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University of Alberta

Elderly Urban Natives and Survival Literacy

by

David Jack Parks 

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

in

International/Intercultural Education

Department of Education Policy and Studies

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Abstract

This study is an investigation into the conditions in which elderly urban Natives are embedded. This study discusses these conditions in the context of low literacy and its consequences as drawn from a case study approach.

Historical data, from two perspectives, provides the basis for two new definitions of Native education; pre-contact *active* education and post-contact *passive* education. The current reformation of Native education in both urban and reserve settings as it pertains to Native children now, underlies the changes that are moving Native education from *passive* education to *active* education.

Reserve conditions that prompt Native immigration to urban settings are discussed. Within the urban settings there has been established, unknowingly, a fictive reserve that provides a cultural and spiritual foundation that is shared by Native migrants and urban Natives. The findings suggest that many elderly urban Natives adapt to city life by using their cultural background, specifically kinship structures, to recreate what the author calls fictive kinships. Fictive kinships often replace real ones to assist elderly urban Natives in dealing with situations requiring literacy.

The hypothesis presented is that many elderly urban Natives would not survive as well without this cultural adaptation. Thus, the juxtaposition of the historical data and the current Native education with the situation of many elderly urban Natives serves to emphasize their need for their survival literacy.

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Chapter 1

Reason for the Study and Methodology

Introduction.

The data on the education levels for Natives born in the 1930s indicate that few of today's elderly Natives obtained more than a minimal primary school education. Education has always been a prime concern of Canada's Natives. In 1846 the Native chiefs of Upper Canada wanted mainstream education so as to "acquire the Euro-Canadians' learning in order to survive" (Miller, 1989:108). The Plains Native treaty negotiators ensured that education became a treaty right. Treaty No. 1, dated 3 August 1871, stated in part, "And further, Her Majesty agrees to maintain a school on each reserve hereby made whenever the Indians of the reserve should desire it" (p. 4).

Treaty numbers 2 to 7 also contained the school clause with some minor variations. The school clause in Treaty No. 8, dated 21 June 1899, reflected a change in the Canadian Government's initial declaration of responsibility for Native education and their new policy of supporting missionary operated residential schools:

> As to education, the Indians are assured that there is no need of any special stipulation, as it was the policy of the Government to provide in every part of the country, as far as circumstances would permit, for the education of Indian children, and that the law, which was as strong as a treaty, provided for non-

> interference with the religion of Indians in schools maintained or assisted by the Government (Treaty 8, p. 4).

However, the education that the Government "maintained or assisted" was, according to the 1970 Special Senate Hearing on Poverty, "until 1945 ... 'education in isolation' During this period schools and hostels for Indian children were established, but scant attention was paid to developing a curriculum geared to either their language difficulties or their sociological needs' " (quoted in Frideres, 1988:174). Daniels' (1973) study found that until the late 1940s, reserve schools "were not offering much instruction at much more than a grade 5 level" (p. 79). Education in isolation was the education for Natives beginning in the 1830s through to the 1940s, with Euro-Christian religion as its controlling spirit (Miller, 1989:107; Frideres, 1988:173). The missionary controlled schools, believing that Natives would always live in isolation, "made no attempt to prepare them for successful careers in modern Canadian society" (Frideres, 1988:173).

Diamond Jenness described the effect of the Canadian Government's minimalist education policy that was in effect until the 1950s:

> In many parts of Canada the Indians had no schools at all; in others only elementary mission schools in which the standard of teaching was exceedingly low. A few mission boarding schools, subsidized by the government, accepted Indian children when they were very young, raised them to the age of sixteen, then sent them back to their people, well indoctrinated in the Christian faith, but totally unfitted for life in an Indian community and, of course, not acceptable in any white one (Jenness quoted in Barman et al., 1986:9).

Statement of the Problem.

Lowy and O'Connor (1986) writing about education and older people stated that "all people need to exert some degree of influence on the various aspects of their lives" (p.

71). Many of today's elderly urban Natives who are graduates of the Canadian government's minimalist schools of education lack the necessary literacy skills to independently cope with, and influence, the impacts of an urban setting's social complexities on their lives. These elderly urban Natives need to be empowered, to focus on increasing their individual and collective capacities in order to transform themselves and to exercise more control over their social conditions. One aspect of elderly urban Native empowerment is survival literacy, defined in part as the ability to function in the language that is the primary means of communication in the environment in which they reside.

A working hypothesis for this study is: when illiterate and marginalized elderly urban Natives acquire survival literacy, they will assist themselves in maintaining, or regaining, their independence and increase their effectiveness to actively and meaningfully contribute their wisdom, skills and experience to their urban society's evolution.

Location of the Study.

The research for this study was conducted in Edmonton, a major urban centre located in the prairie provinces of Canada. The prairie provinces are part of the Great Plains. The Great Plains encompasses a vast area from east of the Rocky Mountains to the Mississippi river, north from the lowlands of the MacKenzie river to the Big Bend of the Rio Grande river in the south. The Great Plains is the home of many Native peoples such as the Blackfoot, Cree, Cheyenne and Sioux.

Methodology.

The case study method was selected for this research. Shulman (1988) states that one must first understand the problem and its attendant questions and then design the most appropriate "mode of *disciplined inquiry*" (italics in the original, p. 15). This research paper has entered an area of study, elderly urban Natives and survival literacy, for which no other studies could be found. Therefore, it became essential to review case study methodology to determine if there was one, or more, case study methods from which criteria could be combined for use in researching this paper's topic.

The case study, as defined by Orum et al., (1991), is "an in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon. The case study is conducted in great detail and often relies on the use of several data sources" (p. 2). According to Goode and Hatt (1952), the case study is not a particular technique: rather, it is a means of organizing research data that preserves "*the unitary character of the social object being studied*" (italics in the original, p. 331). That is, it is an approach that maintains an awareness of the whole while developing an insight into a particular unit of study. The question for this researcher was, what case study approaches have been developed that could be applied to this research problem?

The continuing discourses on "the case study", Feagin et al., (1991), Foreman (1971), and Sjoberg and Nett (1968) have looked at the methodologies of the case study. However, unlike Ragin and Becker (1992), they have not definitively attempted to answer the question, what is a case? Ragin (1992) approaches the problem of bringing together the disparate views of the case study by considering "two key dichotomies" (p. 8). The first dichotomy relates to theory and empiricism, and the second relates to specificity and

generality. In Table 1, Ragin establishes four points of departure in the pursuit of defining the case study by "linking different approaches to the question, [what is a case]" (p. 11).

Table 1

"What is a Case?" - Four Conceptual Answers

Understanding of Cases	Case Conceptions: Specific	Case Conceptions: General
As empirical units	1. Cases are Found	2. Cases are objects
As Theoretical constructs	3. Cases are made	4. Cases are conventions

Source: Adapted from C. C. Ragin's Introduction: Cases of "What is a Case?" Table I. 1. p. 9.

Ragin (1992) emphasizes that these four divisions are "not absolute"" (p. 11), as researchers do not use one concept only but may use both specific and general empirical units or permutations of theoretical and empirical cases. In summary, Ragin's definition of the four conceptions of the case are:

1. *Cases are Found*: this concept sees cases as "empirically real and bounded, but specific" (p. 8). Once they are identified and established the "Researchers who approach cases in this way see assessment of the empirical bounding of cases as an integral part of the research process" (p. 9). This concept is used in confirming or testing hypotheses.

2. *Cases are Objects*: is for cases that are "general and conventionalized" (p. 10). There is no need for the researcher to verify the existence or establishment of the cases' "empirical boundaries in the course of the research process" (p. 10). These cases, because they exist, can be manipulated by the researcher to "develop better theories" (p. 10). Here the study is used to clarify or improve a current hypothesis.

3. *Cases are Made*: this concept is employed where researchers "see cases as specific theoretical constructs which coalesce in the course of the research" (p. 10). Since they are not given or empirical, the researcher can, over the course of the research, impose theoretical constructs "on empirical evidence as they take shape in the course of the research" (p. 10). This concept is used to discover a hypothesis.

4. *Cases are Conventions*: this concept views cases as "general theoretical constructs [as] products of collective scholarly work and interaction and therefore as external to any particular research effort" (p. 10). This concept involves the analysis and evaluation of case studies in order to improve the case study methodologies.

The case study, then, is designed to comprehend a particular case. It can be simple or complex, specific or abstract (Stake, 1985:278) and its strategy is to understand a particular case (Stake, 1988:278) in its own habitat (p. 256). The case study approach is aimed at viewing any social unit, an individual, a community or a culture, as a whole (Goode and Hatt, 1952:331). Defining the wholeness of the particular case or unit of study is the researcher's dilemma; how much data is too much or too little? The wholeness of the unit, however, is ultimately defined by the researcher, an arbitrary limitation that will probably not satisfy the researcher or the researched, showing that wholeness "is an intellectual construct" (p. 332). De Vries (1992) examination of the case study observed that even when a case study is deemed to have been brought to a conclusion, it "could go on, in search of yet another account, another perspective, another possible interpretation" (p. 69). In Wolcotts's (1994) view, the researcher makes "the final determination as to the scope ... on the basis of the problem to be addressed" (p. 183);

and, ultimately it is the researcher that declares the study to be whole and at what point it is to be closed.

The selection of a case study approach is also arbitrary. The researcher should not expect to generalize from a limited amount of case data, however, "it is often true that the depth of insight afforded by case study will yield fruitful hypotheses for a later full-scale study" (Goode and Hatt, 1952:338). The case study may also be utilized, as Foreman (1971) points out, to open a field of study (p. 204). The case study approach used for this research paper was that described by Ragin (1992), as "cases are made" (p. 10). This approach sees the case study developing, or taking shape in the course of the research.

This study of elderly urban Natives required an historical dimension, a way of presenting historical data which is relevant to the current characteristics of the elderly urban Natives. Goode and Hatt (1952) refer to the need to gather data within a time dimension so as to ensure that "the change in time as well as the processes by which those changes took place" (p. 334) is concomitantly observed. Therefore, in this study, a breadth of data, an historical collection of data, provides the opportunity to observe the changes in the pattern and processes of Native education within an historical time dimension.

The case study approach for this research paper is made up of three case study elements: first, Ragin's (1992) conception that *Cases are Made*; second, Goode and Hatt's (1952) notion of hypothesis development; and finally, Foreman's (1971) use of the case study "to open a new field of study" (p. 204).

Research Techniques

The research techniques used in this study were literature search and interviews.

Literature Search.

The first research that was undertaken for this case study was to determine what literature was available on the key-word subjects "elderly," "Natives," "urban" and "literacy". A literature search using current computer search technologies and the computer internet, revealed that there was a large body of literature available on most of the subjects. However, when the key-words were combined into "elderly urban Natives and Literacy", the literature search failed to find any reference material or studies. The literature that is available on "urban Natives" is concentrated within a time frame of post-Second World War up to the early 1980s, all detailing the various social conditions that Natives moving to the urban centres encountered during the 1950s and 1960s.

Interviews.

The interviews were all conducted in English. All interviewees were informed that their names would not appear in this paper; however, Nellie Carlson, P. Shirt and L. Campbell gave their permission for their names to be published in this paper.

The interviews were conducted as one-on-one interviews using both the structured and unstructured format. There were three sets of interview questions requiring specific answers, and a number of interview questions designed to elicit answers on the social conditions and literacy needs of elderly urban Natives (see appendix A). The first set of questions was used to interview federal, provincial, and municipal governments in order to ascertain what support, or programmes, were available primarily for the elderly urban

Native. The second set of questions was for Native and other social organizations and educational representatives. Interviews were conducted with inner city community groups that work with the less well-off urban mainstream as well as Native persons. There were interviews with people in management positions of Native social agencies, educational institutions and Native senior centres. The third set of questions was designed for interviewing elderly urban Natives.

Interview questions were initially designed for specific areas of inquiry. However, depending on the person interviewed and where the answers to the interview questions led to, it was often advantageous to include additional questions drawn from one or more of the other sets of questions.

Throughout this paper, the voices of those Native people who came before and those of today's Natives is an integral part of the historical and current topics in this paper.

Elderly Urban Natives interviewed for this study.

Ten elderly urban Natives were interviewed for this study. They are identified in this study as follows:

"Al," age 79, has lived four years in an urban setting. Prior to coming to the city, he and his wife "Vy" lived in a small rural town. They currently live with their daughter and son-in -law. Interview date, 19 February 1996.

"Bert," age 76, has lived about 46 years in urban settings. Interview date, 8 February 1996

"Cecil," age 63, has lived 25 years in urban settings. He is an active member of an advocate group for Native Veterans. Interview date, 24 January 1996.

"Dale," age 76, has lived about 25 years in urban settings He is a board member of an urban Natives' senior centre. Interview date, 9 February 1996.

"Faith," age 58, has lived about 20 years in urban setting and has been an urban Native outreach worker for over ten years. Interview date, 14 February 1996.

"Grandmother," age about 53, has lived about 20 years in urban settings. She is in frequent contact with her reserve and is an executive in a national Native organization. She maintains extensive contacts with Natives from many parts of Canada. Interview date, 11 March 1996.

"James," age 59, has lived in urban settings about 10 years. He lives in an inner city setting and is seen as a leader by other inner city social workers and by both young and old urban Natives. Interview date, 6 March 1996.

Nellie Carlson, age 68, has lived in the urban setting about 30 years. She has been active in the Native women's movement and has been closely associated with urban Native education. Interview date, 5 March 1996.

"Nola," age about 50, has lived in the urban setting about 27 years. She is a frequent visitor to her reserve. Interview date, 25 January 1996.

"Vy," age 65, has lived in the urban setting for four years. Prior to coming to the city she lived, with her husband "Al" in a small rural town. Interview date, 19 February 1996.

Federal, Provincial, Municipal, School, Native and Urban Community Groups Interviewed

Thirteen interviews were conducted. Three interviews were with federal agencies: one with a member of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs; a second was with a

member of the Department of Health and Welfare; and the third was with a member of the Solicitor General's Department. Two interviews were with provincial agencies; one was with the Alberta Government's Advanced Education and Career Development Department and the second was with the Government of Alberta's Solicitor General's Department. One interview was with a member of the city's Aboriginal affairs volunteer committee. One interview was with an urban school director, the school provides adult education for Natives. There was one interview with a director of a Native Friendship Centre. Two interviews were with inner city community groups; one interview was with a director and one with a social worker. Two general managers of seniors' centres were interviewed; one was with the manager of an inner city centre and the other was with the manager of an urban Native seniors' centre. Two social workers working in the seniors' centres were interviewed. The above interviews are identified in this study as follows:

"Avery," an adult Education Director for an urban school for Native Adults. Interview date, 15 March 1996.

"Hon," is a director in an inner city social centre. Interview date, 26 February 1996.

"Jan," is a teacher and a Member of a Municipal Urban Committee that focuses on urban Native issues. Interview date, 7 March 1996.

"Jessie," age 40, is a researcher in early Native children schooling. She has extensive contact with urban and reserve Natives and has been a researcher of on-reserve and off-reserve elderly Natives. Interview date, 22 January 1996.

"Jock," an inner city social worker. Interview date, 26 February 1996.

"John," is a Director in the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Interview date, 11 January 1996.

"Kit," Literacy consultant, Government of Alberta. Interview date, 16 February 1996.

"Lacy," age about 25, is a Native Youth Worker. She has extensive on-reserve and urban contact with Native youths and their families. Interview date, 24 January 1996.

"Leeza," is a young Native women. She is a social worker in an inner city social centre. Interview date, 26 February 1996.

"Netty," age about 40, an education instructor, has worked extensively on reserves and with Native women prisoners. Interview date, 14 January 1996.

"Oris," an executive with a Native organization. Interview date, 11 March 1996.

"Shell," a senior executive director in an inner city social centre. Interview date, 26 February 1996.

"Val," a Native women who was a director with a Native Organization. Interview date, 28 February 1996.

Definitions.

This research project enters into an area that has not been extensively studied, elderly urban Natives and literacy. Therefore it is necessary to begin with the definitions used in this research project:

Native - for purposes of this paper the term *Native* refers to all members of the aboriginal peoples in North America except Métis and Inuit.

Urban Centre - for purposes of this study, is a city of 100,000 persons or more.

Urban Population - all persons living in an urban centre of over 100,000 persons.

Urban Native - a male or female person claiming Native ancestry whose primary residence is deemed to be in an urban centre of over 100,000 persons.

Elder - this term, as used in Native communities, has been and is currently the subject of discussion under the oft-asked question, "who is an Elder?" In this paper the term is capitalized so as to distinguish such persons as specific persons embodying certain qualities desired and recognized by Native societies. Wilson (1996), using the voices of Alaskan Natives, provides the reader with some aspects of an Elder. An Elder is "a person that shows you their culture ... play the role of teaching ... They talk to you and you don't get a chance to talk till they're done. It's sorta like they're driving a nail into your head - making you learn ... They're old, they're nice, good attitude, never get mad ... basically trying to teach you how they live, how their mothers and fathers raised them" (p. 37). The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples reported that a Native "community looks to [the Elders] for guidance and sound judgement. They are caring and are known to share the fruits of their labours and experiences with others in the community" (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 4. 1996:110).

Elderly Urban Native - a male or female person claiming Native ancestry, 55 years of age or over whose primary residence is deemed to be in an urban centre. The selection of the age 55 for elderly Natives is equivalent to age 65 for non-Natives reflecting the general agreement that the life expectancy for Natives were, in 1981, "9.5 years less for men and 10.1 years less for women" (Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, 1994:17 fn 21; Saskatchewan Senior Citizen's Provincial Council, 1988:15). Another study stated that "for example, many Native people in their 50s show levels of ill-health and disability more

typically associated with non-Native people in their mid-70s. Moreover, degenerative diseases commonly associated with old age are much more likely to affect Native people earlier and with greater intensity" (Armstrong-Esther et al., 1997:40).

Fictive - this term as used in this paper finds its basis in the philosophical term "als ob" - German - for "as if." It refers to something pragmatically acceptable, based, not on objective truth, but on the assumption that there are certain unverifiable fiction constructs that are useful in their conception to provide the basis for explaining Native peoples adaptation to an alien environment, that in this study is the urban setting.

Literacy - as defined by Cervero (1985) is "the ability of individuals to function within a specific social context" (p. 3).

Illiteracy - as self-defined by an individual who determines that his/her present level of competency in the primary language related to his/her specific social context is inadequate (Valentine: 1985:3).

Survival Literacy - survival literacy is the ability to function in a language that is deemed to be the primary means of written and spoken communications imposed on an individual in the environment in which an individual resides. Survival literacy can also be called *mediated* literacy. Mediated literacy is "any mode of literacy which continues to require extensive supplementary verbal explanation [while] *unmediated* literacy is where readers are ideally autonomous and in control of gaining meaning from print entirely by themselves" (Harris, 1990:100).

Indianness - the term, as used in this paper, refers to the spiritual and cultural holdings that a *Native* person uses for his personal identification. Individual interpretations may

differ but many *Native* people see and understand themselves as non-solitary individuals with a communal soul, a tribal centredness that sustains and maintains their identity and their attachment to the spirit of their land. (Highwater, 1981; Neihardt, 1979; McLuhan, 1971).

Mainstream - for purposes of this paper, refers to the most active, productive and dominant off-reserve economic and employment markets that are usually associated with the competitive urban settings.

Organization of this Paper.

In this study I speak of past and present Native people. I am an intruder into portions of their life histories. I presume to speak about them without having experienced all of their hurts, fears and their successes. Interviews with the urban elderly Natives often turned to what they had done in the past, anecdotes about their family members, the good times and the bad times they had enjoyed or endured. When reading excerpts of the personal histories of Native people I am impressed with how much the past formed, or forms, a vital part of their life. For example, Chief Luther Standing Bear of the Lakota tribe wrote of what might have been:

> According to the white man, the Indian, choosing to return to his tribal manners and dress, "goes back to the blanket."... The white man's ways were not his ways and many of the things that he has tried to adopt have proven disastrous and to his utter shame. Could the Indian have forestalled the flattery and deceit of his European subjector and retained his native truth and honesty; could he have shunned whiskey and disease and remained the paragon of health and strength he was, he might today be a recognized man instead of a hostage on a reservation. But many an Indian has accomplished his own personal salvation by "going back to the blanket." The Indian blanket or buffalo robe, a true American garment, and worn with the significance of language, covered beneath it, in the prototype of the American Indian, one of the bravest attempts ever made by man on this continent to rise to heights of

> true humanity (Excerpt from Standing Bear's autobiography, *Land of the Spotted Eagle*, in McLuhan, 1971:104).

The purpose of this study is to: provide an overview of pre-contact and post-contact Native education; explore some of the conditions that promote migration from Native reserves; review some aspects of urban Native life and urban Native education; and present an understanding of some of the problems that some elderly urban Natives encounter in the urban setting because of their lack of survival literacy. Survival literacy, when applied to the situation of some elderly urban Natives may encourage the development of their personal independence and empower them to influence and bring about social change that could have a positive effect on their lives.

Chapter 2 is an historical overview of Native education from pre-contact education, through the education of residential schools, and finally to the return of control of Native education to the Native people. This chapter includes two key definitions of pre-contact and post-contact Native education.

Chapter 3 is a general view of Native reserves, their typologies and some of the factors that contribute to reserve Native migration to the urban settings.

Chapter 4 is about reserve Native adaptations to the urban settings. The notion of the creation of a fictive reserve in an urban setting is developed. The situations of some of the elderly urban Natives are described and discussed.

Chapter 5 This chapter begins with a brief overview of the theories of aging. There is a discussion of what it means to be elderly and how the elderly need and want to be

contributors to their society. The chapter concludes with a restatement of the hypothesis developed through this enquiry.

Chapter 6 discusses the findings of this study and suggests some areas of study.

Chapter 2

Native Education

> *The Introduction of European-style education to Aboriginal people varied by geographical location, by the timing of contact, and by the specific history of relations between various peoples and Europeans. In some regions, schools operated by religious missions were introduced in the mid-1600s. In other locations, formal education came much later. But if there were many variations in the weave of history, a single pattern dominated the education of Aboriginal people, whatever their territorial and cultural origins. Formal education was, without apology, assimilationist. The primary purpose of formal education was to indoctrinate Aboriginal people into a Christian, European world view, thereby 'civilizing' them. Missionaries of various denominations played a role in this process, often supported by the state.* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, Vol. 3, 1996:434).

Introduction.

This chapter outlines the stages in pre-contact and post-contact Native education. The impact of residential and day schools on Native people and the changes in the Canadian Government's policies towards Native education is reviewed. Two definitions of Native education, active education and passive education, are derived from this discussion of Native education.

Historically, pre-contact Native education maintained and facilitated the Native societies. Euro-Canadian education was visited upon the Native communities in the form of Euro-Christian education with the aim of displacing the traditional Native world views with the singular European world view. However, Euro-Christian education lacked the quality and content of Euro-Canadian mainstream education. Native resistance to Euro-Christian education, did, over time, bring about Native control of Native education.

The Europeans arrived in North America self-assured that their cultures were superior to all other cultures they had encountered. On contacting the Natives of North America,

the Europeans concluded that the Native cultures were inferior and of little consequence. Today we know that Native cultures were far from inferior or of little consequence. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, Native Nations of North American had a long pre-contact history of treaty and trading agreements. For example, the Six Nations had highly developed social institutions that included, for example, three levels of government, the village, the nation and the League, as well as individual legal rights and public laws. Another example is the major Native treaty agreement, ca. 1450, entitled, *The Great Law of Peace of the People of the Longhouse*. This treaty was made up of 117 articles which were passed on orally until 1880 when it was written down (Price, 1991:4). Throughout the North American continent Native nations, whether sedentary or nomadic, coastal or plains, had a rich diversity of art forms, complex social organizations and institutions, elaborate religious and spiritual traditions, and a shared respect for their physical environment (Price, 1991; Barmen et al., 1986).

Contact.

> *There is considerable evidence to show Aboriginal people enjoyed good health at the time of first contact with Europeans. Historical records and the findings of modern paleo-biology suggest that many of the illnesses common today were once rare, and that mental and physical vigour once prevailed among Aboriginal people* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, Vol. 3, 1996:111).

The history of North America, as written by early European historians, propagated the belief that at the time of European contact there were only one million Natives scattered throughout the North American continent. North America was, in the European's eyes, a wilderness where for example, the English saw that their migrant people who "enjoyed a liberty of thought and action .... were well qualified to meet the challenges of the New

World" (Farr, et al., 1963:3). Diamond (1992) states that early European explorers descriptions and recent coastal archaeological excavations provide the basis for the suggestion that there may have been around twenty million Native peoples in North America at the time of the first European contact. Smallpox, which arrived perhaps with Columbus but definitely with the Spaniard Cortés in 1519, had, by the end of the seventeenth century, reduced the Native population in the "New World ... by about 95 percent" (p. 72). Denevan (1992) citing Borah (1976) lists other diseases that were introduced in the New World by the Europeans during their voyages of discovery, "measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, bubonic plague, typhus, malaria, diphtheria, amoebic dysentery, influenza and a variety of helminthic infections" (p. 5).

The pre-contact estimates of Native populations of the Americas, as determined by several authors, ranges from a low of 8.4 millions to a high of 112.55 millions. Borah (1992) points out that estimating the pre-contact populations of the Americas "has long been characterized by wide differences of opinion and much fervour" (p. 13). Denevan (1992), summarizes five estimates of the Americas pre-contact population (see Table 2) of five authors, and the year they published their estimates; K. Sapper, 1924; A.L. Kroeber, 1934; J.H. Steward, 1949; A. Rosenblat, 1954; and H.F. Dobyns, 1966. Denevan (1992) has revised the Native population estimates ca. 1492 (see Table 3) by "relying mainly on those studies that give serious treatment to evidence" (p. 290).

Table 2
Some Previous Estimates of Aboriginal American Population, ca. 1492
(in millions)

Area	Kroeber (1934)	Rosenblat (1954)	Steward (1949)	Sapper (1924)	Dobyns (1966)
North America	0.90	1.00	1.00	2.00 - 3.50	9.80 - 12.25
Mexico	3.20	4.50	4.50	12.00 - 15.00	30.00 - 37.50
Central Amer.	0.10	0.80	0.74	5.00 - 6.00	10.80 - 13.50
Caribbean	0.20	0.30	0.22	3.00 - 4.00	0.44 - 0.55
South Amer.	4.00	6.78	9.03	15.00 - 20.00	39.00 - 38.05
Hemisphere Total	8.40	13.38	15.49	37.00 - 48.50	90.04 - 112.55

Source: Adapted from Denevan (1992) Table 0.1, p. 3

Table 3
A New Estimate of Aboriginal American Population, ca. 1492
(in millions)

Area	Estimated Population
North America	4,400,000
Mexico	21,400,000
Central America	5,650,000
Caribbean	5,850,000
South America	20,000,000
Hemisphere Total	57,300,000

Source: Adapted from Denevan (1992), Table 00.1, p. 291.

Denevan (1992) closes his discussion with the admonition that if the high population estimates are to be accepted then it has to be concluded that the European occupation and expansion in the Americas was not "a quiet expansion into relatively unsettled lands, but was instead an invasion and destruction of native societies whose populations were substantial" (p. 292).

Pre-Contact Education.

The Natives of North America even with their different cultures and customs of education, were all similar in one aspect and that was providing education "informally through parents, other relatives, the old people of the tribe, religious societies, hunting and war, and work parties" (Havighurst, 1972:89). Plains Elders, participating in Heller's (1989) film recording about Native education, recall what can be referred to as active education. They speak of the oral tradition's rich sources of Native history, poetry, songs and legends as powerful tools for teaching, preserving and passing on Native culture. On the Plains, the Elders say, the traditional way of raising a child was within an extended family; "parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters and cousins all helped the child learn and grow." Children learned living skills by imitating others; "time was spent observing and visualizing to make sure you know and understand before attempting something. You don't attempt it before you know you can do it." The Elders participated in the education of the young. "The Elders used to take us on a picnic or something, didn't make no difference where. When they made you dance they made you do certain things and they told you the principles of that dance and why you're doing it."

A description of the pre-contact plains Natives' way of life is found in Hoebel's (1960) ethnography, *The Cheyenne, Indians of the Great Plains*. In 1598 Don Juan de Oñote introduced the horse into New Mexico (Grant, 1984:144). With the acquisition of the horse, about 1760, the Cheyenne abandoned their village and gardening lifestyle and "transformed much of their culture, but the past - as always - left its imprint" (Hoebel, 1960:2).

Hoebel provides a word picture of what Cheyenne Plains culture and active education were like before the Europeans had penetrated the Plains. The lives of Cheyenne children were valued by parents and the tribe; while teaching was strict and designed to develop the ideal Cheyenne adult. Physical punishment was rare, creating an atmosphere that encouraged a love of, and an interest, in the Cheyenne way. Quiet patience was an early development for children; squalling or crying was not acceptable behaviour as, on a Plains night, it might lead enemy raiders to their camp. As a result, in adulthood, the Cheyenne were able to keep their frustrations to themselves. The children were also to be quiet and respectful when their elders were present. The relationship of the younger and the elder was that of "pupils and teachers - and pupils must be deferential" (p. 92).

The Cheyenne children were viewed as "little replicas of their elders in interests and deed" (p. 92). At a very early age they were encouraged to imitate adult activities. Boys and girls learned to ride shortly after they learned to walk. At the age of seven or eight the boys would help to herd the camp horses while the girls would help their mothers in gathering wood and carrying in water. The children's play camp was a miniature version of the real camps. It provided the means for the boys and girls to mimic their Cheyenne world, imitating a buffalo hunt, dismantling their play camp during war games, and even putting on Sun Dances. Through their play camps, their working alongside the adults and their elder's oft stated exhortations to "be brave, be honest, be virtuous, be industrious, be generous, do not quarrel" (p. 92), Cheyenne values were forever ingrained in the Cheyenne children's personality. The Cheyenne children were shown, by the example of their elders, that tribal unity was to be placed above band identity. And, while individualism was valued, the individual was never to put himself ahead of Cheyenne tribal

interest, for in the Cheyenne's plains environment group knowledge, group skill and social cohesion meant survival.

The plains Cree education was similar to the Cheyenne in which the " '*social group as a whole* was the school of every growing mind ... The practical and the religious, the manual and the intellectual, the individual and the social flowed as one complex integrated function within the Indian group' " (Collier quoted in Gresko, emphasis in the original, 1986:89). The children of the Plains Natives, reared in an atmosphere of caring and affection, taught in an active holistic manner, easily, when deemed ready, assumed their adult roles and obligations. Holistic active education for Native children coming from their family, their elders, and their environment, taught each of them how to relate to their fellow men and women. It also taught them how to relate to all that was alive and real and governed by the laws of nature and to relate to themselves. This holistic active education created a complete and autonomous personality (Heller, 1989).

Pre-contact education was conducted within vibrant cultural and social constructs. The Native people, in their pre-contact lifestlyles, identified and controlled their educational goals. Post-contact European education, over time, eroded and distorted the Native's culturally based education.

Post-Contact Education.

The so-called discovery of North America had far-reaching consequences in Europe and to the Amerindian nations. The British and French empires of the sixteenth century became the dominant forces in most of North America. Each envisioned part of their colonizing roles, within their spheres of influence, as enablers of English or French cultures and the conversion of the Amerindians to Christianity. Richard Hakluyt, a well

known British preacher, wrote in 1584 for Queen Elizabeth a *Particular Discourse on the Western Planting* about the first English colonies in North America in which he stated that since the Natives in:

> that part of America ... are idolaters ... it remains to be thoroughly weighted and considered by what means and by whom this most godly and Christian work may be performed of enlarging the glorious gospel of Christ, and reducing of infinite multitudes of these simple people that are in error into the right and perfect way of salvation (Stearns, 1947:316).

In 1603 in New France the French were working to convert the Native nations to the Christian faith. The colonizer's religious arms, were at first seen as converters of "idolaters" and "simple people". Later they assumed the roles of educators and imposers of European values on Canada's Native peoples (Jaenen, 1986).

New France's Reserves.

Jaenen (1986) describes the strategies of assimilation that the seventeenth century French colonizers employed in an attempt to blend the Natives of New France with the French colonists. First, French-based missionary groups such as the Capuchin, Sulpician, Récollets and Jesuits did, at various times, attempt to reach the young Natives through contact with nomadic bands or through mission station schools. A second strategy was the sending of selected young Native children to France to be trained as teachers and possibly as priests. By 1639 this strategy was deemed to be ineffective, not for a lack of the intellectual ability on the part of the Native candidates, but because of cultural problems. These Native "elites", young boys and some young girls, were educated in France so that on their "return to America [they] would help in the evangelization and francization of the tribal peoples" (p. 50). However, the strategy failed to produce the

desired "Native elite capable of directing the work [of francization] in the colony under the supervision of the missionaries" (p. 51).

The third strategy Jaenen (1986) describes was to have day schools on Native reserves. Native reserves had been established by the French to resettle those Natives who had lost their traditional territories to English settlers, or had consumed their trading resources, or were escaping religious persecution by other Native groups. The day schools were originally designed to have the Native children and the colonists children educated together. However, "the reserve very soon became an institution for segregation ... [and] ... from the educational point of view, was an attempt at total education, acculturation of not only the children but the adults" (pp. 53-54). A fourth strategy was the establishment of boarding schools.

The boarding schools of the Jesuits and the Ursuline nuns encountered difficulties in keeping Native students. In the beginning the Jesuits had to virtually bribe the Native "parents to obtain students and then they had to cater to the students whims" (p. 56) to keep them in school. The boarding schools of both the Jesuit and Ursuline religious orders proved to be expensive to run with little success in retaining and assimilating the young Native children who found that the boarding school regimentation made them lonely, disoriented, and humiliated (p. 60).

British Colonial Native Reserves.

The end of the Seven Year's War allowed virtually all of North America to come under British rule. By 1783 British influence in North America was confined to the maritime area around the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the areas that became Upper and Lower Canada and the vast fur trading regions based on Hudson Bay and on Montreal.

The British Government, about 1815, responding in part to pressure from such religious and humanitarian groups as the Wesleyan Methodists, the Aborigines Protection Society and the Society of Friends, began developing policies for the assimilation of the Natives into mainstream Canadian society (Miller, 1989:104; Tobias, 1983:41). Since the Natives from Upper Canada to the Atlantic were no longer required as military allies the Government wanted to concentrate them on reserves or in settled areas. In 1830 the Canadian Government established an experimental Native agri-reserve at Coldwater Narrows. There, and at other selected reserve locations, the Natives of Upper Canada were to be given training in agriculture, some mainstream education and religious indoctrination. These reserve system experiments became the "keystone of Canada's Indian policy [it was seen] as a social laboratory, where the Indian could be prepared for coping with the European" (Tobias, 1983:41). The reserve experiments also exposed several problems: the conflicts between Methodists and Catholics over control of the reserves; the Native unhappiness with missionary schools; and the bureaucrats' attempts to direct and then dominate the Native leaders. These problems eventually brought an end to the early agri-reserve assimilation processes in Upper Canada.

In 1836 the newly arrived lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head, considering himself an expert on America's Natives, acted on his own proposal that Natives "not be converted to Christianity ... but that they be left alone to live out their days in isolation and peace" (Miller, 1989:102-103). This proposal by Head, along with his Native lands surrender policy, brought on such public reaction that the British Government countermanded Head's actions and set up a commission of inquiry, the Bagot Commission of 1842. It was the opinion of the mainstream Native educators, who were

mainly missionaries, that on-reserve day schools had failed to provide the education that Natives of Upper Canada wanted for their children (Miller, 1989:105,195; Grant, 1984:177). The missionaries change of focus, from day schools to residential schools, was supported by the findings of the Bagot Commission. One of its recommendations was the establishment of government funded, missionary run, Native students only, residential schools similar to those in the United States.

Residential School Concepts.

> *Residential schools were more than a component in the apparatus of social construction and control. They were part of the process of nation building and the concomitant marginalization of Aboriginal communities* (Canada. Royal Commission of Aboriginal People, Vol. 1, 1996:334).

Gideon Blackburn, an American Presbyterian missionary, in 1804, developed the first manual labour school for the Cherokees with a "schedule that allotted equal time to study and to work in the fields, shops, or kitchen of the institution" (Grant, 1984:86). The Blackburn method was adopted by the Canadian Methodist missionaries who, agreeing with the Bagot Commission's recommendation, established similar schools at Alderville in 1844 and Muncey in 1849.

In 1847 Reverend Egerton Ryerson, chief superintendent of common schools for Upper Canada, gave Indian Affairs his recommendations for residential schools. His theory and method for Native assimilation was to provide "a plain English education suited to the working farmer or mechanic" (Fisher, 1981:39) within which the "animating and controlling spirit of each residential school establishment should ... be a religious one" (Miller, 1989:107). This was to be achieved by first, separating young Natives from the influences of their parents and their cultures, then inculcating them with the mainstream's

religious values with the aim of attempting to make the young Natives into "effective emissaries of Christian civilization among their people" (Grant, 1984:86).

Richard Henry Pratt founded the Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1879, the first American Native residential school that was not located on a reservation. Pratt's Carlisle school was developed from his experiments with young Native prisoners in Fort Marion, Florida. He had worked with them for three years, giving them first, responsibilities within the school, and then getting them jobs in nearby Saint Augustine. It was Pratt's opinion that he had turned his young Native prisoners into model citizens. His self-perceived successes convinced him that Natives could be civilized by removing them from their reserves and placing them in an environment where, by earning a living and learning English, they would transform themselves into productive members of mainstream society (Trennert, 1988; Grant, 1984; McBeth, 1983; Jones, 1972).

In 1878 the United States Indian Office gave Pratt permission to take seventeen of his young prisoners to General Samuel C. Armstrong's Hampton Institute in Virginia, which until then had been an all-black school. After Pratt developed his educational strategies at Hampton, he obtained the authorization of the Secretary of the Interior to open his own school at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Pratt and his agents recruited young Native boys and girls from western American reservations and brought them to his school. There, in Pratt's view, through the acquisition of English, mathematics, economics and trades, young Natives would become contributing members of America's mainstream society. While Pratt developed his school, General Armstrong continued his own Native assimilation program at his Hampton Institution. In the mid-1880s Pratt's and Armstrong's apparently successful assimilation programs convinced the American

government to open similar residential schools in the American West (Trennert, 1988; McBeth, 1983).

The Nicholas Flood Davin Report 1879.

In the 1860s the Canadian Government formulated its Native policy by looking at the British colonial and American Government Native policies. By the late 1870s the Canadian government, urgently concerned with the situation in western Canada where the Native way of life was disintegrating. The Government employed Nicholas Flood Davin, a lawyer-journalist, to examine, evaluate and report on the experience of the Native education in United States (Miller, 1991:326). One of the findings in Davin's *Report on Residential Schools for Indians and Half-breeds*, submitted on the 14th of March 1879, was that the United States Government was not satisfied with the missionary schools and were gradually taking over responsibility for Native education. Nevertheless, Davin recommended that the Canadian Government establish a system of missionary controlled residential schools with the Government setting the educational standards and supplying public monies to Canada's religious missionaries. Acting on Davin's report the Canadian Government delegated the administration and assimilation of Native children to the church missions. This, in effect made the missionaries the Government's Native education agents (Green, 1991; Gresko, 1986; Grant, 1984). With that, missionary education became "the medium and the carrier of the elements of the hegemonic culture" (Graff, 1979:35).

Before the 1880s there was no standard Canadian Government policy for Native education. In Atlantic Canada there were missionary run schools and Upper Canada had a few Church-run boarding schools for Native students. In the west, missionaries had began experimenting with boarding schools. The *British North American Act* of 1867,

continuing the alteration of relationships between the Natives and the Europeans that began with the *Royal Proclamation* of 1763, gave the new Canadian Government control of the approximately 50 residential schools that had been the exclusive domain of the Catholic and Protestant church missions. The Canadian Government in the period 1878 to 1883 "embarked on an extension of the day schools and the creation of a wholly new system of [residential] schools" (Miller, 1989:175). From 1883 to 1884 residential schools were established in Qu'Appelle, Battleford and High River to teach Natives agriculture and trade. Under an 1892 Order-in-Council, the residential schools were made a joint fiscal and management responsibility of the Government and the Catholic and Protestant churches. The Order-in-Council's financial arrangements of the residential schools remained in force until 1958 (DIAND, 1993).

Government Disillusion - Canadian and the American.

The initial euphoria of the Canadian Government over residential schools as a primary means of assimilation soon gave way under the increasing costs with Parliament always complaining about the high cost of Indian Affairs. In 1892 residential school "costs continued to spiral well beyond the results that school inspectors could turn up in their annual visits" (Miller, 1989:197). Both the Canadian and American governments were seriously reviewing the cost and the effectiveness of their respective residential school systems.

In 1910 the Canadian Government adopted "a more frugal educational policy" (Wilson, 1986:83), and "even the limited educational opportunities previously available were cut back" (Barman et al, 1986:9). However, the Government did continue its residential school program, and rather than investing "in the schools to such an extent that Indians

would want to send their children" (Miller, 1989:198), it used coercion and compulsory schooling policies to force Native parents to send their children to fill the schools.

In the late 1870s the American Government, "after depending for many years on contracts with missionary agencies, had found the [school] system unsatisfactory" (Grant, 1984:158). In 1897 the American Government cut their funding to missionary-run schools. Church run mission schools then had to depend on private and denominational contributions in order to continue imposing on some of America's young Natives their "peculiarly limited view of Christianity" (McBeth, 1983:74-75). By 1900 the American Government had established 25 federally funded residential schools. However, in only a few years the American Government's increasing expenditure on Indian residential schools again provoked protests "because the training offered the students was relatively ineffective" (McBeth, 1983:76).

Residential Schools - Mainstream Views.

The Canadian and American governments, each in their own way, instituted, standardized, and controlled the Native residential schools. The residential schools were designed to isolate, socialize, inculcate and assimilate Native students in the ways of their respective mainstream societies. The Canadian Government dealt with the prairie Native problem with a reserve system. The one time "social laboratory" became the Government's primary means of isolating Natives from Canada's mainstream society. The Government's numbered treaty promises of schools meant that the Canadian church missions were to carry out their role as Christianizing educators with a commitment "to the venerable program of civilization and to the inculcation of loyalty to Canada" (Grant,

1984:184). Reverend Thompson Ferrier, a nineteenth century Methodist minister, viewed residential schools as the best design for civilizing Canadian Natives:

> There is no system of schools kindlier of intent, more truly thoroughly educational, better adapted for the great work of unfolding and disentangling the warp and woof of the mysteries of life, more developing, expanding and comprehensive, than the present system of Government Residential Schools. The chief aim of any education should be the fitting for self-support. By self-support is meant the acquiring by honest labour of enough to eat and to wear, and a decent abode.... In all cases the education should be adjusted to the paths of life they are likely to follow (Prentice and Houston, 1975:229).

Thomas J. Morgan, United States Indian commissioner in 1890, seen as a humanitarian reformer, did not agree totally with the philosophy behind Pratt's school but still saw in the residential school the means to improve the life of the American Native (Trennert, 1988):

> These training schools ... removed from the reservation, offer the pupils opportunities which can not by any possibility be afforded them in the reservation schools. The atmosphere about them is uplifting, they are surrounded by the object-lessons of civilization; they are entirely removed from the dreadful down-pull of the camp. If the entire rising generation could be taken at once and placed in such institutions, kept there long enough to be well educated, and then, if such as chose to do so were encouraged to seek homes among civilized people, there would be no Indian problem (p. 11).

Golden (1954) in her memoirs as a teacher in American Indian schools from 1901 to 1918 in Oregon, Arizona, Oklahoma, Montana, and South Dakota, provides one person's humanitarian view of the American Native children:

> But it is the memories of the Indian children that give me the greatest pleasure and satisfaction: those patient, docile offspring of a proud, although conquered race, appreciative of the smallest attention and grateful in their shy, reserved way for the crumbs thrown to them. I read in the Scriptures, Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Perhaps my interpretation is at fault, but I sometimes say, How long, O Lord, how long must these meek stepchildren of Uncle Sam wait until they receive the full measure of justice? (p. 210).

Residential Schools - Native Views.

The Canadian and American Natives accepted schools as part of the obligations that the respective Governments owed them (Miller, 1989; Frideres, 1988; McBeth, 1983; Fisher, 1981). The residential schools were viewed by Natives in different ways; some were forced to send their children to residential schools:

> How did those children get transported to residential school? by the Indian agent, the RCMP and the Priests. They were brought by wagon in the early days, then by car, and later by plane. Rations to the family left at home would be cut off by the Indian agent, or the parents would be threatened with jail if they didn't cooperate (Hodgson, 1990:7).

Residential schools, under the Christian missionaries "philosophy effectively insulated the Indians from the mainstream of society" (Senate hearing of 1970 quoted in Frideres, 1988:174):

> When an Indian comes out of these places it is like being put between two walls in a room and left hanging in the middle. On one side are all the things he learned from his people and their way of life that was being wiped out, and on the other are the white man's ways which he could never fully understand since he never had the right amount of education and could not be a part of it. There he is, hanging in the middle of the two cultures and he is not a white man and he is not an Indian. They washed away practically everything an Indian needed to help himself, to think the way a human person should in order to survive (John Tootoosis quoted in Barmen et al., 1986:10-11).

Some young Natives found that the residential school experience was good for them while others said they gained nothing from twelve years in a residential school. One former female student said:

> Come to think of it I have no regrets that I did what I was taught, forced to learn how to make clothes. If I hadn't of learned that my kids would have suffered. And the sense of responsibility. They were very strict there (Blue

> Quills) ... If I hadn't of learned that strict life of obedience, there would have been times when I'd of made my family suffer (from an interview with a former residential school student, Persson, 1986:156).

Another former student, Faith (1996) and her brother were taken to a "Nun's school" in northern Alberta following the death of their mother. Faith was nine years of age at the time, and neither she nor her brother had had any schooling:

> Our father took us to a Nuns school. When we got there we only spoke Cree. We stayed there for seven years, and when the other kids went home to their families in the summer we stayed at the school. We never went home for the whole seven years. We had no problems with the Nuns and I never heard of anyone else having problems with the Nuns. They treated me like a queen. I thought that I would become a Nun but our father came and got us, I was fifteen. It was the only schooling I ever got.

A former Native student said that his parents sent him to a residential school where he spent twelve years. Although he said he preferred not to talk about the experience, he did say:

> It was run by, what you call them, a religious order of people. We had to go there and stay there and do whatever they told us. They were teaching us. Most of the time going to church and praying and saying poems, reciting nice little things about something that we didn't know. Something that happened overseas and we didn't know a damn thing about it. When I was done, I got the heck out of there (Frank quoted in Krotz, 1980:109).

After the Second World War there was a significant change in the residential school system. According to Grace, who attended Blue Quills Residential School from the age of 8 in 1931 and stayed there until she was eighteen years:

> In class we were taught by the nuns themselves. I guess they were not really qualified teachers either you know. I learned how to read and write. But I only went up to grade six, you know, because I wasn't too smart. Anyway, I noticed they started educating Indians after the World War, you know. The Second World War. That's the only time I realized they started educating

> Indians. Before that they never had no, no interest in Indians, as far as educating. They had a little schooling and that was it. They finally let us out of school when we were eighteen years old. So from there on we never had the opportunity to be educated. I don't think they believed in educating Indians (Grace, quoted in Shorten 1991: 81).

The residential schools had some unforeseen consequences. One was the transmission and reinforcement of Native culture that had, for some American Native students from urban centres, been difficult to maintain:

> I didn't learn my Indian ways at home; I learned them right here [Riverside]. The older kids used to get together and they'd dance and sing.... I remember I would always sneak out and watch them. It was at Riverside that I learned the Stomp Dance songs and the "49" and other dances ... We enjoyed it; we wouldn't trade it for anything [Kiowa female, b. 1925, Riverside, 1932-45] (McBeth, 1983:126).

Another unforeseen consequence of residential schools was that they produced many of this century's leaders of Canadian and American Native political movements. Additionally, the schools fostered and inspired many young Natives to join the pan-Indian spirit of resistance and identity (Miller, 1989:199; McBeth, 1983:151). Cardinal (1969), one who contributed to the Native political movements in Canada, expressed some of his personal feelings about his residential school experience:

> In plain words the system (residential schools) was lousy. The curriculum stank, and the teachers were misfits and second raters.... my teacher, a misfit, has-been or never-was sent out by his superiors from Quebec to teach savages in a wilderness school because he had failed utterly in civilization couldn't speak English well enough to make himself understood. Naturally he knew no Cree. When we protested such inequities we were silenced as "ungrateful little savages who don't appreciate what is being done for you." ... the residential schools ... alienated the child from his own family; they alienated him from his own way of life without in any way preparing him for a different society; ... Worst of all, ... [they] turned the child against education, preventing him from seeing or appreciating the benefits of real education (Cardinal, 1969:54-55).

In 1846 the Native chiefs of Upper Canada, meeting at Orillia, had supported the plan to create residential schools so that they might "acquire the Euro-Canadian's learning in order to survive ... they wanted schooling only, not a fundamental change in their way of life ... schooling, not refashioning" (Miller, 1989:106,107,108). However, the mainstream's Native educational policy was "directed punitively at the sense of Indian identity" (Wax, 1973:340) while promoting a learning process that was "individualistic, competitive, intrusive, regimented, immoral, and emotionally frigid" (p. 349). Nevertheless, the residential schools created more leaders and resistors than subservient "brown white men" (Leighton, 1983:113). It was they who became advocates for their people and aided Native people in regaining control of their education, returning in part, to the active and holistic norms that were once the hallmark of Native Education.

The Phasing out of Canadian Residential Schools.

In 1900 Canada's residential schools' enrolment was approximately 3,285. By 1940 approximately 9,000 students, about one half of the Native student population of that time, were in residential schools. During the late 1940s various Native groups demanded the end to the segregated education of the residential schools. In 1949 the South Indian Lake Band was the first to have an integrated cost-shared educational arrangement between the Manitoba Government and the Federal Government. By 1979 there were 683 such agreements covering 48,757 Native students in provincial schools.

Most of the residential schools were closed by 1969. However, at the request of Saskatchewan First Nations, seven residential schools are still in operation in

Saskatchewan. One is co-managed by the Band and the Department of Indian Affairs and the others are managed by Native bands (DIAND, 1993).

Reserve Day Schools.

Not all Native children attended a residential school. "By 1900, out of a total Indian population of about 20,000 aged between six and fifteen, 3,285 Indian children were enrolled in 22 residential and 39 boarding schools and another 6,349 in 226 day schools" (Barman, et al, 1986:7). In 1902, in Canada, there were "by denomination ...100 Roman Catholic, 87 Anglican, 41 Methodist, 14 Presbyterian, and 41 undenominational schools" (Grant, 1984:177).

Before the 1880s there was no Canadian government policy on Native education. The numerous missionary organizations operating across Canada in the 1800s played a major role in providing rudimentary education to the Natives. These missionary organizations:

> on their own initiative had set up day schools associated with their mission stations. Many of these rudimentary efforts were day schools presided over by ill-trained and worse paid missionaries who had far too many other duties to worry unduly about the abysmal attendance and poor academic showing of their students (Miller, 1989:175).

Al (1996) said that he went to school, in the late 1920s, for "about six months, I was very young, maybe ten. I went to school in Blackfoot." Vy (1996), who is Al's wife, said that she "went to a Nun's school in Battleford, one year I guess." Many other elderly Natives have similar stories of their brief contact with day school education. An elderly status Native women recalls her day school experiences:

> I went for eight years in school but they [always] put me back with grade 1 or 2. Every time I went back [after quitting] I had to start over. The teacher was too good. When the kids got lonely she would let them go home. My grades

> were too difficult for me (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988:37).

The day schools were far less expensive to operate than the residential schools; however, they were deemed to be "a poor alternative to the more inclusive residential schools" (Coates, 1986:146). An elderly Native woman living in northern Saskatchewan recalled that her family had to follow the traditional northern way of living, hunting, trapping and fishing. She remembered her childhood:

> We only had moccasins and rabbit skins for socks in the wintertime. Rabbit robes made out of about 60 rabbits ... We used to set traps, snare rabbits, get meat from the bush. We'd lift nets in the morning to see if we had fish to eat ... We never went to school much. We'd move to the trapline for the winter, so we'd only get a little schooling in the summer (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988:39).

The day schools on some reserves where seasonal migrations had ceased had better attendance, better qualified teachers and greater financial support. Still, overall, in 1950 "almost 40 per cent of all students in Indian day school were in standard (grade) 1" (Coates, 1986:146). Up to the 1950s the government had a marginal commitment to the day school which in turn marginalized many of today's elderly Natives.

Native Education Renewal - Regaining Control of Education.

The federal White Paper on Native policy was introduced in Parliament in 1969, and was seen by Natives "as the new articulation of a long resisted policy of assimilation" (Frideres, 1988:125). One of its proposals was to have Native education provided by the same agencies that provided education to other Canadians. These agencies would then have continued to impose mainstream society's values that were "alien and meaningless in the context of life on a reserve" (Frideres, 1988:187). Cultural disharmony, created by the

imposed mainstream education, had to be overcome, not by the mainstream society's largesse, but by giving Natives control of their education. The Saddle Lake School Committee control of the Blue Quills residential school, the Cree school board of James Bay, and the Navaho's Rough Rock Demonstration School are some examples of the changes in education taken by Canadian and American Natives.

In early 1970 the Department of Indian Affairs informed the Saddle Lake School Committee that the classrooms at Blue Quills would be phased out and the Native students would be sent to the new regional high school in St. Paul, Alberta. When the school committee received no response to their request that the Department of Indian Affairs turn control of the Blue Quills school over to them, a sit-in by the Saddle Lack School Committee and local Natives began (Bashford and Heinzerling, 1987; Persson, 1986). From this action a "campaign developed despite the fact that the three hundred participants had the use of only one automobile and one credit card to aid their struggle" (Bashford and Heinzerling, 1987:128). At its height, the month-long sit-in included non-Native supporters and Natives from other provinces. "The reason we had the sit-in was so we could take over the school ourselves and run it the way we want. It was our school" (Persson, quoting a Saddle Lake man, 1986: 165).

Two months later, on 1 September 1970 "Blue Quills became the first school in Canada to be officially administered by Indians" (p.166). The Blue Quills school for Native children "is an answer ... creating an awareness - to make a world where it was once ... in harmony with what was given" (Lois Cardinal., principal, Blue Quills, in Green, 1991). By 1982 there were over one hundred band administered schools (Burnaby, 1982).

The James Bay agreement gave the Cree Natives the opportunity to establish their own schools. These Cree schools are educating their children to "live in a modern, [French] literate society, with access to information from the whole world through all the media ... [and] to maintain the identity of their children as Cree, and to maintain a degree of continuity with traditional Cree culture" (Salisbury, 1986:131). Native controlled schools will reinforce the Native children's self-esteem and Native identity and "allow them to interact easily, naturally, and nonanxiously" (Luftig, 1983:258) with the mainstream society.

American Natives were also taking responsibility for their children's education and creating settings that reflected their cultural values. On 1 July 1965, the Navajo's Rough Rock Demonstration School, a community administered, school-wide bilingual Navajo school was a new innovation in Native education. It was the first charter school to be administered by an American Native tribe (Collier, 1988; Rosier & Holm, 1980).

Each of the Rough Rock classrooms had their "own rhythm with no apparent central direction.... [the] classroom circumstances stimulated the children and invited them to learn by their own volition" (Collier, 1988:260). An evaluation of Rough Rock school in 1969 by Donald Erickson found some shortcomings but he saw the school's potential for influencing Native educators:

> There is little doubt, as we see it, that the Rough Rock Demonstration School represented some of the most significant approaches ever tried in American Indian Education.... The very act of publicizing Rough Rock's ideas may have had a major impact on American Indian education. In talking with many educators on the reservation, we discovered that the concepts of the school had become a part of their vocabulary.... It had a far flung influence on the thinking of educators. Its concepts were so appealing they could not be ignored. The schooling of Navajo children may be permanently the better for it (Erickson & Schwartz, 1969:9).

New Definitions of Native Education

> *In Aboriginal tradition, the individual is viewed as a whole person with intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions. Each of these aspects must be addressed in the learning process. Holistic education is the term used to describe the kind of education traditionally used by Aboriginal peoples. Such education is organized to develop all aspects of the individual* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 3, 1996:445).

The Canadian and American Governments had placed Natives on reserves that were scattered and isolated. They then used these conditions to justify the use of residential schools to educate Native children away from the cultural influences of their homes. The residential schools made many Native children unfit "for sympathetic and cooperative action with his kith and kin on return as an adult" (Wax, 1973:345). Had the Native children stayed with their families they would have been given an active holistic education. In the mainstream's residential schools Native children were "sorted and segregated by age level, isolated from external responsibilities, and devoted solely to [their] own educational development ... [disrupting their] ... traditional patterns of socialization, social control, and familial labour" (p. 347). Active Native education meant that children learned by observing "adult activities ...[with] less in the way of the verbal explanation of how to do something before it is attempted .... And young children are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding ... through physical action" (Philips, 1983:63).

What has been revealed is the need to view Native education from two distinct historical periods; the pre-contact era and post-contact era. Pre-contact Native education was a holistic active learning process designed to ensure that all members of a Native social organization actively participated in, or had knowledge of, all sociocultural

activities. In a Native social organization there was no withholding of experiences from the young. From their earliest days they were given every opportunity, appropriate to their age, to participate in their society's activities.

I call pre-contact Native education *active* education, and define it as; the process within which an individual, on his own or with help from others, learns that which makes the individual a fully active contributing member to a dynamic, holistic, evolving society.

Post-contact Euro-Canadian education, in the form of Euro-Christian education, brought the Natives educational experiences that were passive and non-participatory in nature. This Euro-Christian education was viewed by the nineteenth century governing elites of Canadian society as a means of social control. Its content and direction were determined by the social class that was in power. Canada's stratified society precluded the majority of Canadians from taking an active part in the leadership of Canadian society. The Natives' view of education in nineteenth century Upper Canada allowed for the acquisition of Euro-Canadian education as a means to actively participate in the mainstream without compromising their own sociocultural structures. However, Euro-Christian education and the reserve system eventually displaced the *active* holistic Native education processes with Euro-Christian education that was purposefully designed to create christianized Native citizens of Canada.

I call the post-contact education provided to Natives, *passive* education, and define it as; the process within which an individual is controlled, guided, influenced or so managed so that the individual contributes to his society only that which is seen as being desirable by a segment of that society.

Summary.

Pre-contact active Native education was a life-long learning process in which all members participated, directly or indirectly, in order to ensure the survival of their social group. Group survival depended on the dynamic maintenance of their traditional and ancestral sociocultural patterns through the active contribution by all members of the group.

Some Native leaders sought to acquire the mainstream's nineteenth century post-contact education for their children. They initially saw the mainstream's residential school education as a tool, a means for their children to get a foothold into the mainstream's economic opportunities. The government, on the other hand, viewed all their education initiatives for Natives as an assimilation tool. Residential schools were conceived by the government as the means of refashioning Native children into little "brown white men".

Although many Native leaders emerged from the residential school system and became active advocates for their people, many others were not so fortunate. Coates (1986) reminds us that "more Indian children in Canada passed through seasonal or regular day schools than through the portals of the more impressive boarding facilities" (p. 146-7). Day schools received minimum Government support resulting in marginal education for reserve children.

Native people took action to regain control of their children's education. Changes in the content and in the manner in which education is now being presented to Native children came about because Native adults saw the need to provide their children with education that is *active*, not *passive* in nature. Many of today's elderly Natives received

only government-supported, passive, marginalizing education, the consequences of which are visible in today's reserve and urban settings.

Chapter 3

Reserves and Migration

> *Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, first the British Crown and then the new dominion of Canada entered into treaties in Ontario, the prairie provinces and parts of the north, under which Indians agreed to the creation of reserves (along with other benefits) in exchange for their agreement to share their lands and resources with the newcomers* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 1, 1996:142).

Introduction.

Native reserves provide Natives with a place of cultural and spiritual security, strong family and friendship ties, and a refuge from the mainstream society. However, many reserve Natives are subjected to socio-economic pressures to leave their reserves in search of new opportunities. The history of Native reserves has been one of isolation and neglect, both of which contribute to the migration of many reserve Natives to urban settings.

Before the Europeans came to North America Native peoples had economic trading networks and tribal alliances that spanned the length and breadth of North America (Newman, 1985:186-187). The early Europeans saw Native peoples as a resource to be exploited. Then, as European migration increased, their economic view of Native peoples participation changed. The Europeans found they could no longer tolerate the Native peoples presence within the expanding economy of North America. During the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century the Native peoples were overtaken; their lands were confiscated; and many were legislated onto the physical and social isolation of reserves (Guillemin, 1975:5; Vogt, 1972:8; Zentner, 1972:224).

Dosman (1972) describes early Canadian Native reserves as places in which a Native was numbered, rationed, watched and "could do almost nothing without the permission of the Indian Agent" (p. 13). Furthermore, while the mainstream settlements had access to the world outside their communities, the outside world for many reserve Natives was the Indian Affairs Branch. Under the authority of the *Indian Act* Indian Affairs "not only determined the Indian's income, living conditions, education and mobility; it also made every attempt to shape his culture and personality" (p. 13).

When mainstream economic concerns conflicted with economic advances by Natives, the Natives economic initiatives were undermined by the Department of Indian Affairs. For example, Carter's (1991) study of prairie Native farmers of the period 1889 to 1897 clearly shows that Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed was more interested in creating the best agricultural environment for mainstream prairie settlers than for Natives on reserves. When Native reserve agricultural productivity efficiencies threatened the economic status of local non-Native farmers, Reed applied a combination of "measures like the permit system, severalty, and peasant farming ... to undermine and atrophy agricultural development" (p. 372). Reed's measures effectively eliminated Native reserve farmers as competitors to local mainstream interests. Mainstream interests have invariably outweighed the promises made to Natives in the prairie treaties. The treaty promises, like the conditions on Native reserves, deteriorated over the years. Joe Samson from Hobbema, writing in the late 1930s about the decades following the First World War, stated that " 'as far as farming is concerned, I see no sign of real help coming from the Indian Affairs' " (quoted in Cuthand, 1991:391).

In 1939 the Native peoples of Western Canada began to organize and fight to improve conditions on their reserves and to secure a better future for themselves. Frideres (1988) points out that there are two areas involving relational communications that have to be overcome in order to resolve many reserve problems. First, Frideres is of the opinion that a reserve, being a closed area, facilitates communication among its members while creating a communication barrier between themselves and mainstream outsiders. When internal communication dominates a reserve Frideres finds these situations result in group censorship, uncritical acceptance of internal situations, and the creation of a - we are good and outsiders are bad - atmosphere. Second, Frideres argues that even in the 1980s there was still a need to improve the relational communication between the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) and the Native peoples it serves.

Ponting (1986a) in a 1980s study of eight bands ranging from a few hundred members to several thousand members found that, for some bands, the relationship between them and DIAND continued to be a paternalistic one. Even though many bands had acquired control over the design and implementation of their economic initiatives, some chiefs had the perception that DIAND favoured larger bands which had "the effect of creating or exacerbating tensions in relations between large and small bands" (p. 97). This perception of uneven treatment reflects the wide variation in Native bands' remoteness, socio-economic needs, political experience and power and their economic marginality. Uneven treatment by DIAND has led many Natives to believe that little had changed since the days of Hayter Reed.

In Canada today, there are nearly 2,300 reserves, and 85 crown land settlements for about 600 bands (Yerbury, 1980:324); band sizes range from 2 or 3 members to some

with over 9000 band members (Frideres, 1988; Yerbury, 1980; Gerber, 1979). More than two dozen reserves are in or near urban centres (Yerbury, 1980:325; Price and McCaskill, 1974:29); the remainder are small, remote and widely dispersed across Canada. Table 4 indicates the approximate [i.e.: Statistics Canada cautions that Aboriginal populations may have been under counted] number of on-reserve Native populations in the prairie provinces from the Aboriginal data in Statistics Canada census of 1991.

Gerber's Reserve Typologies.

By the 1960s there was a significant increase in the number of Native peoples in Canada and the United States migrating to urban centres (Nagler, 1970; Sorkin, 1978). Many Canadian reserves do not have, or have been unable to obtain, the resources to support their existing populations, and migration to urban centres is, for many reserve members, the only option (Frideres, 1988:215; Kerri, 1978: Nagler, 1970). The focus of most studies of Native peoples' migration has been upon the individual. One of the exceptions, as Frideres (1988) noted, is that of Gerber's 1984 and 1979 studies. Gerber (1979) analysed 516 out of 536 bands in nine Canadian provinces using data from a "comprehensive study carried out by the Department of Indian and Northern Development" (p. 407). Gerber provides an objective look at reserve Native's migration to urban centres, showing that even with increasing migration "it is *very* clear that native communities are not about to disappear" (emphasis in the original p. 405). Furthermore, reserve variation contradicts the existing stereotypical view that all Native reserves are "apathetic and poverty-stricken" (p. 417).

Gerber's (1979) study focuses on the evolution of the reserves' community structures and the impact of this on Native migration. A reserve that has improved, or has the

potential to improve, its social and economic conditions while eschewing the mainstream's formal and hierarchical structures may avoid "total assimilation and structural integration" (p. 406). Migration from reserves is also dependent on group resources as distinguished from personal resources. Gerber defines "personal resources" as job skills, education and off-reserve employment experiences which provide some reserve members with economic mobility. Group resources, developed within and by the community, are those that meet a community's and potentially mobile individual's economic, social and political requirements (p. 405). Gerber developed a two dimensional typology indicating potential migration patterns:

Table 4
Reserve Typologies

		Community development levels	
		Low	High
Personal resource development	Low	"Inert"	"Pluralistic"
	High	"Integrative"	"Municipal"

Source: Adapted from Gerber, 1979 (p. 411).

Gerber observes that even though the typology does not take into consideration other variables such as distance from urban centres, band size, road access and the retention of Native languages, it does reflect "that the differences between the four types are not only real but substantial" (p. 410).

"Inert" bands, many of whom may have continued their traditional development, are the least active in developing group and personal resources. These band types are usually well away from large urban centres and have resisted the influences of the mainstream society. "Pluralistic" bands with their high community development have significant social

and economic development with minimal individual participation in education or in major employment markets. "Integrative" bands are often smaller, located near urban centres and have prepared their members with education and work experience for entry into the dominant culture's mainstream. Integrative communities have not developed group resources and "are the ones most threatened by ... total integration within the mainstream" (Gerber, 1979: 414). "Municipal" bands have easy access to urban centres; their communities have the most developed group resources and personal resources. They retain some band members by offering high levels of on-reserve employment opportunities and keep those who have entered the mainstream economy by maintaining an attractive community.

The band types are not evenly distributed throughout Canada. Gerber's (1979, 1984) analysis reveals significant differences between bands found in the prairie provinces and those in nonprairie locations. Gerber's (1979) analysis shows that pluralistic bands are "much more numerous in the prairie provinces" (p. 415) than elsewhere in Canada, while the nonprairie provinces are the location for the integrative bands. Gerber hypothesizes that the more numerous pluralistic Prairie bands, have been communally established; their "communal values are associated with lower levels of off-reserve residence" (Gerber, 1984:147). Nonprairie bands, on the other hand, were established with members having more "individual control of land and other assets" (p. 147) Gerber argues that this contributes to

the tendency for migration. Table 5 indicates the on-reserve populations for the prairie provinces as of the 1991 census.

Table 5
On-Reserve Populations in the Prairie Provinces

Characteristics	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Totals
Non-Registered	840	645	825	2,310
Registered	35,590	29,655	22,900	88,145
Totals	36,430	30,300	23,725	90,455

Source: Adapted from *Statistics Canada 1991 Census*, Aboriginal Data Cat. No. 94-325. Table 8, p.144; Table 9, p.162; Table 10, p.182.

Reasons for Migration - Push and Pull Factors.

What are the catalysts that motivate reserve Native migrants to try life in the urban centres? Why did they come and why do some stay? Kerri (1978), employing modernization theory from the 1950s and 1960s anthropology research, finds that push and pull factors are "two distinct aspects of the same phenomenon" (p. 36). This suggests that it is difficult to find meaningful distinctions between push factors and pull factors. Pull factors are said to originate from within some reserves and from the urban centres. They have been communicated to even the remotest reserves through radio, television, newspapers, educational and government sources. However, it is television that has had the greatest influence. It is through television that many Native viewers learn some of the ways of the urban centres. Those reserve Natives who have not experienced urban life may get the impression that urban life can be exciting, rewarding, very comfortable and that it can provide an anonymity not always found in reserve communities. What many

Native viewers of television often fail to realize is that their traditional social values are not only wholly different from those of mainstream urban society, they are particularly incompatible with the competitive style found in mainstream urban society (Kerri, 1978: Sorkin, 1978; Nagler, 1970).

There is agreement among those who have studied Native urban migration (Kerri, 1978; Dosman, 1972; Nagler, 1970) that Native migration is not attributable to a particular factor but is a complex combination of individual needs that each Native migrant seeks to satisfy. There are a number of factors, not all of them applicable to all reserves, that influence some reserve Native people to migrate to urban centres.

The Economic Factor.

The dominant push factor for many Native migrants are the economic conditions on some reserves (Krotz, 1980; Yerbury, 1980; Kerri, 1976b; Denton, 1972). In 1966 Arthur Laing, Minister of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, announced at the National Conference of the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada, that the Federal Government was going to upgrade reserves and, where necessary, reserve residents would be relocated to more fertile areas (Indian-Eskimo Association, 1966:25). Laing was also "concerned that there are too many Indians who 'go down the road' too soon" (p. 25). In the numerous studies and books cited herein there is no indication that Laing's "upgrade" had made any significant improvement to the reserve economies. Much on-reserve poverty is the result of decades of uneven economic development ventures (Frideres, 1988:387; Sorkin, 1978:126). The land claims settlements in the 1970s and 1980s were expected, Ponting (1986b) states, to provide for both traditional and mainstream reserve economies with the hope of offsetting the treaty legacies of disastrous

economic imbalances and on-reserve poverty. Table 6 compares 1986 income levels, by percentage, of aboriginal prairie families on-reserve and off-reserve with the total populations of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Table 6
Comparison of Income Levels Aboriginal Families to the Total Population
(Prairie Provinces)

Family Income	Less than $10,000	$10,000-$14,999	$15,000-$24,999	$25,000-$34,999	$35,000-$44,999	$45,000 & over
On-Reserves						
Manitoba	26%	21%	30%	14%	5%	4%
Saskatchewan	24%	22%	29%	12%	6%	5%
Alberta	21%	18%	28%	16%	8%	8%
Off-Reserves						
Manitoba	30%	13%	20%	17%	11%	13%
Saskatchewan	24%	17%	22%	16%	10%	11%
Alberta	18%	7%	20%	15%	13%	20%
Total Populations						
Manitoba	8%	8%	18%	20%	18%	29%
Saskatchewan	9%	9%	19%	18%	17%	28%
Alberta	7%	6%	15%	17%	17%	38%

Source: Adapted from Canada's Off-Reserve Aboriginal Population, Appendix A, Table 15 Income, p. A15. Compiled for the Department of the Secretary of State, 1986 Census, Special Tabulations for Small Area Database.

When these income figures for on-reserve families are compared to Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs (LICOs) (see Table 7) it reflects the depth of poverty found on many prairie reserves. There is, as Oberle (1993) observes, a question about the appropriateness of using LICOs data to measure poverty on reserves. LICOs are based on several assumptions such as, proportional income spending in which adults and children are equal in costs, and on how many people in a family are supported by the income. The LICOs base data excludes Native reserves, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories and does not take into consideration other resources available to reserve Natives such as "the

products of subsistence activities such as hunting and fishing" (Oberle, 1993:2). Nevertheless, LICOs data does provide an indicator that on-reserve poverty encourages migration from reserves. When using the LICOs, the Native families on reserves in Atlantic Canada and the prairies, Table 7, have the highest rates of poverty, based on the assumption that over 90 percent of Native families live on reserves in rural areas.

Table 7
Native Families Below the LICOs by Percent in 1993 - in Selected Provinces

Families in Canada Below the LICOs by Percentage	Registered Natives on Reserves	Canadian average
Nova Scotia	63.3%	14.5%
New Brunswick	58.4%	17.2%
Manitoba	55.1%	15.7%
Saskatchewan	57.6%	16.5%
Alberta	45.6%	13.9%

Source: P. Oberle (1993) The Incidence of Family Poverty on Canadian Native Reserves. (It should be noted that the percentage for Canada includes all people from rural areas to areas of more than 500,000 plus population and therefore shows a wider disparity than if compared to only Canada's rural population. Only reserves with 90 percent or more registered Natives were used in the survey.)

What has to be taken into account is the age of Native migrants; most are the young between the ages 16 and 25 years, (Denton, 1972; Guillemin, 1975; Graves and Arsdale, 1966; Krotz, 1980). The 1986 census found that of people of Native origin living off-reserve, nearly 60% were under 25 years of age, while the same age group in the general population was 40%. The 1991 Statistics Canada first time survey of education and employment earnings of Native peoples found that the unemployment rate on reserves was 31% compared to the national jobless rate of 10%. According to Ovide Mercredi, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, about 80% of reserve Natives live in poverty (Beauchesne, 1993:A8).

In 1995 there was a clear indication that in Alberta economic development projects in Native communities in the 1970s and 1980s had failed to improve their self-sufficiency. However, there were some signs that the Federal Government was listening more closely to Native economic proposals. The Federal Government instituted a pilot programme to support small Native and Métis companies that service the needs of Native and Métis communities in Alberta. Federal Human Resources Minister Lloyd Axworthy stated that the programme "came from the grass roots ... gone are the days when people sitting in Ottawa can understand what's happening in local communities. We have to make sure local community leaders are empowered" (Danylchuk, 1995:A5). This Alberta pilot project was to receive $1.43 million to fund the hiring and training of 100 aboriginal peoples over a period of three years with its aim of developing "long-term employment" (p. A5).

The Education Factor.

Education is another push factor. Prior to 1945 most on-reserve Native children received their primary education through Government controlled on-reserve day schools, which a 1970 Senate hearing referred to as "education in isolation" (Frideres, 1988:174). The residential school system, from the 1890s to the early 1900s, was seen as being superior to the reserve day schools in meeting the children of migratory Natives. Even when the migratory Natives became settled on reserves, it was the residential schools that continued to receive greater government support. In 1907 the Honourable Samuel Hume Blake, in his capacity as chairman of the Missionary Society of the Canadian Church, argued "that improved day schools would be healthier and potentially more effective than

industrial or boarding schools" (Grant, 1984:193). However, it was not until after the Second World War that "there was a belated shift of interest to the reserve schools once advocated by Blake" (p. 200).

Nagler's (1970) review of Native education found that the number of Native students enrolled in off-reserve educational or vocational programmes went from 142 in the 1953-54 school year to 554 in the 1963-64 school year (p. 43-4). Increasing participation in these programmes continued up to 1970-71 with Native enrolment reaching 9,371 (Frideres, 1988:189). Native student enrolment in Universities increased from 432 in 1970, 12 percent of whom graduated, to over 4,000 in 1988 with about 10 percent graduating (p. 190). The increase in educational levels of on-reserve and off-reserve people of Native origin is captured in the statistics from the 1986 census. It can be seen that, on the whole, the Native education profile is now getting closer to that of the Canadian population. The following Table 8 compares Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta Native education levels of 1986 for those aged 15 years and over.

Table 8
Highest Level of Education for Persons of Aboriginal Origin and Total Prairie Province Populations

Group/Region	Less than Grade 9	Grades 9 - 13 (No HS degree)	High School Degree	Post-Secondary Degree
On-Reserve				
Manitoba	52%	35%	2%	11%
Saskatchewan	51%	31%	2%	17%
Alberta	44%	35%	3%	19%
Off-Reserve				
Manitoba	26%	40%	6%	28%
Saskatchewan	30%	35%	5%	31%
Alberta	19%	39%	8%	34%
Total Population				
Manitoba	18%	33%	9%	40%
Saskatchewan	19%	33%	9%	39%
Alberta	11%	31%	11%	48%

Source: Adapted from Canada's Off-Reserve Aboriginal Population, Table 6. Compiled for the Department of the Secretary of State by Statistics Canada, 1986 Census, Special Tabulations from the Small Area Database.

In reviewing these statistics, consideration has to be given to the on-reserve age group, 25 to 65 plus years of age, who represent about 32 percent of the on-reserve population. Their educational opportunities were more limited, due in all probability, to the legacy of past on-reserve day school educational standards.

The Fertility Factor.

Reserve fertility rate is another significant push factor. Nagler (1970) found that in Ontario the rapid increase in reserve populations meant that reserve resources were inadequate (p. 10). Similarly in British Columbia, with a large number of small reserves Canada (only 12% exceed 1 square mile in area) reserve resources cannot support their increasing populations (Yerbury, 1980: 326). The registered Native population has been cited as the fastest growing group in Canada. Once registered Natives had the highest

infant mortality rate. By the 1980s this had been reduced, in some localities, to just slightly more than the rate for the total Canadian population (Ponting, 1986c; Yerbury, 1980; Dosman, 1972; Indian-Eskimo Association, 1966: 11). A decline in registered Native infant mortality is reflected in a decline in fertility rates. In particular, Quebec and British Columbia's registered Native fertility rates had, by 1981, come near to the overall provincial levels. The Native fertility rates for the prairie provinces, Table 9, have historically been higher than fertility rates for all other registered Canadian Natives.

Table 9
Fertility Rates for Registered Natives - Total Prairie Provinces and Total Canadian Populations

Province	Year							
	1968	1970	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980	1981
Manitoba								
Native population	7.72	7.19	6.28	5.22	4.31	3.89	3.84	3.53
Total Population	2.71	2.65	2.38	2.18	2.02	1.91	1.84	1.86
Saskatchewan								
Native population	8.87	7.91	6.93	5.93	4.88	4.39	3.67	4.13
Total population	3.01	2.73	2.55	2.39	2.30	2.20	2.14	2.14
Alberta								
Native population	7.08	6.43	5.34	4.72	4.53	4.35	3.98	3.78
Total population	2.79	2.67	2.24	2.11	2.04	1.98	2.01	1.94
Canada								
Native population	6.07	.5.68	4.87	4.19	3.71	3.41	3.18	3.15
Total population	2.45	2.33	2.02	1.88	1.83	1.76	1.75	1.70

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada *Vital Statistics*, Catalogue 84-204, Annual; in Ram, B & Romaniuc, A (1985) *Fertility Projections of Registered Indians, 1982 to 1996*, Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Ram and Romaniuc (1985) conclude that allowing for the necessity of adjusting for late data reporting and underreporting, a "total fertility rate of 2.6 by 1996, is probably the most plausible in the short as well as the long term" (p. 33). Another method of

determining fertility rate was to look at the ratio of children under 5 to the total registered Native population; this ratio fell from 19 percent in 1961 to 13 percent in 1981 (Frideres, 1988: 140).

Table 10
On-Reserve Populations by Sex and Age in the Prairie Provinces

Sex and Age	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Total Elderly
Males				
0 - 14 years	7,570	6,635	4,915	
15 - 34 years	6,665	5,275	4,255	
35 - 54 years	3,040	2,460	2,075	
55+	1,565	1,335	900	3,800
Total Males	18,840	15,705	12,145	
Females				
0 - 14 years	7,205	6,350	4,725	
15 - 34 years	6,275	4,375	4,135	
35 - 54 years	2,675	2,105	1,865	
55+	1,440	1,160	925	3,525
Total Females	17,595	14,590	11,650	
Total all	36,435	30,295	23,795	7,325

Source: Adapted from Aboriginal Data, Tables 8,9,10. Statistics Canada - Cat. No. 94-325
Some Indian reserves and settlements were incompletely enumerated during the 1991 census.

The 1991 census estimate of the total on-reserve Natives in the prairie provinces was 80,525, Table 10. The total number of Natives 55 years and over was 7,325 representing approximately 9 per cent of the on-reserve population in the prairie provinces.

The Discrimination Factor.

A push factor that has not been as fully explored, or documented, is on-reserve discrimination. Krotz (1980) gives voice to Emil, a Native from Alberta, who gives his reason for leaving his reserve as having:

> seen too much of the Indian people pulling each other down. Why they do it I don't know. It's like the story where the white man and the Indian man are walking along and each has a pail full of crabs. The white guy has a lid on his

> pail but the Indian guy just has an open pail. Still, his crabs don't jump out. When the white guy asks him why his crabs don't jump out, he answers, "that's easy; they're Indian crabs. Whenever one of them gets near the top the others grab hold of him and pull him back down." There's too much jealousy ... They just can't seem to understand that if (a) guy made it they shouldn't pull him down, they should praise the guy. The guys who made it should be an inspiration to the rest but it doesn't work out that way. I don't know why (p. 37).

Wuttunee (1971), who came from a reserve near Battleford Saskatchewan, saw the reserves as places that, lacking internal motivation, encourage failure. When a band member was successful in business, or farming or by getting a good job he is criticized, wrote Wuttunee, by other band members who said that he was "a traitor to their cause and that he is a 'brown-skinned white man' " (p. 114). Wuttunee found that a band member who attempted to improve his economic condition for himself or his family was not supported by other band members. "Instead they try to tear him down" (p. 114). As Emil said, "there's too much jealousy" (Krotz, 1980:37).

These are not isolated examples. Nagler (1970) cites some instances in which Natives in Ontario who had acquired off-reserve professional or trade qualifications were, on return to their reserve, no longer acknowledged as "full-fledged band members but are looked upon instead as 'white man's Indians' "(p. 12). A Native from the North Bay area had gone to Toronto to become a plumber and after two years at school and work he returned to find that his "friends up there would no longer speak to me - at least it wasn't the same as before" (p. 12). Nola (1996) had left her reserve and moved to an urban setting because "at the time there was nothing there for me." She found that when she went back to the reserve for a visit that "Well yeah, basically yes" there was some

discrimination. However, it was "quite minor, what happens is that you start to like the city, you know, all the facilities here, everything. And it's harder to live on the reserve where it's a small community."

Reserve discrimination or alienation experienced by Natives who have entered the urban mainstream may, according to Nagler (1970), be a way for them to rationalize their acceptance of urban life rather than enduring "the hardship of reserve living" (p. 13). Rationalization aside, why does such discrimination exist among Native peoples? Mucha (1984) provides one possible explanation. The successful urban Native must provide for his family and retain his "Indianness, help his people, share his money and time with other Indians, work for his tribe 'back home' and for the Indian community in the urban setting" (p. 340). If, in Mucha's opinion, this is not the "pattern" to which a successful urban Native conforms, it may explain in part why "there are so few successful Indians known and accepted by their own community" (p. 340). On the other hand, Wuttunee (1971) is of the opinion that the Native who leaves the reserve does not owe a duty to the reserve or those left behind. Feelings of loyalty to the reserve, which in Wuttunee's view is a trap, are "misplaced" (p. 115). Vy (1996), one of those left behind, has another view. She knew "a lot of Wutunees" and she had heard that one of them was going to be a lawyer, "I thought maybe he would help more his people."

Additional Push Factors.

The Federal Government has an historical, but not a legal, commitment to provide housing for registered Natives. Isolated reserves and many rural reserves that do not have the financial means or natural resources that could be used to meet the costs of necessary

community facilities such as housing have to depend on Government subsidies for house construction and renovation.

A 1985 housing evaluation found "that about three-quarters of all existing housing were inadequate in that they failed to meet some of the basic standards of safety and decent living" (Frideres, 1988:193). In 1995 the shortage of on-reserve housing with its attendant problems of disease and social problems continues for some prairie reserves and has lead to protests by Native bands such as the Mathias Colomb band in Pukatawagan on the Churchill River in north-western Manitoba. In order to publicize their concerns the Colomb band, in late 1995, occupied the boardroom of the regional Indian Affairs Winnipeg office for three weeks. They were protesting the living conditions on their isolated reserve on which "tuberculosis and hepatitis are rampant, with 2,000 people crammed into 200 houses" (Edmonton Journal, December 14,1995:A12). An Indian Affairs regional director said the "department still must satisfy itself about how the band has been spending the $11.5 million received each year from Ottawa - money the department says could have built new houses" (p. A12).

Krotz's (1980) description of the situation on God's Lake Narrows reserve located in north-eastern Manitoba parallels the complaint of the Colomb band. A DIAND economic development officer complained about the housing on God's Lake Narrows reserve, "standard Indian Affairs plywood two-by-four houses that cost around five hundred (1970s) dollars to heat for a winter and tend to fall apart in five years" (p. 15). More suitable, and sturdier housing, such as log or stack-wall construction are construction

styles that Central Mortgage and Housing does not approve of. It would appear that the housing situation in the 1970s has changed little in the intervening twenty-five years.

However, another aspect of inadequate housing is seen when reserve Natives who earn a steady income cannot obtain a mortgage because on reserves "individual title is severely limited" (Frideres, 1988:195). The *Indian Act*, section 29 states "Reserve lands are not subject to seizure under legal process" with reserves being "held by her Majesty" (Woodward, 1990: 231,228); this precludes a Band from using reserve land as collateral to obtain mainstream sector loans in order to make necessary improvements on their reserve. Therefore, steady income earners must first accumulate a large amount of cash to pay for a house before they can build one on their reserve.

The Elderly Native Migrants.

Relocation to an urban or other setting can be both physically and emotionally difficult for elderly Natives. As younger family members move from the reserve to an urban setting it often means that the elderly may be left without traditional extended family support. The Saskatchewan study (1988) suggested two possible reasons for on-reserve Natives, 50 years and older, migrating to the urban settings. One reason, which Kerri (1978) would call a push factor, was for the need to seek special medical health services. The second, a pull factor, was to be closer to, or live with, other family members who had moved to an urban setting. A third, reserve housing with the attendant health issues. The Hohn (1986) study cites the reserve housing conditions that affect elderly Natives: inadequate number of houses to meet the demand; overcrowding; poorly insulated and constructed; and, the lack of water and sanitation systems (p. 28). The Saskatchewan

study (1988) found that of those elderly who once lived on a reserve nearly "40 per cent ... do not consider their move to the city as permanent" (p. 92). The corollary is that 60 per cent of the elderly Natives who left their reserves see the urban setting as their home.

Summary.

Kerri (1978), in search of answers to his question, "why did the migrant leave his preurban community" (p. 31), found that some of the answers reflected personal decisions: the need for better medical or rehabilitative facilities; the need to improve their children's educational options; and moving to join family or relatives in an urban centre. For some, Natives reserve life became too difficult or they left to find better housing (Kerri, 1978; Dosman, 1972; Guillemin, 1975; Nagler, 1970). Many registered Natives migrate to the urban settings to find "a quality of life commensurate with that of other modern Canadians" (Frideres, 1988:192). In 1995 the stark reality is that many reserve Natives continue to "live in Third World conditions, ... in debilitating poverty, (and with) inadequate housing" (Rushowy, 1995:A17).

The Native reserves are not alike. Gerber's reserve typologies coupled with the findings of Kerri (1978), Dosman (1972), Guillemin (1975) and Nagler (1970) demonstrate the reserves' diversities of personalities, resources and structure. It is difficult to select one all-inclusive reason why some Native people leave their reserve for the urban setting. Nonetheless, the pressures on many prairie reserves, such as high fertility rates, rapid population growth, internal discrimination, the need for better education or health facilities, push some Native people off the reserves. Others are drawn

by what they perceive the urban settings offer, economic opportunities and a better way of life.

The urban settings may also encourage the growth of individuality among many of the migrant Natives. However, the growth of individuality does not diminish the need that migrant Natives feel to maintain their cultural and spiritual ties with, their reserves, their homelands, because "*virtually no one leaves because they are disgusted with reserve life*" (italics added, Denton, 1972:60-61).

Chapter 4

The Urban Setting.

> *There is a history in Canada of putting Aboriginal people 'in their place' on reserves and in rural communities. Aboriginal cultures and mores have been perceived as incompatible with the demands of industrialized urban society. This leads all too easily to the assumption that Aboriginal people living in urban areas must deny their culture and heritage in order to succeed - that they must assimilate into this other world. The Corollary is that once Aboriginal people migrate to urban areas, their identity as Aboriginal people becomes irrelevant* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 4, 1996:519).

Introduction - Identifying Urban Natives

This chapter seeks to uncover some aspects of the urban settings that have contributed to the maintenance of many Native people's lower socio-economic position in mainstream urban societies. This chapter also describes, and defines, the development and notion of a fictive urban reserve.

The situation of the elderly urban Natives are viewed from their own urban life experiences. The revitalization of urban Native children's education and that of the elderly urban Natives mirrors the successes of the renewal of *active* education that is occurring on the Native reserves.

Reserve Natives migrate to urban settings for a variety of reasons, such as, health care, adventure or economic self-improvement. It is a selective process: not all reserve Natives wish to live in an urban setting; not all reserve Natives adapt to an urban setting; not all reserve Native migrants view their move as permanent. However, many reserve Natives

who live in the urban setting have established cultural and spiritual enclaves in their urban environment as a means of recreating the communal reserve spirit.

The number of Native peoples identifiable as separate groups in North America is in excess of 200, each with their own unique cultural values, and yet, Native peoples are more often than not, viewed, by the mainstream society, as one ethnic group. Once there was a multiplicity of Native people's cultural and social harmonies, but trapped on reserves and subjected to imposed ideas and values, disintegration of their cultural and social harmonies was inevitable (Wuttunee, 1971; Nagler, 1970). When today's Native peoples are studied on their own reserve lands, their self redefined uniqueness is described and labelled. However, once a Native person comes to the urban environment he, or she, is looked upon as coming from only one cultural source - Indian. The reserve migrating Natives and non-status Natives are seen by the mainstream urban society as a collection of people "bound together by a distinctive set of social relations" (Broom & Selznick, 1963:31).

Ogbu (1987) views American Natives, as well as Black Americans and Hawaiians, as involuntary immigrants, that is, they were forcibly recruited into the mainstream societies and "relegated to menial positions and denied true assimilation into mainstream society" (p. 321). In discussing Ogbu's involuntary immigrant typology, Trueba et al., (1993) refers to Spindler and Spindler's *Dreamers Without Power: The Menomini Indians* (1971) and *The American Cultural Dialogue and its Transmission* (1990) in which they found that not all Natives perceive "mainstream culture as being in opposition to their Indian culture ... while others remained transitional or even nativistic in their reaffirmation of

their traditional cultural patterns" (p. 10). Many urban Natives have, unknowingly, recreated a reserve's cultural linkages through the creation of the fictive reserve.

In October 1992 the Native Council of Canada made reference to self government and the need for urban reserves. During the research for this paper it became clear that all the spiritual and cultural elements for an urban reserve were present and actively supported. This fictive reserve has healing circles, sweat lodges, herbal medicine practitioners, Elders who can be found in such places as hospitals and schools, Native family counsellors, Native churches, Native senior centres, Native support centres such as the Native Friendship Centre and a Native housing registry. Cultural events, such as round dances, are held in all areas of the urban setting. There are teachers of Native dancing and Native crafts such as bead and leather work. This fictive reserve has been created by urban Natives as they adapted to the social constraints and economic opportunities of urban life. The fictive reserve provides traditional spiritual and cultural values that, for many urban Natives, aids them in maintaining their individual and communal identity, their "Indianness".

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, formerly known as the Native Council of Canada, claims that in Canada today there are 750,000 non-status, off-reserve Natives (Day, 1994, February 28). The following Table 11 compares the total on-reserve and off-reserve Native population in the prairie provinces according to the 1991 census.

Table 11
On-Reserve and Off-Reserve Native Populations in the Prairie Provinces

Province and Characteristics	Population with Aboriginal Origins by Native Registration		
	Total	On-Reserves	Off-Reserves
Manitoba			
Non-Registered	54,815	840	53,975
Registered	62,640	35,590	27,045*
Saskatchewan			
Non-Registered	40,965	645	40,320
Registered	56,710	29,655	27,055
Alberta			
Non-Registered	95,635	825	94,805*
Registered	54,220	22,960	31,260
Totals	364,985	90,515	274,460

Source: Adapted from *Statistics Canada 1991 Census*, Aboriginal Data Cat. No. 94-325. Table 8, p.144; Table 9, p.162; Table 10, p.182. * Discrepancy due to incomplete enumeration of some reserves during the 1991 census.

In the early 1980s nearly 80 % of off-reserve Natives were living in large urban areas. Urban areas are the main destination for a large number of reserve Native migrants (Frideres, 1988:207-09).

Characteristics of Urban Natives.

Studies of Native peoples in urban centres seldom take the time to identify the individual Native person, he or she is just "Indian". The ethnic identity "Indian" has been, as Nagler (1975) states, "imposed on Native peoples - partly through their own awareness of how they are viewed by others, but mainly through the pressure of the larger society on

them to see themselves as a different and separate group" (p. 9). Native peoples do not share an all-encompassing cultural and social background. Nevertheless, Mucha (1984) identifies some characteristics that can be considered to be common to all North American Native peoples:

> generosity and the stress on sharing; dislike for antagonizing other people and for interfering with other people's business; extended family considered as one of the supreme values; the idea of work as a kind of activity that gives first of all satisfaction; dislike for competition with non-Indians; circular concept of time and space, integrating the past, present and future (p. 330).

One characteristic that Mucha did not include was the Native penchant for individual independence. Denton (1972) in his research on migration from a reserve in the southern part of Canada found that young adults, on leaving school, were encouraged to become self-reliant and independent by earning their own money. Independence and individualism are not unique characteristics of just Native peoples, but they are often overlooked when "studying" urban Natives.

Characteristics that are well suited to the Native society do not always prepare individuals to interact in a functionally segmented urban environment. Native migrants to urban settings need to adopt an urban behaviour, such as, individual self-interest and competitiveness (Frideres, 1988:217-18). Many Natives are slowed by their perceived shyness and a reticence for aggressive actions within a white dominated urban setting. Nevertheless, many Natives have been successful in the urban settings in part because "North American Indians experience less prejudice and racial discrimination in large metropolitan areas than in rural communities" (Nagler, 1975:54). Table 12 shows the percentage of Aboriginal populations within selected prairie urban areas.

Table 12
Canada's Aboriginal Populations - Selected Prairie Urban Centres

Province and City	Total Aboriginal Population	Total Metropolitan Population	Estimated Percentage of Aboriginals
Manitoba			
Winnipeg	43,595	610,265	7.14%
Saskatchewan			
Regina	12,500	177,135	7.05%
Saskatoon	13,280	184,015	7.22%
Alberta			
Calgary	22,360	705,185	3.17%
Edmonton	32,945	610,390	5.40%

Source: Adapted from *Statistics Canada 1991 Census*, Aboriginal Data. Cat. No. 94-326. pp.. 62-3,68-9,72-5.

The Labelling of Native Migrants.

> *As with all stereotypes, there is a kernel of truth in the images, which assume a dramatic profile and become etched in the popular consciousness. But stereotypes block out complexity of context and diversity of personality and perspective* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 3, 1996:622).

Native peoples who enter urban settings are categorized and labelled by mainstream researchers in accordance with the researchers' preconceived notions of urban Natives migration motives. These labels, and their associated meanings, are used as descriptors of the expected behaviour patterns assigned to groups of urban Native migrants. Such labelling initiates the first of many discriminatory attitudes towards Native peoples migrating to urban settings.

Frideres (1988) has four categories for Native urban migrants, "the transient," "the migrant," "the commuter" and "the resident" (pp. 214-215). Nagler (1970) has four

categories with a fifth added as an addendum, the "white-collar workers", the "blue-collar workers", the "transitionals", the "short-termers" and finally the "letting off steam" group (pp. 56-60). Dosman (1972) in his study of Natives in Saskatoon Saskatchewan has three descriptive terms, "welfare", "anomic" and "affluent" (p. 68, 84,48). Graves and Arsdale (1966) and Denton (1972) use terms for Native migrants that are more applicable, and less derogatory in nature, than the aforementioned researchers. Graves and Arsdale's terms are "stayers" and "leavers" (p. 301). Denton's two umbrella definitions, "Indian oriented migrant" (p. 58) and the "white oriented migrant" (p. 60), are more useful in describing today's younger Native migrants to urban centres because they are more aware and better prepared socially and often academically to adapt to an urban environment.

The following Table 13, using Denton's definitions, allows the summarizing of the mainstream researchers' labels under headings that are more reflective of Native migration attitudes.

Table 13
Native Migration According to Their Indianness

The Researchers terminology	Indian oriented migrants	Indian/White oriented migrants	White/Indian oriented migrants	White oriented migrants
Frideres (1988)	The Transient (p.215)	The Migrant (p.216)	The Commuter (p. 216)	The Resident (p. 216)
Dosman (1972)	The Welfare(r) (p. 68)	The Anomic (p. 84)	<--- The Affluent (p. 48)	--- >
Nagler (1975)	Short Termers (p. 59)	Transitionals (p. 59)	Blue collars (p. 57)	White Collars (p. 56)
Graves & Arsdale (1966)	The Leavers (p. 301)			The Stayers (p. 301)

Source: Denton's (1972) terminology adapted for use in creating this Table.

Table 13, summarizing the researchers labels, indicates that labelling urban Native migrants does not take into account the personal decisions that may make a "short termer" or a "transient" become a "resident" or a "white collar". Furthermore, some of the labels can be viewed as supporting the mainstream stereotypical assumptions that Native people are seen as irresponsible individuals living off mainstream handouts who do "not take advantage of the opportunities put before them" (Parnell, 1976:3).

Another example of mainstream stereotyping is found in Sorokin (1978). He cites a 1964 study by Harry Martin in which Martin classified behavioural adjustment criteria of Navajos, Sioux and Choctaws in Dallas Texas as:

> 1. Good: Evidence indicates no serious problems; seems highly motivated; may become successful and then return to the reservation.
> 2. Satisfactory: Evidence of problems but shows signs of adjustment, holds job, gets job on his own, cooperative; may start poorly but improves.
> 3. Fair: Evidence of problems and attempts to overcome them without too much success, continues to have difficulties in spite of personal effort; may start well but performance declines.
> 4. Poor: Evidence of poor job performance-absenteeism, quitting jobs, excessive drinking, or arrests.
> 5. Poor: Evidence of poor motivation (other than in 4) lack of cooperation with BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) personnel, fails to keep appointments, refuses certain jobs, complains about hard work or the weather (pp. 127-28).

Such "criteria" continues the mainstream stereotyping of Natives. Reading Martin's behavioural adjustment criteria without the word "reservation" or the reference to the "BIA" reveals that it does not advance an understanding of Native people's "Indianness" in the mainstream setting. On the other hand, Graves and Arsdale's (1966) study of the "Navaho Migrant to Denver," focuses on the individual expectations of migrating Natives rather than categorizing *in situ* urban Native migrants. They hypothesized that:

> those migrants who remain in the city have a personal goal structure more compatible with urban opportunities, and higher expectations for the achievement of their goals within the urban setting, than those migrants who leave the city and return to the reservation (p. 301).

Graves and Arsdale interviewed 99 adult male Navaho Native migrants to Denver. They treated the interviewees, not as stereotypes, but as people with personal expectations that, through migration to an urban setting, may be fulfilled. Table 14 displays the results of the Graves and Arsdale interviews.

Table 14
Expectations for Personal Goal Achievement in Denver or on the Reservation

Subjects Expectation N = 99 Navaho Native migrants	Stayers N	%	Leavers N	%	Returnees N	%
to improve his position if he stays in Denver but not if he returns to the reservation	35	62	9	39	7	35
to improve his position in either location	17	30	10	43	9	45
no improvement in either location	1	2	1	4	2	10
to improve his position if he returns to the reservation, but not if he stays in Denver	3	5	3	13	2	10
Totals	56		23		20	

Source: Adapted from Graves and Arsdale, (1966). Values, Expectations and Relocation: The Navaho Migrant to Denver. *Human Organization*, *24*(4), 300-307.

The preceding discussion has been shown that non-comparative classification of Native migrants continues the stereotyping that has encouraged discrimination against both on-reserve and off-reserve Natives with no achievable understanding of Native expectations in the urban settings. Labels, once applied in the research processes to a particular group of people, prove to be difficult to remove and more seriously, perpetuate cultural discriminatory stereotyping. The approaches of Denton (1972) and Graves and Arsdale

(1966) avoid stereotypical attitudes and labels and treat Native migrants as people in search of personal expectations. In their study some Natives fulfil their personal expectations in the urban setting, while for other Natives, their urban incursions seem to reinforce their personal commitment to an on-reserve lifestyle. Natives who migrate to the urban settings should be seen in the same way as rural migrants or off-shore immigrants, just people looking to experience a new way of living their lives and adapting or, for some Natives, submerging their "Indianness" to a mainstream lifestyle.

Urban Setting Adjustments.

> *Aboriginal people living in urban areas face many challenges, not the least of which is maintaining their cultural identity as Aboriginal people. Some become trapped between two worlds - unable to find a place in either their Aboriginal culture or the culture of the dominant society. Others find ways to bridge the gap, to remain firmly grounded in traditional values while living and working in an urban milieu* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 4, 1996:612).

A 1966 conference, *Indians and the City*, found that "the Indian on the reserve is done for - rarely done with" (DIAND 1966:11). The Department of Indian Affairs does not give reserve Natives training for, or any orientation on, the basic knowledge and personal management skills required for living in a mainstream urban society (John, 1996). The Department of "Indian Affairs is not sure that they have a continuing responsibility when Indians come to the city. It is not good to chase after a person to make sure he won't make an error" (DIAND 1966:25). But it was the lack of federal support for reserve Natives that made many of them leave the reserves, reserves that did not provide a reasonable economic life, reserves with poor standards of living, compelling the reserve Natives to enter the mainstream's urban society "to escape boredom, misery and

tomorrows no better than yesterday. He comes seeking a better way of life - bright lights, good job, a good home, a better education for his children, or something that he cannot find in his colony or reserve" (p. 11). Because many reserves are incapable of supporting the existing Native population, out-migration is essential (Frideres, 1988:215; Edmonton Facts, 1991).

The economic and social adjustments that Native migrants had to contend with on entering urban settings has to be seen as they occurred in two distinct eras, the first from about 1946 to the early 1970s, and the second from the 1970s and continuing today. The first era was highlighted by the maturation of technologies in consumer and construction industries that followed the Second World War and is often referred to as the "golden age of capitalism" (Lipeitz, 1992:1; Harvey, 1990). It was a time when there was a balance, or a reciprocity between labour, governments and capital creating an era of prosperity and seemingly endless expansion (Harvey, 1990:29-30). Employment was readily available, even for the least educated. As well, many companies, such as telephone, power and local industries, had apprenticeship programmes to train workers to meet the demands from the expanding urban economies. Native migration to the urban settings began to pick up momentum during this golden age. However, it was primarily the mainstream workforce that fully enjoyed the economic opportunities. For the Native migrant, the golden age usually meant being given menial jobs with little opportunity to realize many of the financial benefits of the golden age. In 1961, Toronto had, according to Nagler (1970), the largest population of Natives of any urban community in Canada, with the possible exception of Vancouver. Even though the 1961 census published the Toronto Native

population as 1,196, estimates of the number of Natives actually in Toronto were as many as 20,000 (p. 5). As the economies of the prairie provinces grew so too did the migration of Natives from the prairie reserves to the prairie urban centres. The increase in the prairie Natives' migration to urban centres was, in part, the result of four factors: the collapse of the controls that DIAND had over reserve Natives; the reserve Natives' growing awareness of opportunities for them in the urban economies; the increase in transportation systems; and the pressure of increasing reserve populations (Dosman, 1972:9). The following Table 15 comparing 1951 and 1961 census of Native populations probably, as Nagler suggests, grossly underestimated the urban Native populations. However, the Table does provide an indication of the rapid increase in growth of the urban Native populations during the 1946-1970 era.

Table 15
Comparison of Native Population Increases in Selected Urban Centres

Urban Centre	1951	1961	% Increase
Toronto	85	1,196	1400%
Winnipeg	210	1,082	500%
Regina	116	539	500%
Calgary	62	335	550%
Edmonton	116	995	850%

Source: Adapted from Nagler, 1970, p. 8. Nagler's source, 1951 and 1961 census.

Native Urban Migration - 1946 to 1970.

There is a body of research which examined the socio-economic patterns of adjustments made by immigrant Natives in this initial era. For example, Nagler (1975,1970), Kerri, (1978, 1976b), Dosman, (1972), and Graves and Arsdale, (1966)

have provided views of migrant Natives' urban adjustments in a number of urban settings: Toronto, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and Denver.

The economic pattern of adjustment of migrant Natives was described by the researchers under three general categories. The first category was those described as Nagler's (1970) "white collars" or Dosman's (1972) "the affluent", they are the Native migrants that the researchers saw as the ones that, for all intents and purposes, would best reflect what Denton (1972) calls the "white oriented migrant". These Native migrants were better educated, had planned their migration to the urban centres, and sought employment that was "for all practical purposes permanent" (Kerri, 1976b). Nagler (1970) found that the "white collar workers seldom leave their jobs, and their employment changes are usually the result of being promoted" (p. 60). Some of these Native migrants integrated into the mainstream society and purposefully terminated many of their ties with their band (Frideres, 1988:215; Dosman, 1972:65).

The social pattern of adjustment for the white oriented Native migrants, according to Denton (1972), began by identifying with the white members of the mainstream society, forsaking their reserve, and avoiding Native associations. However, "if they [had] a close kinsman there such as a parent, child, or sibling (p. 60), these Native migrants would maintain some contact with their reserve. Nagler (1975) identified three sub-groups of white oriented Native migrants, "those who identify with their Indian heritage, those who are ambivalent about their Native identity, and those who have rejected their Indian ancestry" (p. 56). Dosman (1972) also found similar trends but did not find any who had totally rejected their Indianness.

The second category, the "blue collars" (Nagler, 1970), or the "accepting" (Hurt in Kerri, 1978:40), were those migrant Natives who looked for and took jobs but the jobs were usually temporary or seasonal (Kerri, 1978:40). They rarely participated in mainstream activities "as their web of affiliation remain(ed) based on the reserve" (Nagler, 1975:60). These "blue collar's" social adjustment patterns were similar, Nagler (1975) found, to those of the white oriented Native migrants, i.e., identification with ambivalence toward or rejection of their Native heritage. Dosman (1972) described them as "anomic ... for in the city they suffer personal disorientation, anxiety and social isolation" (p. 84). The anomic a represent lower level of the second category. They had little contact with other Natives and "each family live[d] out its own struggle for survival by itself" (Dosman, 1972:86). Although most of the Native migrants in this category had accepted mainstream values, they continued to maintain close contact with their reserve families and friends (Kerri, 1978; Dosman, 1972).

The third category, the "migrant" (Frideres, 1988:215) the "transitionals" or "short termers" (Nagler, 1975:59), were those Native migrants that spent only short periods of time in an urban setting, or moved there just for the winter months . Many of those migrant Natives had "insufficient training and experience for any skilled job" (Kerri, 1978:40) but were often able to obtain "employment and free room and board in exchange for their stories, many of which were probably fabricated" (Nagler, 1970:16).

This third category of Native migrants demonstrated the least interest in any of the mainstream economic or social values. They made up the majority of Native migrants who returned to their reserves because they were unable or unwilling to make the

necessary adjustments that were required of them to cope with the urban setting (Kerri, 1976a). Some of those Native migrants would seek out their reserve relatives or friends who had made successful mainstream adaptations with the expectation of obtaining immediate financial assistance. The extreme Native migrants in this category are those that Nagler (1972) describes as dishonest, unreliable and who had "frequent problems with the law and desire(d) to obtain as much as possible with minimum effort" (p. 285).

Stanbury's (1975) interview with status Natives in British Columbia in 1971, who had been in the urban setting for at least one month, illustrates the problem that the Natives of the first era faced. They knew that moving to an urban centre meant learning new ways of behaving and that they would have a greater number of life style alternatives from which to choose. However, they felt that they should have been given some preparation by the Department of Indian Affairs for the urban life, and they expressed some ideas of what DIAND should have done to aid their adaptation in an urban setting:

- They should have a program to teach the life style of off-reserve living.
- Tell them that they won't have so many friends or family around; a place like Vancouver is so different.
- Probably information's the best thing. Tell them exactly what to expect when they are on their own.
- They should have workshops or an orientation program to acquaint people with problems of urban life, thing like water taxes, land taxes, garbage collection costs....
- Teach them how to get along with white people.
- Help Indian people to adjust to the different value system (p. 78).

Nola (1996) came from an Alberta reserve in the 1970s without any knowledge about urban living and she too thought that DIAND should have provided those reserve Natives

who move to the an urban setting with information about the need to pay for utilities and their telephone:

> Yeah, all those minor things. And rent too becomes a problem with people that move here. They figure that they have to pay rent the one time and that's it. But the other thing is, that before they do move from the reserves they should be taught these things. Yeah, somebody should tell that this is what is going to happen when they move to an urban area. ... I'm just wondering if it's the same for the young people coming from the reserve today, if they experience this hardship? I believe in a way that they do unless they have somebody here already in the city they know that can show them the ropes.

Native Urban Migration - 1970 to the Present.

The second era began in the 1970s. The Native consciousness raising in the late 1960s set the stage for Native people such as Harold Cardinal, and other young Native leaders, to organize Native politics. During the 1970s and 1980s there was a increasing awareness by Natives and the mainstream public about Native rights and the conditions to which reserve Natives had been subjected. "At least four major activities contribute(d) to this increased Indian consciousness: (i) Political conferences; (ii) Court cases; (iii) Constitutional conferences: and (iv) International activities ... and strong increased awareness specifically about Indian Treaties" (Littlechild, 19 May 1993). During the 1970s and 1980s, four types of Native organizations emerged; national organizations such as National Indian Brotherhood which originally lobbied on behalf of registered Natives; activist organizations like Red Power that advocated Native controlled social and political programmes; and multi-ethnic organizations such as the Indian-Eskimo Association. The fourth association type emerged in the urban centres, "locally organized and focused

group(s) ... created by both status and non-status Indians and newcomers, and long-time residents" (Frideres, 1988:275).

The urban Native social and economic problems of the second era have yet to be resolved satisfactorily. The president of the Alberta affiliate of the Native Council of Canada, Doris Ronnenberg, at a two-day constitutional forum for off-reserve Natives from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, proposed that the "federal government should place $2 billion in trust to meet the backlog of financial obligations to off-reserve Indians" (Danylchuk, 9 March 1992:B3). Ron George, president of the Native Council of Canada, also speaking for the off-reserve Native peoples said, in response to the Canadian Government's constitutional affairs minister Joe Clark, that the Government must "take responsibility for the 750,000 non-status, off-reserve Indians and Métis who live in jurisdictional limbo" (Bryden, 16 April 1992:A3). Table 16 indicates the significant increase (due in part to improved reporting) in Native populations in several urban centres in the prairie provinces.

Table 16

Comparison of Native Populations in Selected Urban Centres, 1951, 1961 and 1991

Urban Centre	1951	1961	1991
Winnipeg	210	1,082	35,165
Regina	116	539	10,840
Calgary	62	335	13,835
Edmonton	116	995	29,240

Source: Adapted from Nagler, 1970, p. 8. Nagler's source, 1951 and 1961 census and the 1991 Aboriginal Data, Table 2, Statistics Canada - Cat. No. 94-327.

The Elderly Urban Native.

> *For Aboriginal people in urban areas, the problems are more often failure to make contact with needed services, the lack of culturally appropriate services, and the absence of Aboriginal personnel who can overcome barriers to effective service* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 3, 1996:249).

The situation of the elderly urban Natives, a double minority, has been lost amidst the increasing attention being directed towards the situation of the general Native population. "The literature shows that little research has been conducted to specifically define the unique problems and needs of the Native elderly" (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988:7).

The elderly Natives represent approximately 6% of the total Native population of the prairie provinces. Of these about 54% in Alberta and a similar percentage in Saskatchewan, live alone or with only a spouse or partner (Seniors Advisory Council of Alberta, 1994; Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988). They are often the most vulnerable of the Native population and those living in the urban settings are "more likely to be poor, less healthy, and less able to access needed services than their counterparts in the general seniors population" (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, Supplement, 1989:1).

Interviews with outreach workers that work closely with the elderly urban Natives found, for example, that even though an elderly Native's supporting family members spoke English well, it was still necessary for the outreach worker to aid many elderly Natives in dealing with doctors or with various government agencies. It was especially necessary for the outreach and other agencies dealing with elderly Natives living on their own to provide assistance on an almost regular basis for such things as on-going doctor visits. Faith

(1996), an outreach worker working with elderly urban Natives, accompanies many of them to their doctors appointments because:

> they misunderstand a lot of things, especially doctors or others who use not just big words but different words and the way they [the doctors] use them and the way they [the elderly Natives] use them, they understand it in a different way.

If the English language is a problem for the elderly urban Natives, then written English communication poses an even greater problem. Shell (1996), a manager with an inner city agency that works with elderly Natives and mainstream elderly, found that many were "seventy-one years old, seventy-two years old and had never received a pension. And mostly because they don't know the system." Hon (1996), a social worker in an inner city drop-in centre in which there are both elderly urban Natives and elderly mainstream people, had many of them asking her or other staff members for assistance with their letters and government forms:

> That's a good portion of what we do on a daily basis. We help people deal with forms and letters and applications. And even people who can read, read the letter and don't know what it means. They can't appreciate the significance of it or they don't understand the requirements. Because the reality is when you get a letter from Social Services you have to understand the policy behind it to understand how important what [*sic*] it is they're saying in the letter. We do a lot of filling out of forms, in particular we help people fill out their income tax every year.

At another inner city drop-in centre where elderly urban Natives are part of the social workers clientele, Jock (1996) told of the many times he and the other social workers found that even when the Native clients could read and understand simple words, many of the forms or letters they received from various government departments contained large

and complex words. Jock remembered an incident that brought home to him how difficult it is for people who can't read even simple words:

> It must have been my ignorance at the time, I had a sign [on the coffee machine] that said "coffee" and a guy said "is the coffee ready? Is there coffee here?" "Yeah" I said, "can't you read the sign?" The guy says, "No, I can't read." I apologized to the guy. Some people here can't even read a little word like coffee.

Elderly Natives revere their independence. However, when they need assistance, they usually turn to "close, co-resident kin, and not to professionals or other paid helpers" (Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, 1994). Social support, other than family and kin, can have a detrimental effect on the independently minded elderly Native. Such support, even when required, can make an elderly Native feel useless or old, create an artificial dependency or contribute to a lowering of their self-esteem. Reciprocity has always been an important element in the elderly Natives' lifestyles. They expect help from their family and kin but independently minded elderly Natives, like many mainstream elderly, can be "uncomfortable accepting help from people who owe them nothing" (Smolak, 1993:410). Thus it is likely that the independent minded elderly Native will accept assistance from others only "if they feel that they are in control of their environment" (p. 411), an environment in which they have social and intellectual interaction.

The Extended Urban Native Family.

One notion that emerged from the reserve system, according to Nagler (1970), was that of the extended family "as a cooperative unit to create and obtain the necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter" (p. 20). This notion of the extended family is put to the test in the urban settings. When family members move into an urban setting they

often find, as did John who moved to Regina, that "we don't stay close in touch. I mean we don't see each other every day ... after a while you're going to want to have a life of your own" (John quoted in Krotz, 1980:111). In the Native culture, as in many other cultures, there is a strong sense of family obligation toward their elderly parents. However, in the urban setting there is a growing diminution of respect for the aged Natives. Hohn (1986) suggests a number of reasons for this trend, among them a faster pace of life, a lifestyle in which the accumulation of money is emphasized and an "emphasis on assisting the majority who are young" (p. 10).

The Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council 1988 study and the 1989 study supplement found that over one-third of Saskatchewan Natives migrating from their reserves to Saskatchewan's urban settings were over 50 years of age. The two main reasons for the elderly to migrate were, failing health and the desire to be near family members who had previously moved to the city.

Table 17 (page 88) gives the impression that there are few elderly Natives living in the prairies' urban settings. The census data reporting may underestimate the number of urban Native elderly because, as the Saskatchewan studies have found, these persons do not consider their move to an urban setting as permanent. Faith (1996), a Native outreach worker agrees, "most of them come to visit their families and end up staying for a long long time and sometimes they never go back to their reserve." Some of these elderly Natives still consider the reserve their permanent place of residence and are constantly faced with the decision of whether to remain in the urban setting or to return to the reserve (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988:91).

Table 17

Native Populations by Sex and Age in Selected Prairie Urban Centres

Sex and Age	Winnipeg	Regina	Saskatoon	Calgary	Edmonton
Males					
0 - 14 years	6,560	2,195	2,785	2,725	6,355
15 - 34 years	5,720	1,910	1,765*	2,445	5,075
35 - 54 years	2,945	885	765*	1,100	1,625
55+	710*	–	–	–	455*
Totals	15,935	4,990	5,315	6,270	13,510
Females					
0 - 14 years	6,125	2,290	2,545	2,540	5,500
15 - 34 years	8,285	2,180	2,720	3,355	6,445
35 - 54 years	3,780	1,040	1,055	1,340	3,000
55+	1,040*	340*	–	330*	785*
Totals	19,230	5,850	6,320	7,565	15,730
Total all	35,165	10,840	11,635	13,835	29,240

Source: Adapted from Aboriginal Data, Table 2. Statistics Canada - Cat. No. 94-327

* Figure to be used with caution. The coefficient of the variation of the estimate is between 16.7% and 33.3%.

– Figures suppressed. The coefficient of the variation of the estimate is > 33.3%

In the urban setting a Native family that is caring for its elderly parents or parent, working and raising their children, may not have the support network of other siblings or close family members, that is usually available on a reserve. Strain and Chappell (1989) studying the social networks of elderly urban Natives found that Natives "tend to share a household with children and grandchildren" (p. 114). The urban Native family then can be said to be in what Bee (1996) calls "a kind of *generational squeeze*, providing some assistance both up and down the generations within the family" (emphasis in the original, p. 207). In such situations the elderly Natives may, by default, find themselves left to their own resources (Markides & Mindel, 1987:111).

The Elderly Urban Native - Urban Difficulties.

In the urban setting in which this study's research was done, it was found that some elderly urban Natives were literally being abandoned by their families. For many urban Natives it is too difficult to work and then come home and look after their elderly parents "so then they try to get them put in a home or someplace, they try to get them from underfoot" (Bert, 1996). Jessie (1996), interviewing elderly Native women for a Federal Government study, found this to be true and, she said, it was:

> quite depressing because there was [*sic*] some of them that were so out of touch and so lonely that they had nobody visiting them. Or that their only link was to a daughter that was annoyed with them, then that person stopped calling on them or whatever. And, these people had no idea where to go for support and they were just really really lonely. I found that really sad, that for me told me that we were going away from the extended family. Some families have adopted the white way of doing things, you just put your mom or your grandmother or whatever in the old folks home and just leave them.

Leeza (1996), an inner city Native outreach worker, also observed that some extended Native families break down in the urban setting leaving some elderly Natives isolated:

> so the elderly people, they become isolated just like anyone else who are elderly here [in the city]. And, one of the things about Native people is the extended family has always helped their elderly and keep them, you know, taken care of. So in that respect that's the breakdown, so you see, there is that breakdown here. And there is isolation, it does happen. I've seen the results of it here [in the city].

Elderly urban Natives living with family members may not fare any better. Andrew, a Saskatchewan Native senior, has, since the death of his wife in 1988:

> lived in six different places in the city and has moved out to the reserve twice. ... right now Andrew lives with two of his three daughters, a son-in-law, and four grandchildren. Andrew continually refers to his desire to find a home where he can live by himself but is not sure how to go about the process because both he and his daughters are illiterate. ... As for his future Andrew

> says "At times I walk through the town crying because I have no home base. I feel there's no help" (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988:55).

The Saskatchewan study came across a number of examples of Native families leaving their ill or physically impaired elderly parents alone in the city. The family of an elderly Native woman in ill health at first came to the city to live with her, but over time they all moved back to the reserve, leaving her on her own. A Saskatchewan study interviewer observed:

> Watching her make tea and trying to fend for herself was a pitiful situation ... I asked her why she had not requested a family worker to do her required tasks. She stated that she ... was not told of family workers or of any other services ... if she was told in English she would not have understood what they were telling her ... she did not know the names of any organizations such as the Métis Society or Friendship Centre. The day she can return to the reserve and see all of her relatives [is what] keeps her going [even though four years have gone by] (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988:127).

Studies of the elderly urban Native tend to fixate on the notion that the extended family provides a refuge for elderly Natives (Seniors Advisory Council of Alberta, 1994; Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988; Strain and Chappell, 1986). Markides and Mindel (1987) point out that when the urban extended family has no resources "the traditional kinship support system of the family structure is unfeasible" (p. 109). Confirmation of this situation comes from an outreach report by the Frog Lake Band in Alberta in which the authors stated that the elderly on their reserve are better off "than the elderly off the reserve for they have not been abandoned by their families" (Hohn, 1986:34).

Urban Native Grandparents.

Support from and by Native grandparents has always been an accepted cultural practice. When parents on the reserves can no longer cope with their own teen-age children they often send them to their urban dwelling grandparents, and the grandparents "are the ones that are basically raising that group of young people for a certain period of time" (Netty, 1996). The Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council (1988) study and Markides and Mindel (1987) found that over 25% of Native grandparents are caring for at least one grandchild. However, it can be difficult for the elderly grandparent or grandparents to raise a teen-age grandchild:

> when a mother can't control her youth, the youth goes to grandma. And then the youth rips off grandma. They take their money and run, or they take whatever was valuable to them and they pawn it, and that was the only thing they [the grandparents] had. And they [the grandparents] don't want to abandon their grandchildren or their children ... Some of [the youth] try to escape the reserve and they know that their grandmas or their aunts are in the city and they can live there for a while and get their stuff together. In the meantime they end up turning it into a party house or whatever and then grandma gets kicked out too. It's never ending I think (Lacy, 1996).

The question that many would ask is, why do the elderly urban Natives accept such behaviour from their grandchildren? Smolak (1993) points out that research evidence indicates that the mainstream elderly are less confrontational, and that lack of confrontation indicates that the elderly are more passive and may be "more accepting of what cannot be changed" (p. 413). Although Smolak's mainstream observation may not apply entirely to the elderly Natives, particularly with regard to confrontation and their abusive or advantage-taking grandchildren, Leeza (1996) provides one Native's insight

into confrontation and elderly urban Native grandparents attitude toward such confrontation:

> It's that [the grandparents] are from a different school and confrontation was not what they were taught as young people. They were taught to be kind. And so they are trying to be kind to their grandchildren but it's hard to teach them a lesson. Kindness, if the grandchildren don't understand the Good Red Road of kindness, honesty, trust and sharing you have a breakdown of any of those values then you begin to misuse those values.... So what happens to those grandparents they have this philosophy so they are trying to be kind to their grandchildren but their grandchildren misuse it because the grandchildren don't understand the philosophy and the stuff about being on the Good Red Road, keeping those values strong, so then they learn to misuse it. And they misuse it on their grandparents. And so what happens is, it's not confrontation because they don't really understand the confrontation, it's not, confrontation is not being kind. They [the grandparents] can't confront because it's not being kind according to them (Leeza, 1996).

The Fictive Reserve.

> *But not all urban Aboriginal people have the option of visiting or returning to a home community. For an increasing number, the city has become a permanent home, and some have no links to a rural community. The ancestral lands of others may be distant. Yet Aboriginal cultural identity remains, even for these people, very closely tied to a relationship with the land and the environment* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 4, 1996:535).

The reserve Natives who move to an urban setting do not ghettoize (Dosman, 1972; Nagler 1970). In the urban setting, Nola (1996), from her years of living in the urban setting has found that migrating reserve Natives "live in so many places all over the city;" this scattering can be seen as a sign of Natives affirming their independence and also a reflection of the historical cultural value of conflict avoidance through tribal dispersion. Nevertheless, within the urban setting the fictive reserve affords the maintenance of communal ties; "we are Natives and we identify ourselves with other Natives. I know

Natives out there in the North end, Natives out and about and, you know, they're all over but, we're still a community" (Nola, 1996).

Many of the young, and not so young, Natives who have come on their own to the city, lacking adequate education or technological training and with no family members in the city, use the inner city drop-in agencies as locales wherein fictive extended families and fictive adoptions have developed. Fictive adoption is based in part on the Native tradition of adopting blood and non-blood relatives such as a sister adopting her deceased sister's children, or a mother who adopts a young man because he looks like her son that had passed away. There are also cases where young Native people may ask older Native women to adopt them as their grandchildren and all such "adoptions are carried out with appropriate ceremony" (Grandmother, 1996). A fictive extended family, for example, exists in one inner city drop-in agency where an elderly Native man acts as a "father for everybody; he doesn't have any immediate family himself but he certainly has lots of people he looks after who are like his family" (Hon, 1996). In an inner city seniors drop-in centre, James (1996) who has no family members living in the city, has a "brother" called Louie, a white man that James has known for over twenty-five years. James is, according to Leeza (1996), one whom many of the centre's seniors look upon as a leader, a fictive Elder, within their small inner city community. James in turn considers many of the seniors as his "family members." For those elderly Natives who have no family in the urban setting, their participation in inner city drop-in locations has created a system of fictive Elders who, like some Elders on reserves, have been given, or have accepted, the roles of father and advisor. Fictive extended families, fictive adoptions and fictive Elders

provide many newly arrived and unattached reserve Natives with a sense of belonging in an alien environment.

Urban Native Religion and Cultural Activities.

> *For many urban Aboriginal people, cultural identity is intimately tied to celebrating the ceremonial life of their culture. Taking part in a pipe ceremony, lighting sweetgrass, dancing in pow-wows, fiddling and jigging, drum dancing, and going through a naming ceremony were identified as significant events through which Aboriginal people internalize the values of their cultures into their identity, reinforcing knowledge of who they are as members of the group and establishing their place in the world of the culture* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 4, 1996:526).

Urban Natives have created religious centres which incorporate regular traditional cultural celebrations. In Edmonton the Sacred Heart Church of First Peoples became an official Native church in October 1995 (Hill, 7 April 1996:A1). Within the Edmonton church the aspects of Native culture that are brought "to the Catholic ritual are the sweetgrass ceremony (burnt instead of incense), a drummer and the Cree choir.... the church itself is infused with Native culture" (p. A1); murals of the stations of the cross portray Native men and women and "the altar boy and altar girl wear garments trimmed with fringe and ribbons" (p. A1). Father Jim Holland, the church's rector, sees the church as being owned by the Native people of Edmonton:

> "We're (the Edmonton Catholic Diocese) trying to make the people the church ... It's a form of empowerment. It's difficult for them to comprehend, the idea of ownership. But this way, the priests may come and go, but the church itself will carry on" (p. A1).

Native cultural activities, such as round dances have also become an increasingly important part of the fictive reserve's urban community. Having them take place in many

locations in the urban settings adds to the fictive reserve's communal character. These activities, religious and cultural, demonstrate the extent of the fictive urban reserve. This fictive reserve exists despite, as Nola (1996) said "that we as Natives cannot live together, we can't seem to, not like the Chinese and the Italians, we can't seem to gather as a family unit; it's because we are too independent." Still, urban Natives from all parts of a city come together through the many religious and cultural events to celebrate, unaware of, the oneness of their fictive reserve.

Urban Native Education.

> *We believe that Aboriginal parents and Aboriginal communities must have the opportunity to implement their vision of education. Aboriginal children are entitled to learn and achieve in an environment that supports their development as whole individuals. They need to value their heritage and identity in planning for the future. Education programs, carefully designed and implemented with parental involvement, can prepare Aboriginal children to participate in two worlds with a choice of futures* (Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 3, 1996:442).

The fictive reserve's grass roots movement to introduce a Native element in urban schools curriculum began in the prairie cities in the late 1970s. In the City of Edmonton, the Public and Catholic school districts introduced Native education projects that have given some insight into the difficulties, and successes, of providing urban Natives with solutions to their children's educational needs. The Edmonton Public schools had been involved in improving the education of Native children from the early 1970s with a "Cree enrichment kindergarten program" (Douglas, 1987:185) and have continued to build "the Awasis Program from Kindergarten to grade 6" (p. 185). Nellie Carlson, an elderly Native women, remembers the beginning of the programme:

> I was only a part of it for one year when Jennie Shirt started it. They were meeting and planning on it. I used to tell her "oh, there's no way you can do that." But when I realized they were progressing, they were really on it, I came into the picture because what we were trying to do was raise money, and I was going to try and help her raise money. So there were some concerned parents that were there who helped Jennie start it. And concerned grandparents. It was really a mix on the board..... And so, while it was going good three years, they had their own bus service. I seen in the latest news that the public school board suggested that this Native children's programme should go on to grade three. Two or three years later I seen it again in the news that they said it was going on to grade six. Now the foot was on the other side. There were more Indian kids than white kids so they were screaming discrimination. But its a good programme. It's still going at Prince Charles school (Interview with Nellie Carlson, 5 March 1996).

In 1981, the Urban Native Education Council and the Edmonton Public Schools District developed the Sacred Circle Project (Green, 1991; Douglas, 1987). The Sacred Circle Project proposed to Alberta Education:

> stressed the goal of developing a systematic approach to address the academic, social, and cultural needs of Native children while at the same time emphasizing an awareness of Native culture for all students in the district's schools. The project was to promote an understanding of Native culture and values, including social, moral, ethical, and spiritual perspectives (Douglas, 1987:186).

The Sacred Circle Project had a number of services designed to meet the urban Native children's educational needs: a liaison between the home and the school which resulted in "an improvement in behaviour, attitude and attendance" (Douglas, 1987:193); a Native Studies consulting service in which "Elders, cultural people, and academics all had input into the development of demonstration lessons" (p. 196); and the development of a curriculum which established guidelines as to "where a Native perspective could be integrated" (p. 200).

The Sacred Circle Project in Edmonton Public Schools "met its objectives successfully" (p. 200), and more importantly, it "won acceptance and respect from the Native community" (p. 201). This project answers, in part, the question, can the urban schools Native curriculum component "reinforce the Native child's sense of his Native identity and values" (Burnaby, 1983:13).

The Edmonton Catholic School District noted the high dropout rate for their Native pupils after grade 10. The Edmonton Catholic School District saw the need for Native students to be with other Native students, and in May 1981 the board supported the establishment of the Ben Calf Robe School. The school was up and running by September 1981. Diana Greyeyes had written the original proposal and Eric Shirt was the first chairman of the school. The rapid response reflects the dedication of the Native women and the Catholic School Board (Nellie Carlson, P. Shirt & L.Campbell, personal communications 14 April 1996).

The Ben Calf Robe school has also attracted a number of elderly urban Natives. Avery (1996) has seen a number of elderly women students at the school and they "have had a strong impact on [their] programme." Some want to learn to read and write so that they can go back to their reserve and sit on the band council. Many do not stay for long, usually due to health or to a family problem that takes precedence over their educational endeavours. However, Avery has been impressed with the elderly Native students' enthusiasm to learn:

> "how happy they get by learning. They want to learn! They love to learn! They're very open-minded for the most part. They have a strong impact on the rest of the students.... I've seen them learn and it brings something alive in them.... the capability [to learn] was always there, they just never had a chance to go to school..." (Avery, 1996).

The experience at the Ben Calf Robe school gives some indication of the problem of literacy among elderly urban Natives. The Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council's 1989 supplement to their 1988 study found that only about one-quarter of the elderly Natives in the southern part of Saskatchewan had "any formal education beyond grade eight [and] in the north, over half of the population surveyed have no formal education" (p. 3). The information in Table 18, limited though it is, supports the Saskatchewan findings that many elderly urban Natives in major provincial urban centres lack formal education.

Table 18

Schooling and Training Characteristics of Aboriginal Adults (50-64 years of age) Aboriginal Populations in Selected Urban Centres

Metropolitan Area	Winnipeg	Regina	Saskatoon	Calgary	Edmonton
Total number of Adults 50 - 64	2,085	625*	260*	500*	1,750
No formal Schooling	–	–	–	–	–
1-8 years Schooling	785*	295*	–	–	605*
Secondary Schooling	500*	–	–	290*	400*
Some Post-secondary	–	–	–	–	–
Certificate/Diploma	–	–	–	–	505*
University Degree	–	–	–	–	–
Not Specified	–	–	–	–	–

Source: Adapted from *Statistics Canada 1991 Census*. Aboriginal Data Cat. No. 89-534 Table 1.2, pp. 12-13. * Figure to be used with caution. The coefficient of the variation of the estimate is between 16.7% and 33.3%.
– Figures suppressed. The coefficient of the variation of the estimate is > 33.3%

Summary.

Reserve Native migrants face many challenges in the urban settings, social and economic challenges and the challenge of self-identity. Some reserve Native migrants do not, or cannot, adapt to the urban settings; others go to the other extreme and separate

themselves from their Native world. These extremes of urban Native actions have been given fixed categories by a number of researchers implying that Native migrants are incapable of change or adapting to changing circumstances. What can be seen is that Native migrants are highly mobile, do not ghettoize and, through the establishment of a fictive reserve, are extremely adaptive.

The fictive reserve, as defined in this chapter, has allowed, and encouraged, many urban Natives to maintain their traditional Native values and cultures within the mainstream's urban values and cultures. Within this fictive reserve there can be found all that is culturally and spiritually necessary for urban Natives to maintain and proclaim their identities. Meanwhile, many Native migrants adopt the mainstream work ethos as a necessity for survival in the urban environment, a necessity they see as an adaptation not assimilation.

Within the urban Native community the revitalization of urban Native children's education is not a return to the past but an affirmation of the dynamic adaptation of Native cultures, the revitalization of the potential in all Natives, and the opening of new paths of learning for their coming generations. The urban Natives' education movements recalls what it was that the Native leaders of the nineteenth century wanted for their people, "Euro-Canadian's learning in order to survive ... schooling only, not a fundamental change in their way of life ... schooling, not refashioning" (Miller, 1989:106,107,108). The urban Native education curriculum indicates that Native education is moving from "being done for" to "being done with", a movement from the post-contact mainstream's *passive* education to the pre-contact Native controlled *active* education.

There are unfortunately a significant number of elderly urban Natives who have either been left on their own, abandoned by their families or their families have placed them in senior care facilities. Much of this inability to provide support for their seniors stems from the socio-economic conditions in which urban Native families live. Some elderly urban Natives see the acquisition of survival literacy as a possible means of helping themselves and others.

Chapter 5

Agism and Elderly Urban Natives

> *Education is a lifelong, continuous process requiring stable and consistent support. First Nations people of every age group require appropriate formal and informal opportunities for learning and for teaching* (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Education Commission, 1993, quoted in Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 3, 1996:445).

Introduction.

Agism is a type of prejudice, just as are sexism and racism. Agism was defined in the late 1960s by Robert Butler, Director of the U.S. National Institute of Aging as a "process of systematic stereotyping, of discriminating against people because they are old" (McDaniel, 1986:56). Agism also "refers to unequal opportunities for individuals as they grow older" (Atchley referenced in Rybash et al., 1995:34).

Many elderly urban Natives are the poorest members in the urban societies. They also face a number of other challenges such as discrimination, abuse, language problems and health care needs (Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, 1988; Hohn, 1986). Many elderly urban Natives, even though they have few or no literacy skills, have contributed to the growth of their urban Native cultural, educational and spiritual centres. Why? The answer is that underlying the elderly urban Natives is a well of dignity, determination and acceptance of their urban lifestyles. They have knowledge and wisdom that should be, and could be, brought into the struggle for social justice for all urban Natives.

In the fictive urban reserve's extended families, the status of the many Native elderly has reached the point where "concern has been raised ... that the respect for the aged

Native is diminishing and abuse increasing" (Hohn, 1988:10). This reflects the ever increasing mainstream attitude of "laissez-faire, survival-of-the-fittest, every man for himself concept of society, each individual theoretically having an equal opportunity to succeed" (p. 19). However, the elderly urban Native most often finds that success is reserved for the young.

Theorizing about the Elderly.

The early years of life, of the mainstream population, have been well studied, while agism, the process of growing old, is not fully understood "and until recently it has not been accorded much priority as an important process to be studied" (McDaniel, 1986:ix).

Smolak (1993) finds that the progress in research and the development of theories on adulthood and aging has been very slow and is "a relatively recent phenomenon" (p. 3). Markides and Mindel's (1987) analysis of the development of social gerontological theories confirms that these "have been recent and have been characterized by controversy, poor conceptualizations, and inadequate research designs for testing the proposed theories" (p. 24). Markides and Mindel provide a brief overview of the prevalent theories. The Disengagement Theory (1961), a functionalist theory, states that the withdrawal of the aging persons from the social system provides a " 'new equilibrium characterized by a greater distance and an altered type of relationship' " (Cumming and Henry quoted in Markides and Mindel, 1987:25). They find that theories such as Aged as Minority Theory (1953), Modernization Theory (1972), the Sociology of Age Stratification (1972) and the Exchange Theory (1975) "have developed without special attention to ethnic minority groups" (p. 44). For Markides and Mindel, the Double Jeopardy Hypothesis, which "predicts an interaction effect between two stratification

systems - one based on race or ethnicity and one based on age" (p. 44), provides a focus on the effects of discrimination by reason of ethnicity and age. One "ethnic" group that needs more study to understand the effect ethnicity has on the aging process is the elderly Natives who "are often a double minority" (Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, 1994:3).

The Needs and the Wisdom of the Elderly Urban Native.

The literacy level of the elderly urban Native has an effect on their socio-economic situation and access to health and social services. However, when approaching the subject of the illiterate Native elderly with the presumption that they need, and want, to learn to read and write, one should keep in mind what Fingeret (1983) wrote about illiterate adults:

> Many illiterate adults view reading and writing as only two of the many instrumental skill and knowledge resources that, combined, are required for daily life. Individuals create social networks that are characterized by reciprocal exchange; networks offer access to most of the resources individuals require, so that it is unnecessary to develop every skill personally. Therefore, many illiterate adults see themselves as interdependent; they contribute a range of skill and knowledge other than reading and writing to their networks (pp. 133-34).

There is no presumption that "adult education" is a paramount need of mainstream and Native elderly people in order to survive in their society. However, McClusky (1974) in his description of the needs of the mainstream elderly, saw education as having a "significant and potentially powerful role to play, [but] it must be supplemented by other kinds of measures in order to satisfy the basic requirements of the aging" (p. 331).

McClusky described some of the needs of the elderly; coping needs, expressive needs and contributive needs.

Coping needs involves having a basic education. Basic education means; the minimal ability to read, write and compute; to make legal decisions; and, "to make the most rewarding use of leisure time" (McClusky, 1974:332).

Expressive needs are those needs that involve activities that are in and of themselves a goal. Those activities may originate "in most people --- especially in the later years because of postponed desires --- there is a large domain of unexpressed and underexpessed talent and interest which, if properly cultivated, could be activated to enrich one's living" (p. 334). Rybash et al., (1995) refers to this as the "new beginning" (p. 282), when the elderly now have the time to pursue new challenges with "feelings of renewal, revitalization, enthusiasm, and increased vigour" (p. 282).

Contributive needs are based on the "assumption that older people have a need to give ... a desire to be of service" (McClusky 1974:334). The old are often touted as wise, but, "age is not per se necessarily a mark of wisdom ... Some older people are wise, and some are less wise, and some are stupid ... [nevertheless] ... in the dimension of wisdom there is a resource that society greatly needs and has not yet learned to exploit" (p. 335). Smolak (1993) states, contrary to other findings, that the elderly's "greater emphasis on real-life solutions to real-life problems" (p. 387) can be viewed as an indication of wisdom. Although the concept of wisdom is difficult to measure, Table 19 provides some specific criteria that are currently being used to evaluate the idea of wisdom (Smolak, 1993:387-8).

Table 19
Specific Dimensions of Wisdom

1. Rich Factual Knowledge:	General and specific knowledge about the conditions of life and its variations.
2. Rich Procedural Knowledge:	General and specific knowledge about strategies of judgement and advice concerning life matters.
3. Life-span Contextualism	Knowledge about the multiple contexts of life and their interrelationships over the life span.
4. Relativism:	Knowledge about different values, goals and priorities.
5. Uncertainty:	Knowledge about the relative indeterminacy and unpredictability of life and ways to manage uncertainty

Source: Smolak (1993) p. 388. Original source Smith, J. & Baltes, P. (1990). *Development Psychology, 26,* 494-505.

Elderly Natives have, through good times and bad, accumulated a great deal of information and knowledge which leads to the possession of practical wisdom. Practical wisdom allows them to use these accumulated personal assets in their daily activities and to provide guidance to the young, and sometimes the not so young. Many of the elderly want to continue to contribute to their society for "in the dimension of wisdom there is a resource that society greatly needs and has not yet learned to exploit" (McClusky, 1974:335; Rybash et al., 1995:282). The elderly Natives, in the urban and reserve settings, have the wisdom to provide real-life solutions to real-life problems. Wisdom is seen as having expertise and experience in the practical aspects of life.

Towards a Theory of Survival Literacy.

Faith (1996) told of the time when she went to visit her uncle and aunt and her aunt offered her some soup:

> "She had made a pot of soup for us to eat so I'm looking down and I see green balls floating around in the soup. I says, 'Auntie what kind of soup did you make?' 'Oh,' she says, 'Uncle bought some barley and he said that's what

> they look like.' So I says, 'Let me see the bag.' So I look at the bag and here it is tapioca seeds. So my uncle says 'it looked just like barley.' We had a good laugh and then we had tapioca soup for supper that day. The elderly Natives who don't read and write often buy things by how they look 'cause they can't read the labels. They either go by the colour of the packages or they go by what they look like. So, with the tapioca they bought for nothing, they don't use it and it means they wasted their money."

Faith's experience with her aunt, although humorous, points out one of the dangers faced by the elderly Natives who lack reading skills. Many elderly urban Natives need prescribed medication and, if they lack reading skills and live alone, they may not remember what they were told about their prescription instructions and directions . Then, as the University of Toronto's Centre for Health Promotion study found, "about one in four admissions of seniors - results from misuse of prescription drugs" (Edmonton Journal, November 25, 1996:A14). A March 1997 report on Aboriginal seniors and medication use observed that "those [Aboriginals] who could not read English were more likely to not use their medication as directed" (Nechi Institute, 1997:53).

Jessie (1996) cautions that the elderly were "raised in the old school mentality where the word of doctors, or so-called white professionals, was law. They [the elderly] would never question a doctor's judgement even if the judgement was wrong." Jessie sees the need to empower elderly Natives. "People shouldn't be dictating to you and you just accept whatever it is. [The elderly] have the right to challenge ... Compliance ... can be dangerous to them."

There is the need for the elderly to exert far more influence on the circumstances of their immediate surroundings and their society as a whole. Older people usually have less power by reason of less income, less plasticity, a decrease in physical vigour (Bee, 1996;

Rybash et al., 1995; Smolak, 1993), and they often lack access to political and economic resources. Older people may be less powerful; however, "they are not powerless. With the right kind of education their power decline can be arrested, if not reversed" (McClusky, 1974:336). Older people can, through educational experience, become effective agents for social change; "older people have a vital need for that kind of education that will enable them to exert influence in protecting and improving their own situation, and in contributing to the well-being of the larger society" (p. 336).

The prevalent view of the elderly is that the elderly lower their expectations of what they can do and avoid losses of self-esteem and personal identity by ignoring or side-stepping difficult problems and situations (Bee, 1996; Rybash et al., 1995). If the lack of education is a contributing factor to their avoidance of difficult situations, then "the right kind of education ... will enable them to exert influence in protecting and improving their own situation, and in contributing to the well-being of the larger society" (McClusky, 1974:336).

In McClusky's view there is a need for transcendence in older people, that is, many older people desire to find a sense of personal fulfilment in their later years "to become something better than he has been, or to attain a stage of being higher than he has heretofore occupied" (p. 337). Many of the elderly eschew their physical condition and allow "social and mental sources of pleasure and self respect [to] transcend physical comfort alone" (p. 337). Within the fictive urban reserve there are opportunities for the urban elderly Natives to be effective agents for social change. However, without the ability at least to read English, many of the elderly will not have the opportunity to access

the knowledge necessary to bring about social change that reflects their cultural, spiritual and community values. Some of today's elderly urban Natives, through survival literacy, could be empowered, could become leaders in bringing about changes that are beneficial to themselves and more significantly, to those future elderly who now lack survival literacy skills.

Support for Elder Education has come from the United Nations. On August 6, 1983, the United Nations World Assembly on Aging adopted the *International Plan of Action on Aging*. Section (g) Education, two of the recommendations of this document recognized that:

> *Recommendation 44.* - Educational programmes featuring the elderly as the teachers and transmitters of knowledge, culture and spiritual values should be developed.
>
> In many instances, the knowledge explosion is resulting in information obsolescence, with in turn, implications of social obsolescence These changes suggest that the educational structures of society must be expanded to respond to the educational needs of an entire life-span. Such an approach to education would suggest the need for continuous Adult Education, including preparation for aging and the creative use of time. In addition, it is important that the aging, along with the other age groups, have access to basic literacy education, as well as to all education facilities available in the community.
>
> *Recommendation 45.* - As a basic human right, education must be made available without discrimination against the elderly. Educational policies should reflect the principle of the right to education of the aging, through the appropriate allocation of resources and in suitable educational programmes. Care should be taken to adapt educational methods to the capacities of the elderly, so that they may participate equitably in and profit from any education provided. The need for continuing Adult Education at all levels should be recognized and encouraged. Consideration should be given to the idea of university education for the elderly (Lowy & O'Connor 1986: 220-221).

Survival Literacy - a Working Hypothesis.

The literacy level of the elderly urban Native has an effect on their socio-economic situations and access to health and social services. However, there is no presumption that "adult education" is a paramount need of mainstream and Native elderly people in order to survive in their society. On the other hand, if the elderly urban Natives wish to transform how society treats them then the acquisition of literacy used by the mainstream members is a necessity.

I restate my working hypothesis for elderly urban Natives survival literacy: when illiterate and marginalized elderly urban Natives acquire survival literacy, they will assist themselves in maintaining, or regaining, their independence and increase their effectiveness to actively and meaningfully contribute their wisdom, skills and experience to their urban society's evolution.

Summary.

Agism and the various theories on aging indicate that the majority of elderly people gradually withdraw, disengage, from their social systems. Many elderly urban Natives on the other hand, remain, for the most part, active participants within their urban social systems.

It is clear that many elderly urban Natives wish to remain active members of their urban Native community. Many elderly urban Natives, given the opportunity to obtain survival literacy, could become more effective in assisting themselves. Given the generous sharing nature of most of the elderly Natives, those who have helped themselves to acquire access

to available seniors' programmes, could then be a source of support for those elderly who have been isolated.

Chapter 6

Discussion

Introduction.

In this chapter I summarize the design, purpose and methodology employed in this study. I reflect on my experiences in carrying out this study and I offer recommendations for further study of literacy and elderly urban Natives.

Summary of the Study.

The most significant aspect of this study is that there have been no other studies, as far as could be determined at the time I began this study, focusing on literacy and elderly urban Natives. This finding is not surprising since it is only in the mid to late 1980s that literacy and the elderly in the mainstream society seem to have become a serious issue of study and action.

The purpose of this study then was to determine if survival literacy was, or should be, a necessity for elderly urban Natives. The selection of the methodology for this study posed several questions. The first question was how to separate myself from the study. I am an elderly urban Native, according to this study's definition. Therefore there is my personal bias to recognize. As well, I am on the boards of a Native Seniors' centre, an Aboriginal Veterans Society and I am a committee member of an Aboriginal Mental Health group. To add to the mix I have been interviewed for two studies on Aboriginal seniors and Aboriginal health issues. The second question then was what methodology would allow me to be objective rather than subjective about an issue I consider to be relevant to the situation of elderly urban Natives.

I had considered participant observation as the primary means of study. However, I decided that this would limit the scope of the study. It was suggested that the case study method would be more suitable. I did not find a case study method that was wholly suited to my perceived needs so I combined several case study methods.

Combining case study methods allowed me to develop several aspects. The first was a historical time dimension. Through the historical dimension of the study I defined Native education as pre-contact *active* and post-contact *passive* education. Furthermore, the historical dimension provided the means to follow some of the major changes in Native education from pre-contact to the present. A second method allowed the introduction of a new field of study, literacy and the elderly urban Native. And finally, the case study method allowed the development of a working hypothesis "for later full-scale study" (Goode and Hatt, 1952:338).

Interviews.

The use of interviews and the Native voices, from the past and the present, provided the essence and substance in this study. One can perhaps see the irony of this in this study; many of the illiterate elderly Natives speak to us through the medium of the printed word!

Findings.

There are three interrelated themes in this study; Native education, Native migration and the elderly urban Native.

Education of Native children, on the reserve or in the urban setting, is now under the control of or influenced by Native people. The effect of the return of *active* Native education is reflected in the increasing number of Native students attending universities.

Reserve Natives migrating to the urban setting do so for a variety of economic and non-economic reasons. Many Native people in the urban setting maintain their traditional social and cultural values through the urban fictive reserve's social and cultural activities. The fictive reserve, for many Natives who are permanently established in the urban settings, aids them in maintaining their cultural identity and self-esteem.

There are a number of problems that some elderly urban Natives have had to confront in the urban setting. The notion of the extended family as a means of social and financial support for elderly family members is breaking down under financial and generational pressures. The result is that there is a trend for some Native families to abandon their elderly members. Despite the emphasis on family, Native seniors do not live in especially large households. Studies have shown that 25% of prairie Native seniors live alone.

Some elderly urban Natives who lack survival literacy are living on their own. Some illiterate elderly urban Natives live with family members who also have limited English reading skills. In both such cases, the elderly may not receive all the social and financial assistance to which they are entitled.

Many elderly urban Natives are concerned about their peers that lack basic literacy abilities. These elderly urban Natives often lack access to critical social and health resources. Many elderly urban Natives do not want to be "studied" rather, they want the opportunity to add improvements to their social, health and cultural environments within their urban settings.

There are some elderly urban Natives who are raising their grandchildren. Many of these grandparents are single Native urban female seniors that may have one or two grandchildren living with them while they try to survive on extremely limited incomes.

There is a need for survival literacy for some elderly urban Natives. They are often the ones that received the mainstream's *passive* education. Some elderly urban Natives have enrolled in Native adult education facilities; however, for many the pressures of family obligations brought a halt to their pursuit of literacy.

Reflections on the Findings.

The voices of many of the elderly urban Natives are muted, due to a lack of direct, readily accessible ways to make their ideas and concerns known to those who control social, health and financial policy. This lack of communication links precludes many elderly urban Natives from influencing critical policies and programmes that directly affect them.

My study suggests that survival literacy could contribute to the lessening of this lack of communication. Although this study focused on today's elderly urban Natives other study and census data indicates that there are many urban Natives now in their 30s and 40s who need survival literacy. They too may, without a literacy intervention, face similar difficulties to those that confront many elderly urban Natives today.

Recommendations for Further Study.

It should not be necessary to do a needs study to determine if elderly Natives have a literacy problem; it is self-evident. What is needed are solutions for the literacy problems facing the elderly. The first solution is to provide a survival literacy programme for elderly

urban Natives that is both relevant and culturally acceptable. The second solution is to employ current computer technology as a medium for elderly urban Natives to acquire survival literacy in a meaningful and constructive manner. The use of this medium, once learned, would provide elderly urban Natives a modern and expedient means to communicate their concerns and their solutions, to Federal and Provincial Governments and, if necessary, to an international audience of Native peoples.

Another solution is to develop a collaborative literacy learning program for elderly Natives that can incorporate both on-site and distance learning techniques.

Conclusion.

While the mainstream's education in the nineteenth and twentieth century grew and expanded to meet the increasing Canadian industrial demands, reserve education continued, until 1945, to follow a curriculum that failed to meet the needs of the Natives seeking mainstream occupations. Many of today's elderly urban Natives who "graduated" from the *passive* education era lack the survival literacy, and the concomitant independence, that would allow them to access and assess federal, provincial, municipal and business information that could make a difference in their day to day practical living.

This research only looked at today's elderly urban Natives. A review of the educational attainment in Table 8 and the fertility rates in Table 9 (pages 58 and 59) provide the evidence that there are many Native persons today who will be tomorrow's literacy deficient elderly.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

Questionnaire Set 1: Interview Questions for Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments, and for Native and Community Organizations.

Part A.

The following questions form the basis for interviews with the three levels of government.

(1) Are there any literacy programmes for elderly urban Natives?
(2) What educational services or programmes are now provided for elderly urban Natives?
(3) Are there any education programmes under consideration to promote improved literacy for the elderly urban Natives, and if so, at what stages of development are they?
(4) Have any elderly urban Natives been asked about their literacy needs?
(5) Is there a policy or transition programme to assist those Natives who choose to live in an urban setting?

(6) (Question only for DIAND) In 1966 the Honourable Arthur Laing, then minister of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, stated that "Indian Affairs is not sure that they have a continuing responsibility when Indians come to the city. It is not good to chase after a person to make sure he won't make an error." The question is, has there been any significant change, or changes, since 1966 in the Department's position with regard to those Natives that choose to live in an urban environment?

Questionnaire Set 2: Native organizations, Native social organizations and Community Organizations.

(1) Do you have adult literacy programmes?
(2) If so, do any of the programmes address the possible literacy needs of elderly urban Natives?
(3) Have any elderly urban Natives been asked about their literacy needs?
(4) Has your organization any elderly urban Natives as consultants regarding the literacy (or other) needs of elderly urban Natives?
(5) Does your organization encourage elderly urban Natives to participate in your organization's policy implementation or activities that are designed to highlight the literacy (or other) needs of elderly urban Natives?
(6) Does your organization have any programmes to assist Natives in the transition from a reserve or rural setting to the urban setting?

Questionnaire Set 3: Interview Questions for Elderly Urban Natives

A culturally appropriate introduction should precede the interview.

These questions are to be considered as initial guidelines questions. The questions have been divided into three parts:

Part A are the opening common questions to be asked of all interviewees.
Part B are the questions to be asked of interviewees who deem themselves to be illiterate.
Part C are questions for those interviewees who deem themselves to be literate.

Part A.

(1) How old are you?
(2) How many years have you lived in the city?
(3) When did you come to the city?
(4) Did you receive any assistance from any government or social agency to assist you in your transition to the urban setting?
(5) Have you lived in the city all the time?
(6) Do you leave the city for long periods of time?
(7) If you leave the city, where do you go?

(8) How many years did you go to school?
(9) What grade did you finish?
(10) Where did you go to school?

(11) How many people live with you?
(12) Who are they?

(13) Have you ever been asked to participate in any federal, provincial, municipal or Native organizations regarding elderly urban Natives needs?
(14) Do you now, or did you ever participate in any political activity that centred on the needs of the elderly urban Natives?
(15) (If the answers are no to the two above questions then) Do you feel that you have been left out by the leaders of federal, provincial, municipal or Native organizations when decisions that effect the elderly urban Natives have been made?

(16) What language, or languages, do you use in your home?
(17) Do you read and write English?

Part B.

(1) Do you have someone that reads and writes English for you when it is needed?
(2) Is there more than one person who does this for you?
(3) Are they related to you?

Part C.

(1) Do you do your own bill paying and banking?
(2) What is your opinion of the literacy problem, if there is one, for other elderly urban Natives?
(3) Who should be providing a solution to elderly urban Natives illiteracy?