NATIVE SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION:
STUDENTS MAKING CULTURAL RELEVANCE

by

JUDITH SHARPE

B.S.W., The University of Calgary, 1983

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(School of Social Work)

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 1996

© Judith Sharpe, 1996
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

School of Social Work

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date June 26, 1986
ABSTRACT

In the field of Native social work education, the concept of "culturally relevant education" is poorly defined despite increasing student enrollment and development of programs. This study employed a qualitative approach to explore with twelve students, enrolled in a B.S.W. program at a Native college in Merritt, B.C., their experiences and meanings of this concept. In-depth interviews and a focus group were conducted; data were transcribed and analyzed, using grounded theory and narrative analysis, to generate concepts, elements, and themes. Four interactive themes emerged, that when taken together, tell a story of what "culturally relevant education" meant to these Native students: the four themes were Learning What It Is To Be Indian; Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues; Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White; and, Becoming the Teacher. The principle finding was that students made cultural relevance for themselves. Various elements, such as Indian Studies courses and Native instructors, seemed to support students making cultural relevance.

This study indicates that making cultural relevance was highly individualistic and situation-specific, and required competence in mainstream culture and a First Nation's culture. Educators, programs, and institutions can, and should, help students access the necessary elements. The main criterion for determining such elements should be the extent to which they strengthen student's Aboriginal self-
identity and worth: it seems that strong Aboriginal self-identity and worth is what supported the student’s ability to make cultural relevance. Further research into the phenomenon of *making cultural relevance* is indicated.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ................................................................. ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS ................................................... iv

LIST OF TABLES ......................................................... viii

LIST OF FIGURES ....................................................... ix

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................ x

CHAPTER ONE ............................................................. 1

   INTRODUCTION ......................................................... 1
       Terminology and Limitations .................................... 3
       Researcher's Point of View .................................... 6
       Central Issues in Native Social Work Education ............ 10

CHAPTER TWO .......................................................... 16

   LITERATURE REVIEW ............................................... 16
       A Philosophical and Political Framework ...................... 17
       Power and Control ............................................... 18
       Dialectical Contradiction ...................................... 20
       Native Social Work Education in Canada .................... 22
       Native Social Work Education in Canada: Issues and Adaptations (Castellano, Stalwick and Wien, 1986) 23
       Native Social Work Education: Struggling to Meet the Need (Pace and Smith (1990) .................. 27
       Social Work Education for Aboriginal Communities (Brown, 1992) ........................................ 30
       Native Education .................................................. 35
       Native Cognitive Schemes ....................................... 36
       Towards An Indian Theory of Education ...................... 41
       Summary ............................................................ 44
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Method
Participant Selection
Data Collection
Interview Guide
Procedures
Data Analyses

CHAPTER FOUR

LEARNING WHAT IT IS TO BE INDIAN

Introduction
Theme/Phase One: Learning What It Is To Be Indian
Courses Focused On First Nations Content and Practices
Understanding colonization
Practicing traditional ways
Cultural camp experiences
Knowledge of cultures
The Role Of Native Instructors
Aboriginal Ways of Knowing
Ethic of respect
Inclusive learning
Circle of Understanding
Native communication style
Concept about the classroom
Summary

CHAPTER FIVE

HEALING, INTEGRATING & BECOMING

Theme/Phase Two: Healing Residual Personal & Cultural Issues
The Need for Healing
Residual personal and cultural issues
Breaking the cycle of oppression
Opportunities for Healing
Inside and outside the classroom
APPENDIX E DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

APPENDIX F CODED TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics 54
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: The Four Themes/Phases of Culturally Relevant Education 68

FIGURE 2: Concepts/Factors and Story Elements of the Four Themes/Phases of Culturally Relevant Education 73
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Prof. Elaine Stolar, my thesis adviser, for her insightful critique, her belief in the worth of this project, and her ongoing support over the years.
To Hans Froese, my husband, who helped me think and write more clearly, and find my way on the path with a heart.
To my parents, sister, children, and grandchildren who demonstrated their love and support in ways that I needed.
To Marg and Carolyn, my friends, who understood this project in the context of my life, and helped me keep things straight.
To all my friends, colleagues, and students who shared their humour and wisdom with me. And to the Grandfathers and Grandmothers who, despite my resistance, taught me anyway.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The intent of this study was to gain a fuller understanding of what the concept "culturally relevant education" means in the field of Native social work education. The research purpose was to flesh out this much used, but poorly defined concept, by exploring with Native social work students, their meanings of "culturally relevant education". Specifically, this study sought to identify, describe, and clarify which factors students associated with culturally relevant education; to determine if culturally relevant education was valued by students, and if so why, and in what ways; to determine if some factors were more important or valued than others; and to elicit students' normative visions of culturally relevant social work education.

Culturally relevant education is a major issue in the field of Native social work education. All major stakeholders - educators, community members, advisory committees, funders, and students - agree that achieving culturally relevant education should be a primary program goal. However, lack of any agreed upon meaning or definition of the concept of "culturally relevant education" has undermined our efforts and created tensions and conflicts. Native social work students are in a unique position to help clarify this concept, for they bring an understanding and experience of both Native cultures and social work
Therefore, this study intended to explore Native students perspectives on "culturally relevant education", with the anticipation that all stakeholders could benefit.

This study was carried out at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT), a First Nations college, located in Merritt, B.C. NVIT offers a B.S.W. program accredited with the University of Victoria, School of Social Work. At the time of this study, winter 1992, the program had approximately 75 full-time Native students. Twelve students accepted the invitation to participate in this study (n=12).

Baker, in his article entitled "Aboriginal Post Secondary Education in Canada: A Survey" (1992), notes that there were 4,341 Native post-secondary students sponsored by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) in B.C. during 1991/92. In order to receive INAC funding, students must be status Indians (or Inuit), as were all the respondents in this study, and the vast majority of NVIT students. Of the 1991/92 INAC student sponsorship in B.C., the colleges enrolled 2,884, universities 738, and institutes 619. These figures provide some context in which to situate the NVIT social work student numbers, and the twelve respondents in this study. More specific statistics, such as the number of Native social work students enrolled in Native social work programs in Canada or B.C.,
are not available. Baker cites this lack of baseline statistics as a major limitation in current research.

Terminology and Limitations

This study focused on Native social work education in Canada. Within Canadian social work literature, "Native" has been the term most commonly used to denote status, non-status, and Metis Indians. I use the terms "Native", "First Nations", and "Aboriginal" interchangeably. Student respondents used these terms, as well as "Indian". When I use the term "Indian", I do so only when quoting students; referring to authors who use this term; or when the use of this term seems to be important in conveying the tone of the original source.

Correspondingly, the term "non-Native" has been commonly used to denote people who are not of Aboriginal ancestry. Student respondents used, in addition and interchangeably, the terms "White", "non-Aboriginal", and "EuroCanadian" to refer to non-Native people. I use all these terms interchangeably when referring to non-Native people.

For the purpose of this study, Native social work education refers to those programs which are specifically for Native people; social work education means programs leading to a B.S.W. degree. When this study refers to Native social
work programs not leading to a B.S.W. degree, these cases will be noted and clarified.

In this study, the cultures of interest are those of Canada's First Nations and the dominant, majority non-Native culture. First Nations cultures are by definition culturally diverse, but they do share a common background of a tribal lifestyle and strong land-based community focus (Haig-Brown, 1991, p.19). The dominant, non-Native culture "continues to be controlled primarily by white, bourgeois males of northern European background" (Haig-Brown, 1991, p.19). This dominant, majority culture, is what I often refer to as "mainstream". In this study, "mainstream" is meant to connote Haig-Brown's definition. The terms "traditions" and "traditional" refer to both historical and contemporary beliefs, customs and practices of First Nations peoples.

There has been a strong position taken by First Nations people in Canada that Native issues and concerns not be compared with those of other races and/or ethnic groups. It is their position that inherent Aboriginal rights and land claims in Canada differentiate them from these other groups. This study accepted their position in this regard, and therefore excluded from the literature review, literature on cross-cultural education (other than Native/non-Native), and literature regarding multicultural education.
Although ten of the twelve respondents were women, this study does not use a feminist perspective as a major focus. When working with Native people, particularly with students, it has been my experience as a non-Native woman, that feminist perspectives were often less welcomed than other types of analyses, such as race for example. I believe that students experienced feminist perspectives as potentially, if not actively, divisive between men and women. The Indian studies courses that they had taken as part of their social work program, were, for most students, the first time they had been exposed to an analysis of colonization from an Aboriginal point of view. These courses had an emotional impact on the students. Many students felt profound grief and anger. They dealt with their feelings by sharing them with each other. They were unwilling, and perhaps unable at that time, to be open to perspectives which they believed might promote divisions between men and women. I believe that they needed to feel united as First Nations people, particularly when relating with a non-Native instructor such as myself. The relationship between instructor and student has its own dynamics of power, no matter how sensitive the instructor may be. When I framed issues of power and control in terms of race, students were more receptive. However, I also know that Native instructors have explored feminist analyses with students. I came to the conclusion, that as a non-Native woman working with these Native students, a race analysis, rather than a feminist analysis, was the more appropriate
(racially and culturally appropriate) focus. Therefore, issues of power and control from a racial perspective rather than a feminist perspective, are a major focus in this study.

Although I believe that the racial perspective in this study is appropriate for my use, I also believe that the lack of feminist or gender analyses is a limitation, and I encourage others in future research to employ, if possible, all three types of analyses - race, gender and feminist.

Researcher's Point of View

This study was exploratory in nature. An extensive literature review was undertaken (fall 1991/winter 1992) in the fields of Native social work education (including non-degree programs), social work education, adult education, and Indian education. There had been little, if any, previous research done, or at least reported, that focused specifically on the issue/concept of "culturally relevant education"; thus the exploratory nature of this study.

Qualitative methods were used to "explore": in-depth interviews with student respondents; informal interviews with program staff and students; consultation with colleagues; observing on-site and making field notes; reviewing program documents; and analysing data. In addition, I was a full "participant
observer" in all these activities; both as a past administrator and instructor in the NVIT program, as well as during the time that this study was undertaken.

In qualitative inquiry, it is the researcher who is the primary "research instrument". As such, I brought my own particular biases, assumptions, beliefs and values to this study. It is through my voice that I re-present the voices of others. Therefore, it is important that I identify myself so that it is clear "where I'm coming from".

I am a White, middle-class, middle-aged woman of Irish/Celtic heritage who has worked in Native social work education for approximately five years, primarily as a program administrator and instructor in the Social Work department at NVIT. I came to NVIT with very little experience working with Native people. As a B.S.W. graduate, I had worked in child protection, mental health, and with women's organizations. Initially, I was hired by NVIT on a three-month contract to facilitate the life-skills component of a Job-ReEntry program to train unemployed Native women in clerical skills. These were early days in the development of NVIT; two or three programs, with a small group of staff and instructors. They were exciting times, with never enough resources to meet new challenges, based on very real needs and visions. I went for three months and stayed five years!
I think what kept me at NVIT was the respect I gained for Native people, their cultures, and how they worked towards fulfilling their vision for “Indian control of Indian education” (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972). I discovered that spirituality provided the meaning for what First Nations people did and how they did it. My own source of meaning in life was enlivened through my relationships with Native people and the work we were doing. I felt spiritually connected to both the people and the place. When I was offered the opportunity, this is why I stayed. And also why I left. For after five years, I also came to realize that the spirituality of Native people, and that place - the Nicola Valley, belonged to them in a way that it could never belong to me. It was time once again, for me to find my own way in the world.

Together with Native leaders and community groups, we established a social work department at NVIT, and a diploma program, accredited through the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, University of Regina. During those early years, we also initiated the Sexual Abuse Worker Training Program, in response to overwhelming needs in Native communities to address sexual abuse. Following development of these programs, I taught social work courses and coordinated special projects. During the last few years, the social work program at NVIT has been broadened to include a full B.S.W. degree program, accredited as a satellite with the University of Victoria, School of Social Work.
While working with Native and non-Native people in program development, administration, and teaching, I continually struggled with, what I came to name, "The Two Worlds" - Aboriginal and White. I started out with the belief/value that "human is human" - that all people share more similarities than differences. That the "way out" of what appeared to be tensions and conflicts between our Two Worlds, lay in our collective ability to define and acknowledge our similarities, and to focus on these as sources of strength and affiliation. However, the longer I worked in the field, the more I came to realize that if there was a "way out", it lay down the path of exploring and articulating our "differences" - as individuals, as families, as communities, as groups, as societies and Nations - both within and between Native and non-Native peoples. I am on this path of exploration, both personally and professionally. I am intrigued and drawn to that which is "particular". Perhaps the ability to walk this path of diversity and particularity, now at this time in my life, rests in my trust that "who" and "what" I am is paradoxically, both the same as, and different than, others. I am the same, in that we are all the Creator's children, but at the same time, I am "me" - woman, White, middle aged, and of this time and place.

Walking this path led me to the interest, and the qualitative methods used, in exploring the "particularities" of "culturally relevant education" - as seen, felt, experienced, and understood by Native students. What was different in each of
their perspectives? What was shared? How did their realities compare with mine, and with those of others working in the field of Native social work education?

It has been my experience that all of us, Native and non-Native, engaged in Native social work education, struggle in our own ways with the tensions which seem inherent in the meeting of The Two Worlds - Aboriginal and White. We also often experience great joy and celebration in the meeting, both within ourselves and with each other. I have learned a great deal on my journey with Native people, largely due to their deep ethic of respect and their abiding sense of humour. But like a true social worker, the "problem" focus is hard for me to shake.

The following section is a brief overview of two central issues which impact on Native social work programs. This section is what I call "the heart of the matter", and offers a beginning, rather personal, framework with which to view these issues. A more thorough philosophical and political framework will be presented in the literature review, chapter two.

Central Issues in Native Social Work Education

There are two issues that are central to Native social work education; university accreditation of programs, and the development and delivery of
culturally relevant education and training. The trend in Native social work education is towards increasing First Nations enrollment, participation, and control. Many Native people want accredited education. They also want that education to be "culturally relevant". They want accredited education for two main reasons. First, accredited education provides, upon successful completion, recognized mainstream credentials which can increase opportunities for employment and/or further education. Second, they want accredited education because they believe that accredited programs help to guarantee the quality of the education being delivered. Culturally relevant education is valued by First Nations people because they believe that Native graduates need to understand First Nations cultures in order to practice effectively as social workers in Native communities.

It is important to mention here that not all Native people want or value post-secondary education accredited by mainstream (ie: non-Native) institutions, such as universities and/or community colleges. (The Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, which is part of the University of Regina, could be considered the only exception in Canada to the definition of mainstream as non-Native. However, even their graduates receive University of Regina degrees.) This study was concerned however, with those Native (and non-Native) people who had chosen to engage in university accredited Native social work education. Much
could be said about the resistance of universities to accredit, and maintain, Native social work programs. It has been and continues to be, a major systemic struggle. But for the moment, I would like to focus on the more "personal" aspects of this struggle, which take place in the context of structural and systemic issues.

The major stakeholders engaged in Native social work education are educators, students, community members and advisors, and government funders. It is these people who are actively involved in the day-to-day development and delivery of programs. These different groups are composed of both Native and non-Native people, although the majority of students and community members are Native, and the majority of educators and funders are non-Native. All of us have chosen for various reasons to be involved and engaged in the enterprise. Typically this choice is based on our belief that the enterprise is possible and worthwhile. Generally speaking, we share a commitment to do our best. Those who have different beliefs, values, or needs, seem to quickly leave the field; the rest of us press on. But despite our collective strengths, we seem to run into continual tensions and conflicts - within ourselves, between individuals, and between stakeholder groups. Furthermore, these tensions and conflicts do not seem to be based exclusively on racism and/or self-interest. Racism is certainly both a personal and systemic issue in Native social work education, as is oppression. However, for those who remain committed to the enterprise, this
commitment includes the commitment to continual and explicit work, individually and collectively, on issues of racism and oppression.

This study was founded on my belief that there exists, along with issues of racism and oppression, other forces, or factors, which negatively influence our ability to work more effectively together, and which contribute significantly to our experience of tensions and conflicts. I had loosely labelled, in my own mind, these forces as the meeting of the Two Worlds - Aboriginal and White. While not minimizing or discounting the role that racism and oppression play in this meeting, I have felt intuitively that there are other significant factors that play a part.

Whatever else can be said about Native social work education, it is indeed a meeting of The Two Worlds. The central issues of accreditation of programs and culturally relevant education are symbolic as well as practical. Accreditation represents a particular EuroCanadian philosophy or world view of education and training. Accreditation represents mainstream society's attempts to control and certify "knowledge" which is deemed necessary and worthwhile, particularly for professional education and training. On the other hand, culturally relevant education represents a world view shared by many First Nations people, which asserts that knowledge of traditions and cultures is fundamental to any educational endeavour involving First Nations people.
When these Two World views meet in Native social work education, they meet through the actuality of real people engaged in the enterprise. Often, these people value both world views, and are actively engaged in, and committed to, trying to accommodate both. And this is what I refer to as "the heart of the matter": We bring our commitment to, and valuing of, these Two Worlds, and yet we experience, both personally and collectively, intense struggles, tensions, and conflicts.

In the every day activities of program development and delivery, accreditation demands a specific, largely EuroCanadian, curriculum which is often rigid, and which leaves little room for innovation. Strategies to address the need for culturally relevant programs have typically taken the following forms: "Adding-on" courses, usually in the form of electives, that have First Nations content; hiring of Native faculty; and occasionally trying to "build-in" Native content across the curriculum, including instructional processes and practicum placements. The NVIT social work program has used all three strategies in an attempt to increase cultural relevance.

This study was not intended as an evaluation of the NVIT program, and/or of the effectiveness of these strategies. Rather, the intent was to gain a fuller understanding of what the concept "culturally relevant education" means, by exploring with Native students, their experiences and meanings of this concept.
Native students were in a unique position to help clarify this concept because they had an understanding and experience of both Native cultures and social work education - the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White. The NVIT social work program was chosen as the site for this study because I had an existing rapport with students and staff, and familiarity with that program.

The following literature review, chapter two, will present and summarize previous research findings and/or articles, which provide this study with background and context.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research findings in the fields of Native education and Native social work education provided a context and perspective from which to explore the concept "culturally relevant education" with the Native social work students who were respondents in this study. The research in Native education found most useful was of three types: an ethnography which focused on a Native adult education centre in Vancouver (Haig-Brown, 1991); an unpublished dissertation which presented themes for an Indian theory of education (Hampton, 1988); and, research on Native cognitive schemes (Tafoya, 1989; Maracle, 1990). Although there has been little research published in the field of Native social work education in Canada, three articles proved useful to this study (Castellano, Stalwick and Wien, 1986; Pace and Smith, 1990; Brown, 1992).

The following discussion will begin with a philosophical and political perspective, provided by the aforementioned ethnography, in which two central issues of Native social work education - accreditation of programs and culturally relevant education - are situated. The discussion will then proceed with the review of the three articles regarding Native social work education in Canada. This review will conclude with research on Native cognition schemes, and themes for an Indian theory of education to be found in the unpublished dissertation.
A Philosophical and Political Framework

Celia Haig-Brown's thesis "Taking Control: Power and Contradiction in First Nations Adult Education" (1991), is an ethnography that explored how students, faculty, and staff at the Native Education Centre in Vancouver, B.C., made sense of "taking control of education" (p.ii). Haig-Brown identifies, defines, and relates three concepts/issues - control, power, and contradiction - that are central to Native adult education, and thus to this study. She draws from a variety of sources, most notably: the "new sociologists" of education perspective on control and power; Michel Foucault's analysis of power and knowledge; the National Indian Brotherhood's policy statement "Indian Control of Indian Education"; and, the concept of "contradiction" as used in dialectical philosophy.

Haig-Brown's ethnography is thorough and complex, wide ranging yet particular. She illustrates how control, power, and contradiction are played out in the real-life experiences of the people who engage in Native adult education at the Native Education Centre. For the purpose of this study, however, it is her identification of that which is general about these concepts/issues in Native adult education, that is most useful. Therefore, this presentation of Haig-Brown's analysis will focus more on the philosophical and political framework that these
concepts/issues provide for this study, rather than on the particular application of her perspective to the Native Education Centre.

**Power and Control**

Haig-Brown outlines the impact that the "new sociologists" of education have had by their assertion that a "sociology of knowledge" is central to a "sociology of education", and central to a "sociology of knowledge" are the issues/concepts of control and power. "Knowledge" is to be seen, in the view of the new sociologists, "as socially constructed, with some in a position to impose their constructions or meanings on others" (p.6). "Science" and "rationality" for example, are social constructs used to exclude alternative systems of thought: Exclusion is a form of exercising power and control.

Haig-Brown demonstrates how the neo-Marxists contributed to the discourse by focusing on class analysis, and also how the expected early promise of the "new sociologists" has fallen short by paying little if any attention to the role of ethnicity in a sociology of knowledge. Haig-Brown argues that "racism and ethnicity are also necessary considerations for situated, specific analysis of the social constructs relevant to education" (p.7).

Haig-Brown discusses how the work of Foucault contributes to the discourse of control and power in Native education. Foucault's "attention to
disqualified, subjugated knowledges and their concern with 'a historical knowledge of struggles' (83) calls to mind the lack of attention paid to ethnicity in much of mainstream educational writing" (p.10). Both the memory of the struggles, and the "local knowledge" of the struggles, are marginalized. The knowledges of First Nations peoples are specific examples of Foucault's concept of "local knowledge".

Power relations are integral to the struggles between First Nations peoples and non-Native society and among First Nations people themselves, and educational practices are one of the ways in which power relations have been established and power circulates. (p.11)

Haig-Brown illustrates how Foucault's thought contributes to her perspective on Native education.

Haig-Brown describes how the National Indian Brotherhood's policy statement "Indian Control of Indian Education" (1972), grew out of the struggles that Native peoples in Canada experienced (and continue to experience) in the face of mainstream society's attempts to integrate and assimilate First Nations people. This document challenged the Canadian government's right to control Indian education; it asserted the right of First Nations peoples to control their own education, and it challenged non-Indians to "modify, if necessary, some of their own ideas and practices' (25-26)" (p.21). This document continues to have relevance for those people engaged in Native education at all levels, including adult education. "Indian Control of Indian Education" became a strong rallying
point for those involved in Native education, even those who never read the
document" (P. 21).

Dialectical Contradiction

"Indian Control of Indian Education" demanded "radical change" in Indian
education, and "the document cites two goals as central to their project: 'to
reinforce Indian identity' and 'to provide the training necessary for making a good
living in a modern society'" (p.22). Haig-Brown sees "contradictory aspects" in
these two goals, which "are not addressed in the document" (p.22). She focuses
on "contradiction" as a third integral concept/issue, along with control and power,
in Native education.

When Haig-Brown discusses "contradiction", she does so from the view
point of dialectical philosophy, and "at the heart of the dialectical outlook is the
notion of contradiction" (p.311). Dialectical philosophy asserts that "things" (ie:
"ideas, propositions, cultures, social institutions, people, or objects" p.311) exist
through their relationships to other things, and thus things are in a constant state
of being and becoming. Contradiction is seen as central in development.

"Because it is based in the realization that all is in flux, contradiction provides a
way of looking at the process of becoming" (p.311). And it is the "particularities
of contradiction", that are of interest. Therefore, the "context" within which
things interact becomes significant, as does "conflict": Conflict between things is inherent in development, as a thing only knows itself and maintains itself through opposing other things.

Furthermore, the dialectical perspective holds that there will exist in any process of development the "principle contradiction". In Haig-Brown's ethnography of the Native Education Centre, "[t]he contradiction between the goals of success in further education or employment and enhancing and maintaining First Nations cultures may be seen as the principle one .." (p.320).

From the dialectical point of view, a contradiction is never actually resolved, for when opposites come to co-exist within a unity (as in the principle contradiction at the Native Education Centre), this unity is still composed of opposites.

Haig-Brown's discourse of control, power, and contradiction in Native education, provides this study with a philosophical and political framework. As outlined in chapter one of this thesis, this study is interested in two central issues in Native social work education - accreditation of programs and culturally relevant education. Haig-Brown's analysis demonstrates how these two central issues can be seen as the opposites that Native social work education is trying to unify. In this study, these two issues are seen as the "principle contradiction". Control and power are shown to play a central role in Native education, and Haig-
Brown's discourse provides context and meaning to the tensions and conflicts that occur in, what I have called, the meeting of the Two Worlds, Indian and White - the meeting that takes place in Native social work education.

Haig-Brown's analysis also provides a perspective and context from which the following research findings can be viewed. As this discussion continues, references will be made to her work.

Native Social Work Education in Canada

Three articles in current Canadian social work literature regarding Native social work education provide further context for this study. These articles are different - in focus, approach, and design - from the present study, which was exploratory in nature precisely because there had been no previous research of this type (ie: exploratory) done in the field. The first article by Castellano, Stalwick and Wien (1986), presents an overview of existing Native programs and issues. The second article by Pace and Smith (1990), is a descriptive "case study" of one Native social work program. The third article by Brown (1992), addresses current educational practices in aboriginal social work education.
Native Social Work Education in Canada: Issues and Adaptations (Castellano, Stalwick and Wien, 1986)

The Castellano, Stalwick and Wien (1986) article has been considered the definitive article in the field of Native social work education in Canada. The authors are social work educators with extensive experience. They cite four central issues that "have emerged in efforts to adapt social work education to the requirements of Native communities" (p.167). These four issues are:

(1) the adaptations in education required by the work situation for which students of Native social work are being prepared;
(2) adaptations required by virtue of student characteristics;
(3) the tension between maintaining mainstream educational standards while adapting the content and process to meet community and student needs;
(4) and, finally, definition of the role of Native communities and organizations in determining the content and process of educational programs directed to them (p.167)

In chapter one of this thesis, two central issues in Native social work education were presented - accreditation of programs (by mainstream institutions) and culturally relevant education. This study's analysis of these two issues, is meant to include the four issues presented by Castellano, Stalwick and Wien. When this
study uses "accreditation of programs", it is to be understood that this concept includes "maintaining mainstream educational standards". When this study uses "culturally relevant education", it is to be understood that this includes: "adaptations in education required by the work situation for which students ...are being prepared"; "adaptations required by virtue of student characteristics"; and, "definition of the role of Native communities and organizations in determining the content and process of educational programs". Castellano, Stalwick and Wien's articulation of what they consider the principle issues in Native social work education, provides further depth to the two central issues of interest to this study.

In addition to identifying key issues in the field of Native social work education, Castellano, Stalwick and Wien propose two frameworks for "analyzing the educational responses made to date" (p.167) The first framework illustrates types of social service structures in Native communities. This typology demonstrates the breadth and variety of work situations in which Native social workers practice. For these authors, in order to be "relevant", social work education must respond to this diversity. They do not suggest how this might be achieved, but they do indicate that one criterion for relevant education is that social work education address the diversity of practice situations encountered by Native social workers.
The second framework presented by Castellano, Stalwick and Wien offers four models of Native social work programs that are differentiated by "using the degree of Native control as the criterion for differentiating one model from another" (p.177). The authors associate a program's degree of control with a program's level of autonomy, its level of accreditation and affiliation, and the extent of Native content in a program's curriculum. Based on this criterion, four program "types" are presented: autonomous programs, affiliated autonomous programs, special Native programs, and conventional programs.

Using this framework, with its four models/types of programs, Castellano, Stalwick and Wien classify and review twelve Native social work programs in Canada. The NVIT social work program would be considered an affiliated autonomous program: affiliation and accreditation agreements exist, or have existed, with both the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College/University of Regina and the University of Victoria, and a level of autonomy exists through "Native participation in curriculum adaptation and program administration" (p.181). For the purpose of this present study, what is most relevant about this framework, is the fact that it is based on the criterion of control. By implication, the authors are demonstrating and asserting that "Indian control of Indian education", has influenced, and continues to influence, the field of Native social work education.
The Castellano, Stalwick and Wien frameworks provide further context to the issues of accreditation of programs and culturally relevant education. Many Native peoples want social work education which is both culturally relevant and accredited. Accrediting universities want academic standards maintained. One reason that accreditation of programs is desired by Native peoples is because the transfer of social programs from federal and provincial governments to Native control has been partially contingent upon the ability of Native organizations to demonstrate that they have competent staff to administer and deliver these programs (Tester, 1985). Governments equate competent staff with accredited education; some Native people also make this equation (Hill, 1982).

The issue of accreditation of Native social work programs reflects historical and contemporary Canadian political realities. When Native peoples talk about culturally relevant social work education, they are speaking from their own values, knowledge and skills in both social caring and education. They are also speaking from the viewpoint of oppressive relationships with "liberal" systems of social caring and education - The Canadian Indian Act, The Department of Indian Affairs, the residential school system, and provincial child welfare systems. (Campbell, 1973; Cardinal, 1969, 1977; Carniol, 1987; Haig-Brown, 1988; Manuel & Posluns, 1974; Tester, 1985)
Universities and professional associations control accreditation (Bowles & Gintis, 1987; Carniol, 1987; Elias & Merriam, 1980). They argue that they need to maintain control in order to ensure academic standards. On the other hand, Native peoples are demanding more control of programs; control, which they see as their right and responsibility to ensure more culturally relevant programs, and thus more competent Native social workers (Tester, 1985).

Native Social Work Education: Struggling to Meet the Need (Pace and Smith (1990)

The second article on Native social work education in Canada, by Pace & Smith (1990), describes and discusses the Micmac B.S.W. program at Dalhousie University. This article can be viewed as a "case study" which demonstrates issues outlined by Castellano, Stalwick & Wien (1986) and Haig-Brown (1991). Pace & Smith, from their perspective as educators and program administrators, illustrate how "political" issues (ie: power and control) are inherently part of "educational" issues, and how these issues challenge the survival and viability of programs.

The Micmac program would be considered a special Native program, using the Castellano, Stalwick & Wien (1986) framework. It is different from the NVIT program, in that it has less autonomy and control. However, similarities
exist, particularly in the Micmac program's initiatives to adapt standard
curriculum, and other program aspects, to the specific culture and needs of
Micmac communities and students. However, the NVIT program is different
from the Micmac program in one critical dimension: students enrolled in the
NVIT program come from a wide variety of Native Nations - they are a culturally
diverse population.

In the Micmac program, adaptations towards a "culturally appropriate
program" (p.109), have been guided by an Advisory Committee comprising the
three major players; government funders, the educational institution (including
student representation), and Native communities. Adaptations made in the
Micmac program include:

1. The educational philosophy of the program was based on the radical approach
   of Paulo Freire (1984); a social change approach, which focuses on cultural
   action for freedom of oppressed groups. The Micmac program has taken a
   broad interpretation of Freire's philosophy and "encourages students to
develop individual, group, and societal empowerment ... the Freirian approach
   is highly appropriate and congruent with Native values and culture" (p.13).

2. A curriculum committee, which included student representation, made cultural
   adaptations to the curriculum based on questions raised as to the
   appropriateness of mainstream theory and values. Pace and Smith state that
few social work theories appropriate for Native counselling have been identified, and that in their experience an "eclectic approach" to practice has been found to be that most relevant. Practicum experience offered students an "opportunity to experiment with different theories and concepts, to share knowledge between cultures, and to formulate their own eclectic models of practice. These models will be instrumental in assessing which theories are appropriate for Native social work practice" (p.17).

Pace and Smith demonstrate in their article the validity of the issues in Native social work education presented by Castellano, Stalwick and Wien (1986). Pace and Smith's experiences verify and confirm Haig-Brown's analysis of control and power in Native education. Furthermore, their experiences highlight the central importance that the issue of culturally relevant education has in the field of Native social work education. In concluding their article, they state "The Micmac BSW program has proved that it is possible to combine university training requirements with culturally relevant learning and appropriate practical experience" (p.117). Their experiences support the need for further exploration of the concept "culturally relevant education", which is the purpose of this present study.
Social Work Education for Aboriginal Communities (Brown, 1992)

The third, and final, article, from the Native social work education literature to be reviewed, is by Leslie Brown (1992), from the University of Victoria, School of Social Work. Using Castellano, Stalwick and Wien's (1986) framework, Brown classifies the on-campus UVic program as a "conventional" program, where "Native students are encouraged to enrol in regular social work programs ...[with] minimal adaptations of core curriculum, although special interest electives may be offered" (Castellano, Stalwick and Wien, p.179).

It is useful to view the UVic on-campus program as "conventional", because it helps to clarify the context from which Brown writes as an educator who works in an institution that maintains significant power and control over Native social work education in British Columbia.

In this article, Brown raises the concern that "current education practice may be facilitating the assimilation of aboriginal students into mainstream culture and profession" (p.46). The profession's philosophy, values, goals, and methods may not be congruent (ie: culturally relevant) with the needs of aboriginal students or the communities in which they may practice. Brown sees this situation as a "formidable challenge" to educators: "how to encourage a commitment on the part of aboriginal students to their profession and its
philosophy, without at the same time attempting to assimilate them into the
dominant values of non-aboriginal society" (p.47).

Brown addresses this challenge in two ways; "a philosophy of recognition
and accommodation of aboriginal perspectives as a basis for future
developments", and a "strategy for teaching, termed interface teaching" (p.46).
She elaborates the proposed philosophy by stating, ":[r]ecognition of the
uniqueness of aboriginal peoples and social work practice, as well as the
accommodation, not assimilation, of aboriginal perspectives in contemporary
Canadian professional social work, may begin to respond to this challenge"
(p.47).

In her discussion, Brown reviews program models, curriculum
developments, and teaching models, and suggests ways in which "a philosophy of
recognition and accommodation" may be achieved by the profession and
educators, working in conjunction with aboriginal peoples.

Brown expands Castellano, Stalwick and Wien's typology of program
types by classifying programs as distinctive or integrative. Distinctive programs
are those that focus specifically on Native students, and she cites the NVIT
program as an example of this type of program. Integrative programs are those
"which find increasing numbers of aboriginal students in their regular classes"
(p.48), such as the on-campus UVic program. Both program types have strengths
and limitations in terms of their "utility and validity for any particular aboriginal community" (p.49). Brown recommends that "[h]aving an array of program models available across the country, and the capability for aboriginal students to transfer between programs, would allow individual learners to put together the most appropriate program for their particular practice needs" (p.49).

As well, Brown applies her concepts of distinctive and integrative to curriculum developments. Integrative approaches "have accommodated curriculum adaptation to incorporate aboriginal perspectives and content while retaining a core curriculum that remains essentially reflective of the ideas of social work as determined by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (CASSW)" (p.50). Brown cites Pace and Smith (1990) and their experiences in the Micmac program, as an example of the challenges and issues posed by an integrative approach.

For Brown, distinctive approaches to curriculum development run the risk of a perceived, or real, lack of academic standards. She gives one example of what she means by distinctive curriculum development, "[t]he concept of the Medicine [w]heel [sic] ...came from, and is being developed for, social work curriculum by some aboriginal peoples" (p.51). She notes, "[d]istinctive approaches ..are not pervasive, but they are increasing in visibility" (p.51).
From the perspective of this study, Brown's application of "distinctive" and "integrative" to program types and curriculum developments is confusing. She uses the NVIT program as an example of a distinctive program model, because the NVIT program focuses specifically on Native students. However, when using her concepts of distinctive and integrative approaches to curriculum development, the NVIT curriculum would be classified as integrative, because it has attempted to "incorporate aboriginal perspectives and content while retaining a core [mainstream] curriculum". For the purpose of this study, Castellano, Stalwick and Wien's program typology, based on the criterion of "control", is more useful than the concepts of distinctive and integrative used by Brown because it highlights the central role that power and control play in Native social work education.

The "philosophy of recognition and accommodation" that Brown proposes is most clearly developed in her discussion on teaching models used in the classroom. For her, "[t]eaching models can provide the chance to assess traditional social work knowledge, skills and values as well as discover the knowledge, skills and values held by First Nations and aboriginal students" (p.51). Brown proposes an "interface teaching model" as an alternative to what she sees as the norm, where teachers present certain material (theories, concepts and skills), with the assumption that what is presented is better than what is not
presented. An alternative interface model is "designed simply to offer material and ideas to students ... in a detached manner, separate from the presenter and the student, as a curiosity with which to wrestle ... not a piece of knowledge to be banked" (p.52).

Drawing on literature from adult education, Brown demonstrates how principles, such as self-directed learning rather than teacher-directed learning, can support and inform interface teaching. As well, self-directed learning involves shifts, or transformations, of a student's perspective or world view. Brown states that the challenge of social work educators "is to facilitate the education and transformation of aboriginal students in a way that is useful, relevant and valuable for aboriginal communities" (p.54). Brown proposes that both aboriginal and non-aboriginal teachers can facilitate student transformations by acting as "translators" or "mediators" between mainstream and First Nations cultures. Brown sees the teacher's role of translator and mediator as central in facilitating a reciprocal process; "[a]boriginal communities as well as mainstream Canadian social work values, knowledge and skills have the opportunity to be reciprocally transformed" (p.55).

Although not stated clearly by Brown, it would seem that the implementation of a philosophy of recognition and accommodation of unique aboriginal perspectives in Native social work education, is to be achieved largely
through educators who adopt an interface teaching model, rather than through structural changes in institutions and/or programs. Brown's perspective and analysis, and her emphasis on the role of educators, would seem to "de-politicize" the issues, and the means by which these issues might be addressed. A philosophy of recognition and accommodation does not acknowledge or confront issues of power and control, which are central to the perspectives of Castellano, Stalwick and Wien, Pace and Smith, Haig-Brown, and this present study.

Native Education

In addition to the work of Haig-Brown (1991) discussed at the beginning of this review, other research findings in the field of Native education have proved useful to this present study; these other findings address Native cognitive schemes, and an Indian theory of education. The review of literature on Native cognitive schemes was based on the following rationale. This present study sought to explore the meanings—the cognitive constructs—that Native students made of "culturally relevant education". Their cognitive schemes would likely influence what meanings they made, and how they made them. It was important therefore, to review literature on Native cognitive schemes.

The review of themes for an Indian theory of education, as presented in an unpublished dissertation (Hampton, 1988), is useful because it provides this
present study with one Indian educator's vision of "culturally relevant" Indian education.

Native Cognitive Schemes

In introducing research on Native cognitive schemes, the following points need to be made. First, this area of research tends to blur the distinction between research that focused on adults and that which focused on children. Findings which are reported from studies undertaken with children, are often applied to adults, and/or assumed to be valid for all Native peoples (More, 1989; Ministry of Education, Province of B.C., 1984). Second, there is considerable confusion regarding the definition of relevant concepts; for example, "cognitive scheme" is often used interchangeably with "cognition style", and "cognition style" is often used interchangeably with "learning style" (More, 1989; Tafoya, 1989). Third, there is wide-spread disagreement regarding the validity (and reliability) of a uniquely Indian, versus non-Indian, learning/cognition style (More, 1989; Tafoya, 1989; Baty and Chiste, 1986).

For the purposes of this review, "cognitive scheme" is the concept of interest, and is to be understood as Tafoya (1989) uses the term/concept. In his article "Coyote's Eyes: Native Cognition Styles", Tafoya uses the concepts "cognition styles" and "cognitive scheme"; he uses "cognitive scheme"
interchangeably with "world view"; and, he does not define these concepts. Although Tafoya uses "cognition styles" in his title, his discussion focuses on the concept of "cognitive scheme"/"world view".

It would seem that when Tafoya (and others) use "cognition style", he is referring to the process(es) used by learners to learn, whereas when using "cognitive scheme" and "world view", he is referring to the content(s), or mental constructs, made by learners. Perhaps it is misleading to differentiate between process and content in learning, for in fact they are mutually dependent and interconnected. However, drawing these distinctions has been useful for this present study.

As will be pointed out in the final chapter of this thesis, the interview questions used to elicit data from students, were questions which were primarily "content" questions, rather than "process" questions; questions aimed at eliciting a student's "cognitive scheme", rather than a student's "cognition style"; questions aimed at "what" meanings the student made, and did not focus on "how" they made these meanings.

(It should be noted that the emphasis on "content" in the interview questions was unintentional on my part, and due to a lack of clarity regarding what are essentially epistemological issues. It is only through the re-visiting of literature on Native cognitive schemes, after data gathering and analysis, that gaps
in my thinking surfaced. This oversight will be more fully addressed in the final chapter of this thesis.)

Using a traditional Native story - Coyote's Eyes - as a focus for discussion, Tafoya (1989) illustrates the differences between what he calls the Standard Average European (SAE) world view (i.e., cognitive scheme) and the Standard Native American (SNA) world view. He draws upon literature from anthropology, sociology, and education, to support his argument.

Tafoya characterizes the SAE world view as linear and reductionistic; and, SAE education as discursive, compartmentalized, decontextualized, and bureaucratic. In SAE education, knowledge has been based on texts, a standard canon of knowledge that is to be learned, "...this may explain the inherent belief among those of the SAE world view [in] the validity of the printed page regardless of what one's senses may tell one" (p.37).

In contrast, the SNA world view is "holistic" and "circular": "This is one reason why the circle is so often associated with Indian tribal philosophy... This is the circle with a cross in the centre, representing the four directions, and thus the entire creation.... This circle symbolizes balance and the desired harmony for which the Native American child is taught to strive" (p.32). Legends and stories form the basis for traditional teaching paradigms. The individual experience of knowledge is valued and pursued, rather than knowledge gained second-hand.
through texts. Participation in the spirit or vision quest is one way that personal knowledge is gained.

Tafoya believes that these different world views are not mutually exclusive, but rather that they "point out some possible areas of interethnic confusion in communication dealing with cognitive schemes" (p.40). For Tafoya, the lesson of "Coyote's Eyes" is that ". one must be flexible enough to be able to switch world views when appropriate" (p.40).

Tafoya's description and discussion of the Standard Average European (SAE) and the Standard Native American (SNA) world views, or cognitive schemes, adds further depth to the present study's conceptualization of the Two Worlds, Indian and White, that meet in Native social work education. To achieve accreditation with mainstream institutions, programs have had to maintain a core curriculum which, using Tafoya's analysis, is based on a SAE world view. On the other hand, the SNA world view is at least part of what "culturally relevant education" is trying to operationalize.

It is interesting that Tafoya states that he does not see these world views as mutually exclusive; rather, he emphasizes that Native peoples need to "switch world views when appropriate". This Native author also believes that non-Native people who hold the SAE world view, will likely not be able to fully comprehend the SNA world view; and therefore, they will not have the ability to switch world
views when appropriate: "[t]he legend of Coyote's eyes which is a scheme for
Native American cognitive development is only a parable for the SAE" (p.41).

Lee Maracle's monograph "Oratory: Coming to Theory" (1990) can be
seen to address a specific area of interethnic confusion that exists between
Tafoya's Standard Average European (SAE) and Standard Native American
(SNA) world views. Maracle focuses on the differences between "theory" and
"oratory". She demonstrates how European scholars (and mainstream academics)
have used theory, and its emphasis on "proof" and "objectivity", as a means of
power and control, as a tool of oppression.

By presenting theory in a language no one can grasp, the speaker
(or writer) retains authority over thought. By demanding that all thoughts
(theory) be presented in this manner in order to be considered theory
(thought), the presenter retains the power to make decisions on behalf of
others [emphasis in original]. (p.11)

Writing from her perspective as a Native woman, Maracle explains that
the tradition of Native oratory is based on the belief that "the proof of a thing or
idea is in the doing ... Doing requires some form of social interaction and thus,
story [emphasis in original] is the most persuasive and sensible way to present the
accumulated thoughts and values of a people."(p.3). On the other hand, theory
values the "showing", not the "doing", of proof. Maracle argues that although
theory values objectivity, in fact stories are used in demonstrating proof, but they
are called "examples". For Maracle, oratory, and its use of stories, is the more honest and effective means of "theorizing".

There is story in every line of theory. The difference between us and European (predominantly white male) scholars is that we admit this, and present theory through story. We differ in the presentation of theory, not in our capacity to theorize. (p.7)

Maracle's analysis of how Native oratory employs stories to present theory may prove important to this present study. Maracle provides further insight into Tafoya's two world views. She adds another dimension to the understanding of what may be particular about Native cognition schemes, and how Native world views may differ from those held by the Standard Average European.

Towards An Indian Theory of Education

In an unpublished dissertation "Toward a Redefinition of American Indian/Alaska Native Education" (1988), Eber Hampton writes from his perspective as an Indian educator/administrator, with extensive experience in Indian education in North America. Subsequent to his studies at Harvard, Hampton became president of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, University of Regina. Hampton has a bi-cultural heritage, his father was American Indian, his mother White. Although his dissertation focuses on
American Indian/Alaska Native education, I believe that much of what he has to say applies to Indian education in Canada, and thus to this present study.

Using grounded theory as the primary methodology, Hampton conducted interviews with Indian participants (n=10) in the American Indian Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Qualitative data analysis identified themes which Hampton postulates as twelve standards to be addressed by an Indian theory of education. His findings do not permit the formation of an Indian theory of education, but his twelve standards are to be seen as necessary, although not sufficient, to future theorizing.

Hampton's analysis of Indian education to date, is similar to that of Haig-Brown's (1991), and her emphasis on the issues of power and control. However, Hampton's perspective is also different, due to his strong "visionary" focus. Particularly informative is his classification of a new type of Indian education - "Indian education sui generis". By this he means, "Indian education as 'a thing of its own kind' ...a self-determined Indian education using models of education structured by Indian cultures" (p.19). It is towards this vision of "Indian education sui generis" that Hampton's study is directed.

Indian education will not be truly Indian until we develop our own research, our own philosophies of education, our own structures, and our own methods. (p.20)
Hampton is not advocating for a segregation of Indian education, but rather for a coming-of-age, where Indian education sui generis is recognized by, and contributes to, mainstream society.

The recognition of Indian education as a thing of its own kind indicates a legitimate desire of Indian people to be self-defining, to have their ways of life respected, and to teach their children in a way that enhances consciousness of what it means to be an Indian and a fully participating citizen of the U.S. (p.20)

Using the Native teaching of the "six directions" as "a pattern for understanding the data" (p.38), Hampton notes:

The six directions are not a model but a pattern or an organizing principle. Models connote something that is a small, imperfect copy of something more real. The six directions are a way of thinking about existing in the universe. This pattern organizes and clarifies thoughts. It directs us to think of Indian education as dynamic. There is movement. There is historical development. .. This is what Indian education was, this is what it is, this is what it should be. (p.39)

The six directions are: east, south, west, north, above, and earth. Reminiscent of Lee Maracle's discourse on oratory and its use of stories to present theory, Hampton weaves the themes generated by the data, into the twelve standards for Indian education sui generis; these in turn, become situated in, and illuminated by, the teachings of the six directions. It is not possible to do justice here to the depth and elegance of Hampton's work, but it is possible to present his twelve standards, and his summary of their meanings.

(1) Spirituality, an appreciation for spiritual relationships;
(2) Service, the purpose of education is to contribute to the people;
These twelve standards begin to give voice and substance to Indian education sui generis, and would seem to express at least some of what Hampton would consider "culturally relevant education".

Summary

The purpose of this literature review was to provide background and context for the exploration with Native students of their meanings of "culturally relevant education". This review has focused on the philosophical and political framework offered by Haig-Brown's (1991) analysis of power, control and contradiction in Native education. Literature in Native social work education
provided a perspective of relevant issues, program types and experiences, from the point of view of educators in the field.

Castellano et al (1986) present four issues that provide further clarification and depth to the two central issues of interest to this study, namely accreditation of programs and culturally relevant education. For these educators, "relevant" social work education must include responding to the diversity of work situations in which Native social workers practice. Their framework of program types is based on the criterion of control, and demonstrates the central role that issues of control have in the field of Native social work education.

Pace and Smith’s (1990) “case study” of the Micmac program illustrates how political issues - power and control - were inherently part of educational challenges faced by that program. Their experiences confirm, by example, Haig-Brown’s (1991) analysis; they highlight the central importance that “culturally relevant education” has in the field of Native social work education; and, they support the need for further exploration of this concept, which is the purpose of this study.

Brown’s (1992) argument for a “philosophy of recognition and accommodation” of unique aboriginal perspectives, and her interface teaching model, seems to ignore structural issues of power and control which are central to the perspectives of other authors reviewed here, and to this present study. On
these issues, her article offers this study a different, but not uncommon, point of view.

An exploration of literature regarding Native cognitive schemes, helps clarify this concept, and its potential relevance to this study. Tafoya's (1989) argument for a distinctly Native "cognitive scheme" (what he calls the Standard Native American world view, as differentiated from the Standard Average European world view), points to possible areas of "interethnic confusion" in communication between Native and non-Native people. Maracle's (1990) analysis of how Native oratory is theorizing, further develops Tafoya's concept of a Native cognitive scheme. Their perspectives will be particularly useful in the analyses phases of this study; when I, a non-Native researcher, analyse data from Native respondents.

Finally, "Indian education sui generis" (Hampton, 1988) provides this study with one educator's vision of culturally relevant education.

Many issues raised in this literature review will be re-visited in the final chapter of this thesis. The next chapter, Methodology, addresses the methods used in this study for data collection and analyses.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Method

The intent of this study was to gain a fuller understanding of what the concept "culturally relevant education" means in the field of Native social work education. The research purpose is to "flesh-out" this much used, but poorly defined concept by exploring with Native social work students, in one particular setting, what "culturally relevant education" means to them. The decision to focus on Native students as respondents was based on the assumption that Native students were in a unique position to help clarify this concept because they have an understanding and experience of both Native cultures and social work education.

The Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) in Merritt, B.C., is a First Nations college which offers a B.S.W. program accredited through the University of Victoria, School of Social Work. The NVIT social work program at the time of this study, fall 1992, had approximately 75 full-time Native students from which the student respondents for this study were selected. Although the NVIT program was accredited as a satellite by a mainstream university, explicit modifications had been made in an attempt to enhance the "cultural relevance" of
the program. As well, I had been both a department head and an instructor in this program, and therefore, I was acquainted with all the major stakeholders, and with the issue of culturally relevant social work education. I knew from experience that NVIT social work students cared about this issue and that they were articulate: they were potentially ideal respondents.

Although the concept of “culturally relevant education” is central in the field of Native social work education, there was little agreement as to its definition or meaning. (This lack of clarity and agreement existed within and between Native and non-Native stakeholders.) A review of the literature indicated that there had been little or no research that was directly aimed at establishing a more rigorous conceptualization. In the NVIT program, there was on-going tension both within and between stakeholder groups, (and within individual participants), due to lack of clarity regarding this central concept. The situation in the NVIT program seemed to mirror that of other programs. Everyone was busy trying to survive and do their work; as students, as faculty, as advisors, as communities, as governments.

Therefore, this study was exploratory in nature, and employed a qualitative approach. The aim was to contribute to theory building by exploring and clarifying this central concept, rather than verifying a hypothesis. The principles, procedures, and techniques of grounded theory, as developed by Glaser and
Strauss (1967), and as outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1990), have been used in all phases of this study.

A **grounded theory** is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge. (p.23)

In addition, the philosophy of a phenomenological perspective has supported this research, particularly the work of Giorgi (1985). In Patton's words "...phenomenological inquiry focuses on the question: "What is the structure and essence of experience of this phenomenon for these people?" (1990, p.69).

Due to my association with NVIT and the social work program, the role of researcher included that of a being an active participant observer.

Participant observation involves the researcher being a participant during the data gathering process. Participant observation combines ways of data gathering such as surveys, personal accounts/narratives, life histories/chronicles, unobtrusive measures (filming, recording) or document analysis with direct observation to give a full account of how individuals make sense of their experiences.

(Kirby and McKenna, 1989, p.76).

Major benefits of being a participant observer were ease of access to various sources of data, and pre-established rapport with staff and students. Equally operational however, was the dynamic of power between myself as teacher and students as respondents. Specific strategies were employed to minimize
researcher bias, and they will be described as this discussion proceeds. On a more general level however, a qualitative approach offered the opportunity to set aside my preconceptions and open myself to what students had to say about “culturally relevant education”. I worked to maintain and cultivate an attitude of openness throughout this study.

Qualitative methods were used to "explore": in-depth interviews and a focus group with student respondents; informal interviews with program staff and students; consultation with colleagues; observing on-site and making field notes; reviewing program documents; and analysing and re-analysing data.

The primary research approach was an in-depth interview conducted with individual and focus group respondents. The focus group occurred when all individual interviews were completed. The objective of the focus group was "...to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others" (Patton, 1990, p.335). It was anticipated that data from the focus group would also indicate whether-or-not there had been adequate data gathered in the interviews. If new directions were reported in the focus group data, then additional data gathering would need to occur.

Interviews and the focus group were audio taped to ensure accuracy of data collected: tapes were transcribed verbatim. In-depth interviews offered the
opportunity to collect the type of rich data most congruent with the intent of the study.

The long interview is one of the most powerful tools in the qualitative armoury...The method can take us into the mental world of the individual, to glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world. It can also take us into the lifeworld of the individual to see content and pattern of daily experience. The long interview [allows] us...to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do... (McCracken, 1988, p.9).

Participant Selection

Through consultation with the program department head and instructors, 10 potential respondents for individual interviews were identified according to the following criteria:

1. They had to be third or fourth year students, to ensure sufficient experience as social work students, particularly in regards to practicum experience, where “culturally relevant education” is applied. Only third and fourth year students had done at least one practicum.

2. They were judged, by myself and the department head, to be particularly interested in the issue of “culturally relevant education”, and had the ability to be articulate.

3. They represented a variety of characteristics, such as culture and/or language group, gender, age, level of familiarity with their Native heritage and culture, and level of academic achievement.
Each potential respondent was contacted in person by the department head who briefly outlined the purpose of the study, the researcher and her role, the interview process, and the commitment required of a respondent. Each student was then asked to notify the department head if they wished to participate in the study. Of the 10 students who were contacted, 9 volunteered to be respondents. I then met with each student individually to discuss the study in more depth, answer questions, assure confidentiality, and arrange a time and place for each interview. Two students asked to be interviewed together, and I agreed. Therefore, eight interviews were conducted; seven students individually, and two students together.

Although the number of respondents was small, these students were a fairly diverse group. They were quite representative of the larger population of NVIT social work students in terms of the characteristics described in Table 1. In addition, less obvious areas of diversity, (which also tended to mirror the social work student population as a whole), included different levels of academic achievement, from poor to excellent; depth of familiarity with Native heritage, from little to profound; Native first language or English as a first language; urban background or rural background; political participation, from little to elected office; and spiritual orientation, Native and/or non-Native. These factors increased the representational character of the sample, and strengthened, in theory,
the applicability of research findings to other Native social work students at NVIT, and in other programs.

Participants for the focus group were self-selected. A public notice was posted in various locations at NVIT, including social work classrooms. As well, social work instructors announced the focus group in their classes. Seven students participated in the focus group. However, due to a power failure after the first hour, the group moved to another location. Only four students were able to continue and complete the focus group discussion. One of these four students had previously been interviewed. Table 1, on the next page, presents an overview of respondents' characteristics as collected by the respondent information form (Appendix E) filled out by all study participants.

Table 1 illustrates the following information about the twelve respondents (note: one respondent was interviewed individually and participated in the focus group). Respondents ranged in age from 28 to 54 years; there were 10 women and two men; all, except one, had children or dependents; all were status Indians; and, 10 of the 12 had rural backgrounds, which would likely mean they had lived on reserve.

The small number of student respondents, the purposeful selection of most respondents, and the fact that respondents came from one social work program, are all factors which limit the ability to make any generalizations to other Native social work students. However, given the lack of research regarding the meaning
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONDENT</th>
<th>01</th>
<th>02</th>
<th>03 &amp; 12</th>
<th>04</th>
<th>05</th>
<th>06</th>
<th>07</th>
<th>08</th>
<th>09</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30 +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARITAL STATUS</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># OF CHILDREN OR DEPENDENTS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATUS NON-STATUS METIS</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URBAN OR RURAL BACKGROUND</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR OF STUDY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># OF PRACTICA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGES OF CHILDREN</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16 ?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE #1: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS
[M=married; SP=separated; CL=common law; D=divorced; W=widow; S=single]
of "culturally relevant education" in Native social work education, the exploratory and qualitative approach was necessary in order to clarify and develop this concept. Qualitative data can provide results with breadth and depth; results which, although only strictly applicable to these NVIT student respondents, can indicate very valuable avenues for further research.

Data Collection

The principal means of data collection was through in-depth interviews and a focus group. An interview guide was used to provide structure, topic focus, and consistency and comprehensiveness of data in all 8 interviews and the focus group. Because the study was exploratory, interview questions were designed to be broad and open-ended, to encourage responses of depth and breadth (Appendix B: Interview Guide).

Interview Guide

The primary objective of the interviews, reflected in specific questions, was to explore students' cognitive constructs of "culturally relevant" Native social work education; and secondly, their feelings or emotional responses to their thoughts and experiences. Questions which explored experiences and behaviours were used to provide a context, or grounding, for students' thoughts and feelings.
These objectives came from the cognitive/behavioural perspective that it is what we think that determines how we feel, and that our actions stem from our thoughts and feelings. Therefore, the types of questions used in the interview guide were largely opinion/values questions, feeling questions, and experience/behaviour questions.

Because "culturally relevant education" did not have an agreed upon definition, it seemed necessary to establish at the beginning of the interview how a student, (or group of students in the focus group), defined this concept. The first question, after introductory comments, was "Can you please begin with you saying what the term "culturally relevant education" means to you?". This question presupposed that the student(s) could, and would, respond with meaningful data. This assumption was based upon my prior knowledge of each student and existing rapport. Our previous student-teacher relationship permitted leading with this type of question. In addition, as Patton (1990) points out, the researcher must be clear about what she wants to know. The bottom line was that I wanted to know what and how these students thought about the concept of "culturally relevant education". So why not ask directly? I wanted and needed (ie: researcher bias) to step out of my constructs, what Kirby and McKenna (1989) call "conceptual baggage", so that I could listen with an open mind.
The rest of the questions in the interview guide, two through six, aided in exploring students' perspectives of culturally relevant education. Questions focused on their educational experiences at NVIT that were particularly culturally relevant; what factors contributed to culturally relevant education; the value they placed on culturally relevant education; and their normative vision of culturally relevant education. In a sense, questions two through six acted as "variations on a theme"; the theme having been established in question one.

All students were asked the same six questions, in the same order, with the same wording. This was done to promote comparability of responses. As well, I depended on the interview guide to provide structure, so that I could feel more relaxed during the interviews and follow the students' responses.

The basic purpose of the standardized open-ended interview is to minimize interviewer effects by asking the same question of each respondent. Moreover, the interview is systematic and the necessity for interviewer judgment during the interview is reduced.


Although consistency was enhanced in these ways, each interview, and the focus group, had its own individual character which reflected that of the respondent(s). I was a passenger on a journey led by each student. We travelled the paths and byways, as well as the main roads, of their cognitive maps.

It is appropriate here to discuss briefly one cross-cultural aspect of this study as it related to these interviews. It had been my experience that Native
peoples' styles of communicating were often different than mine. I could characterize my style, (and that of EuroCanadians generally), as taking the "direct route" from A to B; and along with this style has gone the assumption that this is "good" communication; this is how communication is supposed to work. Native peoples, when seen from a EuroCanadian point of view, may seem to take a more circuitous route when communicating; a style which often includes stories, and what seem to be "indirect" and rambling asides and comments. I had learnt overtime (and often the hard way, ie: with embarrassment on my part, and humour and charity on their part) that our styles were different, and that to really listen (what in social work, would be called active-listening), I had to listen in their style in order to hear what they were saying. As well, this was the norm, plain good manners, and an indication of respect in Indian country. Therefore, the interviews and focus group took on the communication style of the students, rather than the style of this researcher. This was another reason why a standardized open-ended interview was used. It provided focus and direction through its structure, and therefore allowed me to relax, actively listen, and assume a communication style more congruent with that of the respondents.
Procedures

All aspects of this study were undertaken with attention paid to cross-cultural issues and role-related issues, that might exist between a Euro-Canadian instructor/researcher and Native students/respondents. When recruiting students, the program department head made the initial contact with potential respondents, so that students might refuse to participate in the study without feeling obligated. It was decided that every potential student respondent who volunteered, would become part of the study. This decision was made in order to avoid the situation where some students where chosen and others where not.

The department head and I spoke to each of the nine students who were interviewed, prior to the interviews, sharing information about the study and answering questions. Care was taken to assure each student that the interviews were confidential and that their anonymity would be protected in the thesis.

All respondents agreed to the use of audiotapes in the interviews; they were familiar with this tool from their own experiences of taping interviews in their courses. As well, students were assured that any identifying information from interview transcripts would be removed. These assurances where particularly important in this situation because some staff and the department head knew the identity of the students who volunteered to participate, as did many of the other social work students. Furthermore, each respondent agreed to meet, in the future,
with the researcher to verify findings. Only after these procedures, and at the beginning of the interview, did each student then sign an informed consent form (Appendix: D).

At the end of each interview and the focus group, each respondent filled out a respondent information form that would provide descriptive and demographic data (Appendix E: Respondent Information Form). One student from the focus group did not fill out this form. Some information regarding this student was known to me and appears in Table One; information not known, has been noted.

All interviews were held in the same location: the kitchen/living room of a motel unit in Merritt. The second part of the focus group was also held in this location, the group having moved from a location at NVIT after a power failure. This location was relatively neutral territory for both researcher and students, compared to any location at NVIT. It was hoped that a more neutral territory, free from the associations at NVIT, would help to limit the influence of our past roles as teacher/student, and encourage our present roles as researcher/respondent. Furthermore, this location facilitated a congenial atmosphere: it allowed smokers to smoke; the kitchen was used to make tea and coffee, and sometimes light meals; the washroom was readily available; as was a phone for making and receiving calls. This space provided a pleasant informal debriefing space.
following the interviews; and a space to make the transition from the interview process to what ever came next in our day. These transition periods were important because all interviews and the focus group were intense experiences. Afterward we often just hung-out watching the soaps on T.V., telling jokes, having coffee, and visiting. All these activities helped to break down barriers that were associated with a teacher/student relationship. As well, hospitality is a prime value in Native cultures, and this location allowed me to be hospitable to these students in practical ways.

Interviews lasted between one and one-half hours to two hours. The focus group lasted two hours, with one-half hour extra taken for re-location. Factors which enhance replicability of this study include the consistency maintained in the recruitment process; the consistency in interview location and duration, and the consistency in the interview process, which included using the same format and questions for each interview and the focus group. The main factor which hinders replicability is the pre-existing relationships between the researcher and the respondents. These relationships were the major source of researcher bias in this study. On the other hand, these relationships were this study's greatest strength, and indeed this study was undertaken because of these relationships, and the respect and caring which were part of our association.
As mentioned above, interviews and the focus group were intense, and respondents spoke freely and in-depth, with very little prompting or probes needed on my part. Respondents felt strongly about the research topic: the issues touched each of them deeply. Respondents were visibly tired after the interviews, but each mentioned in their own way, that the experience had been worthwhile.

This phase of data gathering on-site at NVIT in Merritt, lasted approximately 10 days in November, 1992. After this phase was completed, I transcribed all tapes verbatim. The next phase of this study was data analyses which continued, in a more rigorous way, a process already begun during the data collection phase. In qualitative research, it is impossible to strictly separate data collection from data analysis because the researcher is continually analysing data as it is collected.

Field notes helped keep track of the interactive and unfolding process of data collection and analyses, and recorded hunches, insights, impressions, observations, and points to follow-up in the more rigorous data analyses phase. It was a challenging experience to switch from periods of intense reflection, intuition, and analysis while alone, to "shelving" my mind during interviews, and actively listening. It was also a very moving experience, for I seemed often to enter the reality of the other, and to "see" with their eyes.
Data Analyses

There are three sequential procedures in grounded theory, outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1990), for the analysis of data - open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding is "...the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data" (p.61). Axial coding involves "...a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between categories" (p.96). Selective coding is defined as "...the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development" (p.116).

Interview audiotapes were transcribed verbatim, producing hard copy transcripts of raw interview data, formatted with a text column running down the middle of each page, providing wide left and right margins for coding notes (Appendix F: Coded Transcript). The constant comparative method of data analysis (CCM), from grounded theory, was used to analyse data. The CCM involved two interactive analytic procedures: the making of comparisons between data using an inductive process; and the deductive process of asking questions. The purpose of the CCM is to generate concepts, categories, and themes "grounded" in the data. These concepts, categories and themes then become the elements used to construct a theory which comes directly from the data.
Transcripts were read through from start to finish. The raw interview data were then open coded, using the CCM, to generate concepts and categories. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define a concept as "conceptual labels placed on discrete happenings, events, and other instances of phenomena" (p.61); and a category as:

A classification of concepts. This classification is discovered when concepts are compared one against another and appear to pertain to a similar phenomenon. Thus the concepts are grouped together under a higher order, more abstract concept called a category (p. 61).

The first phases of open coding involved the following concurrent and interactive processes: underlining key words, phrases, and sentences; making margin notes to summarize important points; writing "codes" to label preliminary concepts; and making "memos".

Miles and Huberman (1984) define a code as "...an abbreviation or symbol applied to a segment of words - most often a sentence or paragraph of transcribed field notes in order to classify the words" (p. 56). For example, when asked if culturally relevant education was important to her, one respondent said:

It's important to me because culturally relevant education speaks to respect, speaks to the dignity and honouring of my culture, and it speaks to the acceptance of who I am.

This comment was coded as "strengthening of identity". A code is used to represent the respondent's words at a somewhat more abstract level, while still...
maintaining the integrity of their meaning. All the data in each transcript were coded in this manner.

Memos were also used during the coding process. Glaser (1978) defines a memo as "...the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationship as they strike the analyst while coding" (p.83). For example, a memo written in the same area as the above code, appears as Note: "strengthening of identity" may relate to "empowerment".

Upon the completion of this first phase of coding, transcripts were then reviewed a number of times, moving back and forth between inductive and deductive levels of analyses. The preliminary codes, used to denote emergent concepts, were refined; concepts that seemed to be related were grouped into categories (ie: axial coding). Memo and coding processes facilitated increased levels of abstraction which remained grounded in the actual data.

The six questions in the interview guide provided both a structure and a focus for coding. These questions enabled comparison of data between interviews; they also served as constant reminders of the purpose of the interviews - "What is it that I want to know?". Continual reflection on this question (and the posing of other deductive questions), provided focus and rigour during data analyses.
Continual revision and modification of codes, categories, and themes was carried out until theoretical saturation was reached. This point is reached when "...additional analysis no longer contributes to discovering anything new about a category" (Strauss, 1987, p.21). Four themes emerged, supported by elements, and their respective concepts. These themes and their relationship to each other will be presented in chapters four and five.

I was unable to return to the respondents, as originally planned, for their review of the findings. By the time I wrote this thesis, three years had passed since the interviews, and these students had graduated and dispersed. When I came back to the "project", I found that I needed to re-read all my notes and the interviews, listen to each tape again, and re-analyse all the data. I believe that the findings presented in chapters four and five more accurately reflect the students' meanings of "culturally relevant education" than those formed originally, shortly after the interviews were completed. The principle difference between the original analysis and the present analysis, came about as I abandoned trying to fit 'holistic' data into the discrete conceptualizations advocated by grounded theory. I came to understand the narrative quality and strength of the data, and its essentially organic nature. The introductory section of the next chapter further describes this aspect of the data, and the four themes that emerged.
CHAPTER FOUR
LEARNING WHAT IT IS TO BE INDIAN

Introduction

Four themes emerged from the analyses of interview data. These themes, when taken together, tell a story of what "culturally relevant education" meant to the Native social work students who were respondents in this study. These four themes are: Learning What It Is To Be Indian; Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues; Integrating The Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White; and Becoming The Teacher. The themes are interconnected and interactive. As well, they represent a cyclic process of phases: The four themes are also four phases. Figure I, on the following page, visually demonstrates the interactive and cyclic nature of these themes/phases.

These four themes, which tell the story of student respondents' experiences of "culturally relevant education", would seem to mirror a larger "life journey or path" for each of these students that is composed of similar, or perhaps the same, four themes. It is within the context of a larger story of Learning, Healing, Integrating, and Becoming, that this specific story of culturally relevant social work education takes place.
FIGURE 1: The Four Themes/Phases of Culturally Relevant Education
In this study, it is important to view themes as being “organic” in nature: They are dynamic and interactive. An organic analogy is appropriate, and it is used to illustrate the sense of life and movement that is inherent in the stories of these students. The organic nature of the data is reflected in the active, “doing” qualities of learning, healing, integrating, and becoming in the four themes.

As well as being "organic" in nature, the students' stories were also "poetic". By this I mean two things: students often used evocative phrases that held a resonance of unspoken, yet shared (between Native people), experience and meaning; and, they often (from my point of view) "told a story" in response to a question, where the meaning of their response was to be found "between the lines".

The “organic” and “poetic” nature of students’ stories, and thus the data of this study, presented a particular challenge for qualitative analyses. The data seemed to have a "life of their own" and often seemed to defy "containment" in categorical "boxes". Data "metamorphosed" into a configuration of their own choosing, and then would realign themselves into yet another configuration. One of the consequences of this challenge was that these four themes, as conceptualized and presented here, are only one possible "cut" of the data. I believe that this "cut" is the one most useful for the purposes of this study. But in reality, what is presented here, may in fact say more about me, and about a White
researcher using a mainstream process, than about the meaning that these Native students made of "culturally relevant education".

In the practice of grounded theory, as exemplified by Glaser and Strauss (1967), coding of data is undertaken in order to generate concepts and categories that become the "building blocks" of a theory "grounded" in the data. During the data analyses phase of this study, when open and axial coding methods were applied, it was discovered that these methods were insufficient. These methods did not facilitate the formation of discrete conceptual categories. (It was like trying to push "round" data into "square" boxes.) Attempts made to form mutually exclusive concepts and categories were largely unsuccessful. The "parts" were interconnected and interdependent; respondents seemed to think "holistically". What did emerge quite naturally and strongly in the data were these four themes.

Although coding methods proved insufficient, they did facilitate what may be considered the central finding in this study. This finding could be seen as the "core category" as defined by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as, "the central phenomenon around which all the other categories are integrated.". In this study, the core category is the central phenomenon around which the four themes are integrated. Or stated within a narrative analogy, the core category can be seen as the pivotal events in the students' stories about culturally relevant social work
education. The core category which emerged from the data was that for these respondents, "culturally relevant" social work education was primarily something they made or constructed; a process by which they made their education "culturally relevant". I have called this central phenomenon making cultural relevance.

The core category making cultural relevance denotes the central event(s) in theme/phase three - Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White - where the student "transforms" seemingly disparate and unrelated aspects of their Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White, into a new synthesis and level of understanding. Aspects that had previously seemed separate and unrelated in the Two Worlds became relevant, became "culturally relevant".

There were various factors which seemed to proceed and influence making cultural relevance, and these became the story elements which make up themes/ phases one and two, Learning and Healing. The central phenomenon - making cultural relevance - occurs in theme/ phase three, Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White. As well, there were "outcome" factors which seemed to occur as a result of these transformative events, as a result of making cultural relevance. These outcome factors became the story elements of theme/ phase four, Becoming the Teacher. Figure 2, on the following page,
visually depicts each theme/phase, the corresponding story elements, and their factors/concepts.

A causal relationship is not assumed between themes/phases, but a strong association is indicated. It does appear that particular factors in Learning and Healing contribute to the transformative events that occur in the Integrating theme/phase, and that these transformative events influence Integrating and Becoming the Teacher. However this process is not actually linear, but is cyclical, interactive, and organic in nature. Students are continually Learning, Healing, Integrating, and Becoming in a complex and dynamic process; a process that is cumulative yet interactive.

It may appear that there is a contradiction between using both the concept of "core category" from grounded theory, and the concept of "narrative", as exemplified by the use of "themes" and their story elements. However, the experience of "integrating" these two perspectives during data analyses mirrored the student respondents' experiences of Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White. When integrated, both perspectives were transformed and became more than the sum of their parts; both gained, were stronger and more complete.

In the presentation of findings to follow, each theme/phase will be discussed in turn, with its corresponding story elements. Verbatim quotes from the data will be used to demonstrate and support findings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT/FACTOR</th>
<th>STORY ELEMENT</th>
<th>THEME/PHASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>understanding colonization</td>
<td>Courses Focused on First Nations Content and Traditional Practices</td>
<td>Learning What It Is To Be Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practicing traditional ways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultural camp experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>role models</td>
<td>Role of Native Instructors</td>
<td>Aboriginal Ways of Knowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fluent in the Two Worlds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shared experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality of relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethic of respect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inclusive learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circle of understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native communication style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concept about the classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>residual personal and cultural issues</td>
<td>The Need for Healing</td>
<td>Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breaking the cycle of oppression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inside the classroom</td>
<td>Opportunities for Healing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside the classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culture is treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the third way</td>
<td>Making Cultural Relevance</td>
<td>Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;ah, ha&quot; and/or incremental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal self-identity and worth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>role of social worker/helper</td>
<td>The Repertoire of the Teacher</td>
<td>Becoming the Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traditional prophesies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elders in training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being the messenger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>re-entering the community</td>
<td>The Cultural Relevance of Mainstream Course Content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban Native people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal theories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 2: Concepts/Factors and Story Elements of the Four Themes/Phases
This chapter will present theme/phase one: Learning What It Is To Be Indian, and sets the stage for chapter five, which will present themes/phases two, three, and four.

Theme/Phase One: Learning What It Is To Be Indian

The theme of this Learning phase is characterized by Learning What It Is To Be Indian. Student respondents described in detail and with "heart" the variety and significance of Aboriginal knowledge, values, and skills that they were learning. This was true for each respondent, regardless of their existing level of knowledge of First Nations history and culture. Some respondents had in-depth knowledge and experience of their own culture, and of other Native cultures; other students had little knowledge of their heritage, or of First Nations in general.

There are three main story elements which contribute to this theme: courses that focused on Indian content and traditional practices; the significance and role of Native instructors; and, what I have called Aboriginal Ways of Knowing. Each of these elements will be presented here in turn, and none is intended to be seen as more important than any other; each element plays its part in contributing to Learning What It Is To Be Indian, and to setting the stage for theme/phase two. In fact, it would seem that is was through the interplay of these elements that students' learning took place.
Courses Focused On First Nations Content and Practices

The emphasis here on First Nations is to make the point that these courses had a First Nations perspective in content, and were taught by Native instructors.

Understanding colonization

Courses which focused on First Nations' history re-told the story of colonization, and pre-colonization, from an Aboriginal point of view. Most respondents were not familiar with many of the facts of colonization, such as the number of Indian lives lost due to diseases brought to this continent by Europeans, or the strategic role that Native peoples played in supporting the very survival of the first colonizers.

Furthermore, most respondents had not previously experienced their history presented in an "academic" manner. Often for the first time, students began to understand the extent and magnitude of oppression and racism that Native peoples have experienced. There seemed to be a new legitimacy and credibility given to First Nations' history by the academic structure of these courses. Most students had learned "history" in previous schooling, but in that history Native peoples were largely invisible or mis-represented. In these courses, students experienced both grief and pride: grief at the extent of harm done to all
Native peoples, past and present; and pride in their abilities and strength to survive. The understanding that students gained in these courses was felt personally and collectively: to understand colonization and oppression, was to understand self, family, community, First Nations, and Indigenous peoples generally.

All respondents commented upon the significance of these history courses and the role that they played in their Learning What It Is To Be Indian. The following excerpt demonstrates the importance that these types of courses had for respondents.

Well, I think for me the...one of the important things was the background. Knowing the whole background of our Indian people since the arrival of the colonists. Understanding that has helped me understand the oppression that we have on our reserves today. And how we oppress one another. And to understand DIA, and the government, and the colonists. To understand how we were treated, and how we were kind of pushed aside, helped me see why our people are the way they are today. And when we had Marie [a Native instructor] and... actually what's her name, Jean [another Native instructor], talk about oppression, I began to understand a lot more. Having a real good base of our own history, the importance of Louis Riel and all the Native leaders had done. Philip Paul. All them. Like hey, they were finally acknowledged as part of history, in a good way. Because before, they were seen as..what do you call it..rebels? Like Louis Riel and Dumont, Gabriel Dumont and... That helped me a lot. I said, "Oh, my goodness, I always just blamed our people for being the way they are, because I listened so much to what other people judged us". We're always poor, we're always drunks, or this or that. But knowing how they got to be that way helped me. The loss of the language, identity, the culture, everything, has chipped away at our people. And to me, that's where we're stuck. The fear of fighting back. The fear of saying what we really feel inside. Except where Native people are. We don't go out in public and do that aye. So to me, we need more people to understand that. More of our own people.
Practicing traditional ways

All respondents thought that learning and practising traditional ways was important and contributed to Learning What It Is To Be Indian. (The terms "traditional ways", "traditions", "cultural practices", "traditional practices", "ceremonies", are all used and refer to both the historic and contemporary knowledge, skills, and practices of First Nations peoples.) Although there were differences of opinion about where and how these practices should be carried out, most students advocated that traditional practices, such as sweats, talking circles, and smudging, for example, should be an integral part of their social work program.

Like last year when we first started, we were in a spring program with three courses, and the first course was on spirituality, and we smudged everyday. We did that for three weeks. And I really believe if we didn't do that course first, then the last two courses, we wouldn't have the strength to go on because they were really heavy.

Yah, really heavy duty. But see, everyday we built on, from Lee Brown's course [a Native instructor], momentum. It carried us through. The other courses were really tough. And we only had three weeks to do them. So it was six weeks of intense school. Seven hours a day and then you had to go home and do mega reading and everything else.

The whole thing in that was, in the morning you had a chance to really regenerate stuff because we had a smudge, we shared, even before the class started. The class started at nine, we were getting there at eight thirty, sometimes eight fifteen, just to have time to be with each other and pray and have the strength. And that's what we were asking for everyday. "Give us the strength to make it through this; give us strength to learn, to be open to learning, to pull together". And it really worked. That's why I believe I pulled through. I really look forward to the sharing circle. Through the whole process of learning. Even though I was tired, some
parts of me were very tired, the other parts ... spiritually I was very awake. That gave me a lot of energy.

One respondent thought that these practices did not belong in an "educational" setting. In her opinion, these ceremonies were personal and sacred, and should be practised outside school time, outside the classroom. This student, although only one voice in this sample, represented the opinion of a small minority of students in the larger student population.

Some people think that "cultural relevance" is we drum and sing every morning and smudge. That's important to me. I believe in that. But I don't think it's "culturally relevant" to a university situation. That's personal stuff ... that you can do on your own time.

I think it's because I'm so competitive. And my time is limited. It's based on that. And wanting to succeed... and wanting to get the most out of what's being presented to me. And if I don't have that time, I'm not going to learn. So ...I love ...I do my own smudging. I have my own altar. I have my own paraphernalia. And I did that every morning. That's me. That's for me. And when there's drumming and singing, I go. But to make it as part of ...a mandatory part of education, I think it should be an option.

Cultural camp experiences

All respondents mentioned Cultural Camp as a preeminent experience which they associated with culturally relevant education. Cultural Camp was a ten-day group wilderness experience, and also a compulsory social work course. Students took an active role, along with their instructors and Native elders, in planning, managing, and participating in this yearly event. For fourth year respondents, Cultural Camp had been held at Kingcome Inlet on Native land; for
third year respondents, Cultural Camp had been at Glimpse Lake, part of the Douglas Lake Band's land near Merritt.

During cultural camp, students learned traditional knowledge and practices; and equally important, it provided the opportunity for them to put their existing knowledge into practice. Some students had brought to the social work program a pre-existing, in-depth knowledge of their cultural traditions; some students had been exposed for the first time at NVIT to Native traditions. All students had increased their level of knowledge during their studies. (It should be noted that sharing of knowledge and skills between students took place formally and informally both at NVIT, and outside school time. But the quality of sharing at cultural camp was more intense. Indeed, this type of cross-cultural exchange was one of the stated objectives for cultural camp.)

Whatever their previous level of knowledge and skills, at cultural camp students learnt from and with one another, and their instructors and elders, in a way which seemed to be qualitatively different from what they had previously experienced together. Cultural camp provided an First Nations environment for learning, based on Native land, where "doing" and "being", in community, seemed to facilitate and accelerate Learning What It Is To Be Indian.

We've experienced cultural camp too. And that was a whole spiritual trip even though people didn't look at it in those terms. Where I've learnt more in that trip, the eight days, about the pipe, through the elders that were there. About what it is to be Native from the community itself of Kingcome. I learnt how ...their community is like walking back in
time. Like it's 125 years old, or older, and the long house there is 125 years old. And when you walked in there, history just grabbed you by the hands and walked you around. It's really special. I'll never forget the first time I walked into that place. It was really neat. The carvings on the poles and stuff. So original, so old. Just breath-taking.

Cultural camp was a multi-cultural event. There was a great variety of First Nations represented by students, instructors, elders, and the host community on whose land the camp was held. As with all multi-cultural events, there was sharing and exchange, as well as tensions created by differences. One example of differences mentioned by some respondents was centred around the issue of female students who were in their "moon period" being separated from other participants.

I guess I'd say our Culture Camp was a different experience, because we came up against their traditions there [ie: Kingcome]. And so our group was literally separated because of that. Because some of us who were on our cycle could not join the rest of the group because they were out there. So, we had to stay in the village in a house ...and we couldn't participate in a lot of what was happening. So they'd come and tell us as we'd be sitting there yawning. So, I happen to be one of those people that had to stay in the house. They were out in the teepees and having these cookouts and ... So, I guess for me. that's something I've never really come against is having ...running up against another culture like, that was strict and stern in their ways. And yet, I can see where that's going to be an issue in self-government.

Despite differences in traditions and values, all respondents reported that cultural camp deepened their knowledge, skills, and appreciation of traditional
ways, of one another, and of their teachers and elders. Cultural camp seemed to be a bonding experience for all participants.

Knowledge of cultures

Knowledge of First Nations' cultural diversity was particularly important to student respondents. These respondents were actively engaged in searching for this type of "cultural" knowledge. Courses focused on First Nations content and practices facilitated this type of learning.

I don't know if this answers the question but ...in order for it to be culturally relevant for me, I also had to know the differences between my culture and the cultures of all the other Indian students in the class. It does no good to put me in a class of non-Aboriginals and teach us all culturally relevant stuff, from one Indian standpoint. When it takes effect, is when we hear all the differences. Like in our class, I think there are 13 different Nations. And it wouldn't have done any good to have talked about cultural relevance, if I wasn't let in on their worlds. There's a difference between our cultures. There's an underlying thread that ties them all together. But I couldn't have done it without the Coldwater's perspective, Lytton's perspective, the Interior's perspective, the American perspective - the American Indians' perspective. I have to know that in order for my training to be culturally relevant.

Respondents gave numerous examples which illustrated specific and detailed knowledge of their own particular First Nation's culture and traditions. They also cited examples of how their own cultural beliefs and practices differed from that of other cultures, Native and non-Native. They had well developed skills in making fine distinctions regarding cultural norms and values. They
demonstrated a sophisticated understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, and the tensions which may arise from these differences. In addition, they described their own experiences of having to adapt, accommodate, and compromise in interaction with their own people, and with people from different cultures.

But, ...coming to Merritt and having to learn new customs and like new Native customs ...new things, like ...things that don't fit for me, but I have to do it. I have to adapt here.

Like in my community, in regards to say potlatches, food or feasts, if you're in your menstrual cycle your not allowed to touch the food. And here you're allowed to. And there if you're in a public meeting, or public forum, and you have your menstrual cycle, you're suppose to wear a shawl around your body. So that people know and they don't touch you. And that doesn't happen here. Like at home, I have this special shawl that I wear and people know. And like it's like an honour. It's an honour. They honour you by not bothering you when you have your menstrual cycle. It's re-birth aye. And it's different here. I don't see any difference here. It's just another day here. And I had to learn that. And I kept saying, "But, but...". I know when my friends are having their moon cycle, and I'd say, "But, you're not suppose to touch food, you know.". And they'd say, "No, no.". And I'd go, "Oh, oh, okay. This is what they do here. I'll have to accept that." And I did. That's just one little thing.

And then going to Round Lake [a Native treatment centre], and finding that it's different again. Going to cultural camp, and finding it's different again. So just that one subject, I got three different views on it. So it's always constantly having to adapt.

Right, and if you don't know all the ways, I don't know how to say it, but you can get a bad name or bad reputation for not following where you are, what territory you're in at the moment. Because I know it's frowned upon in our community when Indian people come in and they don't follow our cultural beliefs. And I hear the old people talking about them, and I'm assuming it's the same here.
Respondents communicated a strong commitment to learning about culture, their own and that of other peoples, Native and non-Native. The words of one respondent, typify the general attitude amongst respondents.

Like I'll never know everything culturally. Like it changes; like it's changed so much in the last fifty years, that the things that happened fifty years ago, I'm not going to learn them because there is no one around to teach me. Because my Mom missed her whole generation thing. She had nothing to teach me other than white man's ways - how to cook and clean. I learned that. I learned it well. And my Dad was so busy working and logging and doing what he was doing, he didn't have time to teach me. And my grandparents were already old and they were limited in what they could teach me.

So, it was my job as a Native person to search out people who could teach me that. And I did. I found my aunts and uncles, even if they weren't my own aunts and uncles, they belonged to someone else's family. I still searched them out and said, "Hey, how come you guys do it this way; how come you guys do it that way?" "How come funerals are done this way?" "How come feasts are this way?" And I asked and asked, and asked and asked. It wasn't relevant to me at that time, but now it is. Now today, it is because now I know how to conduct myself.

When you get in a situation where no one knows, that's real bad. You have to try and learn something really quickly. Just to do it in the right order, and the right way, and the right manner. So in that way, I think I'm still doing my search. I'm doing this big search still.

The Role Of Native Instructors

Although respondents respected all their instructors, they gave particular importance and value to Native instructors. Native instructors were role models for these students; they were successful academics, highly educated, and "fluent" in both Native and non-Native worlds. Native instructors communicated, in word and action, knowledge of, and respect for, traditional knowledge and ways of
knowing. They helped students learn traditional as well as contemporary Indian perspectives, and how past and present knowledge and skills were related. Most importantly, Native instructors understood the lives of these students, for they shared similar experiences as Native people. Students felt seen, heard, and understood by these instructors. The quality of these relationships contributed strongly to students' Learning What It Is To Be Indian.

I think for me, when I had a Native instructor, and they taught a course, I could understand what they were talking about. And I could understand ...like before, I denied the bitterness I felt towards non-Native people, not all of them, but a lot of them. And so, when a Native instructor also voiced some of the feelings I had, about how we became what we are, historically, and they understood, and there was a lot of people voicing their opinions about the unfair, the injustice of how our people were treated. It's like wow, we have somebody on our side who understands what we have gone through. And the loss of our culture and our values. A lot of those things were taken from us and ...I couldn't express it before, until I had a Native instructor.

Aboriginal Ways of Knowing

Ethic of respect

Respondents demonstrated an "ethic of respect": respect for their fellow students, their instructors, their traditional teachers, their communities, and themselves. Respect was the predominant and pervasive quality in what they said, and how they said it, irrespective of the "topic" of discussion. Not only was respect evident toward others and themselves, they also held a deep and abiding respect for the diversity of First Nations cultures and traditions, and for
"knowledge" and education in general - Native and non-Native. The following quotes are from two respondents.

I see all forms of learning as culturally relevant to me ... so I grasp from all different kinds ... its like a big pot and I take whatever I can get... I think you take the best from each situation that you can .... if I only grasp what's culturally relevant I am going to miss out a lot. Because everybody has something to offer me and I feel that I have something to offer other people.

One of my basic beliefs is that every individual is unique. Every individual has something to offer me. Because everyone has something to offer me, then in order for that transaction to happen, then there needs to be some respect.

It would seem that this basic "ethic of respect" both motivated and supported what might be called "inclusive learning": their valuing of all forms and ways of knowledge; their open-handed relationships with others; and their ability to learn, formally and informally, with both Native and non-Native teachers.

Inclusive learning

"Inclusive learning" denotes a learning style and stance. It was a style, in that respondents actively engaged in absorbing whatever knowledge was available to them through interaction and experience; it was also a stance, or basic "quality of being", which was open, non-judgmental, and respectful. For example, one respondent, while talking about social work education, said:

Social work to me is this great big, huge, huge ball full of stuff and what part do I feel is important, what part do I feel will fit in my community? I don't know because I haven't had a chance to try it yet. But
I know that the more I have in that ball, the better chances I'm going to have when I get home. ... You know you learn from bad experiences too. So I don't think there's anything I've been involved in the social work field that I could call wrong, or down or anything... Because [then] I learned not to do it that way!

Or in the words of another respondent:

And so to me, if there is something that doesn't fit, if I can't find a space for it to fit in, then I just learn it and let it go. I don't push it away. I don't say "Well that's not working for me", or "I'm having a hard time", or "I don't accept it", whatever. I just learn it because it's there for me to learn. And perhaps later on down the road in my career, or in my work environment, I may need that. So that's why I never push anything away. I learn whatever is there. Whether it fits for me or not.

For these respondents, all knowledge was considered at least potentially "relevant". In some situations, they could readily "fit" new knowledge into their cognitive structure, or world view. In other cases, when "fit" did not occur readily, they still valued this knowledge, and would retain this for future consideration and possible application - ie: relevance. Respondents seemed to consider "culturally relevant", as commonly used in the field of Native social work education, a restrictive conceptualization. For example, one respondent, in response to being asked what culturally relevant education meant to her, said:

I would not set up boundaries like that. ..And each day I challenge myself to learn something new. And if it's not culturally relevant, the thing that I learnt, then I don't think that's bad. ... And things that happen to Native people at the band level are not all culturally relevant either. So we need to know about the whole world in general.
Circle of Understanding

Aboriginal Ways of Knowing also included what I have called the "Circle of Understanding". It is by example that this concept can best be illustrated. For example, a student takes a law course, such as Native People and Child Welfare; this course is taught by a Native instructor; the instructor presents this law course from an Aboriginal perspective; an Aboriginal perspective facilitates the student's greater understanding; their understanding includes a wider understanding of the diversity of First Nations peoples' experiences, as well as specific understanding related to self, family, and their home community. This wider, fuller understanding contributes to making the student a more effective social worker/helper.

Respondents' stories about Learning What It Is To Be Indian, had this "circular" quality. Often it was "how" they told of their experiences, as much as what they told, that indicated a "circular" quality to how these students conceived of learning, what I have called the "Circle of Understanding". This circle seemed to only become completed, and meaningful, when the learning (in this example, child welfare law) included and integrated knowledge and understanding of the experience of First Nations people. Somehow, to know and understand in terms of self, family, and community, although valuable, was not enough, was incomplete. Conversely, to have a global perspective of First Nations experience,
without the personal integration related to self, family, and community, was also incomplete. To learn something, such as child welfare law, was to have integrated all levels of understanding, to have completed the Circle of Understanding. In the words of one student:

The program with ... the law programs, the child welfare, where it pertains to Native people... and she tells it from a Native perspective because she has a lot of experience in that area and it makes it more understandable and then in that way, I understand my people more and not just the Okanagan people, but other Native populations and Native cultures.

Another example of the Circle of Understanding can be seen in the students' experiences of First Nations' history courses. In these courses, to understand colonization and oppression included, necessitated, respondents' understanding their personal lived experiences of these events. When students spoke of learning about colonization, they included the personal. This is illustrated by the following quote from the data.

The only way it [education] can be culturally relevant is if the student understands what has happened in the processes of colonization. All the things we have gone through from the beginning. If you don't understand that, you can't teach what culturally relevant is. Because all these years I've just sort of been living. I didn't realize that colonization has such an impact on me, today. It happened way back when. In order to understand me, I had to understand what happened to all the people way back when - until it got to this stage.
Native communication style

Another concept in Aboriginal Ways of Knowing is what I have termed a Native Communication Style. This concept both uses, and is opposed to, the mainstream concept of "communication style". The emphasis here is on, "What is different, different than white? What is Aboriginal?". The major area of difference which surfaced in this data, is in what might be called "direct" communication. Mainstream culture would seem to value and promote communication which is verbal, direct, concrete, explicit, clear, straight forward, to the point; this style of communication is valued and is considered "good". For Aboriginal people, the norms and values regarding communication do not seem to include "direct". The following examples, taken from respondents' words, illustrate this difference.

When a First Nations person and a non-Native person are communicating, it’s like they are communicating like this [she uses her hands and moves her hands horizontally, so that her hands miss each other, so that there is a gap between them], instead of like this [she then moves her hands with her fingers spread, so that her two hands and fingers become intertwined]. Because when those two people communicate, there are so many things that are in the way of each understanding what the other is saying.

And to give you an example, there’s not too many First Nations people that make eye contact. Very seldom. And I believe when a person, when a First Nations person does do that on a fairly regular basis, that just tells me that they’ve really consciously taught themselves to do it. To try and create that with a non-Native person. Just like I’m doing now.

To me, the level of closeness is you being able to, you might say, second guess, or interpret, or read between the lines of what I’m saying. And if you can do that to what I’m telling you, then we’ve got a good thing
goin'...Because that's the way First Nations people communicate. I don't think there's no such thing as direct, directedness.

And further, in discussing the emphasis placed on learning how to be "direct" when learning counselling skills, a respondent makes the following comment.

It was emphasized here at NVIT. And we walked through the steps, the students, because it's expected of us. But I could probably make a pretty good bet here that when we all graduate at social work, with social work degrees, and go out there in the field, that directedness is not going to stay with us. Because that's not how we are.

It may stay with us when were interacting with a non-Native person. That's when all that stuff will come back. But when we're working with our own people, we'll go back to the way, to the way we are. To the way we usually communicate. To the way we usually are in relationship. And it works!

At the end of that topic in the interview, this respondent ends with this comment.

With us, doing something with someone is having a "deep" conversation. Because to me, you're getting to know each other in several different levels, in several different ways, without really not saying too much. It's like First Nations people don't really need to say very much and it's evident in their languages. For instance, in my Okanagan language, two or three words spoken in Okanagan, translates out probably to a sentence or two. See that's the other reason why non-Native and First Nations people when they communicate, they don't meet.

A Native Communication Style, as understood in this study, could be summarized by two phrases taken from the above quotes: "read between the lines" and "doing something is having a deep conversation".
The final concept that is part of Aboriginal Ways of Knowing is what one student termed "the concept about the classroom". This concept includes an "ethic of two-way learning": Teachers learn from students, and students learn from teachers. Also included in this concept is what this student called "the teachings within the teachings", which refers to the idea that students learn from one another, as well as with one another.

Other people bring you back cause they've gone through the process already. That's the whole concept about the classroom. Some people are ahead of the others. Like I'm pretty young aye. I'm only twenty-eight. When I joined the program I was twenty-four. There were people already in their late forties. So they've gone through, they're already a couple of moons ahead. So they've got the experience of life. So here I am, this young whipper-snapper, full of energy and they're able to slow me down. And teach me a lot of knowledge. Like an elder should. And that's the whole concept I love about NVIT.

Like I share a lot about what I've gone through. Like I've learnt lots about the residential school even though I've never been there. But I also shared with the class what it's like to be sexually abused - as a man. What it was like to be raised in five foster homes. Meeting someone for the first time in your life, and five minutes later you're told to call them mom and dad. Sharing things like that with these people. Sharing what it was like to be fifteen years old running around on the streets of Calgary. Doing all this crazy things, trying to survive. They learnt that from me. And I learnt about residential schools and what it was like to be young way back in the 1950's.

So that's what I like about the whole concept. It's teachings within teachings. It's so complex and yet it's so valuable. And if somebody's in there and willing to learn, then you learn.
Students reported that the best classroom environment, the best environment for learning, for Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, was when instructor and students had a relationship of equality, where power differences between teacher and students were minimized. One student described how a Native instructor helped the class plan for cultural camp.

At first when we started I didn't want to take part in the cultural camp. This is a pile of nothing. I'm not taking part. I'm not getting enthusiastic. Then they brought Kelly in and she didn't say much, didn't lecture us - just, "Hey gang, we've got to get this done, we'll work in groups." And she did it in such a casual way that we pulled together. There was not expectations or nothing. "Oh, if we can't do that, we'll look at another way to do it." So I think she was excellent. And she was there right from the start till it completed. And she was one of us, you know. What I mean by that, she wasn't the instructor; she didn't have the power, or tried to have the power over us. You know her and I would go paddling in a canoe and go fishing. I mean what other instructor would do that. She didn't take her position as above us. She helped with the dishes; she helped with whatever she could. If you need to talk, she'd sit there and listen. That's the kind of people I like; that I think would help.

Friendship and caring between teacher and student, as well as between students, were considered key ingredients for the best classroom environment. Respondents' reported previous experiences with schooling where they had been treated badly by teachers and other students, because they were Native students. They had felt abused and demeaned. And they knew from their own experience that Aboriginal Ways of Knowing always included caring relationships. They
strongly asserted that friendship and caring were necessary in the classroom, and any learning environment.

Summary

In summary, Learning What It Is To Be Indian involved an interplay of all three story elements - Courses and Practices, Native Instructors, and Aboriginal Ways of Knowing. Although presented here in a linear fashion which has facilitated discussion, in the lives of student respondents these elements were dynamically interconnected. Students engaged in Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, as they attended courses, taught by Native instructors, that focused on First Nations content and practices. For these students, what was important, what was meaningful, what was "culturally relevant" about their learning in the social work program, was how this learning increased their Aboriginal knowledge and skills.

In the same manner that the elements in theme/phase one are inherently interconnected, the next theme/phase two - Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues - is inherently interconnected with Learning What It Is To Be Indian. For these student respondents, learning and healing went hand-in-hand.
CHAPTER FIVE
HEALING, INTEGRATING & BECOMING

Theme/Phase Two: Healing Residual Personal & Cultural Issues

The Need for Healing

Residual personal and cultural issues

The concept "residual personal and cultural issues", used to name this healing theme/phase, is a modified version of the concept "residual cultural issues" used by Native Instructors and students at NVIT. I understand the original concept - residual cultural issues - to mean those issues, that need healing, shared in common by all Native people as a result of colonization, and its inherent oppression, repression, and racism. The term "personal" has been added to facilitate the wider meaning that "residual cultural issues" actually has for Native people; in other words, to facilitate mainstream understanding of a Native concept. The concept of healing "residual cultural issues" included that of "personal healing", but also pointed to the need for a larger historical and political perspective in which healing takes place. Healing needed to include grieving losses, past and present, shared in common by all First Nations peoples.
Breaking the cycle of oppression

Another Native concept commonly used at NVIT was "breaking the cycle of oppression". This concept is closely related to "residual cultural issues". "Breaking the cycle of oppression" refers to the need to heal those elements of oppression and racism that have been internalized and institutionalized by Native people, and which are perpetuated within individuals, families, communities, and Nations. Respondents saw themselves on the "healing road" that leads to "breaking the cycle of oppression" and resolving "residual cultural issues". One student described how she saw the need for students' healing.

I'd like to see a course at the beginning were people were validated ...to have a stronger identity. 'Cause you can teach them all you want, but if they don't feel good as a Native person, there will be problems. And I would like to see that in the form of say the cultural camp, where you're away from everything. And you're just together as people. To have facilitators there to help you to see your strengths and start to really give yourself self-talk -"I'm a worthwhile person." "I'm a strong Indian." - whatever. I'd like to see that happen first.

And if there are issues around sexual abuse, which most of them [students] have - residential school, sexual abuse, loss of identity, all those things that make Native people very bitter, very unhappy. It's like we're stuck in something. And if you don't get that out of the way, then ... you'll do it later. I think you'd become stronger if you did it here.

Courses that presented a First Nations historical and political perspective, precipitated a heightened awareness in student respondents of their need for healing. These courses engendered feelings of anger, grief, and loss for all respondents.
There was a lot of anger, a lot of frustration, a lot of like you're ... you hear all these stories of your ancestors getting oppressed and more oppressed, and it's carried on. And some of the things that happened to them - like massacres and the killing from the diseases, and all that. Really ... I got very angry ..like you know, and a lot of us in our class did.

And another student expressed how some course content affected him.

That's a whole thing I haven't really talked about, is the grieving process - the loss of language, the loss of the identity and everything else. You can get on really easy, on to this hate trip towards non-Native people. I learnt what the residential schools did. I learnt why the residential schools were started. What took place in the whole process. I also learnt about the adoption agency, and why it started. And you get this real mad on ...on your war pony, and go out ...

**Opportunities for Healing**

**Inside and outside the classroom**

Students actively sought out opportunities for healing, both inside and outside the classroom. They pursued healing in the classroom through sharing with other students and with their Native instructors. Healing in the classroom was an integral part of the "concept of the classroom", discussed in the Learning theme/phase. Native instructors were seen to be those instructors most capable of facilitating healing in the classroom because they understood, from their own experience, the concepts of healing residual cultural issues, and braking the cycle of oppression.
One of the things that Marie [a Native instructor] brought off for me likely was the times in the classes there, where we'd go home and just be so totally angry, so aggravated, so depressed. And we sat her down one day and said, "We have to talk to you. How do you deal with all this? You teach this subject, how do you deal with it? We're having trouble dealing with it and we need these classes. But we don't know where we are. We're angry. We're depressed. It's to the point of ... the feelings are all coming out and can't deal with them."

And she stayed behind and talked with us ...and she said, "What's re-enforcing for me is as much as I was adversely effected, Native people have survived. That's what I focus on. Sometimes it's hard for me to do that, but I really have to focus, and I really have to be strong to say, "Yah, that's why we're where we are today .. is because the elders were there and they did what they did."

To have that understanding, because we're going to ...I think it's really important to understand all the social issues, the political issues. When a person walks in, or even a student, you know, that they understand that, cause I think it's re-enforcing it that makes us stronger or more determined in all the things to be an effective student - as a person out there in a profession. That's what it's done for me.

In addition, students facilitated each others healing. One student described a healing event that took place in the classroom.

There was one time in class, when there was a death in the family, a niece got murdered. I'm pretty sure it was in the summer time. And the class was let go, in respect for what was going on. We could have got up and left. But instead of leaving, we ... the lady herself left, but the class stayed in a circle and we had a special time for our classmate. Even though she wasn't there. And we shared our concerns and everything. The sharing circle is so strong. Because we believe in it. It's healing medicine. It's powerful. I think it is anyways. I've experienced really positive stuff in there.

As well, students sought healing at treatment centres; in the community through self-help groups, and community-based programs, such as those offered.
at the local Friendship Centre; through individual and group counselling offered by NVIT student services; and through the support of family, friends, and respected elders.

I went to treatment centre because of this program. Because I realized that the problems I did have needed to be looked at, for me to be more balanced, for me to get over that real hump. I have to do that. Take time out for myself. ‘Cause it’s so easy to get caught up in the books and that. And school’s a safety zone. You get into an environment where you start to know it. It’s safety, eh. And all of a sudden, bam! I was in a treatment centre, looking at drug addictions and my drinking habits. That’s a scary thought all together. But it comes down to the process of the system, and it’s a very supportive system - of culture, and through the instructors, and the students. We have found ways. We’re allowed to talk about being Indians in the classroom.

Culture is treatment

Traditional spiritual practices were seen by students to be an important source and opportunity for healing. In the words of one respondent, "Culture is treatment". This is one reason why traditional practices such as talking circles, healing circles, and smudging were seen by most students as necessary and integral to their social work education. Students thought that if they were going to be exposed to course content with such emotional impact, the opportunity to process the impact of this material, the opportunity to heal, should be an integral part of their courses, and therefore belonged in class time.

I really believe that my vision is to have cultural content as part of academic. And also, in that program, that there be healing, and that's not ... like you look at the academic program now where we just go, go, go. To me, I want to slow it down, and I want to say, if it takes instead of two
years, it takes three years. But in that time we incorporate talking circles, healing, time for healing, as well as academic - a mixture. And then at the end of four or five years, you have your degree. Just think of what a strong person you would be.

Healing took place for these students hand-in-hand with their learning. The journey of Learning What It Is To Be Indian that students had experienced during their social work studies, and that has been presented in theme/phase one, included their journey of Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues. Healing was an integral part of learning: Learning was an integral part of healing. I have chosen to discuss these themes somewhat separately, in order to facilitate their presentation. But in fact, learning and healing went together - like mind and heart.

Theme/Phase Three: Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White

Learning What It Is To Be Indian and Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues, themes/phases one and two, set the stage for theme/phase three - Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White. It would seem that students' learning and healing facilitated a type of transformational experience that is the central phenomenon, or core category, in this study.
Making Cultural Relevance

The third way

Theme/phase three, Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White, has one central element, the core category *making cultural relevance*. In this phase, respondents "transformed" previously unrelated aspects of the Two Worlds into a "third way", some new synthesis of meaning, whereby previously held perspectives were joined and transformed into a new point of view. Aspects of the Two Worlds, the two cultures, which had seemed unrelated and separate, were transformed and became related and relevant; they became "culturally relevant", in a mutually illuminating way; they became two faces of the same coin. This coin analogy is useful, in that it demonstrates a quality of *making cultural relevance* which is difficult to describe: how a coin can be both a whole thing and also have two faces, all at the same time. *Making cultural relevance* seemed to have a similar quality. Through some kind of internal transformative process, a third and whole synthesis was achieved, while at the same time, the Two Worlds were maintained, changed, related, and illuminated.
“Ah-ha” and/or incremental process

These types of transformative events could occur as sudden leaps of intuition - "ah, ah" experiences - and/or incrementally over time. One of the most outstanding characteristics of this transformative process was that it seemed to "liberate" the student having these experiences. It was as if a "third way" offered a new external position from which they could observe the Two Worlds, rather than be caught in them. The sense that students conveyed was that this "third way" liberated or freed them from both worlds, Aboriginal or White, while simultaneously, and paradoxically, they maintained both worlds. A third point of view was now available, and this point of view had a quality of wholeness, of completeness.

*Making cultural relevance* is a difficult process to describe. The following quotes are taken directly from the data, and here we can hear, in the students' own voices, their description of these transformative experiences.

I even did social work values parallel to Fools Crow's teachings [an Indian author] - social work values and beliefs. And it runs along the same lines. I had already theorized that before I read Fools Crow. Because what I was doing, was getting excited about this new knowledge - the new terms I could use to describe my experience. The new terms were given to me by social work terminology. I was able to verbalize what was going on.

I'd run to [friend's name] grandmother. She's an elder at Coldwater reserve. And she'd sit there and just listen to me real intensely. "I don't know [student's name]." And then I'd say it in another way. And she say, "Oh, I know, my grandmother used to say that to me." And she'd have it in ordinary English - what I'd just said to her, the concept we'd learnt in social work. And she kept doing that over and over again. And I thought,
"Holy shit, we have our own social workers. We have our own philosophers. We have our own healers. She's proof." She didn't look at the book. And yet she knew it. It's a way of life. It's an ethic.

But you have to bring them books with the Indian authors to show, so the people can see for themselves. There is a way of life. There is an Indian way of life. Social work is an Indian way of life. Religion is an Indian way of life. So we can put away this shame, this cultural self-shame. And validate Indianness.

But if you've been under oppression for so long, the self-shame is so ... that's the biggest thing. That's all I see, that's all I experienced at that time. Until I saw Fools Crow, until I saw the social work ethics, values and beliefs, side by side. Then I said, "Wow, we had it long time ago. We were okay the way we were. We were ace the way we were." There was nothing wrong. I started believing the dominant society - that we were something to be ashamed of. There's something to be very proud of. When you see that we had all the social work code of ethics. We had it. It was a way of life. Not just for social workers, for human beings.

The above quote exemplifies the "ah,ha" quality that some students experienced while making cultural relevance. The next quote is another example of an "ah,ha" type of experience.

And whether it's culturally relevant or not, to me at this time, like psychology or sociology, some of the things I'm learning in those classes, are things I've already heard from my elders. It's things I've already learned in stories. But when I'm six years old, and I'm sitting inside and all my brothers, sisters, and cousins are playing outside, but I'm sitting there listening to stories, because that's my role. I'm the story carrier in my family. I didn't like it. I heard it, but I didn't like it.

But today, when I read sociology, and it goes blah, blah, blah, I go, "Oh, my God!", and this brainwave hits me - "That's what they meant!" I sit there and I lose all sight of the rest of the lecture because I'm comparing, doing the parallel. And then after I recognize that, it's my job to pass it on. That's my responsibility.

Yah, it's all relevant. So I feel I can attach something "Native" if you will, to anything we learn. Even research, and that was my worst subject. Like how are you going to know until you do it. Like how are you going to know until you compare it to something you already know.
Aboriginal identity and self-worth

The transformational experiences in theme/phase three seemed to validate both First Nations and mainstream teachings: If both teachings were speaking about the same phenomenon, then both gained in credibility. This credibility contributed to further supporting the worth and validity of Aboriginal knowledge and reality, and therefore, the respondents' own Aboriginal self-identity and worth.

One thing that really struck me is when the whole class lived together for those seven or ten days [at cultural camp], or however long it was. And in my interaction with my classmates, and the elders, and the different resource people we had coming to the camp. I was really able to think of all the theories we had learned to that point. This is what's happening! This is what the textbooks are talking about. This is what the instructor was saying. It's working right here. We're going through it. And some of the things the elders talked to us about; they said it in their own way, probably the way they have always been saying it, and yet I could connect some of what they were saying to what we're learning about in the classroom.

And I think about one course we had. I think it was called ... I can't remember what it was called, but we were using that book "Joining Together" [a group process course text]. And we worked through all the different theories and concepts of group process, and group dynamics. And there it was! It was staring us in the face. I don't know what it was about us being there, but we just seemed to work through it. It seemed like we went from the phase of not getting along with each other, trying to figure out what this group was all about, what am I doing here - all those frustrating things. It seemed like within these seven to ten day period, we went right from there to the complete end of group process, you might say, where we were really a team of people working together, complimenting each other in different ways.
The above quotes illustrate the more intense, or "ah,ha", type of transforming and integrating experiences described by respondents. Those experiences which were more subtle and unfolding, more incremental in nature, were woven into respondents' stories, and therefore do not lend themselves to quotation. However, regardless of the type or quality of experience - "ah,ha" and/or incremental - respondents' seemed to experience transformation and integration while making cultural relevance. Some respondents described "ah,ha" experiences; some described both "types"; and in some interviews, an incremental "type" of experience was to be found "between the lines".

Furthermore, the actual transformative experiences seemed, in and of themselves, to be empowering. They validated the respondents' abilities to make these "connections" or "fits". This internal process required an "agent" or subject, who, through their personal sense of integrity and strength, was able to "make" knowledge culturally relevant.

A sense of liberation, of increased power and mastery, accompanied making cultural relevance, and seemed to grow and unfold overtime. The empowerment that occurred for respondents facilitated further learning and healing, and enabled them in Becoming the Teacher, theme/phase four.
Theme/Phase Four: Becoming the Teacher

The Repertoire of the Teacher

The central phenomena of making cultural relevance, those transformative experiences whereby the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White, were transcended and new meaning was born, were ultimately in service to Becoming the Teacher. Cultural relevance was important and valued by respondents primarily for its "usefulness", its applicability to being and becoming an effective teacher.

Role of social worker/helper

Social work practice was seen as one important element in the repertoire of the teacher; but the concept of teacher seemed to be larger and more encompassing than that of social worker. "Social worker" seemed to be more synonymous with "helper", and both were encompassed by that of "teacher". As well, integral to the concept of "teacher" was that of "learner": "Learner" was assumed to be inherent in "teacher".

Traditional prophesies

There is a traditional prophesy that some respondents mentioned by name - The Prophesy of the Little Ones - and that other respondents implied knowledge of, which foretells that the survival of Aboriginal traditions and cultures will be in
the hands of the Little Ones: Those that are young now, will become, and are
becoming, the "teachers" and elders (irrespective of age), who will reclaim, carry,
and transmit essential knowledge, skills, and values.

Another related prophesy known to respondents is that of the Seventh
Generation, which foretells that the Grandfathers and Grandmothers (spiritual
beings) will be available to pass on wisdom and knowledge to the "living", only
for seven generations. After that time, they will not be accessible to future
generations. Many Native people believe that they are the Seventh Generation,
and they feel a profound sense of urgency to become worthy, and able to receive
the guidance of the Grandfathers and Grandmothers. (The number of generations
can be different; I have heard both five and seven generations used by Native
people.)

One of the prophesies that Lee Brown [a Native instructor] said in
our classroom, was that the seventh generation is when the healing is to
start. But it's not going to be the people who are already in the
community. The prophesy is that the people who have left the community
- they're called "The Little Ones" - the Little Ones who are coming back to
the community. And I'm the seventh generation. And I was a Little One
when I was taken out of the community as a baby. I was only three weeks
old. And he says that the Little Ones that are coming back are going to be
the teachers. The ones who are going to value the drums, the songs, the
whole culture system. He said a lot more about that prophesy but he
shared that in class. And when he shared that in class with me ... Like first
of all, he didn't know how I was raised. I looked at him, and a cold wind
was blowing down my neck. Because I realized, "I'm on the right
journey!".

A couple of times when he [Lee Brown] was singing morning
songs, prayer songs - he'd just say time for a song. Like, you'd just get this
power rush, aye. And one time when we were in the circle and he was
singing, people would see the Grandfathers come in and go around the circle. And they were all excited, aye. He was waking up their spirits. And that's NVIT, the chance. That's a good way of looking at it - "Waking up the spirit of culture!".

Elders in training

The meaning of Becoming the Teacher is based in these types of prophesies. These respondents, and indeed most of the social work students, intended to return to their communities and/or other Native communities to practice social work. Irrespective of chronological age, they knew that they were "elders in training", and that part of that role would include being teachers. Their concept of "teacher" seemed to include life-long learning and teaching "What It Is To Be Indian".

Being the messenger

In addition, the role of teacher included that of the "translator"; the "messenger" that facilitates communication between the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White. The messenger has the ability to move back and forth between the Two Worlds, facilitating understanding in both. The following two quotes illustrate the messenger role of the teacher.

That's one of the things I've learnt at NVIT, how strong the norms and values of a person are. If I'm sharing something, and a person doesn't believe it, then they're not going to connect with it. They're going to argue their point. Because it's what they believe in. And kids, they learn very early, what it is to be Native, or whatever. And if they have a negative
image, and they see this Native person, they are going to think negative instead of positive. See, I don't look Native either. So, that's an advantage too. I'm Native, but I've green eyes. I'm quite different than the stereotype Native. ... And it really helps with kids. I really believe that I'm the messenger. I'm the go-between.

But you see, my mind goes to ... a couple of things here. First of all, we as Native people, my elders tell me, you take what you can learn, you take what's good for you, and then you try and implement it into a Native way. Even though a non-Native person is teaching, or sharing, or whatever - knowledge based stuff. You as a Native person interpret it the way you see it. And then you as a Native person bring it back. Because you're the teacher. Then you're the teacher, and you're teaching it a Native way. Even though you learn it from a non-Native. And then it switches. right.

You see, that's what I'm saying. Somebody has to have that job. Let's get on with our growing. Let's get on with our grieving process. Let's get on with improving Native communities. Let's get on with Life. Instead of .. Stop blaming. Stop the denial stuff. Stop using the excuses. Whatever. That's why I say it's so important to do that. Elders taught me that too. Pretty valuable I think.

Becoming the Teacher is an inherently spiritual process. The prophesies that underlay this quest, and that provide motivation and meaning, are "spiritual" prophesies. In the following quote, one student described how her spiritual beliefs were integral to her role as teacher/helper. Here, she was talking about healing.

I point that to the spiritual side too. Like, we don't take it [helping others heal] on as a total responsibility to do something about it. If I can't do something about it, then eventually the Creator has his way. Like, what goes around, comes around. So don't struggle with it, don't hold on to it, make it your own personal issue. Eventually, it will be looked after. My little part in it has come and gone. It's not totally my responsibility to teach this person, or right this person. I only have a small part - maybe the introduction. It may look like he's totally thrown it aside. But that's only a beginning. The next person will have to say it stronger. And the Creator
will put the words into that person's mouth. And eventually, every one gets knocked off their high horse. And they have to listen. It's like Lee [Lee Brown, a Native instructor] says, we keep ignoring our gift because it means we have to travel a straight path. But the longer we keep ignoring it, pushing it aside, the sicker we get. And that's what happens to that person. I can only present a certain part. Whatever the Creator says I'm best at - the mode of teaching I'm best at. He will give that to me. But that doesn't mean I'm going to get the whole message across to you or who ever. The next person you come along with, will present it in a different way. But really, it's the same thing I said. And eventually, you'll be really knocked off, because you haven't heard all this time from all these people.

So I think we're more tolerant because of our understanding of the way the Creator works. And because the spiritual component is not omitted. ...More neglected. with the white people, they feel hell bent in getting their message across, and it's a life or death situation, because after today, I'm not going to have a chance and I'm the only one that can say it. They don't rely on the Creator coming up with another person. And that's where I think the flexibility comes in - knowing that it's not totally up to me. I only have a small part to play.

Another respondent had a summer job as an instructor in the Transitions program at NVIT. (This program offered assessment and upgrading to students who were planning to register in academic courses: It provided a "transition" for students.) The respondent had received a sacred eagle feather from Lee Brown, a Native instructor, at the closing circle ceremony that was held at the end of Lee's social work course. The respondent described the significance of this gift and how it related to his Becoming the Teacher.

And everyone came up and hugged me. They were so proud that I got it. And I used that feather in the Transitions program. And it was already on the journey of the teacher, aye.

Like, I have my own private smudge bowl, for my family. And I was asked when I first got the job, will you be able to do this and that. And I said, "Yah, I think I'll be able to do this, bring out the smudge bowl
and use it in Transitions.". But I was in the concept of struggle, 'cause I didn't know if I should bring mine out. I had three weeks before the program began, and those three weeks, I was given a smudge bowl out of no where. Lee gave me the feather. And somebody gave me a whole bunch of sage. Then I got this bundle. And I got a talking rock when I was on a walk with a friend. So within three weeks, I got everything I needed - my bundle. And I prayed for that, right. And I got it. And I used it in a good way. And the next time I go out teaching, I'm going to bring it out again and do it. And I feel so honoured to have that. It's already on the journey!

The Cultural Relevance of Mainstream Course Content

Throughout the interviews, respondents commented upon various aspects of mainstream content that they had been exposed to in their program. (The term "mainstream content", as used here, is meant to include non-Native curriculum content from all courses in the social work program at NVIT. As is the case in non-Native social work degree programs, students were required to take Arts and Science courses, such as Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, etc., as well as social work courses.) Respondents' comments were often offered as asides, or additional commentary, related to some main point they were making. Although these comments did not seem to hold a central place in the minds of the students, based on the relative importance of their presentation, they are important to the purpose of this study. When taken together, they help to shed light on how these respondents experienced and understood "culturally relevant" social work education. Furthermore, these comments relate directly to
theme/phase four, Becoming the Teacher, as the role of social worker was seen by respondents as part of the repertoire of the teacher.

It should also be noted that not all respondents commented upon the same issues regarding the cultural relevance of mainstream content: Often just one student mentioned one issue. Therefore, respondent's comments did not necessarily represent opinions shared by other, or all, respondents. However, in my experience, both as an instructor and a researcher at NVIT, what might appear as individual opinions of one respondent, were likely opinions shared by other respondents, and other social work students at NVIT.

Comments made by respondents regarding the cultural relevance of mainstream content, were grouped under three conceptual, or topic headings, and are presented in the following discussion.

Re-entering the community

Respondents had given considerable thought to the process of re-entering their home communities, and/or other Native communities (or organizations) after graduation from the social work program. One respondent described her ideas about the issues involved in re-entry, and how these might impact her ability to work effectively in Native communities.

To me, First Nations people that are successful, in mainstream society and in their own communities, they've overcome that communication gap. They've somehow worked at it and struggled with it
long enough, so that they can communicate both. They can move with whom ever they're involved with. And when I say successful, they're able to move in mainstream society as well as their own community, and yet maintain who they are as an Indian person. That that is not lost.

See that brings me to one of the things that I hear quite a lot from the elders or from people who don't have a very high education in our communities. Take for example my self. I'm being trained to have a certain degree, and when I'm finished, I can guarantee you, when I go home, some people in my community are going to look my way and they're going to say, "Now she thinks she's better than we are."; "Now she thinks she knows it all.". And to me, that reflects upon - "She's going to walk into our community and she's going to tell us this is the way it should be." "This is how we should be." "This is the way we should interact with each other." In other words, I'm bringing the outside ideas and trying to apply them to my people. And they know and I know that it doesn't fit. But I'm going to try and make it fit. And to me that's the basis of them looking at me and saying, "Now she thinks she's better than we are." "Now she thinks she knows it all.".

And yet, I've seen people with degrees walk into our community again after all those years of schooling, walk into our community again, and it's as if, "So what. It's not that important.". What is important, is how that person re-entered that community. In other words, that person re-entered the community in the same manner they left. There's still that respect for our way of communicating. There's still that respect for relationship interaction with each other.

When this respondent stated, "I'm bringing the outside ideas and trying to apply them to my people. And they know and I know that it doesn't fit. But I'm going to try and make it fit." her words typified what seemed to be the general attitude of respondents regarding mainstream content. It was only when they "make it fit", through making cultural relevance, that mainstream content became relevant. In addition, a Native "ethic of respect" was seen by this respondent as a key factor, or norm, required in successfully re-entering a Native community.
Another respondent commented upon issues related to mainstream content and re-entering his community.

I'm a Native person learning the status quo material, going back and .. going back with the influences of the education system and the ideas that the social work program - the generalist approach, the law, community development, abnormal development - they're all mainstream society's ideas and... I'm going, I will be going into the Native communities with these ideas and .. some of them isn't relevant because the people are still .. They are still doing their survival things like farming, hunting, and fishing. They are highly unemployed. Seventy percent of Native people are unemployed. Heaven knows when that will change. But the community economic development project, CED, gives me resources to work with, but it's not relevant to our community cause we will still be looking at a high rate of unemployment on reserves. So I will be looking at getting Indian people educated as one of the first tool to get them to be self-sufficient, to be able to maintain themselves in this society. I didn't see that as part of the learning that I had because it doesn't fit at the moment. In the future, it would probably fit, but it won't be relevant today.

This respondent raised the idea, expressed by other respondents, that the relevance of mainstream content can be associated with the timing of its application (ie: "In the future, it would probably fit, but it won't be relevant today."), and with the circumstances of the "client", in this case the high rate of unemployment in his community and their "survival" existence. Making cultural relevance would seem to include the ability to "make" relevance retrospectively, in terms of understanding and integrating past events; to make relevance in the present; and also the ability to make relevance in the future, as the client's circumstances
permit and require. In his role of Becoming the Teacher, this respondent saw education of Native people as his first priority.

Urban Native people

Two respondents raised the issue of "urban Indians", to use their term. They were concerned that their social work education had not prepared them to work with Native people who lived off reserves in urban environments. Their assumption, based on their own experiences, was that many urban Native people had lost, or never had, their traditional cultures. During the interview, these respondents (who were interviewed together) talked about how important it had been for them to have Native content and traditional practices in their courses. And then they went on to talk about their concerns regarding working with urban Native people.

And sometimes I think about that you know. It's impactful for me toward my learning but what about other Native people, like the urban Indian, eh? They live downtown and that's all they do. They are not like, in a sense, what I'm like - being traditional, in a sense. I live on the reserve, and I still maintain some of the old ways. I wonder what it is for them because there are differences out there. There are people, you know what you call urban Indians, and I'm just wondering what their perspective would be on this because they are neither with me but they are neither with the society out there. And to me, that's raising questions because I'm going to be working with those kind of people as a social worker. So, I'm just wondering what kind of.. perspective I'm going to be taking with them, or change, or you know, in helping them, as a social worker. ...And you know, the people who are neither traditionally based, but they are not part of a mainstream culture either.
I'm sure I will [be working with urban Indians]. Because the moving back and forth to the communities is really common. You have the people who are traditional that stay there, but still you have the people that go back and forth and come back.

The implication that these two respondents were making, was that nothing in their education had really prepared them to work with urban Native people. Their abilities to make mainstream content culturally relevant when working with Native peoples, did not address the unique circumstances of urban Native clients, who did not identify with either mainstream or First Nations cultures.

The desire for Aboriginal theories

A number of respondents referred, either directly or indirectly, to what they perceived as a lack of "Indian" theories; theories that conceptualized, and named, First Nations' experiences and realities. They were frustrated by the lack of Aboriginal theories. They valued mainstream theories, but wanted and needed Aboriginal theories as well. They expressed a strong desire to discover and/or recover theories which were indigenous to their cultures. One student expressed her frustration and desire regarding a Political Science course she had taken,

Unless you know the other [mainstream] ideologies, you can't verbalize our ideologies. I can't verbalize mine, or the Aboriginal, or my ideology. All ideologies are just slight variations of each other. That's my perception anyway. And holy cow, we have one that fits in somewhere. And there's nothing wrong with it. If you've studied ideologies and political science, you realize there's a lot of sick people out there, running around but they're doing the best they can. And this is what they've come
up with - the guiding force as a philosophy. And we're dysfunctional too. We're crippled, we're in a crippled state. But by golly, we've got an ideology too. Otherwise we wouldn't have survived this long. So we have to know all ideologies. Where they came from. How they evolved. In order to stand up and say, "Yah, we've got one too!"

Because we all have different ideologies. I believe that within each Nation we have different ideologies. Within the different bands. Because it has to be, cause we are situated in different areas. Our environment is different. So our ideology is going to move over a little bit.

This student was one voice that clearly expressed both the content and tone, the thoughts and feelings, shared by other respondents on this issue.

One of the few Aboriginal "theories" that respondents were exposed to in their courses was the Medicine Wheel. The Medicine Wheel is not a theory, in the mainstream sense of the word, but students spoke about the Medicine Wheel "as if" it were an Aboriginal theory. (Historically, the Medicine Wheel comes from the Plains peoples of North America: Today it is used by many First Nations peoples to illustrate, teach, and share a traditional philosophy of life. In fact, another name for the Medicine Wheel is the Circle of Life (DeMallie, 1984; Eaton, 1978; Powers, 1986; Sun Bear & Wabun, 1980). The Medicine Wheel is circular, and therefore, has no beginning or end; one can enter the circle at any point. It represents a Native world view that all peoples and things in our world are interconnected and interdependent, and that time is circular. It illustrates and teaches the need for balance between all four parts of ourselves - mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual.)
One of the ways that the Medicine Wheel was presented by Native instructors in social work courses, was as a tool or model for doing assessments and problem solving with clients. Respondents referred, directly or by implication, to the Medicine Wheel in ways that demonstrated that this Aboriginal theory worked for them, that they found it useful and relevant. As one student expressed, "Yah, I look at a human being as four parts - like the medicine wheel - spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental. Because of the parts, everyone needs to have their needs met, right?". And further in that interview, he said, "I really believe that the experiences I had at NVIT looked after all the four parts of the Wheel in me. It's given me a knowledge of what it is to be Native.". His sentiments regarding his experiences at NVIT are not necessarily shared by other respondents, but his integration of the Medicine Wheel was shared by the other respondents.

Summary

Chapters four and five have presented the findings that emerged through data analyses; the four themes/phases of Learning, Healing, Integrating, and Becoming. When taken together, these four themes became a narrative of what “culturally relevant education” meant to the Native social work students who were respondents in this study. And there were stories within stories; each theme was
composed of various story elements, which were like "mini-stories" in their own right.

The central point to this narrative, or better stated, the central thread that ran through and connected all the parts, was that for these students "culturally relevant education" was a journey: A journey of Learning What It Is To Be Indian, that went hand-in-hand with Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues, like mind and heart; Learning and Healing seemed to influence students' abilities in making cultural relevance, and Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White; Learning, Healing, and Integrating, seemed to support their Becoming the Teacher, providing them with a strong Aboriginal self-identity and worth, that served them in the quest of being and Becoming the Teacher; and finally, Becoming the Teacher led them back to Learning, because the heart of teaching was to teach "What it is to be Indian". The final chapter will relate the findings of this study to previous research discussed in the Literature Review; discuss the significance that the narrative of the four themes might have for the field of Native social work education, including non-Native instructors; and suggest directions for further research.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will present conclusions drawn from the findings, in conjunction with the literature review and my own experience; and, will offer considerations for program development and for further research. As outlined in chapter one, I brought to this study a desire for clearer understanding of the tensions which exist when the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White, meet in Native social work education. These tensions were framed in terms of two central issues - the accreditation of programs with mainstream institutions and culturally relevant education. The purpose of this study was to help clarify the concept "culturally relevant education" by exploring with students their experiences and meanings of this concept.

The following sections structure this chapter: 1) comments on issues of validity; 2) a summary of the major findings; 3) a discussion focused on each of the four themes/phases; 4) outstanding questions; and, 5) final comments. Each section will include, when appropriate, recommendations for program/curriculum development and further research.
Issues of Validity

One can ask, "To whom do these findings apply?", and the answer is, "At least to these particular respondents." "At least", indicates the concern that is inherent when the researcher is the primary research instrument for data gathering and analyses. In addition, these findings can only hope to accurately reflect data that were specific to a particular time and place; these findings would not necessarily apply to these respondents today, or in the future. It is likely that the respondents, who have now graduated from the program, would generate different data - they would have somewhat different stories to share; and, they might also agree with what they said previously.

One of the major limitations of this study was the fact that I was unable to return to the respondents for their review of the findings. By the time I wrote this thesis, three years had passed since the interviews, and these students had graduated and dispersed.

In spite of these limitations and concerns, qualitative methods provide a type of data and findings that are valuable (Patton, 1990). The intent of this study was to "explore", and that has been accomplished. This study demonstrates that there are ways of thinking and conceiving of "culturally relevant education" that have not been reported in other literature; and, many of the findings in this study, add depth to findings reported previously by others. Furthermore, this study
generates many new questions for further consideration and investigation, and that is a positive indicator.

Summary of Major Findings

From my point of view, there are two major findings in this study. (I arrived at this summary by asking myself, "What would I try to communicate about this study to someone else, if I only had five minutes to do so?") A more in-depth discussion will follow in the section that focuses on each of the four themes/phases.

1. Students can and do make cultural relevance.

   The student is a major "agent" of culturally relevant education. Educators, programs, and institutions can, and should, facilitate student access to the elements that seem to support students' making cultural relevance. It may be counterproductive for non-Native educators and institutions to concentrate exclusively on "institutionalizing" culturally relevant education. Making cultural relevance is a highly individualistic and situation-specific event. It would seem to require competence in at least two cultures. In Native social work education, mainstream culture is always one of the two, the other being a First Nation's culture. Non-Native educators are by definition, competent in mainstream culture, but few of us can claim competence in any First Nation's culture. We
need to trust the students more. While continuing to work towards institutionalizing cultural relevance, we also need to focus our efforts on helping students access the elements that support them making cultural relevance.

The principle criterion for determining such elements should be the extent to which they strengthen students' Aboriginal self-identity and worth. It seems that strong Aboriginal self-identity and worth is what supports a student's ability to make cultural relevance; and, in turn, the experience of making cultural relevance, strengthens Aboriginal identity and self-worth - an empowering and productive cycle - but one that resides within the student - not the educator, program, or institution.

2. Dialectical contradictions are inherent in Native social work education.

"Contradictions" (Haig-Brown, 1991) are an on-going part of the enterprise, and they can be a source of positive change. Much of our energy has been devoted to trying to minimize and/or resolve issues of power and control, and to ameliorating contradictions. Our energies could be more effectively employed if we accept these realities for what they are, stop trying to mask them and/or get rid of them, and put our effort towards understanding and working with contradictions.

In Native social work education, the principle contradiction can be seen as accredited programs and culturally relevant education. In this study, the principle
contradiction can be framed as the students' emphasis on "Nativeness" - in Learning, Healing, Integrating, and Becoming - and the fact that they were engaged in a professional program of studies that had a mainstream core curriculum. It is my contention that this study demonstrates that students have the ability to transcend this contradiction by making cultural relevance, whereas non-Native educators and institutions do not, can not, and should not.

My position in this regard directly contradicts that of Brown (1992) who proposes an "interface teaching model" where the non-Native educator becomes the "mediator" or "translator" between cultures. From my perspective, it is the student who has this ability, not the educator.

Themes/Phases: Learning, Healing, Integrating and Becoming

As demonstrated in chapters four and five, these themes/phases are inextricably bound together in a dynamic, interconnected and organic whole. This finding supports the proposition that Native people have cognitive schemes, or world views, that are "holistic" and "circular" in nature, as argued by Tafoya (1989) and others.

One might speculate that Native cognitive schemes, and their holistic and circular qualities, may be associated with making cultural relevance: Further exploration is indicated.
Learning What It Is To Be Indian

It is hard to view the findings of this study, without being struck by the emphasis that students placed on "Nativeness", and their lack of focus on "social work". One could argue that their emphasis was due to the topic of focus in the interviews - culturally relevant education. But even so, it is arresting that so few of their comments focused on social work, and when they did, it was usually in reference to some "non-culturally relevant" aspect of social work knowledge, skills and values.

I have not found a satisfactory explanation for this apparent anomaly, and this leads to considerations for further research. I believe it would be fruitful and interesting to explore with students - at program intake, during their studies, and after graduation - questions that elicited what they hoped to learn, what they were learning, and retrospectively, what they did learn - that was of value and use. This type of exploration might help to determine relevance of mainstream curriculum for Native students.

Another interesting dimension of students' emphasis on "Nativeness", is how they held, at the same time, an "inclusive learning style" and an "ethic of respect" that encompassed both Native and non-Native elements. One might assume that if "Nativeness" was of prime value, then "non-Native" would be of
lesser value, or possibly of no value. This is not the impression that their stories
gave, despite their lack of emphasis on "social work". Rather, they seemed to
value and respect all knowledge and they valued "Nativeness" most highly.

As to the aforementioned elements which seem to support students making
cultural relevance, this study indicates that these include the following.

1. Courses that focus on First Nations’ perspectives and content, including
traditional practices, taught by Native instructors. Learning about
colonization, and pre-colonization, through Aboriginal political and historical
analyses, and with Native instructors, was highly significant, and should be
considered a priority.

2. Courses such as cultural camp, which are conducted in Native settings,
include leadership by elders, and which focus on communal living, are also
important requirements. These types of courses offer students the opportunity
to reflect, experience, and learn through "doing"; and, most importantly, it
would seem that "doing" together, in community, provides an important
element that neither the classroom nor the practicum can provide.

3. This study indicates that a "radical" philosophy of education, (as exemplified
by Freire (1984), and as reported by Pace and Smith (1990) in the Micmac
program) is that non-Native philosophy most congruent with Native world
views. In addition, principles from current mainstream adult education may
apply to Native students, such as life-long learning, self-directed learning, and participatory learning. This philosophy, and these types of principles, facilitate the empowerment of Native students who share a personal and collective history of disempowerment. Further research is indicated.

4. Opportunities for self-healing, concurrent with learning, are necessary.

It is important that students have access to the above four elements, and that educators help facilitate access, not that programs can or should provide them all. Access issues become particularly relevant for "conventional" programs, where Native students are a minority. However, the strength of conventional programs, such as those at UBC and UVIC, are that they have a wide variety of resources, both on-campus and in the community, from which to draw. For example, the UBC program has the First Nations House of Learning on-campus, and Hey-way-noqu Healing Circle in the community.

In 1994, the UBC School of Social Work published a report entitled The Linking Project (Christensen 1994). This project was part of a larger national initiative of the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work called "Linking Schools of Social Work to Cultural Communities in Canada". The UBC Project focused on building bridges between the School of Social Work and Aboriginal peoples. The Linking Project identifies specific issues that negatively impact
Native students and communities, and offers recommendations. Issues, and corresponding recommendations, include such areas as student access, recruitment, and retention; program relevance; student support systems; and, prejudice, discrimination and racism. In its analysis, the Linking Project clearly articulates institutionalized racism as the prime source of the problems which confront Aboriginal social work education. Recommendations call for structural changes that include wide-ranging shifts in attitudes and values required by the profession and schools of social work, through to specific changes to curricula and teaching methods.

There are some commonalities between specific recommendations made by the Linking Project and this present study, such as the need for courses, taught by Native instructors, which address colonialism, oppression and racism. However, there are also major differences in analysis and perspective. The two studies seem to identify similar issues, but understand those issues differently, and pose different solutions. The Linking Project advocates sweeping structural changes, whereas this present study identifies the individual Native student as a major "agent" of change; and, contradictions as unavoidable, and potentially constructive in the meeting of the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White, that takes place in Native social work education. It is hard to argue with the intent of the Linking Project but let me pose just one issue to illustrate my concern. The
Linking Project recommends that Native community members work with the UBC School of Social Work to make the curriculum more culturally relevant. This sounds like a very valid idea, but it immediately raises the issue and importance of First Nations cultural diversity. Within B.C., there are twenty-six tribal groups, that represent a wide range of traditions and cultures. The findings of this present study demonstrate that making cultural relevance requires competence in at least two cultures. Respondents worked hard to make cultural relevance, not only of mainstream social work, but also of Native cultures other than their own. It is the contention of this study that it may be counterproductive for "conventional" programs, such as that at UBC, to focus exclusively on "institutionalizing" cultural relevance. Rather, these programs should also help Native students access the elements required in making cultural relevance. Native social work education has under-emphasized the individualistic aspects of students' learning in our attempts to institutionalize culturally relevant education. In my opinion, it is not a case of either/or, but rather our need to acknowledge and pursue both; and, all the conflicts and contradictions that are inherent in that undertaking.
Healing Residual Personal and Cultural Issues

For these students, learning and healing went together like mind and heart. They were extremely pro-active in seeking out, and participating in, healing. Their stories highlight the importance of traditional practices and confirm that "culture is healing". Furthermore, many students believed that healing was, and should be, an integral part of their learning in the classroom.

Mainstream institutions have a difficult time with this position. In their view, healing is a "personal" issue, not a "public" issue. If individual students need healing, they should find this outside of the academy; with "therapists" not "educators"; and, preferably before, rather than during, education and training. Of course, all educators know that healing does indeed take place in the classroom, whether intended or not. But institutions are opposed to any attempts to formalize what takes place informally. Part of their rationale is that healing in the classroom raises ethical issues. Who determines which students need healing, and how is this determined? If healing becomes a stated or formalized objective of the curriculum, how, and by whom, is healing to be implemented and evaluated?

I find these concerns legitimate and significant. However, I also see these concerns arising as a consequence of what Tafoya (1989) calls the Standard Average European world view which is held, and implemented, by mainstream institutions. The First Nations' concept of healing "residual cultural issues" rests
on the belief, and value, that all Native people are on, what they call, the "healing road": For them, healing is both a personal and a public issue. It would seem that "healing" raises yet another dimension of the contradiction that occurs as we attempt to unify accredited programs and culturally relevant education.

Frances Ricks, from the University of Victoria's School of Youth and Child Care, addresses many of these learning/healing issues, and proposes an Empowerment Training Model for Native counsellors (1992). Ricks' model demonstrates how student education and training (in this case, counselling knowledge and skills) can be, and needs to be, concurrent with self-healing. Unfortunately, she does not address accreditation issues of such a training program. In a commentary at the end of Ricks' article, Margaret Anne Gallagher makes the point that Ricks' model has much to offer "conventional" programs.

Innovative developments in accredited counselling programs, that combine learning and self-healing in their curriculum, may prove a worthwhile avenue for exploration. However, until such time as Native social work programs resolve these issues, this study indicates that educators should facilitate, when appropriate, student access to existing Native counselling programs, on-campus and in the community.
Integrating the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White

As stated previously, making cultural relevance is the central phenomenon - the core category - around which the four themes/phases are integrated. This finding was unexpected, and raises a variety of issues for consideration.

1. Epistemic Concerns: This study demonstrates that "how" students know, is at least as important as "what" they know. Making cultural relevance is an "how" event/phenomenon. Epistemology has historically focused predominantly on "what" can be known: "How" issues have, in practice, been largely subsumed by "brain science" - "mind-brain" research (Searle, 1995). Recently however, some feminist theory has begun to challenge this state of affairs, as have social researchers, such as Guba and Lincoln with their "constructivist paradigm" (1989). Feminists, such as Code (1991), and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule (1986) argue that "how" we know is integral to "what" we know. This position is congruent with my own, and raises the question, "Do the findings of this study reflect a 'woman's way of knowing' (ie: mine); 'Aboriginal ways of knowing' (ie: the students, mostly women); or both?"

the work of others, most notably Kuhn's concept of "changing paradigms", Friere's "conscientization", and Habermas' critical theory of knowledge. I mention these influences on Mezirow, in order to indicate his philosophical "roots": He is considered one of the foremost thinkers in American adult education (Brookfield, 1986; Merriam, 1987).

Briefly outlined, Mezirow's "critical theory of self-directed learning" (1985) states that each person brings to adulthood a set of beliefs and assumptions, conscious and unconscious, about their self and about their relationships with others. These beliefs and assumptions form our meaning perspectives. Meaning perspectives are influenced by our experiences in life and by cultural context. In our development as adults, we are challenged by life's dilemmas. These challenges can precipitate a change or shift in meaning perspective, or what Mezirow calls a "perspective transformation". These transformations change our previously held assumptions about life. Mezirow describes this process:

A cardinal dimension of adult development and the learning most uniquely adult pertains to becoming aware that one is caught in one's own history and is reliving it. This leads to a process of perspective transformation involving a structural change in the way we see ourselves and our relationships. (p. 100, 1978)

Transformations in meaning perspective are dependent upon one's association with other people who have a more critical awareness of the psychocultural
assumptions that influence our lives. Positive development in adulthood is contingent upon our ability to resolve the dilemmas in our life by making perspective transformations and new meaning perspectives that are more congruent with reality. For Mezirow, our meaning perspectives inform our actions in the world. Therefore, perspective transformation, although primarily describing an internal process of change, is inherently linked to social action. As our meaning perspectives transform and become more critical and informed, so do our actions in the world.

This brief review of Mezirow's theory is presented here in order to substantiate my "hunch" that making cultural relevance may be a concept/phenomenon similar to "perspective transformation". I am not aware of any previous research done using "perspective transformation" in cross-cultural settings, and/or with Native people. However, it is likely that at least some research of this type has been undertaken, as Mezirow's work has generated numerous dissertations in the United States and elsewhere. In addition, a more thorough investigation of Mezirow's theory would be interesting. I have read most of what Mezirow has published, but have failed to come across any in-depth discussion that answers my epistemological concerns - namely, the "how" questions. Once again, Mezirow seems to focus primarily on the "what" of
perspective transformation (ie: the new meaning perspectives/constructs), and not
the "how", except for naming it (ie: perspective transformation).

This apparent limitation of Mezirow's concept, and certainly that of
making cultural relevance, might be, at least partially, addressed by, what
grounded theory terms, the "properties" and "dimensions" of a category (Strauss
and Corbin, 1990). For example, it would seem that the property of intensity in
making cultural relevance, falls on a dimensional continuum - from "incremental"
through "ah,ha". A thorough analysis of this type was not undertaken in this
study.

In concluding this section, making cultural relevance is a phenomenon,
and a beginning concept, that would benefit from further research. I have
indicated in this discussion, two areas that may contribute to further exploration -
epistemological considerations and Mezirow's "perspective transformation".

Becoming the Teacher

This study indicates that a Native concept, and role, of "teacher" may be
qualitatively different than that held by mainstream culture. It would seem that
for these students, "teacher" was associated with "elder" and "helper"; and, that
"social worker" was only one dimension of "helper". As well, the role of
"messenger" or "translator" between cultures was part of "teacher". All of these
concepts/roles have been included in what I have called "the repertoire of the teacher". Furthermore, their stories indicated an aspect of "becoming" - becoming the teacher - which connotes a sense of preparing, of "elders in training", for important roles in their communities. It was my impression that "becoming" also meant a belief in, and value of, a life-long journey of learning, healing, integrating, and teaching; a journey which is inherently "spiritual" in nature, and which provides the primary source of meaning in their lives.

Therefore, it would seem important to remember that social work education has only one small part to play in a larger life-journey of the students. I am reminded of the comments made by one of the respondents, quoted previously, where she is talking about healing:

So I think we're more tolerant because of our understanding of the way the Creator works. And because the spiritual component is not omitted. [It's] more neglected with the white people. They feel hell bent in getting their message across, and it's a life or death situation, because after today, [they believe] "I'm not going to have a chance and I'm the only one that can say it." They don't rely on the Creator coming up with another person. And that's where I think the flexibility comes in - knowing that it's not totally up to me. I only have a small part to play.

The inherently spiritual nature of "Becoming the Teacher", of which the role of social worker is but one part, raises an important consideration for Native social work programs, educators, and institutions - namely, our reluctance to address the whole issue of "spirituality" in social work education and training, and
in praxis. It seems to me that of all the professions, social work is that most suited, and most able, to address this aspect of humanness. We have been remiss. I do not have a ready solution, but I believe that developments in Native social work education may help mainstream social work education, and the profession, address this issue in meaningful ways.

The findings of this study, support Hampton's twelve standards for Indian education (1988). None of the findings of this study dispute his standards, in fact they strongly confirm their validity. Native social work education has been moving in a direction that is compatible with Hampton's standards. We can benefit from his analysis, and begin to implement these standards within the context of accreditation requirements. We do not have to have "Indian education sui generis" in order to do so.

Hampton (1988) identifies the lack of, and need for, Indian theories to inform "Indian education sui generis". Maracle (1990) points out how Native oratory is theorizing. Respondents in this study report the lack of, and the necessity for, Aboriginal theories in their education. While it is important to continue our search to identify mainstream knowledge, values, and skills that are congruent with Native cultures, it is equally important to pro-actively support Native people in developing Aboriginal theories. Maracle's discourse reminds us that Aboriginal theorizing will likely be different than mainstream, but equally,
and perhaps more valid. At a minimum, it is important that, as educators, we continue to promote Native students' theorizing. When Native students theorize, everyone benefits, including mainstream theory. In addition, by promoting access to resources outside social work programs/departments/schools, we can facilitate students' exposure to existing Aboriginal theories. Significant generation and identification of Aboriginal theories will require structural changes to curricula, programs, and institutions that are more difficult to achieve due to issues of power, control, and contradiction that are inherent in Native social work education.

In closing this section, I would like to comment on the issue of "urban Indians" reported by two respondents. Their assessment seems accurate: neither mainstream or "culturally relevant education" has prepared them to work with those Native people who do not identify with any Native culture nor with mainstream culture. This issue becomes increasingly significant as more urban Native people return to reserves, and/or switch back and forth from reserves to urban environments. Native social work programs need to give more attention to this issue. One avenue for investigation might be how this issue is being addressed by Native human service programs offered in urban settings, such as those at the Native Education Centre in Vancouver.
Concluding Comments

In the last few years, we have experienced Oka, Gustafson Lake, and the Douglas Lake stand-offs, to mention just a few confrontations that have been heavily reported by the media. These types of events are part of the wider context in which Native social work education now takes place: they serve as a warning of what can, and likely will, happen if we do not achieve a more equitable meeting of the Two Worlds, Aboriginal and White. I believe that Native social work education can make a valuable contribution. The social work students at NVIT, and in other programs across Canada, graduate to become leaders in their communities and Nations. Although their social work education is only a part of their life-journey, it can be a significant part. It can provide an experience where the Two Worlds meet in mutually beneficial ways; and power, control and contradiction will be inherent in this meeting. The question is, "Will Native social work education facilitate or hinder our mutual journeys to a more just society?"
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A

The NVIT Social Work Program Description
The overall purpose of the Social Work Diploma/Degree Program is to prepare graduates to intervene in crises, problems and policies as they pertain to individuals, families, groups and communities with appropriate knowledge of change, organizations, systems, the law and a clear understanding of self.

Social Work Program

Students will be equipped with education and training for competent leadership and practice in Native and non-Native settings.

OPTIONS
Options for students accepted into NVIT's Social Work Program include completion of:

- two years of study leading to a Diploma in Social Work awarded by NVIT in which all courses are university transferable;

and/or

- four years of study leading to the degree of Bachelor of Social Work awarded by the University of Victoria.

RELEVANCE
First Nations are increasingly undertaking self-government initiatives aimed at the holistic development of their communities.

A core of culturally relevant generic social work courses prepares graduates to facilitate such development and change through a process of assessment, goal setting, action and evaluation.

Additional social science courses sensitize students to historical, cultural, social and legal issues of Native people. Combined with an intensive cultural camp experience in which elders play a major role, students graduate with a well-rounded education and a respect for Native people and their culture.

FEATURES
The Social Work Program is open to anyone currently working or wanting to work in the human service field who desires accredited education and training in Social Work.

Students may register in part-time or full-time studies. Depending on demand, some courses may be delivered in a block format each term to allow part-time students to continue their employment.

Students undertaking the diploma undertake one field work practicum while those taking the degree complete two practica.

Practica are selected on the basis of student interests and the availability of suitable supervisors. A range of placements are possible including with government (MSSH, Probation, Ombudsman's Office), Bands (Social Work, Alcohol & Drug), non-profit agencies (transition homes, friendship centres, treatment centres, therapy,
street-kid programs), schools, consulting firms and political organizations (e.g. Assembly of First Nations).

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES
• Child Welfare Worker
• Family Support Worker
• Child Care Counsellor
• Teacher's Aide
• Youth Worker
• Corrections Worker
• Community Development Worker
• Alcohol and Drug Counsellor
• Social Worker
• Probation Officer

PREREQUISITES
Students require Grade 12 equivalency with English language proficiency to enter the qualifying year for Social Work. Adult entry provision is available in exceptional circumstances. As well, preference will be given to students who have gained experience in the social services field on a paid or volunteer basis.

NVIT's College Preparation Program provides upgrading for the student whose academic education is incomplete.

ACCREDITATION
The Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and University of Victoria have established a Program Agreement providing the opportunity for First Nations students to complete Bachelor of Social Work degrees in Merritt, British Columbia through NVIT.

A total of 60 units or 120 credits are required for degree completion. Of this total, a minimum of 30 units or 60 credits are courses accredited by the University of Victoria with the balance of courses being accredited through the University College of the Cariboo.

Taken together, students completing their four years of study at NVIT will graduate from the University of Victoria B.S.W. degree. This degree is accredited by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work.

TO APPLY
Students interested in applying to the first year of the Social Work Diploma/Degree program must submit (1) an application form (p. 61) and fee; (2) a letter outlining reasons for pursuing Social Work education at NVIT; and (3) a resume outlining work and volunteer experience.

DEPARTMENT HEAD
Pamela Lewis-Willie, B.S.W., M.P.A.
(604) 378-9797

TERM I (AUG – SEPT.)
Beginning August 10, 1992 Social Work students engage in 4 weeks of Pre-term Preparation during which time they acquire writing and computer skills and prepare for college life. Successful completion of University Entrance English requirements and completion of FES151 (3 credits) is required for continuation in the Program.

TERM II (SEPT. – DEC.)
Composition
Intro to Social Work Practice
Intro to Psychology I
Intro to Sociology I
Canadian Native Peoples

TERM III (JAN. – APR.)
Modern Literature & Thought
Intro to Social Welfare
Intro to Psychology II
Intro to Sociology II
Indians of British Columbia

TERM IV (MAY)
Introduction to Personality
TERM V (SEPT. - DEC.)
- Oral & Written Communications
- SW Practice & Planned Change
- Interpersonal Communication
- Law & Social Services
- Special Topics in SW—Addictions

TERM VI (JAN. - APR.)
- SW Practice & Planned Change
- Interpersonal Communication
- The Rural Community
- Legal Skills for Social Workers
- Special Topics in SW—Abuse

TERM VII (MAY - AUG.)
- Cultural Immersion
- Social Work Field Practice

TERM VIII (SEPT. - DEC.)
- Government & Politics of Canada
- Introduction to Statistics
- Developmental Psychology
- Understanding HS Organizations
- Family Practice

TERM IX (JAN. - APR.)
- Contemporary Ideologies
- Introduction to Statistics
- Research Practitioner in HS
- Generalist SW Practice
- Social Science Elective
- Social Science Elective

TERM X (MAY - AUG.)
- Social Work Field Practice

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

FES 151
PRE-TERM PREPARATION

- ENG110
  ENGLISH COMPOSITION
  3 CREDITS
  The emphasis of this course is on the development of composition skills and on short essays, logical thinking and argument. Instructors may use some literature in the course.

ENG 111
INTRODUCTION TO MODERN LITERATURE AND THOUGHT

- SW 200A
  AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE
  3 CREDITS
  This course provides an introduction to the general practice of social work with particular emphasis on practice in rural communities and with emphasis in interdisciplinary approaches and the roles of consumer and self-help groups in the helping process. This course reviews the knowledge bases and skills of social work.
practice and assists students to evaluate their interests and capacities for entering the profession of social work.

SW 200B
AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WELFARE IN CANADA
3 CREDITS
This course provides an introduction to and analysis of major social policies and programs in Canada. Emphasis will be given to policies in income security, corrections, health, family and children and housing and will include an examination of the role of the social worker in formulating policy.

PSYCH 111
INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY 1
3 CREDITS
This course covers selected topics in contemporary psychology. Instructors vary in approach to the course, but the topics discussed usually include learning, perception, development, the central nervous system and elementary methodology.

PSYCH 121
INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY 2
3 CREDITS
This course covers selected topics in contemporary psychology. Instructors vary in approach but topics discussed usually include emotion, motivation, cognition, personality, social psychology, abnormal behaviour and psychological adjustment.

PSYCH 212
INTRODUCTION TO PERSONALITY
3 CREDITS
This course examines the major theories of personality formation including psychodynamic, cognitive, humanistic, behavioural and systems approaches. The student will have the opportunity to relate this material to personal growth and development.

SOC 111
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY 1
3 CREDITS
This course introduces students to the concepts and techniques employed in the study of social relationships. The course examines diversity and change in society focusing on culture, socialization, social roles, gender and education topics that encourage the student to locate herself or himself in this society and community.

SOC 121
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY 2
3 CREDITS
In the second of the introductory course, the focus is principally on major institutions in society such as the family, religion, politics and economy; on structured forms of inequality reflected in class, race and gender relations and on forms of deviance and social control.

ANTHRO 214
CANADIAN NATIVE PEOPLES
3 CREDITS
This course provides an introduction to the present situation of Canada's Indians, Metis and Inuit, interpreted on the basis of contemporary and historical political, economic and cultural developments. Major topics include: the Indian Act, the reserve system, land claims, directed culture change and social consequences of paternalism.

ANTHRO 223
INDIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
3 CREDITS
This course surveys the traditional Indian cultures of British Columbia as known through ethnography and archaeology. Topics will include regional variation and adaptation in economy, technology, language, religion, art, medicine, kinship, and social organization.
Admission to the second year of Social Work and/or University of Victoria Social Work Degree requires students to complete:

1) a personal statement along with other written submissions, and
2) a group interview.

All written material will be reviewed by a panel of people comprised of representatives from NVIT, the University of Victoria and the community. This panel will also conduct group interviews. The deadline for completing application requirements for the second year is February 15. Selection of the group admitted to second year Social Work will be made on the basis of grades, written submissions, the interview and successful completion of SW 200A and 200B.

To be awarded the NVIT Social Work Diploma, students must complete a total of 75 credits (37.5 units) of study. Requirements include 9 credits of English, SW 200A, 200B, 202, 303, 304, 350A, 352, 455, 460 (Addictions), and 460 (Abuse) along with Social Science Electives. Courses generally taken during the Second Year of Social Work are described below:

**ENG. 229**
**ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

The objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the Law as an expression of social policy and of the processes by which laws are developed, enacted and changed; Family Law and the Family Courts with special reference to laws affecting children; human rights as they apply to social services; the organization of legal services; and the legal accountability and liabilities of social workers and others in the social services field.

**SW 303**
**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE & PLANNED CHANGE**

The objective of this course is to introduce students to the generic approach to social work practice by using major concepts and theories concerned with the planning of change.

**SW 350A**
**LAW AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

The objective of this course is to develop basic competency in court skills (report writing, court presentation, evidence giving), advocacy skills (individual and group, political lobbying, advocating before tribunals, etc.), and conflict resolution skills (negotiation, mediation, arbitration, etc.), for Social Work students.

**SW 350B**
**LEGAL SKILLS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS**

The course's practical basis, which requires oral presentations, business letters, reports and memoranda, is implemented by background material on relevant communication theory.

**SW 352**
**INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION (2 TERMS)**

This course has a number of interrelated objectives: to introduce students to the literature on interpersonal communication; to afford an opportunity for a critical review of various approaches to interpersonal helping; to assist students in developing a personal commitment to, and philosophy of, the art of interpersonal helping; and to involve students in simulated practice experiences.
SW 455
THE RURAL COMMUNITY
3 CREDITS
The objectives of this course are to: (1) analyze rural community structures and problems, (2) understand the delivery of human services in rural communities, and (3) review approaches to community work practice.

SW 460A
SPECIAL TOPICS IN SOCIAL WORK & SOCIAL WELFARE—ADDICTIONS
3 CREDITS
This course provides a conceptual framework for understanding addictions as a systemic problem. Both process and substance addictions are examined. Topics include indicators, dynamics, assessment processes, therapeutic and treatment issues and intervention skills required in relation to addictions.

SW 460B
SPECIAL TOPICS IN SOCIAL WORK & SOCIAL WELFARE—ABUSE
3 CREDITS
This course provides a conceptual framework for understanding emotional, physical, mental and sexual abuse. Each area will be examined in depth and students will have opportunity to apply the model to practice. In this process, students will become familiar with the indicators, dynamics, assessment processes, therapeutic and treatment issues and intervention skills required in relation to abuse.

SW 202
CULTURAL IMMERSION
6 CREDITS
The objective of this course is to provide students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and appreciation of First Nations' culture, including values, philosophies, survival skills, technologies, arts and ceremonies. Prerequisites: SW 200A, 200B, and practice experience. Grading: COM, N or F. Course takes place during Spring/Summer Session.

SW 304
SOCIAL WORK FIELD PRACTICE
9 CREDITS
For the equivalent of 10 weeks of full-time work, students undertake a field work placement as part of their diploma and degree requirements. Students are assigned a wide range of responsibilities at the individual, group and community level. Precise objectives will be established on a contract basis between students, faculty and the agency. Upon completion of the placement, students participate in an integration seminar. Students may choose to undertake this course during Spring Session.

<<<THIRD/FOURTH YEAR >>>>
<<<SOCIAL WORK >>>>

Students entering the degree program have successfully completed their Social Work Diploma. Courses generally taken during the Third and Fourth Year of Social Work are described below:

POLI 111
THE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF CANADA
3 CREDITS
This course provides an introduction to the main processes, structures and institutions of Canadian politics and government, including the constitution, social cleavages, the prime minister and cabinet, parliament, political parties and ideologies, federalism and the structure of power.

POLI 121
CONTEMPORARY IDEOLOGIES
3 CREDITS
This course examines the major systems of political ideas which have shaped the modern world, including liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism, anarchism, fascism and nationalism. These ideologies will be analyzed from the perspective of their historical and philosophical antecedents, contemporary relevance and place in the Canadian political experience.
MATH 120
INTRODUCTION TO STATISTICS
(TWO TERMS) ........................................ 3 CREDITS
This course is designed for non-science students who require a course in basic statistics. Topics include descriptive statistics, random variables, Binomial and Normal distributions, large and small samples, linear regression and correlation, Chi-Square test.

PSYCH 301
DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY
.......................................................... 3 CREDITS
This course covers topics in social, personality and cognitive development from infancy to late adulthood, in the context of work and family relationships, including attachment and loss. Content will include theoretical and methodological issues and practical implications.

ARTS & SCIENCE ELECTIVES
A total of 6 credits (3 units) in Arts and Science Electives with transfer credit to the University of Victoria are required and will be chosen in consultation with Department Head.

SW 401
THE RESEARCH PRACTITIONER IN THE HUMAN SERVICES
.......................................................... 3 CREDITS
The objectives of this course are that the students will be able to: define research practitioner; understand the different ways of gaining knowledge; understand the use of descriptive, associative and inferential statistics in data analysis; apply research and evaluation studies.

SW 403
GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE
.......................................................... 1.5 CREDITS
This course has the objectives of (1) strengthening the students' understanding of generalist social work practice and problem solving approaches, (2) highlighting the students' ability to recognize and grapple with ethical dilemmas, and (3) providing students with an opportunity to think critically about their own conceptual and philosophical or orientation to social work practice.

SW 450
UNDERSTANDING HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
............................................................................. 3 CREDITS
The objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the components and dynamics of human service organizations so that they may practice more effectively within these organizations and participate in their development and change.

SW 477
FAMILY PRACTICE
.......................................................... 3 CREDITS
The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives and practice approaches that are relevant for working with the contemporary family in all its forms. A family systems framework will provide the theoretical base from which students will begin to develop their own family practice skills through use of video, class exercises and lab experiences.

SW 402
SOCIAL WORK FIELD PRACTICE
.......................................................... 12 CREDITS
For the equivalent of 12 weeks of full-time work students complete a second field work placement as part of their degree. The intent of this course is to refine intervention skills at the individual, family, group and community level. Precise objectives will be established on a contract basis between students, faculty and the agency. Again, students participate in an integration seminar at the conclusion of the work placement and they may choose to undertake this course during Spring Session.
APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introductory Remarks:

As you know, within the field of Native social work education there is considerable debate about what “culturally relevant education” means. The purpose of this interview is to explore your perspective on this topic. Your contribution is valuable and unique because you have experience and understanding of both Native cultures and social work education. My interest comes from my experience working at NVIT. As we go through the interview, please ask any questions you have. If there is something you do not wish to answer, please say so. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Interview Questions and Possible Probes:
Q1: Can we please begin with you saying what the term “culturally relevant education” means to you?

Q2: Are there aspects of your social work education that you consider to be culturally relevant to you as a Native person?
   - If so, what aspects?
   - In what ways are they culturally relevant to you?

Q3: If you were to pick out an experience, event, or situation at NVIT in which you have been involved, that was particularly culturally relevant to you, what would it be?
   - Please describe it.
   - What made this experience/event/situation culturally relevant to you?
   - In what ways was this culturally relevant?
Q4: In your opinion, what factors contribute to making your social work education culturally relevant?
   In what ways do these factors contribute?
   Are some factors more important than others?
   If so, what factors are most important? and in what ways?

Q5: Is culturally relevant social work education important to you?
   If so, how? and in what ways?
We have been exploring your perspective of what culturally relevant social work education means to you based on your experiences as a student. Now I would like to ask you to imagine or envision what, in your opinion, "truly" culturally relevant social work education should look like.

Q6: If social work education were truly culturally relevant to Native students, what would your vision of this include?

That's all I have to ask now. Do you have any final comments or questions?

Thank you for your participation. I look forward to meeting with you again when I have completed the analysis of the data, so that we can review the preliminary findings together.
APPENDIX E

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Age:

Sex:

Marital Status:

Number of Children and/or Dependents:

Ages of Children:

Are you Status Indian, Non-Status, Metis?

Name and Location of Band:

Do you receive financial aide to attend school?

If so, from what source?

What year of study are you in now?

What practicum placements have you had?

Do you plan to complete a B.S.W. degree?

What year do you expect to graduate?
APPENDIX F

CODED TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

Q#1: Can we please begin with you saying what CR education means to you?

R: Okay, there are two that I can see right now. CR in the first place.. the only way it can be CR is if the student understands what has happened in the processes of colonization. All the things we have gone through from the beginning. If you don't understand that you can't teach what CR is. Because all these years I've just sort of been living, I didn't realize that colonization has such an impact on me, today. It happened way back when. In order to understand me, I had to understand what happened to all the people way back when - until it got to this stage.

Understand colonization:
Understand self

And another level that CR .. when I speak of CR is, when you present an issue or idea in SW to me in the class, that very statement, "What's it got to do with my Indianness?", "How does that statement connect to me and my reality?", and "Can you connect it to me in a way that I can understand it?", It's got to be your style, It's got to have impact. You got to show me the impact it has on my life as an Indian. And you got to show it in a way I understand. For me, and alot of Indian people I think, our learning styles are different. So you've got to be able to put it across

Content must be connected to personal Indianness
Process must facilitate connections
Indian learning style:
-hands on
-concrete
-life experiences
to me in the learning style I'm accustomed to. Like hand's on, like in story telling, I notice that alot of us respond to "In my life experience", "For example, when you do this, this happens". Show me! That I know what you mean. In real concrete life experience sort of things.

So there's different levels of CR.

I: Okay, that's clear.

Q#2: Are there aspects of your SW education that you consider to be CR to you as a Native person?

R: I don't know it this answers the question but, .. in order for it to be CR for me, I also had to know the differences between my culture and the cultures of all the other Indian students in the class. It does no good to put me in a class of non-Aboriginals and teach us all CR stuff, from one Indian stand point. When it takes effect, is when we hear all the different .. like in our class I think there are 13 different Nations. And it wouldn't have done any good to have talked about CR if I wasn't let in on their worlds. There's a difference between our cultures. There's an underlying thread that ties them all together. But I couldn't have done it without the Coldwater's perspective, Lytton's perspective, the Interior's perspective, the American perspective. The American Indians perspective. I have to know that in order for my training to be CR.

Note: CR includes (necessary?) knowing specifics of I. cultural diversity

Common beliefs and values (underlying thread)
I: Can you explain to me why, why you need to know that? I'm clear that that has to happen for you. Why is that?

R: Because I didn't realize until we started into this training program . . . I didn't realize that there was a difference between us. I had no idea. I was doing the same thing that everybody else was doing to us. Putting us all into one pot. And we all need this, this is good for all of us. So I was part of the oppression too.

I: Okay, and when you reflect . . . because you're just about finished, when you reflect back, actually your finished all your SW courses, so when you reflect back now on your SW courses, although the A &S courses your doing are part of the program, So I guess I should say, when you reflect on your whole, all you've taken here, are there certain things that stand out for you as being CR to you?

R: The colonization process with M. M. was really important. It wasn't till then that I realized what areas I needed healing in. It wasn't until I was given that knowledge about colonization. And . . . believe it or not, political science. We have to know that in order to teach any cross-cultural education. And I said that to Warren, I said I know now the importance of this. If we don't know this, and all the ideologies, how can we teach cross-cultural education.

I: I don't quite understand . . . the

Understanding cultural diversity counteracts oppression (outside and internalized)

Learning about colonization (Ind. Studies courses) leads to identifying areas of personal healing needed (self awareness)
Note: concept of residual cultural issues!

Note: use of C/C vs CR: Is c/c a more
connection.. why do you need to know those political ideologies?

R: Unless you know the other ideologies, you can't verbalize our ideologies. I can't verbalize mine, or the Aboriginal, or my ideology. All ideologies are just slight variations of each other. That's my perception anyway. And holy cow, we have one that fits in somewhere. And there's nothing wrong with it. If you've studied ideologies and political science you realize there's alot of sick people out there, running around but they're doing the best that they can. And this is what they've come up with - the guiding force as a philosophy. And we're disfunctional too. We're criped, we're in a criped state. But by golly, we've got an ideology too. Other wise we wouldn't have survived this long. So we have to know all ideologies. Where they came from. How they evolved. In order to stand up and say, yeh, we've got one too.

I: So it really ties into the self-government stuff?

R: Yes, and it's really important for our healing. And for us to start validating ourselves. As a group. There's a real pride in learning all the ideologies. I never thought I'd ever say that. I hate it. And I hate the politics. But I had a real break through last week when I worked on democracy. Democracy is an ideal rather than an ideology. I used to laugh at Canada all the time till I did that project, and then holy shit, .. For all

pro-active (feeling) concept than CR?

Need to know other (non-N.) ideologies to know your own (Ind.)
Indian Ideologies (contributed to survival)

Validity of I. ideologies connected to Healing and validating self

Democracy - Indians do it in a “different way”
we've been through, we're looking pretty good. We can call ourselves a democracy, and we can say it proudly. Once you realize what real democracy is. And that we're all striving for democracy. But we just do it in different ways.

I: Do you think there's a variety of political ideologies within Indian country?

R: Oh, yeh. There has to be. Look what happened to that referendum thing. When the Metis ran up to Ovid and said "You don't speak on our behalf". He may in a very underlaying way that connects all of us. But at the same time, the Metis are very different people, and very afraid because they are a minority within a minority. I think they are. Whether their numbers show it or not. They can still be a minority. Unless you speak very loudly of their area, it may look like they're completely abandoned, completely forgotten about. And I believe that Ovid was speaking on all our behalfs as best he could. But when you speak on behalf of a whole, you .. It looks to me from my perspective, that Ovid said this one word on my behalf, but it sure is watered down. Who in the hell told him to say this part? The Metis will come along and say, "That's the part he said about us, but what the hell has this got to do with us?". So he did the best he could for all of us. Because we all have different ideologies. I believe that within each Nation we have different ideologies. Within the

Different ways - different I. Ideologies; lead to difficulties in self-gov't - no collective voice
different bands. Because it has to be cause we are situated in different areas. Our environment is different. So our ideology is going to move over a little bit again.

I: That makes sense to me.
Q#3: If you were to pick out one experience, or event or situation at NVIT in which you have been involved, that was particularly CR to you, what would it be? Is there something that stands out?

R: One experience? The one that I'll never forget is Lee Brown's class. To me, if I had my way, I would have a Lee Brown, or that type of a class in every semester.

It wasn't until we came to that semester that .. just in the spring, between April May and June, .. and we had a very rounded semester. It showed in every one of us. Physically in our faces, the way we held ourselves. because that side was looked after.

I: So tell me about that class. I wasn't there. Can you describe to me what it was like.

R: I used that class to show in political science that in our way politics is not a career, it is a way of life. It's a part of all .. it's important in all the other realms. It's not just a career. It's a total way of life for everybody within that community.

Experiencing Indian Ways
Integration betwn White content and Indian Ways: Two Worlds coming together

Note: All this sounds like “ah-ha” experiences described in Interview #1.
I: You'll have to explain this to me.

R: We all partake in our politics. We all are politicans. within our community. There's not one person that we can say, he's a politican. We all are. We just send him forward on our behalf. And.. in a decision to have a baby, there's politics involved in that. I: Okay, explain this to me.

R: The economic core, the moral core of it, how is this baby going to survive, do we have the right to say yes to this baby's life? without his consent? when we know what he's going to go through? Based on what we've gone through. Based on what we see in the world. That's a very political question. Should we have a baby? If you try and talk to one of those guys in the big boys network, about the politics of trying to decide about having a baby, they just look at you like.. what are you talking about? But to our way of life, how is it going to affect the environment, how is it affect the economy, if we make this decision. what is going to happen to the spiritual side of us? If we make this decision. I: I'm gettin a flavour for this.. it's not like politics are over here somewhere. And there's these people called politicians who do this .. it's like somehow the fabric of life .. a thread that runs through it. R: Through every thing and every one. I: And that came up in Lee's class?
R: Yes. And especially if you go to the matrilineal system. Which most of us are from. I believe that if you dug deeply enough into every one of our history's, they originated in a matrilineal society. There was a gradual switch of people who think they have always been patrilineal, but I believe that all of our societies.

Like that suicide amongst Aboriginal peoples throughout B.C., one of my questions in that study was, "do your people go by a tribal system?". And in every one of the cases, they said, "No not now, but we are trying to reestablish it". And if you talk to the ordinary people in all those groups, they'll believe they've never had it. But why did the people I interviewed say, not any more, but we're trying to reestablish it?. You can't reestablish anything that was not there before. We're trying to bring it back. Those were all the responses that I had. I: What were you doing that you were involved in this?

R: It's a suicide study amongst Aboriginal in B.C.

I: And you were involved in that study?

R: I'm one of the co-authors of that study. I did that in my first practicum. The other two on the team, were the one's that did all the stats. stuff, like from the coroners office, and using
Stats Canada stuff to..
I: Where were you doing that practicum?

R: Aboriginal Affairs, [formed an Advisory committee etc.] I was brought in because the organizers of the study wanted to know, what can we do to bring this inline with what the Aboriginal people want. And I was suggested as a person. The way we really do research is by talking to people. We don't use numbers, we don't use trends or patterns, we just talk to them, and ask about it. So that's the way we do research, and we said that's the way we think our people would want it. So I designed a questionnarie. And we talked to the Advisory C. and they gave suggestions about who would be an appropriate resource for that area. Divided B.C. into regions. Os I did the actual interviews.

I: Right. So you know what this process is about. [laughter] So just to refer back to this question, when I ask you about an event that really sticks out in our mind, it was Lee Brown's course? R: Yes. And to me you can't have a CR school if you're not going to have a spiritual side of it.

I: You mentioned a political side, now you're talking about the spiritual? R: The political is spiritual. Because politics .. if you think about the word politics, it's the guiding force of .. Politics is the guiding force of...
I: Of?
R: Of, whatever.
I: Okay, so how would you define it?
R: To us, our guiding force is always the Creator. So politics is a very spiritual thing. You're thinking about affecting all of humanity. You're talking about affecting a human being's life. Governing, that's the business of the Creator. We only do it on behalf of. He guides us, he shows us the right way. So how can it be my career! It's all of our responsibilities.

Guiding force is Creator

I: I never heard of it put like that. [laughter] That's neat. I mean really. It's neat... my mind is going..

Governing is business of Creator: We do it on his behalf

R: And oh, that brings us to a heavy. My belief in why women, Aboriginal women, should be a real part of self-government.

Indian women and self-gov't

I: Go for it! [laughter]

R: If you consider, and I've really switched my view of the moon cycle, I used to curse it. Here I go again. Stuck on the rag for another 4 days. Now I wait. It's the one time when I'm the closest I can ever be to the Creator. It's a direct line. It's so powerful right now, I can't be anywhere near a uipee, a pipe ceremony, near even a sharing circle. I can manipulate the forces, I'm so directly connected at that time. When are the men directly connected?
I: Go on.
R: I can't see it. There's a direct.
I: well not in the same way.
R: Not in the same way.
I: A sweat maybe?
R: So are we. It's the one time, once a month, to bring us back, to rejuvenate, recharge, taking away all of the nurturing. We pick up alot of stuff in our nurturing. We are very nurturing people - the females. And because that's our nature, I will pick up your tears, the negative stuff in your life, and I will .. I can get sick if I'm not careful. And give them back to Mother Earth, the Creator, whatever, during those 4 days. It's a real opportune time, and it's the same time .. It's a real opportune time to pick up the learning from the Creator.
So we need to be included. We know. We know as mothers what is needed for humanity. A mother knows.
I: Yeh! This is neat.. this is like ... did you always have these views? [laughter]
R: I think the Spirit always had those views, but now it's connected. Because I've always thought quietly by myself. Now I feel that it's allowed to come forward.
I: I would imagine that the academic studies, like you're doing political science now, how is that fitting into all of this?
R: The very first question we had in political science this year was
"Do you think Aboriginal people have an ideology, and if so, what is it?" And I struggled with that one right away. And it bugged me. And I felt like .. here we are again, crazy Indians running around doing our stuff, and we don't even have an ideology! [laughter]

Negative image of Indians (self-image/identity?)