EXAMINING UBC ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGY AS IT PERTAINS TO FIRST NATIONS CURRICULAR CONTENT:

CARING FOR THE VULNERABLE STUDENT

By

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ABSTRACT

Existing research on institutional racism focuses on identifying the problem, not on responses to it. The purpose of this research is to determine what is being done by instructors at the University of British Columbia to respond to racism embedded in the curriculum. Interviews were conducted with ten instructors in the Faculty of Arts undergraduate program in the Departments of Anthropology & Sociology, History, and the First Nations Studies Program. The study inquires into the techniques developed to respond to embedded racism and how both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students are prepared to read and deconstruct these materials. The participants were selected based on their reputations as excellent educators who are proactive in dealing with equity issues. The data indicates that instructors use anti-racist pedagogical techniques, specifically: creating a safe classroom environment where all students feel comfortable participating and challenging the content; using "self" as the subject to connect concepts with lived experience and normalize those experiences without placing students in the position of representing their group; employing First Nations voice in the form of guest speakers, scholarly materials, and when appropriate, the students themselves; using a historical perspective in order to connect present day attitudes, policies and contexts with their roots in the past and to illuminate the intersections of events from past to present with social inequality and racism; teaching from a First Nations perspective or explaining it in comparison to Western perspective to legitimate Aboriginal ways of knowing and provide non-Aboriginal students with a fresh point of view. It was also determined that excellent teaching is not adequately rewarded, discouraging educators from taking the risks that are inherent in adopting new approaches and anti-racist pedagogical techniques.
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I dedicate this thesis to my daughter Rachel, my inspiration.

You are the best.

♥
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As an academic advisor at the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Arts, I meet with undergraduate students daily and am familiar with the multitude of obstacles students must overcome to earn their degrees. Because the issue of racism (see Appendix A) emerges in my meetings with them, I am particularly interested in the experience students have of racism embedded in the curriculum and how this phenomenon is perceived and dealt with by instructors. Due to the scope of a Master's Thesis, I have limited my research to First Nations (see Appendix A) curricular content and the instructors who teach courses that include First Nations topics.

From among the many varieties of racism that exist in institutions of higher education (Van Dijk, 1987), this study focuses on the relatively subtle racisms encountered by First Nations students embedded in the curriculum and in the attitudes of fellow students. More specifically, this research inquires into how UBC instructors are employing anti-racist pedagogy in response to these racisms. While these racisms may be non-violent and covert, they still constitute a barrier to higher education. The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) acknowledged the importance of higher education for First Nations Peoples. The Report also acknowledged that because government-controlled education does not respond to the cultural realities of First Nations Peoples, equality of education has not been achieved. This study does not address the large issue of "Indian control of Indian education" (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972) but it does attempt to identify anti-racist techniques used by instructors to address the reality of First Nations students who encounter racism while working to earn their undergraduate degrees in a mainstream, Eurocentric institution (Alladin, 1996; Archibald, Bowman, Pepper & Urion, 1995; Martin & Warburton, 1998; McKinney, 2002).

My colleagues and I in UBC Arts Academic Advising Services notice recurring complaints from First Nations students who experience racism in the classroom and the curriculum. Students who encounter such circumstances sometimes feel this is a barrier to completing the courses in question because the materials or attitudes they encounter raise serious personal and emotional issues for them. It would be naïve to think I can, in the scope of a
Master's thesis, identify ways to eliminate racism embedded in the curriculum. Instead I am focused here on identifying some of the elements employed by instructors that support First Nations students in overcoming these barriers.

In Honoring What They Say (1995), Archibald, Bowman, Pepper & Urion found that barriers to success for First Nations students included inadequate funding, impersonal institutional climate, contextual factors such as the logistics of moving, transportation etc., personal problems and racism. Factors supporting success were found to be institutional and social support systems, academic preparation, strong identity and supportive faculty and staff. In his 2002 study Success Factors that Helped First Nation Students Complete their University Degrees, Boyer found barriers to successful completion included identity and confidence issues, transition to an urban environment, and racism. Success factors revealed were strong identity, academic preparation, maintained connection with home community or established connection with a local cultural community, and supportive faculty and staff. In Issues of Respect (1992), Te Hennepe focused on the experience of First Nations students in UBC Anthropology classes. She found a pronounced incidence of racism among instructors and non-Native students as well as racism embedded in the curriculum itself. The coping mechanisms used by First Nations students to persevere in the face of this racism and the extreme discomfort they experienced as a result, included pretending such racism did not exist, discussing it with other First Nations students, discussing it with staff at the First Nations House of Learning (also known as the Longhouse), and writing letters of complaint to the university administration. Some students attempted to educate their instructors and others determined to never share the truth of their culture with instructors they deemed to be untrustworthy. The impact of instructors’ behaviour on students’ experience of their education is undeniable. I have chosen to explore the techniques used by instructors to respond to the reality of racism embedded in the curriculum and the classroom.

Te Hennepe recommends that instructors, in this case “anthropologists”, study themselves in order to become enlightened as to their internalized racism and objectionable practices in the classroom. Boyer suggests more cultural sensitivity training for instructors. Archibald, et al. eloquently explain the structure of racism and suggest that we all need to anticipate its occurrence, refuse to internalize it, and enter into constructive relations with others.
to deal with racism, be it subtle or blatant. The key to being able to do this is described as self respect, refusal to become defensive, and a willingness to educate others in a calm and confident manner. Because there has already been much research done to identify racism in universities and its consequences to students (Alladin, 1994; Archibald, et al, 1995; Boudreau & Eggleston, 2002; Boyer, 2002; Dei, 1996; Dei & Calliste, 2000; Dei, Karumanchery & Karumanchery-Luik, 2004; Te Hennepe, 1992), I prefer to focus on what is being done by instructors in their classrooms to address a situation that is already known to exist. This research revealed that instructors who are actively contending with racism are self-reflective. They know where they are located and accept that they, like all people, have the capacity for internalized racism. They are sensitive to the presence of students from other cultures and traditions and they work to create an educational arena where all students are safe to speak up and to challenge the curriculum and the dominant perspectives.

**Statement of the Problem**

University course work that utilizes primary sources often requires students to read materials that were written generations ago, before racism was even defined. Often these readings are racist or at least ignorant when viewed from a modern perspective but they remain embedded in the curriculum because they were written by eye witnesses or the prevailing authorities at the time in question. Examples of primary sources are Hudson’s Bay Company records, missionary records and reports, personal letters written by colonists, studies conducted by early anthropologists and novels and poems written about early Canada (Veccia, 2004). The nature of history, sociology and anthropology courses necessitates the regular use of such sources and so increases the likelihood that First Nations students will encounter intrinsically racist materials. These courses attract a larger population of First Nations students and often use texts written by white historians and anthropologists 25 to 100 years ago about First Nations peoples which are often politically and culturally inappropriate (Barker & Cole, 2003). Texts have slowly improved over time but even today publishing houses continue to produce inaccurate and insensitive materials written from a Eurocentric perspective, but professing expertise on Aboriginal topics and histories (Marker, 2000; Martin, 1987).
My initial questions in formulating my research were, how are these texts dealt with in the classroom? How is racism dealt with? How do instructors deal with racist attitudes embedded in the texts and separate them from the still-valid content? And, most importantly, how do instructors care for vulnerable students in this situation? Following discussions with Margaret Sarkissian, Senior Equity Advisor, Dr. Linc Kesler, Director, First Nations Studies Program, and Wendy Trigg, Director, Arts Academic Advising Services, I concluded that there would be value in interviewing instructors of courses likely to contain such curriculum materials to determine how they deal with racism embedded in the curriculum and in the classroom.

In addition to racism embedded in the curriculum is the internalized racism that is a symptom of Eurocentric institutions and a legacy of white power and privilege: "historically constituted relations of domination and subordination are embedded in institutional structures of society" (Dei, 1996, p.26). In order for instructors to be capable of implementing anti-racist pedagogy, they first need to be aware of their own location within the power structure of the university, and of their own sense of struggle or privilege: "educators with a revolutionary consciousness understand not only their own moral commitments but also the contradictions that persist inside the capitalist system" (Suoranta, Tomperi, & FitzSimmons, 2005, p.204).

**Purpose of the Research**

Of all the barriers to higher education that exist, I would like to focus on racism because it concerns me the most. As a white woman I am aware that I have slipped past barriers that other women must struggle with. I do not believe this is fair or tolerable. In a sense I have benefited from racism which makes me an unwilling contributor to it and I would like to rectify this. As an Academic Advisor I meet students of many cultures and it is imperative that I do so with sensitivity and caring. Although I am aware that racism is an extremely sensitive topic and must be approached carefully to avoid opening old wounds or creating new ones, I feel it is appropriate to shed light on it in order to foster change. There are many excellent instructors at UBC who are aware of the problem of embedded racism and its impact on students. It is my hope that sharing what they have found to work in the classroom will enlighten other instructors as well as help students determine what actions they can take in situations where this problem has not been acknowledged or remedied.
Through the experiences of instructors who have successfully dealt with this issue, this research provides relevant and useful recommendations to the UBC Faculty of Arts regarding racism, overt or subtle, as it pertains to curriculum and classroom environment. I would like to think these results will promote changes to improve the educational environment for First Nations students within the Faculty of Arts and possibly improve the rate of retention of First Nations students for the Faculty. I have attempted to build on the clarification of what racism is, as defined by Archibald, et al. (1995), as well as provide a definition of anti-racist pedagogy to promote the active deconstruction of racism as it occurs in the curriculum and classrooms of the Arts undergraduate program at UBC.

Assumptions

This research was designed based on a number of assumptions, the first being that institutional racism, in the form of curricular content and classroom experience, continues to be a reality and a problem for vulnerable students. This assumption arose from conversations with students and colleagues within the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia. A further assumption is that instructors have developed responses to racism in the curriculum and in the classroom. This second assumption arose from my personal experience as an undergraduate student in the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia, and from conversations with colleagues within the Faculty. My third assumption was that research to date has focused on defining and identifying institutional racism, not on what is being done to respond to it. This assumption was confirmed as fact through my experience as a graduate student. I found much research that confirmed the existence of racism in institutions of higher education, as well as recommendations for remedies, but I found a dearth of information on anti-racist educational techniques actually in use. I also assumed that identifying effective responses to racism in the curriculum and in the classroom would provide valuable information to instructors and students who encounter such circumstances. This assumption was based on the fact that information/knowledge is a powerful medium for change. My final assumption was that simultaneous data collection and comparison would result in development of a theory grounded in the data. This assumption proved to be incorrect as the use of grounded theory (see Appendix A) proved to be unwieldy and was ultimately replaced with the use of anti-racist theory as a comparator of the anti-racist pedagogy practiced by the participants in this study.
Limitations

The scope of this study was limited to those instructors in the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia who were identified by colleagues and students as being aware of equity issues and proactive in their response to racism in the classroom. The scope was further limited to instructors in the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia who are senior level, i.e. tenured or tenure track. Of the potential participants who met the previous criteria, only those who teach in the Departments of Anthropology, Sociology, History and the First Nations Studies Program, were invited to participate. The scope of research was limited to these departments as courses taught therein often contain First Nations curricular content and attract First Nations students interested in studying topics relating to their own histories, ancestors and contemporary issues. These limitations were necessary in order to include only those participants who possess the information being sought, as well as to restrict the size of the sample to a scope that is appropriate for a Master’s degree.

Rationale for Selecting These Departments

The disciplines of History and Anthropology both possess a legacy of white scholars researching and writing on Aboriginal topics. Although these disciplines have made great strides in recent years, to increase their sensitivity to First Nations perspectives and concerns, the central issue of perspective remains a reality. In The American Indian and the Problem of History, Martin (1987) decries the white historian’s tendency to write “Indian” history from a white perspective. He says that writing history with an ethnocentric bias produces not “Indian” history, but “white” history, and that the entire history of “Indian-white” relations needs to be rewritten from the “Indian” perspective. Whether or not white historians are capable of this task is debatable because in order to have an “Indian” perspective, one would probably have to be Indian. Non-Native historians may find it challenging, if not impossible to compensate for their “social location and ethnocentric bias” (Weaver, 1996, p. 27). However, white historians should be capable of writing history taking into account the intersection of “Indian-white” history. As Marker (2000) states in his article Economics and Local Self-Determination, “the issues of voice and authority will never be insignificant factors, but research that emphasizes the history of Indian-white relations, rather than a tourist’s approach to studying the Indians, would lessen the concern about non-Natives writing about First Nations” (p.32).
As a discipline, Anthropology has struggled with its origins, an association with polygenism (see Appendix A), and the legacy of imperialism (Baker, 1998; Wolpoff & Caspari, 1997). While the discipline has undertaken decades of soul-searching, and continues to do so, it remains imperative for anthropologists to take to heart the lessons of the past (Thomas, 2000), and diligently adhere to responsible and respectful research methods and protocols (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Hedican, 1995). Because of past misuse of research data and dishonest research practiced by some anthropologists, field researchers now must earn the trust of Indigenous groups, follow relevant protocols, and respect the restrictions placed on their research by their subjects. Unfortunately there are still researchers who fail to do this (Menzies, 2001), so it becomes more important than ever for instructors in the discipline to ensure their students are sensitized to cultural issues and the importance of doing research with Indigenous research partners, rather than on Indigenous peoples (Alasuutari, 1995; Jenkins, 1996). This is particularly important because of the ongoing relevance of the field of Anthropology in the interpretation of Native history vis a vis land claims and the accompanying court battles (Culhane, 1997).

The discipline of Sociology struggled with the concept of “race” (see Appendix A) in the 1960’s and 1970’s. In The Continuing Significance of Race? Teaching Ethnic and Racial Studies in Sociology, Mason (1999) says there was concern in the world of sociology that using the term “race” created the danger of “legitimating the concept of race and hence racism” (p.17). White institutional racism was the key dynamic factor. Mason focuses on this period because he believes patterns were developed that have influenced subsequent patterns, including academic institutional inertia. The field of Sociology insisted there were no biological races but that if people define a situation as real, it is real in its consequences and so sociologists had to study the relationships between socially defined “races”. This dichotomy also exists within anti-racism (see Appendix A), “anti-racists have frequently deployed racism...(such as) adherence to categories of ‘race’” (Bonnett, 2000, pp. 3-4), because even though there are no real biological racial distinctions among humanity, racism exists. Therefore it is necessary to utilize racial categories in order to acknowledge and combat racism. In fact the word “race” appears in all the scholarly sources for this study and it seems impossible to discuss racism without using the term “race”, even if just to explain that it is a social construct.
Sociological perspectives are influenced by post-modernist and post-structuralist theories emphasizing difference, diversity and identity which makes it easier to recognize the conditional and situational character of people's identities and to take into account the ways in which ethnicity may affect people's images of themselves and others. The decline of structuralism and rise of post-modernist conceptualizations have resulted in the rediscovery of patterns of difference, and variations in identity. Mason concludes that it is critical that students of Sociology learn to appreciate and analyze difference involving race and ethnicity, class and gender because these differences play a central role in "resource distribution and access which structure people's power chances" (p.28). It makes sense that these differences also play a role in student and faculty power chances and access to resources within university settings. The field of Sociology can not acknowledge the reality of racism in the external world without acknowledging its existence within the academy (Curtis & Tepperman, 1990).

First Nations Studies is a fledgling program at UBC with hopes of growing into a strong presence in the Faculty of Arts as well as the University in general. It is an interdisciplinary program that focuses on topics that are central to First Nations communities such as land claims issues, self-government, control of education, history and research. The program incorporates First Nations Pedagogy as well as perspectives of other cultures (First Nations Studies Program web page, www2arts.ubc.ca/programs/fnsp, June, 2004). The establishment of this program is the most recent step towards creating a more visible and inclusive First Nations element on campus and it does represent a concentration of First Nations students.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

I focused my review on the topics of racism which are crucial to understanding the continued existence of racism within institutions of higher education and the barriers racism represents to First Nations students, as well as the movements within education that have occurred in response to racism. I have touched upon multicultural education only because it is a movement that has become part of the Canadian national identity and is a useful example of government policy which can effectively promote assimilation while seeming to honour cultural diversity (Dei & Calliste, 2000; Yuval-Davis, 2002). It is a useful comparative perspective to anti-racist pedagogy which is a radical challenge to racism in Canadian society, and for First Nations pedagogy, which resists assimilation and offers all students an alternative to the standard, Eurocentric world view.

Institutional Racism

In reviewing literature about institutional racism I encountered a variety of topics that contribute to the core problem. Racism is a complex social construct that responds to its environment in that it is overt when it is acceptable and otherwise seeks shelter in a variety of ways such as turning covert or claiming the moral high-ground. While racism is a social construct often used consciously to manipulate populations, the most difficult form of institutional racism to confront or challenge is that perpetrated unconsciously by members of institutions and organizations that are identified as liberal, tolerant and inclusive (Pederson, 1995; Razack, 1998; Suhas, 2001; Wilson, 1994).
This type of racism is embedded in the cultural assumptions of the dominant group, the norm to which other cultures are expected to conform (Gomme, Hall & Murphy, 1993). It is characterized by the tendency to advantage some groups and disadvantage others (Feagin & Feagin, 1978). Educational institutions, for example, may celebrate the diversity of the student population and pay lip service to equity, but in practice provide a distorted view of other cultures that miseducates majority students (Knowles & Prewitt, 1969). Dominant cultures lack a self-critical perspective, are blind to inequity and barriers to equal opportunity, and resistant to criticism. Failure of minorities to advance through higher education is blamed on culture or genetics, rather than an uneven playing field (Haas, 1992). Even when equity is pushed upon institutions via human rights legislation, universities sometimes refuse to comply by failing to implement changes or by outright backlash against minorities (Boudreau & Eggleston, 2002). This resistance is often rationalized with the argument that things have worked well enough until now, and people need to adapt to the needs of the majority. Huff (1997) discusses the cost of institutional racism since it negatively impacts educational excellence. He argues that the economy can not continue to support inequity and racism because people who don't meet their potential fail to become effective consumers or contributors. He explains the process by which statistics are used, or skewed, placing responsibility for illiteracy and poverty on First Nations cultures, rather than on racism embedded in the very fabric of society, thereby relieving existing institutional structures of any responsibility to remedy inequities.

Racism is very often covert and difficult to illuminate. In the educational setting, curriculum constructed without consultation with minority groups is an example of institutional racism (Sarup, 1991). This is a systemic problem in that it impacts the entire system and has the effect of silencing minority groups and failing to address their educational needs. It is not enough to change the attitudes of individuals, structures must change and power must be reallocated (Frideres & Gadacz, 2001). First Nations curricular content should be selected in consultation with Aboriginal scholars, students and communities.
Embedded Racism

Of particular interest to this study is racism embedded in curricular content. Curricular content in this case is defined as the materials students are required to read as part of their course of study. Collins (1993) points out that curricular content is chosen by the institution or its educators and tends to reflect the reality of the dominant society. Even materials specific to First Nations topics and issues tend to be written from a white perspective (Huff, 1997; Marker, 2000). First Nations students can find they are required to read descriptions of their grandparents and ancestors that are insensitive and insulting. For a Native person separated from home and family by distance, dealing with the transition to a foreign culture and a massive, impersonal institution, the experience can be shocking and hurtful. For a student who is still healing from past abuse, the encounter can be devastating and make completion of the course work impossible (Dua & Lawrence, 2000; Kirkness, 1997; Nora & Cabrera, 1996).

The more subtle racism found in modern texts is not lost upon First Nations students, many of whom are experienced in dealing with the politics of colonialism, the Reserve system, and the interface with government (Barnhardt, 1991). In spite of their life experience, many First Nations students are not emotionally prepared for the racism they encounter in an institution of higher learning (Barman, Hebert & McCaskill, 1986, 1987). Text books are not neutral or free of racism and therefore, educators and students must be aware of the need to read critically and deconstruct the messages and the racist attitudes embedded in the text (Canadian Teachers' Federation, 1992; Wilson, 1994). It is not possible to remove all the embedded racism from curricular content because racism will continue to be renewed and reinserted, but it is possible for instructors to be alert to the potential harm and to educate students of any background in the art of critical reading (Alladin, 1996). Texts with embedded racism can actually be an opportunity to deconstruct racist messages and reeducate students who have been miseducated. Therefore, even with a prescribed curriculum, instructors can become agents of change as they incorporate anti-racist pedagogy into an encounter with a racist text (Crichlow, 1999; Dei, 1996). As Alladin (1996) points out, instructors need to be aware, not only of what students are reading, but how they are reading.
First Nations Students' Experience of Institutional Racism

Racial inequality began with first contact between Europeans and the Indigenous population of North America and the adoption of government policies designed to eliminate Native history, religion, culture, society and economy (Alladin, 1996; Battiste & Barman, 1995). The desire for land necessitated the neutralization of Indigenous peoples and the policies used to accomplish this included acts of both physical and cultural genocide. Aboriginal children were removed from their families and placed in residential schools (Adams, 1994) and the resulting destruction of First Nations culture, society and family systems is still being felt by Aboriginal peoples. The education provided to Natives was designed to be inferior and to support the racist objectives of assimilation. Intellectual development was never a priority; instead, students were given an education that prepared them only for menial labour (Alladin, 1996; Frideres & Reeves, 1993). The term cultural genocide as defined by the United Nations refers to the prohibition of using one's native tongue, the denial of opportunities for higher education, the restriction of cultural or artistic activities, and the destruction of monuments or documents (United Nations, 2005). All of these elements of cultural genocide have been employed by government against First Nations peoples. This study is focused specifically on the denial of opportunities for higher education.

While there is promising movement among First Nations peoples towards reclamation of Native culture and knowledge bases (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Dua & Lawrence, 2000; Smith, 1999), there remains the question, is obtaining higher education in a Eurocentric institution an example of further colonization? Must First Nations students accept the superiority of Eurocentric ways of knowing over their traditional pedagogies? Or is it possible for First Nations students to “re-imagine school as a site of revolutionary struggle” (Grande 2000, p.343) and navigate their undergraduate degree programs in such a way that they emerge from university with their identities as Aboriginal people intact, in spite of the existence of institutional racism? (Smith, 1999). Institutional barriers to occupational and social mobility create and maintain a stratified society with power relations defined by class, race and gender: “universities are, to turn an old anti-imperial phrase, ‘the heart of whiteness’. They accomplish the acceptance and normalization of Western ideas, the glorification of Western societies as the highest form of human organization” (Alfred, 2004, p.96). The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) found that post-secondary Aboriginal students continued to encounter
racism at institutions of higher education in the form of interpersonal exchanges, but also through the denial of Aboriginal values, perspectives and culture in the curriculum and the life of the institution (Wilson, 2004).

Despite claims that Aboriginal people are uninterested in education, failure of minorities to advance to higher education can be traced to problems in elementary grades and to insensitive and unrepresentative monoculturalist teachers and administrators (Haas, 1992). It has been shown that, in spite of some teachers’ beliefs that Aboriginal students are slow learners, when their contract renewal becomes dependent upon their students’ accomplishments, the students’ performance improves dramatically (Huff, 1997). In addition to incentives for improved teaching practices, inclusion of First Nations pedagogy has been shown to improve the performance and retention of First Nations students (Grande, 2000; Graveline, 2000; Hurlburt, Kroeker & Gade, 1991; Kehoe & Echols, 1994; Macias, 1989; Rindone, 1998).

First Nations Pedagogy

While there are many Aboriginal cultures and therefore, many pedagogies, I have attempted to summarize First Nations pedagogy by identifying the main components that may be generalized across cultures. The destiny of a people is bound to the education of their children. Through education, culture is transmitted from one generation to the next, shaping language and thought processes, creating the contours of character, values, and the creative potential of each individual (Armstrong, 1987; Morris, McLeod & Danesi, 1993; Wilson, 1996). Aboriginal pedagogies developed over thousands of years and, according to Ermine (1998), Lanigan (1998) and Swan (1998), are based on modeling and observation and are holistic in that they encompass the physical, mental, psychological and spiritual world. This differs dramatically from the mainstream pedagogical approach based on a Eurocentric, atomistic world view of reality consisting of separate, isolated units (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Weenie, 1998). As I have done with Aboriginal pedagogies, for simplicity’s sake I am distilling many Eurocentric or Western pedagogies developed from within industrial cultures into a unit I can use for comparison to First Nations pedagogy. Compare the English maxim “if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again” with the Mohawk maxim “watch and listen and do it right” (Leavitt, 1993, p.13). While Western pedagogy traditionally relies on one way transfer of information from the active instructor to the passive student, Aboriginal pedagogy traditionally incorporates
storytelling, reflective dialogue and a commitment to act on the resultant understanding (Ermine, 1998; Lanigan, 1998). Couture (2000) explains that Aboriginal pedagogy provides useful learning that is “comprehensive and leads to the development of mind, attitude and adaptation in conduct.” (p.161). Students are expected to consider topics and issues in a holistic way before making a determination and then to act on this knowledge. Alfred (2004) distills the Indigenous ethical frame to two imperatives; “The first is to respect, value and honor differences (independence); and the second is to organize one’s mind and attitudes around the idea of sharing of space (interdependence)” (p. 93). The emphasis on teaching students how to think critically and then to take action is also a core component of anti-racist pedagogy and the expectation of both personal and social responsibility also resonates with anti-racism theory. Although universities traditionally take the lead in scholarship and research, they are also powerful players in the legitimation of knowledge processes. Instructors and administrators in universities have an opportunity to legitimate First Nations ways of knowing by incorporating First Nations pedagogy and scholarly materials into the curriculum in conjunction with anti-racist pedagogy. To do otherwise is to “contribute to the continuation of the unjust claims to knowledge that swirl around us daily” (Hall, 2000, p.211).

Aboriginal education has been examined many times and the recommendations are generally similar in nature. The culmination was the comprehensive review done for the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) which recommends “Indian control of Indian education” (p.442). This conclusion was reached when it was acknowledged that the education being provided to Aboriginal youth was less successful for preparing them for the responsibilities of adulthood than had been traditional educational practices. It was determined by the Royal Commission that Aboriginal peoples were better equipped to redesign the curriculum offered to First Nations students in order to increase its effectiveness, and that this would require a shift in authority. This conclusion was earlier reached by Cummins (1986), Deloria (1991) Hampton (1995) and the National Indian Brotherhood (1972), all of whom cite the necessity of incorporating the Aboriginal perspective into higher education and empowering Aboriginal students to be active participants in their education, rather than passive receptors. An experiential, participatory learning process is one of the hallmarks of First Nations pedagogy (Couture, 1985; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991), and while non-Aboriginal students could also benefit from it (Leavitt, 1993), the application of First Nations pedagogy within Eurocentric
educational institutions is unlikely in the absence of Aboriginal authority. The inclusion of First Nations pedagogy is crucial to the success of First Nations students because of the reality that they must pursue their education in a foreign institution and come to understand Eurocentric ways of knowing (Brown, 2004). It has been shown that Aboriginal students who are given the opportunity to maintain their traditional ways of learning and knowing "can become tuned to the spiritual and psychocultural nature of traditional existence as well as to the demands of the Western tradition" (Couture, 2000, p.163). This is important because once they complete their education, many First Nations students will become spokespeople for their communities and will require the skills to dismantle Eurocentric ways of knowing. If they have had access to part of their education through First Nations pedagogy, as well as come to an understanding of colonial traditions (Brown, 2004; Leavitt, 1993), they will be so equipped because First Nations pedagogy "compels students to question how (whitestreamed) knowledge is related to the processes of colonization. Furthermore, it asks how traditional Indigenous knowledges can inform the project of decolonization" (Grande, 2004, p.56). The contemporary goal of First Nations pedagogy is to eradicate the colonial ethos from the minds and souls of Aboriginal students (Grande, 2000; Graveline, 2000; Huff, 1997), a goal that is not taken into consideration by mainstream pedagogy, but one that is shared by anti-racist pedagogy. Grande (2004) suggests that as First Nations pedagogy evolves, anti-racist or critical pedagogy should be used as a model because "critical pedagogy aims to understand, reveal, and disrupt the mechanisms of oppression...suturing the processes and aims of education to emancipatory goals" (p.23).

Anti-racism

Bonnet (2000) explains the origins of anti-racism in relation to relativism and universalism which emerged in the eighteenth century. "Relativism refers to the belief that truths are situationally dependent. In the context of debate on racial equality it refers, more specifically, to the idea that cultural and/or physical differences between races should be recognized and respected" (p.13). He explains universalism as "the assertion of the validity, across all cultures or historical periods, of certain values, truths and processes. Within anti-racist discourses it is often associated with the conviction that people are all equally part of humanity and should all be accorded the same rights and opportunities" (p.19). Anti-racism’s minimal definition is "forms of thought and/or practice that seek to confront, eradicate, and/or ameliorate racism" (Bonnett, 2000, p.4). In its more formal definition of "an anti-essentialist political force
that acts to denaturalize both ethnic and racial allegiances and categories, and challenge stereotyping, homogenization and naturalization of identity” (Bonnett, 2000, p.3), it seems a relative newcomer to the world stage. Bonnett (2000) argues this is due to the intense focus on racism and inequality with a concomitant lack of interest in anti-racism: “Whatever reasons may be offered for the consideration paid to the nature of oppression and exclusion and the minimal effort made in understanding the forces of equality, it is clear that an imbalance has been created.” (p.2). As of 2005 more publications on anti-racism are appearing on the library shelves. The supporters of anti-racism range in extremes from Scheurich (2002), who ardently confesses that all whites are racist and can no more escape racial grouping than can people of colour, to Allen (2002) who believes that focusing attention on race can only compound existing tensions. He believes the goal should be to no longer use race as a moral reference. Instead, he advocates regarding one another as human beings without focusing on race. While both positions are problematic I would agree with Allen’s ideal as a goal for the human race as it evolves. I also believe that all humans have the capacity, if not the tendency to hold racist opinions and attitudes. Awareness of intrinsic racism will facilitate the personal and collective introspection that is required if we are to eliminate racism from our human attributes.

Anti-racism theory will continue to evolve in response to the continued existence of racism and cyclical occurrences of backlash against change and movement towards equity. Bonnett (2000) urges that anti-racism is a diverse social process that should not be interpreted as the inverse of racism. It is a challenge to multiculturalism and a “radical challenge to entrenched racism in Canadian Society [sic]” (p.63). He cautions that, once linked to a political party, anti-racist theory becomes vulnerable to accusations of political bias which result in dissolution of policies upon the election of a new governing party: “National traditions of anti-racism tend to rely on broad based political support. The sustainability of such discourses depends on the invisibility of their politics” (Bonnett, 2000, p. 64). For example, multiculturalism survives due to its cohesion with the Canadian national identity. In addition to being a legal Act, it is entrenched in the minds of Canadians as a fundamental and desirable aspect of our identity as Canadians, not as the device of a particular political party (Moodley, 1989). On the contrary, Grande (2004) stresses that “education for decolonization must also make no claim to political neutrality” (p. 63), and must challenge capitalism and imperialism. Both of these statements are true at different times in varying political milieus. However, the common goal among anti-
racists is to “enable all people in society to be full and active citizens, to remove the fixed, immutable and naturalized boundaries of otherness involved in processes of racialization.” (Yuval-Davis, 2002, p.58).

How can anti-racism inform the practice of policy-making in universities? It cannot be solely the domain of specific instructors with obvious political allegiances, but must be an accepted element of the character of the university. Awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity would need to be valued and adhered to by all who are associated with that institution. When these policies are employed in the service of the institution, how do minority groups utilize them in the quest for actual equality? Governments and institutions adopt change only in self-interest, so how do minority groups bend that self-interest to their mutual benefit? Bonnett (2000) feels that “rather than construing anti-racism as the territory of a few specialists, it may also be understood as an area of social participation” (p.86) promoted within structures of individual and collective consciousness. This would create an arena in which it is safe for students to challenge the existing structures of “socio-economic power and privilege that foster and reproduce racism” (Bonnett, 2000, p.84). Universities are the logical settings for a critical discourse on racism in society and as such, institutions of higher education should strive to address racism and the intertwined systems of social oppression. Anti-racist pedagogy would allow the university to move “beyond a narrow preoccupation with individual prejudices and discriminatory actions to examine the ways that racist ideas and individual actions are entrenched and (un)consciously supported in institutional structures” (Dei, 1996, p. 27). What continues to be absent from institutions of higher education and policies developed to deal with “race” issues, is the voice of the other. This is problematic because academic debates concern marginalized peoples: “Anti-racism is an explicit academic stance of personal involvement and implication in the problem of racism” (Dei, Karumanchery & Karumanchery-Luik, 2004, p.151). Without the voice of the other taking a pivotal role in the critical reconstruction of social theory, anti-racism will blunder into the same errors as anthropology by tourism or fantasy (Roman, 1995), and will fail to bring to consciousness the “illegitimate domination and violence of this situation, and to bring to expression the real-existing, but as yet unarticulated, potential for liberation” (Pongratz, 2005, p.156).
Anti-racist Pedagogy

Like First Nations pedagogy, anti-racist pedagogy has been shown to be an effective strategy in confronting racism in higher education. Anti-racist education differs from multicultural education in that, instead of merely celebrating cultural differences, it seeks to demystify the interface between dominant and minority cultures (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993; McDougall, 1985; Ng, Staton & Scane, 1995). It offers an opportunity to question power structures and relations and emphasizes the importance of personal experience and lived realities as sources of knowledge (Alladin, 1996). Multicultural education operates on the notion that learning about other cultures will dislodge racism because racism is derived from ignorance of minority cultures (Sleeter & Grant, 1994). However, Moodley (1989) explains that multicultural education “superimposed on an Anglo-mainstream curriculum” (p.89) fails to recognize the inequality of access that differentiates between visible and non-visible minorities. Anti-racist education operates on the premise that racism resides in policies and power structures as well as beliefs (Troyna, 1993), while multicultural education is able to deny the structural aspects of racism, due to its view that racism is a prejudice held by unenlightened individuals. It reflects a majority and often miseducated view of other cultures and ignores the effects of racism. At best, the goal of multicultural education is to learn of other cultures, particularly the more exotic aspects, not the racism of one’s own culture (Grant & Gomez, 2001). At worst, it is a government-sponsored mechanism for diffusing the French, Indigenous and immigrant “problem” (Bonnett, 2000). Bonnett argues that it has been the Indigenous peoples’ refusal to participate in “race” equality or multicultural agendas that has enabled their resistance to assimilation.

Anti-racist education encourages analysis of racism on all levels, personal, institutional, state, and international, and is concerned with “critical questioning of pedagogic goals, institutions and practices” (Pongratz, 2005, p. 159). The intention is to perpetuate a decolonizing process and create change in existing power structures (Sarup, 1991). Alladin (1996) points out that anti-racist education is not a separate topic but must be presented as a political aspect of all education to raise group and individual consciousness and to develop critical political thinking. This is more important than specific knowledge of cultures as the ability to think critically and introspectively enables one to recognize the value of cultural diversity as well as the intrinsic inequity of dominant societies and to respond to racism wherever it is encountered (Moodley,
Higher education is one of the most well-developed areas of anti-racist critique, particularly in the critique of the racist nature of existing education practice and the proposal for new forms of pedagogy that facilitate students' critical thinking skills, "more specifically, the development of students' ability to look at existing educational material as well as the society around them with an informed attitude to the role and nature of racism" (Bonnett, 2000, p.106).

Although universities have been known as arenas of debate and critical thought processes, institutional change is known to happen slowly and to be met with great resistance from within (Barman et al., 1986). It is often argued that things have worked well enough until now and some authority needs to be responsible for determining an objective standard for educational practice (Marchak, 1996). This however, is a retreat to the status quo. While it may be as simple as choosing a theoretical stance for some, this does not address the fact that objectivity can not be determined in isolation from the various stakeholders. Viewpoints and learning styles of other cultures are not addressed or even taken into consideration in a Eurocentric institution (McCarthy, 1990). In their review of student complaint reports from Canadian universities, Martin and Warburton (1998), found minority students complained of racist practices such as Eurocentric curriculum, omission of cultural topics and a reluctance on the part of instructors to discourage generalizations and offensive racist comments and jokes in the classroom.

It must be acknowledged that Anti-racist pedagogy and First Nations pedagogy differ in their foundations and perspectives but their mutual goal of eradicating white hegemony from the minds of students and the fact that they both require instructors to "challenge the processes through which white hegemony is maintained" (Dua & Lawrence, p. 107), have created a sort of partnership between them. The risks of practicing either are the same and each can effectively inform the other (Dua & Lawrence, 2000; Grande, 2004). The two most obvious points on which anti-racist pedagogy and Aboriginal pedagogy diverge are religion and Elders.

Although there is a strong sense that part of the reason for the woes that continue to befall Aboriginal peoples is a spiritual crisis (Alfred, 2004), I have not considered spirituality or religion as aspects of First Nations pedagogy that easily generalizes across all North American Aboriginal cultures due to the diversity of spiritual and religious beliefs and the fact that not all
Aboriginal people are spiritual or religious (Moore, 1998). Additionally, religion is personal and adaptable and therefore, can not be assumed to be dogmatic simply because some religions are. Admittedly, in many cases religious beliefs will be incompatible with anti-racism but they may be in conflict with Aboriginal pedagogy as well. Respect for Elders also can not be assumed to enforce a dogmatic adherence to anything an elderly person utters. The term ‘Elder’ is “diffuse and all-encompassing” (Medicine, 2001, p.73) but the role of Elders is usually specific to their qualifications and knowledge as “reservoirs of aboriginal [sic] skills” (Medicine, 2001, p. 75).

**Backlash**

In the overwealthy and overweighty West where liberal democracy has a beachhead, the philosophy of revolutionary pedagogy can easily receive a Cold War welcome. A pedagogy that is critical about capitalist development will experience roadblocks from educational administrators, parents, students, academics, and political action. (Suoranta et al, 2005, p. 187)

Dua & Lawrence (2000), McKinney (2002), Srikanth (2002), Srivastava (1996), and Whatley Smith (2002), all discuss the risks of adopting anti-racist pedagogy. The risks to instructors include rebellion of majority students, hostility among colleagues, and endangerment of promotion opportunities as part of the backlash against anti-racist pedagogy (Boudreau & Eggleston, 2002). Srivastava (1996) describes the discomfort of being a woman of colour, a feminist and anti-racist in a traditional institution. She can not speak of anti-racist teaching without referring to institutional power structures, domination and complicity. She discusses the need to create, within the university structure, a space of opposition for people of colour in order to safely critique normative whiteness.

In spite of the risks and discomfort these instructors encounter, they persist in their determined efforts to deal with racism in the classroom and in the curriculum. They do so because they believe that an institution that does not advance racial equity enables racial conflicts and produces graduates who are racially ignorant and insensitive. Hill (2002) explains that her willingness to face the anxiety around dealing with racism in the classroom is due to identifying “racial moments” as teaching opportunities. Universities have the power and responsibility to teach justice and moral vision or risk contributing to an unjust society. Gititi
(2002) expands on this point in his discussion of the immense cost of perpetuating racism, not only for its victims but also for its perpetuators. An educational institution that perpetuates or tolerates, or even overlooks racist practices, is inflicting on its students the antithesis of mind-liberating education. Failure of institutions to implement formal anti-racist education is often due to a lack of a distinctive anti-racist pedagogy and an absence of clear recommendations for classroom practices (Troyna, 1993). It is important for institutions to adopt an anti-racist theoretical stance because “race” will continue to serve as a criterion on which the future of the world is organized (Winant, 2001) and the future of democracy depends upon the meaning attached to “race”. However, backlash will continue to exist in perpetuity; therefore, it is important that anti-racist pedagogy be continually examined for potential collusion and to ensure it continues to “exceed the polemics of the debates over ‘backlash’ and ‘anti-oppression’ pedagogies” (Roman & Eyre, 1997, p. 18).

White Power and Privilege

Providing a clear definition of white and then determining who is white is a difficult, if not impossible task. White does not just refer to skin colour as membership in normative white culture can be obtained by people with dark skin and some people with white skin can find themselves excluded from this categorization and all the benefits that go along with it (Hartigan, 2001; Roediger, 2002). The definition of white privilege that seems most illuminating but not accusatory is “an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks” (McIntosh, 1995, p.76-77). Those with access to power and privilege are able to “disregard, obfuscate and downplay the realities of oppression that circumscribe the lives of marginalized peoples” (Dei et al, 2004, p.126). Members of a dominant society may be aware at some level of experiencing privilege but to acknowledge it would require recognition of some responsibility for the continuance of social injustice. Does this recognition offend one’s sense of self or engender feelings of guilt? Even when the existence of oppression is recognized by the privileged it is done so without perceiving the relationship between that oppression and their own power and privilege, a privilege that springs from being the embodiment of “normal” (Bannerji, 1995). Dei (2004) explains “A rupturing of Whiteness is crucial to any further subversion of Eurocentrism and racial oppression
because Whiteness promotes a particular cultural practice of race-based hierarchies that feeds on the prevalence of dominant forms of racism [sic].” (p.92). Like “race”, whiteness is a social construct that must be treated as if it were a real existing structure, due to its impact upon our lived realities. Therefore it is crucial for students of all colours to have opportunities to examine the structure of whiteness and its intersections with all forms of social oppression (Calliste & Dei, 2000; Frankenberg, 2004). Instructors possess the opportunity to create this safe space for the critique of normative whiteness by using themselves as the locus for such discussions. This is something they can do if they are aware of their own location in the societal structure of racism and inequity.

Because the instructor is the immediate contact for the student within the process of education, the mediator of the messages delivered by the curriculum, it is essential for educators to understand their own “personal and cultural values and identities” (Banks, 1989, p.167). Instructors must be able to critically assess their own knowledge bases as well as their experience of self and others, ideally with respect for others as equals (Couture, 2000; Dei et al, 2004). This process of critical self examination must be ongoing, especially for white instructors, due to the role of social inequity as a support structure for the power and privilege unconsciously enjoyed by whites, as well as the sophistication of racism at the level of the academy.

The emphasis placed by critical theory on enlightenment, critique of domination and emancipation does not arise from the theorist’s arbitrary, subjectively determined interest, but from the movement of historical processes themselves, brought to consciousness. In other words, the cultural achievements and political institutions of bourgeois society (such as in the idea of the integrity of the individual, universal equal law, the autonomy of art) encompass a ‘moment of reason’ which continues to contain their truth claims, even when the bourgeois class utilizes it for its own purposes. (Pongratz, 2005, p. 155)

While there are many scholars now writing on theories of anti-racist pedagogy, there are common threads that run through all recommendations for critical pedagogical change. By far the most compelling is the call to empower students as citizens of the world by enabling their
critical thinking skills: "To empower students...we must change the way in which they acquire, view and evaluate knowledge. We must engage students in a process of attaining knowledge in which they are required to critically analyze conflicting paradigms and explanations of the values and assumptions of different knowledge systems, forms and categories" (Banks, 1989, p. 155). In addition to promoting critical thinking, instructors are also encouraged to demand their students be knowledge generators rather than passive receptors: "Students must also be given opportunities to construct knowledge themselves so that they can develop a sophisticated appreciation of the nature and limitations of knowledge and understand the extent to which knowledge is a social construction that reflects the social, political and cultural context in which it is formulated" (Banks, 1989, p. 155). Students must understand how to examine the cultural context for the ways in which the dominant culture systematically skews a critical understanding of marginalized groups (Dei, 1996). This is far more than obtaining useful knowledge or skills. The central principles of a theory and praxis of critical pedagogy are to support development of subjectivity, "enabling individuals to pursue more self-aware and self-determined ways of life... Critical pedagogy seeks to encourage and prepare individuals to understand and critically question views about themselves, society and nature" (Scherr, 2005, p. 145).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In addition to a review of literature on institutionalized racism and responses to it, I interviewed instructors within the Departments of Anthropology and Sociology, History, and the First Nations Studies Program. The interview format utilized open ended questions that allowed the instructors to tell their stories in a narrative fashion (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Therefore this is a qualitative study utilizing an ethnographic style of interview (Moustakas, 1994), although of necessity, the questions were designed to draw out information on specific topics (Bordkey, 1987). The instructors’ stories were transcribed and analyzed but because, as Te Henniepe (1993) warns, coding interviews for analysis is deconstructive and can result in loss of meaning, some of the intact narrative has been included in the final document.

Anti-racist Theory

Initially I intended to use Grounded Theory wherein data collection and analysis are conducted concurrently, allowing patterns to emerge and to shape the research as it continues to completion (Strauss & Corbin, 1997). It is a method used to identify basic social processes within the context in which they occur, allowing the researcher to generate explanatory models of human behaviour that are grounded in the data (Dey, 1999; Glaser, 1978, 1992). This, however, proved not to be the best method, because rather than a new theory emerging from the data, much of the most pertinent data collected seemed best analyzed using anti-racist theories. Therefore I reassessed the data based on the anti-racist theories elaborated upon in the literature review. The basic tenets of anti-racist theory include the comprehension of the intersections of all forms of social oppression; challenge of white power and privilege; acknowledgement of the deligitimation of Indigenous ways of knowing; need for the creation of safe educational spaces; encouragement of a holistic understanding of the human experience; acknowledgment of the impact of educational processes on identity; and an awareness of the traditional role of education in producing and reproducing inequality in society (Bonnett, 2000; Dei, 1996; Mohanty, 1997; Pongratz, 2005; Scherr, 2005).
Conducting the Interviews

I prepared for the data-gathering segment of this research project by completing a course offered in the Department of Counseling Psychology, CNPS 364: Interview Skills. This is an intensive course where students spend a great deal of lab time playing the part of therapist and client in a one-on-one, video-taped interview. As the therapist, it is the student’s task to stay with the client through their emotions and ask questions that will deepen the therapeutic experience. I recommend the course for any researcher intending to conduct interviews because one can learn a great deal about active listening, recognizing threads of meaning, and following those threads by asking relevant questions. This course is also very effective in teaching one how to respond effectively to those moments in an interview when the atmosphere becomes uncomfortable, rather than retreating to a position of safety.

To arrange the research interviews I contacted potential participants by mail using a cover letter that gave an outline of my research and an invitation to participate (see Appendix D). I then followed up by telephone so that the onus to respond was not on the potential participant, and to determine if the instructors I had contacted were willing to be interviewed. I had assumed that it would be difficult to secure cooperation because the people who met my research criteria are all extremely busy. Surprisingly, almost all of the instructors I contacted were willing to meet with me and participate in my research. Ultimately, I had to approach only 13 instructors before acquiring the ten interviews I required for my study. I arranged appointments to meet with each participant and provided a list of interview questions well in advance, and a consent form to be signed by the participants. Almost all of the participants agreed to permit their identities to be stated in the final document but I have elected not to publish this information in order to protect the participants from potential backlash. In the case of my interviews with administrators, they were considered experts rather than participants. They also signed consent forms and because there is no realistic way I could conceal their identities, I have revealed their names in this document. Before proceeding to publication, I submitted a copy of the segment on these interviews to the administrators for final approval.

Approaching each interview I felt nervous and wished my research were quantitative rather than qualitative. However, once I was sitting down with each participant I found their interest and enthusiasm for my project to be comforting and reinforcing. After obtaining
permission to tape record each interview, I utilized two mini-recorders. I used two so that one could be near the participant to more clearly pick up their responses, and a secondary one could be nearer me to record my questions. This procedure proved to be effective as both tapes tended to record both sides of the interview and on two occasions, one of the recorders picked up background noise that obliterated the participants’ responses. Fortunately I was able to transcribe the missing segments from the secondary tape. I transcribed the tapes myself as an exercise in deepening my connection to the data and, although it was an enormous time and energy commitment, it was well worth the personal cost. I believe there can be no more effective way for a researcher to fully comprehend their research than to spend upwards of 100 hours painstakingly transcribing it before proceeding to analysis. By the time I was prepared to code the hard copies, I practically knew the interviews by heart and was aware of the most pertinent information nodes. I submitted a copy of each transcript to the participants to give them an opportunity to delete or correct any portion of the interview. I included a letter of thanks and indicated that if I did not hear from the participant within two months, I would proceed on their initial letter of permission to use the interview data in my research. Half of the participants returned the reviewed transcripts to me with minor alterations.

**Transcript Analysis & Coding**

In working with the hard copies, on first reading I noted codes in the working margin, for example racism, safety, respect, text examples, incidents, pedagogy, etc. Once this was complete a second reading allowed me to summarize the codes into themes, such as aspects of anti-racist pedagogy, elements of a safe classroom environment, and pedagogical perspectives. At this point I found it unwieldy to move back and forth through the document, on paper or on the computer screen, in order to analyze specific themes. To make the process manageable, I physically cut the paper copies of the interviews into pieces and sorted them into thematic categories. I then analyzed these categories for interconnectivity and core elements that reoccurred frequently in the data such as critical thinking skills, white power and privilege, and historical perspective, etc. Because I was using Grounded Theory, I felt my task as the researcher was to remain sensitive to the data as it emerged and to attempt to avoid filtering it through any preconceived hypothesis by remaining aware of my own location and biases (Creswell, 1998; Dick, 2000; Glaser, 1998). By the time I completed this task the data was clearly not formulating a new theory, but was confirming the practical usage of anti-racist
theories. In light of this fact, my supervisor, Dr. Jo-Ann Archibald, recommended I scrap grounded theory and re-examine the data from an anti-racist theoretical perspective. This was possible to do using the themes that had already been identified in addition to further research of literature on anti-racist theories.

While the writing of this thesis has been as onerous as one fears a thesis will be, the research for this study was great fun because I had the opportunity to meet and interview truly remarkable people who are passionate about what they do. I found that interacting with the participants in this research galvanized my own passion for education and inspired in me a new sense of hope for our society.

Other Interviews Conducted

In addition to interviewing instructors within the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia, I requested interviews with key figures in Administration. I was granted interviews with Mr. Graeme Joseph, Coordinator of Student Services, First Nations House of Learning, Dr. Line Kesler, Director of the First Nations Studies Program, and Dr. David Pokotylo, Head of the Department of Anthropology & Sociology. I was primarily interested in their experience of students reporting embedded racism in the curriculum or the classroom. Are students more likely to approach them than to approach instructors? Do they field complaints that have not been resolved at the classroom level? What do they feel can and should be done to support First Nations students and effective teaching? These interviews provided insight into the different perspectives on the issue of racism in the educational environment.

Research Participants

Ten instructors were interviewed for this study. Selection criteria were that the participants be tenured or tenure track instructors within the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia. The participants' tenure status was thought to be necessary in order to access the highest level of experience available among UBC instructors. The criterion limiting participation to those instructors within the Faculty of Arts was necessary to limit the scope of this study to a size that is manageable within the context of a Master's thesis. Because this study seeks information on techniques developed by instructors in response to racism embedded in the curriculum and racism in the classroom, participants were selected based on their reputation
among colleagues and students, for being aware of equity issues and proactive in their response to racism. This criterion was necessary as there would be little point in interviewing instructors who either do not encounter institutional racism, are not aware of institutional racism, or choose not to respond to institutional racism.

Initial candidates for participation in this study were identified from conversations with instructors and administrators known to the researcher. Instructors thus nominated were contacted in writing, informed of the nature and scope of this study, and invited to participate in a one-on-one interview of approximately two hours in length. Instructors who agreed to participate were provided with the interview questions in advance of the scheduled interview (Mishler, 1989). Due to the qualitative nature of this study and the use of semi-structured interviews for data collection, it was appropriate to use a “snowball” technique for identifying additional participants (Grams, 1999). The first participants were asked for referrals to colleagues who also met the research criteria and each new participant was asked for referrals until data collection was complete.

The Nature of the Interviews

Interviews were conducted with ten instructors, each lasting from 45 minutes to one and a half hours, with an average duration of one hour. The list of pre-prepared questions was used to provide some structure to the interviews but each question was not necessarily asked in each interview. This was so because the nature of the interviews tended to be informal and many questions were answered during the course of the conversation without having to be asked directly. The result of providing the interview questions in advance was that participants were prepared to answer the questions and often did so without being asked.

Interview Questions

1. What is your position at UBC?
2. What is your ethnic background?
3. How long have you taught at UBC?
4. What courses have you taught at UBC?
5. Have you found racism embedded in First Nations’ curricular content at UBC?
6. If so, please provide examples of embedded racism in curriculum encountered by First Nations students in your Department.

7. Please provide an example of required reading that proved to be problematic for First Nations students due to perceived racism.

8. Describe your response in situations where a First Nations student is adversely affected by racism embedded in curriculum.

9. Are you able to identify potentially problematic reading materials before students are introduced to them?

10. If so, how do you introduce these materials to potentially vulnerable students?

11. Are you able to identify students who are more likely to be vulnerable to the impact of racism embedded in curriculum?

12. If so, what are the indicators that you look for?

13. What actions, if any, do you take to adapt to the needs of students who are more vulnerable to the impact of racism embedded in curriculum?

14. Can you provide an example of a time when these strategies did not work?

15. Can you provide an example of a time when your strategies were effective in responding to an occurrence of racism embedded in First Nations’ curricular content?

16. What resources exist at UBC that you use to respond to racism embedded in curriculum?

17. What resources would you like to see created that do not currently exist?

18. What recommendations would you make to instructors who are seeking effective strategies for dealing with racism embedded in curriculum?

19. Is there anything you would like to add?

The interview questions were designed, using a consultative process, to draw out the participants’ experience of racism embedded in the curriculum as well as examples of the techniques used to deal effectively with curricular materials or classroom events that could be perceived as racist by students. Initial questions were asked to locate the participants’ rank, experience and the nature of the courses taught. Results indicated that of the ten participants, one was an Associate Professor, two were Full Professors, and seven were Assistant Professors. Although one of the criterion used in the selection process was that all participants be tenured or tenure track instructors, one Assistant Professor was not tenure track but under contract. However, the reputation of this instructor fit the research criteria and the courses taught have a
great deal of First Nations content and tend to attract First Nations students. These components were considered more important aspects of the criteria than the issue of tenure.

The participants were also asked about their own ethnic background. This question was included because the central theme of the research is racism and it was thought there may be some difference in the experience of instructors or how they address racism in their classrooms, based on their ethnicity. This was the case only in the manner in which instructors use themselves as the focus in order to avoid putting students in the position of representing their ethnic or cultural group. Some instructors used their European ancestry or their whiteness while others were able to use their experience as bodies of colour. Of the ten participants, five were “white” or of Anglo-European decent; two were First Nations; one was South Asian; one was Argentinean; and one declined to answer the question. This turned out to be a more interesting question than originally anticipated as it generated a variety of responses from serious to humorous. Some participants answered this question in great detail, relating their early experiences with racism; “I found the further I moved from Prince Rupert, the whiter I became in terms of perceptions” (06: 4/13/04), or with privilege; “I really began to realize what it meant to be white and have privilege accrue to me on the grounds of my skin colour” (09: 6/4/04). Others laughed at the question and explained how the notion is foreign to them.

I am Argentinean. I was born and raised in Argentina. It is interesting because these discussions about ethnic background of course are very relevant in North America but in Argentina people don’t think in those terms...in the U.S. ...some people label you a Hispanic right, but for most Latin Americans living in Latin America, that category is meaningless...I wouldn’t call myself Hispanic. I am an Argentinean with Italian and Spanish background. (03: 4/28/04)

I am, let’s see, I am born in East Africa and for the last four generations my family have lived in Kenya but we are originally from Gujarat in India. So I guess I would be classified as a South Asian (laughter). What I find bizarre is that I grew up in B.C. ...familiar with the term Indo-Canadian...when I went to Toronto, that doesn’t exist...People with brown skin are called South Asians...I always laugh when people ask those sorts of questions. (05: 5/20/04)
These examples serve to demonstrate how supposedly fixed and obvious categories of “race” are actually context sensitive and hold different meanings for different people. This is the reason it is problematic to use racial terms without carefully defining them first although it is impossible to find a definition everyone will agree on.

While all participants have teaching experience outside of UBC, their UBC teaching experience ranged from one to 23 years with a collective UBC experience of 64 years and an average of 6.4 years. Because these participants are all dedicated to and passionate about their craft, the variation in years of experience teaching at UBC was, for the most part, irrelevant when compared to their overall teaching experience. However, where it may create a difference in the lived experience of these instructors is the difference between being tenured and being yet untenured. For untenured instructors there is a degree of discomfort in taking risks in the classroom, as far as pushing the curriculum or teaching methods in new directions. Although more experienced instructors felt they were also still learning and adapting, they indicated a greater sense of confidence.

I think part of it is just the nature of being tenure track, you are just always kind of a stress case...I'm not sure that there is anything that could actually be done that would really lessen that. That level of pressure. (10: 6/14/04)

As would be anticipated, courses taught by the participants included first year through fourth year classes in anthropology, sociology and history, including methods courses, courses in the First Nations Studies Program, and a few courses taught in Women’s Studies by instructors who were cross listed with that department. I have elected not to reveal specific course numbers to protect the participants’ identities.
CHAPTER IV

ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Introduction

The nature of semi-structured interviews usually results in the collection of a great deal of fascinating data, much of which is related to the research question, but not in so direct a way that it can be reasonably included in the results. These interviews resulted in such a breadth of information that some of it had to be excluded and referred to the section on suggestions for future research. So while it was painful to the researcher to leave out any of the data, it was necessary to limit this report to the six key themes that emerged from the data that are relevant to the application of anti-racist pedagogy. This chapter will begin with a discussion of the research participants’ impressions of racism embedded in the curriculum, followed by sections on each of these key themes:

1. Creating a Safe Classroom Environment: where all students feel comfortable participating in discussions, sharing their experience, and challenging the content.
2. Using “Self” as the Subject: as a way of connecting concepts with lived experience and normalizing those experiences without placing students in the position of representing a particular group.
3. Employing First Nations Voice: in the form of guest speakers, scholarly materials, and the students themselves when they are willing to share their experiences and perspectives.
4. Historical Perspective: in order to connect present day attitudes, policies and contexts with their roots in the past and to present a “big picture” of the intersections of events from past to present with social inequality and racism.
5. First Nations Perspective: to legitimate Aboriginal ways of knowing, provide First Nations students with a sense of acknowledgment, and provide non-Aboriginal students with a fresh way of seeing and knowing.
6. Enabling and Rewarding Excellent Teaching Practices: to create a structure that supports the commitment to teaching and to ongoing professional development.
In order to avoid loss of meaning and to include the original eloquence, many of the research participants’ most pertinent responses are provided here in their own words. To create a visual contrast between my voice and the voices of the participants, italics will indicate direct quotes taken from the interviews.

Racism in the Literature

Although all the participants in this study select the course materials for their classes, they are each aware of racism embedded in the literature, “Almost all materials are problematic in some way, whether they are older materials or contemporary materials” (07:5/18/04). In many cases, materials with embedded racism are chosen deliberately by instructors in order that students may see the racism for themselves and learn how to contextualize and deconstruct the source materials.

Yes, certainly...whether it is media, scholarly literature, visual representation, literature. So they need to look at those and assess them for how it is that First Nations have been represented or misrepresented. How they are portrayed or really betrayed in that study. So I do purposely use what I think are racist kinds of materials...because they need to see, they need to be able to assess these materials...it’s because I want them to see what was just published in 2000 and they can see how Aboriginal people are still being written about...not only an Aboriginal person would be offended but also other students recognizing, this is how Aboriginal people are being represented in the literature. (04: 5/6/04)

Ideally, this guided exposure to the sources enables students to identify embedded racism, move beyond their emotional response, and arrive at a point where they can engage in a discourse on racism. This can not happen without the establishment of the first theme, Creating a Safe Classroom Environment. An essential element in the discourse on racism pertains to its origins and how the legacy of racism continues to impact contemporary attitudes, policies and laws. An effective method of revealing this legacy is for instructors to use themselves as the subject (theme number two), either as a recipient of white privilege or as a body of colour. This creates a safe vehicle for students to explore their own experience of privilege and prejudice without being placed on the spot as a representative of their cultural group, victim or villain.
This is not to say that students should not be permitted to share their personal experiences. In fact, if First Nations students are willing to impart their life stories, it can be an effective way to include First Nations voice in the curriculum (theme number three), in addition to First Nations scholarly materials.

The fourth and fifth themes I will explore are about perspective. The research participants have found that using a historical perspective supports students in understanding the foundations of contemporary policies, whether they are inherently racist or intended to be restorative. Once students have grasped the larger picture they can more effectively engage in the discourse on and responses to racism. While only the First Nations instructors teach their courses from a First Nations perspective, all instructors make a point of introducing First Nations perspectives in comparison to non-Aboriginal or Eurocentric perspective. This serves to reduce the alienation many First Nations students experience during discussions of First Nations topics, as well as to provide non-Aboriginal students with a fresh way of seeing and thinking about the topics introduced in the classroom. The sixth and final theme is on enabling excellent teaching. This is not a component of anti-racist pedagogy but an element that the participants identified as intrinsic to supporting the inclusion of anti-racist pedagogy in the face of reluctance or outright backlash from students, colleagues or administrators.

Stereotypes

Examples of curricular materials that contain embedded racism provided by the participants, included primary sources such as letters written by colonists, Hudson Bay records, missionary records and reports, as well as contemporary publications rife with inaccuracies and insensitivities such as newspaper articles; “When the referendum was going on in BC, I had different pieces from the newspaper that were editorials and there were some awful things written” (02:5/17/04), or text books and journal articles.

In the past First Nations were seen as savage, primitive, lazy, you name it, the typical list of stereotypes, and how more recently, you have a more romantic view of First Nations being spiritual, close to nature and being deep and wise. And I show how, even though that representation may be more flattering or more positive, deep inside there is also this idea that First Nations are essentially different from us. In the past
they were bad and primitive, now they are good and superior. I show that in the two cases we are dealing with stereotypes and by doing that we are dehumanizing the experience of First Nations. So I try to show how racism can work in different ways...I try to show how, sometimes by presenting people as very different from us, we are creating barriers...producing forms of discrimination. (03: 4/28/04)

While it is essential to deconstruct these materials in order to avoid reinforcing such stereotypes in the minds of students, it is also imperative to recognize the potential harm racism embedded in the curriculum can bring to First Nations students present in the classroom. If such materials are left unexamined or unchallenged the offense to these students can result in a negative educational experience.

So an example, I'm reading an essay by McIlwraith ...Letters from Bella Coola it's called (Barker & Cole, 2003), and in the back there is a collection of some previously unpublished essays and this one about medicinal practices of the Bella Coola. And there are all kinds of discussions of savages and Indians and civilization and to read it with the sensibility of the 21st century is to be intensely offended. (06: 4/13/04)

Agency

Another kind of racism was pointed out by several instructors. Whether you call it reverse discrimination or discrimination by omission, it is implicit and so more difficult to identify and deconstruct. Sometimes it is necessary to look at what is missing, such as the voice of First Nations scholars, or deconstruct the seemingly positive, or reject the role of victim and examine agency: "One of the things I've noticed in sociology text books...that I find problematic is the only thing they ever say is First Nations are victims. They never explain rights, treaties, any of the kind of more empowering aspects" (10: 6/14/04).

Examining agency can be fraught with emotional land mines when students are entrenched in attitudes of fault and blame, victim and villain. However it can also create an opportunity to have students step back from these assumptions and recognize the greater complexities at work in social constructs. Within the harsh reality of colonialism and its legacy there have been and continue to be acts of rebellion, complicity, negotiation and independence,
on the part of the colonized. While it is important to point out the inequality inherent in the past and present treatment of Aboriginal peoples, it is equally important to acknowledge their agency.

One of the other emphases that I have found very important in the course is what I think is First Nations agency. So how are Aboriginal people responding in a way that they are taking control...Or helping students read against the grain. I gave students some primary material. These were letters written by Emma Crosby to her mother, Emma Crosby was the wife of Methodist missionary Thomas Crosby...And to give these to students and have them read a primary source, that this is the way she discussed First Nations with her mother. They are lazy, they are dirty, they are...but setting up a larger context to what was going on at the time, a social, political context to help students understand what First Nations response, what was their role in all of this, in terms of what she was writing about. “(04: 5/6/04)

Even the most socially conscious of instructors can fall into the trap of reinforcing the stereotype of First Nations peoples as victims. While it is true that racism and inequality victimize people it is also true that one of the most important weapons in the struggle against these elements is to take control of one’s destiny, to be a victim no longer.

One of the most amazing things I remember from my 4th year class with the three Aboriginal women, near the end of the course, one of the women who had been involved in Band Councils and stuff on Reserves was saying to me that (she) think(s) it’s time that Aboriginal people start taking responsibility for a lot of the things that are happening. And I thought wow, I just spent the whole term constructing this course almost around victimhood, you know look at what the Government has done and completely ignoring the other side. So that was really useful. (05: 5/20/04)

In-class Incidents

While it is clear that these instructors are aware that all materials can be problematic in some way, none of the participants had incidents to report of First Nations students being adversely affected by the curricular content of their courses. In one case a student asked to be forewarned of highly emotional content, “that video [Rabbit Proof Fence] was extremely
emotional for her and she said, “You’ve got to warn me before you show anything like that so I can prepare for it”...because it is very emotional” (07: 5/18/04), and in three others, students questioned the use of particular materials, “they thought I should really think about the book and whether I should use it. They were older students so there is a difference...they were coming up to me to say...as advice...to say ok we like what you’ve done but you might want to think about this” (06: 4/13/04). In each of these cases the students who came forward were perceived to be satisfied with the instructors’ explanations of why the materials had been chosen. However, because I was unable to discuss these issues with the students themselves, I was unable to determine if the apparent absence of in-class incidents was due to the anti-racist pedagogical techniques employed by the participants, or if students simply choose not to approach their instructors regarding highly emotional content. Because the participants in this study have reputations as excellent instructors who are sensitive to issues of racism in their classrooms, and are considered to be approachable and available to students, I can only assume that if students felt the need to challenge some aspect of the curriculum, they would feel comfortable in doing so. I believe this area requires further research; how do students respond to anti-racist pedagogical techniques and do they feel these techniques adequately address racism embedded in the curriculum?

Although none of the participants had experienced situations in which a First Nations student had complained of being adversely affected by racism embedded in the curriculum, they did allow that it could happen and escape their awareness: “It’s difficult because the ones that are often don’t speak up. So you know that they could be walking away and not saying anything to you about it” (04: 5/6/04). These participants each agreed that students arrive at university with preconceived notions and attitudes that can make it difficult for them to process racist materials, even with the use of anti-racist pedagogy, deconstruction of the materials and close contextual reading. In addition to the hurtful content, participants acknowledge the power differential in the student-teacher relationship which can make it difficult for some students to approach even the most caring and sensitive instructor: “I still think there are people who will hit things and will find them objectionable...it’s partly if a student felt that way maybe they felt they couldn’t go to the professor” (06: 4/13/04).
Creating a Safe Classroom Environment

The participants identified four main elements to creating a safe classroom environment: awareness of the diversity present in the classroom; establishing the ground rules such as an expectation of respect for one another; employment of anti-racist pedagogical techniques; and management of backlash. While some aspects of these elements can be identified as basic classroom management, as a whole, creating a safe environment requires instructors to be alert and attentive to students and to the dynamics operating in the room. It is necessary to spend time interacting with students in order to identify potential problems: "If you are interacting with students quite a bit, talking to students, there are indications of how they were feeling, what they would say or what they wouldn't say. Sometimes people will express something to you" (07: 5/18/04). Still, it is not an exact science and sometimes instructors will not know that certain students are having problems until after the fact: "I don't claim that I always pick it up by any stretch of the imagination. Sometimes I will be stunned by what comes out in some of the teaching evaluations that I just didn't know was there. So you can't always do that" (02: 5/17/04). Ultimately instructors can only do their best to create a safe environment and hope that students will meet them half way by approaching them when issues arise.

Awareness of Diversity

The participants do not feel they can necessarily identify students who may be more vulnerable to the impact of embedded racism than other students. However, being aware of the different cultures represented in the classroom can serve to sensitize one to the potential for harm.

But here when you are teaching the history about a people who are sitting there listening to it, you automatically become a lot more sensitive. Sensitized to what it is you are saying. You start thinking, I wonder what they are going to think about that, whereas that question doesn't arise when you are teaching Afro-American history to an all non-Afro-American class. I could see you could easily fall into stereotypes you might not want to fall into and the students might even take you there. But when the people who you are talking about are their ancestors, it does get you thinking. It does sensitize you. (08: 5/13/04)
Given that the absence of representatives of a particular culture should not create space for insensitivity and because the diversity of the student body may not be visible, the participants feel they need to assume a stance of inclusiveness. No matter what topic is under discussion in the classroom, the diversity of viewpoints must be acknowledged in order to avoid entrenching students in their assumptions and their privilege: “You never know by looking. I’m looking at my students all the time, and because I talk about a lot of things that could be sensitive I try to present as many viewpoints as possible” (01: 5/10/04).

These participants are aware that they too originate from a specific location and operate from a particular point of view. They acknowledged that, while they are experts in their areas of specialization, they feel it is important to avoid pontificating. That is, they will admit to their students that they do not have all the information and they are willing to acknowledge that students often bring their own level of experience and a diversity of viewpoints to the classroom. This serves to encourage students to get involved in the creation of knowledge and share their perspective. This is how instructors harness the value of diversity in the classroom.

*I think it is important that we realize we are not the experts. Students should also not be given a passive role. They should be encouraged to actively engage in education. I think that the only way we can do that is if we take a step back and say I’m not the expert or I don’t want to be the expert, I want to hear what you have to say, let’s have a dialogue.* (05: 5/20/04)

**Expectation of Courtesy and Respect**

The participants recommended that the expectation that all students treat one another with courtesy and respect must be made clear. At the start of the class they inform their students they will be expected to participate in and contribute to the class via the discussion of ideas, and that the discussions will not be permitted to degenerate into a confrontational, debate-oriented milieu, particularly in the treatment of sensitive issues: “I tell them right at the beginning, I suspect you all have some pretty strong points of view on some of the issues we will cover in this course. But we are here to talk about them, not throw rocks” (08: 5/13/04). Maintaining a safe environment for all students is a primary goal which is obtained by stating it as a classroom policy and an obligation of each student, and reiterating this throughout the course. Additionally, because a
sense of anonymity can fuel the potential for students to make inappropriate remarks in the classroom, the participants found that a classroom technique that is effective in humanizing the discussion process, is that of breaking the larger groups down into small discussion groups.

Have them talk to each other...What it did, I found that face to face diffused what people will say in a debating type position, when they are a person in a crowd who can galvanize that kind of meeting structure creates a different dynamic. So right away...I recognized how I structured these discussions had a big impact on how people felt about it and how they come to their learning. And because I often teach issues that are controversial, either in terms of First Nations or in terms of politics of various sorts, it’s really important that people actually have an opportunity in those classes to talk to each other as people, as opposed to debate or sparing partners. (06: 4/13/04)

Of course there is a vast array of classroom management techniques that can be adopted by instructors but for maintaining the humanity of the classroom, the two aforementioned were most often cited by the participants as effective mechanisms for promoting a respectful atmosphere. It should be noted however, that requesting students be respectful of each other can be successful only if the instructor models the behaviour and treats the students with the same level of respect.

I also feel like it is my responsibility to be there for them as a role model and as a resource person and as a guide, a facilitator, as a catalyst, a sounding board. Someone they can look up to and trust. And there is trust that is invested in each one of them. (09: 6/4/04)

Contextualizing Materials & Promoting Critical Thinking Skills

Incorporating anti-racist pedagogy follows logically for instructors who are aware of racism embedded in the curriculum and institutional racism inherent in universities. In many cases the participants in this research are not aware of utilizing anti-racist pedagogy as a formal teaching approach, they are simply responding to a problem they can see exists in the materials.
Their responses to the problem of racism embedded in the curriculum resemble exactly those techniques used by the participants who have made a conscious commitment to anti-racist pedagogy. These responses include contextualizing materials before providing them to students, and then carefully instructing students on deconstruction of these materials via a close contextual reading and discussion. Instructors actively groom their students’ ability to read and listen critically.

I contextualize that. It’s not like I present it, here, you know, and have them map those connections themselves. I talk about, this is a bad piece. So we set up a context about why it is a poorly written piece. And sometimes they do say why would you give us this, and it’s because I want them to see what was just published in 2000 and they can see how Aboriginal people are still being written about. And it is a surprise to some of them, you know that someone who is being published in Routledge, a very well known publisher, that would write something like what they are reading. And be offended, maybe not only an Aboriginal person would be offended but also other students recognizing, whoa this is how Aboriginal people are being represented in the literature.” (04: 5/6/04)

I hammer them the first class about my commitment to anti-racist learning (laughter). So it's my expectation that they then bring a kind of critical skill set around anti-racist deconstruction, close textual reading of both these documents and profound contextualization so that they understand the broader political and economic climates within which these texts are produced. (09: 6/4/04)

The participants in this research choose to employ these anti-racist pedagogical techniques because they are aware of the consequences of ignoring the reality of racism embedded in the curriculum. The cost to students is too great whether they are students who are hurt by the content or students who would otherwise remain oblivious to the inequity in how First Nations peoples are portrayed in the sources.

First Nations students who look at that and read that about themselves, and if there is no deconstruction of that, that is hurtful, it's hurtful to those students. So you have to
work with those texts, even historical texts, and help them situate and understand, well who was writing at the time. For what purposes were they writing. And locate the person who is doing that writing and what have been the consequences and impacts on Aboriginal people. What have been the responses...you really have to work with these texts. You can not present them in isolation, you can not present them even as examples of what was written in the past. You have to deconstruct them, you have to take them apart for students and help them to assess the context of what is being said, the social location of who is saying what and why. And even begin to speculate on Aboriginal peoples’ perspectives in that, the idea of reading against the grain. I find facilitating those kinds of questions is helpful to students reading some of these historical documents as an example. (04: 5/6/04)

Contextualizing materials for students, teaching them to question who is speaking, from what perspective, and for what purpose, increases their level of sophistication as students and prepares them for senior level classes and graduate school. Imparting the ability to think critically and to question also returns the student to society with greater sensitivity and an ability to interpret that society and the media more effectively.

When you are dealing with racism in the class you need to get students to go beyond, o.k. this is really racist and it’s unjust and it’s fact. So I encourage them to read it and not get stuck there. To try to be analytical about it, to try and think about whether you think public policy might change it or systematic views that exist that encouraged, that allowed this kind of thing to happen.” (01: 5/10/04)

I try to...connect these abstractions, these concepts we use in anthropology, with everyday problems, with things the students can relate to. So I teach about notions of difference, of what race is, a social category, I try to use examples from things they can relate to...I always tell them I don’t care if they forget all the names, all the authors, all the details of the things that we taught in the course, but the important thing is that they keep part of that lens with them. (03: 4/28/04)
Managing the Backlash Phenomenon

Because anti-racist pedagogy emphasizes analysis of racism on all levels, institutional, state, as well as personal, with the intention of creating change in existing power structures, instructors often find the non-Aboriginal students are the ones who are offended by racist materials or the process of contextualizing and deconstructing these materials.

Some of the readings I assign, usually white students get really upset, and that to me is part of the learning process, that we don’t just learn about theories but that we also challenge our own assumptions about race and racialization. Especially in my 4th year class...there is some element of shock value and that’s part of the process...A lot of anger and backlash has to do with the fact that you are really destabilizing a sense of self...your own or the students’ in your classroom. (05: 5/20/04)

Students who come from a privileged background may have never had to consider the reality of racism or how they may have inadvertently profited from it: “They are confronted with issues of colonialism, not just as past but as present...and issues of privilege” (02: 5/17/04). Backlash sometimes comes from “students who are in positions of privilege who either don’t want to address these things or think that they are being criticized individually” (02: 5/17/04). It can be especially challenging for instructors to introduce anti-racist pedagogy to students from politically conservative families: “My feeling is if I get any resistance from students, those are usually your typically kind of Anglo-Canadian...who have the more conservative background. And then when faced with these readings they feel challenged and some of them react in a defensive way” (03: 4/28/04).

Backlash is one of the risks of implementing anti-racist pedagogy and untenured instructors, already stressed over their work load and finding time to conduct research and write, may be shocked into compliance when faced with unfavorable evaluations turned in by students who were angered when confronted with their own power and privilege. Instructors in this situation find themselves wondering how much risk they can reasonably take with their careers.

For example if you address the issues of racism explicitly and directly not all the students in that class are going to like that. In fact they will feel potential that they
have been disadvantaged by having their sense of privilege and location challenged. So that is going to affect what they do in terms of how they evaluate, what they say. It is more likely that they will be people with access to power. So there is a lot of weird sort of structural constraints about trying to go down these paths. It is a lot harder dealing with the wealthy white kid who has access to the institution’s structural power system than dealing effectively with a First Nations student who’s probably feeling already uneasy, disjointed, potentially alienated from the context in the first place and might not say anything. (06: 4/13/04)

The backlash phenomenon is more likely to occur in lower level classes than in upper level classes. This is partly because less experienced students are sometimes more resistant to new ideas or new ways of looking at old ideas, and partly because senior students are choosing courses in areas of interest to them. They have already made the choice to pursue these lines of reason and will be less likely to react defensively when considering their own access to power and privilege. In fact they may have adopted a radically egalitarian agenda and challenge the curriculum from that point of view.

So to some degree, if we are talking about a Canadian society course, which is sociology majors largely who take that because it is a required course, they already are used to thinking outside of their own selves and thinking about things in collective ways. So thinking about things like ethnicity, class and gender as collective sets of experiences as well as individual ones. So I’ve found backlash more of a problem at lower level classes where the students are not thinking in that kind of way and where they are much more resistant and will often just stand up and say “I don’t believe that”. I can present Statistics Canada data and they will say, “I don’t believe that. Men and women are equal. Everybody is equal in Canada. Aboriginal people are equal, they can go to university, they can do whatever they want to.” So just the refusal to accept the information at a base level before you can even begin to say, well what are the explanations. Once we get beyond the information we say, well why does it happen that way and what do you think is going on. So yes I have certainly had that kind of backlash. (02: 5/17/04)
Even when an instructor has made the choice to confront racism and employ anti-racist pedagogy, whether they have tenure or not, there will still be instances in the classroom when a racist incident can not be effectively pursued to a logical conclusion.

_Sometimes there are students who are just very hostile and resistant to learning and it's hard to use those students as a learning opportunity because what it creates in the classroom is incredible tension and division. So while I don't let it slide, I often don't engage it in the way that I will with a student who is I think more open to actually understanding why he or she sees things the way they do._ (02: 5/17/04)

Instructors must perform a delicate balancing act to meet their commitment as teachers to the satisfaction of the various stakeholders; administrators, colleagues and students; and to their own satisfaction as educators of global citizens. These instructors felt uncomfortable with racist incidents in their classrooms but believed it was essential to deal with them in the moment. The difficulty lies in finding an effective approach that leaves students feeling that they understand the issues, not that they have been silenced: “Particularly for the learning experience in the classroom it would seem important that students are allowed to work through their own stereotypes without being embarrassed or silenced from the outset” (Moodley, 1999, p. 141).

_Well I try to speak to them without saying 'I think it's really inappropriate what you just said', but things like, we were talking about special or different rights for Aboriginal people...People would object, they would say 'well I have a problem with why First Nations would have preferential access to housing' or various types of examples and students who were all primarily not First Nations would talk about that. Or they would talk about their experience and some of their previous education and revealed what isn’t really that unusual which is that they don’t really know some of the legal issues, the legal basis for some of the rights and there is a strong sense in BC anyway that First Nations people might somehow be getting something different and better than other people. So one of the things that I would do, it’s really challenging to stand in front of a class that is primarily, about 98% white, and not either speak to, not either try to tell them all that they are the recipients, that they are really privileged or they’re victims. So I would try to contextualize it historically._
would talk about the constitution. I would talk about legal protections of Aboriginal rights. I would talk about things that have been taken away from First Nations in the past, just to try to give some of that context so people would understand where some of these rights come from. Because I think there is a lot of misunderstanding. Some of those situations are really hard. (01: 5/10/04)

Using One’s Self as the Example

It can be very challenging to facilitate a discussion among students, many of whom are very young and still new to trying out different points of view, still inexperienced at adapting to new information or changing their own strongly held opinions. It can be doubly challenging to do so without using students as examples or representatives of their cultural group, or having students entrench themselves in the political dogma of their cultural group. To avoid placing students in this position the participants use themselves and their own life experiences and social locations as examples. This is possible regardless of the instructor’s skin colour or cultural background.

White Power and Privilege

Being members of the normative white culture can afford instructors an opportunity to use their own experience of power and privilege as an example that will not place white students in a position of having to defend themselves, or Aboriginal students in the position of victim or accuser. Using one’s self as the subject can allow for in depth exploration of social constructs without setting up students as examples or representatives of a larger group.

Because my background is British I use myself, so I do stuff on whiteness for example. I don’t want to simply...create a space where we are all talking about one another and therefore...creating a context where it’s minority students, students of colour, Aboriginal students, who are in positions where they might have to say whatever their experience is. Instead I talk about whiteness and the kinds of privileges that go along with that. And include material in the curriculum that is about whiteness as power and privilege and the ways in which we understand and interact with that. And I think that, to some degree, shifts the dynamics in the classroom so that it’s not, so that I as a dominant person become the subject...and say what does it actually mean
and how come you get to take those things for granted and what does that mean in
every day life and how does it work. So that's one way that I've tried to come to
terms with power dynamics within a classroom that puts people in different places
because that then provides students who are from more vulnerable kinds of
backgrounds to also be able to talk about how they see whiteness affecting them as
well as students who are in dominant positions. (02: 5/17/04)

Even so there are occurrences when white students are simply not able to relate to the
notion of their own power and privilege. Their attitudes and preconceptions may be too
entrenched or they may simply not be ready to entertain new ideas about their own location in
the social construct. It remains important for instructors to make their best attempt to reason
with students while maintaining a respectful stance and not permitting such incidences to take
the entire class off track.

There was one other incident where this elderly white woman was in my office and
she made a comment about the reason why Native students didn't do well or people
didn't do well education wise was they weren't interested in education...I used every
bit of rational argument but she just didn't get it. I don't know what you do. I
explained. I tried. She just literally didn't get it...I didn't say "you are a racist" or
anything. I just said people are blocked to certain opportunities and it doesn't mean
they don't value education. I tried to explain. (10: 6/14/04)

The issue of how do you pursue equality. Do you provide different rights or do you
make sure everybody has the same rights. So we talked about that a lot in my class
and I could see in a way that, you only kind of see it once you are standing there, that
you are in this position of not putting the First Nations or other students on the line
for being kind of the embodiment of what...of people who have survived and putting
the other students kind of in a position of being the embodiment of people who are
where they are because they have inherited privilege that they are not really aware
of. So that I find is the biggest challenge, to get people to get out of those positions,
not put them in those positions and just think, just think creatively. (01: 5/10/04)
Without obscuring the fact that we are not talking about an equal playing field right. So there is always resistance, there are always pockets of resistance. There are always contradictions and tensions in which people can subvert power relations. That we are talking about a really unequal playing field. (05: 5/20/04)

Another thing I think that’s also...a problem is that we all have to act like we are not racist and yet I’ve studied enough to say that no one in our society is not racist. But then we all have to pretend like we are not racist but you can’t live in Canada and not be racist. And that’s what this assignment shows. To me that’s also kind of problematic because there is this image that you have to hold up and I don’t know how honest you can be about that kind of thing. (10: 6/14/04)

Race is a very particular issue here in B.C. and I’ve felt that, having recently come back from the United States, that it’s actually, it feels a little harder here because I think there is strong sense that it’s not supposed to be a problem. Whereas, in a lot of other places, you don’t have that initial barrier, it’s a huge problem but you don’t have that initial barrier of getting through people’s sense that maybe it’s not a problem and everything is good here because the UN keeps telling us. (01: 5/10/04)

The Instructor as a Body of Colour

Instructors who are “bodies of colour” have the opportunity to use their own encounters with issues of white power and privilege and their experiences with racism and inequality. This not only informs white students that racism impacts even an authority figure, it also validates the experience of students of colour: “I try to make students get a critical take on different issues, to see how there are different voices on any type of problem or concept...to encourage critical thinking, not just reproducing what a text book says...that is my goal really, to undermine any type of prejudice” (03: 4/28/04). It can be particularly relevant for First Nations students to hear a First Nations instructor substantiate their experiences as an Aboriginal student in a Eurocentric institution.

As a First Nations person teaching a course about First Nations people, one of the advantages is that I don’t have to draw on students, I can put the spot light on myself.
I can speak to my own experiences. What is helpful about that is that a lot of those First Nations students all of a sudden say “Hey, I’m not alone.” If the teacher has experienced or if the teacher is angered by this or if the teacher feels there is something not right here, it is for them validation. That kind of validation creates a space for them to participate in a way that they don’t have to be the teachers. (04: 5/6/04)

First Nations Voice

The participants felt it was important to incorporate First Nations voice in the curriculum in order to ensure adequate representation. First Nations topics are of particular importance to Canadian curriculum and such topics can not be adequately examined using only Eurocentric sources. To do so dismisses First Nations ways of knowing and sends students the message that their culture is irrelevant.

Everything that I have read about multicultural education, about education looking at Indigenous people, talks about one of the problems with mainstreaming, or as some people say, whitestreamed education, is that...the implicit lesson is your community, your society, your culture has nothing to offer, because here are the people who are in the core, this is the centre. (06: 4/13/04)

The most accessible means of ensuring course content includes First Nations voice is to utilize materials and sources created by First Nations scholars, Elders, artists and social critics. In spite of the low representation of First Nations peoples in institutions of higher education, there is a rich body of literature from which to select materials for inclusion in curricular content.

A pedagogical practice that I use in both my classes is I always try to have a sort of interdisciplinary course list or course reading list and so we talk about all these issues and talk about why it is that First Nations are over-represented in the criminal justice system dating back to colonialism. Trying to incorporate First Nations voices in the context of scholarship that is written by First Nations academics or activists...we spent a lot of time looking at theories of crime and because part of my interest is around the production of knowledge and how knowledge is racialized, a lot
of what we do is critique these theories and look at how they are completely racist. And the ways in which these structures of knowledge emerged or even criminology as a discipline emerged at a time when there was a lot of emphasis on scientific theories around race and how these are still sort of embedded in the criminological enterprise... I do think that it's really important to integrate material that is written by First Nations scholars and so that's a really central issue for me for sure. (05: 5/20/04)

Another obvious but less readily available resource is First Nations instructors, still under-represented in institutions of higher education and probably the most effective means for encouraging Aboriginal students to complete their degrees. It is important for young people to see themselves represented and to see Aboriginal instructors who have successfully completed their degrees in Eurocentric institutions and still maintained their identity. All of the participants with whom I discussed this topic emphasized that the university needs to hire more faculty of colour, including Aboriginal instructors. The non-Aboriginal participants acknowledged the fact that they are not able to provide a First Nations voice themselves, and so they invite guest speakers from the community and visiting scholars to join their classes in spite of a lack of resources to make this possible: "In an Indigenous context, I think students gain from being taught by somebody...I think that we as faculty get to meet and exchange ideas, that is a real learning opportunity. I'd like to see more of that in terms of First Nations scholars" (04: 4/5/04).

And finally, the students themselves are an excellent source for First Nations voice in the curriculum. If they are comfortable doing so, students should be permitted to share their perspective and experience with the class. Incorporating First Nations voice in the curriculum not only validates First Nations ways of knowing, it also provides access to these ways of knowing to non-Aboriginal students who then benefit from the richness of diversity that exists within the classroom.

Yes, well the nice thing about UBC is you have a lot of First Nations students and they are quite prepared to talk about their family histories and that sort of thing so in a sense the classroom itself becomes a primary source...I've had occasions where
I've had students from Ontario say "I can tell you about that. My father and I did so and so", so we do get that perspective which the rest of the students usually like a lot because it sort of makes it more real. It's not such an abstract business then like talking about dead Native people who lived long ago. These traditions are still alive. (08: 5/13/04)

It is important to recognize the resources that students bring to the classroom. Many have personal experience or previous training on relevant topics and some bring interpersonal skills that can be employed in stimulating discussion or creating resolution. Being sensitive to the diversity of backgrounds, skills, and attitudes present in the classroom will aid an instructor in mediating discussions and accessing the resources that are present.

It's more of an opportunity that First Nations students seem to present, it's that they are coming from quite diverse backgrounds. There is a lot of diversity represented there in what they are bringing to the University and what they want to do and what their interests are and what their experiences are. It's there in the rest of the student population as well including some of the same kind of perspectives, but not the same richness. As a small group, First Nations' students have this great range of diversity. You would have some students who are very politically keen, they are on top of all the political issues, and some of them are highly politicized to where they are very critical of white institutions, 'whitetamination', any hint of that. To an extent,... I kind of identify with that to a certain extent. (07:5/18/04)

We have to be relevant to what is going on in the real world. First Nations students especially bring a lot of the awareness of what the real world is like, to the University. They are not there to be studied but they serve to enrich the university experience by having all of those different kinds of backgrounds and for other students, seeing and knowing about that, it's the first time they are probably relating to what's going for First Nations people. So I don't know if there is a real easy way to integrate that into what you do with your class but there are certain opportunities there. (07:5/18/04)
Historical Perspective

Teaching from a historical perspective can help to clarify the roots of contemporary issues and explain the evolution of existing policies, laws and societal attitudes, and to reveal the intersection of racism and policy development.

My research is primarily historical so I bring a historical perspective to everything that I do. It is also critical for students to look at what is happening today within a historical context and to look at how over-representation of Aboriginal people (in the prison system), for example, is rooted in the Indian Act and you need to draw the continuity between what is happening now and what happened then. (05: 5/20/04)

A historical perspective can create a foundation such as the impact of colonization, which is then woven throughout the fabric of the course providing a stabilizing element or a beacon by which to navigate. When specific issues, such as privilege or special rights arise, their origins do not need to be laboriously traced back to first contact. They can be explained by referencing the already established historical foundation of the country.

How can I start anything about Canadian society without starting with a section on colonialism and then running it right through? Because starting it that way allowed me to do what I’d always done with capitalism and said it’s central to everything, no matter what you are talking about it’s still central...I had First Nations, Quebec, so French/English colonization, and immigration and multiculturalism, kind of all in half a term, so instead I took colonialism out of that and made that the pivotal foundation of the Country. Which I think I knew it was but I hadn’t really taught it that way. I was teaching in these compartmentalized pieces and that made a difference I think, to the ability to integrate it throughout whatever else was being talked about...So it provided a better way to integrate some kind of fundamental sets of issues for all of us as the basic foundation of the Country and then you can build on top of that...it also differentiates Aboriginal issues from the other issues around ethnicity and race and I think in most cases those get collapsed so that they are all the same sets of issues and they are clearly not the same sets of issues. (02: 5/17/04)
First Nations Perspective

Although incorporating First Nations voice has been discussed as a means to validating First Nations way of knowing and making those forms of knowledge available to non-Aboriginal students, teaching from a First Nations perspective takes this experience to a much deeper level of understanding. It is my opinion that, in order for an instructor to truly teach from a First Nations perspective, that instructor would need to be First Nations, or would have to have experienced significant periods of immersion in First Nations culture. Certainly there are non-Aboriginal instructors who have achieved a level of understanding of Aboriginal cultures and perspectives that would permit them to teach from a First Nations perspective, but for the most part, white instructors can only compare their understanding of First Nations perspective to their own Eurocentric or Western perspective. The danger in employing such comparisons can be misinformation about First Nations perspectives or worse. Non-Aboriginal instructors may, inadvertently, communicate a sense of superiority over Aboriginal ways of knowing by referring to them in the past tense as if they no longer exist, or as myth rather than paths to knowledge. This is an area where it is especially important for instructors to employ critical self-reflection in order to be aware of how they are portraying First Nations perspectives in the classroom.

For First Nations instructors, teaching from a First Nations perspective is an excellent way to provide a new way of seeing for non-Aboriginal students as well as a familiar framework for Aboriginal students navigating a Eurocentric institution.

I try to teach from a First Nations perspective. I try to draw on First Nations perspectives so that they can begin to discern between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives. That's very difficult for students. I think Aboriginal students really appreciate Aboriginal approaches to framing knowledge. I think Aboriginal students really appreciate reading from First Nations perspectives. It's a real learning experience for non-Aboriginal students to walk away from the course and say I never thought about it like that before. It was never presented to me like that before. (04: 5/6/04)
Enabling and Rewarding Excellent Teaching

The loss of faculty due to attrition has adversely affected many departments over the last decade and resulted in an increase in the number of sessional instructors hired on a course by course basis. In some cases this meant undergraduate students rarely encountered an instructor who was tenured or tenure track. Hiring is underway but these participants would like to see more hiring and greater diversity among the successful applicants as well as appropriate institutional support for the unique challenges faced by faculty of colour. The participants believe that if the university administration demonstrates that excellent teaching is valued, more instructors will be encouraged to make the required commitment of seeking mentoring, training, and other forms of ongoing professional development. If the application of anti-racist pedagogy is systemically supported, advocated and rewarded by the administration, instructors will be willing to take the necessary risks discussed earlier and commit the extra time and energy this kind of teaching requires instead of placing all their resources into research and publication.

More faculty. Our faculty have decreased. As our enrollments have increased the number of faculty has decreased. So yeah, put the resources into teaching, they are not doing it. The University is going in the opposite direction. Instead we are getting more sessional teaching, so that’s people we pay badly who can’t have any long term commitments to here because they have to go where ever they can go to make a living and might teach a course once for us or every now and again. (02: 5/17/04)

We only have one faculty of colour in Sociology. That’s a shameful embarrassment again. It’s absolutely unconscionable. So it is up to all of us to constantly, proactively seek money to hire new positions. We’ve lost a lot of faculty and we are not even getting money to replace those. And the Dean is not particularly interested in Canadian Ph.D.’s, for the record. Top ten American universities. That’s where she wants, that’s the pedigree she is interested in so that alone...are we going to have a good representation of people of colour or First Nations people? NO! we are not. So that already, that’s what we are up against. So I’m not sure how much you can or want to say, I’ll say it for you. I am distressed at the direction this administration has taken vis a vis doctorates from American universities. It means that excellent
Canadian candidates are being passed over, are not getting approval from the Dean’s Office to even be interviewed. (09: 6/4/04)

There is a universal sense that everyone is too busy and resources are inadequate. The demands upon instructors to do more with less have become untenable. Although the criteria for appointment, tenure and promotion at UBC indicate teaching and scholarly activities are considered of equal importance, instructors strongly believe that this is not the case. They believe that research and publishing are valued more highly than teaching and they want to see a commitment from the university to support excellent teaching by placing equal value on teaching ability during the tenure and merit review processes. In addition, they would like structural resources put in place to support the advancement of teaching skills. These changes would represent an acknowledgement that excellent teaching is fundamental to the success of the University: “If they are really serious about helping us be good teachers then I think that means taking a little bit of the pressure off too so that our classes are a bit smaller, so that we do have adequate resources and TA’s” (02: 5/17/04).

The way this institution rewards and orients, it’s all towards research even though we talk about 1/3 service, 1/3 research, 1/3 teaching, it’s all research. So even how you encourage your people, because it takes a lot of time to do good effective teaching, to be an effective teacher and you need the support, the institutional support to do that, the training and there also has to be a culture that supports that. (06: 4/13/04)

The University validates and values research. You go to tenure, great, you get some teaching in, oh, not so bad, oh here is some input from your students, but the bottom line is about publishing. Where you publish, what you publish, how much you publish. (04: 5/6/04)

I think that as researchers we get so caught up in research and we are completely evaluated according to how much we publish so that doesn’t really leave us much time to invest in teaching and making things interesting and lively. I think that if there are ways... in which we can encourage that I think that would be great. (05: 5/20/04)
I think there needs to be structural resources in place. It's like trying to use cooperative instruction, teaching methods in class. The mainstream, university culture doesn't support it. The organizational culture structure doesn't support it... Same thing with a lot of issues about anti-racist teaching. There is not necessarily institutional support for that. (06: 4/13/04)

I know teaching is not rewarded on this campus. You will struggle if you fall flat on your face in the classroom. Someone might make a comment about that in a tenure and promotion meeting, but it's not likely if you've published three books and five or ten journals articles, that a little stain on your teaching record is going to matter. (09: 6/4/04)

If an instructor wants to see change in the institution, the responsibility is then to become an agent of change. The conundrum exists that once you are in a position to make change happen, you may well be an entrenched part of what you originally sought to alter.

What it needs are people who are actually already in place, people who are senior, people who are recognized who have the security of their location. They have a responsibility to start undermining the current problems and creating new support structures. It is that sort of dynamic. When you look at change in the context of what's in an institution it actually has to come from the people who are in established positions. The difficulty is that by the time one gets into an established position, we have been inculcated into the system as well. So there is a real double bind. A weird catch 22, that by participating one becomes implicated even as one wishes to distance themselves from that...It means that, for whatever reason, administrators have to decide that there is good reason to make changes that challenge that which gives them their own power. This is the old argument, politics between reform and revolution, can you actually change the institution internally or do you have to fundamentally restructure it? (06: 4/13/04)
Summary

The results of this study indicate that instructors are aware of racism embedded in the curriculum and, more than just treating it carefully, they use it to demonstrate how to read critically and deconstruct the text. The participants feel it is important to respond to any stereotype, including the seemingly positive and to acknowledge agency rather than focusing exclusively on victimhood.

The participants did not experience a significant number of in-class incidents or complaints from students about racism embedded in the curriculum but they could not know if this was because of the teaching techniques they employ or because students are unwilling to approach an instructor in this regard. The anti-racist pedagogical techniques the participants use include creating a safe classroom environment by acknowledging the value of diversity, insisting on respectful conduct, contextualizing and deconstructing potentially offensive course materials, and managing the backlash phenomenon. Instructors avoid placing students in the position of representing their cultural group by using themselves as the subject, but permitting students to share their knowledge and experience if they are comfortable in doing so. Student participation is also one way to include First Nations voice in the curriculum, as well as utilizing First Nations scholarly materials and guest speakers.

Instructors approach topics from a historical perspective in order to make connections between present day attitudes and policies with their origins in a past characterized by social inequality and racism. Employing or at least comparing a First Nations perspective to non-Aboriginal perspectives can provide First Nations students with a sense of acknowledgment, and provide non-Aboriginal students with a new way of considering the issues. If such comparison is done sensitively it can help to legitimate Aboriginal knowledges, but if done poorly, it can send the message that Eurocentric ways of knowing are superior. This is why it is important for non-Aboriginal instructors to include First Nations voices on First Nations topics.

These anti-racist pedagogical techniques are not used in isolation from one another but are unified in the instructors’ attitudes and approaches to teaching and their desire to impart, not just knowledge, but an understanding of how knowledge is generated and how it has been generated historically to support the dominant society. The ability to be open to change and new
ideas results in the freedom to make new choices based on unconditional acceptance and compassion. Effective teaching imparts more than just content, it produces sensitive, intuitive citizens with the ability to impact society though positive change. This is what is required if people are going to be able to communicate effectively with each other and arrive at mutually acceptable resolutions to volatile issues such as land title and restitution.

The participants feel that, in addition to providing opportunities for professional development specifically regarding sensitivity to cultural diversity, placing the same weight of importance on excellent teaching that the University places on research and publishing would encourage and support instructors to make a commitment to improving their teaching through mentoring, training and spending the extra time that it takes to be an effective educator. This could be reflected in the consideration given to teaching ability during the merit and tenure reviews, by establishing an institutional culture that supports anti-racist pedagogy and by providing the necessary resources such as funding for guest speakers and teaching assistants.

Results of Interviews with Administrators

I was fortunate to obtain interviews with three administrators whose positions are relevant to this research topic. They are Dr. David Pokotylo, Head of the Department of Anthropology & Sociology, Dr. Linc Kesler, Director of the First Nations Studies Program, and Mr. Graham Joseph, Coordinator of Student Services, First Nations House of Learning. I was hoping to learn if they experience greater numbers of First Nations students lodging complaints about racism embedded in the curriculum or the classroom, than do instructors. The instructors interviewed for this study had few incidents to report of First Nations students coming forward to complain of embedded racism or racist incidents in the classroom. However, they could not know for certain if this was because of their commitment to anti-racist pedagogy and the type of classroom environment they create, or if students simply choose not to challenge them.
Dr. David Pokotylo, Head, Anthropology & Sociology

Dr. Pokotylo had not had such an encounter but he too could not know if this was because of effective strategies established by instructors or because students were not comfortable approaching the Head of the Department

*If we are talking about students coming in to have an issue about what’s being said in the classroom about actual content, about reading, I can honestly say in the three years I’ve been in here I’ve not had a student with a complaint on that particular issue. Now I can assume... either it’s being well taken care of in the classroom, or the people don’t want to come and talk to me as the administrative Head about it, or they have talked to the instructor and found some kind of satisfactory resolution at that level.* (7/22/04)

Dr. Pokotylo has almost 25 years of teaching experience and currently teaches introductory archaeology. He understands the nature of the materials taught by the instructors interviewed as well as the necessity to present materials appropriately and with sensitivity to First Nations students present, however he expressed concern over the low numbers of First Nations students in archaeology.

*I’m still amazed as to how few students we have going into archaeology where as it seems to be something of interest to every Band going on. I’ve had some say to me, this is really hard for me to become an archaeologist and still keep my traditional perspective because sometimes they are so diametrically opposed.* (7/22/04)

Dr. Pokotylo noted that non-Aboriginal students do not yet understand, at the junior level, the difference between the perspective of our dominant society and First Nations perspective, so materials need to be presented from both, in a comparative fashion. He is able to do this in archaeology using empirical examples of actual sites interpreted from the researcher’s point of view as well as the explanations provided by the relevant oral tradition. However, without discussing the use of this comparative technique with First Nations students, there is no way to be certain they perceive their traditional ways of knowing are being presented as legitimate rather than secondary to the dominant perspective.
Dr. Pokotylo also agreed that it is important to have First Nations voice represented in the classroom and that is something he can not provide. Therefore he encourages First Nations students to share their perspectives and he invites guest speakers from the Musqueam or Sto:lo Nations to give their interpretations of local archaeological sites with which he is involved.

Dr. Linc Kesler, Director, First Nations Studies Program

Dr. Kesler is relatively new to UBC, having arrived here from the United States just over one and a half years ago (at the time of the interview, July 2004). He has 20 years of experience teaching in American universities and so shared his perceptions of racism from that perspective.

_I've had plenty of occasions in which students have told me... about incidents where instructors have said things which are overtly racist as part of their class presentation or materials. So that's sort of one extreme and sometimes where they have said things that were demeaning to students either on racial grounds or gender or something like that, publicly in the class. So those are fairly common occurrences in some places. I don't know how common they are here but I have a sense that they are not unheard of at UBC. There are a lot of things which are a little more subtle than that. One thing we talk a lot about in our class work is just Eurocentrism or certainly what people in the Feminist movement identified long ago as patriarchal discourse, which is not overtly racist or misogynist but functionally so in the larger context. That's a more subtle problem and it's something which is in some respects, more difficult sometimes for students to challenge, but I think students have become more vocal in raising some of those issues with their professors as time has gone on._

(7/9/04)

Dr. Kesler discussed his impressions of how administrations have changed the ways they respond to student complaints, describing how, in the early 60's, it was possible to ignore accusations of racial discrimination, and how increasingly vocal students and minority organizations made it so uncomfortable that administrators were forced to develop new responses. Once administrations began to react to racist incidents on campuses in a professional manner that indicated to stakeholders that minority students and faculty were visible and their concerns were being addressed, the impact of such incidents was reduced concomitantly with the
need to agitate for change. Dr. Kesler described his personal experience as minority faculty member facing the same reluctance on the part of his colleagues to consider his point of view.

I remember being in faculty meetings where people said things and I would just say “excuse me, wait a minute, let’s think about this for a minute” and I would raise some point that had to do with my perspective or minority perspective on the issue and I got really good at doing that in a very non-confrontational kind of way by just sticking to the point. But I would always get these comments after all of these meetings that I was being irrational or why was I so angry and I think that it is just a pretty common response that people have who have a position of institutional support where they feel that their position is objective and reasonable and therefore anybody who disagrees with it is sort of operating out of this irrational space that they don’t understand. I think it is a real uphill battle to overcome that and I think the way to do it is, well a couple of ways, part of it is just persistence, just not going away and if they realize that you and people who feel the same way you do are simply going to be part of their lives then they are going to have to recognize that there is someone else there to deal with...Setting up some kind of dialogue where our perspectives are not simply bizarre irrationality, becomes necessary and it happens over time. (7/9/04)

Dr. Kesler’s experience of arriving at UBC was one of walking into a program where many First Nations students were concerned with the curriculum in some of their classes and unhappy with some of their instructors. A long-term and very well-liked instructor in the Department of History had left the University on sabbatical and his courses, which contained a great deal of Aboriginal content, were taken over by sessional instructors whose teaching methods offended First Nations students.

In the States we would describe this as a sort of systemic racism, when your view of say, American history relegates Native people in the usual ways as marginalized people to the point where someone who has come through, who is credentialed as a teacher in, let’s say Western history, does not have the materials to talk about Indian history in a reasonable way, that’s systemic racism. It’s not because Indians weren’t important in history, because clearly they were, we were there and it’s our history
too, but they were never taught that and so they have no tools with which to present that side of the curriculum. Well it's not their fault in a personal sense that they don't want to address the issue, they may or may not want to address the issue, but it is a systemic fault in that they were never trained to address it. So this is a sort of systemic racism that is built in there. It's very impersonal and it's quite apart from whatever good intentions individuals operating in that system may have. (7/9/04)

I had the good fortune to have interviewed the instructor whose courses became an arena of discontent during his absence. His recommendation was to provide structural support for incoming faculty who may not be prepared to teach sensitive topics.

When you think of some of these, as we say, you can imagine what the high risk areas of teaching would be, like gender, race, those subjects come up in some disciplines more than others, but certainly for incoming, very junior people, it would probably be good for the University to have some sort of mentoring available to help instructors deal with those situations. Because that was part of the problem we had when I was on leave, putting these inexperienced sessionals in to teach my course, they ran into some problems and I think they were problems of inexperience. (08: 5/13/04)

Dr. Kesler was pleased with the History Department’s response to this incident because the Acting Head of the Department acknowledged the seriousness of the problem and agreed that it was necessary to hire an instructor qualified to teach First Nations history. This was done in consultation with Dr. Kesler and a second candidate with appropriate qualifications was about to be hired at the time of writing. Dr. Kesler felt the Department of History’s treatment of the problem, once they became aware of it, could not have been better.

As had many of the instructors I interviewed, Dr. Kesler pointed out that it is important for instructors to maintain a classroom atmosphere in which students feel they can approach the instructor in this kind of situation. It can then be dealt with as something for which there is a resolution rather than as a challenge to the instructor’s authority. It can be as much of a learning opportunity or “teaching moment” as those times when students make inappropriate or ignorant remarks about other cultures. Of utmost importance is to not fall into a defensive, reactive mode
and begin racially stereotyping the Aboriginal students as angry, unreasonable Indians with irrational perspectives, or the white students as ignorant racists.

Dr. Kesler also noted that excellent teaching is not rewarded adequately. He mentioned that even where teaching awards are available, they do not tend to do much for one’s career: “If you had a choice between a teaching award and two more journal publications in top ranked journals, you’d be a fool not to take the journals. That’s where the money is” (7/9/04). Dr. Kesler explained that a teaching career consists of thousands of choices made daily and the choice to become involved with your institution as an agent of change can take a huge personal, professional and emotional toll. For some people there is little choice, for if they embody issues of discrimination in their colour or gender or sexual orientation, they cannot avoid dealing with them except by hiding or passing, either way at great personal cost. Others can choose to avoid committing any of their energy to such issues because they are not touched by them personally.

You have to decide how much of your career is going to be spent in those directions. I think if people have a personal stake in those issues, if you are a woman and feminism speaks to you, you are in one place with that, if you are a person from a minority background and minority politics are something you have to do, you don’t have much of a choice. The mental effort of turning your back on it is at least as great as the effort you would put into it so you might as well do it. If you are the ‘average white male’ who has nothing particularly pulling them to those politics other than where you have come to be in your life thinking about them... or say if you are a ‘white’ woman who could go through life and not think about race politics but decide that you are going to, then there is a way in which you are making a really different kind of choice commitment. I think when people do that and they are sincere, it’s fabulous if they are really willing to take the time to do it. I think from the other side of it, if you’re the person who is into the gender politics or the race politics and you are sort of all the way in, and you are looking at the people who you are forming coalitions with, you have to be realistic about the fact that a lot of people, and particularly academics, are going to be able to go a certain part of the distance with you and then there is a point at which they are not. I think it is really important not to get upset about that because what is not a choice for you, because it
is an imperative, it's not that way for them and... they are not going to go past the point where they feel they can. It's not really worth worrying about it and it's certainly not an indication they are a bad person because all of a sudden they are gone. They went as far as they could go and you've got to be grateful they went as far as they did. I think a lot of people stumble over that because they get to a certain point and they look around and half the people that were with them are gone and they freak out. It is important to find a way to deal with that. (7/9/04)

In terms of resources, Dr. Kesler would like to see more structural support for excellent teaching as well as for cultural identity. For First Nations students this structure could exist within Student Services with the hiring of Aboriginal Counselors and within the UBC First Nations House of Learning as it evolves to meet students’ needs. Currently the expectation of the House of Learning is to reflect multiple cultures at the same time as being fundamentally Musqueam territory reflecting local traditions and protocols.

When you are dealing with Indian communities, you’ve got really very different cultural groups, different language groups, different customs, different religions. I think that’s a real issue for an institution like the House of Learning to function at all it involves a lot of compromises and creativity in approach and...having some kind of a cultural identity itself which is broad enough to include a lot of people but then, not so broad that it’s not doing or saying anything. (7/9/04)

Dr. Kesler feels a university administration can create a more inclusive atmosphere by making it clear in word and deed that racism will not be supported or tolerated. While it is easy to identify overt racist incidents and respond appropriately based on the current UBC Policy on Discrimination, diagnosing covert, institutional racism and making the necessary changes takes much greater finesse. Dr. Kesler believes we university dwellers should be more capable than most in creating appropriate vehicles for change, such as articulate discourse.
Mr. Graham Joseph, Coordinator of Student Services,
First Nations House of Learning

Although the fact that the participants in this study experience few incidents of students complaining of racism embedded in the curriculum may be due to their anti-racist pedagogical techniques, not all instructors at UBC are known for sensitively creating a safe classroom environment. The reality of racism embedded in the curriculum logically must create discomfort and anger among some students, so to whom were they taking their concerns? Mr. Joseph confirmed that First Nations students frequently discuss with him the issues of embedded racism and Eurocentrism and the impact these realities have on their studies and sense of well-being.

I'd have to say from my own experiences as a student in anthropology and archaeology but also as my role as an administrator here at the Longhouse, it's something that is brought up quite often in terms of students being able to cope with the information that's being provided, what the lessons are, how they are being taught in the class. It's probably one of the most challenging aspects of being a First Nations student here on campus. To illustrate some of these examples I'll use my own personal experiences if that's o.k. In anthropology and archaeology, what I found to be the greatest challenge was, how can I say this, what I felt, my perception was that my identity in ways of knowing and understanding the world were being dismissed as either fantasy or mythology. They were not given the same, equal weight of truth as, let's say, quantitative data was within archaeology. (7/19/04)

First Nations students feel their identity and ways of knowing are under attack when an authority on the subject presents them as inferior to the perspective of the dominant society. Many instructors interviewed talked about presenting First Nations traditions and perspectives along side those of the mainstream, but could it be possible that the way in which this is done, the terminology used such as myth, or even an instructor's demeanor and tone, is telling students that the important and relevant information is in the Eurocentric or Western part of the presentation? Are instructors so sure of their theories they are presenting them as fact?
As an Administrator I have students bring this to my attention and they...say, 'you know what, I just can't handle this', being in a classroom where a non-Aboriginal, non-Indigenous person is standing up in front of the room as an authority figure, presenting information that is not necessarily true or not really accurate and the students are accepting it as truth. Or they are presenting information that is so embedded and codified into theory that students can't separate, let's say for anthropology, theory from ethnography, and so they take the theory as truth. (7/19/04)

It is part of Mr. Joseph's job to recruit Aboriginal students to UBC and he is aware that not all of them will be able to successfully navigate the bureaucracy and Eurocentrism of a white university and maintain their enthusiasm for education and potential career.

One way I try to help them deal with it is I say, you know what, look where you are. You are at a university. This is where the elites of society are trained. This is where the colonizing bodies that have reigned over our people have come, to this institution, and they have learned a way of looking at the world that is far different from ours. But to be able to act as an intermediary, as a person who is able to stand up and to speak for your community, for yourself, you have to understand the way that they view the world. So keep your education in one hand and keep your cultural identity in the other... you have to understand that if you are going to be able to talk and contest these ideas, you first have to understand them to do that. So some of them accept that and they think that is an interesting way of looking at it. Others, they are so emotionally upset that they can't remove themselves from the fight so they see every opportunity as a place to stand up and to contest and it just wears them out. So I basically say if something really comes to your attention that you just can not let go, then stand up. But [if it is] just the little things, your sanity is more important. (7/19/04)

There is a strong perception among Aboriginal people who make the effort to complete their education and develop a career, that "white" society still just wants "brown" people to fill a minor role working for the benefit of the dominant group. Their skin colour makes "good
optics" to quote Mr. Joseph, and they are living "proof" that Canada is a non-racist nation where anyone can be successful.

You will see that within organizations, government organizations, and you will see it here. They really want a lot of 'Aboriginal peoples' to participate within industry and government but they want to set up the rules in a way that they only participate to a certain extent, a certain capacity, and beyond that it is very discouraged. I think once not only First Nations students are seeing that in the classroom or experiencing that elsewhere, it can be really damaging. Very disheartening. It could force people out of UBC and I'm sure it does. (7/19/04)

Mr. Joseph admits to a certain degree of cynicism due in part to the fact that he hears all the bad stuff that students are comfortable discussing with him but about which they will not approach their instructors. However, if his perception of the problem is skewed, then the University's perception must be equally skewed and will remain so until Aboriginal students feel the administration is willing to hear their complaints and take action on them. As it stands, students either stay quiet about the problems they encounter, nursing their disillusionment, or they spend so much energy in fruitless battle they retire from the institution, exhausted and disheartened. Mr. Joseph still feels the University offers the best opportunity for a first class education and it will improve as stakeholders continue to agitate for change and First Nations students learn how to extract what they need from the institution: "If you can navigate the bureaucracy at UBC, you can navigate the bureaucracy anywhere" (7/19/04).

As for supportive faculty as a factor that enhances First Nations students' educational experience and promotes student success, Mr. Joseph empathized with instructors regarding the myriad expectations they must fill and the risk that is represented by choosing to be an agent of change.

They've got the expectations of the University, the students, their colleagues, how to create space for this type of learning. If you stick your head out too many times you are going to take a hit and that hit can be detrimental to your life's work. You spend
10 years getting a Ph.D. and then you take a risk by trying to introduce something new and get slapped. (7/19/04)

Mr. Joseph believes the First Nations House of Learning can support First Nations students through providing a community and opportunities to gather together, network and share the experiences they encounter at the University, but these issues need to be dealt with in the Departments and in the classrooms. In addition to the House of Learning, Mr. Joseph noted off-campus resources such as the Vancouver Friendship Centre, or areas of Vancouver that boast a First Nations population. These neighbourhoods, Commercial Drive for instance, are considered good places to live because, “even though you may not know them...it's just nice to see another Indian sometimes” (7/19/04). The most important resource remains family and this, unfortunately, is one that many First Nations students are separated from by great distance, sometimes for the first time in their lives. The House of Learning, although intended as a 'home away from home', can not replace a sense of family, nor can it reflect the enormous range of diversity among Aboriginal peoples. It is maintained as a welcoming place but due to the fact that it is on Musqueam traditional territory and the majority of First Nations students at UBC are from British Columbia, most of the ceremonies tend to reflect a west coast pattern. Mr. Joseph also acknowledged the problems inherent in including a religious or ceremonial aspect. Many First Nations faiths and traditions are foreign to each other and some are diametrically opposed. How can one building represent such diversity? What Mr. Joseph wishes to avoid is having the First Nations House of Learning become a dumping ground for every issue related to Aboriginal students. He feels it is the responsibility of the University to provide services for minority students in all Faculties and all service departments so that student issues are dealt with where they originate. In addition, Mr. Joseph believes that discussion groups and workshops to assist instructors to become more sensitive and compassionate towards the diverse student population, also should originate within the Faculties.

So I'm sort of stepping away from the Longhouse providing that service because one of the challenges we face is, we've got this beautiful building so the optics are good, but I think if the University wants to change they have to look inside of themselves and see where they can make change, not only as administrators and the powers that be but as an institution, look at themselves and do self-reflection and say, you know
what, we all have to make this change. They can make it within the Faculties specifically or within the University or within Departments, and not just for First Nations, for everybody...I am encouraged to see throughout the campus now that a lot of administrators are taking the initiative on their own behalf and saying, you know what, this has to change. And they are working towards it. They ask us for help and we can provide support in the way that we can. We are a very small unit with very small resources and we can provide some guidance but overall, I think if you want change it will have to be internal. It has to be higher on the agenda I guess.

(7/19/04)

Summary of Interviews with Administrators

My interviews with Dr. Kesler and Mr. Joseph confirmed beyond a doubt that racism continues to be a barrier to higher education for First Nations students, in spite of the best efforts of instructors. It was also made clear that First Nations students are more likely to bring issues of racism embedded in the curriculum to an administrator whom they see as sympathetic; someone not attached to an academic department and someone they know will be able to empathize with their experiences. The most obvious choice for students now is a Native advisor in the First Nations House of Learning. The immediate problem is there are too few advising staff appointed to the house of learning and relegating First Nations issues to the house of learning is contrary to the ideal of globalizing such services to the entire university. There need to be sufficient numbers of Native counselors in the Student Counseling and Student Health units as well as Native advisors in each Faculty Advising office. While there are now two Native advisors cross appointed with Arts Academic Advising and the First Nations Studies Program, there is no formal relationship or process by which Advisors in the First Nations House of Learning, Student Services, or in Arts Academic Advising Services, can communicate to Department Heads or instructors, the issues brought forward by Aboriginal Students. The scenario described by Dr. Kesler in which he approached the Department of History and was met with full cooperation can only occur when there are people in place who willingly engage in such a relationship. The relationship between units is built informally between individuals and can be politically precarious. Even when a strong connection is created, it lasts only until that individual moves on and the process must begin anew. As advisors we are directed to approach other units cautiously and, in some cases, not at all due to the potential political fallout. A
formal process would need to be established by the University administration with the expectation that units work together to resolve issues brought forward by students. This would ensure that Department Heads and instructors would hear of the ongoing problems and barriers encountered by First Nations students. Ultimately, the University needs to make the change at a systemic level by committing the necessary resources to structural support of anti-racist pedagogy and of First Nations students.
CHAPTER V

WHAT IS BEING DONE
AND WHAT COULD BE DONE DIFFERENTLY
(summarized from the interview data)

The results of the interviews conducted often ranged well beyond the mandate of this study. However, I have attempted to treat only the information gathered that is relevant to the research questions. While some of the data has to do with teaching and teaching resources, this goes to the fact that supportive faculty comprise one of the elements that have been found to help First Nations students succeed at university. If excellent teaching is not encouraged, supported, valued and acknowledged by the University, it becomes less likely that First Nations students, and all other students, will encounter supportive, approachable faculty who create an engaging and challenging learning environment where it is safe for students to participate fully.

It is not enough to create a program dedicated to First Nations students or to provide a physical meeting space. Change at the systemic level requires that the University acknowledge the unique challenges faced by Aboriginal students and commit the resources necessary to provide systemic support for an anti-racist pedagogical philosophy to be woven throughout the campus community. Part of this support structure would involve expanding the professional development opportunities offered to instructors to include cross-cultural communication and awareness, anti-racist pedagogical techniques, and understanding of ways of knowing other than Western or Eurocentric. These elements will help to enable excellent teaching but real change will not happen without an alteration in institutional attitude. The participants in this study have provided many suggestions for how to achieve such a shift. These changes would benefit all stakeholders, including First Nations students and others faced with the cultural inequity of a Eurocentric institution. The following discussion summarizes the main points that unfolded during this study.
The Participants

As was noted earlier, these instructors were chosen as participants more because of their reputations among their colleagues as excellent teachers, than for their rank. They have in common a passion for teaching although they admit it is not always enjoyable. They also exhibit compassion and caring toward their students and an attitude of responsibility to provide the best they have to offer in an effort to produce a sensitive, capable graduate.

These instructors, whether new to the field or close to retirement, share an understanding of the inequities inherent in a Eurocentric institution. They employ many of the same techniques in their classrooms in an effort to create equity. The main difference found between tenured and untenured professors was the stress level they experience, particularly around confidence in their own abilities as teachers and in taking risks in the classroom by employing new techniques or materials. Although the more experienced instructors indicated a sense that they were able to intuit how a class was responding before things got out of control, they too felt there was always more to learn about teaching. All the participants were interested in more information on cultural diversity, anti-racist pedagogy and First Nations pedagogy, as well as improving the attractiveness of higher education for First Nations students. Additionally, instructors want the University to commit to enabling excellent teaching by placing equal value on teaching ability during the tenure and merit review processes and allocating more resources for teaching enhancements such as guest speakers, films and teaching assistants. This would represent to instructors an acknowledgement that excellent teaching is fundamental to the success of the University.

Ethnicity of Instructors

No difference was found between techniques used by white and non-white instructors in treating materials with embedded racism. While it is true that instructors of colour will have different experiences than white instructors, this topic exceeds the scope of this study and did not come up in the interviews to any significant degree. The non-white instructors interviewed did not feel they had experienced any barriers at UBC due to their skin colour or cultural background.
It was agreed by all instructors interviewed that it is important to have faculty of colour in order to reflect the diversity of the student population. For First Nations students studying First Nations topics, it is critical that they encounter a familiar voice and perspective in their courses; if not through a First Nations instructor then through First Nations scholarly materials and guest speakers. In the case of white faculty teaching First Nations topics to Aboriginal students, it was agreed that one must avoid pontificating and recognize the perspective brought to the class by the students. First Nations students are greatly troubled when they must passively listen to an outsider expound on their own history and traditions as if the outsider were the expert on something they may know less about than their students. Even more hurtful for First Nations students is listening to the expert treat their belief systems and traditions as if they were myth and secondary to the Eurocentric and Western ways of knowing. Training needs to be provided to sensitize instructors to these issues and rewarding excellent teaching would make committing to such improvement worthwhile for faculty members.

**Techniques for Dealing with Racism**

All instructors interviewed select their own course materials but they all acknowledge that racism is embedded in a variety of materials including primary sources such as records and correspondence of colonists, as well as contemporary documents like text books and journal articles. Because these materials are not going to change it is necessary for instructors to know how to present them within an anti-racist pedagogy.

While some instructors initially said they carefully avoid materials with embedded racism, they had to admit this was not possible and that it was still necessary to treat materials as potentially offensive. They indicated that sometimes it is surprising what students will find offensive and so it is important to contextualize each piece before providing it to the students. It can also be surprising which students are offended. Not all First Nations students are fragile in this context. Many are already experienced in dealing with racism and are prepared to encounter it at any turn. Sometimes it will be students from the dominant society who are shocked and dismayed by the course content and react with guilt, or disbelief, or defensiveness. Often instructors will purposely provide materials that contain embedded racism, specifically to educate students on how to identify it and deconstruct it, as well as to demonstrate how First Nations people were and often still are portrayed. In order for them to be able to engage with the
material and get past their initial reactions, all students need to be instructed on how to contextualize, to question who wrote the piece, where the author is located, what was the purpose of it, and what can be learned from it.

The anti-racist pedagogy practiced by these instructors recognizes racism, sexism, and classism as the by-products of a dominant society. By implementing this pedagogy these instructors seek to create awareness and equity by revealing the skewed power structure at play in institutions of higher education, through critical understanding and deconstruction of course materials, as well as inclusion of First Nations topics and perspectives. This includes permitting First Nations students to share their experience and perspective when they are willing to do so, using comparative techniques to explain the differences between First Nations perspectives and non-Aboriginal perspectives, and above all, managing the polarity brought to the class by a diverse student population. The latter can be done by stating an expectation at the beginning of a course that each participant is responsible for maintaining a safe, respectful environment and then modeling the desired behaviour. Instructors need to do more than pay lip service to a safe environment. They must be prepared to hear from students, not as a challenge to their authority, but as an opportunity to deepen the learning of the class, or expand their own understanding.

Reverse Discrimination

A cautionary note introduced by several participants was to be aware of the potential for reverse discrimination in the form of romanticizing First Nations peoples and cultures in the vein of the “noble savage”, inherently spiritual “children of the earth”, or “proud warriors”. While these poeticisms may be more flattering than the usual stereotypes, they still reduce people to cartoon images and create barriers to relating and communicating with each other as fellow human beings. Somewhat related to romanticizing is the phenomenon of victimhood. Several participants complained that text books regularly itemize the woes afflicting First Nations communities from the time of first contact to the present but do not tend to discuss First Nations topics in terms of active resistance or even complicity. There is a failure to acknowledge First Nations peoples throughout the history of North America as active agents in the creation of their own reality. Although they have been faced with a foreign invasion force that initially partnered with them in matters of survival and trade which then attempted to erase or absorb them (Adams, 1994), all the tactics brought to bear upon First Nations communities, from conventional warfare
to systematic undermining of their social and cultural fabric, have failed to eliminate the Aboriginal population. Does this not speak to a certain quality of resistance? Also pointed out by three of the instructors interviewed was the fact that First Nations people have historically engaged with the dominant culture in a cooperative and even supportive manner. Early settlers depended upon Natives to aid their own survival, for guides, for labour, and for trade. Many First Nations people embraced the new religions brought by colonists and of great interest to them was the opportunity for their children to obtain a “white” education. The intention was for Aboriginal children to receive an education that was equal to that provided to European children so that they could effectively compete with the newcomers, who were obviously here to stay. Unfortunately that is one of many commitments that were not lived up to by the various governments of Canada (Burns, 2001), and to this day First Nations communities struggle to obtain an equal education for their children. In this area too, great agency is being exercised as communities are taking control of their children’s education and introducing relevant curriculum and First Nations pedagogy into the primary grades (Barman et al., 1987; Battiste & Barman, 1995; Frideres & Gadacz, 2001; Hampton, 1995; Kehoe & Echols, 1994; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Swan, 1998). Similarly, each Aboriginal student who successfully navigates the bureaucracy of institutions of higher education and emerges with a degree, as well as his/her identity intact, has demonstrated an act of rebellion. First Nations university students encounter racism in its most insidious form, covert and institutionalized, and if they choose to remain and complete their program they either lose something of themselves or they find a way to take the education offered and bend it to their own will and way of knowing. Instructors should be aware of the fact that Aboriginal students must process their education through a cultural filter in order to keep their education in one hand and their cultural identity in the other, to paraphrase Mr. Joseph. It is an additional effort not required by majority students and one made easier by supportive, understanding faculty.

**Confronting White Privilege & Power**

Whether they recognize it as such or not, these instructors implement elements of anti-racist pedagogy which tend to treat course materials in such a way that historical trends are examined closely, resulting in identification of racist policies and attitudes of modern society. This is often a shocking new way for majority students to see their world, which up to that point, has perhaps been free of any hint of inequality for them. So while these instructors do not have
many incidents to report of First Nations students being traumatized by racism embedded in the curriculum, they did report a regular occurrence of majority students being confronted by a sense of destabilization. It may be they are uncomfortable with the idea that they benefit from privilege, or they feel they are being personally accused of being racist or oppressive. Sometimes they can not accept the idea that racism exists in Canada and that any “special” regulation or policy intended to benefit First Nations is actually unfair, rather than an attempt at recompense. Often majority students who are feeling this discomfort will make inappropriate, verging on racist, comments in the classroom and it is a delicate operation for an instructor to treat these incidents as “teaching moments”. Depending upon how agitated the speaker is it may be necessary to deal with them in an oblique way rather than challenging them outright and inflaming the situation. Instructors describe walking the class through the historical context so that students can see that the foundation of compensatory policies rests on the great losses incurred by First Nations communities. They take pains to avoid silencing students, but instead, encourage them to step out of their entrenched positions and look at the facts and materials critically; to get past being personally offended and try a new way of looking at the issues. Working from a foundation rooted in the elements that initially formed the Nation provides a mechanism for following those elements, such as colonialism and government policy, through to the present to see how they have shaped current policies and laws.

Using One’s Self as the Subject

To avoid embodying students in the role of being a representative of a particular group, whether marginalized or privileged, these instructors use themselves as the example. They may be white instructors who can talk about their sense of privilege or they may be instructors of colour who can discuss their experience of being a minority or their anger at the inequality of our society.

The same techniques are described by instructors who find Aboriginal students confronted with the notion that Natives exercised agency in their dealings with colonists. If this idea collides with a strongly held belief that the relationship between Natives and colonizers was one entirely of victim and victimizer, it can be difficult for the students to hear and they need to be walked through the historical context in much the same fashion. Again, the use of First
Nations voice in the form of the instructor or scholarly works and guest speakers is helpful in convincing Aboriginal students to step out of this entrenched position.

Learning to Learn

Instructors also find a pronounced difference between junior level students and senior level students in their ability to implement critical thinking and to absorb information without becoming personally offended. It is due to the greater level of sophistication that a student will have obtained after a couple of years of university, that they are more capable of accepting information, regardless of how different it is from their earlier understanding of the world. In many cases instructors have admitted they prefer teaching senior level classes because of this and the fact that having more experienced students permits the instructor to pursue more challenging and interesting lines of inquiry than the rudiments of explaining how to think critically, how to deconstruct materials, attitudes and ideas. Many instructors find it is more exciting to have a classroom of students who are able to follow them in their speed of understanding and their enthusiasm for discovery. On the other hand, many senior instructors indicate they love teaching the introductory classes and see it as an opportunity to provide the foundation of how to learn that students may then carry with them through the rest of their degree and the rest of their lives.

The Silent Minority

Although the participants in this study had few, if any, incidents of First Nations students reporting being traumatized or upset by the content of their courses or the classroom environment, several of them indicated that they cannot be sure this is because it does not happen often or if it is because First Nations students do not come forward to complain. It is reasonable to assume that majority students have a greater sense of comfort and belonging in a Eurocentric institution and so will be more likely than minority students to complain when they are unhappy. It has also been shown in the literature that First Nations students often choose to ignore racism rather than spend all their time and energy fighting each racist encounter or educating their instructors or fellow students (Te Hennepe, 1992). The participants also agreed that it is not possible for them to identify students who may be more vulnerable to the effects of racism embedded in the curriculum or in the classroom. Given these facts, these instructors feel the best they can do is remain vigilant in their deployment of anti-racist pedagogical techniques, their
inclusion of First Nations voice and perspective, and their sensitivity to the students in their classrooms, and the fact that students’ racial identity is not always visually obvious.

Classroom Management

Some of the basic methods of classroom management can be learned or reviewed at the Centre for Teaching & Academic Growth (TAG) instructional skills workshops. TAG offers workshops which focus on teaching practice and theory application which are helpful in dealing with the anonymity of large classes and the potential therein of insensitive comments or debates degenerating into arguments. For instance, instructors have confirmed that breaking a large class into small discussion groups forces students to speak to each other, face to face, thereby humanizing the encounter and bringing into play the social responsibility of treating each other with respect. One is less likely to be disrespectful to a classmate than to a large, anonymous group, and more likely to engage in communication. What seemed most significant, however, was the caring that these instructors brought to their classrooms. They look at their students. They make eye contact. They attempt to learn their students’ names, all 150 of them in some cases. These instructors are approachable, compassionate people who worry about providing an excellent education. They are constantly thinking about how to present material, how to impart ideas, theories, concepts. When the class is over they contemplate what went well and what could have been better and they seek improvement by discussing these issues with their colleagues, by creating scholarly communities, by participating in continuing education. They refer to it as polishing their craft and strongly believe there is always room for improvement. They are equally demanding of their students and expect them to be knowledge producers as well as consumers. They provide the tools and information and they expect their students to respond with enthusiasm and creativity. When their students rise to the challenge it is because they are stimulated by the environment created by the instructors.

While these issues may seem confrontational to a beginning instructor and the techniques necessary to manage them complex and difficult to undertake, the more experienced of these participants found that over time their teaching methods evolved to the point that the techniques are no longer contraptions used at appropriate moments, but are unified in the attitude and conduct of the instructor. It becomes a way of knowing and being that translates into a smooth handling of classroom dynamics.
However, even the best instructors will encounter obstacles that bring the locomotive of education to a halt. Occasionally students are so entrenched in their attitudes, opinions, and beliefs that they are unable to analyze the course materials or unwilling to consider the existence of racism or, conversely, are unwilling or unable to engage with hurtful materials even when contextualized. Occasionally even the most experienced instructor will have a classroom discussion rage out of control due to heated debate among extremely polarized students. Sometimes students who can not hear past their own assumptions, or who are unfamiliar with irony or the application of theoretical concepts, will misinterpret what the instructor has said, taking the opposite meaning or understanding theory as truth. In these cases it can be beneficial to send the whole class for a break and regroup one’s energy, but sometimes an instructor leaves the classroom feeling defeated, until the next class where things seem to work perfectly.

**The Risks of Incorporating Anti-racist Pedagogy**

It was found in the review of literature that instructors who make a commitment to anti-racist pedagogy often experience a backlash from white students who resent the implication of privilege; from students of colour who are uncomfortable being put in the spotlight, having survived thus far by remaining silent; from colleagues and administrators who prefer the comfort of the status quo; and from the institution that dislikes change. While the instructors interviewed certainly experienced resentment on the part of some white students, they did not report backlash from Aboriginal students or their colleagues or the University. What they did comment on was reluctance on the part of some of their colleagues to participate with them in applying anti-racist pedagogical techniques. If more instructors are to be encouraged to take on these inherent risks, it will be necessary for the University to adopt a commitment to the systemic support of anti-racist pedagogy.

**Resources**

Most of the instructors interviewed rely on colleagues for feedback on teaching challenges, whether through a loosely formed academic community or formal and informal mentoring. While there is a formal mentoring system in place in the Department of Anthropology & Sociology, most of the mentoring and community building that occurs is informal and self generated. Faculty members seek out connections with colleagues whose work
Yes mentoring I think I try to associate myself with particular people who have a really positive influence and I like their work and...I know I have lot to learn from them. So I look for opportunities to work with people and I invite them to participate in communities I have. I really take the opportunity to learn from them. I create it myself. (04: 5/6/04)

While time is an extremely limited commodity and instructors barely have enough to dedicate to excellent teaching, research and writing, some have attended TAG (Centre for Teaching & Academic Growth) workshops. The workshops can be effective for new instructors with reference to basic classroom techniques, but race and other important issues that emerge in the classroom are not addressed in this venue which maintains a colour-blind attitude.

I have looked into the TAG workshops for lots of things about teaching effectively and I'm not aware of any clear resources for dealing with curriculum content or these sorts of issues that come up in a class. (01: 5/10/04)

There is the TAG Centre and there are a lot of good things and effective teaching practices but it's always kind of race, gender and class blind stuff...There is an interesting process driving this, that is, how do we deliver an educational service in an effective and efficient way. Whereas, I would like to see, how do we teach people to learn in a way that meets their particular learning needs while we get across the point that...we see as being critical. (06: 4/13/04)

Other resources mentioned included the First Nations House of Learning; the Writing Centre; the Disability Resource Centre; the libraries; First Nations Elders as guest speakers or mentors; First Nations students who bring a different perspective to the classroom; the Museum of Anthropology; and personal experiences that cause one to reflect on teaching practices.
One of the things I am able to do of course in my work is go and be with a lot of First Nations Elders...and what the Elders are doing is really teaching so you are seeing kind of a different style. They want to talk about what they think are important issues and what their practices are. They have a different kind of textual tradition. We have traditions here of using sources like journal articles and peer reviewed articles and so on, and of course they don't have the same kind of written resources there but there is a certain body of knowledge and ways of talking about things and what's important and how people are going to learn about that. It's interesting to see what they have to say too. (07: 5/18/04)

We've also got the connection to the museum. That is an incredible resource for us. I teach the debates around repatriation and cultural appropriation all the time in my classes. It's sort of a perfect example, in some ways, of the tensions around stolen goods and contextualization or lack there of, and ownership and all those incredibly rich and important debates that are percolating and bubbling over there and have been pushed by First Nations outside of the museum for decades. (09: 6/4/04)

Teaching takes effort to learn...I arrived here being a very competent researcher, an effective writer, and as a teacher, no skills. Interest, excitement, possibility, but without the skills. I think I was fortunate there was a mentoring structure here, but also I actually attribute most of my interest in teaching to my son's learning disabilities and the different needs my children had in school. Coming to terms with those experiences made me think about how I taught, how I teach and what I try to do in the classroom. (06: 4/13/04)

The participants indicated they would continue to seek their own mentors and community connections but they would welcome training or discussion groups on First Nations pedagogy and perspective, cultural diversity and anti-racist pedagogy, and how to deal with racism in the classroom. It was generally felt that increasing the range of offerings through TAG would be the logical way to provide this kind of institutional support. Clearly one of the strongest resources for instructors at UBC is and will continue to be other instructors and the unique blend of training and personal experience each one brings to the University.
I guess the best place to put those would be in things like TAG where you have these workshops on how to teach. Because part of what I’m talking about, I think, more than anything is about developing good teaching practices. Being empathetic and recognizing the issues that all students bring to the class. What you want to create is a contextual environment in which everyone can learn. (06: 4/13/04)

I think it (TAG) could be better...I think they could have involvement of more faculty of colour and First Nations faculty who would help those of us who are on this lifelong learning path of anti-racist consciousness, about how we could be better anti-racist teachers. Definitely if they had more of those kinds of seminars and workshops, I’d be there, but I haven’t seen any... I would be signing up. I have an incredible amount still to learn and it would be through those dialogues with faculty of colour and First Nations faculty and First Nations experts leading the seminars that I would become a better teacher. No question. And a better learner. (09: 6/4/04)

I’ve told the TAG people, I want more seminars on actual teaching...there is a lot devoted to computer stuff, like Web CT and all that, and I feel like that’s helpful but not really what I need. I need more strategies for in the classroom to make it better. (10: 6/14/04)

Of particular interest is this suggestion that areas requiring great sensitivity should be taught by instructors with proven experience, or mentoring must be provided to junior instructors before they take on such tasks.

I think mentoring would also be particularly for the kind of things you are interested in, some of the areas of what is taught in the University are probably fairly ‘safe’, I mean if you are just teaching a technical subject like economics. I think some subjects may not be very safe, political science, history, gendered history, Native/First Nations history, social history. There are a lot of areas where you can get walking on some pretty touchy ground and I think probably a little mentoring for people there [would help]. I know we had some problems here when I was on leave
for three years. We had some sessionals come in and teach my classes that students had been fairly happy with and had some serious problems. It's an area that requires a combination of experience and sensitivity. (08: 5/13/04)

First Nations students and their instructors should be aware of resources available in the wider community such as First Nations Elders, First Nations Community Centres such as the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre and the Vancouver Aboriginal Family and Child Services Society, and the importance of family and cultural identity to Aboriginal students. On campus there is the First Nations House of Learning, the Museum of Anthropology, visiting scholars, and various events that promote academic community. Students need to regard their instructors as resources and make a point of meeting with them and discussing the issues of Eurocentrism and systemic racism. Dr. Kesler explained beautifully the process by which dominant groups learn how to respond to new perspectives (see p. 93).

Resources for instructors wishing to enhance their craft include the above as well as the TAG workshops, mentors, academic community building, their own personal experiences of education and family, and the students themselves. Instructors can derive much more feedback than can be provided on an evaluation form if they ask their students to talk to them and create an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable in doing so.

**Desired Resources**

The instructors interviewed suggested TAG workshops be developed on cultural diversity, anti-racist pedagogy, First Nations pedagogy and perspectives, and that inexperienced instructors hired to teach sensitive topics receive special sensitivity training or practical training on how to present non-European topics from a non-European perspective. On the subject of hiring, they would like to see a lot more of it and with greater diversity to reflect the reality of the student population and the curriculum. Along with increased diversity among faculty there should be greater structural support for faculty of colour and anti-racist pedagogy, and structural support for excellent teaching in the form of smaller class sizes, more teaching assistants, and merit pay for teaching performance, not just research and publishing. More funds need to be allocated to teaching enhancements such as films, guest speakers, special events and community
development through panels, visiting scholars and greater communication and cooperation among different units of the University.

**Recommendations**

It is clear that instructors and administrators pay a great deal of attention to the evaluations completed by students at the end of classes. Do First Nations students complete these evaluations? If instructors are unconsciously communicating an attitude of superiority over First Nations perspectives, they will not have an opportunity to consider this unless they read about it or hear about it. It is recommended that First Nations students take the opportunity to communicate their feelings via the course evaluations even though they may believe the process to be futile. The evaluations are actually read and acted on by the Heads of the Departments. They use them to determine who among the instructors deserves a teaching award and who needs to be sent for training at the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG).

The instructors interviewed indicated interest in obtaining greater understanding of First Nations pedagogy and perspectives and several suggested workshops in collaboration with the First Nations House of Learning. Workshops offered through TAG in conjunction with the House of Learning could provide an opportunity to educate instructors on these topics as well as how First Nations students perceive the treatment of Aboriginal ways of knowing in the classroom, but for this information to get back to instructors, First Nations students need to report their experiences to a representative they are comfortable with and request that person take up the issue with the Department Head. As Dr. Kesler noted, it takes persistence to effect change. It is recommended that the University increase the availability of First Nations Advisors and Counselors and create a formal connection between advising and counseling services on campus, with Department Heads to ensure that Departments are made aware of these issues and act to resolve them.

With effective communication and cooperation among units, workshops and discussion groups could be designed to address these issues and enlighten instructors and administrators on the special circumstances and challenges faced by First Nations and other marginalized students at UBC. It is recommended that TAG, in conjunction with the First Nations House of Learning and the First Nations Studies Program, create workshops that would enhance understanding of
First Nations perspectives and application of anti-racist pedagogy, and that these workshops be mandatory for instructors teaching First Nations topics.

The participants indicated the reduced number of faculty coupled with the increased workload creates the impression that instructors are expected to do more with less. They feel that in addition to restructuring the way excellent teaching is valued and rewarded in relation to research and publication, additional hiring is required, particularly hiring of faculty which reflects the diversity of the student body at UBC. It is recommended that the Faculty of Arts equalize excellent teaching with publication and research in the tenure and rewards process in ways that are tangible to instructors and expand the hiring process with specific attention to diversity.

Anti-racist pedagogy is an effective strategy in confronting racism in higher education because it is instrumental in demystifying the interface between dominant and minority cultures. Anti-racist education operates on the premise that racism resides in policies and power structures as well as systems of belief and it encourages analysis of racism on all levels, personal, institutional, state, and international. The intention of anti-racist education is to perpetuate a decolonizing process and create change in existing power structures. Anti-racist education is not a separate topic but must be presented as an aspect of all education to raise group and individual consciousness and to develop critical, political thinking. Higher education is one of the most well-developed areas of anti-racist critique, particularly in the critique of the racist nature of existing education practice and the proposal for new forms of pedagogy that facilitate students' critical thinking skills. However, although universities are arenas of debate and critical thought processes, institutional change is known to happen slowly and to be met with great resistance from within. The risks to instructors who attempt to implement anti-racist pedagogy include rebellion of majority students, hostility among colleagues, and endangerment of promotion opportunities as part of the backlash against anti-racist pedagogy. There is a need to create, within the university structure, a space of opposition for people of colour in order to safely critique normative whiteness. Universities have the power and responsibility to teach justice and moral vision or risk contributing to an unjust society. Failure of institutions to implement formal anti-racist education is often due to a lack of a distinctive anti-racist pedagogy and an absence of clear recommendations for classroom practices. The University administration can create a more
supportive atmosphere by making it clear in word and deed that racism will not be supported or tolerated. The University community should be more capable than most in creating appropriate vehicles for change, such as articulate discourse and a commitment to anti-racist education. It is recommended that the University of British Columbia officially adopt an anti-racist theoretical stance.

In Conclusion

When I began this research project I was aware of the problem of racism embedded in the curriculum and that it presented a barrier for Aboriginal students in the completion of their undergraduate program. However, I held a naïve, multi-culturist notion that racism is borne of ignorance and that it could be attenuated through education and experience. My research has enlightened me to the complex matrices that comprise racism and led me to recognize that racism is a sophisticated mechanism for manipulating populations and creating and maintaining inequitable power structures. Racism is a far greater problem than could be maintained solely by an ignorant population and I am aware that all the recommendations that have arisen from this study will do little to alter the reality faced by minority students. However, like the “butterfly effect”\(^1\), everything the University administration does to support its instructors in the quest for excellence in teaching will promote the enablement of excellent graduates who are sensitive global citizens. The university needs to make a strong and visible commitment to the structural support of anti-racism and demonstrate to minority students that they are valued and their presence is desired, not just for “good optics” but for the rich contribution diversity provides to us all.

\(^1\) A tiny difference in initial conditions becomes amplified by evolution, until the trajectory evolves quite separately from one without the difference. The amplification is exponential, the difference grows very rapidly and after a surprisingly short time the two solutions behave quite differently. This is an illustration of the butterfly effect - the idea in meteorology that the flapping of a butterfly’s wing will create a disturbance that in the chaotic motion of the atmosphere will become amplified eventually to change the large scale atmospheric motion, so that the long term behavior becomes impossible to forecast.

The "Butterfly Effect" is often ascribed to Lorenz. In a talk at the December 1972 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C. - the title of his talk was: Predictability: Does the Flap of a Butterfly’s Wings in Brazil set off a Tornado in Texas?
Suggestions For Further Research

Because I was unable to discuss these issues with the students themselves, I could not explore students’ perceptions of their experience in a classroom where anti-racist pedagogy is practiced, versus a classroom where it is not. Further research is required to determine students’ responses to anti-racist pedagogy.

Although the Equity Office was not considered as a resource by the participants in this study, it may be an effective resource for students (see Appendix C). Further research on the efficacy of the Equity Office is suggested to determine if students feel comfortable using that resource or find the processes too bureaucratic.

The workshops and programs offered by the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth were considered somewhat useful by the participants but also limited in their offerings and colour blind in their approach. Further research is recommended into the TAG offerings and how these could be improved and expanded to include anti-racist pedagogy, cultural diversity sensitivity and minority student issues.
REFERENCES


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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Definition of Terms

Race: [French, from Old French, from Old Italian razza, race, lineage.]

Usage Note: The notion of race is nearly as problematic from a scientific point of view as it is from a social one. European physical anthropologists of the 17th and 18th centuries proposed various systems of racial classifications based on such observable characteristics as skin color, hair type, body proportions, and skull measurements, essentially codifying the perceived differences among broad geographic populations of humans. The traditional terms for these populations Caucasoid (or Caucasian), Mongoloid, Negroid, and in some systems Australoid are now controversial in both technical and non-technical usage, and in some cases they may well be considered offensive. (Caucasian does retain a certain currency in American English, but it is used almost exclusively to mean “white” or “European” rather than “belonging to the Caucasian race,” a group that includes a variety of peoples generally categorized as nonwhite.) The biological aspect of race is described today not in observable physical features but rather in such genetic characteristics as blood groups and metabolic processes, and the groupings indicated by these factors seldom coincide very neatly with those put forward by earlier physical anthropologists. Citing this and other points such as the fact that a person who is considered black in one society might be non-black in another many cultural anthropologists now consider race to be more a social or mental construct than an objective biological fact. (Dictionary.com, 2005)
Where I have used the term “race” in this document I have enclosed it in quotation marks to indicate it is a problematic term that refers to a social construct that should be eliminated as a means for categorizing humans but the use of which seems strangely necessary in the struggle against racism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racism:</td>
<td>the belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others; discrimination or prejudice based on race (Dictionary.com, 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polygenism:</td>
<td>refers to the doctrine that different races sprang from different original ancestors resulting in varying levels of human quality and ability (Dictionary.com, 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-racism:</td>
<td>an anti-essentialist political force that acts to denaturalize both ethnic and racial allegiances and categories, and challenge stereotyping, homogenization and naturalization of identity (Bonnett, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Racism:</td>
<td>racism against certain groups of people, structured into political and social institutions, either deliberately or inadvertently, to limit their rights; it encompasses embedded racism, a term used in this document to refer to racism deliberately or inadvertently embedded in the curriculum encountered by students and the assumptions governing or underpinning the knowledge presented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| First Nations:        | *First Nation* is essentially a political term, promoted from within the indigenous community as a substitute for *band* in referring to any of the numerous aboriginal groups formally recognized by the Canadian government under the federal Indian Act of 1876. Unlike *Native American*, it is not a comprehensive term for all indigenous
peoples of the Americas or even of Canada, and while it is often used loosely in referring to Indian groups or communities other than those specified in the 1876 Act, it specifically does not include non-Indian peoples such as the Inuit or the Métis. Although each recognized band or community is a First Nation, the term is more commonly used in the plural with a general collective sense, as in a history of the First Nations in eastern Canada or a program designed for First Nations youth. There is no related form for an individual who is a member of a First Nation; officially, such a person is known as a status Indian.

(Dictionary.com)

At UBC First Nations is intended to be inclusive and refers to all Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people is a term defined in the Constitution Act of 1982 that refers to all Indigenous people in Canada, including Indians (status and non-status), Métis, and Inuit people. In conducting my own research I have found the term First Nations used interchangeably with Indian, Aboriginal, Native and Indigenous and have done likewise in this document with the utmost respect for each of these terms. The various meanings placed on each of these terms by the many stakeholders are numerous, therefore I have chosen to simplify this issue by using First Nations to refer to any person who self-identifies as a member of a group that is Indigenous to North America because there are many nations that were here first, before European contact. While this study is specific to First Nations students as I have defined my use of the term, this is so only because of the limitations that must be placed on such research and I believe that this research is relevant to any person who experiences racism within an institution of higher learning. I leave it to individual people to choose how to define themselves and to determine if this research is relevant to their experience.
White: belonging to society’s dominant racial groups which determine the norm that all are expected to adhere to; this does not just mean fair-skinned because racial identity is context specific

First Nations pedagogy: interactive and participatory education involving a cognitive search for learning processes that can be internalized, allowing for time between watching and doing; both empirical (based on experience) and normative (based on social values), it embraces both circumstances and the student’s beliefs about those circumstances (Armstrong, 1987; Couture, 1985)

Anti-racist pedagogy: critical pedagogy which recognizes racism, sexism, and classism as the by-products of dominant societies; it is a pedagogy that seeks equitable resolution of skewed power structures through critical understanding, and concerted action to address inequity; addresses issues of exclusion in our curriculum, of stereotyping in our texts and teaching practices, and of discrimination in our institutions (Boudreau & Eggleston, 2002; Dei, 1996)

Grounded Theory: simultaneous data collection and comparison allows patterns to emerge and to shape the research as it continues to completion resulting in development of a theory grounded in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1997)
Appendix B

University Policy

While universities decry inequality of any kind and profess to work towards eradicating it, racism continues to be a problem on university campuses across North America (Alladin, 1996; Dua & Lawrence, 2000; Haas, 1992; Huff, 1997). Discrimination and harassment policies are written and procedures are designed to enable complaints to be lodged, accused to defend themselves, and consequences to be levied. However, the actual process can be intimidating, slow, and ultimately unsatisfying for all concerned. In many cases students who have brought forward complaints of racism or race-based harassment simply withdraw their grievance when they realize they will not be able to remain anonymous through the process, (conversation with representative of the Equity Office).

The objectives of the UBC Policy on Discrimination and Harassment are to prevent the same and to provide procedures for processing complaints, creating solutions and disciplining offenders (University of British Columbia’s Policy on Discrimination & Harassment, 2001).

The University of British Columbia is committed to providing its employees and students with the best possible environment for working and learning, an environment that allows friendship and collegiality to flourish. Every student and member of faculty and staff at the University of British Columbia has the right to study and work in an environment free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. The University therefore does not condone discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, of any kind. Indeed, the University regards discrimination and harassment as serious offenses that are subject to a wide range of disciplinary measures, including dismissal or expulsion from the University.

The University and all members of the University community share responsibility for ensuring that the work and study environment at UBC is free from discrimination and harassment. Specifically, Administrative Heads of Unit bear the primary responsibility for maintaining a study and work environment free
from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment; Administrative Heads of Unit are free to act, and should act, on this responsibility, whether or not they are in receipt of individual complaints; and the knowledge and experience of the Equity Office are available to all members of the university community. (UBC’s Policy on Discrimination & Harassment, 2001).

The University defines discrimination as “intentional or unintentional treatment for which there is no bona fide and reasonable justification” which “imposes burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on specific individuals or groups” (UBC’s Policy on Discrimination & Harassment, 2001). Systemic discrimination is defined as “policies or practices that appear neutral, but which contain unjustifiable or unreasonable barriers that lead to adverse job- or study-related consequences for members of groups protected by the B.C. Human Rights Act.” (UBC’s Policy on Discrimination & Harassment, 2001).

Whether or not the UBC Policy on Discrimination & Harassment is functioning well, is accessible to students, staff and faculty, or not, is the subject of another study, but it is interesting to note that none of the instructors interviewed mentioned it as a resource. It is unlikely that any complaints process will be satisfactory to everyone involved as it is a confrontational course of action by nature. And while the ultimate goal would be for our society to evolve to a point that discrimination and harassment policies are unnecessary, until that happens the existing mechanisms need to be put to the test and constantly evaluated for effectiveness.
Appendix C

Resources at UBC

The Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG)

TAG offers Faculty Instructional Skills Workshops which focus on teaching practice and theory application, and vehicles for connecting with other faculty such as dinner seminars and mentor luncheons. However, none of the content is specifically designed to promote anti-racist pedagogy or First Nations perspectives, or to address racism in the classroom and how to manage racism embedded in the curriculum.

The Equity Office

The Equity Office provides advice and assistance, undertakes informal resolution, arranges mediation or investigation, provides education on prevention and remediation, and publishes statistical and summary reports on complaints made. Again, none of the instructors interviewed counted the Equity Office as a resource or even mentioned it except for one: "I tried to go to the Equity Office to see if they would help me with an issue where I thought I was being put in a rather difficult and quite threatening position and their response was that it was not within their jurisdiction" (06: 4/13/04). Could the Equity Office be more accessible to instructors who feel the institutional backlash against anti-racist pedagogy?

It would be interesting to determine if students felt the complaints process to be effective or if they experienced it as cumbersome and potentially damaging. Students seen in Arts Advising are sometimes referred to the Equity Office to lodge a complaint of harassment but they express fear of reprisal if their names are known. Unless a complainant is willing to be identified, the process can go no further than the initial consultation.
Student Associations

The Alma Mater Society of UBC (AMS)

The mission of the AMS is to improve the educational, social, and personal experience of the students of UBC.

The Alma Mater Society will promote high-quality student learning. It will advocate student interests, as well as those of the University of British Columbia and post-secondary education as a whole. The Society will provide its members with diverse opportunities to become exceptional leaders. It will be flexible enough to accommodate the changing world. The AMS's priorities will be determined by its members. The Society will foster communication, both internally and externally, in order to be democratic, fair, accountable to, and accessible to its members. It will provide services students want and can use. It will cultivate unity and goodwill among its members, but will also encourage free and open debate, as well as respect for differing views. It will solve problems constructively. (AMS webpage, 2004)

While this is an admirable mission with a framework that sounds as if it could be useful to students who wish to challenge institutional racism, the mandate of the AMS is actually to advocate on behalf of students who find themselves in conflict with the University in terms of student or academic discipline. If a student feels that he/she has been treated unfairly or needs to approach the University or the AMS to resolve a conflict, the AMS Ombudsperson can assist. The Ombudsperson acts impartially, is independent of any administrative body, and provides a confidential service. Further research is required to determine if this body could be implemented in the quest for equality, inclusion and representation of minority students.
Undergraduate Student Societies

Many Departments encourage and support the establishment of Undergraduate Student Societies which establish their own mandates in consultation with their Department. These societies are able to provide a number of resources to students including events, referrals and advocacy. An interesting development generated last year by the Anthropology & Sociology Undergraduate Society was the establishment of the Outstanding Teaching Award. This non-monetary award is intended to acknowledge instructors who use innovative teaching methods, establish a rapport with students, and who initiate and participate in events and exercises outside of the classroom. The recipients of the award are instructors whom students feel have made an extraordinary effort to be available and approachable. This is a remarkable effort by undergraduate students to promote and support excellent teaching.

Arts Academic Advising Services

Arts Academic Advising offers undergraduate students assistance and guidance with academic decision making, and provides academic concession when appropriate and necessary. Of interest to First Nations students in particular is the availability of two First Nations advisors, Tanya Bob, First Nations Student Services Coordinator, and Donald Johnson, Academic Advisor, First Nations Students. Also available is the First Nations Student Services website which offers access to advising, tutoring, peer advising, orientation and other events.

Department Heads

Department Heads are the next stop for students who are having a dispute with an instructor. The Head deals with student issues that are not satisfactorily resolved at the classroom level. If the student’s complaints are not dealt with adequately at that level, the student is then referred to the appropriate Dean, usually the final stop in the quest for resolution of disputes. Department Heads are also responsible for monitoring teaching evaluations and discussing with individual instructors improvement required or acknowledging excellent performance, as well as awarding merit pay and implementing hiring practices. In addition, the Department Heads appeal for operating funds from the University Administration and then must allocate the acquired funds throughout the Department.
First Nations House of Learning

The First Nations House of Learning provides an important space for Aboriginal students and people from all cultures are welcome through its doors. Some of the services provided include counseling, childcare, the Xwi7xwa Library, and perhaps most importantly, a place to be with other students who may, regardless of the diversity of their cultural background, be having similar experiences on campus. While it is imperative that the Long House not become a dumping ground for all First Nations issues that arise on campus, it remains a valuable sanctuary and an essential element in the process of promoting visibility and inclusion of Aboriginal students at UBC.

An issue that sometimes arises is the fact that UBC and the Long House are on Musqueam traditional territory, thus prayers and ceremonies used at the Long House can seem unfamiliar to First Nations students of other cultures. Due to the diversity of First Nations cultures and languages on the West Coast, let alone across Canada and the United States, it is impossible for all cultural traditions and languages to be represented. What the staff of the Long House do provide is a safe and welcoming space for all peoples and an opportunity for Aboriginal students to be with other Aboriginal students, thereby reducing their sense of anonymity and displacement.