

**ELDERS' TEACHINGS ON INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP:  
LEADERSHIP IS A GIFT**

by

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

in

**THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**(Educational Studies)**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**April, 2006**

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## **Abstract**

This qualitative study introduces a variety of considerations to help understand ways in which Indigenous Knowledge broadens the existing dominant views of leadership. Indigenous Elders, as a source of Indigenous Knowledge provide intergenerational leadership through the sharing of their teachings, oral histories and experiences. For this study I examined the culturally relevant Indigenous leadership program that is offered within the non-credit Longhouse Leadership Program (LLP) at the First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) at the University of British Columbia (UBC), taught by Elders, cultural leaders and educators. Through the telling of oral histories, nine Elders and cultural educators who work with the FNHL community shared their views on Indigenous leadership presenting historical examples of Indigenous leadership and recommending pedagogy for the current Longhouse leadership program. Their cultural teachings are resources for Indigenous leadership pedagogy that is transformative. The Elders' teachings on Indigenous leadership are transformational because they identify and deconstruct colonial structures and support the self determined leadership goals of local communities. The teachings are: knowing the history of the land and educating others; reclaiming culture and living the teachings; culture as a support for individuals, families and communities; leadership as a gift-step forward demonstrating community responsibilities; and wholistic pedagogy all which is transformational when delivered within an anti racism education framework. These teachings are consistent with those found more generally in the academic literature, emphasizing leadership grounded in the cultural teachings that supports living Aboriginal communities and coalition building for change.

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## **Preface**

### **Fragile Freedoms**

Fragile Freedoms are the delicate balance acts played by the indian act politicians and the canadian government bureaucrats in the plush carpeted offices of the inner governmental chambers. A game that affects the original men and women who have survived unrecognized from 1492-1992. The games that continue to deny the original people the right to self determination.

Fragile Freedoms is the backlash that further denied freedoms to the warriors at Wounded Knee and Kanasatake.

Fragile Freedoms is the fragility of the paper made from the disappearing grasses of the rain forests of south america, the herb medicines of the amerikan continent, the air that we breathe, the water as it drips its final drops, our skin as it slowly blotches and disintegrates from the radiated pollutants in the air that affects this whole planet.

Fragile Freedoms is the delicate hope for the possibility of making this time forward as the beginning of healing.



**Shirley Bear (1996)**

**Kesponay**

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### Four Direction Iskwew



MacKenzie (2000)

### Knowledge Keepers

Present day opportunities may suggest that it may be my turn to lead our people on a path towards greater relief for the many social ills and systemic injustices our people face daily. These lessons of conflict resolution through leadership and consensus are shared responsibilities of we Aboriginal people. Only good can come from the renewed application of these tools in our every day lives, under the ever-loving guidance of these great men and women I am privileged to call my Ancestors. From the north bank of their traditional territory (on which they now call the Fraser River), this direct descendant of the First People of this land surveys with great pride the band of "little listeners" convened ...this Elder quietly speaks. O'Siem (p.86-7)

Mearns (2002)

As this study comes full circle I am at home during this winter solstice season with four generations of my family. The land, the river and the Muskeg Inniwak community (Swampy Cree) reconnect me to my Indigenous genealogy. I acknowledge that I am supported by my genealogy, through my dreams and my extended familial relationships. I acknowledge that I come from a family of leaders and educators so this topic of Indigenous leadership and education also connects me to my genealogy.

I reflect on the Elders transmission of knowledge through the interview process for this study. I am humbled by my learning and acknowledge with great respect the relationships with the Elders in this study and that I am responsible for my own interpretations of the stories they so generously shared with me. I will share one experience here. It is late last spring, sage and bitterroot picking season. These plant medicines are the helpers required for the annual summer ceremonial season. We drive up to the interior of BC to interview two Elders, who also happen to be our adopted parents in the traditional Indigenous way. The interview process is secondary to the seasonal work that needs to be done. First we have to go to get the sage and bitterroot on the mountainside, as the bitter root has to be cleaned right away in order to prepare the medicine properly. We set up outside where the Elders prepare to transmit their leadership knowledge to the four generations present as we prepare the medicines. The trains are the regular sounds in the background and the wind and dry mountainous desert surround us. The Elder storytellers talk to us about the local mountains. The father, the daughter and granddaughter are illustrated within the mountain ranges and are the witnesses. The stories that the mountains contain remind us to listen to our Elders. The stories, ceremonies and languages are held within the land and along with them are the Teachings.

The Teachings provide us with leadership foundations and understandings. I reflect on the series of dreams I had where I am moving towards the Sundance ceremony. I am listening to the songs as the sound informs the direction I need to go. I am confident that I will get there but worry that I am not there yet. Along the way Judge Steve Point, a Sto:lo Elder, cultural leader and the current British Columbia treaty commissioner is in a downtown eastside school

playground. We gather together as a collective to listen and see which direction the sacred songs are coming from so we can move in the right direction.

It takes all year to prepare for the ceremony. It is a way of life that expresses Indigenous ways of being in the world. For me the Sundance ceremony connects us to the land and expresses the values and collective visions for a better future. Indigenous knowledge and ways of life such as the Sundance and Mediwiwin Teachings inform both my leadership and educational roles. From my perspective, leaders are really *skabayos* or helpers who remember and enact the community values and lead or embody the ways in which the good life path is expressed. I dreamed that as a collective we followed the sacred songs. The songs express our connection to all of Creation and reflect the Teachings of the Ancestors.

## Acknowledgements



I gratefully acknowledge my family in the picture above. We come from Opaskwayak Cree Nation in Manitoba. Thank you to the Hilda Young scholarship and the Opaskwayak Education Authority for awarding me with funding. This work also acknowledges my extended family, friends and the FNHL community.

Chi meegwetch to the Elder *Ogimauhwak* in this study, the ceremonial societies and the Ancestors for the gifts of artistry, love and perseverance during times of beauty and in the face of great losses.

This work is inspired by Melody Ozawa Anankonz Young and the visions of the *Good Way Life*. My hope is that this study perpetuates the transference of cultural knowledge knowing that the integrity of the Ancestors' work is embedded in the Teachings of All My Relations.

### Mediwiwin Language Camp Prayer

Nimishoo Giin ezhi-gikeniminaan  
Gichi Manidoo, Maamawi Gichi Manidoo  
Giin gakina gegoo gigikendaan  
Giin gakina gegoo gigii-giizhitoon  
Aho! Nimishoo, ganawaabamishin  
Makakakinimigoot indizhinikaaz, gaye Amisk in doodem  
Nimishoo- Nizhaagwiwii Nidinigaas  
Ah! Gizhemandoo, zhawenimishin  
Bagideniminishin gakina gegoo ezhi-banaajichigeyaan  
Zhawenimishin  
Gizhemanidoo nimishoomis  
Zhawenimishin Mino-inenimishin  
Ni zaagi'aa Nimishoomis  
Gichi-Manidoo Zhawenimishin

Benton-Benai (1997)

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **ELDERS' TEACHINGS ON INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP: LEADERSHIP IS A GIFT**

As a person who has been involved in Indigenous politics, it is important that leadership programs be based on Indigenous cultural teachings and offer new approaches to Indigenous leadership in the future. A leadership that shifts the focus away from mainstream hierarchical leadership models and forces us to think about our roles and responsibilities in societies in a light that encourages participatory, egalitarian forms of leadership. The responsibilities of Indigenous academics are to articulate how cultural teachings can play a significant role in contributing to the building and rebuilding of communities (Rauna Kuokkanen, 2002. p.9).

#### **Introduction**

For the past forty years Indigenous education literature has indicated that Aboriginal<sup>1</sup> students require relevant cultural content and pedagogy in order to become effective change agents, educators and leaders (Alfred, 2005; Cajete, 1994; Ermine, 1998; Hawthorn, 1966; Isbister, 1998; Smith, 2000). This qualitative study explores how culture informs Indigenous leadership from the Indigenous Elders' perspectives who work at the First Nations House of Learning's Longhouse community located at the University of British Columbia.

#### **Indigenous Leadership**

The term Indigenous describes groups of people who have unique cultural expressions different from dominant or colonial groups. Sustainable connections to the land that predate colonial contact are one of the unique features of Indigeneity. Collectivist-based expressions of diverse linguistic groups are other distinguishable features. Leadership is described as a process in which people influence others to accomplish objectives by applying their particular histories, genealogies, values, beliefs, ethics and skills. Indigenous leadership demonstrates knowledge of Indigenous paradigms such as collective value orientations and facilitates the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge through language, ceremony and oral histories and stories. Indigenous leaders practice local protocols, genealogies and safe ethical

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<sup>1</sup> The terms Aboriginal, First Nations, Native, Indian and Indigenous are meant to be inclusive and describe the descendants of the original peoples in North America.

community service practices. Indigenous leaders balance inner self with in the collective's interests. Indigenous leadership consisted of development of individual human talent to provide for the basics necessities of collective survival: life, guardianship, healing, leading and teaching. In Anishnabe culture there were no central authoritarian figures. The leaders or *ogimauh* were chosen for particular projects and the council of learned Elders instructed the people on matters that ensured their survival (Johnson, 1995).

### Culture Indigenous Worldviews

The term culture is used here as the accumulated shared learning of a group based on millennia of communal expertise. Culture defines the human inter-relationships within individual and community contexts. Indigenous cultural values are the ideas about what a group identifies as important, such as inter-relatedness that extends beyond human relations, the centrality of spirituality, and the exploration of one's unique gifts via deep inward reflection (Ermine, 1995, Dumont, 1990). I am using the term culture to describe an Aboriginal worldview (paradigm) that informs our ways of thinking (epistemology), knowing (ontology) and guiding our interactions (axiology) with the world (Wilson, 2001; Steinhauer, 2002). These diverse Indigenous paradigms or Indigenous knowledge systems contribute to the field of leadership and education for all peoples. Indigenous Knowledge systems are ecologically centred and affirm the inter-relationships between people, communities and ecosystems (Nadeau, 2005).

### Community

Community is defined here as sets of relationships with shared elements specific to particular land bases and resource management practices that differ from the current colonial and nation state status. The substance of shared elements varies widely, from a situation, to interest, to lives and values. Within Aboriginal communities there are conflicting ideologies and cultural expressions yet there are particular ideologies that can define common and unifying assumptions such as the depth to which a person is linked to their own Aboriginal values and

their commitments to community service. For example An-Nee-Benham and Napier (2002) state,

wisdom and vision are attributed to leaders who consistently adhere to cultural values and maintain strong spiritual connections to the land and languages (p. 136).

### Public Education

According to Statistics Canada (2001), 4.5 percent of Aboriginal students compared to 16 percent of the general population graduate from post-secondary institutions.<sup>2</sup> Aboriginal students are under-represented in post-secondary education for a variety of historical and socio-political reasons (Ah-Nee-Benham & Napier, 2002; Bishop, 2005; Wotherspoon, 1998). This lack of representation may be attributed to a history of cultural genocide policies practiced in Canada since the 1600's (Chrisjohn, 1997; Ing, 2001; Nadeau, 2003). As a result, accurate Aboriginal cultural and historical perspectives are excluded from most Canadian education curriculum and Indigenous leadership research regarding the cultural aspects of education advocated by Indigenous education leaders remains limited (Ah-Nee-Benham, 2003; Johnson, 1997; RCAP, 1996; Storm, 2005). For Indigenous peoples, the purpose of education is to cultivate self-knowledge, foster core personal development of whole human beings and enhance leadership capacities within communities.

The Hawthorn Report (1966), the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) and Aboriginal scholarly literature advocate appropriate cultural education and pedagogy that provides students with contemporary education and effective cultural leadership skills required for working in Indigenous contexts (Bagordo, 2000; Battiste, 2000; Maenette-Benham & Napier, 2002). As it is, few post-secondary institutions provide in-depth studies of Indigenous leadership (Alfred, 1999; Begaye, 2002; McFarlane, 2000).

This study addresses this imbalance by exploring the roles that culture plays in informing the post-secondary Longhouse Leadership program offered by the First Nations House of

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen01/abor/ap\\_main.htm](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen01/abor/ap_main.htm)

Learning (FNHL) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) from the perspectives of Elders and cultural educators who work with the Indigenous community at UBC.

This study is organized into six chapters. Chapter one provides the scope, and purpose for the study while simultaneously introduces the background of the research site, the position of the researcher and outlines the theoretical framework for this study. Chapter two provides a literature review of Indigenous scholars writing on Indigenous leadership. Chapter three discusses the methodology, the data collection and data analysis. Chapter four presents a summary of the findings. Chapter five provides discussion and recommendations. Chapter six outlines the benefits and limits of the study and as well as summarizes the study.

### Culture and leadership at First Nations House of Learning:

#### Scope of the study

The purpose of this investigation is to explore how culture informs Indigenous leadership program development in the context of the Longhouse Leadership Program (LLP) and other activities offered by the First Nations House Learning's (FNHL) student services. Through interviews with nine Elders and cultural educators, with personal observations and reflections I affirmed that cultural knowledge informs Indigenous leadership at the FNHL in several ways. In this study, Indigenous cultural knowledge affirms the importance of self-knowledge and includes the knowledge of families, extended families and land relationships. This study likewise affirms that Indigenous cultural knowledge informing leadership includes collective value orientations, intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge through Elders, language, ceremony and oral histories and stories. Other cultural knowledge important for Indigenous leadership are knowledge of local protocols and histories and leaders who must demonstrate safe, ethical community service practices. Further, this study affirms that cultural knowledge enhances leadership education training at the FNHL. This study looks at culture as the continuation of diverse knowledge, beliefs and behaviours of Indigenous individuals, nations and communities while examining leadership in the FNHL contexts.

## Background

The First Nations House of Learning was established in 1987 with a mandate to ensure that university resources are made accessible to First Nations students and communities and to improve the university's ability to accommodate the First Nations community at UBC. Since 1993, FNHL has been housed within the First Nations Longhouse, an award winning building based on Coast Salish architecture that serves as a home away from home for UBC's Indigenous community. The Sty-Wet-Tan space provides teaching mechanisms that inform basic place-based knowledge and IK protocols. The Sty-Wet-Tan hall's house posts provide place-based education that reflects the diversity of Aboriginal peoples. Our Elder, Tsimlano, wanted the FNHL to reflect the diversity of Indigenous peoples through the different house posts. The house posts represent a variety of nations in what is now known as British Columbia. Providing teachings related to place based Indigenous Knowledge (IK), these house posts offer cultural stories that influence and reinforce teachings relevant for leadership. In this manner, the house posts influenced my interpretations of the Elders' stories and I will return to them later. The FNHL remains committed to heightening awareness about Aboriginal issues, promoting Indigenous leadership on campus and providing a positive environment founded on First Nations cultures and philosophies based on the Longhouse Teachings of Respect, Responsibility, Reverence and Relationship (FNHL brochure, 2003). These teaching values were derived and modified for the current context from the Kirkness and Barnhardt article entitled "The four R's in higher learning: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity and Relationship" (1991) and were identified as a result of a two-year consultation with Elders and FNHL community members. These cultural values continue to guide the work at the FNHL and provide foundational principles for the Longhouse Leadership Program and this research study.

## Longhouse Leadership Program

The Longhouse Leadership Program (LLP) is a non-credit student program specific to Indigenous contexts and perspectives. It consists of three core seminars, four elective workshops and a six-hour service-learning component. The program was established in 2000 because the academic training offered to students did not adequately address leadership training required for working within Indigenous contexts. During its first three years, funding for the program came from the UBC Equity Office's Equity Enhancement Fund. It is now funded completely by the FNHL.

The LLP provides relevant Indigenous leadership training necessary for promoting leadership on campus and introduces skills for working in and understanding Indigenous contexts. Through collaboration with the FNHL student services, UBC's various faculties and UBC student services departments, the program provides leadership opportunities including workshops and opportunities for service learning. The program introduces the protocol of acknowledging the Traditional Musqueam Nation Territory where UBC is located; thus demonstrating respect for the original peoples of this area. The LLP teaches about the local Indigenous language and cultural values as important leadership practices and demonstrates the cultural aspects of using the Musqueam greeting, *Echu'iall*, and singing the public George family song, *Teswanic slolem*, of the Coast Salish during each of its LLP sessions. The sweat lodge teachings are a part of the LLP and it is important to continue them even though they are ceremonial practices from outside the local Nations. These cultural ceremonies are open to all peoples whereas many of the local ceremonial practices have restricted membership requirements. FNHL received permission from Elder Tsimlano, who is from Musqueam to perform the sweat lodge ceremony in their Traditional Territory. We currently have cultural educators who provide this service and their genealogies are located within those ceremonial traditions. The cultural ceremonies such as burnings, smudges and wellness talking circles are available to students outside of the LLP as the program has time constraints and is a non-credit program. The LLP meets two or three times a month during lunch hour and has a six hour

service learning component. The service learning requires students to work towards positive change in communities and report back to the LLP utilizing the cultural values of respect, relationship, responsibility and reverence. The LLP also offers workshops that introduce non-violent communication skills, respectful research strategies, human rights and values, strengths in diversity, political leadership for contemporary contexts, inclusive relationships, identity and belonging and values as foundation for leadership. Despite all the relevant values promoted by the LLP, the cultural aspect of the program requires development to articulate how cultural teachings can play a significant role in Indigenous leadership, in general and specifically, from the Elders' perspectives within the FNHL community. This study provides an opportunity for that development.

### Purpose

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to articulate the role culture plays in Indigenous leadership from the perspectives of respected FNHL community Elders and cultural educators. This information will inform FNHL program development and will introduce a variety of considerations to help understand ways in which Indigenous cultural knowledge and perspectives can expand the existing views of leadership.

Elders and cultural educators who work with the FNHL community describe the role of culture in Indigenous leadership through sharing their oral histories, life experiences, cultural values and knowledge. These narratives and stories contribute to our understanding of Indigenous leadership because they provide living local oral histories about leadership that are generally not written down. By examining how culture informs such leadership, we can begin to understand the values inherent in Indigenous cultural knowledge and create pedagogy that will further meet the cultural requirements of the LLP at the FNHL.

There is little research from Indigenous perspectives on Indigenous research methodologies or on how culture informs leadership. This research is based on ten years of work with Elders at the FNHL education site, located within the traditional and unceded

territories of the Coast Salish and in particular the Musqueam territory. This knowledge is crucial in defining my role as a visitor and a researcher. For example, in order to find out what the needs of the community are, I researched the historical and cultural background in which the education site is situated before I began this study. I refer to this as an informal pre-study phase that is based on relationship building. I established respectful relationships with Elders at the FNHL community and learned about their unique gifts on a personal basis. This relationship building phase informed me as to which Elders could benefit from and accommodate this study. This strategy demonstrates a willingness to understand and support the cultural ways of living and leading. As a result of spending time with Elders, I am able to assist the facilitation of Elders sharing their unique leadership abilities because I am familiar with their gifts. Their leadership gifts are functionally and situationally specific, and by documenting them, this study provides research on Indigenous Knowledge and leadership while contributing to the ongoing communal history and knowledge of the FNHL community.

### Elders

In many Indigenous contexts, Elders are considered leaders, consultants and teachers. The collective of Elders in a community are considered the authoritarian body because of their combined expertise and wisdom (Johnson, 1995). Not all old people are Elders as many Elders are the ones who know the protocols associated with cultural teachings and demonstrate them in appropriate ways. Archibald (2005) says that Elders are chosen by the people in their community. They are accepted, listened to and are usually good speakers (White as cited by Neel, 1992). They live according to cultural teachings and transmit these teachings to others. Joseph Couture (1991) describes an Elder as having a strong sense of responsibility both towards self and community. Elders are the historians, philosophers and teachers of tradition and heritage. They teach us how to make meaning of history, make connections to the present conditions and indicate safe directions to pursue, so that the people's history can be sustained and advanced (p.36). Wisdom is a virtue that Elders demonstrate by example so others may

learn from their lived experiences. Adherence of core spiritual values and demonstration of complex understanding in a variety of situations are other considerations. Medicine (1987) elaborates on the role of Elders in education. She states that:

...only by comprehending the cultural background of contemporary Indian communities in which the school is situated can we understand the role of Elders in education enterprises...[and by understanding this information] we all benefit (p.150-1).

In these common sense ways, I have learned more about the local Indigenous ways of knowing and leading. My role as a researcher is based on these experiences. In addition, I was informed by the literature and the identified needs of the FNHL community and the LLP in particular. These sources identified the need to document and provide research on Indigenous perspectives on leadership. Ah-Nee-Benham et al. (2003) say that not enough work has been done in this area emphasizing its importance for our common knowledge and for the development of our Nations and future leaders, "to examine how First Nations educators describe their own leadership development" (p.149). This research documents the perspectives of Elders at the FNHL community and provides a basic understanding about how culture informs Indigenous leadership through nine in-depth interviews.

#### Position of the Researcher

I am an Anishnabe Cree person and a band member of the Opasqwayak Cree Nation. Opaskwayak describes the landscape of the high bluff over the Carrot River in north-western Manitoba. My standpoints are informed by *Nehiyow*- a Cree word, which describes the people from my region as "humans who seek knowledge from the four directions" (Cardinal, 2005). I locate myself in the urban context and as a practitioner of cultural ceremonies of both biological parents. My matrilineal genealogy consist of intergenerational leadership locations and thus informs my *momi tun ay chi kun eak*. This Cree term describes the wisdom that comes from within and from this place seeks to reflect the voices of the Ancestors (Spence, personal communication, UBC. 2005).

I have a BA from the University of Winnipeg, and received training from the Native Education Centre in sexual abuse counselling. I am trained in body-centered complex trauma, body-mind psychotherapy and movement and expressive art therapies. I develop educational healing programs for community based organizations that combine the training I received with Indigenous knowledge (IK) principles. Since 1995, I have been a counsellor for the FNHL student services and co-coordinate the FNHL's LLP. I wanted to complete a research study that would contribute to the understanding of Indigenous theory, methodology and practice for the community in which I work and study. My interest in the topic is based on the need to expand IK discourse and address cultural competency in Canadian Indigenous leadership studies. Therefore, the study focus I adopt arises from a particular political Indigenous cultural consciousness. My intention is to become competent at raising the political cultural consciousness in Aboriginal leadership discourse through the exploration of this study.

I have developed a guide that addresses Indigenous cultural competency principles for self-determined leadership based on the study's findings (See Appendix E). This guide is a brief summary of the cultural considerations for those interested in the development of Indigenous leadership and helps to locate me in relation to my ideas about leadership. This reciprocal gesture was developed in response to the literature that indicates that Indigenous researchers and those involved in Indigenous contexts need to have a sense of who they are and where they come from in terms of self, culture, beliefs, values, life experiences, memories, dreams, participation in ceremony, community service and language revitalization (Steinhauer, 2001). Absolon and Willet (2004) suggest that the intersection of personal narrative, voices and representation necessitates self location in Indigenous research and the guide may assist researchers and those involved in Indigenous research contexts to develop their own self locations and self concepts as leaders. This guide may assist individuals, communities, and researchers to continue to re-claim and re-articulate the value of individual and communal voice as valid knowledge construction processes in contemporary leadership development. The

researcher's personal location, the use of counter-stories and narratives in Indigenous research contribute to knowledge production and are both political and personal.

The position of this research is to challenge the history of the colonialist narrative and advocate for the development of a leadership consciousness that moves beyond assimilationist and neo-colonial agendas (Askren, 2005). My cultural experience includes training in a number of Aboriginal spiritual traditions or genealogies. For example, I have been adopted in specific cultural ways that create new extended familial relationships. These relationships by protocol require extensive reciprocal responsibilities, such as the commitment to the development of a culturally appropriate community leadership that is consistent within the extended family values. These traditional and spiritual genealogies provide me with intimate knowledge of IK principles that form the foundation for my own leadership development as a mother, family member, community facilitator, counsellor, leadership coordinator, and academic. This research is possible at this time because of my insider knowledge and position as a counsellor who is involved with the FNHL student services, cultural activities and the LLP.

I consulted with community members for at least four years during the pre-study phase to ensure that this research reflects the community's identified needs. I have been working within the FNHL community for ten years and am familiar with many cultural practices within my own cultural traditions and with other Indigenous cultural protocols.

My personal contexts and the larger Indigenous historical context of surviving 500 years of colonization, racism, oppression and cultural denigration and the vision of critical transformative education also inform and shape my work as a researcher and are reflected in the theoretical frameworks to which I am drawn.

### Theoretical Framework

This research will draw upon critical theory for analytic guidance (Fanon, 1968; Foucault, 2000; Freire, 1997; Giroux, 2002; Gramsci, 1995; Habermas, 1998). Aspects of Foucault's work on power and its influence on definitions of truth challenge the concept of objectivity in research.

I declare my subjectivity by declaring my position as a researcher in the previous section.

Habermas's (1998) utopian visioning is consistent with visioning for change, a better future for the seven generations, which is also an Anishnabe Indigenous prophecy. Fanon's work on decolonizing the mind is an important process for understanding the historical contexts and the impacts of internalized colonization. Paulo Freire's (1997) work on conscientization and praxis support the goals of self-determination and sovereignty. Gramsci's (1995) work on hegemonic discourses identifies which ideologies are taken for granted as knowledge and for what purposes they are employed. IK is the taken for granted knowledge that I am centralizing in this study. Critical theorists emphasize values such as social justice and democracy and focus attention to issues of power and interest in their analyses. Instead of distancing themselves from advocacy, many critical theorists disapprove of research pursued for solely intellectual reasons. The outcomes of value-laden activities in research, whether implicit or explicit, are to inform, assess and make positive change (MacIvor, 2004; Smith, 2005). From this perspective, critical theory's goal is transformation.

I locate this work within the tradition of Indigenous wholistic theory. I am in philosophical agreement with post colonial and critical theory approaches in that I am engaged in bringing voice to a subjugated people through an analysis of the colonial processes and constructions of knowledge that have muted their voices. However, I do not employ them exclusively as the focus is primarily on Indigenous Knowledge within its own right, as testimonies to an Indigenous wholistic theory and allow the Elders' narratives speak for themselves. Indigenous wholistic theory considers all the aspects of a given situation and includes the aspects of mind, body, heart and spirit. (I spell "wholistic" with the "w" to emphasize wholeness.) Indigenous wholistic theory is the most encompassing or relevant theory for this study because it is the most appropriate theory to consider when working with First Nations communities and because it reflects the participants worldviews. When using Indigenous wholistic theory the focus is on connection, relationship and balance through consciousness (Laura and Heaney, 1990). Examining imbalanced relationships for potentials to restore balance inevitably leads to a

questing of the status quo (Marsden, 2005). Engaging in the “good way”, a way that reflects the principles and values of Indigenous wholism, are often common ways of knowing, being and doing Indigenous research. For this study, enhancing relationships is the focus as is Indigenous wholistic theory.

Indigenous peoples’ interests, experiences, and knowledge must be at the center of research methodologies. Bishop (2005), Ermine (1995), Hampton (1995) and Lanigan (1998) describe the need for research to reflect Aboriginal pedagogy and provide leadership that accurately reflects the inherent right to be ourselves, to be self determined, to enhance our cultural knowledge, and to enhance our abilities and visions to be self-sustaining communities. Aboriginal scholar Lester Rigney (1997) states:

In research we can begin to shift the construction of knowledge to one that does not compromise Indigenous identity and Indigenous principles of independence, unity, and freedom from racism (p. 119).

Critical race theory (CRT) is an approach developed for and by those within legal education systems. CRT provides useful principles to other fields of study. One of the essential strategies of this theory is that of counter-storytelling. Counter-storytelling or oral histories challenge the construction of knowledge by shifting the focus away from mainstream perspectives (Mathur, 2004). In this research, privileging Indigenous oral histories provides counter-hegemonic discourses in order to influence change. In effect, the counter-storytelling approach reclaims the central position for Indigenous people as the expert knowledge producers in this particular context.

Dei (2005) acknowledges that the political project of anti-racism is to destabilize conventional knowledge and modes of producing knowledge and work towards transforming local communities. This transformation includes connection to politically progressive leadership practices that begins with an examination of cultural principles. This study utilizes aspects of critical theory within an anti-racism education framework. The oral histories are sites of interventions that reveal racist relationships in Canada and, for those interested in social justice, can provide reflexive strategies for change.

Institutions providing Indigenous leadership training must focus on developing respectful Indigenous community partnerships, provide community capacity development and advocate for appropriate change. Some of the challenges for leaders in Indigenous contexts are to develop contemporary processes based on the local territory's cultural principles and practices. This research is informed by these CRT principles and focuses on how IK principles shared by the Elders in this study can provide theoretical frameworks for both critical reflection and action.

The transmission of knowledge in Indigenous research carries rigorous ethical standards because the researchers are accountable to the community and to the cultural teachings, as well as to the regular academic mainstream standards. The oral histories, reflections, cultural values and principles shape this approach to research in order to ensure significance to the community. In order to understand this field, the following is an overview of how IK has been systematically marginalized but is now being used as a framework for research.

IK has been, for the most part, politically positioned within Western knowledge sites as primitive, irrelevant or exotic (Colorado, 1988). These political positions attempt to equate IK within cultural exoticism and relegate IK to a peripheral status away from the real work of knowledge construction. These responses marginalize IK and the exotic responses lead to a superficial understanding and exploit aspects of Indigenous culture without due consideration or understanding of the knowledge upon which IK traditions are based (Deloria, 1995; Steinhauer, 2002; Smith, 2005). In the literature reviewed, scholars discuss the research conversation within the colonial history of Aboriginal oppression and the need to put more emphasis on IK cultural values as foundational to the transformation process.

My research demonstrates how aspects of IK provide relevant, reciprocal and relational research that serves a local community. IK principles, as articulated by the Elders, create a framework that guides this process and demonstrates how IK-centered research can work.

There are several principles that Indigenous scholars consider to be relevant in research. One principle is that Indigenous peoples are diverse, are connected with diverse lands and articulate diverse expressions of their inter-connected cultural relationships (Atleo, 2004; Cajete, 1994; Weenie, 1998). Another principle includes the time-tested world views that represent communal, wholistic and interrelated living (Archibald, 2003; Deloria, 1995; Smith, 2000). Responsible ecological stewardship praxis inherent in Indigenous ways of knowing and leading are other features relevant in research (Borrows, 2002; MacIvor, 1995; Menzies, 2001). Also important is that leadership is shared and situation-specific and is influenced by historical and relational contexts (Armstrong, 2003; Ah-Nee-Benham & Napier 2002; Johnson, 1997). Finally, self-determined Indigenous leadership and decolonizing education are seen as contributing factors that enhance IK systems and the ability to be self-sustaining, diverse communities (Battiste, 2000; Ah-Nee-Benham, Johnson & Van Alstine, 2003; Marker, 2000).

These are some examples of IK framework principles required for conducting appropriate research methodologies in this context. The IK framework principles, outlined above inform this study's methodological research approach and are based on the literature reviewed in chapter two.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:**

#### **WHAT THE SCHOLARS SAY**

The history of the leadership literature describes leadership qualities from the standpoint of behavioural, trait and contingent theories (Bensimon, 1989; Cronin, 1984; King 1990). These theories describe leadership behaviours and traits and the conditions necessary for achieving a common goal. According to Bensimon (1989) social power theories emphasize a one-way influence while social exchange theories focus on mutually influencing, reciprocal relationships that are generally informed by the followers' expectations. Kellerman (1984) asserts that transactional leaders engage in exchange of resources. Such leaders depend on the followers' needs and the ability to fulfill their expectations. Bensimon (1989) and Rodgers (1992) describe cultural and symbolic leadership as theories that strive to maintain or re-interpret a group's shared beliefs and meanings as it influences how individual leaders perform. The aforementioned literature is restricted by its focus on the leader as the point person in a hierarchy, the leader's accumulation of power and the ability to fulfill the followers' expectations. This limited survey of the leadership literature reviewed indicates that leadership is considered from the implicit perspectives of what individual leaders consider as meaningful and what actions flow from those understandings (Benisom et al., 1998). Benisom elaborates:

By explicitly considering other leadership qualities outside one's familiar cultural grouping, one will expand their understandings and choices available for leadership considerations (p.23).

This study explores transformational leadership components and promotes leadership understandings and choices from Indigenous perspectives.

The Indigenous scholarly literature reviewed describes leadership as both an individual and collective journey (Depree; 1994). Reyes (1993) describes leadership as a movement towards a vision, change, growth or goal. Ryan (2003) describes critical leadership education as a politic that will enable individuals to resist oppressive practices and seek out self determined

forms of community. Arden & Wall (1990) and Coyhis (1993) describe Indigenous leadership as both a place of engagement and interaction between people, which is spiritual and literal. Green (1992) reports that:

Leadership is linked to Indigenous peoples' historical struggle concerning the spirit of sovereignty, that quality of being in control of social, educational and economic conditions (p. 36).

This study focuses on the transformational leadership aspects because of the lack of research available on the topic. Additionally, the study documents local cultural perspectives that can inform Indigenous leadership programming within an educational institution. The literature reviewed provides four emergent themes for relevant educational Indigenous leadership programming. They are:

- Promoting positive IK leadership based on cultural values;
- Promoting decolonising education & self-determination of Aboriginal peoples;
- Including Aboriginal historical perspectives;
- Focusing on Indigenous community service.

### Promoting Positive IK Leadership Based on Cultural Values

This study is situated within a higher learning education context. Kirkness & Barnhardt (1991) state that universities need to respect the cultural integrity of First Nations students and communities. Kuokkanen (2004) agrees that respect for cultural integrity or IK requires academic leaders to move beyond institutional epistemic ignorance and move towards more respectful, reciprocal engagements with IK in academic institutions. She argues that to effect change, the university must meet its academic obligations by critically examining its own cultural values evident in hegemonic discourse and move towards concrete educational change. IK is informed by cultural values and protocols inherent in Indigenous epistemes such as maintaining respectful, responsible and reciprocal relationships. The examination of our own cultural values can provide insights to how we provide respectful culturally competent or relevant education.

Smith (2005) suggests a reflexive process will assist in the identification of our own values and intentions that can clarify and inform research. The reflexive process respects cultural and self knowledge. Furthermore, self-reflection will better prepare students to understand the cultural negotiation required for change. For example, a student's reflection on how values provide a foundation for leadership reported:

Our values are the backbone to our actions and behaviours which are the basis on how we treat others. Leadership is not just about ideas, creativity and visions, it springs from our beliefs and convictions which are the motivational drive of our determination. (Longhouse Leadership evaluations, 2004).

Researchers, students and others involved in forming allies for change are encouraged to reclaim their own lineage of cultural teachings to inform such transformations. The community's self-determined objectives for change vary greatly from region to region and yet there are distinguishable characteristics that can provide a guide or beginning framework to identify culturally competent education and research for change.

Positive IK frameworks are characterized by wholism, interrelatedness, orality and the significance of lived experience and genealogy-land relations (Archibald, 2003). While there are similarities in the principles or frameworks of IK, in practice they are unique in their expressions to lands, communities, cultures and languages. Numerous Indigenous scholars reiterate the responsibility of researchers to respect these unique differences by ensuring that the self-determined objectives of Indigenous communities are well represented (Battiste, 2000; Castellano, 2000; Smith, 1999).

IK frameworks also consider relationships with self, family, community, nations and creation as integral to leadership development (Armstrong, 2003; Atleo, 2004; Castellano, 2000; Ermine, 1998; Kawagley, 1995). IK is contextual, decolonising, empowering, ethical and beneficial to the community, and includes cultural protocol and cultural teachings (Archibald, 2003; Battiste, 2002). IK highly regards the perspectives of Elders as they provide us with valuable cultural information required for the understanding and promotion of positive Indigenous leadership.

Restoule (2001) affirms using Anishnabe teachings to inform identity research. He writes that Anishnabe cultural teachings or Bimaadiziwin are for living a good life and suggests that IK and research methods mean entering a relationship with research participants whose teachings are the codes or values that guide the process. The cultural teachings provide values that inform leadership development and contribute to our understandings of Indigenous leadership from the perspectives of Indigenous people.

Cultural teachings provide valuable contributions to the development of Indigenous leadership literature and insight to positive Indigenous identity and leadership practices. Cultural value principles can be thought of as the how to of personal conduct, moral beliefs and convictions such as maintaining respectful, responsible, relationships.

This research provides Indigenous leaders and those involved with leadership methods of validating IK inherent in Indigenous cultures. The storytellers give guidance on how to enact appropriate, respectful cultural values that inform their leadership practice.

Examining the role of culture in Indigenous leadership at the FNHL, we begin to understand the ethics and values inherent in local Indigenous cultures and then create pedagogy that can be enacted to affect change. Beatrice Medicine (1987) stresses “at this juncture, it is hoped that we do not reflect the corruption we see in dominant society but look to our own personal and tribal ethics and values and enact them” (p.86). Promoting positive IK based on cultural values as articulated by Indigenous cultural narratives in this study informs leadership specific to the FNHL community.

### Promoting decolonization and self-determination of Aboriginal peoples

Adopting a decolonizing education agenda is critical for Indigenous leadership programs as these emerging leaders work to change the conditions for Aboriginal people and to restore relationships with non-Aboriginal peoples. Those involved with leadership have been impacted by colonizing histories and need to build a critical awareness to influence positive change.

Education theorists agree with the need to engage in the decolonizing discourse, to critically examine history and its impacts (Barman, 1999; LaRoque, 1998; Mohanty, 2003; Smith, 2000).

Makokis (2001) states:

A decolonising agenda will give meaning to the present context so that First Nations can act from a position of conscious awareness to gain freedom from oppression. The participants [in her study] all spoke to the importance of traditional or cultural teachings in order to decolonise themselves. The people need to know they can heal from centuries of oppression by active engagements with values based on cultural practices. The values could be utilized as a foundation for community action or community service and provide for intergenerational leadership development based on the principles of genuine caring, sharing, honesty and determination (p. 186).

A decolonizing framework for leadership could include intersecting interdisciplinary concepts such as described by Naomi Adelson (2001) in her article "Re-imaging Aboriginality; an Aboriginal response to social suffering":

If social suffering derives an outcome of colonial and post colonial histories of disenfranchisement and attempts to eradicate a cultural history, then a response to that suffering must include the reconstitution and the reaffirmation of social identity... as people to re-imagine and renegotiate their political and social worlds (p.97).

Social suffering and responses to it are social and political phenomena that can provide decolonizing perspectives in leadership education. Among Indigenous Canadians, social suffering is a part of the history and politics of Canada and is apparent in the social health sciences and education indexes as well as in the literature. As many critical theorists observe, a solid reflection on suffering must give way to concrete solutions for change that include redefining Aboriginal identity. The forms of human suffering include the collective as well as the individual and the modes of experience inform both local and global contexts. Kleinman et al. (1997) advocate for a new kind of discourse to inform our collective consciousness and practical action that moves beyond individual pity, victimization and collective pathology framing.

Adelson (2001) suggests social reorganization is necessary:

Leadership improvements must take place in conjunction with the attainment of economic and political autonomy on Indigenous controlled land bases. Until those processes are advocated for and realized, the colonization legacy will continue. (p.97)

The decolonization process in this context can begin with addressing our individual and shared social and political histories. Decolonization requires critically informed reflections and

includes identified shared cultural values that address changes today. Critically informed reflections must focus on strategic collective movements to create the required changes as we have all been impacted by colonialism (Alfred, 2005). The term decolonization in this context focuses on local living communities to articulate the values that inform the respective individual and communal histories. For example, appropriate advocacy is required at the local level to support the reinstatement of traditional values and self-determined practices to address proactive change in contemporary contexts. In university contexts certain interdisciplinary approaches such as critical race theory and social suffering are other examples of decolonizing approaches because they combine self and collective value orientations that can inform coalitions for change in contemporary contexts.

Decolonizing education promotes self-determination. Understanding self-determination from First Nations perspectives is critical for understanding effective, contextual leadership. Self-determined strategies are also necessary for leadership program development at Canadian universities. While theorists like Fanon (1968) have established that decolonization requires critically informed self reflection, I argue that IK, based on collective cultural values, is a key component to any meaningful change. *Indian Control of Indian Education* (1972) describes self-determination as having local jurisdictional power to develop self-governance systems while contributing to healthy Nations. Alfred (1999) agrees, stating that a critical component of self-determination for Indigenous peoples is “educating a new leadership that has access to the spiritual resources and personal power that come from living according to the teachings” (p.141). He locates this educational task within a process of returning to traditional governance, recovering language, economic self-sufficiency and Nation-to-Nation relations with the state. Recovering leadership from self-determined traditional governance principles is a project that requires an understanding of Indigenous cross-cultural principles while maintaining respectful, reciprocal relationships to the local cultures, languages and communities.

Self-determination is an imperative element in a program for understanding effective leadership for Indigenous peoples and for leadership program development. The goals of the

self-determination agenda and decolonizing leadership education program development are to contribute to the vision of practical, culturally relevant values and self-sustaining Nation building through capacity building. This vision is seen as a local, national and collective endeavor that has transformative outcomes, that is, promotes positive practical change at the community level and addresses the systemic balance of powers (Daes, 1997; Dei, 2005; Razack, 2002). Henderson (2000) believes that we need to dream and realize new visions in the old ways. These visions and changes must enhance and improve local First Nations self-determined outcomes.

Quality Indigenous leadership programming requires the promotion of self-determined, decolonizing education agendas from Aboriginal perspectives. Local Indigenous perspectives provide crucial information about specific Aboriginal epistemes and can balance the universalistic claims about Aboriginal cultures that are often too generalized to effect change. These approaches will promote awareness of historical perspectives and ideologies; promote awareness about the change required in the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples; and promote local Indigenous cultural knowledge and awareness as important contributions to transforming the leadership landscape in Canada.

Some examples of self-determined Indigenous cultural knowledge include: the “good life way” and consciousness of reciprocal relational responsibilities. Each Native culture has its own version of the “good life way”. In Anishnabe, it is *bimaadziwin*, or the “good life path”; for the Cree of the Northern prairies, it is *miyowicehtowin*, which translates to “having good relations”; it is *sken-nen kowa* – maintaining peace between peoples – for the Iroquois; and the Navaho have a word, *hozho*, for walking in beauty, walking in a sacred manner, or walking with a peaceful heart. Common to these different versions of the “good life way” are the lived values of relations, beauty and balance (Nadeau, 2003). This articulation describes the cultural principles that provide the foundations required for change; however, it is the local community projects that will determine how they will be enacted.

Taiaiake Alfred's *Wasa'se* (2005) describes the *Onkwehoewe* (Original peoples) warrior ceremony and provides examples of contemporary action strategies. He argues for:

change among Indigenous peoples that is rooted in traditional philosophies and values, but which draws from many different social and political strategies to challenge the colonial, or Settler, society's dominance of Indigenous lives and land. The warrior ceremony also alters the balance of political and economic power to re-create social and physical space for Indigenous freedom. (<http://www.taiaiake.com/home/index.htm>)

One of the challenges he describes in creating leadership models is to determine which cultural values will inform a given context and create change through actions that will address the imbalance of power in society.

In summary, the agenda for local self determined projects must identify which cultural values will generate solutions that provide health, freedom and justice. Equitable access to and appropriate management of shared land resources are other considerations. Effective leadership development in academic contexts needs to transform these identified sites of struggle as potential sites of intervention if it is to provide competent leaders. One of the sites where interventions could occur includes Canadian education institutions. Champagne & Strauss (2002) caution that just as it is important to reflect First Nations values and approaches to leadership in contemporary contexts, one must take care to select First Nations descriptions of historical perspectives and ideologies:

While critiques against historical colonialism and present day policies are necessary they should not dominate Native scholarship. Arguments about colonialism are about non-Indian forms of domination over Indian communities. This is part of the Indian communities' history but puts non-Indian history and policy in central focus, while often leaving the Indian role in history and preservation of community in the background. Putting living Indian communities and Nations in the forefront of the intellectual agenda of Native American studies [leadership] will establish the foundation of interdisciplinary development (p. 8).

Battiste and Henderson (2000) also suggest a critical exploration of cultural teachings and values could provide a foundation from which to approach this vision. Additionally, privileging local or Aboriginal cultural context-specific perspectives will provide accuracy and bring focus to develop actions strategies for the changes required. This research is informed by a balance of these visions and approaches.

## Inclusion of Aboriginal Historical Perspectives

The Hawthorn Report (1966) refers to two styles of leadership. One is characteristic of a business cultural model, a leadership style practiced in governing the *Indian Act*. This model is regarded as less effective than local approaches to traditional cultural (IK) Aboriginal leadership (p. 246), which have communal focuses and are contrasted here with the individual focus of economic or capitalistic culture (Preston, 1975; Petrone, 1990; Schouls, 2002). Both styles of leadership inform the Indigenous leadership contexts today. However, Aboriginal voices about history, education and leadership are lacking in the literature in general.

One of the reasons for this lack of literature is that Indigenous cultures are primarily based on oral traditions and the text-based cultures have recorded a relatively one-sided account of the history of Canada since 1492. Indigenous peoples were instrumental in the inception of Western democracy processes but have not benefited from equitable treatment until as recently as the 1960's (Mohawk & Lyons, 1992). The Iroquois confederacy was an operative democratic constitution that outlined the development of Western democracies (Ah-Nee-Benham 1999; Grinde, 1991). The enforced silence on the topic continues to impact the political, educational and social leadership contributions of Aboriginal peoples. It was not until the 1960's that Aboriginal peoples were able to have a say in their own futures due to the legislated policies enforced by governments to undermine Aboriginal leadership and cultures (Ah-Nee-Benham, 2000).

The contexts of Canadian history in which leadership was undermined and the legitimization of IK leadership from First Nations perspectives are critical themes in a leadership program. For example, the *Indian Act* is a Canadian legislative act imposed on Aboriginal peoples that has adversely affected Aboriginal leadership praxis. The Indian Act has created barriers to Aboriginal leadership development and accountability because it inhibits Aboriginal peoples' freedom to make decisions such as local self-governing policies.

Strategically, Canadian governments have systematically gained control over First Nations peoples by a variety of attacks such as the enforcement of rigid political legislations and policies designed to maintain control of and exert dominance over Aboriginal peoples' lives (Boyco, 1995; Memmo, 1965; Neu, 2003). Failure to comply with these policies resulted in imprisonment and tactics of cultural genocide to undermine First Nations self-determined leadership (Chrisjohn, 1997; Dickason, 1992; Miller, 1996). I am using genocide to mean:

acts committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group or by means of deliberately inflicting conditions of life on the group calculated to physically destroy the group in whole or in part ([http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/p\\_genoci.htm](http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/p_genoci.htm)).

Leadership programs need to critically examine the Canadian history of cultural genocide and the global history of cultural genocide in general in order to become effective agents of change. Chrisjohn (1997) emphasizes that cultural genocide is a collective act and injury, and suggests that an educated leadership could inform the required collective response to these injustices. Chrisjohn (1997) believes that cultural genocide is not about competing ideologies, but rather about inheriting a history of crimes committed against humanity and appeals to the changes required to address ongoing injustice. Chrisjohn's directive is that leaders need to be well aware of the charter on political and civil rights (1960s) and the United Nations convention on genocide (1949) to create pro-active change in attitudes, beliefs and action.

Other examples of imposed legislation that have eroded Aboriginal leadership practices include the enforcement of the residential school system. Since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the residential school system prepared Indian children to assimilate through racist segregation policies enforced by the Indian Act. The residential schooling and subsequent Euro-cultural education adversely affected and continues to affect generations of Aboriginal students (Fontaine, 2002; Ing, 2001). As the result of entrenched racism and lack of positive cultural education, the majority of First Nations students currently leave school well before high school completion (Wotherspoon, 1998). The conventional Euro-cultural education system remains ill-equipped to overcome high rates of Aboriginal education dropouts due to the lack of

Aboriginal content, cultural curricula, and personnel (Brown, 2004; Bressette, 2000; Butler, 1999; MacIvor, 1995). Substantial attention, therefore, has turned to the importance of incorporating Aboriginal culture, training and personnel into the school system for effective education for the next generation of leaders (The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996), volume one, chapter two entitled “Restructuring the Relationship”, outlines the need for transforming the relationship between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginal peoples. Historical features of Canadian federalism provide unique legal concerns that are not widely understood by Canadians. For example, the two row wampum belt (1600s) was a covenant of the agreement of First Nations as self-determined sovereign nations. In order to understand and transform or restore the Canadian relationships, Aboriginal historical perspectives require a decolonizing approach:

that goes beyond the politics of inclusion, which may leave the dominant structures in tact, to a politic of accountability: An accountability that traces our relations of privilege complicity and then examine our difference in the interests of change...as long as we see ourselves as not implicated in relations of power, as innocent, we cannot begin to walk the path of social justice and to thread our way through the complexities of power (Razack, 1998. p. 170).

Razack (2002) suggests a critical examination of the Canadian historical mythology, the stories told about a nation's origins and history, to provide us with understandings of the constructions of white power behind Canada's national imaginary. Unmapping the landscapes prior to 1492, she asks the question what was the land called before it was mapped? We begin to see which perspectives are excluded and how this effectively shuts those perspectives out of the national story and out of any claims for equal citizenship. The historical perspectives of Indigenous peoples provide some insight on how the maps of the past inform the present context and present innovative challenges for egalitarian leadership training. The challenge begins with individual and collective projects that critically examine our own cultural values and histories to transform approaches to leadership.

Makokis (2001) provides an example of how historical contexts can inform the current situation and points to some directions for future quality Indigenous leadership initiatives based on her critical analysis of her individual and community concepts of leadership. She states:

We must critically examine our current reality and...acknowledge that our history does not begin with the arrival of the Europeans but rather our beliefs, values and philosophies are embedded in our own historical stories, languages and in our own ceremonial settings (p.1-5).

Calliou (1995) provides an example of how history and IK can inform Indigenous leadership. She draws guidance from Indigenous plains circular pedagogy to address antiracism and peacekeeping pedagogies, based on the Iroquois "Great Law of Peace". Balancing cultural values of unconditional consensus decision-making, participatory democracy, equality, compassion, respect, reverence, and courage shapes the Great Law of Peace. The Kaswentha, also known as the Two Row Wampum, represents the Nation-to-Nation agreement (1600s) to live in peaceful relations with each other. The wampum belt has two rows of purple wampum beads, is made from quahog shells that are separated by rows of white wampum beads made from Atlantic whelk shells. Each string represents the clan heads and leaders' agreements and is woven together by the shells. This historic wampum belt records not only a historic treaty agreement but a powerful vision for respectful co-existence between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in North America. The British North American Act or the Constitution Act of 1867 reaffirms Nation-to-Nation status and the basic tenets represented by the Two Row Wampum Treaty.

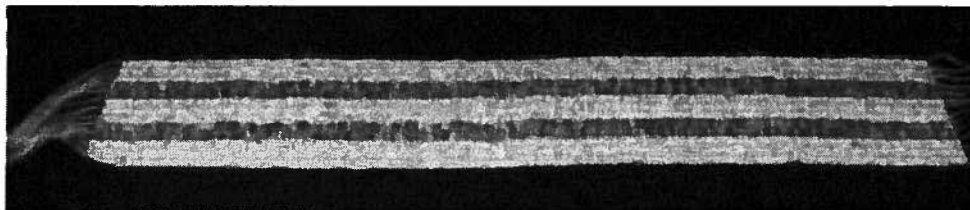


Photo Credit - Kanatiiosh - TwoRowPhoto©1998

The two rows of purple beads further symbolize that two nations of people in separate vessels travel down the river, parallel from each other. The Aboriginal peoples are in their canoes. This symbolizes their leadership and culture, their laws, their traditions, their customs and other life ways. The non-Native people are in their own ships, which symbolize their culture, their laws, their traditions, their customs and other life ways. Each Nation shall stay in their vessels and travel the river side-by-side. Neither Nation will try to steer the vessels of the other, nor interfere or impede the travel of the other (Jemison, 1998). The restoration of the relationship theme could include discourses on mixed race identities and address power imbalances as commonalities that inform coalitions for change (Allen, 1989; Kenny, 2000; Lawrence, 2004).

Reaffirming IK cultural values such as the ones mentioned earlier could provide relevant starting places for meaningful leadership discourse. Additionally, Schouls (2002) proposes relational pluralism as another relevant leadership consideration in his book "Shifting Boundaries: Aboriginal identity, pluralist theory and the politics of self government", he discusses on Aboriginal identity and the politics of self-government. Pluralist discourse is contextually defined, open to renegotiation, driven by local needs in mutual trust and justice and shows that self-government is not only about preserving cultural and national differences but must focus on equalizing current imbalances in power to allow Aboriginal peoples to construct their own identities and approaches to leadership and provides alternatives for informed leadership discourse in Canada.

#### Focus on Indigenous Community Service

It is important to offer appropriate, professional and cultural Indigenous leadership programming that will meet the needs of Aboriginal students in post secondary institution settings. Aboriginal communities have identified the need for relevant leadership that serves the community's best interest. Community for the purpose here is defined as a group of people who

share a local regional area, identify with Indigenous ideologies and have an interest in intersecting Indigenous leadership development.

McFarlane (2000) infers that Aboriginal leaders have set themselves the task of rebuilding their nations, "it seems that the future will call for more, not less of the traditional style of leadership" (p.77). This means that appropriate leadership programs need to reflect the needs and 'traditional' or cultural values of the community they serve. For example, if post-secondary institutions want First Nations leaders to attend their institutions, they will also need to provide more informed programs that include Canadian history from Aboriginal perspectives that promote an understanding of community based or local self-determination leadership agendas. Existing leadership programs focus on political training for capacity building for communities. However, several theorists state that there need to be more programs for leadership that are community based and built on cultural values (Alfred, 1999; Bagordo, 2000; Brown, 2004; Ah-Nee-Benham & Mann, 2003; Benai-Benton, 1979; Borrow, 2003; Johnson & VanAlstine, 2003; Greenall, Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003; Makokis, 2001; Restoule, 2001; Ross, 2000).

In "The Renaissance of American Indian Higher Education: Capturing the Dream" (2003), Johnson et al., identify important leadership qualities to include fluid relationships based on shared leadership. Such leadership is "focused more on a community of skilled individuals involved in a process that contributes to the good of the community" (p.151). Johnson et al describe other leadership values as "a commitment to serving the community and education as key to cultural survival and self-determination" (p.152). The authors also highlight practical skills and lessons learned. A leader will train to:

- Become an ambassador for Native community concerns;
- Maintain a positive attitude and deep commitment to education of, for and by Indigenous peoples;
- Translate theory into practice so that formal education is of practical benefit to Native communities;

- Translate what they have learned into culturally acceptable community practice; and
- Possess self-confidence and pride in Indigenous heritage and must exhibit this attitude through care and concern for self and family and community (p.159-60).

### Summary of literature

Based on the literature reviewed, the following themes were produced for this study: promotion of positive IK leadership based on cultural values; inclusion of Aboriginal historical perspectives; decolonizing and self-determined education; and focus on community service. A brief survey of the history of Indigenous leadership was given in this chapter. Indigenous leadership considers collective orientations, local communities, land bases, language and inter-generational genealogy, ceremonial and wholistic pedagogy as important IK features. A focus on transformational leadership as described by Aboriginal cultural leaders or Elders was identified as a focus for this study. Oral histories and counter-stories provide Indigenous intergenerational perspectives on how culture informs Indigenous leadership for the FNHL community contexts. In this research, I have privileged Indigenous oral histories because they provide counter-hegemonic discourses in order to inform and inspire change. In effect the counter-storytelling approach reclaims the central position for Indigenous people as the expert knowledge producers in this particular context.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY:**

### **CONVERSATIONS WITH STORYTELLERS**

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in this study. The research design, research question and theoretical framework will be presented, followed by a description of the data collection. The chapter concludes with a description of the data analysis. This research addresses a how question about a complex contemporary leadership phenomena, in which historical contextual conditions are critical. A case study was used to guide the research design, data collection and data analysis (Yin, 2003). Indigenous leadership requires an understanding of the complex historical, social, political and educational conditions that create the contemporary context. This study used a qualitative design with a case study approach that incorporates oral histories as counter-stories to address this complex topic.

#### **Research design**

The role of culture in Aboriginal leadership development is explored through nine in-depth interviews. Eight participants were interviewed twice for approximately one hour per interview, while one participant was interviewed once. The interviews investigated how cultural aspects and processes were factors in the participant's leadership development. The interviewee's cultural contributions to the LLP and FNHL activities were additional factors. The identification of cultural factors was explored to determine how culture supported the leadership development from the expert interviewee's perspective. The main research question was: How does culture inform Indigenous leadership? The secondary research questions were designed to prompt discussions on cultural theoretical and practical applications. The questions were used as guidelines as my role as researcher was to follow the Elders' lead and to draw leadership lessons from their stories and experiences.

The participants were from two generations of Indigenous Elders and cultural educators. Three have reached retirement age. All are Aboriginals who live in BC and have extensive

cultural knowledge based on their lived experiences. Furthermore, all participants have experience in advisory capacities in a wide variety of organizations. Based on their work with community organizations and post-secondary institutions, the interviewees are recognized as experts within the FNHL community. The storytellers gave permission to use their real names. The storytellers outlined the following brief descriptions of themselves:

- Larry Grant is from xw@m@thkw@y'@m (Musqueam) and Coast Salish, as the anthropologists call the people. He is a sessional instructor in the First Nations language program at UBC, where he teaches H@n'q'@min'@m' language. He is the current FNHL Elder in Residence and provides guidance to the LLP and teaches protocols to the FNHL community. He is a former band counsellor, a grandfather, and a sXwayxw@y big house dancer.
- Norma Rose Point is from Musqueam and has worked for the Musqueam education committee since 1965. She is retired and has worked for the Vancouver School Board and numerous community health organizations in Vancouver. She is the Elder in Residence for post secondary institutions at the FNHL, British Columbia's Institute for Technology (BCIT) and the UBC Institute for Aboriginal Health. She is currently a post-secondary student, foster mother and grandmother.
- Gerry Oleman, Saa Hiil Thut is from the Stl'atl'imx nation, he is a sXwayxw@y big house dancer and grandfather. He works for the UBC Institute for Aboriginal Health and UBC medicine initiatives. He was a chief band counsellor for Chilalth, Seton Lake and he currently works for the Indian Residential School Survivor Society (IRSSS). He was an Elder in residence at BCIT and continues to run its sweat lodges.
- Hopokeltun is Musqueam and Coastal Salish, he is a great-grandfather, grandfather, sXwayxw@y big house dancer and traditional speaker. He has worked for the Vancouver School Board for over twenty five years and is a trial support co-ordinator for IRSSS for the last six years. He has worked for the LLP and the FNHL. He provides protocol and ceremonial guidance for many of the cultural events at the FNHL.
- N'kixw'stn James is a member of the Lytton First Nations from Lytton, BC. She belongs to the Nhla'ka'pmx Nation of the BC Interior Salish. She has a MEd in Adult Education from UBC and now teaches in her own community. She worked as a Resident Elder at the First Nations House of Learning, where she trained women on the sweat lodge ceremony. Some of these women became sweat lodge keepers themselves and conduct women wellness circles at UBC. N'kixw'stn sincerely believes in living with spirituality and teaches young women and children about it. She prays that spirituality will become the foremost important part of everyone's life in the future.
- Sahnbadis is of Mi'kmaq descent. He has an MA and is an Elder in Residence at the FNHL. He facilitates men's sweat lodges and wellness circles. He is a traditional red blanket man in the Lakota Sundance tradition. He has worked with numerous health and educational organizations in Canada and the USA and specializes in cultural education.

- Shirley Bear (Minqwon-Minqwon) is Wabanagii and has worked with the UBC Summer Sciences and Elders in Residence program at the FNHL and initiated the women's full moon wellness circles. She was instrumental in the advocacy that led to Bill C-31, the 1985 act to amend the Indian Act, and is featured in the film, *Keepers of the Fire*. She is a great-grandmother and a multimedia and performance artist. She has worked with Vancouver Aboriginal youth on an arts based education program called Drawing from Within, which incorporated traditional plant medicine use.
- White Cloud is an Anishnabe Metis grandmother who has been involved in numerous Aboriginal health organizations and was a chief counsellor for a BC band. She is involved with the Institute for Aboriginal Health, the UBC sweat lodges and the women's full moon ceremonies. She is a cultural ceremonialist and provides wholistic wellness approaches to Aboriginal communities, internationally, nationally, provincially and with local communities.
- Lee Brown is from the Tsalagi and wolf clan aniwaya, he is a post-doctoral fellow and sessional education instructor at UBC. He has been involved in an Aboriginal education community and the Round Lake cultural treatment centre for over twenty five years. He has run mens' wellness circles at the FNHL and participates in the LLP and sweat lodge ceremonies.

The research is relevant because the FNHL community identified the topic of this research project through a number of community discussions. The Elders' presence was a consistent recommendation from a variety of student service contexts, hence provided the selection of the Elder participants for this study. The discussions identified the need for more Elder involvement in leadership development and cultural curriculum.

Appropriate cultural protocols were observed before the interview began, with the offering of tobacco and blankets or baskets. The Elders determined where the interview was to be held while I provided refreshments. These protocols were followed to create a context that was culturally appropriate and supportive of the interview process. The protocols respected Aboriginal contexts and enabled an Aboriginal process to produce Aboriginal content. The Elders' life experiences are the oral histories that provide leadership lessons in this study. Semi-structured reflective interviews were conducted and the questions were used as a guideline and asked at an appropriate time during each interview. Sterling (1997) and Brown (2004) suggest that the questions used should relate to the content, context and process during the interview, to follow the natural flow of the conversation and allow for silence as a part of the process. The Elders answered the questions with personal stories and reflections, although they often did not

answer the questions directly, directing me instead by letting me know what they thought were important leadership stories. It was my responsibility as a researcher to derive implicit and explicit leadership meanings from their reflections and not become a nuisance with numerous questions. Some of the Elders thought I was not reading the meaning of their stories and they tried a variety of other stories and reflections based on their experiences to help me to understand what they were saying.

The interviews were held at the FNHL, in restaurants, in their homes and outside in the natural environment. It was my responsibility to follow the Elders' lead and provide a respectful relationship where they were in control of the interview process and the information they provided. The Elders defined what the terms Indigenous, culture and leadership meant in their own ways. Not all of the Elders conceptualized themselves as leaders, which I believe is in accordance with the traditional values of humility. For example, one Elder storyteller emphasized the importance of humility, that leaders do not put themselves above the people or bring shame to the people. Another storyteller felt that the term 'helper' was more reflective of his understanding of what Indigenous leadership is.

One of the interviews did not record on one side of the tape and I had to rely on my oral tradition skills, to remember the stories from my heart memory (Holmes as cited by Archibald, 2005). Heart-memory to me describes the meaning making processes that are derived from the story's principles. This is done with the core of our beings and this implicit knowledge must be applied to the current contexts. Woodrow Morrison (2006) a Haidagwai Elder storyteller said that you must take the words inside and sense what they mean within your heart to see if they are true. I wrote the stories down and used my heart's memory skills based on the cultural teachings and I recited it back to the storyteller for verification.

## Research Question

The primary research question was: How does culture inform Indigenous leadership?

The following guiding questions are based on the leadership literature and discussions with FNHL community members:

- How do you describe Indigenous leadership?
- How do you describe Indigenous culture?
- How do you describe the relationship between culture and leadership?
- What cultural values, principles and practices inform your leadership?
- What cultural components would you like to see within an Indigenous student leadership program at university?
- How can a leadership program address cultural needs within a context that respects cultural diversity such as the LLP?
- How do you envision the LLP cultural components evolving?
- What specific cultural aspects are important for the LLP?

For the second interview, the following questions were designed to build on the content of the first interviews and to further support the process:

- What led you to working with the FNHL community? Will you describe, in your own words, the work you do with the FNHL?
- How did you acquire your cultural knowledge?
- Were there particular events, dreams or teachings that assisted you in your leadership development?
- What changes have you observed as a result of the cultural teachings you received?
- How does the lack of cultural connection affect youth today? What are the intergenerational effects? What are the implications for the future?
- What was the role of cultural values in your leadership development?
- How did the cultural teachings and stories you received influence the relationships in your life? (As a child, youth, adult and Elder-in-training.)
- What do you know now about cultural education and leadership that you did not know before? How could this information and/or other cultural teachings be incorporated into teachings for Indigenous sovereign nationhood and governance?
- If you were to explain to other educators about the role culture plays in Indigenous student leadership development, how would you justify the cultural activities in a curriculum at UBC?
- How are values meaningful and why is it important to have cultural activities included in the curriculum?

## Method

A qualitative research design that utilizes a case study approach and oral histories as counter-stories was chosen for this study because these research tools provide culturally appropriate elements that help best facilitate the process. A qualitative design was the best fit

for addressing the complex topic of contemporary Indigenous leadership for the FNHL/UBC community context. The qualitative design allowed an in-depth critical exploration of how culture informs Indigenous leadership through the available knowledge of the expert oral histories. Creswell (1998) believes that a topic needs to be explored when theories are unavailable to explain the topic of research. Another rationale for the selection of a qualitative study is participant receptivity and comfort with the investigative process used (Creswell, 1998, p. 17). The research was conducted with respect for the participants or storytellers who were interviewed because they were interviewed in the cultural context in which they were familiar. The storytellers have experience with the FNHL community and consequently can provide informed insider perspectives relevant to the FNHL. Additionally, the storytellers were comfortable with the investigative process because it was based on their expertise of the storyteller's lived experiences, oral history and cultural knowledge.

### Oral history

Aboriginal oral history accounts provide relevant socio-political and educational implications for Aboriginal communities and educational institutions (Cruikshank, 1994; Bertaux, 1981). The qualitative research process employed to collect such information provides a model of responsible research by respecting appropriate cultural conduct in an Aboriginal setting using such an appropriate qualitative research methodology, it is possible to facilitate relevant research that addresses change and benefits Aboriginal communities (Smith, 1999).

In addition to providing a model for research, oral history methodology was also drawn upon and used as a guide to interact with the Elders' stories. Oral history research seeks to record people's experience over their life span and seeks to extract meaning among stories and validate the knowledge, experience and expertise of the storyteller (Cruikshank, 1994). Oral histories that provide counter historical aspects or counter histories can help motivate a culture under threat and encourage the revival of cultural traditions and convey them to current and future generations of all peoples (Slim & Thompson, 1995. p. 38). The storytellers' oral histories

provided examples of leadership stories and it was my responsibility to derive leadership meanings based on their lived experiences. Their oral histories encouraged people to revitalize their cultural traditions and through their stories we can all learn from their leadership experiences.

This study engages with Jo-ann Archibald's (2005) principles for storywork research to make meaning of oral histories while honoring the Elders at the same time. The storywork principles of respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, wholism, inter-relatedness and synergy require an intimate understanding and years of commitment to understand and apply them to life and to Indigenous research methods.

### Case study

McMillan (2003) says, "The term case study is identified as a type of qualitative research because it can provide an in depth study of a single entity using qualitative multiple sources to gather data" (p. 271). Merriam (1998) writes,

A qualitative inquiry is best served by a case study approach when there is a holistic or inductive process, when there is an emphasis on description and interpretation, and is within a bounded context that has a pragmatic application (p.21).

This research falls within the category of the case study (Cresswell, 1998) because the researcher reviewed multiple sources via Elder interviews within the bounded context or entity, the First Nations longhouse community – with the goal of applying the research towards the development of the cultural aspect of the LLP.

In other case study approaches, the individual oral histories themselves are the case studies (Yin, 2003), but in this study, I use the FNHL as a single entity case. Multiple oral histories within the FNHL case study convey a fullness of context, character, voice and experience or information that is not readily accessible by other research approaches.

The participants make information available through their narratives, stories and expertise on the role culture plays in Indigenous leadership, providing relational stories based

on lived experiences and acquired knowledge. These oral histories bring local knowledge to discussions on the role that culture plays in Aboriginal leadership relevant for this context.

### Participant selection and access

Informal pre-study interviews were conducted with FNHL community members to ensure that an appropriate topic and appropriate participants were selected. A list of possible participants was developed in consultation with the Acting Director of the FNHL, Student Services and the research project advisor. LLP participants who graduated from the program were not selected because the central focus of the study is on cultural dimensions; recognized Elders with cultural expertise were recommended instead.

Additionally, FNHL cultural protocols include that direction be sought from recognized Elders who are familiar with the FNHL community. The purpose of the research was explained during informal meetings with the Elders and then they were invited to interview. Indigenous cross-cultural, inter-generational and gender representation were other participant selection considerations. Elders' familiarity with me and their availability and willingness to participate in the study were additional factors.

### Data collection

The data was collected from seventeen one-hour interviews. The interviews provided information to help explore and develop theoretical considerations and were supported with empirical data such as personal reflections (Yin, 2003). The interviews were tape-recorded with permission. Indigenous cultural protocols were observed and notes taken when allowed by the cultural setting. The tapes were transcribed and submitted for reading and editing by the participants and then were used for analysis.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis in this case study consists primarily of identifying descriptions, emergent themes, concepts and assertions based on the content of the oral stories. An individual case-by-case analysis phase was used, followed by a cross-case analysis phase (Cresswell 1998. p.63), in order to deepen the understanding of how culture informs Indigenous leadership. Participants were given multiple opportunities for discussion and feedback during the first and second interviews. Discussion and feedback opportunities were also provided throughout the cross-case analysis and interpretive phases so that participants could review their own transcripts by providing corrections, and feedback via informal meetings, ongoing face-to-face conversations, telephone conversations and the mail. The storytellers offered corrections and comments such as preference for name use and spelling on the language used and additions to their oral counter-stories. Once this was done I considered how the Sty-Wet-Tan cultural space could assist in interpreting the data. The cultural symbols prominent in the physical space of the FNHL were important in developing my understanding of the stories.

The cross-case analysis phase included a summary of all nine interviews. The cross-case summaries provided a sense of the direction of the study. Participants made name preferences and chose to use their English name or their cultural names.

The interpretive phase provided an opportunity to explore the meaning of the data collected. For the interpretive phase of the study, a power point presentation was developed to present the initial emergent themes. The themes that were talked about in the interviews were utilized, and presented back to the participants to ensure validation of interpretation of the data. For example, in the data collection phase, the participants referred to the importance of seasonal cycles, the life cycle and the natural elements of earth, air, water and fire as natural teachers or leaders. The heuristic frameworks mentioned in the interviews provided culturally appropriate mechanisms to present the data analysis to the participants. I also considered the cultural symbols located in the Sty-Wet-Tan space and the leadership teachings from the oral histories (data) were reinforced by my understanding of the house posts. The house posts

provided a cultural framework to analyse the data and reinforced my leadership understandings about places, peoples and stories. Other IK frameworks mentioned were Indigenous wholism principles, which seek to consider all aspects of a situation such as the intellectual, physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions (Brown, 2004; Graveline, 1998; Hampton, 1995; Marsden 2005; Urion, 1995).

The leadership values and principles referred to by the participants provided examples of Indigenous knowledge frameworks which I incorporated into the organization of the data during the interpretive phase. This process provided additional member checking opportunities to validate the themes in the interpretative phase of the research.

The participants were invited to become involved in the research process and in decision making about the data and analysis because research that is a shared, reciprocal process is considered a culturally appropriate way to conduct Indigenous inquiry (Slim & Thompson, 1995). Triangulation of the data was provided by: member checking at the first and second interviews; by providing transcripts for revisions throughout the process; by re-reviewing the literature; and using the qualitative data analysis ATLAS.ti program and to analyse the findings.

I was aware that the interpretive phase provided socio-political relevance because the participants addressed commonalities such as history of racism and ongoing oppression in their life experiences. I was also conscious that the goals of research must help inform and address community issues and concerns in ways that reflect a culturally relevant approach to the collection, analysis and discussion of knowledge (Crazy Bull, 2004; Sandelowski, 2000). Therefore, because the participants address historical and ongoing socio-political and educational oppression, I used these themes as organizational features and brought the interpretations back to the participants for their review. This research analysis process was utilized in a way that is meaningful for the participants (Smith, 2005). For example, the oral history below provides leadership learnings that describe some of the challenges in contemporary First Nations leadership contexts. Outlining the importance of knowing about history, places, peoples and culturally relevant pedagogical approaches, Gerry Oleman reflects:

I am from a small community called the Seton Lake Indian Band, but its real name is Chilalth, which means by the lake. I can remember, I knew that there was a chief in the community and in those days the people looked up to chiefs.

As I grew up I went to residential schools and after I left there I started to look at community different and I wanted to be involved. I remember, don't know how old I was, in my twenties, when I was elected on to council - community council.

So it was my first encounter to leadership and I didn't know what I was doing. I can remember thinking, "oh I am going to learn now" and of course I was thinking traditional teachings. Organization and leadership and planning and that was what my fantasy [was] about, was what I was going to see. As I got involved, I quickly learned that what they were doing was the very start of the operation of the *Indian Act*, that it was coming now to the community because before that it was the Indian agent that would come in and tell them when to build houses what to do and they seemed to have a lot of power.

So all of sudden now the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) was starting to talk about core funding and the administration of dollars and then I seen that that was what the chief and council were doing, but it wasn't about the community per se, it was dollars for the community, but it was about how to deal with this aspect.

And I remember I was disappointed at the time because that's all it was. Administrating, it wasn't talking about the community and the needs and what was going on and so I was thinking that this is wrong.

So when I thought about the leadership at the House of Learning, I started to think of the value of tradition, teaching cultural traditions. That the traditions promote harmony and wellness in households and in our communities and with the language and with the learning and I started to see the value of that as whole education, as an insurance policy for the future, as contributors for the children and the grandchildren and that there is something going to be there for them even after we are long gone. And that was ingrained in the leadership.

I started thinking, okay, so how do we train leaders...The clan mothers would chose the leaders. And the clan mothers were appointed. You know because they had to have a trust-worthy mind. That they are not going to say you know, I want my son to be chosen, but that everybody knew that their mind was for their people and for the land. Because that was one of the laws was to have a good mind.

This storyteller shares his experience of leadership challenges and the need to reclaim respectful, traditional cultural values to form the foundations for healthy family and community development. The transformation needed requires decolonizing and self-determined approaches that are based on traditional cultural values. The Elder's oral life stories in this study advocates for leadership to know the history of peoples and places and promote relevant cultural pedagogy within an antiracism education framework. The leadership work the

storytellers advocate is transformative and contributes to the leadership work required in universities.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS: WHAT THE ELDERS SAID**

The Elders talked at length about the nature of Indigenous leadership. Using their terminology, I identified 105 categories using the Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis program. The categories were then grouped into nine themes based on their similarities and the contexts in which the storytellers used the terms. My choice of the themes is influenced by the literature, the storytellers' oral histories and the Longhouse Teachings. I chose to use the phrases from the interviews to represent the themes and noticed that the themes the Elders storytellers talked about were very similar to the literature review themes. The themes are: i) including Aboriginal historical perspectives - know the history of the land and educate others; ii) promoting positive cultural IK - reclaim culture-live the teachings; iii) providing decolonizing and self determined education - culture supports individuals, families and communities; iv) focusing on community service - leadership is a gift - step forward to demonstrate community responsibilities; v) wholism - relevance, vi) respect; vii) responsibility, viii) relationships and ix) reciprocity. However there are a number of inter-related ideas and principles that flow among these themes that are not easily separated. I include here my interpretation of the FNHL Sty-Wet-Tan Hall house posts and cultural teachings to help me understand the Elders' stories, since where learning takes place influences what is learned. As I strive to understand the Elders' stories, I must, therefore, consider how the Sty-Wet-Tan Hall house posts and other construction details helped me to organize the complex, interrelated themes of the stories.

#### **Sty-Wet-Tan: A Living Curriculum**

The First Nations House of Learning is a 2,043 square meter Coast Salish-style longhouse building constructed of West Coast red cedar logs named Sty-Wet-Tan, a Musqueam term which means the spiritual power of the west wind. It is the first of its kind on a North American university campus. It serves as an intellectual, social, spiritual and cultural home for Indigenous students attending UBC. Our Elders here teach us the importance of respectfully

sharing our knowledge and our home with others and to serve as hosts. The Longhouse has been described as a symbol of love and the belief in a spiritual power that makes all things possible. In creating this *home away from home*, having a physical place for learning in the traditional way has been a dream that has become a reality. Elder Tsimlano teaches that when we gather together we form a circle and join hands in reverence. In joining hands, hold your left palm upwards to reach back to receive the teachings of the Ancestors. Hold your right palm downward to pass these teachings on to the younger generation. In this way, the FNHL provides a place where the teachings of the Ancestors continue the circle of human understanding, which grows stronger (Kirkness, 2001). Thus, the Longhouse is a "living curriculum" that teaches and promotes core values and which influence how I interpret the Elders' stories. There are several features of the Longhouse that have particular significance: the house posts, the carved doors, and the roof beams, which I interpret in a way similar to the storywork principles articulated by Jo-ann Archibald (2005). In the following section I have interpreted the FNHL carved cedar house posts, Longhouse Teachings and the storytellers' oral histories. As I engaged with the Elders' stories, I also explored the Longhouse Teachings contained within the FNHL house posts located in Sty-Wet-Tan hall.

### The Elders Speak

The crucial background elements of the Sty-Wet-Tan space reinforced the stories of the Elders and influenced my interpretation of them. In the following section, the storytellers describe Indigenous leadership. From this, the nine themes that characterize their views can be discerned.

#### Leadership

Hopokeltun says that all people have the capacity for leadership based on their genealogies and gifts they have as individuals, in their families, within their communities and as Nation representatives.

Hopokeltun states:

I think for me there is only leadership...all leadership is based on the geographic location and language of the people 'round the world...I think it's an integral part of Indigenous life and education. It's all about leadership, it's about knowing and understanding who you are and where you fit not only as an individual but where you fit as a family member, where you fit as someone who belongs, as someone who is a part of the community and the communities that you are connected to. The guiding principle of being a good leader for my mother was someone who valued other people not only as human beings, but for their special gifts that [they] have to share with others. And if I was to be good leader then I had to understand myself as a good follower. So my early development in terms of leadership revolved around who I am...

Indigenous cultural leadership, it's built into the language, so historically followers and leaders are constantly being reinforced by language...and the understanding of where you fit in...So in our language in terms of leadership, in terms of culture, I am taught who I am and what my responsibility is in that position. Not only as an individual, but where I fit, in birth order in my immediate family and within my larger extended family as well...

The storytellers believe that leadership responsibility means developing your whole self as a person and as a person within a collective. The collective includes a specific land base and perspectives on how to be in a good relationship with one's self, with the community and with the land. The cultural expressions of these relationships include: using the traditional language, adopting cultural ceremonies based on dreams, presenting particular body language, and holding thoughts or prayers. These features that distinguish knowledge for Indigenous leadership contexts were woven throughout the storytellers' oral histories.

Many of the storytellers believe that an ongoing process of self-discovery is required for activism to make positive changes in community contexts. They urge that this process be consistently revisited, recommitted and revised according to the unique gifts given to individuals. Each must know how their gifts can be utilized in coalitions for strategic change. The storytellers acknowledge that these movements towards change must reflect local concerns, land ethics and values consistent with IK frameworks.

Gerry Oleman explains:

It is serious stuff, leadership. We are affecting the earth, we are affecting each other, it is so serious. Like when you know when you are being initiated, you really take that to your core, what this means, then you take it seriously. When you figure out how to do that, that's a life change and affects how you are in relationships, as a parent, spouse,

co-worker or in the case of a cultural ceremonial person and you become initiated when you are worthy.

See that's where we fall or fail today is we don't have moral or compassionate guidelines for the people. Now you get a degree and often in our communities those people are put into leadership positions. When potlatch was outlawed there was heavy racist principles happening on our BC peoples, and when I started to hear these old guys talking about not being able to talk, about not being able to ride above deck in a ferry, or being arrested for being, practicing cultural ways, not being able to vote and do this and that, I can see the impact of all of that in our leadership today.

You know my big concern is when we send people to universities and colleges is when they come home, are they going to be able to sit up all night in ceremonies, are they going to give a feast, save for years and give it away. Are they still going to have those core beliefs? If not we are losing them and we have a serious problem; losing our identities, so that's what I see. Indicators of cultural identity loss occur when we don't support culture as valuable and it's like we have the trappings of First Nations programming but they are still following [the] mainstream.

My brother and I remember, my uncles told us he showed us the mountains and he told us you take of them, it's yours, you know over that mountain and the other side of the mountain that river that now has become a lake that's yours too. So we were politicized that way by people who weren't identified as leaders, like chief and council. People had in their mind that there was something wrong happened here and that they were taken for a ride by the government, given reserves and those early guys, it was not just the reserve, it's all these mountains for as far as you can see, you know that's where we hunt and gather...

We teach our values and our philosophies the way we think in regards to our connection to the Earth. Because in technology they are talking about forestry about technology I know used wrongly hurts the Earth...I work in institutions now, in higher learning...I am there to teach what happened and educate students what we have to offer.

Culture informs leadership by providing values about how to interact in relationships, both with humans and non-humans. Values such as respect and connection were referenced by many of the storytellers. Each of the storytellers included the value of relationship as primary and that the quality of the relationship is highly regarded within an Indigenous wholistic framework. For example, Lee Brown elaborates:

The primary role of culture is to provide values and provide the methods by which we find our gift and have a good strong community within the values [that] are foundational to good leadership. Primary value which I already mentioned, which is relationship and it seems to me that relationship is a core value and that all our other values such as respect and kindness and cooperation and sharing and caring, all the good values that we have are aspects of relationship. So relationship is the central core value and that the role of culture is that it teaches how to be related. Related first to ourselves, related to the spiritual realm, related to the family, the community and the world around us, and the environment.

The best leadership is leadership of people who are not really trying to be leaders but who are trying to be helpers. Helper is really the word I prefer. It's a really good word. I remember that story I heard about Sitting Bull when he went to Washington, DC and he was told [about] the leadership of the United States, and he saw that the people in the leadership were very rich and powerful. He said this is a government that would lead to corruption and I think that sums up the Native ideas that leadership should be no wealthier than anybody else. The role of leadership should not separate you from the people; it should make you a part of the people. Anything that separates you from the people is not good; it's because our primary value is relationship, that we are related, anything that stops relationship is not good. I think this is directly opposed to the leadership in dominant society.

The end result can become where they use the leadership as a position of power to achieve or to get things for themselves. I think the biggest thing is where they get incredible amounts of money and that's not really our concept of leadership, it's not my concept of leadership... A real leader leads in such a way that the potentiality of all the people comes forward and is manifested. A poor leader leads in such a way that only their own potentiality is manifested and some leaders even oppress the group and try to actually limit the potentiality of others so that their potentiality will be greater. A good leader tries to get the group to do things that's why I like the community here at the Longhouse it seems like you do things together. It seems like the community is really innovative and into things. I think that's the best way where each person has their contribution that they make and learns from one another. It's not one person out front doing it all the time.

I think my practices have been informed by the Elders that I learned to listen to. I had the blessing of an Elder man when I was growing up [who] would often point out when people were leading in inappropriate ways. So then I would see that as an example of what not to do. And he might talk about stories about good leaders in the past, stories that contained the values and principles of good leadership I already mentioned. So for instance if a person was mis-conducting themselves or they were using their position to obtain money for themselves or their family, they might point that out and point out the fact that's not what leadership is, leadership is service and you give to others...With no expectation of any gain, or any kind of benefit other than the joy of knowing you had done something good to help the people and that you had done something to strengthen and to perpetuate the culture.

I am hoping that my thinking is rising to leadership in the sense of, by getting a PhD and by being able to write and being in the community I think that I am involved in a community here at UBC which is really on the cutting edge of a lot of things, a lot of thought and the cutting edge of Indigenous research and writing and reflecting about ourselves as an Indigenous community.

I am really happy to be a part of that community and I think whatever role I play in that community, whatever writing I can get done in the community I am hoping that it will have some influence, that it will help somebody somehow and in some way. What I want people to know is that our culture is important, that our values are important and as good as anybody else's. And we have something to offer, not only to ourselves but to other people. I think that the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* publication that is published here is pretty good. A lot of the writing coming out of here is pretty good. I think there is a lot of educational leadership happening here. For me it's really about hard work, working really hard, trying to focus that work on doing something that is helpful to the community...

The talk yesterday for education leadership position sounded like and looked to me that they spent their lifetime making their career on Indigenous research. All the research and every research project that they worked on was on Indigenous people in Canada and when I asked them how is this benefiting the Indigenous community and he didn't have a response. He said that there may have had some benefits in policy changes. Here's a guy who got some kind of award from Oxford by studying Native people, but what good is it if it doesn't help anybody.

Brown shares his views on wellness, educational leadership, ethics and reciprocal research:

The other hard work that relates to leadership and is very relevant is the work on purifying yourself...because as human beings we have the capacity to get off balance pretty easy. We need to be constantly focusing and examining our intent, especially in positions of leadership. And examining what it is we are doing in the community and if we are in a leadership position why are [we] doing it, who are we doing it for, who's benefiting from it?

I think for me too there's a certain amount of temptation in a lot of ways, getting offers from outside the community and to play certain roles. I would prefer not to do because the non-native community is very eager to cast you in a leadership role and we can end up being something you are not and can end up leading the community. I have seen this happening to a few people who basically ended up outside the community because of my desire to be of service it makes no sense to go outside the community. Because the real place of service is within the community. Besides I think some of the most exciting things in the world are happening in the community here.

Sahnbadis advocated supporting differences and was mindful of the fact that leadership training should not focus on cultural processes alone because leadership expressions will depend on the contexts and an individual's particular gifts. However, prospective leaders would benefit from a survey of distinguishing features of IK discourses through case studies and local leadership perspectives. Such a survey would enhance recognition and understanding of the distinguishing features of Indigenous leadership contexts, such as protocols based on local IK principles.

Leadership was also described as an innate form of individual knowledge that is based on personal experience. Shirley Bear said that leadership was earned through the enactment of the values such as respect for fairness and responsible actions demonstrated to individuals, to families and to the community through cultural and creative processes. Bear also spoke about the value of recognizing all the leaders, which is often neglected within communities today.

Bear explains:

We all have a sort of innate knowledge about our lives, and leadership was something earned and not something gained by any other form of popularity. So for us to look at

leadership today, I think a lot of us have neglected to look at the leaders, those really earn that respect and that responsibility and that sense of fairness. We would have honoured the leadership during those times, as we were growing up... since the 1400s.

For White Cloud, the adoption of off-shore or contemporary values at the cost of traditional values was identified as a contributing factor that led to cultural neglect. Storytellers talked about the balance of both contemporary and traditional values as required knowledge to function as effective leaders. They articulated that the values are inherent in the traditional practices and are best understood through direct active engagements. Cultural practices provide opportunities for continuity through intergenerational role modeling and enacting values for appropriate leadership development in Indigenous contexts. People were recognized through cultural processes. Cultural processes provide opportunities to demonstrate appropriate intergenerational leadership training and collective support. White Cloud encourages a regeneration of cultural processes to invigorate leadership praxis. She states:

We owe it to our people, we owe it to ourselves we owe it to the continuity of our people. The teachings that we were given that we need to think seven generations in to the future and it has to start with us and so we all have to be responsible for that. In the Aboriginal helping field we need to recognize that to support and help to bring our people to that place. We need to be role models and leaders to learn and share the cultural teachings and ceremonies.

Storytellers touched on a number of other relevant issues. Several of them talked about the influence of female leaders in their lives and the crucial issue of gender balance in the development of leaders. Hopokeltun illustrated this by talking about the design of the traditional West Coast big house structure. The house posts holding up the roof are alternately female and male. The genders are equally represented and required for a strong framework to house the place where community work is done. Other storytellers talked of the value of an experiential curriculum that could be based on, for example, canoe building and leadership within local canoe societies. Another storyteller, Hopokeltun, suggested that self awareness, language fluency and good following skills could be acquired through traditional cultural processes.

Hopokeltun elaborates:

I think transference of knowledge is important. How we do that is always a challenge and it should always be changing because it is important. I am happy now that we have talked because I have defined culture for myself and it is about our values and beliefs. The more we understand about our values and beliefs, the more we understand what our values and beliefs mean to our own leadership development.

Also the study of language and experiential learning, like how to carve a canoe, you don't have to get a big tree, and you can give them [students] a knife and say, "here, carve a canoe model". And tell them to research North West Coast canoes and during class time talk about leadership and the roles in the canoe. Who is the skipper, who is the bow man, who is the paddler, who is responsible for what and then you need canoe guides to do some training on the water, the tides, the currents, the description of the water, all that.

So they make a canoe model whether it is in glass or ten foot or a beautiful or stark one. How do you build a canoe? I think it would be an awesome teaching tool and then they would learn the importance of balance. Like if you carve a canoe, if they carve the model and they set it in the water, is it balanced in the water? Is it going to be safe to get into if it has a twist in it?

Further enhancing these teachings, learning your peoples' histories and the relevant genealogies were consistent themes cited for appropriate leadership development. The storytellers agreed that this information is acquired through continual training processes. The Elder storytellers remind us of the importance of knowing the history of places and peoples and the role of wholistic pedagogy in Indigenous leadership. In response to the major research question, the storytellers regarded cultural education as a transformative approach to Indigenous leadership development. Thus, the role of culture is to provide a transformative framework for the development of Indigenous leadership. The storytellers agreed that culture in Indigenous leadership is based on understanding such components as local intergenerational knowledge of genealogy, language and ceremonial practices. These aspects of culture are based on IK praxis. They are foundational to developing relevant leadership skills and play important roles in the development of positive families, nations and communities. A practical commitment to this knowledge over a life time was seen as decolonizing because it contributes to the conscientization process of the individual within the community. For me the Sty-Wet-Tan space also helps portrays these teachings. I understand that the spiritual power of the west

wind means to listen to the voices of the Ancestors, and that their voices can be heard through the places, the stories and the cultural practices.

## Nine Themes

The discussions of leadership provided by the Elders' in their stories suggest nine themes. As mentioned above, I discerned these themes in reference to Sty-Wet-Tan, the Longhouse, which provides an ever-present living curriculum.

Theme One: Including Aboriginal historical perspectives--Know the history of the land and educate others.

The storytellers described history as crucial to understanding the present context and providing foundations for respectful relationships. The storytellers shared personal accounts of racism and its continued impact today. The stories of internalized racism and shared colonial histories were seen as educational opportunities providing examples of a decolonizing approach to leadership education. In general, the concepts of restoring respectful relationships were the cultural values seen as missing in leadership training. Larry Grant explains:

We are a contributing factor in the formation of this country, which is denied by not having our culture recognized regardless of how diverse our cultures were and are. We played a major, major role in the structure of Canada. A systematic exclusion of the existence of Aboriginal culture and languages demonstrates a lack of respect for our cultures. The culture brings about ceremonies, language, geography, history and medicines. On the West Coast we have marine engineers who built the canoes, the structural engineers built the big houses, all of that. Cultural curriculum would identify how industrious, self sufficient, reliable and intelligent we were and are.

Knowledge of genealogical histories is a consistent theme identified throughout the storytellers' oral historical accounts. The storytellers agreed that the past informs present circumstances and that future endeavours can be transformed by those experiences. The common lived experiences of the storytellers include histories of oppression, racism and cultural harm.

The storytellers also identified the need to reclaim wholistic health through cultural training that has resisted the oppression of the past. Oleman relates:

Racism, religion, reservations, residential schools and RCMP;  
I started talking about these five R's and how important the teachings about how to live and where we come from today. We lasted through five hundred years of oppression and oppressive communication; this is how we got here. This is how I described it was the five R's because I saw them as the core reasons or indicators about why we are the way we are today.

Now if I was going to talk about the traditional teachings that you are talking about, the four R's, the Longhouse Teachings, they bring about awareness and we have cultural ways that people can look at themselves. In our language to say sweat lodge, we say K'ul'za, it means to look at yourself, and so when you go to the sweat lodge you are actually going there to look at yourself and if you see something wrong, then work towards changing it.

So that would probably be one of the first steps I would do if I was going to train leaders, have a way for them to look at themselves. You were showing me a diagram before and that's a good way of doing it. Physically, ceremonially, it would be more like the importance of having a spiritual way of life. People don't even think of that today. That means to me they are disconnected from the spiritual realms. If I can't see, it has no meaning. That is a scientific attitude and if it doesn't make the right splash or if you ask a hundred people then that makes it a scientific fact.

When I look at my existence, I see I have a mind, body and spirit. So they all need nourishing. If I don't have nourishment for my mind, I am not going to have health. If I sit down and someone is teaching me all this stuff of course I am going to grow...So that is how I started to look at training, say the physical for instance, we teach people how to take care of their body, that means that exercise is part of that, just doing a ritual everyday of walking, running or yoga or something or anything like that, overall it has an effect.

So leadership must have all these areas covered... I remember I was listening to an Elder in Alberta and he was talking about sweetgrass and he was talking about the braid. He said that is the mind, body and spirit. That is a representation. When you braid it together it is strong. If you let one go, it starts to unravel, it weakens. It makes sense and we believe what makes sense. Then we can reason that we need balance in our mind body and spirit.

So there came a time I connected more deeply with what I heard other people say, like the Elder in Alberta with the three strands, mind, body and spirit. You know this is over years and years of practise.

Larry Grant agreed that loss of respect and lack of appropriate leadership role models affects the social, political and educational conditions today:

We want culture in the curriculum because culture brings out who you are. It identifies you and that is what is really needed to reverse the degradation of who we are. With the culture comes the language because culture creates the language. You don't talk about something you have never done before, you do the deed and then you do the language. Culture is there for self-identity and enhances self worth.

Having culture in the curriculum helps the person to identify because the recognition of culture in curriculum is something that is needed because culture creates the self image and the self worth. It brings with it the language and with the language you fully

understand exactly what has happened to create the word in the language. That has all been taken away from us since the residential school time because prior to the residential school people existed in this country side by side. The culture also talks to you about seasonal activities. You know when it is time to go fishing then you don't wait for tomorrow to go fishing you go fish today. This whole thing about Indian time is goofy, because our people had to work when it was time to work, not when we felt like it.

Culture brings about the understanding of self-sufficiency and all of that is tied into the cultural curriculum, which brings about the relevance of Aboriginal people in the formation of country called Canada. Many of our people through the loss of culture and the loss of respect of Aboriginal culture occurred through the school system, a lot of this is a transfer of the knowledge from the original residential school people, that has degraded our cultural standards and created a disrespect or dislike for the old cultural ways the old ceremonies all the old, or considered old stuff...Through the degradation of culture and values that I believe our young people are not able to carry on an industrious life, in the sense of success.

Grant suggests that the cultural harm suffered by Aboriginal peoples in residential schools resulted in a form of cultural brainwashing. He believes that culture is a contemporary life skill which values the stories of creation, the re-creator and the transformer as ways to convey respect for the resources that feed people and help to restore harmonious relationships and overcome difficulties. Grant emphasizes:

If you research what goes on with our language, the level of sophistication that is in Indigenous languages is passed on for generation after generation. This occurred without one certified linguist, without paper and pencil. Something that our contemporaries are not able to grasp and that is the huge thing that keeps our young people out of school because we don't identify with anything, to me that is what is keeping our kids out of school. I think they have not gotten beyond the transfer of knowledge, the degradation effects from the residential school.

Grant's ideas about understanding the history of belief systems is critical for successful identity development and contributes to leadership. He indicates that oral tradition forms such as orality are foundational to understanding the IK epistemologies that can inform leadership development. Grant illustrates:

When I asked my mom, do we have a church service? She says that's not ours. I say when you say it is not ours what do you mean? She said that's the white man's way of understanding how they become where they are. Not ours, we have a different story, we have a different belief of how we are here...

[In the big houses orality is key] it is not a place or worship or religion. When you are speaking and use that word wholistic in training for leadership, that is what that building is, it is wholistic. It is where you live that is where [you] procreate and that is where you watch people die. We have naming ceremonies in there, you had memorials in there you had puberty rights in there, marriages, and it is all part of normal everyday life.

It is not a place of worship although today a lot of younger people bring in organized spirituality. If you talk about it, sometimes there is a little bending of noses, a little out of joint. Because a lot of those big houses were places of residence, many of the things [we] were just talking about took place outside in the field in front of the big houses. That is why you'll see in some of the old pictures of our village. They have potlatch platforms out in the middle of the village. They held the potlatches out there in the fall probably either that or in the springtime. Inside the big house structure it is only since anti potlatch legislation came in effect that all of these things moved in doors.

When I listen to the Elders and consider the meaning of their stories, I note the house post by Susan Point that reminds us of the importance of knowing the history of places and peoples as well as the role of wholistic pedagogy in Indigenous leadership. The storytellers talked about the importance of including Aboriginal historical perspectives because of a lack of access to this information. This results in a lack of cultural identity and a noticeable absence of social, educational and leadership success.

Susan Point is from the Musqueam Nation and her house post is a carving of the raven transformer figure. The raven transformer sits on a spindle whorl, a circular disk that helps to spin goat or dog hair that reminds me of the teaching that everything in the circle is equal and all gifts are related and integral to the whole. The gifts of the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual realms are still relevant in the stories and teachings today. They require an active re-engagement to deepen this core knowledge from within to fully transform their leadership potential. This reinforces the Elders teachings to "know the history of the land and educated others" which can transform your leadership potential.

Theme Two: Promoting positive cultural Indigenous Knowledge - Reclaim cultural values  
- live the teachings

Understanding IK through positive cultural education -- oral histories of Elders, symbols and storytelling to teach values, for example contribute to the pedagogy of transformative leadership. Lee Brown believes that cultural values are important pedagogical considerations that form a foundation for transformation. He states:

I think that all people's values should be taught. Students should learn something about the values of all people around the world when they go to school and to understand how values are different. Just to be aware of what their values are, most people functioning in

the dominant society do not understand their values they don't have to but oppressed people have to be aware of the values of the oppressors. The oppressors do not have to be aware of their own values or the values of the oppressed because of the power relations that are involved in that equation.

It's always difficult to express the extreme diversity of all the students that come to university but I think what we can do is identify those cultural universals that people agree upon. Practice those as much as possible and allow the diversity to manifest through the individuals that are here. If we focus on the universals of prayer, fasting, sharing food, things that almost all tribes do and find ways to do that together. I think the diversity will arise naturally out of the diverse people who are here. We don't want to give up the cultural universals that we have because people are upset about the cultural specifics, but somehow deal with the specifics within a universal framework.

Quite a few authors I have been reading, you know Cajete, Duran, and many others all say that our culture is much more universal than anybody thinks, even though there's a tremendous diversity on the surface of the tribes, but if you start looking at what is actually happening, the real values underneath everything that is going on are just about the same from tribe to tribe.

So we see that values are the way that people do things; the content or the culture is what is being done, the culture seems to vary a lot from tribe to tribe. But the process the way in which things are done, the values behind all these ceremonies whether they be coastal ceremonies or whether they are plains or Okanogan style ceremonies, the values are basically the same. The differences are on the surface and when get really deep into it, the values are the same.

Eventually all the ceremonial processes we have always led people towards their gift, ultimately towards finding themselves and accepting, finding the balance and finding the gift and using it. Every tribe has a way of doing this and could look very different from one tribe to another but the process of what's happen from tribe to tribe is very similar.

Brown talked about the importance of developing self awareness through exploring cultural values. Brown believes that individuals who have the opportunity to explore their values and how their values inform their thoughts and actions will, given the opportunity, also develop understandings about how other forms of leadership operate. Cultural processes give leaders in training opportunities to explore how cultural knowledge and leadership are transmitted in particular contexts. Brown explains:

Culture not only provides the values through which a person can be a good leader, the values of service of respect for others and for serving and helping others, it also provides the institutions by which a person can rise to leadership...

Sometimes a community within the culture chooses specific people to become leaders in certain ways because the Elders in their wisdom perceive certain young people have certain kinds of gifts, talents and abilities and are assisted through cultural processes so that they can be strengthened and so they can become good strong leaders of the people...

I think in the last thirty years we have healed ourselves to an amazing extent. The alcoholism rates are way less – almost half of what most populations around the world. I think we are rewriting our systems of education and our ceremonies are strengthening. People are starting fasting again not by the hundreds, but by the thousands. So there are a lot of good things happening and I think that an amazing amount of our knowledge still exists and is coming out. From different places, through different authors I think it's amazing it's there.

I think the number one most important thing is addressed and not only addressed but it's actually done here. It is understanding the cultural protocols. Another very important thing is the understanding of respect and relationship. One of the things I really like about the LLP and the Longhouse is the respect for the local Indigenous community. The inclusion and the relationship to the Musqueam community here is a really important part of protocol and it teaches the students to observe protocol and to observe respect. So I think protocols and understanding relationship and by learning how to be of service to others. I think the LLP models a way of service because the LLP itself is a service to the community. It's important for students to see that...

I think we need schools where the curriculum is balanced. I think Indigenous people, Canadians and Indigenous peoples around the world have a vision of that and have held to that vision. To me that is a big part of the major shift that Graham Hingangaroa Smith talks about that needs to occur. One of the ways I would justify culture in curriculum is that people are going to [be] working with students and some – in the case of education – people are going to be teaching Indigenous people. I gave a half hour talk in a class of education students that are graduating with a teaching degree last spring. Many of the students in the class said it was the only information they got about First Nations students in five years of college, which I thought was terrible because many are going to be teaching Native students. They need that cultural understanding. Teachers need to be aware of not only Indigenous cultures but all other cultures in the world. We need to make the school system where all cultures are respected and the values of all students are respected.

The values that the students have, the students are able to use those values to promote their own learning rather than have to adopt a completely different set of values, which is what happens now. Everybody that goes into the system has to adopt Western system of values of individualistic competition rather than a tribal awareness of cooperation, and having a more harmonious way of doing things, we all have to adopt the western world's way of competitive education. So I think culture should be there. Culture contains the values, the values should be made explicit.

The house post that most closely relates to this theme is the one by Stan Bevan and Ken McNeil, which is about the teaching of transforming ourselves and respecting community contexts by understanding cultural protocols. Stan Bevan and Ken McNeil, who represent the Talhltan, Tsmishan, Tlingit and N'isga Nations, carved a post of a human transforming into a raven and then back into a human. The raven, a trickster transformer figure, reminds me that we are transformed and educated through our journeys in life. We must remember where we come from through the rediscovery of our respective genealogies and honour their cultural

expressions. The raven represents cultural transformation and demonstrates that the good way teachings must benefit future generations. The promotion of positive IK, reclaiming and living the teachings are identified as important for understanding Indigenous leadership because they provide elements of transformation that can inform contemporary contexts. Humility is often demonstrated through humour as a form of affection and is a particular learning form that utilizes metaphor and stories such as the trickster character. Stan Bevan and Ken McNeil's house post depicts the human that is transformed by Trickster. We must honour our gifts in life with reverence and remember the importance of humility and humour in transforming our teaching, researching and learning. This house post reminds me that the leader (helper), the teacher (follower) and the learner can be transformed by the cultural values of the local community. This reinforces the Elders' teaching to "reclaim cultural values and live the teachings."

Theme 3: Providing decolonizing and self-determined education - Culture supports individuals, families and communities.

Decolonizing and self determined education could provide understandings to facilitate stronger extended familial relationships between all like-minded peoples. Decolonizing and self-determined education approaches could mobilize a culture under threat to reclaim cultural knowledge and values that inform activism for change. Cultural knowledge and values are sources of strength for individuals, families and communities. N'kixw'stn illustrates how knowing about your history provides knowledge about the land and how the people worked together to create a self-determined community. This knowledge is seen as decolonizing because it provides people with knowledge of history, place and language that could be useful in mobilizing people towards local self determined goals. N'kixw'stn states that:

Indigenous leadership was hereditary and there are many geographical benches in that area and each geographical bench had a chief. They used horses and dogs to move from one point or bench to another. So they had to have a leader for each bench. A bench, if you look at a mountain, there's a straight up and down and then there's a little cut off, the geographical area just chipped away a section of the mountain then there's a little shelf there. And that's the bench. And each bench had a chief and his helpers.

The chiefs and counsellors would journey to Skamjeem, Lytton and they would plan things like, my knowledge is from when the European taught Native people to plant vegetables, they would plant things like okay Siska your going to plant corn, Skojean your going to plant beans and each bench was selected to grow one product and that was spring time and then everybody would go back their places of reign and they would do it all summer long and in fall or when it was time to harvest, they bring all their produce to the centre again at Skamjeem and what they bring there that's the leftovers because all through the summer when its time to harvest the corn, all the people from the other benches would go over to Siska to harvest the corn.

Each family from each bench would take the amount of corn that was needed to their home and so when it was time to harvest beans, they would all journey to Skojean and they would harvest there and so what was left they would bring it to the centre to Skamjeem and so who ever came there, like people from Cooks Ferry, Merritt, Lill'owat Hope, they would journey there and take what they want and bring it back to their homes. That's how it was done the people where pretty much in charge of the chief.

The storytellers provided leadership stories that emphasized working toward providing safe, healthy individuals and families as important leadership goals because families are the foundation of the community. The community includes extended family and is fundamental in understanding its collective requirements. In response to the major research question, the storytellers regarded cultural education as a transformative approach to Indigenous leadership development. The storytellers agreed that culture in Indigenous leadership is based on the understanding of components such as local intergenerational knowledge of genealogy and language and ceremonial practices that are self-determined and informed through millennia of experience. These aspects of culture play roles in the development of positive families, nations and communities and are based on IK praxis. They are seen as foundational to developing relevant leadership skills. Maintaining the intention to engage with and apply this knowledge over a life time was seen as decolonizing because it contributes to the conscientization process of the individual within the extended family community.

The storytellers believe that an ongoing embodiment of the cultural teachings is required for activism, to interact and to make positive changes in community contexts, because these teachings enhance self-determined identity both within the individual and the within collective. They urge that engagement with cultural teachings be consistently revisited, recommitted and revised to reflect the unique gifts given to individuals and to consider how their gifts can be

utilized in coalitions for local self-determined strategic change. They acknowledge these movements towards change must reflect local concerns, land ethics and values consistent with IK frameworks. Oleman shares:

The part of the culture I am talking about is the spirit of the culture or the way of life and the principles [of] the philosophy of our cultures, but I look at mainstream culture. Indiscriminate acts against the earth, people just don't seem to care about culture. I see our principles as being healthy. It is better to help than to hurt people. You get more benefits from that and that's cultural ways. If you see people hoarding they are not healthy. Things are not going to get better they are going to get worse if we follow mainstream culture. You see the main principles about the way our people thought, the ways they interacted with the land and how we need to maintain those principle through cultural practices and protocols are important for our leadership development.

Our leadership needs a lot of development. There are a lot of people suffering unnecessarily. Suffering in life is a given; we are going to lose people through death, accidents sometimes different things, we are going to be hungry, but unnecessary suffering where there's cruelty toward each other and people are dying and they don't have to die and that kind of stuff. We need leadership, we need inspiration, and we need confidence because if I trust your mind, I am going to follow you. Because I know you are not going to trick me, I know that you are going to go right to the end with me.

Lyle Wilson's house post reminds me of the importance of extended familial relationships. Lyle Wilson is from the Hiasla Nation, the house post he carved is the eagle and beaver, which represents his parents' family crests or clans. The house post reminds me of the importance of relationships and extended familial relationships. There is a circular cedar braid around the eagle's head that reminds me of the strength of the braid. The three strands represent the mind, body and spirit and represent wholistic approaches to a leadership journey. The braid is stronger than its individual strands and I use this analogy to illustrate Indigenous wholism, which includes the relationships that exist in creation as potential resources for leadership development through the relating of stories, traditional teachings based on places and life experiences to build healthy extended family relations. The seasonal cycles, the life cycle and the natural elements of earth, air, water and fire as natural teachers or leaders are examples of applying local pedagogy that could begin to restore respectful relationships with both human and nonhuman forms of life on Earth. The house post by Wilson is a physical description of this lesson because it reminds us of the teachings of extended families. This post also helps to illustrate the storytellers' leadership stories that emphasized safe, healthy

individuals and families as important leadership goals because families are the foundation of the community. The community includes extended family which is fundamental in understanding its collective needs. Research that assists communities in articulating their self-determined goals will provide appropriate service, advocacy and coalition building as important reciprocal leadership contributions. This reinforced the Elders' teachings that "culture supports individuals, families and communities".

Theme four: Focusing on community service - Leadership is a Gift - Step forward to demonstrate community responsibilities

Many of the Elder storytellers agreed that to serve the community is both a gift and a responsibility. Focusing on community service is critical for bringing attention to theoretical discussions and contributes to understandings of transformative leadership practice and informs collective intergenerational leadership orientations. Culture is viewed as healthy resources for community and family living. Leadership skills develop through community cultural processes and protocols. Brown illustrates how culture supports community service:

I would describe Indigenous leadership as service to others. I think the real essence of leadership as we understand it is to be of service to your family, your community, your clan, your Nation and in a broader sense to all the people. And I think that service any individuals is greatest when a person is able to find their own gift and can use it wisely for the blessing and the benefit of those around them. I am involved with many cultural activities such as the powwows it is an exercise in serving and giving to the community, doing something for the community. With no expectation of any gain, or any kind of benefit other than the joy of knowing you had done something good to help the people and that you had done something to strengthen and to perpetuate the culture.

I see my role is to raise awareness to bring not only some culture in the classroom a complete total change in the way that we are educating people moving from just a cognitive to a wholistic approach. The approach itself has to be wholistic and that is a huge change for people who have been totally focused on the cognitive all their lives.

I remember one of the Elders one day pulling out some grass and throwing it into the wind and saying that is how the people are becoming and that is seems like how his words are coming true that a lot of people are just like grass blowing in the wind. They don't have a teaching or any kind of way they are going by. I think though even in the urban area a lot of people are finding those ways for themselves. I think people will find their way but if they have a teaching there they have more to work with. It's a question of what a person has to work with to make a good life. To me the teachings are about having a good life and if you have good teachings they can help support you in those times when you need them.

You have to have some kind of discipline and devote time when these things are being done on a regular basis. I think that we need something each and everyday and the larger ceremonies that are in line with the other movements of time that are around us of time like the movement of the moon and sun. In those times we have to have things that we practice, things we actually do, because to have the teachings you need to practice them, there is a responsibility to them. It is still good to have the teachings but to really get the most out of them you have to be using them, practising and living them.

N'kixw'stn contributes by stating that leaders demonstrate respectful community responsibilities:

A good leader is someone who is willing to lead the people anywhere is feasible to helping the people. And be willing to go the route themselves. Their beliefs have to be the same as the mission statement so that when they lead they also believe in the same as the rest of the people in. Like walk your talk.

Practical leadership skills mentioned by the storytellers included developing understandings of human nature and how to motivate self and others. Training in making presentations, interaction with healthy role models and mentoring opportunities within an Indigenous wholistic framework were also talked about. Norma Rose Point states:

After getting to know the people in the FNHL community, I felt more comfortable getting to know the students and becoming a student myself made a difference. I am really glad I did go back to school. At first, I really didn't think that I had anything important to say until the Indigenous Graduate Symposium in 2005 a student came to me with tears in her eyes and said that was just great. I never ever knew I had that effect on people. It was like when I was in social work we would talk and say things to people you know is right. They are looking for help and you help them. It is like when people say oh it gave me goose pimples. Like when the warrior dancers from Musqueam this one time I heard them and it gave me this feeling over my whole self. They gave it a Musqueam word for it and they say there is no translation for that feeling or affect. There is that feeling that you can't put into words, the unspoken word.

This is how I do the opening or the farewell. Just say things that will help and give them guidance. People do need guidance to open their hearts and do the right thing for themselves and the people. It is important to have an understanding of your history. What it means. How it developed. Interpreting what is being taught and to take what is necessary to carry on with life. You do not do things to yourself or to others that would be harmful. Always being safe and providing a safe atmosphere.

I think if leadership had an understanding of human nature as a part of building leadership. I think that is part of being taught for leadership is acting the part appropriately and presenting yourself in that part, the way that you carry yourself is important. How to act in public, your mannerisms, it doesn't come natural, it is taught through role modelling and parenting.

Chief Walter Harris and his son Rodney from the Gitskan house also spoke to this theme through their carving of a wolf holding a wolf cub, presented on a post of his matrilineal clan.

The wolf represents the firm foundation of culture based on millennia of expertise. The teaching echoes the many prophecies that we have responsibilities to all the relationships in creation. Responsible interactions with others and the land must include and benefit the seven future generations. Three human figures stand on the wolf head representing the people who come to the university. They remind me of the importance of ally coalitions for change and equity in our education and society building. Two figures are listening and one is speaking, teaching us to listen twice as much as we speak and with both ears as well as with the heart. This post also helps to illustrate the storytellers' leadership stories that emphasized working towards providing safe, healthy individuals and families as important leadership goals because families are the foundation of the community. The community includes extended family and is fundamental in understanding its collective needs. Research that assists communities in articulating their self-determined goals will provide appropriate service, advocacy and coalition building as important reciprocal leadership contributions. This reinforces the Elders teachings to "live the teachings" of providing community service.

#### Theme five: Indigenous Wholism – Relevance

Indigenous wholism characterizes Aboriginal epistemologies and pedagogical approaches. These ideologies and approaches are relevant to understanding that all aspects of the situation are considered, such as the mind, body, spirit and heart and are inter-related in Aboriginal ways of knowing and leading. Oleman elaborates:

Qwe'el'Chen, what brings everything together like that between a man and a woman and is important for identity and that had a huge influence on my spiritual development, I believe. And I started to think about what holds me together and when I started to think in those terms...It is not male or female but it is there, it is a force. And when you make a connection to that force then you are going to be okay...That is where the power of love comes from and the respect. When you connect with it, you are okay and when you are disconnected from it that is where you fall in love with power because we think that we are it. We have this belief that we have power with others and with nature.

In order to work towards change, I had to look at myself and heal myself. So some cultural events that helped me were the initiation ceremony to the smoke house here and my first vision quest had profound effects on me. I had to face myself, my thinking...I had to become responsible for my thinking and my choices. I owned my life. I took ownership of my life.

That realization came to me on deeper levels of my awareness. I wanted to heal myself so I asked a person who knew how to take people out to fast on the mountain so he took me there and I was glad they took my clothes away because I may have left the fasting area as soon as I had to confront my thinking because I was by myself with my mind. I had to start taking responsibility for my thoughts and their effects on my being so I had to confront myself, my thinking. The people came to get me and I was changed. I really understood at a deeper level what they mean about balancing the mind, body, spirit, it became more than a cultural symbol at that point.

Cultural symbols are important because they assist in positive identity formation and provide protection from racism because I am ready to defend my culture because I have some awareness and experiences that tell me that my culture is positive. Culture and symbols can help others to understand racism in Canadian history.

Positive culture in the curriculum and the learning environment will help students be successful. Stories about the trickster, transformer and coyote are some of the other teaching stories that teach about making mistakes. I remember the story about the old basket lady who would collect the children after dark. She taught us to be careful when the night was out because she would fatten you up with food and then eat you. Stories are important because they teach leadership through the characters in the stories. They help give meaning and are instructional such as the trickster character teaches us what not to do. It took me a long time to really understand a lot of the teachings. I hear them over and over again each time I understand a little more...

I learned how to discipline myself, and I began to develop my own standards from within. Another thing I did as training was to look after a stick for a week. I had to take care of it and take it wherever I went, if I forgot it somewhere I had to go back and get it. I wanted to heal. I followed the direction of my teacher, those who know how to do ceremonies. The stick was the symbol for life and I learned how to take care of it. It was a way to develop or train my self-discipline. I share my knowledge gained with others and focus on training that supports healthy families and healthy environments.

Leadership and life are considered gifts and culture provides a wholistic framework for the expression of the gifts. Spirituality expressed in ceremonies provides roles for serving the community responsibly. Developing a spiritual centre, through cultural practices, provides assurance and knowledge of who you are, what your intentions are and which direction you are heading. Developing spiritual connection also helps you move towards a more meaningful communal existence. Sahnbadis contributes:

It is important to localize who we are talking about when we begin to talk about Indigenous culture specific to North America. We have an awfully difficult job because like out here at the university, if ever there was a unique, it long ago became intertwined with neighbouring cultures. People have assimilated aspects with good heart and mind. Some find value in something that doesn't come from their own Indigenous background and if we subject all Indigenous persons by birth and geography as thinking alike then that's a mistake. It wreaks hardship on the people who have tried to become what they

are not. It closes the door to change, which anything culture, anything in order to stay alive it changes...

There was a native Blackfoot woman whose background is the same as mine one native and one non-native parent, and we had the same complexion problem too. We thought about that and what we developed and she ended up using in her own her own association was a way of accessing for an individual a degree of, for want of a better term, assimilation.

By looking into different aspects of a person's existence anywhere, we have a spiritual existence, we have a vocational existence, we have an educational existence and we so we use some criteria like that and... it is a good tool. It turned out to be a valuable diagnostic tool which was very valuable in treatment programming because a lot of people don't realize where they are in that assimilation spectrum, how much of the new culture have they adopted and how much the old culture do they retain and usually there is a difficulty that people don't recognize. They don't really know how come they feel that way.

And it's because they are making a cultural great leap they are going from one culture to another that is always hazardous for any people. Whether it be from immigrant ethnic people from Europe or other places. Just differing from their origins or Native people for some, many, many complicated reasons now are adding things from another culture. So once you establish that identity diagnostic tool, a way of assessing where you stand, then ask the person, are you comfortable with where you are or is there something you need to add or change and go from there. That's why I call it a diagnostic tool because you begin a treatment plan to help people get to where they want to be. And it could be used to decide, what is Indigenous about this tool? Again deciding what's in the new and what is in the old is involved...

I was listening to a talk about the treaty when the Dutch came up the Hudson River to the Haudenosaunee. They used the wampum belt to show the two streams, one with the ship in it, the other in a canoe, and Philip Deere said that it made the differences; a person can't be in both canoes. And it hit me: I can't help be but in both canoes. I am born that way. As painful as it has been to deal with that over time I come to see that that's a gift.

I think that's true of a whole lot of other people who haven't recognized that in themselves...In order for a person to become a leader, going through that gaining respect for themselves ...and what they are what they have to offer and I think that's where spirituality comes in. Because I think spirituality supplies that our way of looking at things transcends boundaries of physical being and we start talking about things that don't have a physical being... Gitchie Manitou is not a physical person, but is very real to us, for example, in our prayers we establish Mishomis spiritual grandparents because that's an immediate we know about them, that they love us and care about us. By extension of this spiritual relationship, we are then related to all of creation. This is a gift and a responsibility.

White Cloud further elaborates on the importance of incorporating our personal and collective visions to help guide leadership qualities:

You know to find that spirit within and the journey and the path you are here for. Actually I like using that and sharing that with people who are searching. I also share that each in our own tribal backgrounds, it doesn't matter what tribe you come from whether its

from northern BC, the Prairies or the West Coast or Africa or Mexico or Europe, that we all come from a tribe and all tribes on mother earth we all have our spiritual base. So I encourage people to seek out that spiritual base within themselves within their tribal group because that comes from the very DNA of our being.

I believe that is what I was answering to when I went in to that sweat lodge, when I finally found this is where I belong this is what I was searching for. I believe that I was led there in my dreams and everything that I was doing at the time for my own well being. That was a cry coming from the very depths of my being and that is what led me on my journey. I had to go deep into pain before I came out of it and brushed the pain off and then started searching for that spirit within me and that spirit from my people, my own Ancestors. It comes from the DNA of our people and so I believe everybody on Mother Earth has that and so if they really searched for that and honour that and worked at finding that place, we would be far happier people...

This young man came from northern Vancouver Island and he would phone me and find out when I was doing a ceremony whether it was [at] a sweat or a pipe ceremony. So finally I asked him because I was curious as to why he was coming because it was quite a ways you know, it would take hours to come to ceremonies. He said my Elders in our village remember when we used to have sweats and pipes and they sent me out to learn about it and I selected you and this other man who was my friend to learn from so that is why I am tagging you. Every time I hear about you, you know I am here learning. I need to learn these things. It is because I want to take them back to our people and they are Coast Salish people.

So I think I was given all that information like that vision way back when for a purpose, because you fast forward quite a few years and here I am on the island and these archaeological digs are coming up and this information is coming to me and it is all connected. I believe there is always a connection to our visions and especially that one when I was given that vision of ancient sweat lodges all over Turtle Island and the archaeological digs are proving that.

White Cloud addresses the concerns about the appropriation and exploitation of IK and cultural expressions:

When I see that, I think that is so sad and I really don't know to handle it, because when I see a person of another race coming in and learning and all of a sudden, they are advertising. I know this one guy, here in Vancouver he advertises that he does sacred ceremonies and pipe ceremonies and sweat lodges in the paper. I don't know where he learned that but it saddens me and he charges for that. It is exploitation. I call this a cultural and spiritual exploitation. He is not connected to [the] Aboriginal community at all. I think he caters to the new age groupie people and then you can even look at the web. I was doing some researching there and I came across this piece of information and I thought, oh this sounds good and then I read the bio of the guy and he wasn't even Aboriginal. They always claim that they have this Aboriginal spiritual teacher that gave them permission to do this. I always question it...

I used to do ceremonies with non-Native people and what I would share with them is that if you want to be a strong spiritual person you owe it to yourself to go back to your tribal area and your tribal people, your ancient teaching where ever you are from. Your most powerful way of being in this world is to take up your own tribal background and your own spirituality because that sense of tribal being is in your DNA.

I used to get a lot of non Native people really angry with me. This one woman who said I want to do what you are doing and I said no, don't. Go follow your own. Don't take up what I am doing. This is my way, Aboriginal anyway, how could you claim it. The stuff that I am doing comes from the very part of who I am. My sense of who I am as an Aboriginal person, my grandfathers and grandmother my Ancestors from time immemorial. They give me these visions and this is what I come with. I would tell them, I urge you to follow your own spiritual journey.

White Cloud elaborates on how ceremony can assist those who are seeking to learn more about their Indigenous cultural expressions:

Culture is very powerful and Indigenous culture is something that has come back to our people again and has given us a very strong base of strength to build from, and we have many people coming to various ceremonies and circles seeking to find out who they are as Indigenous people. They are seeking out their culture and that culture can also define Indigenous people because we have a particular way of being in the world as Indigenous people. We have a different worldview than all the other cultures, some similarities, but our view of culture I think is very unique.

I see that it has to start with the family systems and encouraging in supporting the families and children to actively seek out their culture and their traditions and their spirituality and use that as a source to develop self esteem and confidence and self discipline in who they are. Taking back who they are and all the goodness that comes with our culture and traditions. Incorporating those teachings in to our schools and communities, the culture has to be revived and lived.

You know the Anishnabe prophecies where the Elders are sleeping and so the Elders and the spiritual people have to go back to our traditions and culture and our spirituality to reclaim that and walk with that and use it as a source of strength. That is a big job. You can not make a person you can lead them gently along and hope that they will take that up and work with it. You know in my everyday work I see a lot of families wanting that, they are craving it. They are searching for their identity and some of them still have to work some of their anger and their shame that was handed down generation after generation. But at least they are reaching out and I even see some of the Elders doing that. They are acknowledging that I don't have the cultural and spiritual knowledge as you have. And these are Elders that are older than I. I encourage them to learn, we have to start someplace. When I shared my teachings and practices with communities they started to remember their own ceremonies just by listening and participating.

These teachings on wholism complement another important feature of Sty-Wet-Tan: the carved relief doors by Bradley Hunt from the Haisla Nation, which represent the life cycle of the salmon. This reminds me of the responsible stewardship roles we must employ to maintain the interconnections of the earth, air, water, fire and non-human forms such as plants and animals for the benefit of present and future generations. This knowledge is inherent in the stories of intergenerational knowledge and must be treated with respect and honour according to the protocols for protecting IK from exploitation and consumerist practices that cause harm. Bradley

Hunt's carved doors remind us of our responsibility to our relatives in creation. Indigenous wholism is relevant pedagogy and is represented in the door carvings. The relevance of Indigenous wholism is emphasized in the literature reviewed and in the Elders' stories. The themes are described by the storytellers here as inter-related or wholistic concepts and are reflective of IK epistememes.

#### Theme six: Respect

Respecting self, others and the environment were concepts common to the storytellers' reflections on leadership development. Living healthy lifestyles and interacting with cultural knowledge and principles can provide a foundation for sovereign, safe and sober living. Developing a cultural identity tool to assist people to move towards their leadership gifts and to respect their cultural integrity was recommended. Sahnbadis shares:

We have respect for all living things. Now if we are to make anything of that as a necessary principle for leadership, then we go ahead and say now what do we do that would give a person the ability to respect others? First of all they have to respect themselves. So self-awareness is important, and now we are back to the diagnostic tool as a starting point. Self-awareness [could be enhanced through the identification and development of relevant cultural values to enhance leadership competency training].

It is that I think leadership is a gift and the people who have it, have a gift. That's not helpful to say because you're trying to develop leadership, you need to go beyond it somehow and those who aren't particularly gifted at least give them some tools so they may be able to function as leaders. And I do have something to say about that...leadership goes beyond the ordinary.

When I hear stories about respect, I consider the roof beams carved by Don Yeomens from the Haida Nation that represent the sea lion and killer whale. They look identical at first glance, representing the importance of discernment and reciprocal mutually beneficial service, especially in our research relationships with Indigenous communities. These values appear to be universal goals, yet the methods required for achieving them will have different cultural expressions. The roof beams reminds us to be respectful of difference in our engagements, to continue to cultivate our own core cultural knowledge and to go beyond the ordinary.

## Theme seven: Responsibility

Responsibility to ensure that land resources are kept healthy by sustainable, environmentally-friendly practices was a concern for the storytellers. They suggested that the revitalization of traditional ecological knowledge and creative processes could inform resource management of benefit to all peoples. This was absolutely crucial. Grant explains:

My generation was one of the last to have to move by the seasons... It is like the first story, because those creatures allowed you to harvest them; they are the creatures that give up their life so that your life can carry on and that is the thing about respecting the resource ...that has been given up just for you.

In a male-dominated society it is easy to forget the responsibilities held by women. Several storytellers talked about how influential female leaders are in their lives and that gender balance was seen as absolutely critical to their development as leaders. One of the storytellers illustrates this by talking about the design of the traditional West Coast big house structure. The house posts that hold up the roof are alternately female and male. The genders are equally represented and required for a strong framework to house the place where responsible community work is done.

## Theme eight: Relationships

The storytellers identified relationships as a common value. They believe that the restoration of positive healthy relationships can be demonstrated through cultural processes so that the potential of all people, families and communities is enhanced. They mentioned that leadership responsibilities include teaching others about cultural identity, protocols and practices. They agreed that it was important to step forward, to take risks, to demonstrate community involvement, develop family support systems and provide advocacy. Bear explains:

I think I described how I see as language as culture. What I don't see these days and I think the sense of loss that young people are facing is that there is not as strong sense of cultural awareness because if they didn't grow up with in their home with their moms or dads and grandparents. Then they can still get misdirected when they start coming of age and wanting to be part of the community. I feel if they have a solid foundation and you have given them everything that is possible, they do come around and they have a stronger sense of their community.

So I think culture in that way plays a large part in the way it is practised in early childhood. And we are fortunate to have several people here and there throughout our

country anyway that continue to practise and to look to those who are strong in how they still use their medicines and how they still use the herbal sciences, in how they respect both male and female and just generally how they respect themselves as well.

I recommend to continue teach about traditional herb and healing practices for cultural programming and working with Elders more intimately including outside the institutional work. Also art processes such as programs I developed such as the *Drawing from Within* which utilized a variety of mediums such as art, writing, painting, sculpture, performance and gardening traditional herbs like tobacco, sweetgrass, st johns wort and promote community protocols for working with local medicines such as cedar and basket making. Many of the students who were involved with those programs have gone on to leadership roles in their communities.

N'kixw'stn recommends the following for the FNHL community:

Don't stop having sweat ceremonies don't stop having warrior [wellness] circles. You know don't stop doing those traditional things because a lot of times an institute would go really strong into the traditional cultural aspects of the Aboriginal people and as time progresses then they start to decline and change and go right straight into the Western culture. And they don't do those ceremonies anymore so I think it's really important that the FNHL Longhouse never ceases to do those cultural ceremonies. Because it's important. I would say culture is really important because the university stands on Musqueam territory. The Musqueam have never said UBC okay this is yours now you can have it. They haven't done that. That is still Musqueam territory regardless of how many years go by or how society has changed. That is a fact. Musqueam territory should always be honoured.

Relationships are illustrated by the eastern ceremonial doors in Sty-Wet-Tan hall that have an eagle embossed on the wood doors. It is carved by Lyle Wilson and for me the eagle represents the visions for a better future. The aspirations and accomplishments of the FNHL student community members are acknowledged by having the door open for the graduates to walk through having been a part of the UBC and the FNHL extended family community. They are welcomed back into their respective communities having achieved yet another leadership step in their journey. Whether students are together in the hall or apart in their own lives, they are related to one another, their past, and their future.

#### Theme nine: Reciprocity

Reciprocity and balance were important values that the storytellers discussed. They thought it was essential to give back to community and families so that a collective capacity for sharing could evolve. Both leaders and researchers must examine intentions and values that benefit the community visions and ideals. Good leaders encourage leadership opportunities for

others in ways that demonstrate positive, balanced respect for self, families and the environment. Point relates to this idea of "giving back" by stating:

My Uncle Dave who looked after me from the time I was 8 years old. However, I did call him daddy. He didn't read or write but was a very good orator, he could sign his name. He was a member of council for a long time and he was very good at starting things, planning things. He was a hard worker. He always looked after his mother. I can remember him going in the blizzard to make sure she was okay. She lived about two and half miles away. He made sure her wood stove was burning and had a lot of wood. This is what I believe that no matter how old you are you keep going. His mother was about ninety something and she would walk and walk. She would walk to town and she would make sure that when she past by our house it would be lunch time.

It was like we as First Nations people always cooked enough for another person in case somebody came in. That is the way it happened all the time in our home in case somebody came. People would always feel welcome. We always had enough for another person and if nobody came it was for the spirit.

So generosity at work, and it is part of the way we were taught, to be generous. You always helped somebody who needs help. If you do something for people you do it generously not to be fake or mean. I was brought up to believe that we have to do a good deed everyday. If we don't we are going backwards. So this generosity is part of life. Knowing when to say no and when not to say no, not because of that mean streak but because there are other priorities like family. But you give back and you do it out of generosity because you want to.

I thought of leadership as having purpose in life and being able to make decisions. You have a plan of action and then you follow those plans...[Like providing] Safety for oneself and the environment around you, that your peers, the animals, what ever was put on earth you have to take of and I know that as part of the leadership training. That we stay with it and make sure that we stay with it until it's finished

This final theme is illustrated by the wood circle floor located in the middle of Sty-Wet-Tan hall that reminds us of the importance of reciprocity and including the gifts of all of creation to help us to become the best human beings possible, and to enhance that ability in others. Through this kind of development, true healthy leadership is possible (George, 1994).

### Summary

This chapter outlined the storytellers' responses to the questions about how culture informs Indigenous leadership. The responses express the inter-related and intersecting leadership visions that involve the wholistic well-being of the individual, the family, the communities, the land and the cultural expressions of these value orientations as critical

features in Indigenous leadership. The Elder's stories suggested nine themes that touched on the importance of Aboriginal historical perspectives, positive cultural IK, decolonizing and self-determined education, community service, wholistic pedagogy, respect, responsibility, relationships and reciprocity. To address these issues, a physical space reflecting Indigenous wholistic knowledge was considered crucial to the development of Indigenous pedagogy. At the university, inclusive and flexible discourses supporting Aboriginal cultural content are also required for effective Indigenous leadership development if we are to transform communities. Strong Indigenous leadership will happen by empowering people to reclaim cultural values through the investigation of local living genealogies, oral histories and reflexive praxis, within an environment that supports self-determined changes. It was clear in the Elder's stories that leadership is a gift and a responsibility: we must step forward and demonstrate community responsibilities.

To help me understand my Elders' teachings more fully, I have used the Longhouse Teachings of respect, reverence, responsibility and relationship as they are embodied in the house posts and other features of Sty-Wet-Tan. Doing so, I have found in the storytellers' oral histories their thoughts about the role of culture in Indigenous leadership. The Sty-Wet-Tan carvings complement and reinforce the teachings of the Elders, providing students with a rich, supportive environment in which to become strong leaders.

The main themes and knowledge gleaned from my interviews with the Elders include the fact that culture supports individuals, families and communities; the importance of knowing the history of the land and educating others; the significance of reclaiming culture and living the teachings; and the lesson that leadership is a gift and a responsibility: we must step forward and demonstrate community responsibilities.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **A TRANSFORMATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP: PROVIDE RELEVANT CULTURAL CONTENT AND EXPERIENTIAL WHOLISTIC PEDAGOGY**

In this chapter I will discuss relevant cultural content and experiential pedagogy as a transformative framework for Indigenous leadership. I will also restate the problem, summarize the findings and outline implications for the LLP and for further research. Aboriginal peoples are under-represented in positive leadership roles in society and post secondary institutions in particular. To address this imbalance, the literature states that Aboriginal students require relevant cultural content and pedagogy within a transformative framework. This study addresses these recommendations by examining how culture informs Indigenous leadership by conducting interviews with nine Aboriginal Elders and cultural educators who work at the UBC FNHL. Their oral histories, counter-stories and narratives provide examples of how culture informs Indigenous leadership. Their stories also provide suggestions for the ongoing development of the cultural aspects of the Longhouse Leadership Program. Their oral life histories provide practical suggestions for relevant cultural content and experiential pedagogy that could develop opportunities for transformative leadership praxis.

#### **Relevant Cultural Content-**

The first theme expressed by the Elders -- know the history of the land and educate others -- emphasizes relevant cultural content for Indigenous leadership. Place, life stories, identity, and cultural ceremonies are important for leaders to consider because they provide historical and cultural knowledge about their physical location. In the case of the Longhouse, the physical structure of the building itself provides important cultural knowledge. The LLP is successfully providing much of this relevant cultural content, but could provide additional

opportunities to practice leadership in other contexts and according to a student's particular skills and talents.

## Place

The Longhouse building provides an example of how physical space enhances the development of local, relevant and living Indigenous pedagogy. The Sty-Wet-Tan house posts and other features create a living curriculum that illustrate IK pedagogy that emphasizes place-based knowledge, stories and experiences as central features for a transformative leadership pedagogy. Just as the storytellers emphasized the importance of cultural education (such as knowing the cultural protocols which locate local life stories, experiences and places as pedagogy), the FNHL provides space for relevant cultural pedagogy through cultural ceremonies and activities that are informed by such protocols as involving Elders and local communities. The physical location of the Longhouse and the performance of cultural ceremonies inform potential leaders about the importance of knowing your history and educating others.

We can not overlook the people who are a component of place because culture exists wherever you are. This is important because both the Elders and the literature recommend culture and identity as important Indigenous leadership components. Leadership skills are enriched through the intergenerational leading and learning that occurs through contact with Elders. Their presence in the FNHL community is important because they model important experiential learning that is not captured through text-based learning. Their life stories provide relevant cultural content and pedagogy based on their experiences and cultural knowledge which enhance the identity of aspiring leaders.

## Life stories

I appreciated the intergenerational leadership learnings the Elders shared through their experiences because they successfully lived through generations of racism and their stories are a tribute to their resistance to assimilation, demonstrating the resilience of cultural values. Often, Elders' knowledge is not valued but trivialized as myth or exploited outside their communities and in some cases within their own communities. Elders are rarely paid for their knowledge. Supporting Elders in their community interests as well as within institutions was identified as an important gesture of reciprocity that enhanced relationship building and leadership development in the LLP. Developing the concept of a council of Elders or *Ogimauhwak leaders* may be an option to for the LLP to explore. Having Elders share their life stories not only teaches important lessons about their experiences, but allows students to explore their own life stories.

## Identity

The development of an Indigenous cultural identity tool was recommended to help people look at themselves and set goals that will enhance their Indigenous identity and leadership. In response to this recommendation, I have organized a chart that outlines core Indigenous cultural elements that enhance identity, leadership competency and incorporates the themes in this study. Saeed's (2003) Indigenous pattern of education is included as another resource that could enhance Indigenous identity, leadership and cultural competency. These will be available to students in the LLP (See appendix E and F). Sahnbadis was particularly influential in suggesting core elements or components for an Indigenous leadership model:

Spirituality is fundamental, for all people. How they get to recognize that could be like me, by accident, or it could be education or by design but it is essential. We recognize that those are our primary relationships. For example, first I acknowledge myself, and then I acknowledge you and then I acknowledge the spiritual, it's that simple. You have to be in relationship with these things and develop it in other relationships.

AY: So that really helped you in your leadership development?

Absolutely. Now that didn't change what I had already done. I had already been doing this kind of leadership stuff but I was always like most people who have experienced this kind of malady. We seem to have two lives going on at the same time, we live in two worlds. You have that other secret thing that's always going on, where you are

worthless, and then you are showing to other people how worthy you are. I use the illustration in counselling, you know what gumbies are? They started out as a little jujube, it's just a crude form of a person. I draw a triple gumby, three sizes of gumbies. The one on the outside is how we survive - we show that to other people. The one inside is what we really think we are. That's hidden and it's tiny and scared. In between those two is where the real healthy person is. Most healthy people are between they don't have this exaggerated sense of self. Nor do they have this other fearful kind of self. It's right in between and that's not to say that they are so wonderful and they always walk a good road. We fluctuate back and forth but never lose sight of what's the line between that's where we really are.

Four elements that we are, one of them is that we are beautiful. We have a sense of our blessings, belonging, balance and harmony. I find them useful and maybe could be basic elements for leadership training is recognition of these four or five things to draw on. But basically find out what you think you need to do as a person to get the most of life, your vocation you choose and whole bunch of complicated things and you put those elements in a training program how you train a person using those elements. If you have this as a goal chances are you find the means to that goal and have Indigenous people look within their culture to find what it is they need always recognizing there is going to be some people who are going to be saying no do it this way, support that too.

I don't know how it could be done but I think it would be important for the people themselves to be exposed to the necessity of understanding where they stand in terms of their expectations of themselves, like where is this really going? When a person goes to university, they may say well to get a good job but that's not it all. As a vocational rehabilitation counsellor, I very often was dealing with people who came from reservations in North and South Dakota, Montana and in Portland Oregon and their intention was to make it in Portland Oregon, to be in the mainstream.

People make their decisions and their decisions were not my responsibility, except to expose them to choices. To question choices, why do you think that would be good, or why was that better than this other option that is open to you? And to stand by the principle, that first you don't have the right to tell anybody what to do. It's a conviction that a person does what he wants to do. What he likes would do better than something that's more lucrative because in time this is going to provide rewards that are more than just the tangible things. They will be a better person, their life will be smoother, their kids will grow up smarter.

The handout chart entitled "Elders' Teachings on Indigenous leadership" provides a visual guide that outlines elements of Indigeneity. This guide provides a map for those involved in leadership, Indigenous identity enhancement and wish to further develop their own cultural competencies.

#### Cultural ceremonies

The Elders recommended continuing cultural ceremonial practices and supporting students' cultural interests and gifts. Supporting the cultural diversity and leadership needs of

Indigenous students by including ceremonies from different traditions is important. The Elders spoke of a fundamental commonality that lies beneath the details of particular traditions, so students can engage in particular ceremonies as they create a shared culture through their daily interaction. Indigenous students need to know that they and their traditions make significant contributions to the leadership education of all peoples.

#### Diverse opportunities for leadership

Because students have diverse community and cultural interests and access, the LLP should continue to adopt a wholistic, flexible and supportive approach to leadership development. For example, students should be able to use their elective workshops for activities held outside the LLP, according to their particular leadership interests. This might mean expanding the time for workshops beyond two hours if that is necessary to explore places or life stories. If the goal is transformative leadership praxis, then the LLP should support individuals in finding their gifts for leadership in whatever way works best for them.

#### Wholistic experiential learning

Relevant cultural content is greatly enhanced when people are engaged with their mind, body, heart, and spirit. That is, they experience the content rather than simply think about it. The Elders suggested several concrete ways to enhance experiential learning: students could build a canoe and take field trips with cultural facilitators and leaders from local canoe societies; students might use a cultural competency or self-assessment tool to enhance their positive cultural identity and set goals; they might incorporate local and Aboriginal languages in their program, either through taking language courses, integrating their language into the LLP or volunteering with the First Nations language courses at UBC; and finally, they might learn more about traditional environmental ecology and their own genealogy or cultural expressions/traditions.

Other recommendations for the LLP are to provide intergenerational leadership for training youth, include activities for mentoring with Elders and focus on constructing safe, racism free environments. Wholistic leadership education opportunities include the use of art and creativity, synergy, experiential and community land-based approaches are recommendations for the LLP. These recommendations are outlined in appendix E. The LLP could network the FNHL Elders programming in ways similar to the UBC Humanities 101 initiative and the Aboriginal Youth Leadership initiative that offered mentoring with UBC students and are held in the Musqueam community.

Other meaningful cultural activities that require longer time frames but provide excellent experiential learning should be incorporated. Examples include working with the land and co-partnering with existing programs such as Museum of Anthropology's Musqueam Weavers. In this program, traditional weavers demonstrate to school students the processes of working with the land over the seasons. The Museum also offered a curatorial research opportunity to graduate students to work with the Musqueam community in presenting a contemporary exhibit. In this initiative, students helped with the Musqueam family exhibit *To Wash Away the Tears*, a contemporary memorial to Maggie Pointe.

Other partnering projects could include First Nations Studies Program initiatives that work with communities and the Inter-Health and Human Services courses such as the one in ethno-botany. Projects such as these, adapted to students' own creativity, course work and interests become part of their personal reflections on leadership.

One of the strongest experiences shared by students in the LLP is that of racism. This painful experience can provide a learning opportunity to develop strong leadership by developing an antiracism educational framework. This approach is advocated in the literature (see Eber Hampton and Verna St. Denis (2002), *Literature Review on Racism and the Effects on Aboriginal Education*), and by the Elders through their oral histories. The denial of racism and its effects is a problem that represses Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, regardless of their academic success or social competencies, because it denies Aboriginal experiences and

basic human rights (p. 39-40). No one can reach their fullest human potential in an environment of racism. Students must be provided with the educational tools to deconstruct racist ideology and habits, practice critical thinking and actively promote strategies for change. Aboriginal education calls for antiracist education and culturally relevant pedagogy that will transform leadership education.

### Transformative Leadership

The life stories of the Elders whom I interviewed contribute to the ongoing history of the FNHL and the development of the LLP. Their oral histories provide culturally relevant pedagogy that can be used to develop core and seminar workshops for the LLP. Core implicit knowledge can be developed by promoting life stories, experiences and places as pedagogy for intergenerational learning and leading. The leadership challenges outlined in this study are to know our histories, provide decolonizing education to unpack the tools of colonization, and advocate for the self-determination of community development based on positive IK cultural values. The storytellers' oral histories provide examples of the applications of Indigenous wholism theory to leadership. As the Elder storytellers in this study suggest, the promotion of life experiences, stories and places as pedagogy is required to meet the leadership challenges. The promotion of life stories and experiences and places as relevant cultural pedagogy is in fact, transformative leadership praxis.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **BENEFITS AND LIMITS OF THE STUDY**

This study was intended to assist post-secondary Aboriginal students with their leadership development at UBC by providing Indigenous perspectives on how culture informs the Longhouse Leadership Program. It also contributes to the research literature in Indigenous leadership development

As a direct aid to Indigenous leadership education, the study helps to identify important cultural features to be included in the LLP. The objective of the LLP is to introduce educational leadership perspectives within a cultural Indigenous Knowledge framework. The Elders interviewed pointed to the importance of respectful relationships with the land, language, cultural ceremonies and wholistic praxis, consistent with IK literature. This study confirms that by providing education on the protocols of cultural activities, language use and wholistic processes, the LLP addresses the need for appropriate wholistic cultural programs that reflect Indigenous shared values, synergy and experiential learning. Teaching these protocols and cultural values, even within a limited time, enhances the students' experiences as they begin to develop their own leadership potential. Although the LLP facilitates the diversity of student needs by encouraging different interests and by being flexible, it must continue to monitor how it can best accommodate busy students in a non-credit program.

As a contribution to the literature, this study provides critical cultural understandings of leadership from Aboriginal perspectives through the use of oral histories. This research demonstrates responsible, respectful, relevant research by and for Indigenous researchers and contributes to the understanding of the dimensions of social, cultural and spiritual aspects of Indigenous wholism and Indigenous leadership praxis at the local level. In these small ways, the storytellers and I have worked towards the transformation of Indigenous leadership education by bringing together their wisdom and the university wisdom.

The study is strengthened by my role as an employee at the FNHL and an active participant in traditional Indigenous culture. As an "insider," I am sensitive to cultural subtleties when interpreting the stories and cultural symbols, although as an Anishnabe it is possible that I interpret features differently from a Musqueam. The study is small, however, and restricted to a particular place so any generalizations outside the LLP and the FNHL are tentative at best. However, it may be no coincidence that the themes of my Elders' stories are similar to those identified in the literature. I limited my study to nine Elders, and although I spent much time with them, I did not include in this study observation of their work elsewhere. There were no formal co-researchers with whom to corroborate or discuss my findings and interpretations.

Finally, the systemic changes required in societal attitudes, beliefs and actions demand broader educational approaches based on values that focus on transformation, anti racism and action strategies as priorities. The reflexive process combined with decolonizing agendas are time consuming and not always amenable to short term research agendas, although short studies are still worthwhile strategies for community capacity building that benefit the future generations.

A limitation to many academic studies is that once completed they sit on a shelf, accessible only to those in the university and not to others. To disseminate the findings from this study more widely, one could videotape the Elders' stories or develop curriculum materials on a CD to enhance intergenerational learning. I have developed a cultural competency and identity guide or handout that may be helpful for those in communities who are considering leadership development. The handout is a way for me to help others begin Indigenous leadership discussions.

## Summary

This project has outlined the research site which is the First Nations Longhouse; the purpose and rationale of the study; the research design and question; methodology and theories used for this study. This was followed by the results of the study and recommendations.

A summary of the findings in this study include that culture assists with positive identity formation and belonging and develops the ability to positively cope with change and develop relevant pedagogy that reflects local self determined agendas. This includes language use determined by the local communities. Provisions for an Aboriginal physical space and cultural pedagogies provide the foundations and mechanisms for relevant Aboriginal leadership training. Culture within an anti-racism education framework can address the need for a decolonizing approach to education by providing knowledge about where we come from, where we are now and where we want to go individually, within families and collectively. Decolonizing education can provide us with critical thinking skills to examine the impacts of colonialism, reclaim our cultural identities, language preferences and create coalitions for change. Cultural expressions promote positive, inclusive local community values and require wholistic wellness training for decolonizing and self-determined leadership education. This study presents the position that Indigenous roles in history and the preservation of local communities be promoted by putting living Aboriginal communities and Nations in the forefront of the Indigenous leadership education agenda. The Elders' perspectives on Indigenous leadership affirmed that the cultural teachings can play a significant role in contributing to the building and rebuilding of communities. The Elders' oral histories and stories affirm that transformative Indigenous leadership is a gift.

This study documents the perspectives of two generations of Elders and cultural leaders who are familiar with the First Nations House of Learning community. The storytellers' oral histories and perspectives help us understand how culture informs Indigenous leadership in general and assists in the further development of transformative leadership pedagogy for the Longhouse Leadership Program at UBC.

## Yesterday

It isn't possible to write about our art  
Without connecting it to our ancient  
customs. The juxtaposition of contemporary  
Materials with the ancient soul brings into  
Focus the truth of who we are.  
Many of our ancient traditions in North,  
South and Central America were  
Matrilineal which held the power to bond  
Families.  
Families living together encouraged  
communities to work together. Both women  
And men were honoured for their individual  
achievements.  
The collectivity of the honours served to  
achieve a balance of status and power,  
thereby ensuring a more orderly community.

Bear (1985)

## Relationships

Healing is coming into relationship with our own wholeness  
Knowing that our wholeness includes father sky and mother earth  
And goes beyond the farthest star nations relative in the night  
Wholeness is knowing that we are related to the sky  
Through breath  
And the breath of life  
Knowing that we are related to the earth  
Through our flesh  
That is of the earth  
And the things that grow from the earth  
Knowing that we are related to the water  
And that river flows in us as blood  
As the pulsating feeling of heart  
Knowing that we are related to the fire of Grandfather sun  
Through the fire of thought that is mind  
Knowing that we are related to our ancestors  
And that we represent them in this world.  
Knowing that we are related to the plants  
Through the power to grow that is in us  
As it is in a seed  
Knowing that we are related to the stone people  
Who are within us as bone  
To heal is to be in good relationship with all these relatives  
Without judgement  
With the knowledge that  
We are one Great Spirit in many bodies.

Brown (2002)

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# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



## APPENDIX A

### Letter of Initial Contact

#### The Role of Culture in Indigenous Leadership

Principal Investigator: Jo-ann Archibald  
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Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I am currently conducting a body of research that may be of interest to you. I am exploring the topic on the role culture plays in Indigenous leadership and is part of a thesis project for a Masters of Arts degree in Educational Studies with the Ts'Kel Program at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

I am interested in discussing this topic with you because you have expertise as an Indigenous cultural educator or Elder who has worked with the First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) at UBC. I would like to ask you about any reflection, thoughts and experiences you have regarding the role of culture in Indigenous leadership. Your participation would consist of two interviews for 1-2 hours each.

The information you share will help in the development of a leadership program at FNHL. As a co-ordinator of the Longhouse Leadership Program (LLP), I am aware of your involvement with the cultural programs at UBC. Your expertise is valuable and I would like to provide an opportunity for you to discuss your ideas and suggestions on the topic in detail.

If you have any questions about this research or the interview process, please contact me, Alannah Young, or my theses supervisor, Jo-ann Archibald, at the numbers noted above. If you choose to participate in this study, please indicate by signing the consent form and returning it to me in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope or by calling me to indicate your interest. I will follow up with you by telephone in the next two weeks.

Thank you for considering this important request for your assistance.

Respectfully,

Alannah Young, Opasqwayak Nation  
1986 West Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z2

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



## APPENDIX B Interview Consent Form The Role of Culture in Indigenous Leadership

August 10, 2004

Principal Investigator: Jo-ann Archibald,  
Associate Professor  
Educational Studies, UBC

Department of Educational Studies  
Mailing address:  
2125 Main Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4  
Tel: 604-822-5374  
Fax: 604-822-4244  
<http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca>

Co-investigator: Alannah Young, Graduate Student  
Educational Studies, UBC  
604-822-0963

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this research inquiry. The topic of the project is the role of culture in Indigenous leadership. This research project is being conducted as a part of a thesis project for Alannah Young's Masters of Arts degree in Educational Studies with the Ts'Kel program at the University of British Columbia (UBC). This research project examines the role culture plays in Indigenous leadership. The study aims to provide an increased awareness of the role of culture in Indigenous leadership by interviewing Indigenous cultural educators and Elders who are familiar with First Nations House of Learning (FNHL). It is hoped that by collection and sharing the experiences of Elders and cultural educators who work in this environment, a body of knowledge will be made available to educators and will assist in the ongoing development of the FNHL Longhouse Leadership Program (LLP).

Your participation will involve 2 interview sessions, for 1-2 hours each, over a period of 6 months. You will be asked to share your thoughts on the topic question: what role does culture play in Indigenous leadership? The first interview will be transcribed and you will be invited to provide comments or additional reflections on transcribed interview during the second interview. You will be invited to give feedback, make comments and ask questions at any time during the process. If you wish to have your comments held in confidence, that will be respected and you may request the tape recording to stop at any time. You are not required to give feedback and you may withdraw from participating in this process at anytime without any negative consequences whatsoever.

If you have any questions about this research or the interview process, please contact me, Alannah Young, or my thesis advisor, Jo-ann Archibald, at the numbers noted above. If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a participant in this research you may contact the Office of Research Services at UBC, 604-822-8598.

**Your identity will be kept confidential unless you provide permission for your name to be used in the final report.** You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this consent form and you may change your decision at any time. I will provide you with another consent form on which you may indicate that change. Before the thesis is published, I'll ask you again for your authorization.

If an oral consent to participate in this research inquiry is more appropriate, this will be provided for you.

Should you experience any distress as a result of participating in this project you may also reach me at the above number and a resource list for your consultation will be provided.

After 5 years the original tape recordings of your oral history accounts that may be produced as part of our discussions will be returned to you or destroyed by demagnetization unless you request to have the tapes stored in a specific location with specific access requirements.

By signing below that you give consent to participate in the study "The Role of Culture in Indigenous Leadership".

You understand that by signing this consent form you do not waive any of your legal rights by signing and you may change your decision to participate at any time.

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### ORAL CONSENT OPTION

Participant has given oral consent to participate in the study "The Role of Culture in Indigenous Leadership".

Printed name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Co investigators Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Journal Entry \_\_\_\_\_

Co Investigator:  
Alannah Young  
1985 West Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z2

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



## APPENDIX C

### Interview Script The Role of Culture in Indigenous Leadership

August 10, 2004

#### Department of Educational Studies

Mailing address:

2125 Main Mall

Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4

Tel: 604-822-5374

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<http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca>

Thank you once again for agreeing to participate in this research inquiry. The topic of the project is the role culture plays in Indigenous leadership, and is a part of a thesis project for a Masters of Arts degree in Educational Studies with the Ts'Kel program at the University of British Columbia. This interview script is provided so that you may reflect on the project's topic. You will be asked share your thoughts and stories on the question: "What role culture plays in Indigenous leadership?"

Other questions you might like to reflect on include:

- How would you describe Indigenous leadership?
- How would you describe Indigenous culture?
- How would you describe the relationship between culture and leadership?
- What cultural values, principles and practices have informed (your) leadership development?
- What cultural components would you like to see with in an Indigenous leadership program (FNHL/LLP)?
- How can an Indigenous leadership program address cultural needs and respect cultural diversity within a post secondary context?

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Appendix D Letters: First Nations House of Learning



### Department of Educational Studies

Mailing address:

2125 Main Mall

Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4

Tel: 604-822-5374

Fax: 604-822-4244

<http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca>

To: Madeleine MacIvor  
Acting Director  
First Nations House of Learning, UBC

From: Alannah Young  
Graduate Student  
Educational Studies, UBC

RE: Alannah Young – Thesis Project  
*The Role Culture Plays in Indigenous Leadership*  
Masters of Arts degree in Educational Studies

December 4, 2004

Dear Madeleine MacIvor

I am conducting a body of research on how culture informs Indigenous leadership. This is part of a thesis project for a Masters of Arts degree in Educational Studies with the Ts'kel Program at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

I have submitted the enclosed proposal to you, the acting director of the First Nations House of Learning at UBC. The information gathered for this study will help in the development of a leadership program at FNHL. As a co-ordinator of the Longhouse Leadership Program (LLP), I would like to formally acknowledge your informal participation in the shaping of this study.

If you have any questions about this research proposal please contact me, Alannah Young, or my theses supervisor, Jo-ann Archibald, at the numbers noted above.

Alannah Young



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

First Nations House of Learning  
The Longhouse, UBC  
1985 West Mall  
Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z2

Tel: (604) 822-8940  
Fax: (604) 822-8944  
<http://www.longhouse.ubc.ca>

## MEMO

Date: December 3, 2004

To: Alannah Young  
Graduate Student  
Educational Studies, UBC

From: Madeleine MacIvor  
Acting Director  
First Nations House of Learning, UBC

RE: Alannah Young – Thesis Project  
*The Role Culture Plays in Indigenous Leadership*  
Masters of Arts degree in Educational Studies

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Dear Alannah,

Thank you for the opportunity to review your proposal, and I am delighted that you are investigating the role of culture in Aboriginal Leadership.

The First Nations House of Learning is pleased to be able to contribute in some small way to this project because of the benefits to the leadership program, and to your own development as a researcher.

Respectfully,

Madeleine MacIvor

MM:lh

## Appendix E Cultural Competency and Identity Guide

### **Indigenous Leadership**

*Our individual responsibility is to become the best human beings possible, and to enhance that ability in others. Through this kind of development, true healthy leadership is possible.*

Chief Leonard George Tobe-Waash 2000

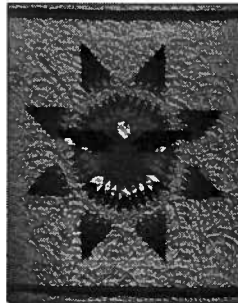
**Indigenous Teachings are transformational because they provide leadership pedagogy that:**

**Reclaims Indigenous leadership that reflects cultural pedagogy**—Positive cultural leadership based on Indigenous knowledge

**Includes contextual historical curriculum**—Know the history of the land—advocate others.

**Decolonises & Self-determines education** Culture supports individuals, families, and communities

**Focuses on community service contexts** Leadership is a gift—step forward and demonstrate community responsibilities.



*It is important Indigenous leadership programs be based on Indigenous cultural teachings and offer new approaches to Indigenous leadership in the future. It is the responsibility of Indigenous peoples to articulate how cultural teachings can play a significant role in contributing to the building and rebuilding of their communities.*

Kuokkanen 2002

**Transformative Leadership is informed by collective values and outcomes that move towards equality and social change**

**Relevance  
Relationships  
Reciprocity  
Responsibility**  
(Barnhardt & Kirkness 1991)

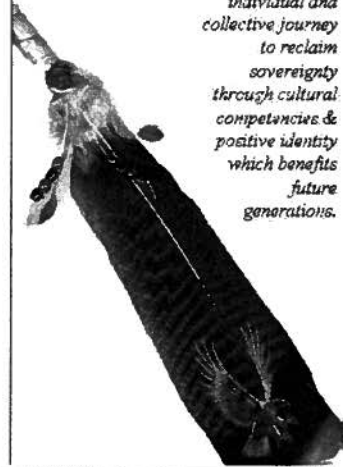
**Respect  
Reverence**  
(LIP, 2000)

**Research is a process of making relatives**  
Tsepa 2003

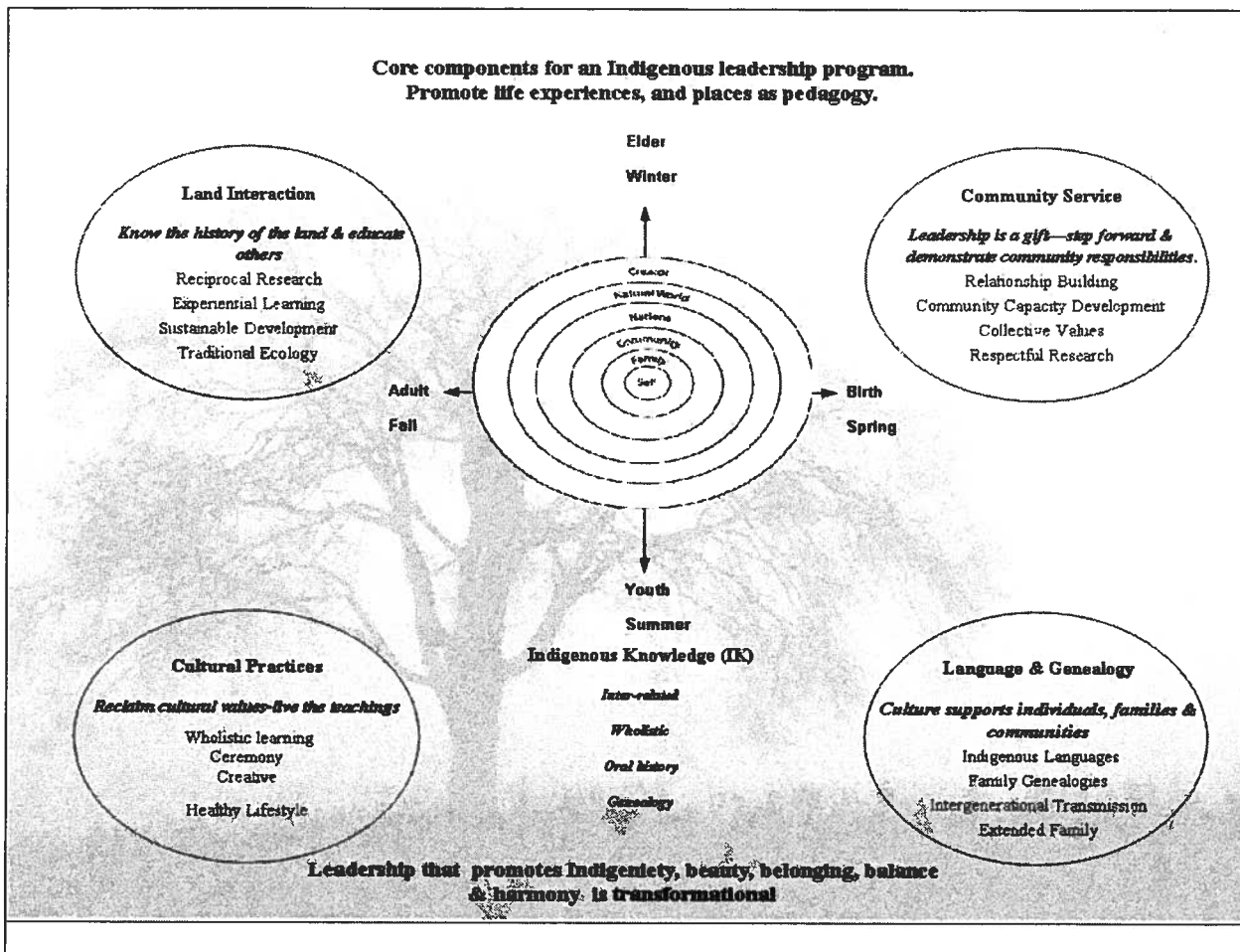
Core components for an Indigenous leadership program

### **ELDERS' TEACHINGS ON INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP**

*Leadership is an individual and collective journey to reclaim sovereignty through cultural competencies & positive identity which benefits future generations.*

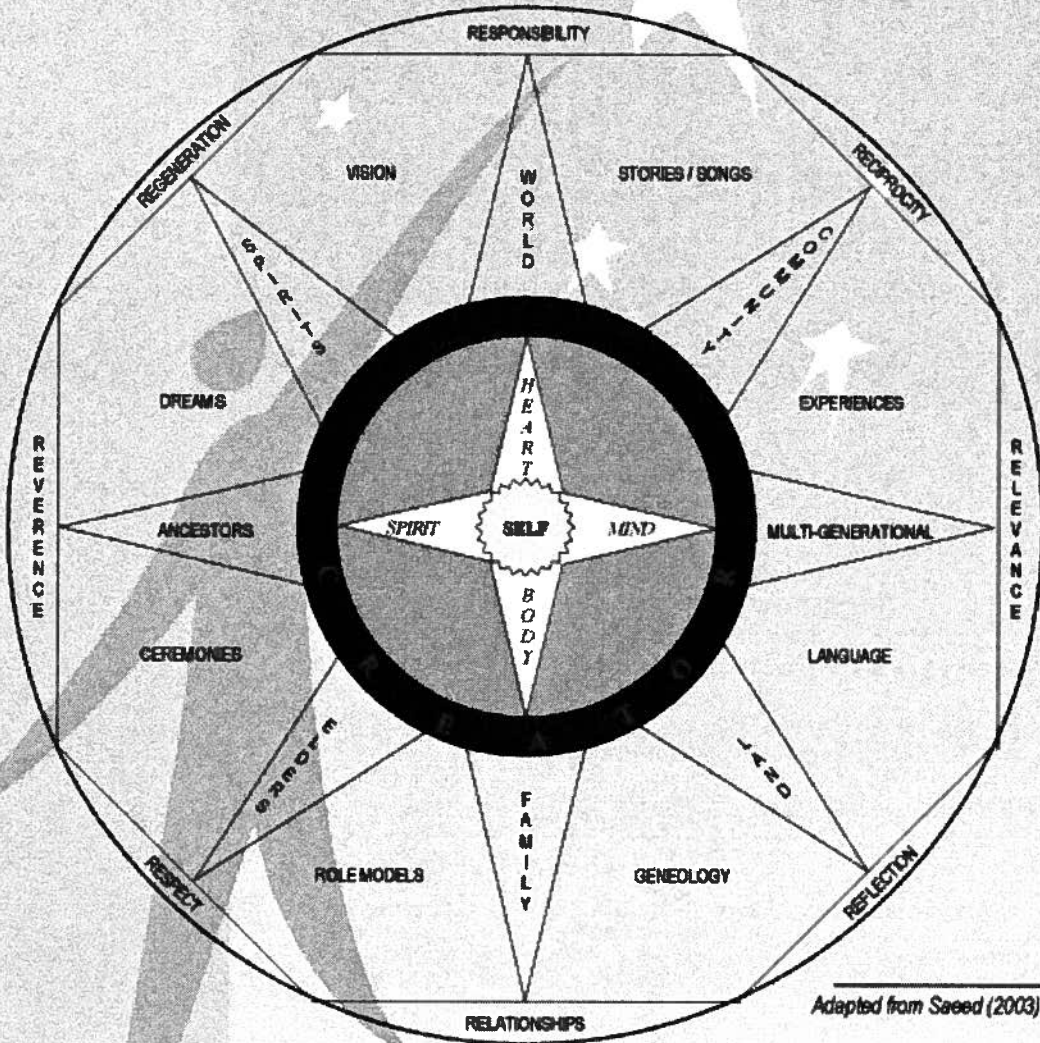


## Cultural competency and identity guide (continued)



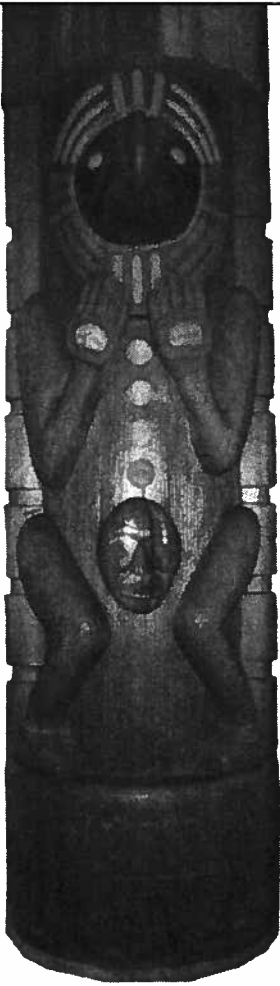
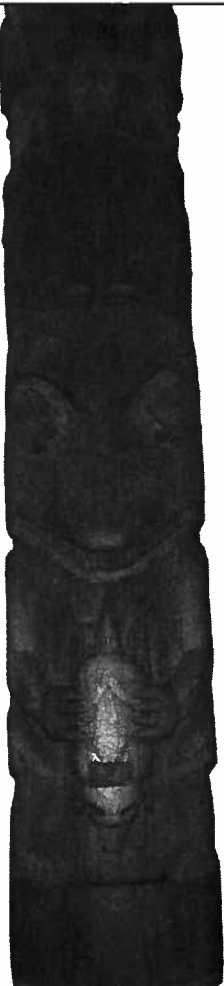


## Appendix F Indigenous Pattern of Education

## An Indigenous Pattern of Education



Appendix G First Nations House of Learning House Posts and Sty-Wet-Tan Hall

			
<p>Point (Musqueam)</p>	<p>McNeil Bevan (Tahltan-Tlingit, Tsimshian, Nisga'a)</p>	<p>Wilson (Haisla)</p>	<p>Harris (Gitksan)</p>



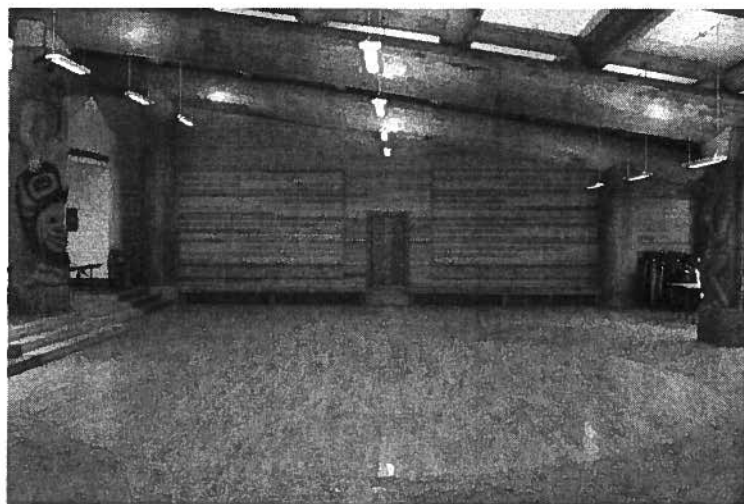
Don Yeoman, Haida



Don Yeoman, Haida



Bradley Hunt, Haisla



Sty-Wet-Tan ceremonial door and circle

Photos & Graphics by Phillip Manuel (2006)



## ***First Nations House of Learning Longhouse Student Leadership Program, 2005-2006***

### **Program Principles:**

The principles of respect, relationships, responsibility, and reverence form the foundation of this program.

**Respect** begins with self and ripples out to embrace family, community, nations, the natural world, and the Creator.

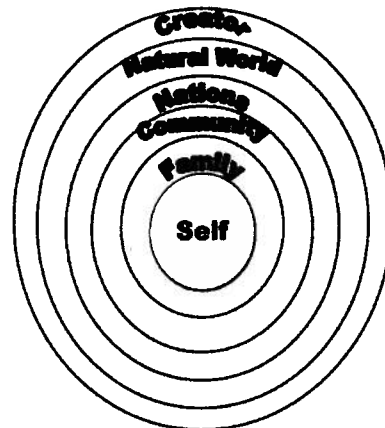
**Relationships** speak to our connection to all of creation and the Creator. We value the gifts and teachings that come to us through our relations with everyone.

**Responsibility** enhances well-being and we strengthen it by honouring protocols, caring for ourselves and others, and creating a safe, healthy, inclusive environment.

**Reverence** brings together respect and the sacred. We respect the spiritual realm and its place in learning.

### **Certificate Requirements:**

For a certificate complete: 3 core seminars, 4 elective workshops, and 12 hours of service learning over two years.



### **Core Seminars:**

1. **Longhouse Teachings.** Wednesday, September 21, 2005, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Sty-Wet-Tan. This introductory interactive session will explore the concept of leadership, introduce Longhouse leadership principles of respect, relationships, responsibility, and reverence and provide dynamic team building exercises.
2. **Service and Leadership.** Thursday, January 12, 2006, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Sty-Wet-Tan. This workshop links leadership to service. Opportunities for service learning will be explored.
3. **Hands Back, Hands Forward for Leadership.** Thursday, March 30, 2006, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Sty-Wet-Tan. This workshop will reflect on leadership teachings and explore how these teachings can help us in future leadership roles. Certificates will also be presented to those who have completed the program.

### **Elective Workshops:**

A total of 4 workshops may be selected from the offerings of the Longhouse Student Leadership Program workshops listed below or the UBC Leadership Program 2005-6.

<http://students.ubc.ca/leadership/programs.cfm>

### **Longhouse Student Leadership Program Workshops: October, 2005-March, 2006.**

- Thursday, October 20, 2005: **Non-Violent Communication Workshop**, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Sty-Wet-Tan. Facilitators: Alannah Young and Teresa Howell.
- Sunday, October 23, 2005: **Sweat lodge Teachings**, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m., Elder's Lounge. Ceremony will follow (10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.) Facilitators: Alannah Young, Madeleine MacIvor, Tim Michel, Lee Brown, and Eduardo Jovel.
- Thursday, October 27, 2005: **Building Inclusive Relationships: Identity and belonging**, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Sty-Wet-Tan. Facilitators: Michelle La Fiemme, Rosalin Hanna, Graham Smith, and Chief Bobby Joseph.
- Tuesday, Nov 10, 2005: **Values as a Foundation for Leadership**, 12:00-2:00 p.m. Co-sponsored by UBC student leadership development office. Sty-Wet-Tan. Facilitators: Steve Ng and Alannah Young.
- Thursday, November 17, 2005: **Respectful Research Strategies**. Union of BC Chiefs presentation on research initiatives in BC. 12:00-2:00 p.m. Sty-Wet-Tan. Facilitator: Jody Woods.
- Saturday, January 14, 2006: **UBC Student Development Leadership Conference**. UBC. Participants can attend the workshops, present or volunteer to organize the conference. <http://students.ubc.ca/leadership/programs.cfm?page=conference>
- Thursday, January 19, 2006: 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., **Leadership for Contemporary Contexts: Leadership in Action**. Sty-Wet-Tan. Facilitators: Judge Steven Point.
- Tuesday February 28, 2006: 12:00-2:00 p.m., **Storywork and Emotional Leadership**. Facilitator Chief Ian Campbell.
- Wednesday, March 15, 2006: **Human Rights and Values: Strengths in Leadership and Diversity**, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. Co-sponsored by UBC Equity and Access & Diversity offices. Sty-Wet-Tan. Facilitators: Maura DaCruz, OmiSoore Dryden, and Alannah Young.

### **Service Learning:**

The Longhouse Student Leadership Program is built on the belief that leadership involves making positive change, so service is an integral part of the program. Students complete a total of 12 hours of service learning in a setting of their choice. Students will work with staff who will help identify and facilitate the service learning experience. Possible service learning opportunities include:

- Organizing and facilitating workshops at the Longhouse
- Taking a leadership role in Longhouse events
- Presenting at career fairs or conferences
- Creating curriculum for S-Takya Child Care Centre
- Volunteering with educational organizations or community centres.

For more information about the Longhouse Leadership Program contact:

**Alannah Young, Counsellor**  
First Nations House of Learning  
Phone: (604) 822-0963  
Email: [aeyoung@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:aeyoung@interchange.ubc.ca)