ancestors understood

> the world, remembering that the tribe exists over many generations and possesses a cumulative knowledge that transcends any particular generation. (Deloria, 1991a, p. 39)

The introductory chapter to Deloria's (1991a) treatise is appropriately called "American Indian Metaphysics: A Prelude to Understanding Indian Education" (p. 9). The fundamental principle of this metaphysics is the "realization that the world, and all its possible experiences, constitutes a social reality, a fabric of life in which everything had the possibility of intimate knowing relationships because, ultimately, everything was related" (Deloria, 1991a, p. 10). Eber Hampton (1995), in a study that resembles mine in that he interviewed contemporary Native educators, but educators who were graduate students in the Harvard School of Education, borrowed the six directions from the pipe ceremony: "I began a diagram to show the interconnections but quickly saw that everything was connected. So I began to search for a model, a metaphor, or a pattern that would somehow organize the themes and serve both as a mnemonic and a matrix for new ideas and actions" (p. 16). Hampton (1995) makes clear the metaphysical source of the six directions, which "are not a model but a pattern or an organizing principle . . . The six directions are a way of thinking about existing in the universe" (p. 16). This organizing principle arose from the words of the educators themselves. Like Deloria, Battiste speaks to both the symbolic epistemology of her ancestors and the cognitive imperialism of dominant society that has obtruded on that way of perceiving reality. Symbolic epistemology

> wove together the natural fact of being born into a certain family, a certain language, a spiritual world, and a material world. It created a shared belief

> of how the world works and what constitutes proper action. The sharing of these common ideals created a collective cognitive experience for tribal societies and tolerance for other societies.
>
> This common cognitive experience was, and remains, the core of tribalism . . . It bonded the people together with a strong worldview and an ideal of the Good in which others participated. (Battiste, 1986, pp. 26, 27)

Battiste (1998) sees this vision as potentially informing contemporary Aboriginal education: "A postcolonial framework cannot be constructed without Indigenous people's renewing and reconstructing the principles underlying their own world view, environment, languages, and how these construct our humanity" (p. 24). Archibald (1990) frames her understanding of orality from within Sto: lo traditions, turning to the elders for help in how to approach the topic in an academic setting: "Our Elders would first teach us to understand and appreciate our environment before letting the journey begin. In this paper, I will try to create an understanding of First Nations orality and Western literacy; briefly show how the two worlds collided; and then, pose some possible solutions. It is the Sto: lo tradition to pay attention to the guest first before serving oneself" (p. 68).

These quotes from First Nations educator-scholars show an attempt to understand and organize the world in terms of an Aboriginal or tribal epistemology. I don't know why we say 'attempt' as if the effort is only half-ways. The key is to match word with deed. All that we have on the page are words, yet they represent words that are not only written but spoken and enacted or transacted: turned into the 'grassroots' work of interweaving this epistemology into the real world of human relationships as well as turned into products like curriculum, reports, books and journal articles. The reality is that contemporary Aboriginal educators live within the modern world. It is not so much that they live in two worlds, like Hugh McClennan's two solitudes with a gulf inbetween; that is part of the story but not the whole of it. They live in this world, a world of their own making as well as one made and imposed by ideologies of imperialism and eurocentrism and cognitive assimilationism (Adams, 1985; Battiste, 1986, 1998; Kirkness, 1998; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Nella Nelson uses phrases like "we still have work to do" (Conversation, Nella Nelson) and Janice Simcoe says about representation of authentic voice, "We're not there yet", while elders like Ruth Cook remind the community of educators: "Look at how far we've come; look at what we have; we are doing it" (Ruth Cook, First Nations Community Advisory Meeting, April 19, 2000).

A word that some of the educators used, that I also encountered in the literature of First Nations educator-scholars but have heard immeasurably around me from First Nations people is: carry. Another word that has brings the same connotations is: walk. You walk with your ancestors, in other words, as you are walking through the system, your ancestors are walking with you. (Whenever I say "You", it is a stylistic device that sounds most appropriate; I am not saying that I walk with the ancestors. You means 'You, a First Nations person'). First Nations people have carried their epistemology with them wherever they go. As Janice Simcoe says, in a moment of anger mixed with indignation and a eureka kind of realization,

> *There was a fear, I think people still have that fear, that post-secondary education will somehow overpower their Indianness. It was a job interview, so*
>
> *I can never cite the woman who said it, but one of the greatest teachings I've had*

> *was someone saying in a job interview: "You can't educate the Indian out of me", and I thought, "Right on! You're absolutely right!" How could we get so caught up in the institution that we were attending that it* *even would occur* *to us that it was stronger than our teachings. Looked at it from that viewpoint, it's not possible. You can't go put somebody somewhere and give them a bunch of books to read for four years and wipe out thousands of years of tradition?! [Janice laughs]. You know, it's not that strong!".* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; her emphasis)

Deloria's (1991a) 'bright' educator is one whose teachings shine from within as he or she walks through a Western and alien education and whose brightness comes both from those ancestral teachings and from the resilience and applicability of the teachings in a contemporary context. It is a both/and approach but from within an Aboriginal worldview; both/and does not mean a Western view plus an Aboriginal worldview, which is how I had interpreted it prior to doing this study. The teachings are not adapted; they are applied:

> Initiating an accelerated educational system for Indians [i.e. assimilation] was intended to bring Indians up to the parity of middle class non-Indians. In fact it has pulled Indians into the western worldview and some of the brighter Indians are now emerging on the other side, having transversed the western body of knowledge completely. Once this path has been established it is almost a certainty that the rest of the Indian community will walk right on through the western world view and emerge on the other side also. (Deloria, 1991a, p. 60; my emphasis)

One of the ways in which this emergence on the other side can happen is through the 'gathering' of knowledge. Janice Simcoe says about her university training: "*I knew that I wanted to learn things and to gain knowledge. I think that I knew that I was not necessarily in a hostile environment but in an unfriendly environment for who I was and so I just walked through it with the goal of: I'm here to gather things, and that's all that I'm here to do* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Janice's "survival in school" was to "*walk through saying: I want this piece of knowledge, I want to know the ideology of that thought, I want to know the historical origin of this way of thinking, I want to be able to access these highly educated brains that work here, and I want to be able to read and gather from the reading that I do"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). The word 'gathering' reminds me of food-gathering: a careful and caring selection of things that you need to survive and that you like. Gathering therefore also suggests taking away what is beautiful as well as what is useful; you don't gather things that you don't need, where need is defined along both lines: food for the body, nourishment for the spirit. Gathering also implies a presence of mind, an active component of a person who is doing the gathering. Janice uses the word 'gather' in a related context of talking about the difficulty in convincing universities to let authentic First Nations voice in:

> *I often have this discussion with my husband about the kitchen. If there's something in there that he doesn't see a use for, he throws it away. I am more experimental when I'm cooking so I'll go buy sauces and spices and mixtures, you know, unusual things, and he'll find them in the cupboard and he'll chuck them out because he doesn't use them. [We laugh]. I think there's a good lesson*

> *in that. I think it happens really, really easily. We're in places where if what we're doing isn't understood, they'll throw it away, which means we're constantly watching, which also means that we can't go out and get new things and gather new ideas.* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; my emphasis)

In one setting, while engaged in degree work in an institution, gathering is a "survivial mechanism"; outside that setting in a role of working within and working alongside institutions, gathering also takes on the meaning of living. When you need to be constantly vigilant, you cannot attend to doing what you would otherwise be naturally engaged in, which is going out and gathering new ideas. Even the words 'going out', especially in connection with 'gathering', carry the resonances of going out to gather food, to earn a living, to practice 'our' traditional ways in 'our' traditional territory. In Bella Bella, if a person said, "I'm going out on the boat" or more likely, "We're going out", it meant that they were planning to go food fishing; food fishing is a shorthand way of saying to gather their traditional foods. Janice's words take on added meaning when seen alongside Ruth's words in the passage that opened this chapter (see: page 191), where Ruth talks about 'going out' on the boats; play and purpose are inextricably tied together: *"We'd play with the kelps and the shells. We never ran out of games to play. We would go out in the boats. There were small little islands around our village and we would go from island to island picking the fresh plants that were edible and the pretty little flowers. Oh, it was a paradise"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook; her emphasis).

Janice Simcoe contrasts her own way of surviving in university to another Native woman's who was having a difficult time; she was "*drowning*": *"she was drowning in isolation and confusion. She questioned the questions that the institution asked more* *than I did. The more she questioned, the more she realized she didn't have a clue how to answer. She was floating along not having any idea what she was doing there"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). A professor asked Janice to help this woman cope with university studies. Janice says that whereas she was supposed to help her, "*she helped me to be a better student and not a better student in terms of doing what the university wanted me to do, because I never did finish my thesis. I give this woman some credit for opening my eyes to the reality that the academic work that I was involved with then wasn't authentic and if it wasn't authentic, then it was not writeable. So it never got written"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). From one perspective, gathering is a survival mechanism, one that allowed Janice to go through the system without drowning: *"I knew if I looked too deeply at the system that I was walking through, I would be too aware of my aloneness to be able to stay there"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; my emphasis). Taking back gathering as an aspect of authentic voice means changing the surroundings so that gathering is not a survival mechanism but is an act in balance with the world: gathering as a way of living.

In the reality of contemporary society, gathering represents an ideal that has not been actualized because of the obstacles in a system that is not receptive to First Nations thought or letting 'authentic' First Nations voice in (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). An authentic First Nations voice is one that is itself; it lives out and practices an Aboriginal epistemology (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; Conversation, Lyn Daniels). When I asked Janice Simcoe to clarify what she means by authentic, both answers she gave demonstrate the presence of an Aboriginal epistemology, especially the idea of service: "*To me authentic means being true to real need (community need) as opposed to self-need* *(getting instead of giving). It means being aware of where you are on the continuum or circle, and the things that you are doing are contributing to the health of that circle"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary). Janice Simcoe explains: *"First Nations identity, for me, is your viewpoint of where you sit on the continuum in the universe, the place in that continuum where you are, and so from that place you have a viewpoint that you look at things"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). The continuum or circle is a description of the place identity (a healthy identity) can have in a First Nations person's life; it is an idea that Janice and her colleagues and students have been developing (Janice Simcoe, Personal communication, April 25, 2000). She goes on to specify that *"I think that the core of First Nations identity is being in the place we recognize that you are sitting amongst your ancestors and that you're sitting amongst the ancestors of the people whosoever territory you're on . . . if you understand that on one side of you are the ancestors and on one side of you are your grandchildren or your metaphorical grandchildren then you understand that you are a part of a broader picture that's tied to this land: tied to this land either smally, by being tied to the territory, or greatly, by being tied to Turtle Island, North America"* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; my emphasis). The role of unhealthy identity is something I address in the next two voices: 'Voice of Resistance: Quiet Rage' and 'Ironic Voice.'

Nella Nelson uses words like 'gleaning' and 'drawing the thread through' to express similar thoughts on how in an alien system you gather what you need and leave the rest behind: *"It was always a challenge to do the anthropological perspective and to glean out what in fact was your reality"*, Nella said, when I asked her about her experience of getting an anthropology degree (Conversation, Nella Nelson). *"The key is to draw the* *thread through. It's true we need to understand where we've come from and how we've lived but also we need to understand the transition and the change"*, she explained, on recounting a story about a phone call from England that the Friendship Centre had recently received asking if they could please set up some Indians in their natural habitat for the tourists to visit (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Drawing the thread through means: a) gleaning out that perspective and then b) pulling it through into the broader society so that the Friendship Centre does not receive those kinds of misinformed phone calls.

Another word that is close in meaning to brightness and gathering is enrichment. Enrichment travels in two directions. It is the perspective that a First Nations educator can carry into and communicate in the classroom: *"Just as long as we get more and more and more of our own teachers and that are culturally strong too, then they know how to blend the two together. Then you use it as an enrichment rather than as a cultural thing separating yourself from other people"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook). By culturally strong, Ruth means someone who has a firm grasp on the traditional teachings. If you have that, then you have an easier time mixing with other people and being open to other perspectives: *"together with the strong teachings from my mom and the elders, you can adapt anywhere when you feel good about who you are. You've got your teachings and you just take what's good for you out of both cultures. There's nothing wrong with that, because everybody does that. You know which part is good for you and which isn't"* (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Nella echoes her mom's words: *"it's because you know who you are that you can bridge"* (Conversation, Nella Nelson).

One of the most powerful words, a word that I adopted to describe the interpretive process, is connecting. It is a word that all of the educators used at some point, but Nella

Nelson relied on it most consistently, and had also turned it into a noun: connector (Conversation, Nella Nelson). The generating of new words is integral to Aboriginal languages: Nella's word for the First Nations children she fosters is "spirit-lenders" while Janice has transformed the word 'carry' into a noun; an educator is a 'carrier' (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Dorais (1993) wrote a fairly technical treatise on contemporary Inuit language in the Northwest Territories, and discussed how the Inuit generate new words by finding a connection with the existing language base. Nella Nelson had made a similar observation in talking about how her people invented a name for fridge because there was no such word in their language. The context in which Nella makes this comment is in speaking about one of her recurring themes, movement, here in the form of energy:

> *Teresa: For Native people everything is continuous; nothing is forgottten or left behind.*
>
> *Nella: Yeah, and I think that is the point where energy does transform. I mean, the energy moves in a new way but it's still the original energy. It's done in a different way but it still springboards from that original energy. I think that's true in our songs, in the evolving of our languages.* (Conversation, Nella Nelson)

The word 'connections', which like 'community', has become a convenient slogan or buzzword in modern educational discourse acquires a deeper resonance when placed in the context of an Aboriginal worldview, such as the one Nella Nelson is expressing, on the continual transformation of energy. Nella calls a child a "connector" (Conversation, Nella Nelson). She doesn't like the word 'fostering'; it sounds temporary, like Cook-Lynn's dislike of Wallace Steven's 'passing through' (see chapter three, pages 52 and 135). Nella says she is glad that she and her husband bought a big house, big enough to house all of the children and host gatherings for friends and community (Conversation, Nella Nelson). I think of a big house. Big houses are architecturally social places of belonging, built in such a way as to facilitate connecting among individuals and families. A child or young person who comes from "home" to stay with Nella's family in her home while attending school is in turn a "connector" to home:

> *I think that those children coming from home and not having parents have been that connector again about community and how to maintain those connections. And what I find really neat is sometimes when I'm walking down these halls or I go to meetings, I see, for example, kids from Kingcome. We're: "Hi". Sometimes everybody's a bit more formal but what's neat is when they go home in the summer and I go home, [we're] going down the road, going up the river. I think that connection has been as important a thread [for them] as it has been for me. You think, "Hey that's great", to be in those two environments; you go back and forth. I think that has developed a real strong thread for me and sense of connection*". (Conversation, Nella Nelson)

For Nella, connecting means "going out" to communities and experiencing the connection; it means accepting the role of being a connector and actively participating in getting the job done, the job being to make education a meaningful and successful experience for First Nations students (Conversation, Nella Nelson):

> *for me community means living it, being out there, supporting other agencies, it's attending functions and being there to show that you are part of the community. I think if you talk about community from a distance, then you*

> *don't feel that connection.*
>
> *You have your community that you work with, you have your community that you live with, you have your community that's attached to culture. I think there are ways to pull them together. But if you talk about community as an armchair community person, by that I mean you talk about community but you don't go out there, then you have a real problem with connection. For me community is being out there, being involved, doing things and connecting it to your home, your family, your workplace, and recognizing that we have tons of work to do.* (Conversation, Nella Nelson)

Frank Conibear also talks about connecting as living the culture. Frank's role as a speaker touches virtually every aspect of his living; it provides the ultimate link, from teaching to his work in the BCTF to writing his thesis to his role in the Coast Salish community and as the eldest son within his family. He likens living to a speech, and speaking to knowing what values to speak of and practice (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Culture is partly comprised of the ceremonies and social gatherings, but these are themselves expressions of a spiritual way of looking at daily living: *Where I see the role of values and the role of metaphors or whatever you want to call them come out is at times like at a funeral, you don't do this, you don't let babies near the body, because the spirit is supposed to be in the room, the spirit of the deceased, and actually it can do harm. Now that might sound like a little superstition looked at from the outside but attached to it, from where I sit, is what the heck does that mean in a larger context ? what about all the other spiritual experiences that we have? Including just having breakfast in the morning to going for a walk. There's: How to protect yourself. How to be safe. How* *to take care. How to respect your spirit or your body* (Conversation, Frank Conibear). While some of that knowledge has been lost, Frank is constantly aware of the importance of maintaining that connection within a Coast Salish horizon of metaphors and teachings (Conversation, Frank Conibear).

A word that Janice Simcoe uses whose meaning resembles connection is: source. The source is both where you go to get re-nourished as well as the knowledge of knowing where the sources are. The source is not only someone external to you, like an elder; it is also an inward knowing, if only the knowledge of where to go for knowledge and strength. In speaking of the film, The Gods Must Be Crazy, one of the mistakes we can make, Janice says, is assuming that we as First Nations educators can speak from the same traditional place as the bushman; that we still have that knowledge: *Someone like me would never be able to speak with a bushman's voice. And it's a mistake to ever think that we could. Although if you're away from the bush long enough, you may start believing that you can. Maybe that's another reason why you need to keep bringing up the community as a way to remind you of your own location. Because in some ways you can be imbued with so much authority simply because you're considered the only one there. On the other hand, and at the same time, imbued with absolutely no authority simply because you're the only one there* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Connecting is experiential: living the values is a way of connecting, because that way of living brings a person back to community and to the source but as Janice Simcoe says, we (as First Nations educators) need to remind ourselves that we live in and belong to a contemporary world. In the film, her point is illustrated by the difference between the bushman who lives in the Kalamari Desert, his community isolated from outside influences until the Coke bottle descends and causes temporary havoc, and the fleeting glimpse of a young African man in contemporary dress who has 'retreated' into the bush to re-connect with Nature and his own ancestral roots.

Voice of Resistance: Quiet Rage

The voice of resistance infuses the affirmative voice with realism. While the broader world for First Nations educators means speaking from within an Aboriginal epistemology, the affirming voice also exists within the wider context of a Canadian society that historically has been and continues to be antagonistic to First Nations voice. A healthy Aboriginal world exists as a genuine and supportive context while Eurocentric society is hostile to and marginalizes First Nations identity. Yet the first lives within the confines of the second. That is a harsh way of putting it, yet it reflects the reality of what First Nations educators do on a daily basis as they work within institutional settings, whether those places are Ministry offices, schools, colleges, universities, and even band schools, which abide by the Ministry of Education's provincial curriculum: *The dilemma . . . is that all of us (Native writers, scholars, academics) speak/work/teach in the colonizers' language, work - usually live - in the colonizers' environment, have careers derived from our relationship with the colonizers - sometimes . . . that relationship flows in our blood* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary on chapter three). Cook-Lynn (1996) says, in reference to indigenous people, we are all collaborators: "It is not just those people (the colonists) who came and invaded the lives and lands of our ancestors . . . It is what we have done to ourselves" (p. 145). Deloria (1985) points out that there is no place that is isolated from or immune to the influences of broader society (see: chapter three, p. 152). The only enclaves or "pockets" (Conversation, Lyn Daniels) are when Aboriginal people are being themselves amongst themselves: in gatherings like family dinners, feasts, celebrations, cultural dancing at the bighouse, meetings. With my family, I recently attended a potluck dinner and dancing hosted by the Kwagiulth Urban Society at the Mungo Martin House; I was one of two identifiably white spouses among a 'sea' of brown faces. I felt mildly uncomfortable because I didn't know very many people there. I let the feeling pass and trusted that gradually I would meet people, and they will know who I am (which is what happened). While there, I was observing the behaviour of tourists who arrived at the door of the bighouse, drawn by the sounds of activity and hearing drumming and singing. Some paused on the threshold and upon noticing the 'sea' of brown faces, intuited that this was not a public spectacle and left promptly, eyes cast down respectfully. Others barged in, seated themselves and then were quietly and unobtrusively asked to leave. As I noticed the differing responses, I also thought about how challenging it is to create a space of identity, culture and belonging that is not at risk of being invaded by the broader world.

The ceremonies in the Coast Salish longhouse, for example, are strictly protected. Denis (1997) recounts a case of a Coast Salish man whose relatives requested that he be put in the longhouse, he refused the ceremonies and took the longhouse to court for infringing on his constitutional right to individual freedom. Intrusions happen along multiple lines.

Another way in which the norms of society infringe on identity is through the racism that lurks, unexpected and uncalled for, around who-knows-which corner. Lyn Daniels' recent run-in with an innocuous-looking representative of Canadian society, the bell-boy, is an example. Lyn Daniels had already told me about an incident in a classroom where she was asked to come in to represent an Aboriginal perspective to the class, and one of the students called her a squaw:

> *Teresa: You told me experiences in classrooms where you encounter that [discrimination], even now?*
>
> *Lyn: Yeah.*
>
> *Teresa: Squaw.*
>
> *Lyn: Yeah, squaw. And even a while ago when I was in Vancouver I was staying at the Hotel Vancouver and I went to a movie, came back around twelve thirty, it was really quiet in the hotel and I started walking toward the elevator and one of those, whatever you call them, ushers. What are they called?*
>
> *Teresa: Bell boys.*
>
> *Lyn: Yeah. Stopped me. Asked to see if I had my room key. "Can I see your room key?" he asks. I said, "Oh, I look suspicious to you." "No, no that's not it at all. We have to ask everybody," he said. I thought, I bet. [we laugh]. I said [to myself], Yeah, I bet you ask everyone.*
>
> *And so that was his perception, that I didn't belong there.*
>
> (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

The voice of resistance is about exposing illusion: the illusion that First Nations voice can belong authentically within the existing frameworks of institutions and society. The voice of resistance exposes the social and political context of systemic discrimination and racism that silently yet potently influences education in schools: policy decisions, administrative protocols, teaching practices and societal attitudes (see: Adams, 1985). My conversation with Lyn Daniels opened on this note:

Teresa: Why don't we start with what we were just talking about? What does it mean for people to become educated? What did you mean by that?

Lyn: I guess I mean just understand the whole history, where Canadian society thinks Aboriginal people should be, becoming aware of that and thinking about how that plays out in your own life and in the life of your family members and your community. And how to change it. It's like a margin. They want you to be on a margin. That's the expectation is that you not be part of it, that you be marginalized . .

Teresa: You mean academics or scholars?

Lyn: Or the whole of society.

Teresa: Right.

Lyn: Just like sort of the purpose of residential school. Not sort of. That's what I think it is. Was. The purpose was not to educate people but to marginalize them and to destroy their sense of who they were as Aboriginal people. Have them take their places on the margins of society, the lowest level being those least valued kinds of work. Once you understand that, you start to develop a personal philosophy - the philosophy you have in your work that you do - that tries to get people to see that and to go beyond that, and not just live up to those low expectations: those expectations that tell you that,

"This is all you can do." (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

Strength lies in recognition. To use Frank Conibear's phrase, it is "cutting through" the smokescreen of palatable language (Conversation, Frank Conibear). Verna Kirkness, after decades of witnessing how educational change has evolved (or not) for

First Nations people in Canada, recently composed from within an unflinching voice of resistance. Her latest essay is entitled: "Our People's Education: Cut the Shackles, Cut the Crap, Cut the Mustard." Her previous articles, for example, the one on prejudiced textbooks (1977) or the one on the state of Aboriginal languages in Canada (1989), make much the same point, but in a milder, more objective and therefore academically conventional fashion. Her present dissatisfaction with the state of Aboriginal education stems from its falling short of the rhetoric. Her criticism is aimed at the system, and therefore implicates all who comply with the system's demands, both Natives and non-Natives. The 'system' is a shorthand way of describing the education system, as well as all other systems that overpower and oppress individuals and cultures (Conversation, Janice Simcoe):

> We have heard, read, and even said many times over the last 25 years that quality education for Our people must be based on our culture and on our history, yet we continue to base education on white, urban culture and history . . .
>
> We say that culture is language and language is culture . . . yet we continue to teach our languages for only a few minutes a day in our schools . . .
>
> We say that our education must respect our values and customs, yet we encourage competition rather than cooperation, the individual over the group . . .
>
> We expound on the importance of our Elders . . . We rarely ask them anything . . .
>
> We say that parents must play a major role in the education of their children, yet in many communities parents have no idea what is going on in the school . . .

> There is no doubt that we have mastered the art of expressing what education for our people should be. The rhetoric is there, but where is the substance? . . . we must first cut the shackles and free ourselves from mirroring a system that has not worked. Then we must cut the crap by less talk and more action, and finally we must cut the mustard, which is to practice what we preach. (Kirkness, 1998, p. 14)

A voice of affirmation sees things in a right perspective; right means in balance with the order of all things that Deloria (1991a) describes. This affirming voice clearly underlies Kirkness' scathing criticisms; it is where education ought to be. A voice of resistance, angry both at the lack of progress and the illusion of progress given through the smokescreen of rhetoric, sees things in a correct or an accurate perspective: this is how reality ought to be, but this is what really is happening, so we still have work to do. Moreover, the kind of work we need to do is not more of the same, as Kirkness (1998) points out, but something different.

The motivation for resistance and change comes from the teachings or traditional knowledge; without such a connection, there is no purpose for resisting. Reciprocally, as Janice Simcoe pointed out after reading this chapter, resistance or what she calls "quiet rage" is the "fuel" that propels her to do her job and advocate strongly, sometimes angrily and in frustration, for an affirming voice:

> *it would be dishonest to not also clarify that part of my identity as a First Nations person is rage. It sits in the background and isn't consuming (at least not anymore) but it's there. All the dead children and elders, all the lost knowledge, all the times of being called squaw, of being followed around*

> *in stores because they think Natives are thieves, all the crap, all my father's pain and my grandmother's pain, it all sits beside this peace of being connected. It fuels the passion to educate.* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary on chapter five)

Maggie made an interesting comment. She says that she does not believe that the things that take away from First Nations identity can comprise a true (or what I have been calling authentic) identity or self; she says this because of the sorrowing and loss and death that are associated with "drowning" in that knowledge: "*So that's a big issue, the residential school, a big, major issue. That makes you who you are . . . today. I feel like it's not your true identity [because] things were taken away from you*" (Conversation, Maggie; I am borrowing Janice Simcoe's word of 'drowning'). Yet paradoxically, as Maggie's words disclose, negative experiences are also identity-forming: they make a person who he or she is today. My question is: can true or authentic identity be created out of negative experiences? Should identity be polarized, as Northrop Frye (1963, 1976) argues, between the world we want to belong to, and what he calls a demonized world, a world that represents the antithesis of what we want to be? Are polarizations humanly fundamental or unuseful and simplistic?

Wagamese's (1997) Johnny, the non-Native who fulfills the role of resistance, is a lost spirit whereas his Native soul-mate, Josh, who experiences the bewildering onslaught of racism, channels his anger back into a fundamentally life-affirming vision, one that, ironically, originates in Christianity. Wagamese's message, as I read his novel, is that strength of character comes from both resistance and affirmation, but the place or soil (Significantly, Josh was brought up as a farmer) from which identity grows is the ideal: a healing or life-affirming vision (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Perspective or attitude makes a difference. Respect comes with living in a healthy way, which means accepting and meeting challenges (Conversation, Ruth Cook), even those "preventable" challenges: colonialism, discrimination, oppression.

I asked Nella Nelson how resistance fits into First Nations education in a context where people have gotten used to speaking about a revitalization or renaissance in First Nations culture. She replied: *"That is the part that is not focused on a lot, is how we did resist. That we were very active. That we didn't just lay over and die. That's a key part of the message to get out there as well"* (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Many of her people were arrested for continuing to potlatch after the infamous Ban on Potlatches was implemented. Cultural ceremonies went underground. She continues: *"I know the situation around [using the words] renaissance and revitalization is a difficult concept for a lot of people because you're right, a lot of times when they say the revitalization of our potlatch, our people get really upset because we never quit, we just went up into the inlets and hid and never quit. That's not our way"* (Conversation, Nella Nelson). A voice of affirmation speaks from a place of peace, beauty and harmony; a place where you can be who you are, and feel serene and secure in that knowledge and way of being: "*we were so fortunate because my uncle lived in one of those little villages and we used to go spend time there in the summers. We used to go up to Knight's Inlet . . . from the time I was six years old to fifteen years old to make eulachon oil and that was the highlight of our life. The fifteen of us packed on a boat going up to make eulachon oil . . . When you've had that experience, you can go to that quiet place in the city; you know that feeling. And sometimes it's that feeling or that place that gives you the strength"*

(Conversation, Nella Nelson; her emphasis). Nella's voice merges with her mom's as when Ruth vividly recounts the "paradise" of growing up in her village and being surrounded by land, waters and beaches (Conversation, Ruth Cook; see quote on page 191).

Strength is needed for resistance, like Jane Constance Cook, Nella's great-grandmother, who had a strong political voice and stood up for what she believed in at a time when it was dangerous to do so. She was the only woman in the Alliance of Allied Tribes: *"I look at my great-grandmother, Jane Cook, and her picture with the Allied Tribes of BC* [the one that hangs in the dining room of Ruth Cook's house], *and she was out there with a political voice at that time"* (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Whereas a voice of affirmation is connected with belonging, a voice of resistance is more closely tied with "being out there" (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Being "out there" means being out there in the broader and harsher society, and it also means actively defending and supporting your identity, who you are as a First Nations people or person. Nella speaks in similar words about her own work as an educator: *"Community means living it, being out there, supporting other agencies, it's attending functions and being there to show that you are part of the community"* (Conversation, Nella Nelson).

Sometimes resistance means standing up for the community in a way that the community does not agree with; community exists as the real group of people with whom we live and associate with and are related to, but it also exists as a separate reality, exactly in the way that Cook-Lynn, who is somewhat of a pariah within Native circles, articulates a vision of tribal voice that is not predicated on what people are actually saying or doing, but on what has been done traditionally and therefore should be done now and into the future (see: chapter three). Nella's granny walked such a fine line:

> *Nella: You have to be independent. My great-granny was very independent, very political. She became an intepreter in the potlatch trials and there was a lot of negative stuff that went over because she did. There were issues in the potlatch that she was against but if you actually do research into a lot of the documentation she wrote, she wasn't totally against the potlatch, she was against what it evolved into. But that was another issue. How our family was pulled away from the culture.* (Conversation, Nella Nelson)

Frank Conibear's resistant voice comes through most strongly when he is talking about resisting being or being taken in by the stereotypical Indian (Conversation, Frank Conibear), an image that lives in books and textbooks but that, as Lyn Daniels observes in speaking of James Banks' discussion of identity (Conversation, Lyn Daniels), is also carried on through indigenous people themselves who assume and live out those stereotypes. Lyn Daniels talks about how at one time she herself perpetuated those stereotypes:

> *Teresa: Do you think that those experiences of discrimination, the stereotypes about Native people that were directed at your parents, the institutional racism, society's racism, do you think those have been formative influences? I know from the time I've known you, one of the constant . . . I don't want to say battles . . .*
>
> *Lyn: Uh, humm*
>
> *Teresa: But always being on the front lines of educating people about First Nations, about authenticity, having authentic resources in the schools. Do you think those experiences played into that, or did that come from a different place?*

Lyn: No I think they did. I remember friends often saying to me: You're not really a Native. And I would say: Yes I am. My mom knows how to do beadwork. She knows how to make mucklucks. My dad drinks a lot. Afterwards I thought: Oh god, isn't that terrible. That stereotype.

Teresa: Did you actually say that to them?

Lyn: Oh yeah. Because what else are you? That's a stereotype that you internalize and that's what I saw. All these families were alcoholics. That's what I thought. I knew it had something to do with being an Indian. That's what it seemed like and so that's what I thought it was.

Have you ever read James Banks when he talks about levels of ethnicity? People with ethnic identify to different degrees with their ethnic backgrounds. He created this model about how people identify [with] or have different degrees of ethnicity. Usually they start with the stereotypes because of the pressures from mainstream society and the lack of any information in the white school culture which doesn't include you. You don't exist; you only exist on the margins; you only exist in these stereotypes. Everybody believes those stereotypes to begin with. Then you don't identify with that, or else you do; you think: I can just live on welfare. People live out the stereotype. Or: drinking is what I do and so that's who I am and that's it. Education about your ethnic group can move you to the next level, where you become ethnocentric. In the process of learning about your own identity, you assume that your culture is better. But people have to go through that stage, to feel all that pride in who they are and their history and their people. But then you move to another

> *level, where you're clarifying, of clarification, and then the next level is when you're bi-ethnic, when you feel comfortable in two worlds.*
>
> *Whenever I present this, people ask me: Well, are you bi-ethnic? [we laugh]. I guess to a certain degree, I could be. But most of the people aren't. Most people are in the first one, and I think it's called the ethnic encapsulation. How I see they're encapsulated is that they can't see beyond the stereotypes, that the decisions they are making are keeping them there.* (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

In a later conversation, I clarified with Lyn whether she sees First Nations identity as "ethnic"; she said that no, it is just a name that an academic (like James Banks) invents in order to make clear the fact that people come from different backgrounds and that they do not always acknowledge their community of origin (Conversation, Lyn Daniels).

Resisting living out the stereotypes is still an issue Aboriginal students have to grapple with, as in a recent conversation my daughter had with her 'best friend' who said: You're not an Indian; you don't look Indian. Her response was to say: "Yes I am", and then tell me. My response was to stand with my daughter in line at school the next day and tell her friend, kindly but firmly, what nation my daughter belongs to and that her granny and grandpa and aunts and uncles and cousins are all Native, which makes her Native too. Maggie recounts how contemporary First Nations students struggle with shirking stereotypes that originate, as Lyn Daniels points out, not only from the broader society but also from Native people themselves taking on those stereotypes; Janice Simcoe used the phrase "taking on" to describe how sometimes educators take on the language of the system and forget to speak with an authentic voice (Conversation, Janice Simcoe):

> *Maggie: Some kids don't want to be Natives, they're ashamed to be Natives*
>
> *Teresa: Here?*
>
> *Maggie: I asked them. Some of them [said] "I'm not Indian."*
>
> *Teresa: Where do you think they get that from?*
>
> *Maggie: They're not proud of who they are. All they see is bad Natives or hear bad things about what we are, like we're nothing but drunks. So we need to begin to raise up strong people.* (Conversation, Maggie)

A voice of resistance enters First Nations educators' language from another but related direction. This voice protects the authenticity of First Nations voice, preventing it from being assimilated or co-opted into the 'system' or dominant society. Two educators independently referred to the same phenomenon and responded to it in similar ways. They both resisted becoming what they called the system's "Native star" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe; Conversation, Lyn Daniels). A Native star, as the name implies, is a First Nations person whose success in navigating higher education singles them out for special attention; the price for this attention is being turned into a symbol of the system's ability to both accommodate and produce such an individual.

Lyn recounts an incident in a Native Studies class where she chose to leave and go home because of a death in the family. When someone in the community dies, everyone pulls together to support the family and honour the one who has passed on. One of the ways in which this is done is through community gatherings and ceremonies, which involve regular influxes of food:

Lyn: I remember in university in the SUNTEP program, it was like they were trying to make me into their star pupil or star student. There was this one time. It was in the summertime. My grandma died . . . It was a Native Studies class, it was only going to last three weeks and I had to do all this work and plus I had to go to my grandma's funeral. I just decided I'm not going to write all those papers because I just can't. I couldn't concentrate. And they were putting all this pressure on me, you know, they were all concerned that suddenly that I was going to . . .

Teresa: Fail

Lyn: Yeah. I just thought, I'm not doing this for you, for you to say, oh look at this work that we've created, this wonderful student. I'm part of this too, you know . . . I remember how mad that made me to think that I would just go along with them, and say "Oh, you're right, I should just write all of these papers". It wasn't that I didn't want to do it; it just made me really, you know . . . upset that they wanted to have this control over me, that I should perform no matter what; I guess that was the novelty thing too. I'm just like that; that there's always this part where I'm not going to go along. I can go along with things for so long, and then I have to have some relief somehow, where you're not going along with it.

Teresa: Well, family too . . . When someone dies in the community, people go . . .

Lyn: Or how you're going to write a paper when you're cooking for a hundred people. Like you just can't do it. I suppose I could have stayed up all night. But I just didn't want to.

Teresa: First things come first.

Lyn: Yeah. (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

Lyn's resistance comes from a place of not wanting "them" (the university, the system, society) to control who she is as a Native person; Ruth Cook displayed the same anger at the Indian Agent forbidding her mother to go to England to develop her singing voice (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Lyn resists being created: being made into a creature of someone else's fantasy or story like the creatures in Spenser's Faerie Queene who are caught in the spell of Acrasia's arbour, an arbour made to look like a haven. All of these resisting voices come from that place that Janice Simcoe calls "quiet rage" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe); I can hear that anger as I listen to their voices, as if the incident happened only yesterday.

The potential for institutions to uplift an individual as a cultural representative is far from remote, and is one of the practices the BCTF First Nations Task Force (1999) warns teachers against doing to First Nations students in the classroom, and schools from doing to First Nations staff. The other danger for institutions is of assuming credit for producing an authentic Aboriginal voice. This is precisely what Lyn Daniels intuitively resisted. Part of that resistance comes from her self-awareness and identity as an Aboriginal person, and part of it is, as she says, from who she is as a person: "*I'm just like that; that there's always this part where I'm not going to go along. I can go along with things for so long, and then I have to have some relief somehow, where you're not going along with it*" (Conversation, Lyn Daniels). For Lyn Daniels, though, the personal is political therefore the two identities merge into one.

Another word that Lyn uses for Native star is "novelty"; she speculates that her brother, an artist, has never tried to enter the market for Native art because he too resisted being society's "novelty" (Conversation, Lyn Daniels). Although she and her brother journeyed along different paths, where hers involved moving into a career in education and literacy and his did not, they share this resistance. Lyn suspects that her brother's way of resisting is passive; he simply does not participate, like the Aboriginal students that Lyn observed who all miserably failed a Science test in high school:

> *Lyn: I remember we would get back a Science test and some people would have 4% on it and you knew it was just passive [resistance]. I knew it was.*
>
> *Teresa: They could have done better*
>
> *Lyn: But they didn't want to. I knew that they weren't dumb. But I just used to think: Why is that?.* (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

Lyn Daniels elaborated on how the resistance that has always been a fundamental part of her character is asserting itself within her role in the system. She is standing up for her vision of Aboriginal education, one that is informed by an affirming voice. The two voices, affirming and resistant, are working together to create an even stronger voice: "*I can remember having arguments when I was younger. Maybe it was because of the way I said things when I was younger. Maybe because now I have thought things through and I have experience and I have the rationale now whereas before you didn't necessarily have the rationale, you just have a feeling, you might not be able to articulate it. Then also when you're younger, disagreement is so much harder, or it was for me, to disagree with people, whereas now I can say to people: I disagree with you*" (Conversation, Lyn Daniels).

Janice was doing a Masters in History. She decided not to complete her thesis, because to do so would have been to write in an "inauthentic" and complicitous voice: *"I give this* [Native] *woman* [who I was helping] *some credit for opening my eyes to the reality that the academic work that I was involved with then wasn't authentic and if it wasn't authentic, then it was not writeable. So it never got written*" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Janice explains further:

> *Part of the reality of being in education is the slipperyness of the definition of success. I don't consider not finishing my thesis to be unsuccessful; I consider it to be a very good decision and I think that having done graduate work was a really good thing. It would be nice sometimes to have a M.A. behind my name, it would probably open some doors for me that are not open right now, and it would make my dad real proud of me. But if I had published, if I had finished writing what I was writing, and the university had decided to do what it had done a little bit, which was: "Okay, here's our Native star," they may have been encouraged to take an inauthentic version as true and that would have been a tragedy. So I'm real glad that didn't happen.* [Laughter] (Conversation, Janice Simcoe)

An inauthentic version, Janice clarified, is one that subordinates community to self-interest (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary). For Ruth Cook, life is for living on purpose (Conversation, Ruth Cook). Life cannot be lived for an inauthentic purpose. The voices of resistance are about the ethical daily decisions the individual makes in face of and on behalf of community.

The next voice is also a questioning voice. It questions the progress that First Nations education has made. It questions First Nations education, asking: What do we mean by First Nations education? What are we trying to accomplish? The ironic voice needs to be distinguished from the kind of critical voice that wants to tear down or divide indigenous people. As I hear the ironic voice, it comes from a place of reflection, both reflection on the whole of *praxis* within First Nations education from an individual's particular vantage point, as well as continual self-reflection on the person's own role within that context. A question that Lyn stops and asks herself before diving into a project is: 'What is the purpose of this?'. I will interpolate the voices of other educators within the following two sections, but primarily for the ironic voice, I will focus on Lyn Daniels.

Ironic Voice

Lyn recognizes that she thinks in an ironic mode (Conversation, Lyn Daniels); this mode is often tied to humour, or what is sometimes called Indian humour. I am not First Nations but from my experience, I know what Indian humour is and what it feels like to be enfolded within it. In my darker moments, I also know as a *qvmxsiwa* (white person) what it feels like to be the object of it. Lyn's dialogue is interspersed with examples of her wry sense of humour, especially allusions to stereotypes about Aboriginal people, particularly the ones that Aboriginal people have adopted themselves. I think we are all familiar with these kinds of human foibles; the ones that we can't help perpetuating even while we recognize their absurdity, and the humour in continuing even while aware of the absurdity. Bingo, for example. Bingo has been criticised by Native people themselves as well as by non-Natives for its destructive effects on communities, yet strangely it has evolved into a way of bringing people together and creating a common interest, some might even say, a common language. It is inextricably tied with fund-raising, which is the back-bone of many First Nations communities.

Lyn Daniels and I were talking about Aboriginal educators. As a humorous kind of afterthought, Lyn threw in a reference to playing bingo. It is the complicitous nature of humour to both jog us into seriousness, into paying attention to what we all do because we are all human, while at the same time taking us out of our seriousness to see things in a truer and broader perspective. The substantive point Lyn was making is that there is no clear direction in Aboriginal education and that that is a by-product of not having enough Aboriginal educators to form a "critical mass" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe, Reflective commentary) around education. This point ties in closely to Lyn's agreement with Eber Hampton's thesis about *sui generis* education.

> *Lyn: There's no clear direction, and like, how could there be? You can't make people want the same things you want, or the things you want them to understand.*
>
> *Teresa: What kinds of other things are they concerned with?*
>
> *Lyn: I guess their family. Of course you have to have a family. And that's their life too. And so I don't know. It's not that I think the people aren't working hard enough, I guess that's the thing, there just aren't enough of us. Watching tv, or playing bingo* [she laughs]. (Conversation, Lyn Daniels)

The reference to playing bingo and watching television deflects attention from one of the real roots of the problem that the BCTF First Nations Education Task Force has also tackled: employment equity. It is not because First Nations educators are not working hard enough; it is not as if they are "out there" (Conversation, Nella Nelson) during the day watching tv or playing bingo instead of doing the grassroots and leadership work they were hired to do. At the same time, the reference is an indictment of the general lack of direction within Aboriginal education: we might as well be out there watching tv or playing bingo because what we are doing now is not making enough of a difference or the right kind of difference; it's not enough just to be Aboriginal and to be "out there." The humour cuts across both communities: the system for not doing enough, and Aboriginal educators for not doing enough of the right thing, whatever that right thing is. This innocuous-looking humour, which makes the point sharply but indirectly, is preceded by a more serious ironic perspective that makes the point more clearly and directly. Beneath the surface of the ironic perspective lies Lyn's belief in the inextricability of the political with the personal: *"it's so ironic, when you start out in education, you're doing a certain kind of work so that eventually you may not have to do that, but then here it is fifteen years later, you're still doing the same thing. So though even though you grow, there's nobody growing along with you. The rest of the population just stays still. I don't just mean the non-Aboriginal population, I mean the Aboriginal educators too. They're concerned with other things"* (Conversation, Lyn Daniels).

Embedded within Lyn's ironic perspective is an affirming vision of Aboriginal education, as the following reflection on our conversations discloses:

> *Lyn: When you are articulating Aboriginal education for curriculum or lessons, your focus is on how to teach Aboriginal students, because that is always what you are asked to do. You have to put it within a framework that has to do with Western education, and you know that it doesn't go there. The structures have to*

evolve from Aboriginal knowledge. It [Hampton's argument] made a lot of sense to me that it would, and it could, and it can.

Teresa: How do you see your role in achieving that?

Lyn: Well it's really interesting because someone recently . . . asked me,

> Indian education *sui generis* is Indian education as 'a thing of its own kind' (National Advisory Council on Indian Education, 1983), a self-determined Indian education using models of education structured by Indian cultures. The creation of Native education involves the development of Native methods and Native structures for education as well as Native content and Native personnel. It is the tension felt by Native educators, teachers, administrators, and curriculum developers as they attempt to fit their practice into non-Native structures that generates the creativity necessary for the development of the new Native education. (Hampton, 1995, p. 10)

Hampton is clear that *sui generis* education does not imply segregation. He also acknowledges Deloria's influence, whose ideas I recognize in Hampton's vision: "The recognition of the uniqueness of Indian education and the contribution it has to make to society does not imply a kind of segregation. Most Native cultures have tended toward inclusiveness and have valued diversity (Deloria, 1970)" (Hampton, 1995, p. 10). A *sui generis* education also agrees with the seminal paper put out by the National Indian Brotherhood (now called the Assembly of First Nations) in 1972, a manifesto that is often cited (BCTF First Nations Task Force, 1999; Kirkness, 1998). The distinguishing characteristic of *sui generis* education is its incorporation of the values of traditional Indian education within a contemporary setting. Hampton (1995) defines traditional education as more or less tribally specific, linked with the particular histories of each tribe (p. 8) whereas a *sui generis* Indian education comes about through Aboriginal educators who are from different nations trying to come to grips with working within a system that does not feel right. Within this crucible, positive change comes about.

Lyn's ironic perspective brings out the illusion of movement in a situation she describes more as stasis. It points to the necessity for Aboriginal educators to concentrate their efforts on creating Native structures. The fact is Aboriginal education exists within that difficult place between a rock and hard place, where the rock is the mainstream system, with all of its silent language as well as its funding rules and bureaucratic manoeverings, and the hard place is the vision, the ideal space, the space of belonging, the place of safety, where many Aboriginal educators want Aboriginal education to get to. As I tried to show in the section on Affirming Voices, many contemporary Aboriginal educators are already dwelling in that space where traditional values or teachings and contemporary reality meet, at least in terms of their philosophy, which is what they try to put into *praxis*. What the ironic voice shows up is that the existing structures are not supporting that perspective. When in a later conversation we returned to the question of achieving an authentic voice, Janice Simcoe said: we are not there yet (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). She meant that the structures are not in place yet to allow for the presence and freedom of an authentic First Nations voice.

Bridging Voice

A bridging voice returns us full circle to an affirming voice. The bridging voice affirms the possibility for mutual understanding and respect. It emanates optimism but within a carefully conceived framework. It is about what we - both Native and non-Native educators and learners - can teach and learn from one another. I am reminded of the significance of the circle within First Nations thought, but I also recall, from my world, a symbol alluded to in English literature and used by the medieval mystics, of the ouroboros, a snake encircled, its tail bound in its mouth, representative of wisdom. The ouroboros, in one interpretation, stands for "the binding force of the universe, which interrelates the parts" (Chetwynd, 1982, p. 364).

Bridging is a word that Nella Nelson and Ruth Cook use to communicate the felt imperative to not remain enclosed within parochial boundaries set by self or society, but to "reach out" and "share" with other peoples, societies and cultures (Conversation, Ruth Cook). The notion that First Nations educators have a responsibility to fulfill this more expansive pedagogical role is carried by certain phrases that Nella Nelson, for example, has adopted. One such phrase is "social conscience": *"I've become part of the social conscience of the shift that's happening, the awareness that's happening. A social conscience for all people, not just First Nations. I think what we have here when all these people are saying"we need to look at this" is a lot of strong political and social will. Principals and district administration are recognizing: this is not a First Nations issue; this is a system's issue. We all have to look at our role in it and what we can do to make a difference. I think that that I've never felt that momentum as strong as I do right now*" (Conversation, Nella Nelson). A bridging voice tracks the inevitable points of convergence between a First Nations perspective and a non-First Nations one, inevitable because both are human perspectives. This voice is rooted in the social ends of education, where the vision or end is enlightenment, understanding or awareness and concomitantly, freedom. In the context of human identity in this thesis, the freedom consists in being in society who you are, as an individual and as a nation or people. That vision is ideally attainable within a society that accepts the inherent worth of a mutual understanding of differences.

A bridging voice reminds us that a First Nations perspective is fundamentally a human - and humanistic - worldview, humanistic in that it is and has generally been open to the teachings of others not versed in its ways of looking at and experiencing the world. Janice Simcoe says that she has often thought that "*some of the things that are considered to be First Nations knowledge are human knowledge but we [as First Nations peoples] haven't forgotten it. Instead of knowing more, we have forgotten less*" (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). Janice Simcoe's statement is two-pronged. It is an evaluative judgment of the modern penchant for accumulating knowledge within a Western worldview, and an aphoristic suggestion of an alternative way of looking at knowledge, a suggestion that connects with a tradition that is strongly embedded within Western culture but whose contemporary relevance has been concealed in favour of more technocratic forms of knowledge. Plato's words on knowing as remembering, or most recently, Rorty's (1998) on understanding as an act of putting old wine into new bottles, are shards that come to mind. An Aboriginal perspective is inclusive. It can speak meaningfully across to individuals or cultures outside of itself, as it has to me, even while remaining a mediating of the world through First Nations eyes or values. The aspect of First Nations contemporary culture that allows me to "belong" to it, using Gadamer's (1975/1998) language, is the humanistic voice that reaches out to anyone who is listening and receptive. As Frank Conibear puts it, First Nations educational issues speak to "everybody" (Conversation, Frank Conibear).

Statements from the educators that point to the presence of a bridging voice are: 'A First Nations approach is not only successful with First Nations children but with all children' (Conversation, Nella Nelson; Conversation, Maggie; Conversation, Ruth Cook) or 'If universities want to become more authentic places for knowledge, then they need to include First Nations voice in meaningful ways' (Conversation, Janice Simcoe) or 'A *sui generis* First Nations school would be open to all children, not just Aboriginal learners' or 'A First Nations angle on teaching is about seeing the world through multiple perspectives' (Conversation, Lyn Daniels).

This bridging voice is also present in the BCTF First Nations Task Force's (1999) recommendation that 'All First Nations tasks or projects in schools should not automatically devolve on First Nations staff'. Why is that? A non-Native person might think that if the goal of First Nations education is to get First Nations voices and perspectives into schools, First Nations staff ought to handle First Nations issues. But arguing in this purely logical way, as Garver (1998) points out, misses the point. If genuine cross-cultural dialogue is to happen, then teachers from different cultural backgrounds need to be working together and alongside of one another, rather than stepping out of each other's way.

Lee Maracle (1989) told Anne Cameron, a popular non-Native author, to move aside and make room for Native authors. She complied, dutifully silenced for a few years. She has now reentered the writing field but in collaboration with a First Nations writer. Her most recent children's book is a co-authoring with a Sliammon elder, Sue Pielle, whose name appears first on the cover (Pielle with Cameron, 1999). These kinds of collaborations can turn out to be, as LeCompte (1992) would argue, instances of "double-description and double consciousness" (LeCompte, 1993, p. 17): "the consciousness, or embrace, of the 'other' in ways that change" educators and researchers and those they study or with which they work alongside "so that their destinies are inextricably linked and shared" (LeCompte, 1993, p. 17). Learning that constructs cross-cultural bridges needs to be reciprocal and reciprocated. Maria Campbell tells of an experience that she had of co-authoring with a non-Native author in which the effort required to inform the other person of her perspective was grossly disproportionate to Maria's own acquired learning, which turned out to be minimal (Lutz in conversation with Maria Campbell; Lutz, 1991). The effort at understanding did not result in a converging of differing perspectives but in a benign occlusion of voice.

Frank Conibear thus clarifies what he means when he says that the issues raised by First Nations education apply to everybody. He is wary of diluting a First Nations perspective into a multicultural "we are all one big family" ideology (Conversation, Frank Conibear). With the evaporation of boundaries, self-determination, as the primary goal of a *sui generis* education, fades. The distinctive cultural aspect of identity needs to be foregrounded in order to create the possibility for hearing an authentic First Nations voice.

Out of belonging to (i.e., leaning towards) and attending to distinctive worldviews comes the recognition that individuals are attached to communities that are greater than themselves. Some of those communities carry particular responsibilities. In a tribal setting, those obligations can be exclusive and very specific. Frank uses the example of canoe pulling: There's a certain way of putting the canoe in the water, the canoe has to be blessed before you set out in it, you have to be in a 'clean' state of mind while in the canoe (Conversation, Frank Conibear). The responsibility to the wider human community, though, is to bridge and somehow, as Nella Nelson says, those apparently disparate acts of connecting to communities link (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Frank Conibear's journey, speaking out of his own experiences as a "Bill C-31 baby", to reclaim his "right" to be who he is as a Native person within Coast Salish culture, connects with his work within the BCTF, which is oriented towards the broader community of educators: he reminds himself "not to exclude" others (Conversation, Frank Conibear) as he himself once felt excluded.

Among the educators, I therefore found a perspective of openness existing alongside the recognition that understanding is culturally and individually specific. This perspective is endemic, I would think, to educators, who are committed to something analogous to an affirming vision of literacy, one that rests on lifelong learning. Each First Nations educator articulates from a perspective of their own particular truth, as Nella Nelson reminded me (Conversation, Nella Nelson). Their bridging voices express that more universal teaching, that if people choose to hear it, can be powerfully informing. In that respect, the bridging voice is not confined to statements of bridging. It embraces all of the teachings, particular and universal, of First Nations educators and a contemporary Aboriginal worldview, that can speak across to and link up with other cultures and individuals, as in Lee Maracle's metaphor of the arc (see next page), or Nella Nelson's of the bridge.

In the introduction to chapter three, I described my own methodology as beginning in Western thought and building bridges to First Nations thought and voice. Willinsky (1998), in his Learning to Divide the World, catalogues the cumulative effect of imperialism on the subject areas of Western education. His book is informed by a vision of a de-colonized Western education no longer held within the thrall of unrecognizable attitudes of polarized, hierarchically separated worldviews. These calcified attitudes are woven so deeply within our language, says Willinsky, as to be invisible, especially to ourselves.

In education, through a new self-genesis, we are in danger of enacting yet another subtraction story, resurrecting ourselves from a colonizing past instead of, as Willinsky (1998) argues, appropriating it as our own and moving on from there. The bridges that I am speaking of constructing are strictly metaphorical. They are built for the purposes of creating that open space within which dialogue can occur. The bridges do not broach a newly conceived First Nations frontier. A necessary correlate to a bridging First Nations voice is my own voice. The bridges have to be built from both ends, meeting in that potential space of understanding so as to become tangibly realized in the human world: "the reality of the world is guaranteed by the presence of others, by its appearing at all; "for what appears to all, this we call Being", and whatever lacks this appearance comes and passes away like a dream, intimately and exclusively our own but without reality" (Arendt, 1958, p. 199; Arendt quotes from Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics). Or as Lee Maracle (1992) says: "Inspired by my need to experience oneness with you at the crest of an arc of our mutual construction in a language we both understand, I build my end of this arc, word by word, dream by dream. This arc becomes the meeting place of our two worlds. The desire for this arc, this meeting place, this oneness does not negate the existence of both our worlds. The arc pre-supposes the harmony of both: not inviting the invasion or the suppression of my world by yours. It invites sharing between them" (p. 15).

Deloria's (1991a) vision is of Native intellectuals being "pulled . . . into the western worldview and . . . emerging on the other side, having transversed the western body of knowledge completely. Once this path has been established it is almost a certainty that the rest of the Indian community will walk right on through the western world view and emerge on the other side" (Deloria, 1991a, p. 60). An analogous vision underlies this thesis for Western intellectuals such as myself, except that "the other side" is contained within a Western worldview, a worldview that has yet to bridge within itself from a de-colonizing education to its own affirming humanistic voice, voices that I have identified as conveyed within the writings of scholars such as Gadamer, Arendt, Taylor, and Rorty.

Conclusion

Although these four - affirming, resistant (quietly raging), ironic, and bridging - are the voices I became attuned to, there could of course be others or different ones. To return to the metaphor of the three-way mirror, continuing conversations with the educators might bring out undisclosed aspects of their being or thought. I noticed modulations and shifts in the conversations over time. Certain events in the educators' lives provoked thought: Janice Simcoe reflecting on Phil Fontaine's visit to Camosun College (Conversation, Janice Simcoe); Frank Conibear's ruminations on subtle changes in perspective within the BCTF membership (Conversation, Frank Conibear); Nella Nelson's subdued anger at political challenges that detract from accomplishments in First Nations education (Conversation, Nella Nelson); Lyn Daniels' optimism for literacy as a way to develop voice, which overlaps with her recent involvement in Aboriginal Head Start programming. Maggie shared that her idealism in the Native Language program was faltering until the community received a needed infusion of energy through a series of workshops for Native Language instructors (Maggie, Personal communication, March 2000). Rather than taking these voices as standing in for the educators themselves, they are more representative of contemporary First Nations education as a whole as I have come to understand it through these conversations: its successes, its obstacles, its challenges, its ironies, and its movements.

I close this chapter with a quote from Maria Campbell that helps to put this chapter within an appropriately humbling yet optimistic perspective.

> I don't believe that those stories should be recorded by anybody except us. I don't think that you have any right to come into my community and tell my stories for me. I can speak for myself. I share them with you, and you can read them. And if you come into the circle, and I tell you the stories, then you should respect that you're invited into the circle.
>
> You know, when you go to visit somebody, and they make you tea, you don't walk off with the tea-set - the stories are the same thing. Either you are a friend of the people, or you're not. And if you're a friend of the people, you don't steal . . . You don't go walking into somebody's personal places and pick through their stuff and decide what you're going to walk off with! It doesn't matter what culture you come from, it's bad manners to do that! . . .
>
> I believe that in your culture, there are the same beautiful things that are in mine, and that we should be sharing those things. And as artists, writers, if we really are healers and teachers, and we're committed to that, then we have to be responsible for the things that we give back to our community. Otherwise, why are we talking about trying to create a better world for ourselves? . . . the way we can change that is to have a dialogue that's meaningful and honest. (Maria Campbell in conversation with Harmut Lutz (1991), p. 57)

Conclusion

Deloria (1991a) envisions educators walking through the system to the other side, carrying their teachings with them and, Janice Simcoe adds, gathering new and useful knowledge along the way (Conversation, Janice Simcoe). The other side means both the "broader world" of contemporary society and a world informed and transformed by the Aboriginal knowledge of the First Nations educators/"carriers" ("broader world" and "carriers" are Janice Simcoe's words; Conversation, Janice Simcoe). The source for the strength to walk through contemporary systems is community. Education is one such system. The community of First Nations educators is enfolded within other communities that support their work directly and indirectly. Individuals do not and indeed cannot stand alone, in isolation or even in self-genesis:

> *I have to go to my adopted communities for rejuvenation. I know I need to go to ceremonies . . . and just be in the presence of a lot of brown people and hear the sounds of laughter, and hear the special sounds, and smell the special smells; that energy is there . . . I need to go to those things and just shut up and listen. Not carry my job.*
>
> *And I need to go to the community of First Nations educators and First Nations education service providers that speak each other's language . . . Sometimes I think we get together as much to be with each other, not that we don't do lots of work, but we don't conduct meetings in the same way; it's also a coming together and holding hands and looking at each other, and then getting on with what curricular changes need to be made . . .*
>
> *Then I have my own nuclear family and extended family. A place where*

> *race and blood quantum and academic credentials are left at the door. It's necessary to go there because, again, we speak each other's language, in a home, like everyone does, in a way that you don't see anywhere else.*
>
> *It would be really hard to not have those communities.* (Conversation, Janice Simcoe)

Nella Nelson and Lyn Daniels talk about the movement generated from creative tension (Hampton, 1995): the necessity to "figure out a way", as Nella Nelson says (Conversation, Nella Nelson), within a system that is indifferent or resistant to authentically including First Nations thought and voice. Or, as Frank Conibear likes to point out, does not yet have the knowledge to know how to authentically include: we have to teach them how, he says (Conversation, Frank Conibear).

Certainly within this thesis, I have sometimes felt like Portelli (1991), where I am the one being unobtrusively studied (p. 54). Portelli (1991) claims we are entering a time of Bosio's "upside-down intellectual", who "give[s] up the privilege of being a depository of culture and accept[s] the possibility of recognizing and receiving cultural messages" (Bosio cited in Portelli, p. 42). The directional metaphors come from a Marxist framework and suggest a power differential that I have avoided in my study; I prefer (and practice) a language of reciprocity that rests on establishing a relationship based on human equality: the capacity to be and act like genuine human beings. Genuine in this context means knowing that research involves teaching and learning, transactively. Native people have always asserted about research: we know our own truth, and we can see yours too. One of my purposes in this thesis was to assert: we do have a tradition in *phronesis* of paying attention to respectful behaviour, and I listen to it. To add to Frank Conibear's point, we need to teach one another from our own standpoints; standpoint is like Lyn Daniels' use of the word 'ethnicity', as the background within and against which we define ourselves. It also incorporatesGadamer's (1975/1998) enabling prejudices or historicity: our knowledge of who we are, in time, and in the world. It is synonymous with identity, which is simultaneously public and private. It is because we know who we are that we can bridge, reiterates Nella Nelson (Conversation, Nella Nelson).

When I asked Nella Nelson informally what she thought of chapter five, she said: "It was interesting. It's an interesting perspective." I wondered: How should I interpret that remark? I clarified with her: "Did you like it or did you think it was way out?". Then she said, "No, I liked it. It was interesting." She expanded on how she felt reading her mom's words and the words of many colleagues who make up the community of First Nations educators she works with (Personal communication, Nella Nelson, April 18, 2000). I mused a little more, and a day later, in the middle of revising another section of the thesis, Portelli's experience all of a sudden came back to me. I thought: Even as I am paying attention and listening and watching, the educators are also doing the same with one another and with me. Understanding flows from being able to apply it to our own situation; this is Gadamer's teaching. For cross-cultural education, I have come to the conclusion that this is a fundamental truth. We, especially but not exclusively in the dominant or privileged system, need to re-ground ourselves as learners so as to become better (i.e., more humanly grounded) teachers.

On a similar note, another thing that occurred to me while I was re-reading my thesis (the part in chapter three about Taylor's identity argument) is how tortuously long the form of argument is. It takes up a lot of space. In proposing the infusion of moral and spiritual ends into living, along with a focus on what makes a good person, Taylor creates a complex series of arguments to say a truth that I have observed and Native people themselves have noticed, their elders say in a few words. This is not a criticism; it is an observation. The nature of argument is to show all the steps it took to reach that point. My thesis is no exception. Chapter two on *phronesis* reads like an argumentative defense of the value of kinship, drawing on the sources within my own 'cultural' community of like-minded people as well as bridging to Native writers.

As he contrasts Indians with Anthros [anthropologists], Deloria (1997) suggests that assertion is the quintessential mode of Aboriginal epistemology and First Nations thought: "Indians did, do, and will continue to express what they feel they are, and this feeling is a wholly subjective presentation. Anthros expect Indians to have the same perspective as they do - to have an objective culture that can and must be studied and that Indians themselves will study" (p. 218). Deloria's point makes an attribute of Western thought usefully stand out, as Western authors have sometimes done with themselves and one another's work. Deloria goes on to comment on the relationship between knowledge and standpoint: "But knowing what others have observed about another culture does not mean that the scholar emotionally understands that culture, and this point many anthros miss completely" (Deloria, 1997, p. 218; my emphasis). Notice how Deloria (1997) phrases this: not emotionally feels, but emotionally understands. Frank Conibear says: When their hearts and minds are on board, then real change will start happening; by 'their' he means non-Natives in education and society (Conversation, Frank Conibear). In a recent First Nations education community meeting, someone observed that administrators and principals always ask First Nations leaders in eduation: "What can we do?" Instead, says Frank, they should be asking: "What can I be? What are my values as a human being?" (First Nations Community Advisory Meeting, SJ Willis Centre, Victoria, April 18, 2000). Bridging and learning from another are more readily accomplished when cultural self-awareness is present. Only then, in the presence of self-knowledge, Gadamer (1975/1998) argues, does *phronesis* come into being: a radical openness to new experiences. We can only engage in that openness of considering alternative visions if we have stood far enough above our own standpoint to see it as one possibility. One genuine possibility.

Deloria (1997) strongly believes that Aboriginal teachings can offer things of immeasureable practical worth to what he calls "the industrial world" (p. 220). In the academic forum of a collection of essays, he uses the provisional language of academia to suggest a possibility that ironically and sadly continues to be with us since the first contact between Europeans and indigenous peoples. He uses words like 'primitive' to make that language bridge to the community of (some) anthropologists; by tribal, he means contemporary tribal peoples:

> We might further suppose, as do a significant number of people today, that the principles of organization and the values of these tribal or primitive societies might offer a new way of looking at the problems of industrial societies. Would not then the materials describing the behavior of tribal peoples and the tribal peoples themselves, whatever remnants now exist, be in a position to speak meaningfully to the modern world?
>
> Could there, for example, be something in the kinship relations - a principle whereby civility could be restored to American society? Could

> the festivals by which people reestablished relationships with the natural world provide us with a vehicle for making our concern about the environment an actual change of behavior instead of a vague sense of warm sentiment about chipmunks? Could the allocation of roles and functions between genders practiced by tribal peoples enable us to resolve some of the gender problems of the modern world? Could principles of balancing emotional states and the natural environment become a new way of assuming responsibilities for our cities and neighbourhoods? (p. 220)

Could non-Native educators and scholars read my chapter five so as not only to better understand the First Nations educators they work with and the Aboriginal learners they serve, but so as to learn something for themselves and for educational *praxis* as a whole? We know about teaching the whole person, but how can we place that idea within a community context, where the values that we are attempting to teach learners - acceptance, confidence, respect, autonomy - become instilled because we know they are fundamentally interconnected? Do we understand the implications of practicing and emulating those values in our own behaviors: on ourselves as well as those we serve? Do we understand the interconnection between the professional and the personal, the academic and *praxis*? Do we know what partnership with parents and community means? Is raising funds tied with the raising of children and the raising of ourselves? What does community mean in a society predicated on differences? These are questions that I envision could come from an alongside space within education.

What I notice is that these questions tend not to arise when we are disaffected, when we respectfully defer First Nations teachings to First Nations people and First

Nations learners without turning that inquiry inward and asking: What does this mean to me or to us, socially and culturally? How can knowing this make me a better person? How can infusing this knowledge authentically into the system improve education? Once these matters are broached, the question can then be further asked: How do I acknowledge where this teaching came from? How do I respectfully work alongside another culture and people? *Phronesis* enfolds self-knowledge and knowledge of another within it.

The question that I promised to answer in this conclusion was who benefits from this study. My general answer is that we all do. I cannot speak for the First Nations educators; their benefits are elusive in the sense that I cannot appropriate their own understandings: their real or potential 'fusions of horizon'. I also cannot know what effects these words will set in motion for whoever comes to read them, except to say that my intent is to set things in motion. I hope that these words, the educators' and my own, will encourage First Nations and non-First Nations educators, principals, administrators, school board members, researchers to actively seek out a common ground of understanding that begins from distinct yet potentially shared standpoints. I will carry these messages with me and show how through my own research experience a space of alongside cross-cultural understanding can be created. I will share the message that all understanding is applied understanding and that this self-knowledge is fundamental to *praxis* in education. This is one of my ways of giving back. Other ways have yet to be envisoned, in dialogue with others; others here means everybody.

Acknowledging the First Nations Educators

Frank Conibear *(Coast Salish)* teaches high school at Esquimalt Secondary School. He has been at Esquimalt Secondary for thirteen years, During most of that time he has acted as the First Nations Counsellor. He recently shifted into a teaching role, and has been involved in coordinating programs like the First Nations Leadership classes. As the eldest son in his family, he is a speaker at cultural gatherings and public meetings. He carries that knowledge and applies it appropriately in other roles such as co-chair of the BCTF First Nations Task Force. He is writing his Masters thesis at the University of Victoria; his research question is: What does it mean to be a First Nations educator?.

Janice Simcoe *(Ojibwe)* is the Coordinator of First Nations Programs and Services at Camosun College, Landsdowne Campus, Victoria. She came into this position many years ago after leaving the University of Victoria. She completed a Bachelor's degree in History and went on to graduate work. She did not complete her thesis because "if it was not authentic, it was not writeable." She resisted becoming "the system's" "Native star." She is actively involved in inter-agency work with First Nations organizations and educators and, like all of the educators represented here, also bridges her perspective into cross-cultural workshops and courses. She also teaches at the College, and is also a guest lecturer at the University of Victoria.

Lyn Daniels *(Cree)* is Coordinator of First Nations Programs and Services in Comox. Upon graduating from the SUNTEP program at the University of Regina, she taught for a few years then moved to British Columbia, where she taught secondary school for several years. She was seconded to the B.C. Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Initiative Branch, where one of her main interests was evaluating First Nations literature, resources, and curriculum for authenticity. She developed a checklist for the Shared Learnings curriculum, one that she uses for cross-cultural workshops. She recently returned to her district (Comox) as

First Nations Coordinator, and continues to be involved in evaluation of curriculum, such as revising the First Nations 12 IRP. She also engages in cross-cultural teacher education. Most recently, she has been supporting the Aboriginal Head Start program in Comox.

Maggie *(Northwest Coast)* returned to school after her family was grown up to pursue her dream of teaching young children her Native language. She has been teaching for many years in her community and continues to look for ways to bring the Native language into the school and into the community so as to create a generation of strong role models and speakers. Her mother trained her to be a speaker, and she often spoke on her behalf in potlatches and feasts. She is a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and an elder.

Nella Nelson *(Kwakwaka'wakw)* has been the Coordinator of the FNESD [First Nations Education School District] in Victoria for ten years, since its inception. She taught secondary school for many years and has been a sessional instructor at the University of Victoria. She continues to be involved with the University as a guest lecturer. Nella Nelson believes strongly in actively seeking and living connection with communities. She is actively involved in First Nations communities and inter-agency meetings as well as reaching out to the broader society in a role she calls being a social conscience.

Ruth Cook *(Kwakwaka'wakw)* is an elder, retired from teaching but very active in going out to the First Nations school community and sharing her teachings. She has fulfilled several roles during her lifetime: Native Language teacher, Home-School coordinator, Coordinator of First Nations programs at the Friendship Centre in Victoria. For many years, she was a teacher aide. She voluntarily gave up her full-time position at the Friendship Centre to work with First Nations learners in schools, to be a role model and support to especially the First Nations children. She has always been actively involved in supporting her own children's education. She is a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, and she is Nella Nelson's mom.

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Appendix A

Conversation Prompts

Prompts that focus on First Nations Identity

- What has been the influence of your own tribal nation or identity in your education as a human being?
- Did you grow up on or off reserve? Has where you grew up shaped you? In what way?
- Of the many ways to refer to First Nations people, which word do you prefer to use and why? [I ask the participant to respond to terms in common use, such as: First Nations, Aboriginal, Indigenous, Tribal, First Peoples, Native American/Canadian, Native]. Which word should we use for this conversation?
- What does the word "identity" mean to you?
- What do you understand the word "authenticity" to mean when speaking of First Nations culture and people? Is there a connection between authenticity and identity?
- Whose recognition is important?
- Does being First Nations relate to a particular way of experiencing and understanding the world?
- Can you describe any significant moments, times of great confusion or great clarity, in knowing or finding out about yourself as a First Nations person?
- What would you identify as the essential elements or aspects of your First Nations identity? Have these elements always been important, or have they changed over time?

Prompts that focus on First Nations Identity in Education

- What kind of schooling did you receive? What kind of education have you had, as a child, young person and adult?
- Were there any particular people who were important in your education? What about other influences?
- How has colonialism affected you as a First Nations person? How has it affected the education system? Are we in education in a different space now, or are colonial practices continuing? If so, in what way(s)?

- Why and how did you become involved in teaching?
- How do you think your identity influences your students?
- What kinds of assumptions do your students make about you as a First Nations person?
- What is and has been the role of the elders in schools - in the classroom, in designing curriculum as well as in the formation of your identity as a First Nations person and as an educator?
- How do you see your identity influencing your approach in education?
- Do you reflect on yourself as a First Nations educator? What kinds of reflections do you engage in?
- What do you think is the relationship between culture and identity in education?
- How does your relationship to your own community enter your practice?
- Is your identity something that informs your practice continually or are there times when you see yourself simply as an educator or a human being?
- What are your goals and aspirations for First Nations education? What challenges lie ahead?
- What is your responsibility to yourself as a First Nations educator?

Appendix B

Conversation Sample

Conversation between Sheila Te Hennepe (UBC professor) and NITEP students who have taken Anthropology at UBC (Te Hennepe, 1993, p. 253)

Leona: We are talking about my elders, my dad, who has left life, and then she [the Anthropology professor] says if he knows more than the books. I mean where do they get the stuff from in the books. My dad is a storyteller. He has taught me a lot and I feel like he, well, he doesn't read or write and what he does is through his stories. So, in a sense, I am sort of the book that he has written . . . So there is nothing I can give her after that.

Joe: Yes, that whole issue, what about our stories? Why aren't they considered really valid in anthropology? If anthropologists aren't really interested in our versions, why are they studying us? That is what it boils down to. Are they always able to manipulate the variables to fit their hypothesis of the research? We screw up the wheels because we have this unexplained idea that cannot be explained with material evidence. I asked if for this paper I could use what the people have told me. They say you can use it for information but it is not really appropriate to put it in the paper. My argument was, What is wrong with that? "How did you get your PhD? Did you incorporate what you picked up in the field through your interviews, and you incorporate that into your paper?" He said, Yes, but he had a methods course on how to do research . . . printed stuff, it is all so linear. It is a nice little package. But when you are talking orally with someone they are able to divert into different directions and pick up other ideas. Where with the printed word you have to go with what is there. We are not going to get any more ideas.

Sheila: When you are talking your hands are going all over. You are taking the words out of your head and putting them down on the table . . . So what would you do?

Joe: You mean in terms of research?

Sheila: Uhhum.

Joe: I would use that [tape recorder]. You would be able to get more clarification. Whereas when you are doing research with printed material you are limited. There are a lot of questions that you cannot find the answer to.

Sheila: It is frozen in time?

Joe: Yeh, it is frozen. It cannot be revived and you can't thaw it out, make it come back to life.

Appendix C:

Comment Note Example

I have placed the comment note below the text instead of in the margin so as not to interfere with thesis guidelines on margins:

The woman that I came to work with didn't have those survival mechanisms around her and she was drowning in isolation and confusion. She questioned the questions that the institution asked more than I did. The more she questioned, the more she realized she didn't have a clue how to answer. She was floating * *along not having any idea what she was doing there. I was supposed to help her learn how to be a better student. She helped me to be a better student and not a better student in terms of doing what the university wanted me to do, because I never did finish my thesis. I give this woman, Sarah, some credit for opening my eyes to the reality that the academic work that I was involved with then wasn't authentic and if it wasn't authentic, then it was not writeable.* ** *So it never got written.*

Ron Wilson
2/5/00 3:27:21 PM

*Another word that you use several times: a metaphor: floating. For you it has a negative meaning. It means not having a conscious purpose. It means feeling lost or at a loss. Floating: if you're floating here and there, you are vulnerable to whatever dangers come along.
9/02/00 Further Conversation with Janice:
Image is of being in the middle of a lake,too far away from any shore.
Immobilized
Lack of choice, lack of control (over limbs). Positive too, if you're floating in a strong tide floating keeps you alive [instead of resisting].

Ron Wilson
2/5/00 3:29:20 PM

**If it wasn't authentic, it wasn't writeable. Maria Campbell said very much the same thing She went to an elder. He told her that the English language has no Mother. Her task is to put the Mother back into it. Didn't happen right away even then; she was going about it in a conscious way: How do I do that? But then it happened. She intuitively knew that this was what the elder had meant.

Appendix D:

Conversations with First Nations Educators: Selections

The selections are arranged alphabetically by first name:

1. Frank Conibear; 2. Janice Simcoe; 3. Lyn Daniels; 4. Maggie; 5. Nella Nelson; 6. Ruth Cook.

Frank Conibear

"The speaker is my metaphor"

Teresa: You're afraid of Coast Salish culture being lost if it isn't emphasized.

Frank: It is acknowledging my connection, my identity and what I was born into. I think that's why I emphasize it . . .One is I wanted to learn more about it, on a personal level; the other is that if we don't speak our own metaphors, like we don't speak our language, we will lose that. I don't speak the language. I don't know if I'll ever be able to.

Teresa: What do you mean by metaphors?

Frank: Well, there's metaphors that people use, particular ways of saying things . . . We're a sharing people. That's just a very simple example because I know a lot of people say that. But the context in which it is said comes from our own worldview or philosophies or values. We begin to lose that, like sometimes us educated people lose that when we remove ourselves from the heart of the culture into the institution of education . . . It's an image for me, that's probably why I struggle with it; it's connected to memory, to 'feeling' and maybe to [the] spiritual [aspect], to an image of how would the elders say this if they were in this institution . . . what metaphors would they retain in their speech, how would they structure their speech. Education has to be from the head and from the heart . . .

Teresa: It's the language.

Frank: It's the teachings. It's the language, it's all of the things that we want to pass on. We pass it on by living it . . . Some of these things I'm finding out that I knew about but [I was] not always as conscious as I should be. We sort of say it's intuitive but it has been passed on, repeated, done, we can practice to a certain degree . . .

Teresa: What constitutes a strong voice, a strong First Nations voice?

Frank: There's a physical side to it, that you have to be heard. The way our speakers talk about it, you speak with your heart and your mind. It's not an intellectual speaking. I'm trying to find out what heart means according to all our teachings. There's emotion too. Our teachings teach [us] how to feel, I guess that's what I mean, they don't lose their feeling or they're not abstract. They're about our history, and ancestors, and about our hopes and dreams as well as what we do, what makes a good life and what makes a good person, not being selfish, having respect for other people.

Self-respect is respecting yourself and not hiding yourself from other people . . . My aunt says: stand up and say your name, say it loud and clear so everyone knows who you are, and that tells everybody which family you come from, how you're related and that gets back to some of the protocols about which family is where and who has rights to what. That's respect . . . You should never put anybody down. You hear that a lot. The elders are very humble people; there's a gentleness about them; they know how to treat people. The strength doesn't come from what you have; it comes from respect, treating others with respect.

Teresa: Those kinds of [teachings], do you translate them into the classroom?

Frank: [laughs a little] I don't know . . . I have an interest in English so I enjoy teaching stories and poetry. I enjoy writing them. In the leadership class, we're able to talk about the reserve; we're able to talk about what we can't talk about elsewhere and we're able to joke around . . . Where I see the role of values and the role of metaphors or whatever you want to call them come out is at times like at a funeral, you don't do this, you don't let babies near the body because the spirit is supposed to be in the room, the spirit of the deceased, and actually it can do harm. Now that might sound like a little superstition looked at from the outside but attached to it, from where I sit, is what the heck does that mean in a larger context ? what about all the other spiritual experiences that we have? Including just having breakfast in the morning to going for a walk. There's: How to protect yourself. How to be safe. How to take care. How to respect your spirit or your body. There's a whole realm of things that we just let slip by, we use a different language now . . . Sometimes we've forgotten because we don't use the values or the language. In English we don't use them.

I was surprised at the speech I made [at the BCTF], and the response that I got. It was something that I was propelled into: I was in the place to speak and felt I had to. I stood up and started to speak; I was doing a motion to change the order of speaking . . . [speaking] from my own First Nations perspective, First Nations protocol. I was tired of waiting [laughs]. I was more shocked by what I was looking at than by what I did: it opened something up and there was a listening . . . That speech opened a door.

But it came from a certain place. And I can remember walking around the streets of Vancouver the day before, waiting for how I was going to approach it, and every time I walked down the street there'd be a different speech. By the time I went to the floor, it was whatever all that was. There wasn't a write-up, but there was a lot of prep work that way . . .

Teresa: You talked about being a C-31 baby . . .

Frank: [laughs]. Oh yeah!

Teresa: Is that important in the way that you think about yourself? Was it important in the formation of your identity?

Frank: It was a legal recognition. But the legal recognition was also coming from a community perspective. There was always a question of whether I had a right to claim that, and that wasn't just my own thing; it was being teased on reserve and not feeling welcome . . . The more I reflect on that, that's really a product of the Indian Act. That's how we were defined . . . why are we in a situation like this where we define ourselves based on a foreign law? Rather than doing it ourselves? I think that's coming around a lot. There's more acceptance now. It certainly shapes my experience and my understanding.

Teresa: So you seem to be saying that it's not as important anymore in the community . . . attitudes have changed.

Frank: No but I think if I hadn't done anything on my own, understanding the history and making contact with families, I would still have no connection . . . So that is more what I came to terms with in that stripped status part of me . . . It's at a stage where, it's not a question of, is it legitimate, but now it's a question of: who I want to be. The other part is the sense of being responsible for who I am as a human being, for passing on that *knowledge and what is important to me to my family, as well as to non-Natives. Don't try to exclude.*

Teresa: Do your own kids have a stronger sense of that than what you did when you were growing up?

Frank: Absolutely! Very much more open . . . But I think we're all open to it now. That's the difference. There is that door open across society.

Teresa: Do you think that's because First Nations people are taking back defining identity?

Frank: I think it's had a huge impact . . . I mean, it gets really complex. Whether it's bloodlines or whether you know the culture. I don't know if I'd ever want to enter into that. It certainly opens the net up, that people have rights, the children and the women are a part of it.

When I did get down to applying for status, and understanding what my responsibility is, it wasn't just a [legal] privilege that I got. My aunt said to me once: "The songs and dances are yours" and I wasn't sure what she was referring to at the time. Whether she was referring to the mask dance or the bear song or the more traditional dances or ceremonies. She said you could be part of that, and that's when ultimately I clued in, I could be. That just shifted my whole thinking. Before that I never included myself. No one ever said: you could be part of it if you chose to. Growing up, I recall aunts the most; they were always including us in the family . . . My thinking is: if I have a right to that, or if I'm asked to do that, I better know what *that* *is. That started a growing process of: Look, you have a right to be there . . . I didn't have to argue. It was just assumed. I seem to be 'called' to do this . . .*

Post-Conversation

Teresa: What is the difference (if any) between an educator and a First Nations educator?

Frank: I teach from what I'm interested in: English. I'm always trying to figure out myself what kind of response or context I am trying to elicit from the student. We are just trying to get from them who they are. That is [happening] whatever content I am using. I don't have to be First Nations to do that but that informs what I'm doing [because] *that's who I am. When it does come out, I am sharing about myself. The content is not learning information about First Nations. The distinction seems subtle . . .*

Teresa: To me what's significant is that it is a worldview that is shaped by all of these values. The Eurocentric or Western worldview is not shaped by the same values.

Frank: No.

Teresa: They may be in there somewhere but in an Aboriginal epistemology, they are all interconnected. What I found when I was writing the fifth chapter is that I could not talk about one without talking about another and another; they all were together simultaneously. To me that is the distinctive aspect. Aboriginal people focus on these values because of the importance those values hold within their worldview. In my culture, they don't.

Frank: It's a very different kind of emphasis. The question is: how to get it into the system? The dominant culture has to change. I recognize that. It's not just a matter of putting it into a law; you have to change people's minds and hearts so that it will work for them . . .

Teresa: The other thing that can happen, and I don't know if you've noticed it, being in the BCTF, but I have, is that tendency, as soon as you say the word First Nations, you are placed in a box instead of others saying, okay, this is a teaching that we can learn from First Nations and apply in our own context . . .

Frank: You used the word box. When I think of a box, I think that they're hiding their ignorance, which they don't have to do, especially where there are different cultures. Instead they should be saying: 'I don't know about that' or 'I have never had the opportunity to learn that'. Or they in a sense know a lot, but they tend to box people and things into categories, in which case the paradigm is far too small. Part of my work [in the BCTF] is breaking paradigms about First Nations people and creating understanding through reaching a mutual ground . . . I think it involves the whole of society. I get frustrated because there's too much emphasis on making political decisions . . .

Teresa: What should be happening then?

Frank: There should be more of an emphasis on education. On open dialogue. Addressing the racist issue and examining our attitudes and assumptions. I don't tell *people if what they're saying is racist but if they ask me, "Is what I said racist?" then I will say, "Yeah, it was" and explain why. I think if we could have that kind of dialogue instead of a high-powered dialogue about whose power and whose jurisdiction.*

Teresa: I was going to ask you a question about how all the different roles you have in education come together or converge: teaching, writing your thesis, co-chairperson of the BCTF FN Task Force. Do you have a sense of all of the work that you do converging in a common purpose, for example, your reflections on your thesis question of what it means to be a First Nations educator?

Frank: It's interesting because they've all come about at around the same time. When you ask that question of what it means to be a First Nations educator, what you are really asking is what does it mean to be a First Nations person within any institution.

Teresa: How did that question come to you?

Frank: I really wanted to use the literature to get at my experience of how I gained my identity, because in just teaching content, I was missing the mark. There's an experiential component to teaching, and I didn't know what it was, and then I realized that what it is, is family. I have an obligation, a responsibility, I'm part of something. The subtle things that form the basis of identity . . . That's where I talk about metaphors and language and understanding . . . I realized that I really didn't want to look at the literature at all, that I was getting boxed in. What I really wanted to look at was identity.

This came out when I was taking a course in the evaluation of curriculum . . . I said: I know how to present this. I just stood up and started speaking. And you know how elders acknowledge the words of other people, well that's what I did. I started acknowledging the work that the previous group had done in the class, a presentation that was very moving. I didn't know [what I was going to say] but I just got up and started to speak and acknowledge them. That's when I realized: okay now I am speaking from the floor . . .

Teresa: You had told me about preparing for the BCTF and how that speech came from a particular place. Is that the place? Is it like a bighouse voice?

Frank: I call it my bighouse voice. It's the kind of voice that you use in ceremonies.

Teresa: You mean, big, as in powerful?

Frank: Loud, strong, probably lots of emotion. As in when someone stands up in the bighouse and says "I'm going to speak now, can I have your attention please?" But I've known that not only as a bighouse voice but it also comes from teaching. If you're doing a workshop, somebody has to take control . . .that's their role . . . When my supervisor looked at my thesis, she said, the whole thing is a speech; that's the structure of it . . .
Teresa: How did you come to know the traditions? At one time you did not have direct access to the culture, whereas now it seems that you do. How did that change come about?
Frank: Like I said, in funerals, there were things that were not said directly but that were understood. I can remember one of my aunts saying at a funeral, "Yeah, I lost my earrings. They must have really liked my earrings." I was thinking: "What are you talking about?" "Yeah they must have really liked them and taken them with them." And then I realized: taken them to the spirit world. And things like that just started to clue me in to this other world. Just stories like that that they would be sharing. And maybe an approach to life. It wasn't ever anything formal . . .

I realized a lot of the things were in place for me to understand, but it's just that during a part of my life, I had never recognized it. I couldn't articulate it. I'm still struggling to articulate it now. It was much more just the process of life mostly until I actually gauged enough (for example, through courses) to understand the history and politics. Reading enough books to say, well these are not written by First Nations authors; the tone doesn't match. It's sitting down with friends and relations and just people who come to the house who come for a visit and say, "We've got some Indian bread". It's out of that the little teachings come through . . . It's the particular ways of handling things . . . I've learned a lot from the Canoe Pulling Races. You have to take care of the canoe. Be careful what you say. You can't say any bad words while you're in it. You have to bathe yourself. Have a clean mind . . . I always say that you can't teach that kind of knowledge in a lecture, but once you're in a canoe, it's different; you can see and feel it in action. I call it sideways teaching because when you canoe-pull, you have to have strength. The message is that when you do this, you have to respect that. And so you go, Ah yes, that's the teaching; that's why you have to do it this way. That's when it *all made a lot of sense to me. If you give them [people, learners] something to do, it creates a concentration. So then you ask: what do we do in the classroom to create that concentration? If you can set a tone where you're having fun in the classroom, it creates a kind of relaxed concentration . . . I'm trying to think of: what practical things can we do that are like that? Right now we're teaching speaking for a potlatch. But what you do on a day to day basis, I don't know.*

Teresa: That's the difference between having First Nations teachers teaching as opposed to non-Native teachers.

Frank: I suspect that we're all learning. I keep saying that it's not the content. It's how you teach the content.

Janice Simcoe

Teresa: We've used - you've used and I've used - the word authentic quite a bit. How do you think authenticity is connected to identity, First Nations identity . . . for you?

Janice: Well, First Nations identity, for me, is your viewpoint of where you sit on the continuum in the universe, the place in that continuum where you are, and so from that place you have a viewpoint that you look at things, and it might be that your place is to look at the details, and it might be that your place is to look at a really broad picture. I think that the core of First Nations identity is being in the place we recognize that you are sitting amongst your ancestors and that you're sitting amongst the ancestors of the people whosoever territory you're on. I think that that's the core and if you understand that on one side of you are the ancestors and on one side of you are your grandchildren or your metaphorical grandchildren that you understand that you are a part of a broader picture that's tied to this land: tied to this land either smally, by being tied to the territory, or greatly, by being tied to Turtle Island, North America. It comes from there, from that connection.

Teresa: When you talked about your ancestors, were you thinking of particular ancestors, or are you thinking of a First Nations philosophy, or are you thinking of your own community? Where does that come from?

Janice: Hmmm. [We both laugh at Janice's pre-articulatory humms].

Teresa: It sounds like a different hmmm.

Janice: Yes it's a different hmm: it's how to describe it. I realize more and more and more that I wish I could speak Ojibwe because I think that there are things that are really . . . I think that there are things that I know . . but I don't know how to speak Ojibwe so I don't know how to say them . And that's really from a non-speaker. I knew Saulteux when I was a baby.

Teresa: Do you understand Ojibwe when it's spoken?

Janice: No. I know words, but I love the sound of it [Janice says each word separately, "I love the sound of it" as if savoring the sounds as she speaks], it sounds like flowing water to me, it sounds really really beautiful; but no I don't, I don't understand. Anyway, when I talk about ancestors, I think I'm talking about the spiritual world, the layer that I know that we walk in. I believe that the spirits of the territories and ancestors are where we are and in my heart or in my being, I know that they are there, I know that they are there in some places very much stronger than in other places, but I know that they are everywhere and I know that their physical remains are part of the earth. I know we interact physically with ancestors every time we step in dust or every time we touch a tree that has grown out of the nutrients that are made from the physical remains of those who are now spirits. I think that there's fusion across the land. That's why I say that if you look in the big sense of Turtle Island that there's fusion of all others, winds that carry things, rivers that carry soil and there's fusion even though there's separateness. So there's all of that physical relationship with ancestors that is there, that is way stronger when you're at home.

Lake Superior is home. I've lived out here since I was a little kid. I went back a real lot when I was young and I knew since I was a very little kid that as soon as we got within a certain part of geography that there was something about my feet being at home and they will only be home there. By the way I started writing a story this morning when I was supposed to be reading the paper so it must be a foot day [We both laugh].

Teresa: Was it connected to what you were just talking about?

Janice: Well I didn't know what it was connected to. It was a line, "In winter I rarely see my feet" and I know that that means something to me and something will grow from it [Laughter]

. . . So there's the physical stuff and the spirits that live on the land. We carry the spirits of our ancestors with us and maybe we carry it in our DNA or maybe we carry it in some physical part of us. I have heard of people who were adopted when they were very young and didn't know that they were Native until they were older, say that their belief is that they carry being Indian in their DNA and they always knew, they always acted like it, they always thought it, they always believed it and then as soon as they found it, it was like, Oh! [exclamation of surprise and wonder], This is what this is about! I haven't lived their experience so I don't know but I know that there's a whole spiritual manifestation around us. I've been told by other people that they have seen the spirits walk with me and I absolutely believe them. That's a big part of me, of my First Nations identity, a big part of who I see with students and colleagues that I work with. We walk with generations around us all the time. I actually believe that that's not being First Nations, that's being human. I think that everybody does that. But somehow the mistake was made to start evolving a system that stopped recognizing that.

Teresa: Like I was saying, Deloria, in the book that I was reading about education, remarked that that is one of the distinctive philosophies or contributions of First Nations people. Other people have either lost or never had [this teaching], or [it has] been suppressed: connectedness to the spirit world, to living things and non-living things.

Janice: That's right.

Teresa: He talks about it being there despite all of the things that have happened to Native people. The recognition is still there of the importance of relationships.

Janice: I've thought that some of the things that are considered to be First Nations knowledge are human knowledge but we [as First Nations] haven't forgotten it. Instead of knowing more, we have forgotten less. We were talking a little while ago about being aware - the need to be conscious of - what you're writing and it's really hard to do that it.

Teresa: It is.

Janice: Because you forget what you used to know when you learn more of something. I have a challenge of when I start spending too much time being an administrator, I start talking incomprehensible things to people who don't know the language of this organization. And sometimes it's hard to simply say a clear sentence because there's all *of these words that have become meaningful to me. They sometimes crowd out the rest of my knowing. And then I become mute. And I don't like it.*

Teresa: Part of you becomes mute.

Janice: Yeah.

Teresa: That happens to me too. Even though I feel very comfortable in words, in and among words, writing words, I have to connect. My husband is good at helping me do that.

Janice: And I have that privilege also of people around me who remember how to speak English [Laughter] . . .

Teresa: Deloria . . . is concerned about Native people who, because they're in a position and they're there because they're Native, they are communicating Native values. He says that may not be true; they could be teaching non-Native values. He talked about his hope for Native intellectuals who come out the other side. There was a particular way he phrased it that opened things for me because I have been concerned about that dichotomy or conflict between this side and that side. He talked about going through the system and coming out stronger on the other side, like you said, looking at the arguments and ideologies and coming out armoured with all of that knowledge and yet not losing your own. Your own knowledge becomes stronger from knowing that. He says that's how Native people used to do things too: to know your enemy, kind of thing. To know who you are up against. [Janice laughs]. I thought it was really neat when he said that.

Janice: Oh I am really looking forward to reading that book. Books have been a sort of bible; they certainly were during part of my education, and when you asked about my mentor . . . I forgot to mention the books that were available also were a huge part of coming back. There was a fear, I think people still have that fear, that post-secondary education will somehow overpower their Indianness . . . one of the greatest teachings I've had was someone saying in a job interview: "You can't educate the Indian out of me", and [I thought] "Right on! You're absolutely right!" How could we get so caught up in the institution that we were attending that it even would occur to us that it was stronger than our teachings. Looked at it from that viewpoint, it's not possible. You can't go put *somebody somewhere and give them a bunch of books to read for four years and wipe out thousands of years of tradition?! [Janice laughs]. You know, it's not that strong!*

Teresa: What do you think about the argument that there has to be that connection to the community maintained?

Janice: I think that there's a lot of different ways of defining community. I think that we are tempted to get very exclusive, depending on from where we are sitting, and that we need to be conscious of avoiding that temptation . . . We're always tempted to say: The experience that I have and the road that I walk is the one that I understand, and it's the one from which my blessings and privileges, and joys and knowledge, come from and it can be hard to see that other people may have accessed their blessings and spiritual knowledge in other ways. So do you have to stay connected to the community? On the one hand I would say "absolutely" because we're encouraged all the time to go off and be individuals and always compete with each other and we're very encouraged to strive to be right and if we sit alone for too long we can fall into that trap. If we go back to the community, we get reminded that that's not the purpose of life and so you can stay, wanting to do good instead of wanting to do right. The other thing is that if we stay alone too much and don't connect with the community, we can start doing some of the things that we were already talking about, like forgetting the words that are meaningful and by forgetting what it is we're doing because we start taking on the language of those around us. It becomes incomprehensible and then what is the good of that?

On the other hand, to make the argument that unless you are connected to a particular group of people and do a particular kind and number of activities in a particular place with a particular understanding, that then you are not able to contribute . . . I don't agree with that. I think that that is not opening our vision wide enough to recognize the gifts that may be coming to us from other sources that we don't understand yet.

Teresa: The other night I watched a documentary made by Bea Medicine about Russian people who have created their own tribe . . . How are those Russian people different from someone who is Native and for whatever reason became separated from their own *tradition, family, community and now feels impelled or compelled to . . . find their identity? How is that different or is it?*

Janice: There's another film called "I Wish I Were an Indian" put out by NFB [National Film Board] that I've watched really carefully. It's about a Czechoslovakian group of people who have done the same thing . . . they may ultimately find more fulfillment in looking for traditions of their own ancestors. I don't know if it's totally lost . . . they're trying to find: Who was I when I was still tribal? Because everybody used to be tribal. And if there's DNA or whatever it is that carries our tribal memories . . . I believe that everybody carries the same kind of thing and that there's a longing, especially for those people that have grown up in environments where spirituality was denied to them, that they look really hard. What looks the most spiritual is Native American stuff. . . but what I really did notice is that they moved their bodies in a way that powwow dancers don't because they had the influence of their own culture, their own way of dance, their own way of expression. That was what betrayed the piece that they couldn't get. If their bodies could not adapt, then ultimately their spirits would not be able to adapt . . .

Teresa: In First Nations education, whose recognition is important?

Janice: The most important is the student's. Gifts that I have that have been made by the students. I have a crocheted blanket that a student made for me; it's one of the most precious things that I have. I have gifts at home and around here that are incredibly important to me. Recognition from my First Nations peers is . . . Not recognition, I don't need to be praised, I hope.

Teresa: Acknowledgment?

Janice: Acknowledgment from people like Nella [Nelson] and other peers is very important to me. It makes me feel like I'm doing it right . . . Recognition from the system is fun but it's not as meaningful because I'm not ever sure if they know what they're recognizing. When peers and students recognize work, it's because they know that it's important work. Sometimes I think that with external recognition, the words might not be right . . .

Teresa: It doesn't resonate as deeply.

Janice: No, and it can be embarrassing too. If I ever have a sense that people are thinking that I'm doing something that I don't think that I'm doing, then I have to . . .
Teresa: Lee Maracle in one of her interviews [with Hartmut Lutz] talked about the autobiography she wrote, Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel*. . . She talked about Raven and Wolf. Wolf is the thinker and he's a loner. He can go off by himself and think. But Raven is the heart. For her Raven goes back to the community and to what we were talking about, of staying grounded. She said that those two things have to work together, Raven and Wolf. She said that the comment her community made to her was that her writing lacked Raven . . .*
Janice: And I understand that. Someone I know told me it is such a long journey we have to the heart and . . . someone else said . . . "But then you have to go back." We need to be doing that. If we forget to do that, and if we stay in too much isolation we can forget to do it, then we start making mistakes that impact those who we are here to serve.

You know you asked me how I was feeling, and I was telling you about my shoulder got really painful and I realized one of the reasons it got painful was because I have not created space in my life in the last few weeks to pray. My body let me know that. It was almost like being spoken to verbally - you know, if you don't yourself take time to pray, then it means you don't give yourself time to cleanse and if you don't give yourself time to cleanse, then you carry too much stuff on you and absolutely, it breaks your shoulders. When I pray - and I am thankful for the reminder to go back to that - my basis, my prayer for myself, is: Eyes to see and ears to hear, mouth to speak and lips to close, heart to feel and head to think, hands to work and feet to walk. We need to do all of those things at the same time or our work starts to become about us rather than those who we service. I think maybe that's why recognition by community and other groups that we're serving is so important. Because they can recognize when you are doing those things and those who don't know you or who haven't got strong teachings of walking with the Raven and the Wolf at the same time, they can't know whether you are or not . . .
Teresa: Do you consciously reflect on yourself as a First Nations person in the course of your work? Do you consciously think about : how do I want people to understand what

I'm doing here as a First Nations person? Or is it something that's so embedded in what you're doing - like you mentioned prayer. I imagine prayer is one way of consciously reflecting or reminding yourself of what is important to you, staying connected. Are there other ways that you do that?

Janice: I always wear jewellery when I'm working. I don't when I'm not. If I don't want to take on the persona of THE First Nations person, then I don't wear jewellery. I usually don't when I'm on holidays

Teresa: Why don't you wear it when you're on holidays?

Janice: Because when I'm on holidays, I want to be a member of a family that doesn't have to think about race, and social issues and political things . . . the physical expression of being First Nations is written throughout our home and it's always there whether I'm on vacation or not [Laughs]. It's an expression of who we are. But being a First Nations educator means that you are always carrying the causes with you and you're always carrying your history with you. You're always carrying the issues of your people and the issues of the people that surround you. For me, there isn't any time in my work when I am not conscious of being a carrier of First Nations things. There are times with colleagues, with friends that it floats away for a while but I'm never in a meeting or doing any thinking in any working environment when I'm not carrying it or when I'm not conscious of it.

Post-Conversation

Janice: [in speaking of chapter three on identity] Discussing whose voice means what, whose definition of identity means what, whose way of expression means what. All of these questions and observations lead back to that same problem or dilemma. Everything that we do in the academy is done in a foreign language. Then how can any of us make a claim really to be speaking in an authentic voice when we're out of our element? Unless we start changing, and you were speaking about this too, and I've come to the same questions that you have, of how we redefine who it is that we are without going back into that exclusive mode of saying, A First Nations voice is this OR that. If somebody's voice is speaking this First Nations voice, it's authentic, and if somebody is speaking with this First Nations voice, then they're not. How are we to decide on those *definitions? Those definitions probably tend to be self-serving, but not deliberately. Self-serving in that we can only describe what we know.*

Teresa: What did you think about the horizon idea? Those common elements are things like being recognized by your family, blood connection that's linked with family, and having connection to the community. Even people who have not had that [tribal] experience all refer back to something that is about the connection to the land, spiritual connections, connections with the earth, like you talked about. It's very strong; it comes through in their language.

Janice: I agree that's the beginning of the definition and I liked the imagery of the horizon. I think the imagery of the horizon needs to be there in order to be looking at a further definition. It's easier to define what isn't than what is. Phil Fontaine was here on Friday and I was listening to him really carefully and he was saying the same thing . . . He talked about going back and forth to find the answers. Maybe that's part of adding to the horizon. Somebody has a connection to the land and we have to be really careful about how we define that. I think some people define this small piece of geography as being the land as your requirement to have that connection. We have to be connected to the places where our ancestors live and where there are ancestors' spirits so in that way, there is some limitation to a land that you have to have your heart connected to, and it might spread out right over Turtle Island. You might have a connection to that big thing, and a relative connection to where your ancestors are buried.

Teresa: And that's where the common thread comes in.

Janice: There has to be the understanding of who the family is and some kind of connection . . . I think it goes back to the ancestral connection.

Teresa: Yeah, that's a good way of putting it.

Janice: What needs to go beyond that, and this is where I'm getting back to what Phil Fontaine was saying, is what you were saying of going back to the source. That may be part of the answer to the dilemma . . . there's something missing in there, and what might be missing is the ability and the knowledge of how to go to the source to get the answer. That's where the problem comes, of an isolated person, with all kinds of understanding of *the land and history, knowledge of who they are, but isolated from all of that. Something happens to them.*

Teresa: Like?

Janice: That connection. I mean if you go there - and you were alluding to this too - and you're totally isolated, then something starts happening, and it comes from the isolation. If you've lost a source to go to, then you've lost some of that tribal voice. Nella has always, always, always reminded everybody: you have to go to the community. It's not just about going to events or dinners or watching people dance; I know that she's talking about doing more than that. More than sharing their expertise or bringing your gifts. It's more than that and it's hard to describe. It's creating a source for yourself, to find out answers to questions.

Teresa: Well I guess you'd say a part of yourself is in there, and you recognize that, and others recognize it in you too. People listen to you because your words carry a strong message. The words come from that place [or source].

Janice: And there's markers in conversation to show that you really are connected. There's words that you're probably not even aware of that are spoken and understood. I watched that movie again, The Gods Must Be Crazy. Have you seen it?

Teresa: I've heard of it.

Janice: It's about a Bushman tribe in a place that is really remote in Africa . . . I think it's connected quite a bit to what you're doing. It's a way of talking about it. Someone like me would never be able to speak with a bushman's voice. And it's a mistake to ever think that we could. Although if you're away from the bush long enough, you may start believing that you can. Maybe that's another reason why you need to keep bringing up the community as a way to remind you of your own location. Because in some ways you can be imbued with so much authority simply because you're considered the only one there. On the other hand, and at the same time, imbued with absolutely no authority simply because you're the only one there.

Teresa: What community do you go to for that source?

Janice: Well I have to go to my adopted communities for rejuvenation. I know I need to go to ceremonies, and just be in the presence of a lot of brown people and hear the *sounds of laughter, and hear the special sounds, and smell the special smells; that energy is there, and it's in adopted communities around here. I need to go to those things and just shut up and listen. Not carry my job.*

And I need to go to the community of First Nations educators and First Nations education service providers that speak each other's language . . . Sometimes I think we're doing that as much to be with each other, not that we don't do lots of work, but we don't conduct meetings in the same way; it's also a coming together and holding hands and looking at each other, and then getting on with [discussion].

Then I have my own nuclear family and my own extended family around. A place where race and blood quantum and academic credentials are left at the door and it's necessary to go there because we speak each other's language, in a home, like everyone does, in a way that you don't see anywhere else. It would be really hard to not have those communities.

Teresa: When you're in an intellectual setting, you have to connect back to that place. Or those places, because you described more than one place where you go, for nourishment, I guess

Janice: That's exactly it: where you go to feed. I've heard the same kinds of things coming out of the University of Victoria as the kinds of things that you're saying, that there has to be this voice within the institution, and everybody's having a real hard time defining what that is . . . Maybe what we're talking about is getting to that place where we can say with confidence that the white system isn't necessarily going to always win. We'd like to get to a place where the result of a dialogue isn't a winner and a loser. If we get there, and the teachings are heeded and made strong enough so that we can get to the place where when we make changes, we don't make someone else the loser, then maybe we can start talking about having developed an authentic voice. Because we taught that voice to somebody else.

Some of those committees that I belong to, we make decisions by consensus. It's not a long protocol-laden process; we sit in a circle across from one another, and if so-and-so says, "We need this . . .", we learn to trust that person and what she's talking about, and so we'll support that . . . If that kind of communication could start to take *place within the institutions, where we have First Nations people being equal partners at both tables, I think we would have some authentic First Nations voice. If the discussions at the institution's table have to always take place playing by the institution's rules, then the First Nations voice is at a disadvantage; it means always being on the defensive, and I don't think that you can have an authentic conversation with anybody when you're up against that attitude. Maybe that's part of the problem. When you get on the defensive, you really have to start defending who your allies are. A way to do that is by defining who your allies aren't . . .*

Teresa: It seems that what you're saying is that most of the work needs to be done on my side: on our side. Cross-culturally. That reaching out.

Janice: Yeah. Yeah, I do. I think that the institutions themselves have to be willing to make some significant changes. It's just layer after layer after layer after layer; I don't know where the core of the onion is yet. You get that big brown thing off [the onion] and you think you've won. [Janice laughs] . . . Institutions [assign] labels and therefore they don't see the value. I often have this discussion with my husband about the kitchen. If there's something in there that he doesn't see a use for, he throws it away. I am more experimental when I'm cooking so I'll go buy sauces and spices and mixtures, you know, unusual things, and he'll find them in the cupboard and he'll chuck them out because he doesn't use them. [We laugh]. I think there's a good lesson in that. I think it happens really, really easily. We're in places where if what we're doing isn't understood, they'll throw it away, which means we're constantly watching, which also means that we can't go out and get new things and gather new ideas.

Teresa: Constant vigilance.

Janice: Yes, and constant vigilance is irritating. It's irritating to have to defend over and over and over and over again, and that's why I say we'll have really made some progress if we can get it down to trust. If you trust, you don't do that.

Lyn Daniels

Teresa: What does it mean for people to become educated? What did you mean by that?

Lyn: I guess I mean understand the whole history, where Canadian society thinks Aboriginal people should be, becoming aware of that and thinking about how that plays *out in your own life and in the life of your family members and your community. And how to change it. It's like a margin. They want you to be on a margin. That's the expectation is that you not be part of it, that you be marginalized . . . Just like sort of the purpose of residential school. Not sort of. That's what I think it is. Was. The purpose was not to educate people but to marginalize them and to destroy their sense of who they were as Aboriginal people. Have them take their places on the margins of society. Once you understand that, you start to develop a personal philosophy - the philosophy you have in your work that you do - that tries to get people to see that and to go beyond that, and not just live up to those low expectations: those expectations that tell you that, "This is all you can do." . . .*

Teresa: Do you think that happens in contemporary education as well? At one time I remember we were talking about your role in the school as a Coordinator and whether being First Nations is the District's way of unmarginalizing marginalized people, or whether that change is really getting into the minds and hearts of people?

Lyn: No I think it continues to marginalize people. And the reason why people are still able to come out of that experience with their dignity in the sense of themselves as worthwhile, is because of their family . . .

Teresa: When you were growing up, was there anybody who was really formative for you?

Lyn: I was just writing a paper on the things that influenced me, and they were books, like books about black people. In Grade 4, this teacher read us this book about this person called George Washington Carver, he was this black scientist. It was also about the kinds of barriers he faced in terms of being black person. I could see the parallel then. I identified with him. Yeah, it was hard to be different, to be a different color than the kids at school. They would ask you questions or they would say things to you: "Are you on welfare? or "Why don't you go back to your reserve?" . . . my mom and dad moved [to the reserve] when I was fifteen. I remember people asking me things about reserves and I had never lived on a reserve and so I never knew. Even teachers would ask me, "You aren't allowed to drink on reserves, are you Lyn?" And I would just be totally quiet, I wouldn't say anything. I would be one of those passive students where I *would just not say anything. And then we moved to this reserve . . . I can remember asking my mom, "Where does everybody work on reserve? They don't work" and she said, "Well a lot of people don't work." And I said, "Where do they get all their money then?" Cause my parents always worked. That was just so hard to understand, that you could live without working. There were just all these things that I noticed that I knew were so wrong. So I was in Grade 10 then. There was about thirty-five students in Grade 10, maybe twenty-eight. In Grade 11 it was like fifteen. And then in Grade 12, there were nine. And it was the biggest class of Aboriginal kids that had ever graduated; five non-Aboriginal students and seven kids from the reserve even though I wasn't from the reserve. I knew there was something wrong with that: Why did they drop out so soon? Why don't they just do the work? I remember we would get back a Science test and some people would have 4% on it and you knew it was just passive [resistance]. I knew it was . . .*

Teresa: They could have done better.

Lyn: But they didn't want to. I knew that they weren't dumb. But I just used to think: Why is that? . . .

Teresa: Did your parents grow up on reserve?

Lyn: My mom did . . . she spent most of her time in residential school. And my dad, they were non-status, so they never lived on reserve. They lived on the margins of the little towns around Saskatchewan. They were really poor. I think he went to Grade 7 or something like that. They went to school with all the white kids, and they were all tormented . . . because their ancestors were really poor. They were teased about their clothes and their food.

Teresa: Like Maria Campbell.

Lyn: Yeah. And then my dad never wanted to identify . . . like, he tried to get away from things like going to pow-wows.

Teresa: Because of that experience.

Lyn: Yeah. He felt really negative about his heritage.

Teresa: Does he still feel that way about it?

Lyn: He was ambivalent about it. He died about ten years ago. As he got older, he became more dysfunctional. You know, I feel really bad for his family because they had such a hard time, because they didn't live on reserve, they didn't have a house. I remember when I started taking Native Studies and talking to his mom, she was telling me about what she remembers and I started talking to her about what I was learning and she said: "Why are you learning that? Indians are no good! Don't you know that? Indians are no good." I thought: Wow! That's why my dad thinks the way he does . . . about himself and about Indian people.

Teresa: Did your mother think that way?

Lyn: No, I think she didn't. You know, she went to residential school and when you go through that experience, that is what they teach you, that you are a bad person. Indians are no good. She gave up her status and moved away, so a lot of it was really negative to her. She didn't want to have that life either. That's why she tried so hard. She always worked, she didn't want us to be poor, she encouraged us to do well in school but like I was saying, the [Cree] belief about non-interference, she wouldn't say: Do you have any homework? If we said, oh I have to do this report then she might remind us, oh you better get going on that report . . . I can just remember her asking one time: "When you get older, are you going to get married and have children or are going to do something?" I don't think she used the word career but it was something like that. I said: Well, I don't want to get married and have children; I want to have a career. . .

Teresa: Do you think that those experiences of discrimination, the stereotypes about Native people that were directed at your parents, the institutional racism, society's racism have been formative influences? I know from the time I've known you, one of the constant . . . I don't want to say battles . . .

Lyn: Uh, humm

Teresa: But always on the front lines of educating people about First Nations, about authenticity, having authentic resources in the schools. Do you think those experiences played into that, or did that come from a different [place]?

Lyn: No I think they did. I remember friends often saying to me: "You're not really a Native." And I would say: "Yes I am. My mom knows how to do beadwork. She knows *how to make mucklucks. My dad drinks a lot." Afterwards I thought: Oh god, isn't that terrible. That stereotype.*

Teresa: Did you actually say that to them?

Lyn: Oh yeah. Because what else are you? That's a stereotype that you internalize and that's what I saw. All these families were alcoholics. That's what I thought. I knew it had something to do with being an Indian. That's what it seemed like and so that's what I thought it was.

Have you ever read James Banks when he talks about levels of ethnicity? . . . He created this model about how people identify [with] or have different degrees of ethnicity. Usually they start with the stereotypes because of the pressures from mainstream society and the lack of any information in the white school culture . . . You don't exist; you only exist on the margins; you only exist in these stereotypes . . . People live out the stereotype: Drinking is what I do and so that's who I am and that's it. Education about your ethnic group can move you to the next level, where you become ethnocentric. In the process of learning about your own identity, you assume that your culture is better. But people have to go through that stage, to feel all that pride in who they are and their history and their people. But then you move to another level, where you're clarifying, and then the next level is when you're bi-ethnic, when you feel comfortable in two worlds. Whenever I present this, people ask me: Well, are you bi-ethnic. I guess to a certain degree, I could be. But most of the people aren't. Most people are in the first one, and I think it's called the ethnic encapsulation. How I see they're encapsulated is that they can't see beyond the stereotypes, that the decisions they are making are keeping them there . . .

Lyn: [speaking about a recent meeting she attended on First Nations 12]. We had identified all the learning outcomes and we're re-writing the IRP . . . one of the strategies someone suggested is that you could compare First Nations culture with Greek mythology. . . but I said: "No, I don't think so." And it's interesting how as you get older, people say: "Oh, okay." I can remember having arguments when I was younger. Maybe it was because of the way I said things when I was younger. Maybe because now I have thought things through and I have experience and the rationale whereas before you *just have a feeling, you might not be able to articulate it . . . Now I can say to people: I disagree with you . . .*

It's so ironic, when you start out in education, you're doing a certain kind of work [so that] eventually you may not have to do that, but then here it is fifteen years later, you're still doing the same thing. So though even though you grow, there's nobody growing along with you. The rest of the population just stays still. I don't just mean the non-Aboriginal population, I mean the Aboriginal educators too. They're concerned with other things. There's no clear direction, and like, how could there be? You can't make people want the same things you want, or the things you want them to understand.

Teresa: What kinds of other things are they concerned with?

Lyn: I guess their family. Of course you have to have a family. And that's their life too. And so I don't know. It's not that I think the people aren't working hard enough, I guess that's the thing, there just aren't enough of us. [We're] Watching tv, or playing bingo [she laughs] . . .

Teresa: One of the most important things that Deloria emphasizes is relationships and interrelationships. Just because this happened and that happened, that does not mean that they are unrelated. Have to trust that those two events are related in some mysterious way.

Lyn: I think I know what you mean. Well that's just the way I always think . . . Like when you're going through a difficult thing. Like talking to older people. I remember Nella's mom talking about her job, going through a difficult time, and she said: well I know I'm going to learn something from this, and I'm going to figure out what it is. That's what I think too. I know I'm supposed to learn something from this once I think it through, then I can put it into perspective.

Post-Conversation

Teresa: How has this research process and these conversations on identity, how have they affected you?

Lyn: Well because I have this political perspective on people, and I always ask, "What does this mean for me?", there were a lot of things that you wrote in there [chapter three on identity] that I recognized in myself. The leaving home. That has been a big part of *my thinking and my life because I left Saskatchewan . . . Not allowing that part of it to come to the surface but now I realize that yeah, that's what it really is: to find out more about myself too . . .*

Teresa: You realized that you were in the same position as . . .

Lyn: As all of the people who leave home: the pattern for the mainstream society. At the same time, because I've been doing all that work with First Nations Studies 12, and just being in a place and a space of mind where I'm totally thinking about knowledge: Aboriginal knowledge and how you want to teach that. It's a really comfortable, exciting, and motivating place.

I'm in a relationship with a non-Aboriginal person, and I started to think about how the politics is personal, that I am not being true to my identity . . . I really began to question whether this is what I really want to do and to question the whole relationship. Just the things that have happened over the past year over family, and conflicts over values, came to the surface in my mind to the point where I felt that, you know, I have to make a decision about whether this is the right thing to do, whether this is the way I want to spend the rest of my life.

With the Aboriginal people [at FN 12] the experience was so good [rewarding, Lyn later clarified] that [I thought about what it would be like] to have that experience all the time.

Teresa: So it relates back to what you were saying about your job, how you've been doing it for the past fifteen years, you're always explaining things [and explaining yourself]. You feel that there isn't growth around you. How you are always explaining it rather than living it or living inside of it.

Lyn: That's it. Good. [she laughs really hard]. The other thing I thought when I read the [transcript] was that here is a really knowledgeable person [we laugh] . . .

Teresa: Did you see that ironic perspective that you bring? Did you recognize that in your words?

Lyn: [nods] Yeah, because that's how I think. I cut that part off when I'm talking to a lot of non-Aboriginal people. I try to be a straightforward person. I don't share the ironic things because they might not know where I'm coming from.

Teresa: They might not understand you. Like [your reference to] bingo.

Lyn: Yeah, right. [She laughs hard again]. I feel like in my work I'm always having to be this other person in a way. It's not my true person. It's suppressing those other [ironic, humorous] comments. Instead I just always try to be clear. It's always a delight just to be who you are.

[We returned to the topic of Hampton's sui generis Indian education].

Lyn: When you are articulating Aboriginal education for curriculum or lessons, your focus is on how to teach Aboriginal students, because that is always what you are asked to do. You have to put it within a framework that has to do with Western education, and you know that it doesn't go there. The structures have to evolve from Aboriginal knowledge. It [Hampton's argument] made a lot of sense to me that it would, and it could, and it can.

Teresa: How do you see your role in [achieving] that?

Lyn: Well it's really interesting because someone recently asked me, "What would you think of the idea of a First Nations school?" He said: "I don't want you to think that I believe in segregation or anything like that but what do you think of that idea?" I said "I think it's a great idea. Can I be the principal?" [she laughs] . . .

Teresa: The distinctive thing is that the staff are Aboriginal

Lyn: And the knowledge. The structures would be Aboriginal . . . It would be open to other members of society but with our knowledge, our structures, our teachers . . .

Teresa: What about my own research approach? What has been your response to that?

Lyn: I was always wondering about how you, being non-Aboriginal, were going to do this. You're having these conversations with Aboriginal writers, and there's always the fear that your words will be appropriated. You know, the whole discussion about appropriation and voice, and whose words are they, and who's benefiting. I just wondered how you were going to deal with that. But I didn't say anything. [she laughs]. That being part of my non-confrontational nature. Once I read your chapter I saw that you weren't pretending to be someone who you weren't. You were acknowledging the place where you were coming from, and that was a big relief. When I read that part or when I realized where you were going with that, I thought: Right on!

Teresa: How about the fact that I rely a lot on Native authors? Did you notice that?
Lyn: That made me want to read some of them. For example, the part about Paula Gunn Allen when she's talking about one of her students who's saying the reason there's all this writing now is because we realize we're going to disappear. I had come to that point in my position as Coordinator . . . I'm always trying to think: Where does this go? What would be the purpose of doing this? We have to start writing our own stories and finding our own voices. Because right now our kids are hardly getting anything, in terms of what's represented in books . . . That [passage] helped me to realize that we need to develop a literate [Native] community.
Teresa: I read Gunn Allen differently . . . She questions her own Indianness: of how she appears from the outside. What she said reminded me of the myth of the Vanishing Indian, and I wondered whether it was the 'same' myth but coming from a different direction . . . It's interesting that you had a different take on the same passage from Gunn Allen.
Lyn: Well you know I thought about that when I read that part and I thought this is the Vanishing Indian myth. But then I thought, no, it's coming from this Aboriginal writer, so in a sense they're right. She's right. I mean, I can see that happening with my own family and my own child. That's partly what led me to ask all of those hard questions. So no, I didn't think that. On the one hand I know there are a lot of things that are being replaced but on the other hand there is an increasing population. Somebody said something interesting: "Pretty soon we're all going to be white." And then someone else said, "Yeah, but we won't have the same culture." I thought, yeah we could all be 'white', but we won't all have the same culture. Culture will make the difference.

I don't think I look anything different from Cree or Aboriginal. Noone ever assumes that I'm anyone else. It makes me wonder what that experience is like for someone who doesn't look Aboriginal. It must be really hard . . . [Someone I know] said that when she's with Aboriginal people, she recognizes them but they don't recognize her. She says that it's really frustrating and hard.
Teresa: But when she starts talking, do they recognize her? By the kinds of things that she says?

Lyn: Yeah. Eventually, maybe. That reminds me of a question I had that a guy asked me: "Do you have any White ancestry?" I said, "No. No, I don't think so." Now that I think about it there probably was, because I have Metis ancestry so there must have been a white person way back there. I thought to myself, "Gee, I haven't been asked that question for a long time." I wonder what they're thinking when they ask that question, as if they're saying: She must have some white blood in her to be that smart.

Teresa: Gunn Allen talks about vanishing in terms of where she is in the university. Of being marginalized, or being put on the margins . . . It's vanishing as a blending or mixing of all these different identities that I disagree with . . . I guess I see a danger in that.

Lyn: Yeah, I do too.

Teresa: A danger that is all the more insidious because it is coming from a Native person.

Lyn: Yeah. I thought: it's fine for her to be multicultural, but I'm not.

Teresa: Can you elaborate on that? Why do you resist being called or calling yourself that?

Lyn: Because that is what is put out there, that the Aboriginal perspective is just one of many cultures that make up Canada . . . if we're just one of many cultures, there's no such thing as having a right. Multiculturalism is not recognizing our Aboriginal rights . . .

Teresa: When you were talking about Banks' discussion of identity and how that made some sense to you, the question I had when I read that part over was: Do you think First Nations identity is an ethnic identity? How do you interpret that word 'ethnic'?

Lyn: I think it's a bridging word. It probably developed in the sixties and seventies when Indian people were demanding to be heard: Indian Control of Indian Education . . . Ethnic is just a word some academic came up with [Teresa laughs] to describe some process that we could all relate to, the non-Aboriginal to the Aboriginal person . . . To me ethnic helps you get to that place where you can say, yeah I have a culture. I have ethnicity. I think it's maybe useful that way. When I'm teaching First Nations Studies, I don't say: let's look at all of the Aboriginal ethnic groups in B.C. Instead I say: we are going to look at the Aboriginal nations.

Maggie

Teresa: What do you see as the role of a Native language program in a First Nations community?

Maggie: I think it's a big, big, major role because we've had such a hard time. We're a lost nation and we don't have our identity. There's lots of major things that took our identity away. It was the schools that we were put into and we were not allowed to speak our language. We didn't know our native ways, we never went after our food like our parents did because we were taken away, so when we don't have an identity, a lot of people are killing themselves, they're dying because of the loss of who they are. They don't know who they are or where they belong. That's why I think - I don't think, I know - that we're pushing so hard to speak our language. We're making lots of mistakes doing it. We're learning as we go along. One day we're gonna hit the jackpot and do the right thing, like the New Zealanders are doing [with the Maori Language nests]. Maybe that's what we really need to do. But it has to have support. It makes me feel good when I hear our leaders speaking our languages. They need to keep speaking our language so that they can know that our language is important and it is a part of us and it is a part of where we come from and of who we are as a First Nations people.

Teresa: So it's very important to contemporary education.

Maggie: It is.

Teresa: It's not enough to learn English or do well in school. It's who you are as a person.

Maggie: That's right [Maggie says forcefully]. If you don't feel good about who you are, you're not going to do anything. If you start feeling good about who you are, then you start learning. But as long as you don't know who you are and you have a block there of who you are, you're not going to have an easy time in your learning. In fact a lot of students drop out. They're a lost nation. I have some children and the grandchildren that are lost because of that, and that's where I feel that it's a really big strong word that we need to find out who we really are and be proud of it but some kids don't want to be Natives, they're ashamed to be Natives.

Teresa: Here?

Maggie: I asked them and some of them said, "I'm not Indian."

Teresa: Where do you think they get that from?

Maggie: They're not proud of who they are. All they see is bad Natives or hear bad things about what we are, that we're nothing but drunks. So we need to begin to raise up strong people, get them to go over to all the schools and tell them who they are and where they are and why they became the way they are.

Teresa: Role models

Maggie: Role models. Strong role models. Because it's natural for us as people to have someone to look up to. We need more of our own people to build up our esteem. It's really important we do. You really need that support from the home too. Every home needs to support accomplishments even if they're small. When my grandkids would take paintings home, I would tell my girls, "Don't throw it away, hang it up, let them see how proud you are of what they've done." When you encourage them so much, they want to do more, always. That's what I've watched the little ones do all these years. It's a really big important thing for them to be praised for their little accomplishments and as they grow bigger, you just keep on praising them and they know when it's natural and they know when it's fake; when it's just words and when you really mean it.

Teresa: First Nations School Boards want children to learn their traditions but they also want them to be successful in the "outside" [motioned in quotes] world. Do those two go together?

Maggie: It's good. Yup, they do, they do, but they have to know who can do it and who can't. They have to be able to help those that can't, find out where those students are at, and help them in those areas where they're good at. They're not all going to become teachers and they're not all going to become nurses and doctors. You listen and you watch what the kids are good at, and that's the native way. And then you encourage it. When the elders know there's a speaker, they do everything to help that speaker, if it's in their family.

Teresa: Encourage them.

Maggie: Yeah. Like my mom did to me. She always made me - or more or less almost kind of pushed me - into being her speaker. I always had to speak for my mom. I was *very uncomfortable with it, but it's okay, I can speak to you and it's because of what she kept pushing me into. I keep encouraging anyone that I know that can be a speaker, or whatever they're good at.*

Teresa: And what they're not so good at, to help them with it as much as you can.

Maggie: You have to encourage them and not discourage them. I say to them: " I know you can do it." I have one granddaughter who keeps saying, "I can't do it, I can't do it!" "Oh, I think you can, you just keep practicing. Practice makes perfect. Okay, let's find out what you can't do and let's try it. Show me what you can't do and then work with that." Just keep doing it, and then when they do it, you see the light in their eyes and then they're ready to keep trying. They may get discouraged again but you just keep doing it. Those are the ones that we keep losing in the school, the ones that need that little extra encouragement.

Teresa: People talk about the difference between native education, I mean, traditional ways of teaching in native communities, and mainstream education. What do you feel? Do you feel they're different, similar or is there an overlap?

Maggie: I think there needs to . . . yeah, I think there's a difference, I think you need to teach both, and I think that's the goal of our community is to teach both because they want our kids to be successful wherever they choose, like if they choose to just live here or to move out, so they need both. If they go out, they have to know the other, not just First Nations traditions. But those that are good at whatever goes on in our community, they would benefit from it.

Teresa: And be successful here.

Maggie: And be successful here.

Teresa: It's kind of going back to what their strength is, encouraging whatever it is . . . that gift you see in them.

Maggie: And it doesn't happen overnight. It's a long process. So it goes back to the parents. They're the ones that know the kids. They're teachers. Parents are teachers. They know what their kids can do and what they can't do. It's their responsibility to inform the teachers.

Teresa: Do you think they do though?

Maggie: Uh-uh. They're afraid of the school.

Teresa: Why is that?

Maggie: Because of the residential school and incidents that happened with some teachers, not all teachers, just some that were authority figures. Whatever upbringing the teachers had, they brought it with them. So some of our kids suffered. They pulled right out of school. They don't want to be involved with it. My brother had an incident where he fought tooth and nail with himself to even come in and confront one of the teachers . . .

Teresa: To actually come in the building?

Maggie: And to confront him with what he did. He cried and cried because of how he felt about school. It's just things like that that cause them to not want to be here. Not all. Some have a really successful experience in the school, so I guess it's just whoever you are or whatever happened.

Teresa: One parent remembered coming down the hallway of the old part of the school, and had overcome that fear, but still remembered and had strong . . .

Maggie: Flashback, kind of, eh?

Teresa: Yeah, we spend so much a part of our early life in school. I remember my elementary school really vividly and if the experiences were bad, then . . .

Maggie: You don't forget.

Teresa: Yeah. You don't forget.

Maggie: Uh-huh. So that's a big issue, the residential school, a big, major issue. That makes you who you are . . . today. I feel like it's not your true identity because things were taken away from you. But I think a lot of our people are gone already, the ones that are real hurt. But even the kids have the effect of it.

Teresa: You mean gone, you mean they're passed away.

Maggie: Yeah, passed away. But it's affected the kids too because we're the way we are.

Teresa: The attitudes . . .

Maggie: Everything [Maggie says in a drawn out voice]. How we are as a person. But I think that's something that our people hung onto. The ones that were left behind. They hung onto extended family. All my first cousins are my sisters. Even if I have just one *biological sister, they're my sisters, so I'm not alone. Like my sister is sick right now, so I'm not really alone because of my other sisters. That's the way of our people. It's a good, good way and it's a good thing that they hung onto that cause it's something that our people always do, they always support one another.*

Nella Nelson

Teresa: So what is community? What does it mean for you?

Nella: Community is a word that everybody bandies about, "you've got to get the community [involved] . . .", but for me community means living it, being out there, supporting other agencies, attending functions and being there to show that you are part of the community. I think if you talk about community from a distance, then you don't feel the connection.

You have your community that you work with, you have your community that you live with, you have your community that's attached to culture. I think that there are ways to pull them together. But if you talk about community, as an armchair community person, by that I mean you talk about community but you don't go out there, then you have a real problem with connection. For me community is being out there, being involved, doing things and connecting it to your home, your family, your workplace, and recognizing that we have tons of work to do. With all the agencies that we have, we're not getting the job done. The needs are greater than the amount of people . . . A phrase that I constantly use is creating a sense of place and belonging . . . It's almost like you have to go in with three or four or five people because if you don't get that sense of belonging, you leave. The other aspect I think about our people and how they see the world is the fact that when you go to do your work and you go to do your training, you do it for your people, you do it because you're moving into service for your people. That's not to say that you don't want to create a better lifestyle for yourself - that's definitely part of it - but when I'm interviewed about my people, I say: I'm here to work for my people; that's the ultimate goal.

Teresa: Can you tell me more about that? How does what you're doing in service for your people come back to them and come back to you?

Nella: As a First Nations person, I think I always recognized, and again it's come through the teachings of my parents, and in an interesting way - the older I get, the more I recognize it - that sense of service, fairness and justice. Growing up in commercial fishing. Being involved on a fish boat where you worked as a team. Everybody needed each other to make the set and get the job done. Male and female roles were totally blended. Everybody worked on deck and did the stuff they needed to do. We hired people from the community who had difficulty getting jobs in other areas. Those were the kind of teachings that laid a foundation for me.

I look at my great-grandmother, Jane Cook, and her picture with the Allied Tribes of BC, and she was out there with a political voice at that time. So it's been there, that movement, and you do it for your people. I wonder sometimes what it would be like to go to a job, do the job and your job is finished for the day; you just live your own life. I can't comprehend it. It's just not in my realm . . .

Well, the other thing is having come from Alert Bay, and my husband from Kingcome, I think that for me one of the strongest things in being connected to my home was all those children that have lived with us. All the children that came, that became part of our lives. That became spirit-lenders, supporters, nurturers . . .

Teresa: That's a beautiful phrase. Spirit-lenders.

Nella: I don't like to call it foster parenting. I do foster, but I don't like the term. Maybe because we're still connected . . . what I find really neat is sometimes when I'm walking down these halls or I go to meetings, I see, for example, kids from Kingcome. We're: "Hi". Sometimes everybody's a bit more formal but what's neat is when they go home in the summer and I go home, [we're] going down the road, going up the river. I think that connection has been as important a thread [for them] as it has been for me. You think, "hey that's great", to be in those two environments; you go back and forth. I think that has developed a real strong thread for me and sense of connection.

It's also in service.

It's also in having our young kids . . . [one] graduated when he was 16, and has gone back and forth, and all the time, he's teaching, teaching, teaching; teaching songs, stories, history. He's been here for three weeks and I've learned three new songs. That's *a real gift of culture tied in with community and education. That's living for me. All of the feasts. That's living.*

One of the things is when we bought our house we had five children. We bought a really big house for our kids. It's ended up that we've hosted a lot of feasts, a lot of gatherings in our house, and I've thought, if I had a little house I wouldn't be able to do this . . . It's so important, and I realize I would be so lost without it.

I find when you do that, seeing and being involved in the culture, I can do this kind of work, it gives me the strength to do this kind of work. Sometimes when you get your graduates and they're not moving, that's what gives me the strength to go on. Some of those young people, they may not have graduated, but they know who they are. At a later point, they will go back . . .

Teresa: I was looking at the [Ministry] statistics that you gave me to read. I'm surprised by the number of off reserve students that are in school, you know, compared to the number of on reserve. It seems like a lot.

Nella: Yeah, like Victoria it's 10 % on and 90 % off.

Teresa: I know before you've told me about the difficulty of that transition from reserve to the city. I wanted to ask you about that. But I also wanted to ask you about your experiences, because you grew up on reserve. How have those experiences influenced you as a First Nations person? How are those experiences different from or similar to some of the students'?

Nella: I think for me, I'm glad I grew up on rez . . . I've learned so much from community and the connection to the land and the water. . . I mean when you're young you don't realize but when you're older, you totally realize the connection that happens. You're going: Oh my god.

Those are things that you can bring to the city to help you survive . . . We used to go up to Knight Inlet (T'sawadi) with our family every year from the time I was six years old to fifteen years old to make eulachon oil and that was the highlight of our life. The fifteen of us packed on a boat going up to make eulachon oil . . . When you've had that experience, you can go to that quiet place in the city; you know that feeling. And sometimes it's that feeling or that place that gives you the strength.

Like I said, the other night my dad was talking about travelling across the sound, it was midnight and he thought we'd fallen overboard. We were on the bow of the boat looking in the water, we were just getting ready to go to bed. It's a beautiful night. All of a sudden everything shuts down, and my brother and me say: "Gee, what's going on? Sounds like dad is running around." He thought we'd fallen overboard. But what fascinated us was we had our blankets, and we were hanging over the bow of the boat and watching the water that was lit up, you know, the fire-water night, with the sparkling lights in the water. We were so enthralled by that picture that we were there for hours. My dad was saying: "Oh, how I am going to tell Mother the kids have died" [We laugh]. I remember that moment, and I remember the tranquility of the night and the water wasn't rough, it was just beautiful . . .

As for the children in the city, the connection . . . That's why it becomes really critical to offer those opportunities for them to get out, even if it's for a day, to get out on the canoe, a cultural event, to start to open their eyes and what they experience will awaken something . . .

Teresa: Do you know about Sheila Te Hennepe and that article she wrote? [Nella indicates no]. NITEP students who were taking Anthropology at UBC brought a concern to her. There was a pattern emerging of complaints about how it was being taught, and how they as Native people were being approached in class, so I was kind of interested to hear about your own experiences in Anthropology. How has that training shaped the way that you see education now, and research too?

Nella: Well it's interesting because when I went into Anthropology, it came out of a desire to know other parts of my history, which you know in the early to late 60's, we were just being allowed to come out of the closet . . . It was certainly interesting times in the process because in one of my courses I wrote a paper for, I used some of my experiences in the villages - different aspects of issues related to the land and the burial sites and the beliefs around the spirits, about how they were still in the trees; I can remember when I was young and we used to do the hundred yard dash - and you were just brought up all the time with the stories, right? So I remember there were times when . . . and I wasn't verbal at that time, not at all, but I sat down and looked at the pen on *paper and the professor had failed me, and I thought how could he fail me? My history is nothing related to the books and to the stories, and I'm telling you, I'm telling you our story. It was the one time I really took that challenge to meet with the prof. I said, I disagree with this. These are experiences of my people! This is what I've written, these are my experiences, this is what I've been told, these are the stories that go with this. Then I go to him and say: I want you to re-read this, to re-read this and re-mark this but try to read it from my perspective. So he took it away and he did. He came back and he gave me another grade. But it would have just been left. It was always a challenge to do the anthropological perspective and to glean out what in fact was your reality . . .*

Also with our own people. You know, it wasn't something you advertised, "Yeah, I have a degree in Anthropology, or Sociology". It was all silent kind of stuff; our people were still angry with the grave robbers. And then trying to move things from that perspective . . . it was then I realized how critical it was for them [anthropologists] to understand what went on in the past. The difficulties in relating to the present and the future.

Teresa: I've seen that, but I imagine you've seen that too, in designing curriculum.
Nella: Especially yes. The key is to draw the thread through. It's true we need to understand where we've come from and how we've lived but also we need to understand the transition and the change so you don't have a call like they received at the Friendship Centre the other day from a lady in England, "We were wondering if you could take us on tour to visit the Indians in their natural setting". Is this a joke?. The question kind of summarizes the difficulty of trying to make anthropology a living, dynamic process . . .

Energy never dies, energy transforms into another shape. As they say, is there any other nationality or race that is judged by staying in their past? Like the First Nations people are? They haven't been allowed to change, and so that becomes the challenge. I had a young Masters student come to interview me on racism. I said it's because you know who you are that you can bridge, and to have her final statement to be: "What does it feel like for you to be assimilated? How does it feel?" After this great interview. It proves that there's this mindset that gets stuck.
Teresa: What is the place of resistance in First Nations identity? . . .

Nella: It's . . . having the strength to say: I need you to hear what I have to say. Even now if I'm in certain situations and I'm confident I know who I am and I know where I'm at, there are still times that I'm silenced, because maybe it's not a safe time. I will never dispute it in the sense that I will always think about it and figure out a way to bring the issue forward, if I can't do it in that verbal way at that time. For our students, that has been a real challenge. We're still dealing with differing perceptions. We had an incident recently where a child did very well on some testing and one of the staff brought it to one of the teachers and that person said: Oh, she's pretty smart for a . . . [Nella leaves off the end but we know how that phrase finishes]. It's still there. Again, as we know, non-verbal messages are so powerful. It's hard to battle them . .

Teresa: Do you find that you can change people within that framework. Is the framework shifting because you are there to say, with your voice, okay this is true and this is true and this is not true. Is there a shift happening?

Nella: I think there's a general, how would you say it? A social conscience. I've become part of the social conscience of the shift that's happening, the awareness that's happening. A social conscience for all people, not just First Nations. I think what we have here when all these people are saying, "we need to look at this", is a lot of strong political and social will. Principals and district administration are recognizing: this is not a First Nations issue; this is a system's issue. We all have to look at our role in it and what we can do to make a difference. I think that that I've never felt that momentum as strong as I do right now . . .I'm not saying that it's not challenging to work within a system that is very concrete, sequential, and organized. But I think that's when your creativity can come . . .

Post-Conversation

Nella: It was interesting to read it [the transcript] in a written form and see it framed that way. It triggered some things too, seeing how it was written. How do I move that concept out, how do I expand on it . . . I could also see where my threads ran through over an extended period of conversation, how they would come full circle and weave together.

Teresa: Have you had that sense before? Was it because of being able to see in a written form in the transcript?

Nella: No I know the way I speak. That is my style, to pull things together and weave them through. I think when it comes to a literal sense of looking at it, it brings a different perspective because there's a different voice when you say it, and there's a different voice when it's written.

Teresa: One of the things that I notice, and it's framed in the way that I'm writing this chapter, is the language; the words that people choose, like pulling or threading or pulling the thread through. I pay close attention to those words because those are the words that make the connections or where connections start to pull together. They start to form a kind of

Nella: Pattern.

Teresa: Right. Pattern.

Nella: Yeah, and I think that's true that there's themes and words and ways and metaphors, the way that you express yourself and your experience . . . when I'm speaking, I usually use a lot of metaphors from commercial fishing, like brailing, bailing and the nets and the weaving of nets.

Teresa: That was another question I had. As I was reading the transcript and all of the times I have ever talked to you, I have had the sense that your identity is something, I don't want to use the word resolved, but something that you feel secure about and strong in. I was going to ask you if that was a process of getting to there, or whether it was always there?

Nella: No it wasn't always there. It was always there in the sense of knowing I'm an Indian person, and growing up on reserve. The struggle came in the name-calling; being called Nigger, Aunt Jemima, Midnight. I think it brought me into conflict with the colour of my skin. I always think about that. I wasn't ashamed to be Indian, but I didn't like the colour of my skin. I never ever denied my race or the fact that I was Indian; I just wished that my skin were lighter. Another part of my identity was the fact that my grandmother was an interpreter at the potlatch trials. There was a lot of shame attached that was community shame put on the family because their belief was, you helped to wipe out the *potlatch. I had to struggle being a part of the Cook family yet [from] all the research on the potlatch trials and on Granny, a lot of the words were taken out of context; whole sentences or paragraphs weren't included by people doing research or using that documentation. When we go home, we do take the time to go visit our different elders and it's amazing how many of them will say: "Oh your granny, I loved your granny, she was such a special woman . . . " . . . Even the elders called her Granny. So it was coming to grips with that balance and coming to terms with saying maybe her role wasn't how people saw it; maybe there was another context. She was not opposed to the potlatch per se but what it had evolved into: how children went without . . .*

Teresa: What about terminology? I've been asking everyone about this . . . First Nations, Aboriginal, Native . . .

Nella: I prefer to be called First Nations. It's not to exclude anybody. It's inclusive of all indigenous people and that's always been our [FNESD] philosophy . . . With Indian, some of our elders say, "I was born an Indian, I'm going to die an Indian." . . . It's a legal word . . . but the elders use it in a different way . . . We say: "We're going Indian dancing." It's still hard to say, "We're going First Nations dancing." There are certain contexts where it's okay to use it . . .

Teresa: I wanted to ask you again about the social conscience and how big of a role that plays in what you do.

Nella: We as First Nations people can work to mobilize things but . . . because we're such a minority (a small part of the population) we need people to recognize what the social issues are. And that there is a conscious level for understanding what the issues are. And it is for the betterment of all.

Teresa: So social conscience means the consciousness raising of the people in society: colonization, discrimination, racism. So when you're acting as a social conscience, what are you doing?

Nella: Part of it is increasing the awareness, bringing forward knowledge on issues. I strongly believe for myself that when I speak in public . . . especially in a general context, the key is to maintain an open mind, heart and spirit. When you're doing that social conscience, you're not throwing people against the wall and dumping collective *guilt on them because we can't move them that way . . . And so being a social conscience is about bridge-building . . .*

Teresa: When you use literature, you can't help but have a response, and then in sharing about that response, issues and assumptions and prejudices rise to the surface. Literature is an effective vehicle for teaching. One prejudice that I always encounter is: First Nations people approach things that way because they're coming from an oral tradition. Things are attributed to the form: oral versus written, instead of really listening to what is being said. That prejudice shuts out an awareness of, for example, contemporary First Nations literature. The oral tradition is part of it, but it's not the whole of it.

Nella: . . . There's another part for me in public speaking of going to that place for spirit. You pray every time . . . one part of that is my mom's teachings: You pray every time before you public speak. . . The other part is for protection, because you're vulnerable when you speak.

Ruth Cook

Teresa: What I'm wondering is how your identity became part of what you were doing in education, for example, all of the things that shaped you as a person when you were growing up?

Ruth: It came from my mom's teaching from the time I was little. I carried on the values of our people. I went to residential school when I was seven and the transition was pretty mild compared to some people. We had choices. My mom had choices whether to send us or not. She herself went to a Mission School in Alert Bay under a principal - I think his name was Mr. Corkey. By the time we went it was Mr. E. Anfield. I think because Mr. Anfield was so respectful of First Nations people and the families that it set the tone.

Teresa: That must have been unusual at that time.

Ruth: Oh very. The little village I came from is called Village Island, Mamalilikala. We had two missionaries who settled there and they were so respectful of the people that they wouldn't even put their house on land; they put their house on stilts by the road . . . That was my first interaction with non-Natives and it was positive because they respected our people.

With my mom's experience being positive with school, the second generation also looked forward to going to school. Mr. Anfield - and I don't think you hear this anywhere else, I may be wrong - came to our village twice to introduce himself to my sister and I because they were preparing us to go to residential school a year before we went. Twice he went out of his way to come and visit us, make himself known to us, to tell us about the routine and their expectations of us, what would be going on there at the school. I don't think you get many principals doing that.

Teresa: No. The opposite.

Ruth: Totally. So we looked forward to going. Even though we really missed our families, we could go out and visit them on Saturdays when they were home. At certain times they would be out travelling and trapping and doing other things. The other thing that I did find frustrating was not being able to speak our language. If we were caught, [Ruth demonstrates on her hand] it was a tap with the ruler, not beaten like other people's stories. Of course we spoke it when we were out in the yard playing; they couldn't stop that.

It is normal that you miss your family and I was a curious kid, I was always asking questions: "Why is our language so bad?" My supervisor said, "Well . . . ". She was stumped for a while; for a good answer, I guess. Then she said, "Well, we don't think you'll learn as well if you're still speaking your language." Of course I was bilingual because I was already speaking English. I had no problem when I got there. So in my heart, I knew what she said wasn't right. But I had to ask that question.

I adapted because I went in with my older sister and I knew some of the kids, they were from the Alert Bay area and all up and down the coast. That was a good experience, of getting along with children from other tribes along the coast. It was a good thing because so many tribes had little resentments against one another.

I was fortunate that I was well prepared beforehand. I thought all schools were positive experiences like mine. I was absolutely dumbfounded and shocked when I heard about all the abuse that was going on in those schools. It blew me away. It's so rare now that people hear a positive experience. They say to me: "Are you in denial?" "Nope, I just happened to be very blessed having a good principal."

Teresa: And he was there the whole time?

Ruth: That I was there, yes. He left a few years later. From then on that school went downhill. Even the ministers abused the girls.

Teresa: It just goes to show what we were talking about before, that individuals make a difference.

Ruth: Yes, oh definitely. I know my mother was very gifted with a good voice. In fact, she used to be able to sing in three octaves. One of the supervisers wanted to take her to England for further training and of course the Indian agent said, NO. I think that was one of my mom's deepest sorrows and disappointments in her life, that she couldn't go to get this training for her beautiful voice. The Indian agent had total control over your whole life; you had to go ask permission. It was like concentration camp in our villages. It was horrible.

Like I say, to ease their conscience, today they have to keep Native people's image down to justify why they had to take our land, why they had to have say over our lives, because they didn't know how to run their own lives. That happened for centuries, you know, forcing us to stay in one place when all year we worked. With the different seasons, we moved to different places. It was pleasant, it was happy for us. They wanted to stop that too and put us all in one village. They called us lazy Indians. Yet we were busy all year round, gathering our food, bartering, socializing, just having a good life.

I was fortunate that my mother was always very open-minded. I was always full of questions. She never said, "Oh would you shut up and go play outside!" She had patience and answered to the best of her abilities. I was always visiting the elders and they never chased me away either. They always answered my questions.

I felt safe and happy and contented in our village. I never wanted to go to Alert Bay. That was the big town where we would go shopping. If we had a choice, we would stay with our aunties in the village; we didn't want to go to Alert Bay. A lot of times our parents left us with our relatives and went shopping. We didn't have to have any toys, because we were constantly making up our own games in the village and playing down the beach. It was so clean. The beaches always had those nice white shells. We'd play with the kelps and the shells. We never ran out of games to play. We would go out in the *boats. There were small little islands around our village and we would go from island to island picking the fresh plants that were edible and the pretty little flowers. Oh, it was a paradise . . .*

So together with the strong teachings from my mom and the elders, you can adapt anywhere when you feel good about who you are. You've got your teachings and you just take what's good for you out of both cultures. There's nothing wrong with that, because everybody does that. You know which part is good for you and which isn't.

I was taught never to always want. You know how everybody runs around sometimes, I shouldn't say everybody, but you know how some people go for all the advertising: Oh I gotta try this and I gotta try that. My parents taught me to be disciplined in that area . . . Out of that I grew up not to want what everybody else wanted but I always chose something different [she laughs].

So, my values and teachings were very strong. I more or less chose what was good for me from society and blended it into my life. Because of my good experience, I think that was why I could mix with anybody . . .

Teresa: So when you were a T.A. [Teacher Assistant], what kinds of values did you pass on to the students? You were concerned about attitudes.

Ruth: Uh, humm.

Teresa: So how did your presence there make a difference to the students, the school, the teachers?

Ruth: After they got to know me, that I was dependable, that I would be there every day and not take off after the first paycheck as they viewed First Nations, that I could be sociable and talk to anybody and not hang back. I got involved with things that were going on at the school. I was blessed to work with a wonderful teacher. She loved First Nations values and the artwork. She taught choir there. Our Native kids would put on plays. She was just so talented and I was so lucky to work with her. She trained under the Hunt family as an artist. I felt her support right from the beginning: the acceptance of our people. I just had the odd person who looked at me as if, "What is she doing here? She's probably not qualified." No I wasn't qualified in their terms but I was qualified in *living it, and experiencing it and bringing up my own children. I mean, what better experience and diploma would you need? [Ruth laughs]. I lived it all my life.*

I think for the First Nations children, it would good for them to see a First Nations person there . . . You know, just to be there and do those things is saying a lot to them . It was saying: you can do this kind of work and enjoy it. With her right attitude, we did a lot with the children. You know, First Nations artwork and bringing in resource people that could dance and sing for them. You could tell, it just opened them right up, because they related to those things because it had meaning; it was real.

Teresa: Do you think First Nations teachers have a different manner of teaching because of the values that they have been brought up with?

Ruth: I think most of them, if they apply it, the children are richer for it because you teach the children to be more caring and sensitive to other people around you. By feeling good about yourself, you pass that on to the children . . . You give them that message and try to build more and more confidence that they can do it. That's what we would do in our classroom. The kids would say, "I want to do this," "I want to do that". She would say, "Of course I'll show you how to do it." She would never say, "You can't do it." She would allow them to try and would show them how to do it. When computers came in, we got them going on it right away. Anything that the children wanted to do, at any age, whatever they were interested in, we would allow them to do it and show them the steps how to. We would never say, "Oh you're too young to do that." You would show them how to do it, and it's amazing how quickly they picked it up. We encouraged them and didn't tell them, "Oh, it's too much for you." That was a put-down.

With our plays, there was one boy, a big boy. That's probably what it was, being the biggest in the class, he would have a bad behavior and bullying. We put him into the play and put him into the part of the head chief. What a difference it made in that boy! It turned him right around. We told him: "You can do it. You're good enough to do it". We encouraged him. He put his whole heart and soul into those practices. That play was so good that we were asked to go to other schools to show the other students what we were doing with our boys and girls.

It was just a real thrill to work with this teacher and to have somebody who was so respectful of our children. The children picked it up. The sky was the limit once they had confidence and trust in us that we would back them.

Teresa: For a First Nations person, where does confidence come from?

Ruth: Well I guess I can only speak for myself, for my own family and community, of accepting me for who I was. Like I said, going to visit the elders every day. They had time for me and never chased me away. Acceptance. Right in your own home, for God's sake.

Teresa: You told Lyn Daniels this, and I have also heard it from Nella and Janice Simcoe. Things will always be revealed in time. If you don't understand it now, you will understand it

Ruth: When it is time for you to understand it. That's right. That's where you learn, where your maturity comes from, of sitting back and waiting for it to happen. We can't do it now, so wait for the right time for it to be shown. When you're young, you're impatient, you say, "I want to do it now." It's like a lot of times when you read something, it doesn't come, it doesn't come, and then it does. That was one of the teachings that was so important to our people, patience, learning to wait for things. The seasons told us that. Nature told us what to do and when to do it. Today's world: you have to jump ahead, beat it, scramble up. Whereas what you have to do is wait for the right time.

Teresa: You also have to be observant during that waiting time.

Ruth: That's right.

Teresa: When I spoke with Skip Dick, he talked about the difficulty he has with these teachings being put into a program, being taught as part of a curriculum.

Ruth: Right. Right.

Teresa: What are your thoughts on that?

Ruth: Well, I find it difficult too because you just live it. It's hard to put it in little categories. But in order to get in there and stay in the school system, I say you have to do what you have to do in order to get that diploma even if you know it's not the right way. It's important to be there for the children and teach them. That is the way it is done *for now and hopefully along the way, you will find something that will be meaningful to them, how to approach those teachings, and how to adjust to the changes. Because change will always be there. You can kick against it but the harder and the longer you kick against change, the more it comes. Once you say, okay Creator, I accept what is here and I will wait for you to tell me what I should do, change comes easier. I find in my own life that my struggles and trials last longer if I'm resisting. Instead of saying, "Okay this is what is happening right now, Creator, but show me how to deal with it and when."*

Teresa: Yes, I feel as if I've been through that process in my research. I became aware of it through my association with Native people.

Ruth: Yes, we all learn from one another when we share. You still hear so much of that mind-set of First Nations . . .

Teresa: I used to hear a lot of superstitions when I was growing up. Superstitions are to me one of the spiritual vestiges of my culture that has lasted into the present. Instead of taking responsibility for yourself when something bad happens, you say: this must have happened to me because

Ruth: A black cat walked across the road

Teresa: Or I walked under a ladder. I had to resist those when I got older. They would come automatically into my head.

Ruth: It's like de-programming yourself. It's like the old negative tapes that we heard when we were growing up and we need to find a way to do away with those, because they're harmful or they don't work. But I pray in the morning. I pray for guidance. We forget to ask him for help to help us do it because sometimes we can't do it on our own. The best part of life is challenge. Do you like challenges?

Teresa: Uh-humm.

Ruth: I used to be afraid of it but I'm not now. I guess I should be learning a few things by now [we laugh]. I'm sixty-eight years old. So, living life on purpose. It's what you make your life to be: keep it challenging and live it without fear. We're always bombarded by the media with negative messages of fear, fear, fear. There are a lot of good people and good things happening out there . . .

Teresa: In my letter, I told you I would ask you about research, and whether you have some thoughts on how research should be conducted, and how Native people have been treated in research.

Ruth [breaks in and exclaims]: We're just fed up with it! Because I think: what are they doing with it? Are they getting money from it? Is that why they're doing it? Is it money again? And if they've done the proper research, why do they keep having to do it again? It's their way of saying, well, you're not really human. To me, that's what it's saying. There's a lot of inaccuracies when they're doing the research and a lot of times the people have not said these things. Do you know what I mean? Yet the researcher puts it in to make it sound more exciting. I guess I'm just tired of the research going on. I think things are not changing, nothing's been really done with it. With all the research, what do they aim to do with it? You know, we've been researched to death. And you know why I think they keep doing it? They're not getting the answers they want [I laugh]. "You know, we're just at the animal level." If we said something like that, that would please them, but because we don't, they don't know what to do with us. At least that's how I'm beginning to figure it out [we laugh]. I guess you've had a lecture on protocols, have you? I don't know if they told you this but you always bring a little gift.

Teresa: Yes I did bring one.

Ruth: You know why? Because it proves and solidifies that you are a witness to these words.

Teresa: I didn't know whether to give it right away or afterwards. I brought you a jar of salmon. I'm sure you probably have jarred salmon.

Ruth: Yes but we never turn it down . . . Before, our diet was very important. Our people were very passive people, you know we weren't rushing around all the time. I think that a lot of it was because of our diet.