

Resistance and renewal: surviving the Indian residential school

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perceptions of Native cultures as inferior and primitive (*Maclean, 1896, Hill-Tout, 1907*). This strong sense of white superiority accompanied by a tendency to generalize, to subsume the many and varied groupings from across the country or across the province into one amorphous grouping, resulted in a hazy view of Native people (*D.I.A., 1960; Grant, 1984*). Because academics writing of Native history have tended to rely on written records for their research, they present most often the views of the white fur trader, settler, Indian agent and missionary (*Morice, 1906; Cronin, 1960; Hewlett, 1964; Wilson, 1985*). By far the majority of the lengthy quotations are the words of Euro-Canadians; all too rarely is attention given to those of the Native people. Because few Native people have kept written records, interviewing is at times the only means of garnering their perceptions of history. With notable exceptions (*Berger, 1977, 1981; Brody, 1981*), few researchers writing of Native people have taken the time to develop the trusting and understanding relationships necessary for open communication and meaningful interviews. Historical writings about Native people to the present time exhibit a deficiency of primary source material explicating Native perspectives.

Because the nature of their work requires that they spend time with the people whom they study, anthropologists have fared somewhat better in presenting the life experiences of Native people. Although some studies suffer through their attempts to present a comprehensive study of Native cultures across the country (*Jenness 1963*), others such as those of James Teit (*1900, 1909*) are in direct contrast. Fluent in a number of Native languages and married to a member of the Thompson Nation, Teit in his life work with the people of the Interior of B.C., has provided invaluable resources on traditional life styles considered accurate by both Native and Euro-Canadian historians. Years after Teit, Wilson Duff produced a book based on extensive ethnographic work throughout the province. As a result, *The Indian History of British Columbia (1964)* presents for the first time in a publication of a general nature a variety of Native views on the impact of the Europeans on their societies. About the same time, Wax, Wax and Dumont (*1964*) produced a detailed case study of the education of the Oglala Sioux of the Pine Ridge reservation. Thorough field research resulted in a clearly developed study with emphasis on the Native perspective.

This example was followed quickly by a number of case studies (*Wolcott, 1967; King, 1967; Brow, 1967*). All of these studies are obviously the work of academics involved for only a limited time with the people whom they studied, frequently with a predetermined agenda. Although they do present a personal view of the objects of their study, their understanding could be said to lack the depth which comes with long-term contact. A significant aspect of these studies is the inclusion of a number of lengthy quotations by Native people.

Educational writings, as all writings, are influenced by the society within which they are formed. British Columbia has a history preceding Confederation which refuses to acknowledge the existence of Native people. Unlike other provinces, few treaties dealing with relatively few portions of land were drawn up to address the issue of aboriginal title. Douglas, the first governor of the colony of Vancouver Island, insisted that:

... only after the aboriginal title had been extinguished by treaty could settlement proceed ... the settlers denied that it was their responsibility, and they would not vote funds for the purpose.
(BERGER, 1981: 222-23)

The policy of denying that aboriginal title had ever existed persisted when the new colony of British Columbia united with Vancouver Island in 1866. Because the provincial government chose to ignore Native people, no consideration was given to their education. The federal government's assumption of responsibility for Native people in 1876 reinforced this attitude. In his 1936 doctoral dissertation, "The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia," Donald MacLaurin, the Assistant Superintendent of Education for B.C., does not even mention Native people. As a result of federal control as outlined in the Indian Act, people writing about Native education tended to write about it as a national concern. Reports and research often failed to consider the concerns or perspectives of individual tribal nations, but rather reflected the national views of the Department of Indian Affairs.

Much of the research and publishing on Native education has been done under the auspices of the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA). Materials which embellish the department's image and depict its successes are more acceptable than those which

might lead to suggestions of racism and ultimately threaten the careers of the elected officials at its head. A book entitled *The Education of Indian Children in Canada* (1965) presents itself as "A symposium written by members of the Indian Affairs Education Division with Comments by the Indian Peoples." It outlines policy decisions and changing legislation. The direct involvement of Native people is found only in the short commentaries which follow each chapter.

On the topic of Native involvement in decision-making, the closing chapter contains a most revealing statement.

At present the education of Indian people is directed almost exclusively by outsiders. The federal, provincial and municipal authorities argue, discuss and decide. Indian people participate, but more to ratify than to plan, so is it any wonder that Indians continue to remain unexcited about our program for their education? (INDIAN AFFAIRS EDUCATION DIVISION, 1965: 96)

This paradoxical approach continues to the present day: while paying lip-service to involvement of the people in self-determination, those in control simultaneously present plans for ratification. In Freire's words,

The invaders act; those they invade have only the illusion of action, through the action of the invaders. (1977: 150)

The Hawthorn report (1967), while generalizing as *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada*, is structured around research with a number of bands across the country. As is the case with many of the historical writings, the credited quotations are those of the white experts: church people, school people, and department people. Generally limited to single words and phrases, Native people's responses to questions regarding the need for education are made to sound shallow and ill-conceived: "Education makes life easier," or "Education helps you get along with whites better." (Hawthorn, 1967: 137). The Indian voices are given only through layers of European interpreters.

Few works on residential schools in western Canada exist. *The School at Mopass* (King, 1967), a study of a Yukon residential school, is thorough and includes considerable comment on the school by Native students and workers. The study was commissioned by the Indian Affairs Branch because officials found that the school:

... is dysfunctional in the sense that it does not produce the kind of product which it is intended to produce. The desired 'product' might be defined as a well-integrated Canadian citizen equipped with attitudes and intellectual skills that enable him to function within the larger society in basically the same manner as other citizens. (ix)

Despite the author's intent not to be influenced by the sponsorship of his study, his ethnocentric bias surfaces in comments such as:

Those elements [of traditional culture] that linger seem to be a reactive defense mechanism for coping with the powerful but generally apathetic Whiteman society rather than a deliberate or functional persistence of cultural traits as valued entities in themselves. (27)

On the other hand, his criticisms of the school and nearly all portions of society responsible for its inhumanity and ineffectiveness are well-taken.

Two articles published separately in *BC Studies* include some interesting insights into residential schools. Coates (1985), relies heavily on archival material, including files of letters from Native people to school officials, to construct his thesis that the school at Carcross in the Yukon "... failed to provide the Native students with an obvious route into either native or white society." (47) Redford (1980) summarizes attendance statistics to demonstrate the control which Native parents had over the starting date and the duration of their children's time at residential school. A recent collection of articles entitled *Indian Education in Canada* (Barman et al, 1986) includes several allusions to residential schools in Canada. Although the emphasis is on archival material as a source of data, it includes notable exceptions such as the linguistic study of Battiste and the summary of an extensive study by Persson (1980) on the Blue Quills school in Northern Alberta.

Other references to residential schools are found within larger studies. Mary Ashworth (1979) took the time to interview a former residential school student for inclusion as a part of a chapter on the history of Native education in B.C. Her use of other Native sources for her information led her to the conclusion that Native people must control their own education, an

indication of the depth of her understanding of the current situation in Native education.

In summary, three points regarding existing writings about Native people are paramount. Although archival material, particularly primary sources which may include the recording of Native comments, is worthwhile in examining history from a Native perspective, only careful interpretation can expose the Euro-Canadian bias of much of the material. Whenever possible, archival material should serve only as a starting point for research about Native people, and should be complemented with information gathered in interviews. Because of the relatively short duration of the Euro-Canadian presence in B.C., there are still many older Native people who have a wealth of memories to contribute to an effort at understanding their perspectives of events which may be documented only minimally in the various archives. Finally, few detailed studies have been conducted on the Native experience in residential schools. None exists for the Kamloops Indian Residential School prior to the current study.

APPENDIX B

METHODOLOGY

*"don't rhyme the words too closely
when you tell our story
leave time and space for us to install
our bit of truth "*

Sheila Erickson
(in *Gooderham*, 1972: 40)

The analysis of the methodology used for collecting and presenting this research falls into two major sections. Part one includes the reasons for using certain methods. The second section recounts details of the methods themselves, i.e., how the research was conducted and how the data was selected for presentation.

THE REASONS

Understanding human experience is the central task of the educational researcher Too often, theory fails to speak to the personal everyday life-worlds of the students and becomes instead another set of alienating constructs. (POLAKOW, 1985: 826)

Valerie Polakow, in a recent article, elaborates on the importance of storytelling in developing theory concerning those groups in society who have tended to remain voiceless—the invaded and the oppressed. The article points out that too much of modern educational research has been an attempt to emulate the so-called true sciences.

In contemporary social science, stories are soft—they do not constitute the real data of the scientific enterprise The isolation of body, of mind, of experience, of consciousness leads to documentation, to a mere taxonomy of facts closed in on themselves, leading us away from, not towards, the understanding of human experience. (POLAKOW: 826)

Decrying this approach to research, she goes on to point out the importance of storytelling as a form of research. The careful selection of stories by the researcher who "... is an embedded participant, not a distant, uninvolved observer of the human-scope" (*Polakow: 826*) provides the key to storytelling as human science research. In works cited earlier, such as those of George Manuel and James Teit, the writers have indeed taken the time to live the lives whereof they write.

I began the formal research for this study of the Kamloops Indian Residential School as an informal participant observer involved in 'the process of living'. My involvement with Native people in the Kamloops area spans a period of fifteen years. Originally, as a teacher in two of the secondary schools, I worked with some Native students in my classes. Another intense connection was through a rodeo company in which I played an active role. A number of Native people in the Kamloops area have lifetime commitments to rodeo. Over the years I developed strong friendships with some of the rodeo people. Twelve years ago, in 1976, I moved into the field of Native education through my work as co-ordinator of the Native Indian Teacher Education Program, an alternative program offered by the University of British Columbia for prospective elementary teachers. In this capacity, I served as teacher, counsellor, seminar leader, and practicum supervisor working with Native adults. I mention these involvements because they have provided the basis for long term trusting relationships with people. The friendships served as the starting point which, when accompanied by an explanation of the work which I was doing, enabled me to talk with the people in depth about an emotion-filled area. As my knowledge of the Native people's lives and history grew, the importance and lack of documentation of the impact of the residential school became clearer to me. The interviews provided an opportunity to focus on what had emerged as an area of concern and significance for many Native people of the Kamloops area.

Only with the direct involvement—the words—of the people in the presentation of history can one approach a Native perspective. Through these words, the residential school which lives in the memories of the participants takes shape before our eyes. The cultural invasion and the resistance to this invasion and ultimately the survival and persistence of a group of people

in the central Interior of British Columbia become the emphases of this book.

A strong sense of irony focussed my attention on the stories of the students of K.I.R.S. Originally the senior girls' dormitory, the top floor of the east side of the huge brick building completed in 1923 now houses a program for Native people who wish to become elementary teachers. Frequently, students coming to be interviewed for admission or to class for the first time said very calmly, "My bed was right by that window . . ." or that door, or around that corner. With only slight encouragement, the stories began to pour forth—stories of loneliness, pain, camaraderie, and resilience. The irony of the situation comes with the people who have returned to a place of their youth, a place of what was often very difficult formal education, to study to be teachers. They come by choice, as mature students, with clear goals in mind. How different from the other times.

The Kamloops Indian Band owns the buildings which were until recently the Kamloops Indian Residential School. As I have discussed earlier, within these buildings, educational activities from historical research to curriculum development are in progress. They have the potential to affect and have already affected the school lives of the band children. In order to appreciate this phenomenon as a tremendous expression of the survival of a culture and a group of people, I felt it necessary to delve into the history which has led to this present state. Beneath the current surge in educational activity lies almost a century of formal education for the most part dominated and controlled by religious and governmental policies established unilaterally by European society.

THE METHODS

Initially, my formal research relies heavily on written material to present something of the attitudes and ambitions which guided those people who established and controlled the residential school. Records at the Public Archives of British Columbia, Oblate House in Vancouver, the Secwepemc Museum and Archives, and the libraries at Cariboo College and the University of B.C. provided a brief but basic picture of the European perspective. That total cultural annihilation was the goal of government and missionaries is undeniable when one examines the written records. That these efforts to assimilate Native

people were on the whole successfully resisted is the ultimate focus of the preceding stories.

Because the stories of the people so vividly depict life in the residential school, frequently in a very different light than that which the written records suggest, interviewing was deemed the most satisfactory approach to presenting some of the history of the school from a Native perspective. Thirteen intensive one to two hour interviews form the kernel of the data. In addition, I have kept field notes on more casual discussions with numerous other Native people.

Interviews were taped and transcribed. Because two participants did not want to be taped, I made notes during the interviews. I was particularly interested in facets of school life which were deemed contrary to values and beliefs held before coming to school; in the forms of resistance which students developed to the foreign expectations of the people in charge; and finally, in the effects which schooling had on the students' relationships with their families when they returned home.

The interviews themselves were very flexible. Although I prepared a schedule (see *Appendix D*), I rarely referred to it during an interview. Instead the direction of the interview was determined by the stories the person wanted to tell. At times, the flow of the interview was guided more by the stories which the person had to tell than by my schedule. Without exception, the issues of cultural violation and resistance to that violation were mentioned. The place of interviewing was most often my office which was located in the residential school buildings. The room itself stirred many memories: "This used to be sister's bedroom," commented one participant. On some occasions, particularly when speaking with older people, I went to their homes. My kitchen table was also the site of many tales told by casual visitors about the residential school.

Generally I chose to interview people with whom I had already had contact or people whom others had suggested as strong participants. Those who hesitated when I asked them, I did not interview. Throughout the interview, people were made aware that they could end it whenever they chose, and that they could refuse to answer any questions. Almost without exception, people spoke most openly and informatively about their school lives. Needless to say, the interviewing which I did only

scratched the surface. Many important stories are still unrecorded.

Because of the intense emotions involved in sharing pieces of life with an interviewer, one must have established a warm relationship before the interview, or be capable of establishing rapport quickly. In a cross-cultural situation, this ability is crucial, as is some awareness of specific cultural interaction patterns. I do not mean to imply in any way that this relationship should be developed in an exploitive way, in order to interview, but rather the converse. The accounts reproduced here were generally fuller and more open than is often the case with one-time interviews, for the most part because of a long term relationship between the interviewer and the participant.

Two of the main problems with interviewing, particularly in asking people to recall events which are in the distant past, are the selectivity of memory and the possible distortion of these memories over time. I would like to present for consideration two points in this regard. Selection of material presented is a problem encountered with any documentation of fact or history. Memories which survive over time in people's minds are usually those of the more salient experiences. Rather than seeing time as distorting, we might consider it as a filter which allows clearer vision of the matters of importance in a person's life.

Secondly, I feel it is essential to emphasize the oral tradition of the Shuswap people and aboriginal people of the surrounding regions. Unlike some Native cultures in Canada, those in the central Interior of the province did not traditionally transmit culture in written form. As has already been mentioned, storytelling has been the most important means of passing along history and traditions. Even in the now literate culture of the Shuswap, the ability to tell stories with accuracy is respected as a skill. Storytelling, often in the guise of entertainment, continues to be an important dialogical tool for passing along truths. I propose that the long tradition of storytelling—one which includes the re-telling of stories many times with little or no change (*Teit*, 1909: 621)—contributes to accurate presentation of events even long after their occurrence. One participant commented on this notion as it exists in her culture: "There is no distinction between telling lies and not remembering or

exaggerating. There's no difference; all of them are lies" (*Nancy*: 4). For this person, remembering is a value-laden activity. Closely associated with telling the truth, speaking remembrances is socially acceptable only when it is faithful to the previous accounts.

As my interviewing progressed, I found my mental image of the school constantly changing. Each new idea expressed produced a slight reshuffling of the pieces which made up the visualization which I was developing of the school. Occasionally an interview produced so many ideas or an idea of such import, it was as if in turning a kaleidoscope, the overall pattern changed radically, incorporating the old bits of coloured glass with new bits to form an entirely new design. These initial reactions to the interviews were followed by the more comprehensive analysis of the transcriptions of the interviews and a review of the field notes.

The deeper analysis began with a thorough reading of the transcripts. At that time, I marked noteworthy points. On a second reading, I prepared a list of the most striking topics which arose from each interview. These consisted of points which I felt would be useful in re-creating the participants' perspectives of the school and its effects on them. I had in my mind a general direction in which the information might lead me, but remained open to changes which secondary examination of the data might encourage me to emphasize. I found myself thinking most often of a quiltmaker. The people I talked with created the squares and my job was to arrange them in an effective design and to stitch them together to fashion an impressive entity. The stories form our quilt, made of people's strength, resistance, pain, change and adaptation.

In an effort to maintain the confidentiality of the interviews, I have included only minimal details about each person. I have assigned each study participant a pseudonym and a number and have included the following details: tribal origin, year of birth, and years of attendance at the school (see *Appendix C*). The presentation of the data for the most part is not arranged chronologically. When I felt that the time of a particular comment was important, I have usually indicated a decade. Although many policies changed over the term of the school's operation, outstanding is the commonality of feeling about the school. Some details of daily life changed with the policy, but

the study participants' attitudes to an oppressive and dehumanizing system remained fairly constant.

Because I came to the Native culture as a privileged guest, I felt that it was most important to seek the people's approval of my work before beginning it. The recently formed Secwepemc Cultural Education Society has as its mandate "... to work in unity to: Preserve and Record—Perpetuate and Enhance our Shuswap Language, History and Culture" (*Secwepemc Cultural Education Society, 1982*). Because non-Native people in general and academics in particular have often been rightfully accused of approaching Native culture and experience in an insensitive and exploitive way, I wanted to address this concern directly. With the society's approval and working closely with staff and some board members of the society, I felt more confident that my work would not simply be an ethnocentric academic exercise, but that it might prove useful and enlightening to the Shuswap in the work for positive education for their people. I also felt it was important to give the participants an opportunity to comment on my use of their stories and my speculations regarding what they had shared. I met with the majority of them following the writing of this, and without exception, they approved of what I had written and the way in which I had edited their words.

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANTS

<i>Pseudonyms</i>	<i>Birthdate</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
1. Cecilia Female, Shuswap	b. 1900(?)	1907-1908
2. Martha Female, Shuswap	b. 1918(?)	1927-1930
3. Sophie Female, Shuswap	b. 1918	1926-1934
4. Leo Male, Shuswap	b. 1924	1930-1940
5. Josephine Female, Shuswap	b. 1925(?)	1935-1944
6. Charlie Male, Shuswap	b. 1929	1938-1950
7. Mary Female, Shuswap	b. 1931	1940-1951
8. Anne Female, Shuswap	b. 1942	1959
9. Neil Male, Shuswap	b. 1944	1952-1960
10. Linda Female, Lillooett	b. 1947	1952-1960
11. Sam Male, Shuswap	b. 1947	1958-1961
12. Alice Female, Thompson	b. 1950	1957-1963
13. Nancy Female, Chilcotin	b. 1957	1965-1967

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Tell me about your involvement with the school. Years? Grades?
2. What were the rules which stood out in your mind?
3. Children often have ways of getting around rules. Did you? Did others? In what ways?
4. Describe your day. What did you do in the classroom? What subjects? How long? Specific lessons?
5. How often did you go home? Where was it? Did your parents visit? Describe visits.
6. Were there aspects of school which contradicted what you were taught at home? What were they?
7. Religion was an important part of school. Was it compatible with what you had learned at home?
8. And friends. Did you see friends resisting school? Complying with school?
9. Going home. How was it to go home? Were there adjustments within yourself that had to be made? Did friends or other relatives struggle with going home?

APPENDIX E
MAP OF BANDS OF
SHUSWAP NATION

Image Not Available

APPENDIX F

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

"And when the telling is done and the voices of the voiceless are heard, does story-telling not invoke a call to action?"

Valerie Polakow (826)

Paulo Freire writes of the antithesis of cultural invasion as cultural synthesis. Characterized by dialogue amongst the people involved, the notion of cultural sythesis is fluid. The people listen authentically to one another as a basis for action.

In cultural sythesis the actors who come from 'another world' to the world of the people do so not as invaders. They do not come to *teach* or to *give* anything, but rather to learn with the people about the people's world. (FREIRE, 1970: 181)

Through this learning, people can then begin to work together for a better world for all involved. Contrary to the children's residential school experience, no individual or group holds the power. It becomes the domain of all who learn and act.

This model has been adopted by the liberation theologists of South American and other so-called Third World countries, much to the consternation of the established Catholic church. Contrary to the notion of blind obedience to superiors, these priests take their direction from the people with whom they work. As a direct threat to the established line of authority and its concomitant distribution of power, liberation theologists visualize power lying with the people. The ability to know themselves and to direct the changes in their lives is ultimately power-giving and humanizing.

Educational leaders would be wise to follow such a model (Witulief, 1985; Quade, 1982) and to abandon the hierarchical concepts of the past. Educational institutions from teacher training programs to elementary and pre-schools must be responsive to local experiences and needs. Teachers must design their lessons with the knowledge of their students' lives as well as the subject matter more often deemed important. The opportunity

for students and their families to play an active role in their learning both in school and out must be integral to any successful education system. Freire's pedagogical model, in direct contrast to the banking method of education exemplified by the residential school, demands thoughtful action on the part of all involved in the education system. This praxis is both humanizing and liberating.

In light of the residential school experience, the necessity of adopting a similar model in government and its institutions must be addressed. Only through the people and the elected officials recognizing their power and working together in dialogue can meaningful change come about. Within the education system, Native people have effected change through insistence on dialogue. Andrew Paull's strong statements in 1946 and those of the National Indian Brotherhood in 1973 had effect. The system must be restructured to welcome such input as a part of meaningful dialogue rather than forcing confrontational reactions through their inability to include authentic consultation with Native people.

The strength of Native culture is evident in the way Native people dealt with the institution of residential school by successfully resisting its interventions in their lives. Repelling its goal of assimilation, Native people adopted aspects which appeared worthwhile while rejecting others. Those who questioned, who refused to accept the authoritarian system perpetrated upon them, survived. With the strength of family, of seniors and from within themselves, the survivors refused to comply fully with the oppressors' efforts to dictate their lifestyle. Rather, they adapted the invaders' lifestyle to their own way of being. Catholicism was combined with Native spiritualism; the English language was accepted, but Native languages were never completely abandoned. Traditions and customs passed on through generations were maintained. Native people resisted; Native culture survived; and today the two are rising forces for action and change within a self-defined Native context.

The residential school is closed. The buildings now owned by the Kamloops Indian Band are, as has already been mentioned, the scene of increasing, Native-controlled activity. People can justly celebrate this expression of the indomitable human spirit.

The individuals who participated in this study are all survivors. Although many have experienced and continue to experience

the need to put the impact of residential school into perspective, they are at the same time contributing to the continuation of their culture in innumerable ways. As parents and grandparents, teachers and students, politicians and band executives, entrepreneurs and rodeo champions, they define their Native culture in its vibrant and evolutionary state.

Implications for further research revealed by this study are myriad. More detailed studies on some of the aspects introduced here could prove most rewarding: the cliques of the 1950s, arranged marriages, Native people who returned to the residential school as workers and teachers, and more extensive study of particular time periods are only a few examples. Related topics include people's perceptions of integration into public schools and the current move to band-operated schools. The whole area of language retention, of what is viewed by some of the participants as temporary language inhibition, and the increasing efforts to re-establish language for those who have had little or no opportunity to learn it, could also prove to be fruitful areas of study.

For those whose goal is to quantify, this study in itself can provide the basis for very meaningful empirical studies. The use of field research, in particular the open-ended interview, can serve as the focus for quantitative analyses of a number of areas touched upon in this work.

Educational and social programs developed partially to enable people to face and deal with the impact of residential school and other aspects of cultural invasion are operating in the Kamloops area. In direct contrast to the oppressive system described in these pages, the programs build upon an examination of cultural identity and an appreciation of self as a basis for meaningful education in any subject area. Programs such as Native Human Services, K.E.E.N., a re-entry program operated by the B.C. Native Women's Society, and the college preparation course developed by the Interior Salishan Education Council and the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society are areas for thought-provoking research. Their integration of traditional values and culturally appropriate methods with necessary content are another facet of the process which has enabled Native people to survive and grow during the first 200 years of contact with Euro-Canadians. These distinctive approaches hold

possible implications for other Native education programs and any humanizing pedagogy.

The substance of this study also holds implications for academics and researchers who address Native issues. Listening and learning must form the basis for cross-cultural research. For too long, Euro-Canadians have studied documents written by other Euro-Canadians about Native people as the basis for analysis of Native culture. Archives may serve as an aid to understanding the history of a culture, but in all research the people who proceed from that history should be directly involved in the researcher's work in some way. To understand a people's history, a learner should start with the living generation of that culture. Their combined life experiences most often bring them closer to their history than any book or paper in a library can. Not only the basis for educational developments, dialogue should serve as the groundwork for research as well. The people and the academics must work together in data gathering, in analyzing data, and ultimately in building authentic theory.

Acceptance of all people's experience as legitimate and the sharing of perceptions and biases in true efforts to arrive at common understanding create the possibility for fruitful action. In the words of Rita Jack, the administrator of the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society,

The legacy of the residential school experience is that we now have generations of Shuswap people who, not by their own choice, are unable to participate in the academic education of their children.

In order to best plan for the future educational needs of Shuswap children, it is necessary to acknowledge the present situation We need once more to make education a priority in communities. (1985: 9)

With an understanding of the past, people can participate in dialogue with one another to make a different future. The strength which resisted the onslaught of cultural invasion perpetrated by the residential school for almost a century is the strength of a people and a culture which continues to survive and grow.

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