

LUBICON LAKE FIRST NATION CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

LUBICON LAKE FIRST NATION CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

This paper describes the concept of traditional education. Educators define traditional education as a way of life, spirituality, an act of love, wholistic, language, and culture. In economics, children learn by observing a skill like setting a snare and then actually snaring something, like a rabbit. This paper includes a history of the Lubicon Lake First Nation, history of the first Indian Mission and Northland School Division. It concludes with the idea that now is the time to develop a unique Lubicon Lake First Nation approach to education. This idea means that the First Nation school has the chance to develop their own system in conjunction with mainstream curriculum, but would include appropriate cultural concepts such as language, native spirituality and history.

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CHAPTER ONE:

LUBICON LAKE FIRST NATION CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

Introduction

For over half a century the Lubicon Lake First Nation of northern Alberta have been seeking recognition for their reserve land and treaty status. In 1899 the treaty commissioners missed the Lubicon Lake First Nation because of their remote geographical location. Later the struggle for recognition for their reserve land and treaty status was made more difficult by the government's use of varied tactics delaying the treaty settlement. Over this period the Lubicon Lake First Nation have strived to organize and complete their negotiations with the government but this political struggle continues to the present day.

Throughout the years the Lubicon leaders have had hindsight, dedication, and courage to strive for justice for their people. It takes a unique kind of leadership to continue to fight for justice for their community. I admire the strength and courage of the leaders in their continued political fight against almost insurmountable odds. I wanted to give something to the community once the settlement has been reached. For this reason I contacted Chief Bernard Ominayak and asked whether I could interview members of the Lubicon Lake First Nation to help develop

their concept of education. These interviews are a preliminary philosophical groundwork for their own educational system. During the course of my time at Little Buffalo, and with the assistance of Chief Bernard Ominayak, I interviewed ten members of the community and developed the Lubicon's concept of education. This is the Lubicon story of what they would like to see in their future education system.

Because of the confusion around the usage and definition of the terms Indian and First Nation, the first section of this paper will commence with the definition of terms such as Indian, First Nation, tribal, and indigenous. Because this paper deals with developing a concept of education, it is necessary to define what the word traditional means.

Chapter one starts with the introduction and definition of terms; chapter two discusses the history of Lubicon Lake (see map in appendix), the history of the first school at Little Buffalo, and of the Northland School. Chapter three is a literature review which shows how other educators and authors define traditional education, to illustrate how the Lubicon idea of education may fit into parameters of traditional education. Following the history and literature review, chapter four describes the research methodology, and introduces the respondents. Chapter five describes what the respondents told me, and what this means in relation to traditional education. Chapter six concludes with the importance of the research in bringing information and technical knowledge back to the community. It

suggests bringing in experts from the many disciplines such as educators, social workers, lawyers, community workers, parents and elders to start to build a new and unique educational system with a curriculum that meets the needs and desires of the Lubicon Lake First Nation community.

Definition of Terms

Before approaching the discussion of the Lubicon Lake First Nation concept of education and the subject of traditional education, it is necessary to define and clarify my usage of the terms Indian, First Nation, tribal, indigenous, and the term traditional as it relates to First Nation education. The term Indian as it is defined within the *Indian Act* (1989) means "a person pursuant to this act registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian" (p. 2) and is registered in Ottawa. Today, First Nation is the politically correct term to describe Indian people: thus recognizing their sovereignty and nationhood. In the United States, Gregory Cajete (1994), a Tewa Indian from New Mexico, defines the term indigenous and tribal, particularly as they relate to education, as follows:

The term tribal and indigenous will apply to the many traditional and tribally oriented groups of people who are identified with a specific place or region and whose cultural traditions continue to reflect an inherent environmental orientation and sense of ecology.

The term indigenous will also describe the culturally based forms of education that are not primarily rooted in modern Western educational philosophy and the methodology (p. 15).

These terms -- Indian, First Nation, indigenous, and tribal -- are all used interchangeably in the literature and in my literature review. In the works written about the Lubicon Lake First Nation and the literature review on traditional education, the word Indian is used in place of the preferred term of First Nation. In an attempt to make the terms clear, it is necessary to mention that the legal term Indian is used in most of the earlier documents.¹

Before defining the concept of traditional education, it is important to avoid the misconceptions about the term. Historically the terms savage, uncivilized, pagan, and heathen were associated with traditional education. Likewise, traditional education cannot be romanticized to show young people carefully listening at the feet of their elders. Archibald (1995) describes this as: "a romantic view of traditional First Nations education has young people seated on the ground listening attentively to elders telling stories imbued with moral principles that are woven into explanations of Mother Earth" (p. 289). Traditional education is related to knowledge

¹ It is my position that by making reference to this interchangeability of words at the beginning of this paper, it is not necessary to footnote the discrepancy of terms.

acquisition, economics and learning through observation. The *Webster Dictionary* (1981) describes traditional as: "the handing down of customs, practises, doctrines" (p. 550). Barman, Hebert, and McCaskill (1986) describe traditional education as "the informal process that provided the young with the specific skills, attitudes, and knowledge they needed to function in everyday life within the context of a spiritual world view" (p. 3). Kirkness (1992) relates traditional education to economics and shows that through observation and practise First Nation children learn the art of survival.

Traditional education was inextricably linked with economics. Learning was for living - for survival. Boys and girls are taught at an early age to observe and to utilize, to cope with and respect, their environment. Independence and self-reliance were valued concepts within the culture. Through observation and practise, children learn the art of hunting, trapping, fishing, food gathering and preparation, child rearing, farming and building shelters. They learned whatever livelihood their particular environment offered, through experiential learning (p. 6).

First Nations have survived for thousands of years. Much of the knowledge, practises, attitudes and traditional methods of teaching was passed down orally and learned through observation and practise. The subject of this paper is to define traditional education and to examine and

analyze how this correlates with the Lubicon Lake First Nation's concept of education.

CHAPTER TWO:

HISTORY

History of Lubicon Lake First Nation

The Lubicon Lake First Nation is located about two hundred and sixty miles northeast of Edmonton. In 1899 the treaty commissioners missed the Lubicon Lake First Nation because of their remote territory and treaty commissioners perceived lack of time. On September 22, 1899, the report of the Commissioners for Treaty 8,¹ described the situation as follows:

The date fixed for meeting the Indians at Lesser Slave Lake was the 8th of June, 1899. Owing, however, to unfavourable weather and the lack of boatmen, we did not reach the point until the 19th. But one of the commissioners -- Mr. Ross - who went overland from Edmonton to the Lake, was fortunately present when the Indians first gathered. He was thus able to counteract the consequences of the delay and to expedite the work of the Commission ... We met the Indians on the 20th, and on the 21st the treaty was signed (p. 5).

¹ Treaty 8, the first of the northern treaties, embraced an area of 324,900, square miles. It comprised what is now the northern half of Alberta, the northeast quarter of British Columbia, the northwest corner of Saskatchewan, and the area south of Hay River and Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territory (Madill Report, 1986, p. i).

In 1933, thirteen Lubicon Lake First Nation members sent a petition to the government for recognition of their treaty status and requested a reserve. There was no response to this petition. In the following years the treaty commissioners were surprised when they finally found the Lubicon Lake First Nation traditional homelands. "In 1939, two federal officials penetrated the region as far as Lubicon Lake to discover a kind of model native community ... The officials recognized the band and promised a reserve" (Goodard, 1991, p. 2).

It seemed with the recognition that Lubicon Lake would receive the land promised under treaty, the government officials changed their strategy several times since the band's recognition. With the outbreak of World War II and shortage of funds, the Lubicon Lake First Nation became victims of government bureaucracy and stalling tactics. Two commissioners, Pant Schimidt and Napoleon L'Heureux who worked on the treaty paylists for Indian Affairs, recommended a reserve at the west end of Lubicon Lake. With a membership of 127 people the Lubicon Lake First Nation were entitled to 25.4 miles as prescribed by Treaty 8. Ottawa approved the recommendation but no treaty was signed. But in the early 1940's the Surveyor General ordered that a reserve be marked out at Lubicon Lake. Authorized by Napoleon L'Heureux, the Lubicon Lake First Nation held their first election, in which Joseph Laboucan became their first chief. A survey crew was to fly into northern Alberta. Under the *Alberta Natural*

Resources Transfer Agreement, 1930 the surveyors approached the province for land that would be granted in trust to the federal government for the care and use of the Lubicon Lake First Nation. Due to budget reasons the surveying at Peerless² and Chipewyan was cancelled, but the Lubicon Lake First Nation was temporarily postponed due to a forest fire. The surveyor, Donnelly, sketched out the map of the Lubicon Lake reserve. The reserve was mapped out, the chief elected, and the band formally recognized but before final preparations were complete, the government bureaucracy stalled the process. The main reason for stalling the reserve and treaty status was the outbreak of the War and the moneys were needed elsewhere.

In the 1940's crews searched for oil.

In the winter of 1949-50, oil exploration crews began to enter the region for what they called 'shoot and test': workers would bulldoze straight through the bush, explode dynamite in the ground at regular intervals and map the substrata on bulky seismographic equipment mounted in a truck. They were looking for signs of pinnacle reefs - subsurface rocks ridges one mile or less across that would indicate the presence of oil (Goodard, 1991, p. 36).

² Trout, Peerless, Chipewyan, Sandy, Cadotte, Loon Lake and Lubicon Lake were all members of the Isolated Communities Advisory Board who joined together to pursue land and treaty rights together (Goodard, 1991, p. 49).

It was not until 1969 that oil was discovered at Marten River. "The first producing oil field in Lubicon territory is called the golden field" (Goodard, 1991, p. 41).

In 1971, Peter Lougheed was elected premier of Alberta, ending thirty-six years of Social Credit rule. In 1973 world oil prices quadrupled and Peter Lougheed was quick to ask Ottawa to increase the Alberta oil export price (Goodard, 1991, p. 49). Goddard (1991) described the situation as follows:

Since Indians were under federal jurisdiction, and since Indian lands held in trust, Lougheed viewed the assertion of Indian land rights in the Lesser Slave interior as a Trojan horse - a means by which Ottawa could deprive Alberta of some of its oil-rich territory. To ease tension, federal authorities were assuring Premier Lougheed that Ottawa would not support the Indians unless a court ordered otherwise (p. 49).

The isolated communities used the courts to force Canada and Alberta to recognize their land claim. Goddard wrote that:

Chief Walter Whitehead and headmen of the other isolated communities submitted a caveat on October 27, 1975, formally asking the public to take notice that seven Indian bands north of Lesser Slave Lake claimed an interest in 33,000 square miles of land between the Peace River and Athabasca Rivers, by virtue of unextinguished Aboriginal Rights (p. 49).

The Lubicon Lake First Nation called on the Indian Association of Alberta to help save the destruction of their homelands. Harold Cardinal, then president of the Indian Association of Alberta, worked hard to assist the Lubicon and the isolated communities. With the support of the provincial organization, the isolated communities decided to register a caveat with the provincial land registry. However the provincial land registry refused to register the caveat. While the courts were postponing, the caveat legislation was drafted which would prohibit caveats on unpatented Crown land.

The Alberta government passed a law, Bill 29,³ to stop the Lubicon Lake First Nation people and several other bands from declaring interests in their region. The Lubicon Lake First Nation filed an injunction against Premier Peter Lougheed's Alberta government and the oil companies to stop the destruction of their homelands, environment and hunting grounds.

The rationale for the Alberta government was clear: the Lougheed government was pro-development and went to extreme measures to ensure the prosperity of the oil companies. If the provincial government had allowed the Lubicon Lake First Nation to stop the oil and natural gas

³ Bill 29 is legislation that would change the wording of the *Alberta Land Titles Act* to prohibit caveats on unpatented Crown Land, and the law would be applied retroactively (Goddard, 1991, p. 51).

development the companies would have had to move elsewhere in Canada and Alberta would have lost its prosperity.

It was during these troubled times that Bernard Ominayak became chief of the Lubicon Lake First Nation. During the winter of 1979-1980, thirty new wells had been drilled. By 1984, four hundred new oil and natural gas wells were drilled within the region of Little Buffalo. With this new wave of industrial activity, the environmental impact was enormously damaging and included new roads which were destroying the environment, breaking the traps, and endangering the habitat of the wild game that the Lubicon Lake First Nation lived on. Because the government would not stop the oil and natural gas exploration the Lubicon Lake First Nation reached out to interest groups and lobbyists to assist in their cause. The World Council of Churches and the Friends of the Lubicon tried to assist the Lubicon Lake First Nation by lobbying the Glenbow Museum and the Olympics (Goodard, 1991, p. 142). Even though the protesting at the Olympics received international attention, there was little political impact on their reserve and land claim settlement. After much discussion the Lubicon Lake First Nation decided to declare the land sovereign and make the federal and provincial governments deal with them through political means: a road blockade.

Although Premier Don Getty did not approve of the confrontational tactics of Lubicon Lake First Nation, he called a news conference on

October 15, 1988 telling Chief Bernard Ominayak that he was willing to meet to settle their land claims. Since there was no agreement on the size of the reserve, the blockade continued. On October 22, 1988, Premier Don Getty and Chief Bernard Ominayak met at Mile Zero at Grimshaw. After a day long meeting, according to Goddard's account they came to this agreement:

Under the agreement, the Lubicon people would get ninety five square miles of reserve land, Getty said. There were two conditions. The first was that the ninety-five was to be considered a negotiated settlement not tied explicitly to membership: the Alberta government did not suddenly have to admit to 478 members after years of presenting the figure 9. The second was only seventy nine square miles -- Getty's offer of a week earlier -- would come with full subsurface rights. The remaining sixteen square miles were to be purchased from Alberta by Ottawa for the band's use, with Alberta retaining subsurface rights. A further stipulation gave the band veto power over how the province might exercise subsurface rights. In effect, the deal gave the band control over the entire ninety-five square miles while allowing Getty to present the agreement to cabinet as seventy-nine-square-mile reserve (Goddard, 1991, p. 193).

While there was obvious agreement from Premier Don Getty's provincial government the federal government had continued difficulties with the agreement. Once again the negotiations stopped.

Sometime in the late spring of 1995 Chief Bernard Ominayak requested a new round of negotiations with the federal and provincial governments. Chief Bernard Ominayak asked Harold Cardinal to represent the Lubicon Lake First Nation at the negotiating table. Harold Cardinal accepted and the first meeting was held at Fish Lake, Alberta. Harold Millican from Calgary was appointed the new federal negotiator. Nested in the poplar trees under a clear blue sky at Fish Lake a new round of discussions started on July 17, 1995. In front of elders and members of the Lubicon Lake First Nation community, and visitors from Tall Cree First Nation, Denny Auger opened the session with a prayer and a drum song. The federal negotiator, Harold Millican, recited his own prayer. Much good will was eloquently passed over the table since this started the newest set of negotiations.

The Lubicon Lake First Nation have been waiting for 56 years to settle their treaty. During the course of those years, membership in Lubicon Lake First Nation has been a difficult question to deal with since individuals were encouraged to join other band lists but have always lived and maintained membership in this band. The federal government theorizes that these individuals are not members of the Lubicon Lake First Nation. Ferreira (1992) described the events from the time of treaty:

Nearly one hundred years after Laird's initial visit to the Peace Region, the Lubicon Lake band has

still not "adhered" to Treaty No. 8, According to the band, it attempted contact on several occasions with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), but these early efforts were unsuccessful. Upon their arrival at Whitefish, for example, the Indian agent put their names on the Whitefish Band list, gave them five dollars each, and sent them off. The Indian agent did not recognize the Lubicon as a separate and distinct group (p. 4).

With the outbreak of WWII, Malcolm McCrimmon, an Indian Affairs official began removing names from treaty lists who could not prove that they were 'pure Indian blood'. Ferreira wrote:

From a list of 154 Lubicons, he removed 90 members at the outset, paying annuity to the remaining 64. All others in the group were deemed 'non-Indians' or 'half-breeds'. This move was especially disastrous for the Lubicon because most of their registered members were not added to any membership list until the 1920's and the 1930's, and more than half their people had never registered at all (p. 4).

Malcolm McCrimmon caused much confusion with the massive removal of names of Indian persons from band lists. The Lubicon Lake First Nation and others who were affected by McCrimmon's actions protested to the federal government. The government responded with a study into the matters. On June 30, 1943 Judge McKeen stated: "I cannot concur (with the removals) when I study Treaty 8 and previous commitments made by various Commissioners appointed by Canada and

acting for Canada" (Ferreira, 1992, p. 5). The protest continued. The government responded with a judicial inquiry in 1944.

In 1944, Judge W.A. Macdonald, head of the new inquiry, not only agreed with the previous findings, but recommended that the department reinstate most of the Lubicon Lake Band members struck from membership lists.

Of the 294 people which the judge suggested be reinstated to all the bands affected, the department only accepted 129. Judge Macdonald heard 49 appeals from the Lubicon Lake Band and he recommended the reinstatement of 43. McCrimmon agreed to only reinstate 18 (p. 5).

Instead of responding to the requests of the Lubicon Lake First Nation the federal government has encouraged the members to enfranchise or to transfer their names to other band lists and then question whether there is an legitimate claim for reserve lands. The Lubicon Lake First Nation described their plight:

We still have no reserve lands. Some of our band members have never been added to the Treaty list. Others were removed and never reinstated. Some band members have enfranchised. And some band members have had their names transferred to the membership list of other bands, in spite of the fact that they were born and raised in our community, in spite of the fact that they have never been considered to be members of those other bands by the legitimate members of those other bands (p. 5).

There are also some members who applied to the federal government for Land in Severalty⁴ and received a monetary settlement. Although these members have received this settlement there are questions as to the effect on their membership. But membership in the Lubicon Lake First Nation has been and continues to be a contentious issue that cannot be resolved easily. The James Bay Cree have negotiated a modern day treaty which allowed the members to define their own membership. The government has allowed the Lubicon Lake First Nation this same right. The Lubicon Lake First Nation has always maintained and will continue to maintain their struggle to determine their own membership. The membership issue is a political and extremely complex issue with no simple solutions.

History of Education at Little Buffalo

In dealing with the history of education at Little Buffalo it is important to note the uniqueness of First Nation education. Within the province of Alberta the *British North America Act*⁵ assigned education to the jurisdiction of the provinces (except for treaty Indians). In signing Treaty 8 with the Crown in 1899, the treaty Indians within the area agreed to peace

⁴ Land in Severalty is part of the provisions of Treaty 8. This means land either for individual or family are separate from the collective reserve lands.

⁵ British North American Act, 1867 was the governing constitution of Canada, renamed in 1982. It is now called Constitution Act of 1867.

and friendship and to share the land with the incoming settlers. As part of the agreement,⁶ the Crown through her representative, recognized that treaty Indians were sovereign within their own territories. In recognition of their alliance between the Crown and treaty Indians, the federal government promised to pay for education and medicine, and to provide reserve land for the Indians' use. With the signing of Treaty 8 the signatories had a guarantee that they would be able to maintain their traditional lifestyle through hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering from the land. Because of the peace and friendship treaty the federal government entered into a special relationship with treaty Indians. The federal government assumed responsibility for the education of Indians.

At the same time the Metis, or the mixed bloods, were considered neither white nor Indian but a mixture of both. Chalmers (1967d) described the Metis as having "no special status, and aside from the Metis Rehabilitation Areas had no special provisions for their education had been attempted until about 1960" (p. 267). A special survey was conducted to find out the number of Metis children as follows:

All Metis pupils outside of the cities who met the following criteria: Indian ancestry, at least partly, but not registered as an Indian; acceptance of standards of values different from those of the

⁶ Treaty 8 - there are different perspectives as to what the treaty says. The following presents the First Nations perspective.

normal white population; a material standard of living below what would be considered a minimum for whites in the same area (p. 267).

In the late 1930's the Alberta government established the Metis Rehabilitation Areas, commonly known as Metis colonies. Chalmers described the situation as:

The colonies have aptly been described as Alberta's answer to the Indian reservations. They are more nearly an echo. The people who were persuaded to settle there found themselves under a paternalistic bureaucracy which in its wisdom made all decisions (p. 268).

Following the survey it was found that there were about 4000 identifiable Metis in Alberta. The schools operating in the colonies were considered "poor, overcrowded, and lacking any facilities other than essential classrooms. The teachers were often poorly qualified, frequently possessing only Letters of Authority rather than valid Alberta teaching certificates" (p. 268). Although the facilities and facilitators seemed to be substandard the Minister of Education tried to assist the Metis children. Chalmers wrote:

The Minister of Education, the Hon. A.O. Aalborg, persuaded his cabinet colleagues to accept as government policy that every child for whom the province of Alberta is responsible should have the right to attend a public school of a good minimum standard ... regardless of the tax resource of the area affected (p. 271).

Treaty Indian children were sent to the many Christian residential schools scattered throughout the province. In the Little Buffalo area, the young people went to residential school at Grouard, located about 192 miles away.⁷ To most parents Grouard was considered a great distance away from their home community because of the poor roads or what might be considered no roads.

Northland Indian mission, the first educational facility, was an inter-denominational school set up in 1953 by Rolland and Thelma Smith at Little Buffalo, 80 miles northeast of the town of Peace River. Raymond L'Hirondelle, son of the trader Josie, founded the new mission office in Peace River and invited Rolland Smith to set up a school for the nearly seventy-five children around Lubicon Lake, Cadotte Lake, Fish Lake and Little Buffalo (Goddard, 1991, p. 33).

Both Quakers and graduates from the Cleveland Bible College, Rolland and Thelma Smith carried a childhood dream about serving as missionaries to the Indians in the north. Before coming to Little Buffalo, Rolland and Thelma Smith resided at Moberly Lake in Dawson Creek, in the district of British Columbia.

Early in May 1948 the Smiths and their two small children arrived in Peace River by train. No information about them settling into the

⁷ The distance between Grouard and Little Buffalo is calculated at present day roads and mileage.

community is available, but there are some details about the new missionary school, which was located in overhauled log cabins. The Peace River newspaper, the *Record-Gazette* (1988), described the buildings: "The log cabin, chinked with mud and coated with whitewash (a native washing derived from local limestone), also doubled as the dining room." Rolland Smith found the parents more than willing to assist with the building of a school. "A school is wanted bad enough that the men have agreed to get together and put up log buildings. They are willing to do all that they can" (Goddard, 1991, p. 33).

When the school opened in 1953 there were fifteen students in residence and other children came for the day school. The children who lived in residence had to pay \$5.00 a month for their tuition, room and board. It is said that the parents paid for their children's education through their work of supplying firewood, making fences and helping with the erection of the buildings. In 1955 the Northland Indian Mission received \$200.00 from the Alberta Government.

In describing the Smiths' missionary work among Canada's northland Indians, *The Record-Gazette*, February 3rd, 1955 headlines read: "*The Quaker Mission Brought Learning to the Bushland.*" As a little boy, Rolland Smith had the idea that "God had spoken to him and it had been laid upon him to spend his life helping the people he felt to be so neglected." Filled with missionary zeal, his one desire was to fulfill the

spiritual needs of the Indian people but he also found that there was a need for educational and medical needs.

Although much of their missionary work seemed impossible, failing health forced the Smith family to return to Sebring, Ohio in 1957, but they returned to Little Buffalo for the first graduation of Jane Seeseequoin, Elaine Jobin and Veronica Whitehead in June 22, 1988.

In the early 1950's the federal government changed the education policy for First Nation children to one of integration. Verna Kirkness (1992) described integration as "the process of having First Nation children attend provincial school" (p. 13). First Nation children, now for the first time, had the opportunity to attend provincial schools. Up to this point in First Nations history the children attended Christian residential schools.

Northland School Division

On December 30, 1960, the Minister of Education established the Northland School Division, comprising over 30 school divisions and some twenty schools. It encompassed: "all areas north of township 55 which is not included in any other district, division or country, or in an Indian reserve. The north boundary of township 55 line is some fifteen miles north of Edmonton" (Swift, Carney, & Ewasiuk, 1975, p. 9). Northland School Division was modelled on the centralized administration of

educational services at Prince Albert, northern Saskatchewan. The Northland administration was conducted in Edmonton. Chalmers (1967d) described the event:

the provincial government stood by its policy of making a foundation programme of education available to all Alberta children, within five years this new organization was to mark a major breakthrough not only in Metis but also in Indian education in Alberta (p. 272).

In 1965 the *Northland School Division Act*⁸ was passed in the legislature and the Minister of Education appointed five members to the Board. In 1968 the Minister increased the number of trustees to seven, with the appointment of one Native person and in 1975, the number of Native trustees was increased to five.

Although the Alberta government felt that the creation of Northland School Division was establishing education within their bands and settlements, the residents complained about the quality of education in the division. These complaints prompted four major studies about Northland School Division in 1969, 1975, 1981 and one that is scheduled to be completed in 1997.

⁸ *Northland School Division Act*, 1965 is the legislation that administers to the schools within the Northland School Division region.

Nell Jean Irwin (1993), a doctoral student at the University of Alberta, wrote that the "1969 study concluded that the teachers did not feel free to adapt the curriculum to the students and their environment" (p. 44). The Swift Report (1975) indicated

in many of the communities the cultures, the history and traditions, the lifestyles, even the language in common use, different substantially from those to be found elsewhere, and from those of the teaching staff employed (p. 12).

The MacNeil Report stated:

The findings and conclusions of this investigation indicate that the Northland School Division is not satisfactorily meeting the needs of the majority of the students enrolled in its schools, nor the educational expectations of parents and other residents. If the Division is to realize its potential and be a vital force in the lives of the people in the area, there must be changes (Swift, Carney, Ewasiuk, 1975, p. 57).

Although there have been a number of recommendations, there has been no historical documentation presented, whether the division continued its efforts to improve the education in schools administered by Northland School Division.

I have tried several times to get further information from the new head office in Peace River, Alberta. Although the administrators agreed to forward information, I have not yet received any. In the meantime, I

contacted the Department of Education in Edmonton and on July 26, 1996 I received the following information about the school at Little Buffalo.

There are six teachers on staff. Three received their training at the University of Calgary, two from the University of Saskatchewan and one from Memorial University in Newfoundland. During the 1995-96 school year there were 95 students in ECS through to grade 12.⁹

This chapter discussed the history of Little Buffalo and the two different school systems: Northland Indian Mission and Northland School Division. A visitation to the present day Northland School was not included in this study because it was important to have an unprejudiced approach to their concept of education. The parents expressed concerns about the quality of education that their children are receiving. The Northland School Division reports question the quality of education that the students were receiving from their schools. The Northland School reports are searching for methods to improve the delivery and quality of education. Since Northland School Division is presently conducting their fourth report there needs to be serious consideration given to opening the lines of communication between the parents and schools.

⁹ Elaine Kryzanowski, Special Assistant to Minister of Education, July 26, 1996 faxed the information on the school at Little Buffalo.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE CONCEPT OF TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

In approaching the question of education at Little Buffalo I felt that the respondents were similarly describing traditional education but using different terms to explain their method of teaching their children. Little Buffalo is an isolated area where the subsistence is based upon on hunting and trapping. Before the introduction of schools the whole family unit travelled to the trapline and learned from watching and then later doing. Chief Bernard Ominayak describes life at Little Buffalo.

I was born in my parent's cabin at Little Buffalo ... Life was like a cycle. In the fall, the men would hunt, trying to store as much food as possible for the winter. Then my dad would go up to his cabin at Bison Lake (70 miles north), trap for three or four weeks and come back with fur. My mother took the fur for drying, and my dad went out again. My mother, my brother and I were home alone most of the time. If somebody shot a moose he'd call the others over, and they would split it up between them (Hill, 1993, p. 35).

In Chief Bernard Ominayak's statement he is describing their economics, livelihood and family relationships. Chief Bernard Ominayak described his own personal experience of learning from his father.

It was a situation where you had to learn things by keeping you ears and eyes open, always trying

to watch what was taking place. It was learning on the job. I started getting to know the area, where to get certain animals and when. I would watch my dad, watch where he would put a trap and how he would set it up. Then one day he said, 'Okay, it's your turn,' and I realized watching wasn't good enough, I had to really pay attention. I knew that I was going to have to learn in order to survive (Goddard, 1991, p. 54).

This community has a strong religious and traditional base in which the roles of the men, women and children are clearly defined. Lubicon society is patriarchal; with status and authority acquired through hunting ability. Women and children were generally not part of political discussions, and even today no woman has stepped into a leadership role in the community (Goddard, 1991, p. 57).

Traditions and repetition are important to the Lubicon Lake First Nation. Being a traditional society the Lubicon Lake First Nation celebrate the tea dance every spring and every fall.

Life is like a cycle. To celebrate it, the whole regional band came together at Lubicon Lake twice a year, in the spring and fall, for a tea dance - a combined, religious, political and social gathering. Men could cut poles to build a tea-dance house, structured like several teepees joined together and walled with canvases and moose hides. ... The ceremony began at sundown with four fires down the middle (Goddard, 1991, p. 55)

Since my paper covers the Lubicon Lake First Nation concept of education it is important to define and understand the context of traditional education. Within the framework of traditional education there are many varied ideas and a limited number which define the concept and how these attitudes, practise and methods are passed to the children and young people. The overall goal is to define traditional education and illustrate how this relates to Lubicon Lake First Nations idea of traditional education.

The literature review examines the methods and learning styles associated with traditional First Nation education and examples from the Navajo, Hopi, Salish, and Alaskan Inupiat, since these few have been documented. The last concept that will be examined is "play" as it relates to the First Nation learning processes. This concept is important since the theorist describes the child as an active participant who initiates their learning from their environment.

Traditional Education

The concept of traditional First Nations education is defined by Jeanette Armstrong (1987, p. 14), an Okanagan First Nations, and Jo-ann Archibald (1995, p. 289), as the holistic approach to learning and teaching. This holistic approach looks at the whole human person in relation to his/her larger community. The whole person includes the mental, spiritual,

emotional, and physical being of an individual. This approach requires that one cannot isolate the individual from his/her family, community and his/her regions.

Anne Campbell (1991), a non-Native and former student of Vine Deloria, a Standing Rock Sioux and professor of political science at the University of Colorado, defines traditional education as a "way of life" (p. 94). She discusses the distinctiveness of each individual, the primary role of the elders, and the importance of values within the Indian community. Each individual, as she learned from Deloria, has a special gift to offer to his/her community. This special gift is nurtured from the time of birth and respected by all the members of the community. The elders, the learned individuals and the multi-generational group teach children their purpose within the wider circle of the community. The children are taught to observe and to listen to the stories and histories. Each time the child hears the metaphors he/she finds deeper meaning from within the story.

Anne Campbell (1991) draws some of these ideas from work with Deloria, her mentor and teacher. She mentions that working among the Indian people that she noticed common principles. One of these principles was a strong sense of respect and responsibility for the community and the other was a deep appreciation and reverence for children.

Thom Alcoze, a Cherokee biologist, believed that stereotypes have affected the image and place of Indians in the Americas. "We have to turn

around the entire John Wayne era. That is a problem, because of Native culture's subordinate position within the larger mosaic of North American society" (Greer, 1992, p. 14). In order to illustrate Native sophistication he wrote about the medicines that are now in the modern pharmacy. "There's more than a hundred Native American medicines that now are in the modern North American pharmacopoeia. Aspirin is one of the best examples, whose medicinal value was identified and applied by Native Americans in its original plant form" (Greer, 1992, p. 14).

Eber Hampton, a Chickasaw Indian now working in Saskatchewan, endeavoured to clarify the idea of traditional education as part of his doctoral work at Harvard University. Traditional education, he writes, is

teaching and learning as it is patterned by an American Indian or Alaskan Native culture. The personal and professional challenge that I share with other Indian educators is to make the two systems work together to benefit both Indian students.

Hampton (1993, p. 268) along with Notely (1979) and Buffalohead (1976), regard the bulk of traditional education as being "oral stories, teaching stories, ceremonies, apprenticeships, learning games, formal instruction, tutoring and tag along teaching." The children were taught to learn the traditional stories and histories and how to become respected persons within the community.

Raymond Merkel (1986), a Simon Fraser University graduate, studied traditional education from an historical perspective. He implemented an historic study of what Indians contributed to the world.

The degree to which our modern society has borrowed from the Indian's way of life comes as a revelation to many people; much of our agriculture, nearly the entire basis of modern pharmacy, and even the structure of the American Constitution can be traced to Indian origins, not to mention contributions to natural science, in the arts, in games and sports, and in many other areas (p. 2).

Indians were not (and still are not) recognized for their contribution to the world.

Vine Deloria (1992), a Standing Rock Sioux and professor of political science at the University of Colorado, described:

education in the traditional setting occurs by example and not as a process of indoctrination. That is to say, elders are the best living examples of what the end product of education and life experiences should be (p. 13).

Further, he outlined family accomplishments are more important than individual accomplishments.

Early training of children involved some elaborate praise of youngsters carrying out simple tasks but the praise was directed toward the family, the

individual became a good representative of the family (p. 16).

Deloria (1992) considered traditional education as a prerequisite for any another education of training. He outlined traditional education as:

an orientation to the world around us, particularly the people around us, so that we know who we are and have confidence when we do things. Traditional education enables us to see our place and our responsibility within the movement of history (p. 18).

Gregory Cajete (1994), a Tewa Indian from Santa Clara, New Mexico, attempted to define traditional Indian education. He also challenged Indian educators to address the issue of Indian education.

Traditional American Indian education historically occurred in a holistic context that developed the importance of each individual as a contributing member of the social group. It was an educational process that unfolded through mutual, reciprocal relationships between one's social group and the natural world (p. 26).

Cajete believes that it is time for Indian educators to take up the challenge and decide what is best for their children. His work is culturally-informed and can develop the foundations for principles of tribal education combined with a contemporary framework of thought and description.

It advocates American Indian education historically occurred in a holistic social context that developed the importance of each individual as a contributing member of the social group. Tribal education sustained a wholesome life process. It was an educational process that unfolded through mutual, reciprocal relationships between one's social group and the natural world. This relationship involved all dimensions of one's being, while providing both personal development and technical skills through participating in community life. It was essentially a communally integrated expression of environmental education (p. 26).

Cajete informs Indian educators that the basis for our own unique tribal education exists each of our communities. He is well informed about the existence of many tribal cultures and uses different examples throughout the text.

Learning Styles

On learning styles, First Nation educators Pepper and Henry (1986) described learning styles as an holistic approach to the individual in the socio-cultural context. The home, culture and the community are all components that are important factors that influence the student's work, similar to traditional education. The authors suggest "we are who we are by virtue of observing things around us and making choices and reaching conclusions as to what are effective and constructive ways to get along in

the world, as we see it" (p. 57). Pepper and Henry recognize that differences in the learning styles are observational rather than verbal. Since children are part of the community activities, they learn through observing and imitating adults. The authors list the numerous items that are characteristic of value differences and cultural differences but conclude that there is not one uniform Indian style. In traditional societies the elders teach about the laws and native spirituality and similar to what was outlined, the individual observes, makes choices and reaches conclusions.

Pepper and Henry (1991) incorporate a more holistic approach by linking traditional education with self-esteem. They write that: "Life is viewed as an interactive process within the physical, social, and spiritual environments ... The cycle of nature, and life, is a circle, without beginning and without end" (p. 145). In order to illustrate this concept of self esteem, Pepper and Henry use the Indian medicine wheel. Although his metaphor illustrates their point well, it is important to note that the medicine wheel is not a universal First Nations concept, nor are First Nations societies identical in their cultural orientations. They are unique and distinct.

Different Approaches to Traditional Education

There are many different approaches to traditional education. Teresa McCarty (1989b, p. 484) described the Navajo's School, Indian-controlled

and locally-operated since July 7, 1966. This school was the first to incorporate systematic instruction of native language and cultures. The community consists of 125 residents who live in extended family households. The economic livelihood for this community was herding and farming, but shifted quickly to school-centered economy.

While McCarty (1989b) described the positive contributions of the Navajo's school, Barbara George (1979) traced the history of education among the Navajos, much of which was similar to Canadian First Nations experience of education. George explained how initially Indian/First Nations were provided education in order to read the Bible and gain Christian salvation (p. 15). Goodensow (1980) discusses the changes in American government policy. Since many of the changes in policy were rigid and controlling factors, Goodensow quoted an Apache leader on his ambivalent feelings about Indian education.

Indian education is a phrase which has a good sound. It sometimes touted as a cureall for problems, large and small, but we must keep it in the proper perspective because it means a thousand different things to as many different people (p. 207).

The Apache leader noted that there were different meanings to these words "Indian education."

In his study of Hopi Matrilineal society, Donald Miller (1988) defined traditional education as: "a conservative close-knit cultural setting which the Hopi managed to maintain for several centuries after the arrival of the intrusive Navajo, Spanish, and white populations" (p. 28). His article discussed the roles of the mother and the father in relation to their children and other members of the clan. In a matrilineal society the children belonged to the mother's clan. The most important person in this matrilineal society was the mother's brother who was the disciplinarian: "children were advised, instructed, scolded and sometimes punished, by their maternal uncles" (p. 29).

In a collaborative article, First Nations educators Ellen White and Jo-ann Archibald (1992) discussed the Coast Salish method of teaching children (p. 151). Coast Salish traditional education used storytelling, experiential learning, and metaphors. The child/young adult found deeper meaning from within the stories. Ellen White shared that: "Stories are teacher. Storytelling, you tell something. You learn when get old; you'll be happy that you have listened because some day you gonna use those" (p. 153). Jo-ann Archibald narrated that "From my Sto:lo teachings and from other First Nation ways I have learned that in oral tradition, the listener/learner is challenged to make meaning, make understanding from the storyteller/ speaker/teacher-words" (p. 160).

Leona Okakok (1989), an Alaskan Inupiat, defined traditional education as survival and excellence. This style of traditional training was achieved through the art of storytelling, but Okakok laments that now only the elders are listening.

Oral history and the art of storytelling, highly developed in a society which used it to pass on subsistence techniques and cultural values, is still practised today, but the critical element of the process - the audience has changed. Audiences which used to be composed of young and old listeners now usually include only elders (p. 406).

Okakok discussed the role of the Western teacher. The teacher is respected because of his/her role in instructing the children. The parents do not interfere with the role of the teacher.

Parents often stand back and let a child explore and experience things, observing the child's inclinations. If a child showed an aptitude for skills that the parents don't possess, they might arrange for their child to spend time with an expert, or an adult may be asked to participate in the education of that child. Thus, many adults in the community have a role in the education of our children (p. 414).

This was often misconceived as a lack of interest on the part of parents. In fact, this is the First Nation style of allowing the teacher to fulfil her role. This was a common complaint among EuroCanadian teachers with respect to First Nations parents. They perceived the parents as not interested in

what their children were doing and learning. Often this was not the case but it was interpreted in this fashion.

The last concept related to traditional education discussed here, is the role of play. Eileen Antone (1992) studied *The principles of play and traditional Native education philosophy* and argued for the self-discovery methods of learning. With this method, theorists described this way as empowering the child to develop to his/her fullest potential. Arthur Solomon, a Saulteaux medicine person, informs us that children learn through storytelling, example and experience. He, like many other learned elders, expounds that First Nations people learn from birth to death - a continuous process.

Judy Gillis described a case-study of forty-eight parents from three different communities who focused on the value of play in learning. Parents valued the opportunity for play but felt the cultural transmission could be best served with active parental participation.

Linda Akan (1992), a Saulteaux woman, discussed traditional education with an elder. The Saulteau elder insists that teaching is an act of love that should be handled with respect. She defined traditional education as a spiritual process (p. 191).

Shirley Sterling (1992), a Nlakapamux from the Interior Salish tribe and graduate student at the University of British Columbia, discussed two different children/adult interactions (p. 165). She used her two

grandmothers to illustrate the authoritarian and the egalitarian methods of child rearing. With the authoritarian grandmother the children listened out of fear. In an egalitarian situation, on the other hand, children listened because they are interested. In retrospect, Sterling says, in her role as mother and teacher, she found both models within herself.

In this discussion, traditional education was considered a holistic process that integrates the spiritual as well as the physical being into learning. In both Canada and United States, First Nation institutional schooling was designed around religion. Non-Native educators wanted the Indians/First Nations to be able to read the Christian Bible and gain a Christian salvation. In approaching the history of First Nations education there was no praise for the efforts of Indians/First Nations students.

Jon Allan Reyhner (1981) discussed the reasons for failure among the Indians in the United States (p. 19). Compulsory education had removed children from their culturally strong communities and put them into an individualistic and competitive school system without any cultural defence. The school system does not value the cultural identity of Indians and therefore this caused failure among Indian students. The Canadian federal government had compulsory attendance policies in many Christian residential schools: the result of the residential school still cannot be totally calculated.

Methods of Delivering Traditional Education

In 1966, few American Indians had control over their children's education; one exception was the Rough Rock School in Arizona. In Canada, the National Indian Brotherhood (now the Assembly of First Nations) joined all the provinces of Canada and the territories to write a joint proposal on Indian Education. This position paper became known as *Indian control of Indian education*. The Federal Government accepted this position paper which became the policy on Indian Education. The major purpose was that the parents would have control over the education of their children. Although this paper was accepted as policy, it depended on the initiative of the different First Nation groups as to how much of the policy was implemented into First Nations education and schools in Canada.

Much of the literature showed that storytelling exhibited exemplary adult role models and First Nations language programs were important aspects of traditional education. Native spirituality was important because it reflected the social relationships with family, clan, community, and nation.

Madeleine McIvor (1990) studied the issue of whether traditional healing practises should be shared within the university community. Among the Cree community there was a strict protocol for public versus

private knowledge (p. 89). Her results polarized two different perspectives. Some of McIvor's respondents felt that now was the time to share all with the mainstream culture, while others felt the university was an inappropriate setting for sharing private knowledge. I found that article reiterated the ideas of the Lubicon Lake First Nations in northern Alberta. Some knowledge can be shared while other knowledge must be kept private.

Conclusion

The literature on traditional First Nations education was quite varied. One of the main reasons for including a review on traditional education was to create a framework of ideas. "Life followed a cyclical pattern set by the changing seasons" (Goodard, 1991, p. 12). The Lubicon Lake First Nations follow the patterns of the seasons for their economics of hunting and trapping, and for their spirituality, since the tea dance ceremony follows the spring and the fall seasons. Pepper and Henry (1986 & 1991) and Armstrong (1987) described the holistic approach to learning. Armstrong's holistic approach included "the mental, spiritual, emotional and physical well being of the individual, the family, the community and the people as a whole" (p. 14).

One of the major ideas that can be derived from this literature review is the diversity of thought. The main reason for such diversity continues to be that First Nation culture, identity, spirituality, and environment were and are not static. First Nations cultures have different histories and different geographic locations which contribute to their livelihood, and economic way of life. The concept of play and storytelling are not discussed in relation to the Lubicon Lake First Nation. Although these are important learning tools and concepts the time constraints do not allow documentation on this concepts.

CHAPTER FOUR:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In the course of my academic training I have studied the history of the Lubicon Lake First Nation and became very interested in their political struggle. I contacted Chief Bernard Ominayak, first by the mail and then later by telephone. I wanted to make him aware of my interest in their history and in developing their concept of education. I went through the correct Cree protocol, and presented him with some tobacco. After some discussion he mentioned that he had to consult with his council as to whether they would grant me permission to enter their community. He did not think that there would be a problem.

After making initial contact I telephoned Chief Bernard Ominayak and asked whether it would be possible to interview some members of his community with the sole purpose of defining the Lubicon Concept of Education.

Role of the Researcher

Although I have not had much contact with this community, I have met informally with some of the members. In ethnographic terms I would be considered an "outsider" to this community. Because I was an outsider

to the Lubicon Lake First Nation, I depended on Chief Bernard Ominayak and his office assistants to assist me in choosing the participants.

After consultation with his council, Chief Bernard Ominayak consented to my developing their concept of education. Since Chief Bernard Ominayak uses consensus leadership I suggested the possible participants might include the chief of the community, a councillor, parents, elders and some students. Approximately two participants from each of the four groups were interviewed.

Ethnographic Interviews

Schumacher and McMillan (1993) characterized the ethnographic interview as an effective method of obtaining participant meanings; a way to identify "how they conceive of their world and how they explain or 'make sense' of the important elements in their lives" (p. 423). I was interested in exploring the experiences, the values and the attitudes of the community toward the education of their children in their community. Through the use of ethnographic interviews I explored the knowledge, practises, and attitudes of how the research participants understand their concepts of education.

The interviews used an "interview guide" approach. Although I selected certain topics I wanted to examine with each participant, I adapted

the sequence of questions according to each participant's response (see appendix). The questions that I used were:

1. What would you like this study to do for your community? (Chief Bernard Ominayak was the only person that I asked this question).
2. Are there any specific gender roles within your community?
3. Tell me about your education.
4. Is there anything in your education that you would not like to see in your educational system?
5. What do you feel would be the most important elements that you would want included in your school?
6. When you look at your history, what has been the most important elements that has kept your community together and you would like to see continued in your educational system?

The interview guide approach allowed each participant to address topics of particular interest to the respondents and as a result, each participant helped determine the form and content of their interview session. Each respondent described what type of educational system the individual wanted to see in their new community. By using a semi-structured interview format, I was to be able to formulate my topics of interest and at the same time, be introduced to new issues that were important to the participants. Each of the participants discussed the need for Cree language

instruction, history, spirituality, and ceremonies but none of the respondents used the term traditional Cree education.

All prospective participants were informed about their rights to privacy. Each potential interviewee was provided with a letter of initial contact, outlining the conditions of participation in the research study (see appendix). All individuals agreed to become research participants and signed the consent form before starting the interview (see appendix).

Although I asked each participant if they would consent to having the interview taped-recorded, each interviewee had the opportunity to respond "off the record" and checked the interview transcript before being used by the researcher. The interview was approximately one hour in length.

Before starting the interview process there seemed to be one troublesome area which was whether to use a pseudonym or their real names and the disclosure of the place. I discussed this at length with the Chief Bernard Ominayak. He could understand that the university would allow the use of what he called "code names" but why did he need to disclose real names to the University. I misunderstood what the University of British Columbia wanted in the initial ethical review stage. The ethics review form wanted me, the researcher, to have some method of guaranteeing the participants their right to privacy. The respondents had to read the transcripts and agree with the content and were free to add or delete the content of the transcripts. I told Chief Bernard Ominayak that I was new at this research

and I had made a mistake. I was telling him that the community could use 'code names' and yet I was expecting the chief to give me a list of ten names. Once I corrected this with the Chief and forwarded the appropriate information to the Ethics Review Committee, I was able to begin my interviews with members of the Lubicon Lake First Nation.

The interview process started with Chief Bernard Ominayak at his office. Because I wanted to know his expectations of this paper I started the interview process with him. Being their leader for a number of years he was comfortable answering the questions.

The interviews were conducted wherever it was comfortable for the respondents. The majority of the interviews took place in their homes. Chief Bernard Ammoniac's assistants telephoned the respondents and then I was invited to visit their homes. Because the roads were extremely slippery and I did not know where the respondents lived, the chief asked one of the office assistants to drive me to the homes.

One of the elders had difficulty with the interviews being taped but consented to participate. Because of the extremely cold temperatures in 1995 my taperecorder malfunctioned and it was also with this particular elder who felt self-conscious of answering the questions on the taperecorder. I asked her husband the questions in English and he translated them into Cree. She responded in Cree and he translated this into English. Unfortunately this interview was not fully recorded and I had

to revisit this elder. I re-interviewed her, this time without a recorder. She was more comfortable and happy with the outcome of the interview.

Because I asked the Chief to define their concept of education I did not question the choice of the respondents. Each time I came to the community I contacted the chief and he gave me names.

The Introduction of Respondents

With all of the ten interviewees I was given permission to use their real names and include their residence at Little Buffalo in northern Alberta. I started the interviews with Chief Bernard Ammoniac at the Little Buffalo office on October 23, 1995. Chief Bernard Ammoniac, serving his sixth term as leader of his people, works a gruelling schedule. He is everything to everyone of his people. This is an excerpt from a thesis, *The spirit of resistance of the Lubicon Cree*, written by Dawn Hill (1993).

In 10 days we had driven to Edmonton and back three times, attended four meetings, held over seven sweat lodge ceremonies and never went to bed before 4. a.m. ... His days and nights included everything from meeting with Lubicon lawyers, attending a conference hosted by the Lutheran Church, fixing a furnace in a lady's home at 2 a.m., gathering rocks near Fish Lake for the sweat, and picking and making medicine for a very sick little girl (pp. 60-61).

Besides this, the other roles that Chief Bernard Ammoniac were "a hunter, doctor, policeman, fireman, social worker, spiritual advisor; he was the Lubicon Chief."

Among of the other respondents I spoke with four elders. Charlie Wapoose, Reinie Jobin and Joe and Alma Laboucan. Charlie Wapoose is an elder originally from Fort Vermillion and as a youngster attended residential school. Also being educated by his elders, he was taught skills that would assist him in his adult life. He was taught to make drums, snowshoes, wagons, and teepees.

Reinie Jobin was educated at Big Prairie and spent a couple of years at High Prairie. He is the elder on the Lubicon Lake Band Council. He mentioned that he was raised about thirty miles from Little Buffalo, 'as the crow flies'. From his mother's side he is related to all the people at Little Buffalo.

Joe and Alma Laboucan were a couple who would really like to see their children graduate from school. Joe Laboucan went to the Anglican Mission School at Whitefish Lake, Alberta. I asked what he didn't like in the school today and his response was, 'Who complaining'. His wife Alma is the elder member of the Community Wellness Committee. Alma was one of the of the interviewees who attended the first mission school at Little Buffalo. I asked her what the school was like but her only

recollection was "good" and the fact that she didn't stay very long because her parents went to the trapline.

The others members I interviewed were Bryan Labaucan, Juliette Noskeye, Winnie Whitehead and Maggie Auger. Bryan was a young man who has been trained by his elders for about four years. He was learning the songs, learning to serve in the tea dance ceremony and attended the sweatlodge. He was two courses short of his grade twelve but had worked as a labourer on slashing lines. He mentioned that the workers are expected to take one to four day courses to get "cards" and qualify for certain labourer's jobs. He was interested in taking a course as a Cree instructor.

Juliette Noskeye was a young single parent who worked in the band office as the social worker. She was shy to discuss her experience but was very knowledgeable and efficient in her social work position for the Lubicon Lake band members.

Winnie Whitehead was the youngest Lubicon Lake member I interviewed. She was an assistant to Juliette Noskeye and was very efficient on the computer. She mentioned that she had completed grade ten at Little Buffalo school. Although she was single, she was a very caring person who was raising a little girl. She had been caring for this girl since infancy. This was part of the philosophy of this community where they believe in helping each other. When a person cannot care for their children

for whatever reason, other members of their family or their community raise the child. When the child is old enough it is their choice as to whether they return to their family or stay with their new family.

Maggie Auger received her early education from the local Mission residential school in the late 1950's and early 60's: "At that time my parents did not have a permanent home here, they lived further north at Bison Lake." One of the most amazing accounts of her residential school experience is the fact that they were only allowed to speak their own Cree language on Wednesday afternoons until bedtime.

Maggie Auger was the chairperson of the Wellness Committee at Little Buffalo. In the late 1980's there was a Women's Circle who believed that their story and struggle should be known. Maggie Auger was one of the members that was very politically active in this Circle. At the time of the interview, she was the Community Health worker who completed her first year with Necci Drug and Alcohol Abuse and was working on her second year. She worked in the community and planned to return to Edmonton for the final semester of studies with Necchi.

The last interviewee was Elaine Bishop who was not a First Nation person but a volunteer from the Mennonite Central Committee. She came to the community in July, 1992 and was to complete her four years in July, 1996. Through her ministry she visited and tried to respond to the needs of the different people. As a volunteer service worker, she "tries to live at the

same level as the people in the community which I know is impossible in some ways because I get as much food money as I need to buy food so in that way I have more than some people in the community." One of the main reasons that she came to Little Buffalo was to help them to take control of their school. A short time later, she drafted a proposal to have her and two members of the Lubicon visit communities who had successfully taken over their education. This proposal for funding was presented to the DIAND but was returned because there was no funds until their land rights had been settled.

With the advice of Chief Bernard Ammoniac, Elaine said that she tried to get a teaching job at the school at Little Buffalo. She succeeded but resigned after four days because "I was uncomfortable with the hidden agenda of what I was being asked to teach. It seemed to me that whether I was teaching language arts or math or anything else, basically I was teaching colonialism and I could not do that."

These are the ten interviewees that Chief Bernard Ammoniac presented for me to interview. Their group consisted of four elders, parents and young people. It was difficult to try to fit the respondents into categories because some of them fit into more than one category.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RESPONDENTS: WHAT THEY SAID

On October 23, 1995 I began with a taped interview of Chief Bernard Ominayak the Band Office at Little Buffalo. I questioned the Chief as to what he considered this study might be able to accomplish. He felt that the educational system was not meeting the needs of his community. He felt that there needed to be change in the curriculum because the present one tried to change their First Nation identity. Their long range goal was First Nations control of Education. They wanted to:

run the school, select the teachers, teach what we feel is important and then try to combine the two curriculum into one to enable us to bring out the important issues that they want us to deal with. Our language and our ways have to be a system somehow for our youth to be able to understand our ways and not to condemn the native peoples. I feel the native kids should be proud of who they are, once they go through the school system that is not their response.

Since Chief Bernard Ominayak has been their elected leader since 1978 I asked about specific gender roles. Everyone had their roles to play but the recent oil and gas developments and the activities of the timber companies have started to destroy their way of life.

Everyone had their roles in everything that we done which brought us together as a close knit family and a close knit community. In many ways, even though we were throughout our traditional areas, most of the time we always knew where we were and what the others were going to be doing -- ceremonies and that.

The Lubicon lived in the isolated areas and made their living through hunting and trapping. This is their survival. "We use the fur and we use the meat of many of the animals. It is a kind of system that kept us going, living off the land." His personal commitment to land and the environment was strong since he survived from this.

I will work on until I die, to protect the land, the environment and the traditional heritage because I have survived off that and I lived through the type of destruction that is taking place within our traditional area but at the same time I got to encourage my younger children to look for something -- for example that has to do with the land but in doing that we are going to have vet's that going to deal with the sick animals and so on. When we look at education we will have to have an objective so that our people can try to tie these things together and move forward to try to get education for specific areas.

Another area of concern was that the students learn about relevant information like "the constitution, the treaties, and aboriginal rights and what they mean?" In this new technological age the students are better able if they know and understand government. His concern was the First

Nation people who become educated, joined government and then completely disregarded the wishes of the their own people. He narrated this with the following statement: "We have Native people within government that are totally against the wishes and the hopes of our people. What good does that do?"

This question referred to the fact that the Lubicon Lake First Nation had tried several times to negotiate with the federal and provincial government for their reserve and treaty status but there has always been something that prevents this from becoming a reality.

Charlie Wapoose

Charlie Wapoose was an elder who attended residential school and found that the most difficult experience was getting over the loneliness of being separated from family.

No body to help, loneliness. It was very hard for us, when you leave your family, you are there all winter. The loneliness always stays in your heart. It was hard for us to learn but we still continue trying to work our school books. We miss our family, it was hard for us.

Another aspect of the residential school that made it difficult was the teachers were not always good, and the students were required to conform

to the mainstream standards: "pushing us how to act, how to work, and how to study in school. If you did something wrong then you have to stand against the wall, facing the wall and then after you had to work."

Charlie Wapoose believed that the most important thing for the young people today was to know their culture. With the residential schools the students lost their culture but today they are trying know it.

I think this is the reason why we lose our traditional way of life because at that time, when we were in residential school, the only thing that we were taught is how to pray. They used to laugh at us that we were Indians, we're believing false gods, we are believing false thoughts, and they used to call Indians kids names because they don't understand anything because they still have their feathers on.

Charlie had a strong desire that his children and other Lubicon children knew and followed the traditional way of life. He believed the elders could come in and team teach with the present day teachers. He felt that they could teach: "how to pray, how to respect people and how to look after themselves."

The last question, what he felt kept the community together in the past, that he would like to see continued in the school system. He he felt the community "had faith and their traditional way of life. At that time the old people used to get together and pray for peace for their people that

they would live strongly and after these old people passed away, we are all talk now?"

The most important element that he wanted to see was for children to be taught their traditional way of life.

They have their tea dance every fall since I've been here for seven years, they have their sweat lodge and some people make their own sacrifices and their feasts -- always strong, I think. ... I think that once they get to know traditional way of life. I think that these young people will become more stronger after. After they get to know their traditional faith and respect people and look after themselves.

The most important aspect of the interview with this distinguished elder was the whole idea of respect for oneself, respect for each other and then respect for their elders.

In conclusion, Charlie Wapoose discussed the fact that even if we taught about the traditional way of life, it is difficult for some children to understand. These teachings must start in the home. Some parents would complain that their children didn't listen to them. Charlie believed that the parents must be the first to teach their children how to respect people and to respect themselves. He mentioned that some of the kids like to "act the same way as they've seen on those video tapes."

Reinie Jobin

Reinie Jobin was the elder member on the Lubicon Council. Reinie Jobin felt that Lubicon should control their own school, their own curriculum and guard the standard so that they could be accepted into any university in the country. He described his own personal experiences with one of his sons who was in school in a nearby town. He felt that the school was discriminating against Native students and putting all in a non-academic stream. He felt very angry about injustice and therefore approached the principal. He questioned the educational system and the institution on how this could be happening.

He also felt that the students should learn their own traditional ways. "Well, for one thing, our language, and something where I think the girls could learn their old traditional ways of beading and making moose hides." When asked to expand on traditional ways, this elder mentioned that he didn't like what he was seeing in White society:

Well, If they could only look at what's going on in white society, it is not good out there with all their killings, their rapes, and different kinds of abuses of alcohol. In our traditional ways, we never had that. Our youth never had that. Our youth should be taught all the boundaries of what they had, instead of always listening to the white man's ways.

When questioned about what he would like to see in the future, he said the following:

Not to be going through what we are going through, to be treated as human being not to be thrown against one another, like the governments have been doing and trying to wreck out partnerships. After all, they are our future. They are the ones that we are fighting for, to carry on our traditions, hopefully not our fight.

Reinie Jobin concluded his interview with the fact that he would like to see the community stay together. He felt that the government had an obligation to settle this claim and the teachers had a moral obligation to teach Lubicon history and support their struggle.

To keep this community together, let's not have the governments of this country, keep trying to divide and conquer our people. With the Lubicon struggle, it has been going on for too long. And the governments of this country have a moral obligation to settle this. It would be a benefit to our people but to our society as well!

Then he continued:

These are the things that should be also be taught in our schools about Lubicon struggle by the teacher because they can read, white teachers. I am sure that they are aware of what is going on in this community. They should be involved, supporting our people because they are teaching our children and drawing a good wage.

Alma and Joe Laboucan

Alma was a Cree-speaking elder who attended the First Mission School at Little Buffalo. She was the elder member of the Community Wellness. Alma felt a great concern to keep the children in school. "I would like my grandchildren to go to school and learn. I want them to go to school as far as they can." Even though there was a school there, the children were not attending. I questioned Alma and Joe Laboucan on the reasons that they felt the children were not attending school but she had no reason. Her husband Joe felt that there was a lot of teasing and fighting from some of the other kids. He felt that it was part of the teacher's job to sort these out to keep the kids in school.

Being a trapper and having a great interest in keeping this part of their culture alive, Joe felt that the teenagers should experience trapping. "I think that they should get tapes or make tapes about hunting and trapping and how they lived long ago because the teenagers are not interested in that. The teenagers do not want to go trapping. I want them to give trapping a chance."

Alma mentioned that she would like her grandchildren to learn Cree. "I don't like it when they use just English." Joe mentioned that it was the parents' fault that the children spoke English: "It doesn't make any sense because we have a Cree instructor but the parents talk English. The only

way for the children to learn Cree is for the parents to use Cree with their children."

Considering their long history, I questioned the two of them about what they would like to see continued in the present school system. The only thing that they wanted to see was a resolution to their land claims. Joe felt that when "it sounds like it's going to be settled - there's hope." He felt that he wanted to see the matter settled for everybody but mainly for his grandchildren. Alma mentioned her experience was "that my brother and my sister joined the Woodland Cree. They came and asked me if they should join? I can't tell them what to do. They have to use their own mind. (Thought for awhile, then mentioned) ... But I am still hoping for a land claim."

Bryan Laboucan

Bryan was a young man who thought that all the Lubicon children knew how to talk Cree, but believed the school should "bring out more the heritage part, all these ceremonies and many of the other things that people don't know." He continued:

I think that it is sad not to learn about your traditional ceremonies and all of them other things. A lot of people are missing out, they don't understand what it all about. It's all bad.

That's what they were told when they were growing up. You are worshipping the devil and that's one thing that I would like to see in the new school. Someone telling our younger generation about our language and all that and it's not bad. So it was suppose to be our religion before Canada was invented.

With this computer age it is better for us to know our past because this is what is going to help us in the future. Today is an easy life because all it involves is money. When we need something, all we have to do is go to the store. This is not what happened long ago. Before everything was particip - action - the community helping each other!

Before completing this interview, Bryan talked about how he wanted to see education for all his Lubicon people. He has worked on the slashing lines and says even labour jobs are getting more difficult. The men now have to take short courses of one or two days. There is an instructor there to help but sometimes it is difficult. The workers have to study, read books and then take tests. In order to get these labour jobs the workers must qualify by obtaining "cards." This shows that they have taken the short courses.

An example of one of the courses was "Bear Awareness." I questioned him as to whether they had grizzly bears in the Lubicon Lake area. The grizzly was normally found in the area. There was one at Joker Lake, about thirty kilometres from there.

Bryan believed that education was important and he was considering further education for himself. He mentioned that Cadotte Lake has adult

classes but that he did not feel that he needed to have adult classes in his own community before he could consider going to post secondary education.

Juliette Noskeye

Juliette was a young woman who went to school in Little Buffalo. She felt that the school had improved because there was now a gymnasium and the children had a place to play.

When I asked her about what she felt was important in the schools, Juliette wanted the children to learn about their traditional ways. For her, this meant: "how the people lived back then. Most of the kids do not speak their language." In response to why they not speak Cree language, she said: "I think it is basically just how the parents talk to them." She felt that if the parents spoke to their children in Cree all the time then the kids would be able to speak their language.

When asked about what she would like to see continued in their education system, from their historic struggles, she felt that "all of the people are getting along. Long time ago they got along and worked together." She felt that this is what she wanted to see in their present and future educational system.

Winnie Whitehead

Winnie was the youngest member of all of the interviewees at Little Buffalo. She was a very alert and efficient worker on the computer. She was challenged and enjoyed working on the computer.

When questioned about her school experience, Winnie felt that she didn't want to see the children being picked on. Her own personal experiences with the teachers were not positive. She felt that some of her teachers did not treat all of the students as fairly as possible.

She felt that the most important element that she wanted to see was a settlement. She wanted to see hope and stated that the community members were "looking forward to moving into their new homes."

Maggie Auger

Maggie went to the mission residential school in the late 50's and early 60's at Little Buffalo. In the time when Maggie went to school there were around eighty to one hundred students. From this residential school experience, Maggie did not like the multi grade classroom: "For one teacher there was about three or four grades."

When questioned about what she would like to see in their school today? She wanted to see "curriculum about our culture, heritage,

language and our traditional ways." It is more important to learn about our ways than to learn about the Chinese and Japanese: "I will never get to the other side of the world."

When questioned her about what she would like to see in the educational system, she responded:

The closeness and the trust that was there years ago and sort of trickled down to some of the families of long ago, to be supportive of each other and what a person was doing. This is what I see that I would like to see continued in the school. Also the traditional and spiritual ceremonies that we were able to pick up the tempo in them. We almost lost them. There was a time when we never had tea dances and round dances for about seven years.

When asked if she felt that they were losing their traditional ways, she replied that liquor was one cause for the traditional ways being lost, but also the elders had "passed on without giving or passing on the spiritual ritual or ceremony to the next family member in line."

Maggie had strong convictions about who should teach the traditional ways. Only spiritual people could teach the old traditional ways. She described the correct protocol in approaching an elder:

To bring tobacco, bring something of value and ask the elder what it is that you would like. The young people should learn more at home on how to do these things. I believe that is should start at home and not in the school building. ...This must

be done in a humble way and not in public. You tell them (your children), why about something and explain why this is not done in a public place. Native spirituality is very sacred to me.

Elaine Bishop

Elaine Bishop was a volunteer from the Mennonite Central Committee, a non-Native person and a Quaker. She came to Little Buffalo to try to assist the people in taking control of their school. Although she initiated the effort to take control of the school, the federal government derailed their efforts because the land claims have not settled. She has spent her time doing solidarity work on land rights, community development and presence ministry. From a Mennonite perspective this presence ministry means that the individual visits and responds to people's needs.

Within the last two years, the principal at the school had changed. This new principal was more open to knowing the community struggles, and the tensions between the Lubicon and the Woodland Cree. During this period she had been invited to teach two short units on Aboriginal history law and justice.

In 1994 the work changed. The federal government told the Lubicons that they no longer administered post secondary funding. During

this period the Chief and Council asked Elaine for her assistance to take control of the funding for post secondary education and for the school.

In the past year I have worked with the Chief and Council, and Northland School Division and the Department so that now the funding for the school is at least, being passed through the Lubicon. It's not that we have an official tuition agreement between the Lubicon and the Northland School Division but we are at an interim stage which, once there is a settlement, will help the Lubicon move to the point of being in control of their own school.

As part of her first two years at Little Buffalo, Elaine discussed her four-day teaching experience. She felt that she was teaching colonialism.

While my experience was in one school I think this experience can only be explained in the broader context of the longer term assimilation policies of Britain and then Canada. While assimilation policies are no longer so blatantly articulated there are still strong political drivers for extinguishment and against full and just land rights and self determination.

According to Elaine, the school system is not teaching Lubicon children to be proud of who they are but is actually making demands for them to change.

While claiming to encourage self-actualization I see a system that demands conformity and teaches the knowledge and skills generally demanded by the capitalist economic system. The

values of competition and individualization are taught at the expense of community values, co-operation and care of others before care of self.

While working on her Bachelor of Education degree, Elaine found some research that really excited her.

If you want native kids to succeed in school, you ground them well in their own culture and their own language and then you give numeracy and literacy in their culture and you teach them the dominant culture as a second language and culture. They will stay in school longer and do better in school.

Although Elaine came from a English background she mentioned that her culture was "attached to writing and reading and giving advice." While studying for her Bachelor of Education degree she met Art Solomon, an Ojibwa elder and medicine man. Through his assistance she became pre-disposed to learning different methods of teaching styles. The traditional teaching style that she saw among the Lubicons is non-interference. What this concept of non-interference meant is that a child sees, watches and learns responsibility from watching. She gave a few examples of what she had seen in the homes. A young two year old tries to mop up milk that he had spilled on the floor. It was not a perfect job but the child had taken the responsibility to try and clean up the mess that he had created. Another example that she gave was about the young child

setting snares. The children watch and then they try to set their own snares. The success of their efforts is experienced when the young children bring home small game like a rabbit.

This section concludes the ten interviews that I did between October 23, 1995 and December 8, 1995. Although there may be overlap in some of the responses, there is one point included from each of the respondents:

1. We want (Chief Bernard Ominayak) total control of our school system. We want our children to know and understand their language, traditions and be proud of who they are.
2. Wanted them (their children) to know their traditional way of life. Wanted their children to respect their elders, respect each other and respect themselves.
3. Wanted them to learn their language and learn their own traditional ways.
4. Wanted their children to learn about the traditional forms of trapping.
5. Wanted their children to learn Cree.
6. Wanted their children to learn more about their heritage, their ceremonies and 'particip - action' - the community helping each other.
7. Wanted their children to learn their own traditional ways, and their language. Wanted to see the community working together and getting along with each other.
8. Wanted to see settlement of their land claims, wanted to see hope and wanted to see the community members moving into their new homes.

9. Wanted to see curriculum about our culture, our heritage, language, and our traditional ways. Believed that only spiritual people can teach about our old traditional ways.
10. Wanted the children to succeed in school, you ground them in their own language and culture.

This represents only the beginning of their philosophical groundwork for their concept of education. It might have been better if the researcher had knowledge of the Cree language. This would have greatly enhanced the basic knowledge surrounding traditional peoples.

In interviewing members of this community it was necessary to be flexible and share understanding with the respondents. If personal and sensitive questions were asked then the discussion moved to more congenial educational issues and experiences. In Cree tradition, individuals are taught not to seek personal praise. In discussing their personal experiences, the respondents may have difficulty answering the questions. The researcher was aware of these difficulties and tried to be respectful of way of life.

In conclusion I feel that this paper educates and brings about a better understanding of the Lubicon Lake First Nation, their history and the policies that have governed their daily lives. The legal concepts are complicated but I have tried to simplify to make the concepts more understandable.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION ON TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Over the period of the last fifty-six years the Lubicon Lake First Nations have been waiting for a resolution to their land claim. Some of the respondents have no room to dream beyond the outcome of their land claims. It has been a long and endless trail with only a probability of resolution. The respondents want a swift and just settlement between themselves and the two governments. The elders want the settlement for their grandchildren and then for themselves. The younger respondents just want to be able to plan for their future, to be able to dream.

Bernard Ominayak, Chief since 1978, is aware of the difficulties of acquiring an education at Little Buffalo. He cautiously supports education but he believes that this schooling sometimes changes the young people. Echoing the National Indian Brotherhood policy, *Indian Control of Indian Education*, he wants the parents to make recommendations and control the content and curriculum in their school. This policy paper was accepted by the Canadian government and was intended to help provide direction for curriculum, hiring teachers and improving the standard of education by culturally appropriate material and parental involvement.

The Lubicon Lake First Nations would like to implement a new form of education; one that can satisfy the criteria of provincial schools and one

that includes First Nation culture; their Cree language, spiritual ceremonies such as the tea dance and the sweat lodge, First Nation identity, trapping, making hides, and beading. The concept of traditional education can include ideas from the literature such as holistic, spiritual, a way of life, an act of love, storytelling, observing and then doing - like the concept of play, and the ability to adapt to the changing world and environment.

One of the respondents discussed the ridicule that he received in residential schools. This cannot affect the children if they have a strong cultural identity: the ridicule can be brushed aside as an unimportant idea. Dr. Thom Alcoze, a Cherokee, described his father's feelings about identity. He wrote "that his father was reluctant to teach his children about their Indian identity, because of his fear that they would be discriminated against" (Greer, 1992, p. 13). There is no room for fear, only leadership for their children. This leadership can be realized through adapting the educational system to their changing environment. One of the respondents suggested that total survival off the land with hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering are not longer possible with the oil and gas developments on their traditional lands. Now is the time to adapt to the changing environment by making their livelihood through becoming veterinarians or game farmers of wild animals such as moose, elk, deer and buffalo. This is an example of a possible new area of economics for the Lubicon Lake First Nation children.

The Lubicon Lake First Nation need to find a method of expressing their own unique identity and leadership. With a new settlement there are chances to develop a complex multi-disciplinary approach where there are educators, social workers, lawyers, elders, and members of the community network to develop a joint fresh new approach to their education and community healing. Alcoze elaborates that: "Native cultures over the millennia adapted their traditions to the changing environment" (Greer, 1992, p. 15). Gregory Cajete (1994) expressed sentiments that I believe are necessary for other First Nation to hear and experience.

It is time for Indian people to define Indian education in their own voices and in their own terms. It is time for Indian people to enable themselves to explore and express the riches of their collective history in education. Education for Indian people has been, and continues to be a grand story, a search for meaning, a essential food for soul (p. 28).

In completing this paper I found the most important aspect of traditional education is identity. The First Nation children and young people need to know who they are then any goal that they aspire is achievable. First Nation, and Lubicons, to be more precise, only need to look at their history to realize that their journey for justice has been a long and difficult one. In order to realize their new realm of education, they only need to look within their own community. By talking together, the

educators are able to build a curriculum that will not destroy their identity but enable them to cope in the next century. One of the interviewees described their strongest desire to be: "Particip - action - the community helping each other and start by exploring their own history and development." Gregory Cajete (1994) eloquently states that:

Indian people must determine the future of Indian education. It is time to explore where we have been, where we are now and where we need to go as we collectively embark on our continuing journey (p. 219).

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APPENDIX

LETTER DESCRIBING THE STUDY AND CONSENT FORM

Box 176
Enilda, Alberta
TOG OWO

September 22, 1995

Chief Bernard Omniyak
Lubicon Lake First Nations
Peace River, Alberta

Dear Chief Omniyak:

Recently, I completed my course work required for my MA program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of British Columbia. Not long ago, I approached you concerning my MA Thesis. I would like to conduct my research in your community. During the course of my education I watched the political developments with your community and the Federal Government. I support your endeavours but feel helpless that I cannot assist your plight. As a graduate in First Nations education I feel that I can contribute to your community by conceptualizing your ideas and values in education. The Thesis topic is "Lubicon Lake First Nations Concept of Education."

Once the thesis is completed there is two avenues: the thesis can protect the privacy of all research participants. The names will be coded. As a result, no individuals will be identified and the information will be described in such a way that will reflect group patterns and not those of the individuals. Each of the research participants will receive an initial, explanatory letter and a "Participant Consent form."

The other method is to identify all the members and the location. In both methods the participants will see all the transcripts of their interviews.

Based on the nature of my research, I will require minimal amount of resources from your community. Since my research will be based upon information gained from interview sessions, I will not be conducting observations sessions in your community. The types of resources and assistance I may require are as follows:

- i. Assistance in identifying and contracting possible research participants

- ii. Assistance in securing an interview "space" where I may meet with research participants

I would like to conduct my research from the beginning of October to November.

I am now in the process of completing the Ethical Review Form which is required for all research conducted by UBC students. At this time, I would like to request a letter from you and your council stating your support for my research project. I would appreciate knowing if the community supports the idea of the thesis and identifies the research participants.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact me at (306) 373-2767.

Yours truly,

Maisie Cardinal
B.Ed B.A.
Master of Arts Candidate
University of British Columbia

Date

Participant's Name

Participant address

Dear _____,

As you know, I am a Master of Arts student at the University of British Columbia and I plan to do a research project focusing on the Lubicon First Nations community at Little Buffalo. The name of my study is "Lubicon First Nations Concept of Education." The study is to identify and conceptualize First Nations education at Little Buffalo by interviewing some of its members.

The selection of Lubicon First Nations community is because of my personal interest in your community. I support your endeavours but I feel helpless that I cannot assist in your endeavours. But as a graduate I feel that I can contribute something to your community by conceptualizing your ideas and values in education.

If you are interested in participating in the study, please complete the attached "Interview Information" form. Please refer to the next page for interview information. If you agree to be interviewed, you will be asked to sign a separate "Consent Form" before the interview takes place. I will write the study in such a way as to protect your privacy; all individuals will be referred to by the use of pseudonyms. As a result, no individual will be identified and the information will be described in such a way that will reflect that will that it will reflect group patterns and not those of individuals participants. You can change your mind about taking part in the study at any time. If your wish to withdraw from the study, I will delete all references to you from my research notes, I will delete the transcripts of the interview and I will erase or destroy the tape recording of the interviews. Alternatively, If you wish, I will return the tape, transcript and computer disk to you. Your decision about whether or not to participate in or withdraw from the study will not affect any other opportunities available to you at the University of British Columbia.

If you have any questions about the research project, please feel free to contact me at (604)241-2320. I look forward to hearing you.

Sincerely,

Maisie Cardinal

Interview Information

Time Required? Approximately one hour

When? Sometime during the October and November, 1995

Where? Wherever is most convenient to you.

Consent form? I have enclosed a copy of the consent form which you can look over now and then we'll review it together before the interview takes place.

Tape Recorder? I would like to tape record our interview so that I don't have to rely solely on my notes or memory. You will have the option to ask me to turn off the recorder at any time so that you might make comments that are "off the record." However, you certainly have the option of requesting that I do not tape record the interview.

Tape transcripts? You will have an opportunity to review a transcript of the tape and provide me with any comments you might have about the interview. You may ask that parts of the transcript not be used in the research.

Confidentiality? As mentioned in the covering letter, all information will be kept confidential during the study. Only you and I will have access to the interview transcripts and tapes. When I write the study, individual participants will be identified but the respondents will have to give their permission before the interview starts.

Types of Questions? The questions will vary according to your own experiences and will be loosely organized around the following topics:

- * Tell me about your education.
- * Is there any part of your educational experience that you would not like to see in your educational system?
- * What do you feel would be the most important elements that you would want included in your school? Name them and explain.
- * When you look at your history, what has been the most important element that has kept your community together? What from this, would you like to see continued in education system?

Maisie Cardinal
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Ponderosa F
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, B.C.
V6T 1Z4

PLEASE SEND BACK TO MAISIE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
(envelope enclosed)

Interview Information:

Name _____

Current Address _____

Telephone Number(s) _____

____ Yes, I'm willing to be interviewed. The best date and time for me
would be _____.

____ I'm not sure ... I would like to talk to you so that I may obtain further
information.

Date _____

Your Signature _____

DISPOSAL OF INTERVIEW MATERIALS

I _____, agree to disposal of the tape and transcript of my interview with Maisie Cardinal dated

_____ as follows (circle one selection):

1. Destroyed on completion of study.
2. The tape, computer disk and transcript returned to me.

Signed _____ Interview participant

Date _____

CONSENT FORM

I _____ agree to be interviewed by Maisie Cardinal for the study entitled "Lubicon Lake First Nations Concept of Education settings at Little Buffalo under the following conditions.

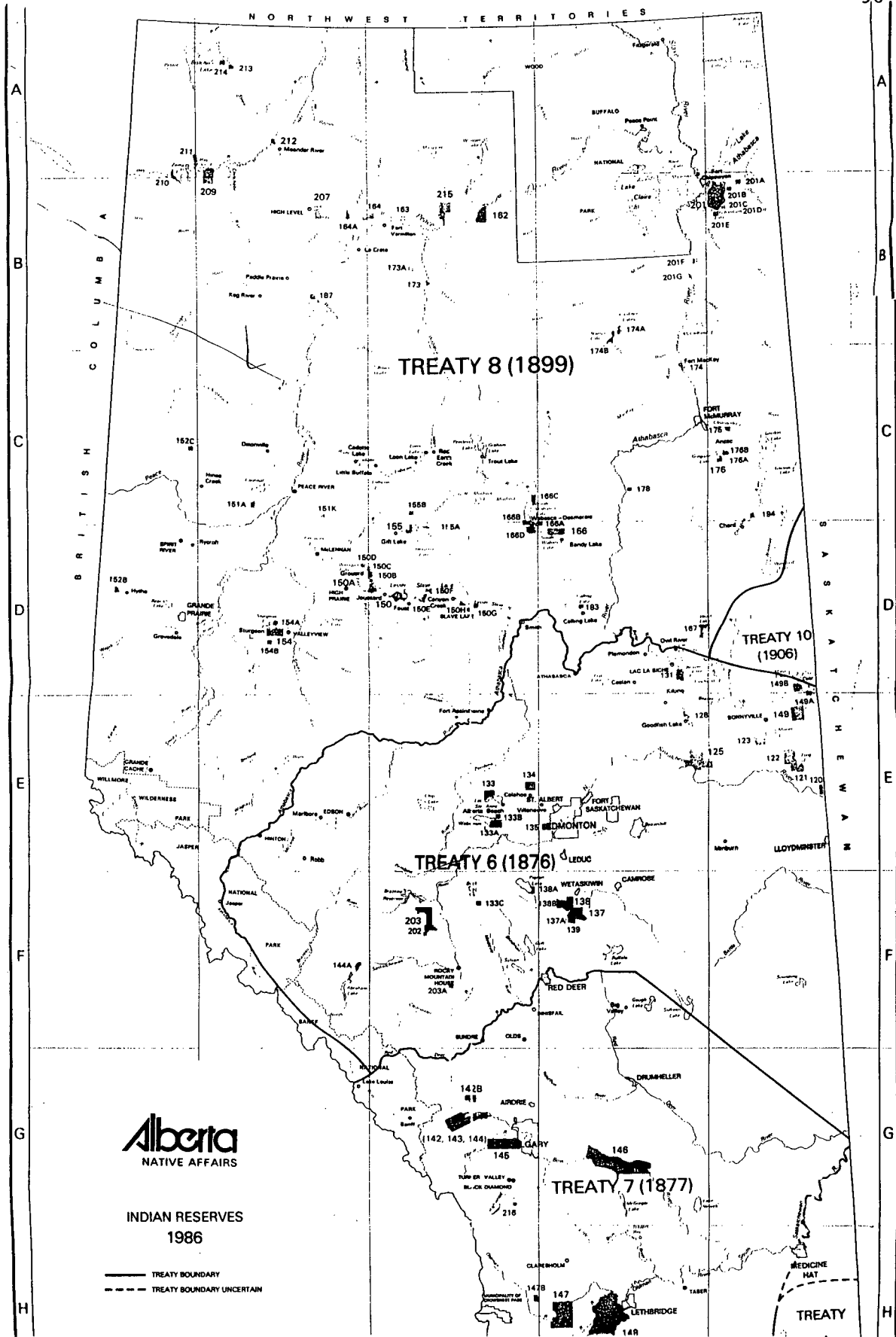
1. I may refuse to answer any questions asked by the interviewer, and/or stop the interview at any time, without prejudice or further obligation.
2. I may make specific comments during the interview as "off the record."
3. The interview will be taped and transcribed (or notes will be taken by the interviewer). I can request a copy of the tape or transcriptions, (or the notes), and I will have the right to correct inaccuracies within a time frame to be agreed upon with Maisie Cardinal. I may request the parts of the transcript not to be used in the research.
4. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time. If I wish to withdraw from the study, all references to me will be deleted from the research notes. In additions the interview transcript, tapes and computer disk will be return to me or destroyed. My decision to refuse to participate or withdraw at any time from the study will not affect any other opportunities available to me at the University of British Columbia.
5. I understand that the study will identify the community and each of the participants who were interviewed for this study. I will be given a chance to review and correct any part of the transcripts before the information will be included in the study. Because of the long history of political struggle the community wishes to include both the community name and the participants names.
6. The interview material may be used by Maisie Cardinal in her MA thesis and in associated academic publications.
7. I understand that if I have any questions concerning my involvement in the research project, I may contact Maisie Cardinal in Saskatoon at

(306) 373-2767 or (403) 523-3201 at High Prairie. I understand that I can contact Maisie Cardinal's Faculty advisors, Dr. Jean Barman, at (604) 822-5331 or Jo-ann Archibald, at 822-3071.

8. I understand that I will receive a copy of this form for my records.

Signed ----- (interview participant)

Date -----



Alberta
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