Two Rows: Assimilative Transformations Impacting Six Nations' Educational and Communal Circles

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Abstract

This study examines the current educational and community realities faced by a large First Nations community in Canada. First, the research explores the voices of youth and parents to determine the current issues and trends of an Aboriginal community. Second, the work discusses the transformation of Six Nations youth and parents and its impacts on student educational and community life. Third, I relate my personal experiences as a First Nation student, parent, and community agency representative.

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CHAPTER ONE: MY BRIEF AUTO ETHNOGRAPHY

Parents expect the birth of their child to be a time of life full of joy. The fantasy for some Six Nations of the Grand River Territory (commonly referred to as Six Nations) families of the perfect, beautiful child with eminent future successes quickly dissipates as the realities and hurdles of "reserve life" emerge. As a child raised at Six Nations (often called "on reserve" or, when I grew up, "the bush"), I remember having both parents at home. My mother was a stay-at-home mom very involved in our extracurricular activities and school environment and my dad worked with his buddies constructing houses. Along with those experiences are the frightening memories of alcohol abuse and many times of hiding at my grandparents' house.

As we entered into elementary school, my father landed a job off-reserve at a private corporation, while my mother was hired as a manager to assist our elderly. My first exposure to others' constructed identity of First Nation people was transferring to an off-reserve Catholic elementary school (the transfer was a result of an asbestos contamination of our elementary schools). From my friends on-reserve, I was viewed as one of the "rich Indians" (I assume because both my parents were employed, we owned a beautiful, large home and I remained off-reserve to attend school), while my newfound acquaintances in the off-reserve school viewed me as "an Indian—the people who do not work." These vivid recollections influenced and confused my developing understanding of "self" and what it meant to be a member of Six Nations.

After elementary school, I remained off-reserve; at the time there were no secondary educational institutions on reserve to attend. Had there been a secondary school on reserve, I highly doubt my parents would have allowed me to attend.

Elementary and secondary academics did not pose much of a problem, only that I needed extra "catching up" assistance following my transfer to the off-reserve school. However, social problems arose when I entered grade 9. I recall the blatant racism and Otherness of being called an "apple" (meaning I was red or Native-looking on the outside, but my friends and choices were white in thought) by some Native students. I recall one girl who wanted to physically fight with me because she told me I acted like I was better than others. High school was a time of self-discovery, confusion and was not the happiest of times on my personal trek, but my experiences fostered my personal self-development. I fast-tracked in high school, taking independent learning courses in addition to my eight scheduled classes. I applied to university and was accepted at Windsor University to study Criminology. If high school was bewilderment, at university, I entered into a world of solitude and absolute perplexity.

My postsecondary experience was a time of independence, a time of confronting racism and dispelling stereotypes. More importantly for me, I was defining my identity, and my personal aspirations. Following university education, I returned to Six Nations to live. I commenced my justice career; first, I supported families involved in family court proceedings; from there I landed a liaison position at a correctional institution; and finally focused on community policing and crime prevention. My 10-year career has been relatively short but my educational experiences have been complicated and contradictory. Growing up I observed our culture as family oriented; we trusted each other and shared resources yet our community was tainted with alcoholism and physical abuse. Today, Six Nations alcohol issues are compounded with substance abuse, there is an increase in domestic abuse, and our community has transformed into a new world of aggressiveness,

assertiveness, and "is imbued with a post-colonial consciousness, or an awareness of colonization" (Newhouse & Belanger, 2010, p. 9).

Situating myself amongst the transformation, I struggle to define what it means to be a "Native person" (I use Native because it's the common tag at Six Nations). I recall during Cayuga language class, my teacher told us the Two Row Wampum was an understanding that First Nation canoed parallel to European settlers and that both cultures were to cohabit simultaneously, respecting one another's cultures. Mutual respect was fundamental to the Two Row Wampum philosophy. Nowadays with the increased criminal activity, low levels of educational achievements, and aggressive social issues, I wonder: Do we really understand and reciprocate the Two Row Wampum philosophy of respect for our Western counterparts and our Six Nations culture?

Over the past 6 years, I have experienced many things. One of the most profound experiences has been the birth and parenting of my budding young son. I have also spent a great deal of time and energy intervening with children and youth involved in the Six Nations education system. In addition to my roles as parent, a partner, and community member, I have taken on the role of graduate student. Together, these experiences have been my catalyst to understanding the meanings of being a forward-thinking, optimistic, educated Aboriginal person in a complex world.

Purpose of the Study

This research afforded me the unique opportunity to research something that is meaningful to me. Firstly, it has allowed me to hear the stories of Six Nations community youth and parents and to explore the following question: What are the current pervasive educational and community realities at Six Nations? The educational and

community realities are mapped on the Haudenosaunee Creation Story's Tree of Peace (which represented strength), in particular, the developmental stages of a tree. Secondly, having an understanding of those current realities, I employed the Two Row Wampum ideology to examine the transformation process that has taken place at Six Nations. Finally, this research allowed me to relate my experiences as a parent, community member, and graduate student to those of the participants. To understand how this paper relates to transformation, I depicted some current realities playing out at Six Nations. Throughout my professional and academic career, I have often heard both Native and non-Native people share singular, tangible "factors" requiring attention, and this would promote Six Nations youth academic success. Participating in many community committee and roundtable discussions, there has been an abundance of suggested remedies: enhancing educators' teaching styles; addressing substance addictions; eradicating the First Nation cigarette trade; parent outreach programs; and "knowing the culture" (Green, 2007). Six Nations has communally taken a singular approach for the last 25 years and dependent on the survey being completed, is ranked either at the top of alarming statistics or at the bottom of excellence. The singular approach historically does not fit within Six Nations epistemology. Six Nations' cultural view was intricate, intimate, and interconnected.

With regards to the education system, Toulouse (2008) used an interconnected approach and discussed many factors associated with success for Aboriginal students, specifically: the importance of educators with high expectations who truly care for Aboriginal students; classroom environments that honour Aboriginal students' culture, language, world view, and knowledge; teaching practices that reflect Aboriginal learning

styles; and schools that have strong partnerships with the Aboriginal community. Brigham and Gouthro (2006) added to the interconnected approach and stated there needs to be a vision or common understanding for Six Nations, "understanding knowledge and success is something that is mutually constructed, shared and negotiated, rather than a commodity that can be packaged, consumed or exported" (p. 81). Years ago our Ancestors had a vision and it was to provide for the Seven Generations yet to come; however, through colonization that vision has been blurred. Six Nations is quite diverse and there are multiple visions, dependent on one's cultural interpretations, and I believe until there is a mutually constructed, inclusive understanding of what it means to be Haudenosaunee (the Cayuga word for People of the Longhouse), Six Nations community members will continue to struggle in Canada's diverse and complex world.

For the remainder of this thesis, I discuss the contemporary realities of Six Nation youth and parents. These realities are then mapped on my developed Tree analogy and, using the Two Row Wampum, I will then demonstrate how transformation has taken place. Finally, I examine my own realities as a parent, community-agency service provider, and graduate student. This thesis is structured in five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces my research focus and sets the stage for the remainder of my writing. In chapter 2, I provide a glance of Six Nations' history, governmental policies proclaimed for Aboriginal people, the emergence of residential schools, and the relationship between Iroquois culture and mainstream schooling. In the latter part of chapter 2, I provide a snapshot of current Six Nation educational trends along with societal and health trends. Chapter 3 details my research methodology and identifies how my research is positioned within the larger Student Success Research Consortium research project. Chapter 4

includes an extensive illustration of Six Nation youths' challenges and successes. In chapter 5, I explore participant's voices and personally relate my constructed transformative reality against the Two Row Wampum understanding, and finally discuss recommended next steps for Six Nations' holistic wellness.

Theoretical Framework

Using the Haudenosaunee Creation Story (see Appendix A) and Tree of Peace developmental growth process (North American Indian Travelling College, 1984) analogies along with the historical Two Row Wampum (Jake Thomas Learning Centre, 2004), which states First Nations people will canoe parallel to their Western counterparts but never cross into their boat, I illustrate how historical impositions have transformed the Six Nation community who once shared an inclusive, value-based approach to community success but now are floundering in uncertainty. Framing participants' words using a tree analogy and utilizing the Two Row Wampum framework allowed me to examine participants' voices and my personal understanding in a comprehensive way that recognizes the duality of our respective experiences.

This duality refers to the "binary worlds" experienced by Native and non-Native people. The participants' voices illustrate the crossing of the Two Rows. Using the Two Row Wampum philosophy, along with transformational learning theory, a framework is provided for the examination of the Six Nations participants' experience. This examination provides a vessel for transformation. Scott (2005), in *A Way of Seeing: Transformation for a New Century*, details the word "transformation"; *trans* means across, beyond, to the other side, through; and *form* means structure. Transform, then, means to change or go beyond or across structure or to change completely or essentially

in composition or structure (Scott, 2005). First Nations have gone through numerous changes, (Waldram, 1997; Battiste, 1998; Jake Thomas Learning Centre, 2004). Many would argue that imperialism and colonialism to Western culture from the Two Row Wampum perspective (i.e., from the other canoe) has had a profound impact on Native culture (Battiste, 1998; Graveline, 1998; Paquette & Fallon, 2010; Toulouse, 2008). Both positive and negative impacts have transformed Six Nations' culture in a way that has become unrecognizable as a Native culture in the contemporary world.

In the case of Six Nations, the struggle to reaffirm Native identity in a highly assimilated community is difficult. How do we transform in a modern day world into a community that honours traditional values? The answer to this question lies within the transformational learning theory. Scott's (2005) transformational learning theory parallels Paulo Freire's (1970) theory which illustrated the transformation of poor peasants in Brazil who, while learning to read and write, shifted from a magical consciousness to a critical consciousness, what he termed conscientization. For Freire, the word critical was more than constant questioning; it included an awareness of the social forces that are running our lives (p.154). Similarly, for nations indigenous to Canada, the first contact and material trade were foreign but soon became social forces influencing First Nations' societies (North American Indian Travelling College [NAITC], 1984).

Jack Mezirow (1991) sought to explicate Freire's conscientization and showed that a change in perspective constitutes a transformation. It seems that adults who undergo a substantive trigger event (e.g., loss of a child, a divorce) and who go through dialogue in a safe and supportive social space also go through a kind of transformative process that, when it is made conscious, is powerful and enduring (Scott, 2005). Over the

past 500 years, Six Nations has undergone substantive colonizing events with governmental policies and disparaging "social forces" that have impacted First Nation fundamental beliefs and values (Cadwallader, 2004; Newhouse & Belanger, 2010). The Six Nation community has transformed from a communal, one canoe society to a convoluted, fast-paced community. Incorporating tenets from Haudenosaunee peoples' Creation Story and the Two Row Wampum philosophy and understanding First Nation "trigger events" (Scott, 2005), I examine the profound transformation or "crossing of canoes and vessels" happening at Six Nations.

Limitations of the Study

"Living it" and understanding historical impacts and current realities places me in a very different position in my research compared to that of an outsider or someone of another culture who might be doing research in a First Nation community. I obviously have a unique perspective and interpretation of this research which serves as both a limitation and a strength. This study is limited to a select group of 45 participants and is not representative of the entire youth and parent populations. The youth included in this research have achieved educational success; youth who have encountered educational and community challenges and adults who were willing to share their successes and challenges within the last 5 years.

While the 45 participants provide a good cross-section of Six Nations youth and adults, it is important to note that due to Six Nations being a close community, all of the participants have had previous contacts and connections with me. These contacts and connections have included being fellow community members, working relationships through services provided as part of my work, and other such community connections.

Furthermore, it is important to note that I do not claim that the voices included in this research represent all of the Six Nations community and they should not be construed as such. The significance with Six Nations is that most First Nation communities in Ontario are either Ojibway, Cree, Nishnawbe, Delaware, Chippewa or one distinct nation, therefore, one system. Six Nations is the only First Nation community comprised of six nations: Mohawks, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, Senecas, and Tuscaroras, all with their own language, history and concerns.

My research participants are shaped by the historical, political, social, and cultural negotiations our ancestors engaged in and those events inform and influence current realities. The experiences shared by the participants are specific to the Haudenosaunee people, those presently residing at Six Nations. Six Nations is a Nation that did not surrender all historical agreements or treaties with the federal government. Therefore, my research cannot be generalized with other First Nations communities, since many First Nations have surrendered historical treaties and have their own distinct identities and contexts. We cannot take the research and expect other First Nations to be synonymous with Six Nations' realities. However, it is hoped that other First Nations communities may be able to draw upon what is revealed in this work.

Importance of the Study

This research reflects the underpinnings of a First Nation culture that has existed in North America for over 500 years (Paquette & Fallon, 2010). There are lessons to be extrapolated from the stories shared of the transformational shifts from the spiritual, connected Creation Story and respectful co-habitants of the Two Row Wampum ideology to contemporary Six Nations.

Chapter Summary

Prior to delving into the participants' realities, it is necessary that an understanding of the historical context that contributed to shaping the community be conveyed. Chapter 2 explores the significant history of Six Nations and highlights five assimilative policies (or what could be identified as "trigger events" using Scott's (2005) characterization) that transformed Six Nations cultural ideologies. Chapter 2 concludes with a discussion of Six Nations' contemporary educational and community issues.

It is necessary to understand the many interchangeable labels for First Nations People, such as Indigenous, Native, Original Peoples, and Aboriginal. Throughout my research, I will use both Haudenosaunee—which is specific to Six Nations and means People of the Longhouse—Native, and First Nations, as it denotes our people were the first inhabitants of North America. Chapter 2 often utilizes the term Aboriginal. Most authors refer to First Nation people as Aboriginal, which is consistent with the Section 35 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom's definition of First Nation people. I chose to remain close to Six Nations' significant history and the traditional name my Ancestors passed on. Our Haudenosaunee Ancestors were oral in their negotiations, with few documents supporting early discussions. I wanted my research to be symbolic of Haudenosaunee culture and have chosen to honour my Ancestors who used the strength of their voice to negotiate for generations yet to come.

CHAPTER TWO: FIRST NATIONS HISTORY

It is important to understand that within this thesis I draw primarily upon Indigenous researchers, as their work is most relevant to my research. Due to oral history traditions, there are times when I rely heavily upon conversations with community members who are willing to share their knowledge of our history and customs. Some of the sources and approaches that I incorporated into my consideration of the relevant literature are not aligned with traditional academic conventions but my thesis seeks to balance between First Nations' ways of knowing and academia.

There is an incredible irony concerning Canada's First Nation peoples. On the one hand, there is considerable oral-history evidence from First Nation peoples (reaffirmed by archaeological evidence) indicating that Native peoples have indeed populated the continent since "time immemorial"—long enough for aboriginal ancestors to have witnessed the ice ages that affected the North American continent between 10,000 and 40,000 years ago (McMillan, 1998). On the other hand, the European (and academic) bias toward paper documentation, coupled with the fact that Aboriginal cultures have been oral and/or used other media (e.g., wampum belts) to transmit information from generation to generation, have left Aboriginal peoples among those peoples who, from the European perspective, have no history.

Stanley (1983) stated "because the Indian had no written records when the first white man reached this continent, he was dismissed by the white man as having no past" (p. 1). European histories of North America, and depictions of Aboriginals within it, have themselves changed considerably as the relationship between Whites and

Aboriginals have varied over the last 500 years. Another historian, K.R.Howe, 1779, as cited in The Historians' Indian: Native Americans in Canadian Historical Writing noted, "history is what we choose to see, the past has no independent existence. Indeed, it might well be argued that history has some of the same functions in western cultures as mythology does in Indian cultures: it validates the past in terms that are meaningful for the present" (Howe, 1779, p. 3). Hale (1883), who wrote *The Iroquois Book of Rights*, was a single voice that pushed against the dominant voices of his contemporaries by insisting that the characterization of First Nations peoples as "savages" who lacked "intelligence" and need to be "civilized" was inaccurate given their highly complex language, the sophisticated structure of the Iroquoian League, and other customs.

In the early 1600s, significant treaties (agreements) commenced the erosion of First Nation culture (Newhouse, 2010; Dickason and McNab, 2009) discuss the content and impact of many of these early treaties and understandings. There were five significant historical events that contributed to the paradigm shift those key events were, the Two Row Wampum of 1613; Haldimand Treaty of 1784; Indian Act of 1867; White Paper of 1969 and Red Paper of 1970; and the Constitution Act of 1982 (or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, Section 35). In 1924, Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC) sanctioned Six Nations Elected Band Council as the administrative body responsible of federal monies (Six Nations Elected Band Council, 2010). It is essential to have an understanding of Six Nations' historical trigger events to appreciate the impacts on the Six Nations community. The first event was the Two Row Wampum of 1613.

Two Row Wampum of 1613

The Two Row Wampum, so I have been told by Six Nations Elders, was revered for us, the future generations. The Two Row Wampum understanding was discussed as a respectful relationship between Haudenosaunee and Europeans cohabiting in North America. Six Nations' Cayuga Chief Jake Thomas described the meaning of the Two Row Wampum:

> one purple row of beads represents the path of the natives' canoe which contains their customs and laws. The other row represents the path of the Whiteman's vessel, the sailing ship, which contains his customs and laws. The meaning of the parallel paths is that neither boat should outpace the other, and the paths should remain separate and parallel forever, that is, as long as the grass grows, the rivers flow, the sun shines, and will be everlasting, and they shall always renew their treaties. (Jake Thomas Learning Centre, 2004).

Almost two centuries later, the Haldimand Treaty of 1784, acknowledged and promised an extensive landmass for Six Nations culture and their relationship to the land.

Haldimand Treaty of 1784

According to the Six Nations Lands and Resources Department's (2010) *Land Rights: A Global Solution for the Six Nations of the Grand River*, the Haldimand Treaty promised,

> a tract consisting of 95,000 acres within their Beaver Hunting Grounds along the Grand River to the *Mohawk Nation and such others of the Six Nations Indians as wish to settle in that Quarter* in appreciation of their allegiance to the King and for the loss of their settlement in the American States. They were *to take*

> *possession of and settle upon the Banks of the River, commonly Ouse or Grand River, running into Lake Erie, allotting to them for that purpose Six Miles deep from each side of the River beginning at Lake Erie and extending in that proportion to the Head of the said River, which Them and Their Posterity are to enjoy forever* (p. 2).

The Haldimand Treaty signified a large landmass and supported Six Nations' connection to their culture and their relationship to land. The relationship to the land provided sustenance for Six Nations families. Over the last 300 years, land has been expropriated (Montour, 2010), so now Six Nations occupies a mere 22,000 acres parcel of land. The Two Row Wampum and Haldimand Treaty were significant agreements maintaining and promoting Six Nations' cultural sovereignty but the Indian Act of 1876 was the catalyst of Six Nations' transformative shift.

Indian Act of 1876

The Indian Act administered by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development defined registered Indians, their bands, and the system of Indian reserves and provided Canada's federal government exclusive authority to legislate in relation to "Indians and Lands Reserved for Indians" (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010; RCAP, 1996). Indigenous scholars and First Nation leaders refer to the Indian Act of 1876 as the document that promoted colonizing powers and stated that First Nations were now at the mercy of Canada's federal government. Marie Battiste (2000) wrote, "Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) continue to facilitate the devolution of Indigenous knowledge and heritage protection in Canada" (p. 213). As Battiste (2000) elaborates, "modern contexts of Eurocentrism are seriously endangering Indigenous knowledge.

Rapid economic development guided by Eurocentric theories have subordinated the strategy of sustainable development and denied equal protection of the law" (p. 191). A century later, the federal government of Canada continued its colonising integrations by attempting to impose the White Paper.

White Paper of 1969 and Red Paper of 1970

Jean Chretien, then Minister of Indian Affairs, developed the White Paper, a proposed policy to abolish the Indian Act, reject the land claims and assimilation of First Nations people into Canada's population with the "status of other ethnic minorities rather than a distinct group" (RCAP, 1996, as cited in Newhouse & Belanger, 2010). The White Paper was shelved and "Indian leaders reacted forcibly against the proposals claiming that federal officials ignored or minimized treaties and dismissed separate legal status for Indians that mapped out a future that envisioned Indians as part of the emerging multicultural society" (Newhouse & Belanger, 2010, p. 4). This opposition paper written by Harold Cardinal became known as the Red Paper. The Red Paper states,

> To Us who are Treaty Indians there is nothing more important than our Treaties, our lands and the well being of our future generations. The only way to maintain our culture is for us to remain as Indians. To preserve our culture it is necessary to preserve our status, rights, lands and traditions. Our treaties are the basis of our rights; however, the spirit and intent must be a guide to interpretation as opposed to the precise letter of a foreign language. (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1969, as cited in Newhouse & Belanger, 2010, p. 7)

The First People of Canada continue to be recognized as a distinct group upholding their treaties, cultures, and indigeneity (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). This proclamation is found in the Canadian Charter of Right and Freedoms.

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982

The most recent agreement involving the rights of First Nations in Canada was outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom (1982): "Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada," Section 35 states, "Recognition of existing aboriginal and treaty rights (1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed. The Charter of Rights and Freedom further defines "aboriginal peoples of Canada" (2) as the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada (p. 39). The constitutional recognition of Aboriginal peoples and the recognition of an inherent right to self-government remained contentious in some places but have been transformative, both for Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian nation (Denis, 1993). These assimilative cultural interferences have slowly eroded Six Nations identity.

Six Nations Confederacy

Called the Six Nations Confederacy by the French, and the League of Five Nations by the English, the Confederacy is properly called the Haudenosaunee Confederacy—meaning People of the Longhouse (NAITC, 1984). The Confederacy was founded by the prophet known as the Peacemaker with the help of Hiawatha. The exact date of the joining of the nations is unknown and is said to hark back to time immemorial, making it one of the first and longest-lasting participatory democracies in the world (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, 2010).

The Confederacy—made up of Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas—was intended as a way to unite the nations and create a peaceful means of decision making (Teacher's Guide to the Six Nations Confederacy, 2005). The Tuscarora nation joined the Confederacy in 1713 after being displaced from their traditional homelands in the Carolinas, and the Confederacy is commonly known as Six Nations of the Grand River Territory (Teacher's Guide to the Six Nations Confederacy, 2005). Each nation maintains its own council with Chiefs chosen by the Clan Mothers (responsible for the welfare of the Clan by overseeing the actions of the Chief and ensuring he performs his duties) and deals with its own internal affairs, but allows the Grand Council to deal with issues affecting the nations within the Confederacy (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, 2010). The NAITC's (1984) history book titled *Traditional Teachings* indicates that

> upon confederation each nation took on a role within the metaphorical longhouse with the Onondaga being the Keepers of the Fire. The Mohawk, Seneca and Onondaga acted as the Elder Brothers of the Confederacy while the Cayuga and Oneida were the Younger Brothers within Grand Council. The main meeting place was and still exists today on Onondaga territory. (p. 34-35)

Often described as the oldest participatory democracy on Earth, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's constitution is believed to be a model for the American Constitution (Newhouse & Belanger, 2010; Hill, 2009; Jake Thomas Learning Centre, 1998). While the American Constitution's emergence or relevance to First Nations governance continues to be debated, Confederacy democracy stands out as unique to other systems around the world because of its blending of law and values. For

Haudenosaunee, values, society, and nature are equal partners and each play an integral role.

The Confederacy was a matriarchy, meaning women held political power (Teacher's Guide to the Six Nations Confederacy, 2005) and a matrilineal culture which Clans (e.g. Turtle, Deer, Bear, Wolf, Snipe, and Beaver) are based upon. Traditional education of Aboriginal children was mainly an informal experiential process. Nevertheless, it provided young people with the specific skills and knowledge needed to learn their predetermined destiny (Newhouse & Belanger, 2010). The distinct Six Nations culture or Row shaped the dual paradigms the government perceived as "the Indian problem" (Dyck, 1991) and "the Canadian problem" (Denis, 1993). Both paradigms establish a notion of transformation and residential schooling was another citizenship attempt to encourage Aboriginal people to adopt Western cultural norms, leading to Western cultural absorption and assimilation into the Canadian body.

Residential Schooling

Resistance by First Nations to what colonial officials deemed the best avenue available to civilization and citizenship came to be known as the "Indian Problem" (Dyck, 1991). To address the Indian Problem, an established network of approximately 130 Indian Residential Schools were designed to replace Aboriginal languages with English and Aboriginal cultures with European cultures and Christianity (Newhouse & Belanger, 2010). There is substantial literature on the nature and impact of residential schooling that ranges from documenting personal accounts, the impacts on residential school survivors, and the intergenerational impacts (Dickason & McNab, 2009; Haig-Brown, 1995; Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003). It is outside the scope of this thesis to

systematically explore the residential school system but it is important to highlight the most salient aspects of residential schools and their impact on First Nations communities and individuals.

Despite the significant literature, it remains difficult to fully capture and articulate the damaging legacy of residential schooling. Children were removed from their families and homes at a young age, some to return 8 to 10 years later, some never to return (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2002). The ability to speak Aboriginal languages and the motivation to do so were severely undermined. Aboriginal students were taught to devalue everything Aboriginal and value anything Euro-Canadian (Haig-Brown, 1995; Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003).

The damage done by residential schools and transformation is evident today as Aboriginal people, long deprived of parenting skills, struggle with family responsibilities and have lost cultural connections to a once strong Indigenous identity (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2002); Grand Chief Dave Courchene Sr. put the experience succinctly:

> Residential schools taught self-hate. That is child abuse.... Too many of our people got the message and passed it on. It is their younger generations that appear before you [in court]. Educational protocols were designed with the goal of assimilating Aboriginal children and peoples and transforming them "from their helpless 'savage' state to the one of self-reliant 'civilization' and thus to make in Canada but one community—a non-Aboriginal, Christian one. Of all the steps taken to achieve this goal, none was more obvious a creature of Canada's paternalism toward Aboriginal people, its civilizing strategy, and its stern

> assimilative determination than the step of education, particularly education in residential schools. (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2004, para. 1).

According to many, the goal of the school was to "kill the Indian in the child so as to save the man" (Churchill, 2004, p.2). More than 90,000 people alive today attended residential schools, their legacy of trauma and abuse has devastated several generations of Aboriginal people, and litigation for damages is ongoing against churches and the Canadian government (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2007). In 2007, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the federal government acknowledged the Canadian government's residential school responsibility and compensated Aboriginal residential school survivors through the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). Despite financial compensation, residential schooling was directed towards transforming Aboriginal communities to fit into Canada's nation and was heavily influential.

Transformations at Six Nations

Many scholars write of the distinct shifts that have occurred within First Nation communities. Indigenous women often carried major responsibility for transmitting their cultures and assuring the well-being of their communities (Weaver, 2009). Women were never considered inferior in Aboriginal society and played central roles in sustaining Native American communities until the arrival of the Europeans (Battiste, 2000). Long and Dickason (2011) attributed factors of "European superiority; patriarchy: the rule of the father, manipulation of history by the literate" (p.61) for subordination of Indigenous women. Then men were considered their social, legal, and political masters (Long & Dickason, 2011). Any rights which women had were those derived through their

husbands. The law of England, for example, held that women did not have the right to vote, to own property, or to enter into contracts (Weaver, 2009).

This attitude was ultimately reflected in the Indian Act, which blatantly discriminated against women (Jacobs, 2005). This attitude toward women continued as part of the Indian Act. Section 15 (1) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms states: "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, age or mental or physical ability." Section 28 states: "Notwithstanding anything in this Charter, the rights and freedoms referred to in it are guaranteed equally to male and female persons (as cited in Long & Dickason, 2011, p.84). Although both sections state that discrimination on the basis of sex and race would contravene the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Indian Act continued to do exactly that. It was not until 3 years later that the discrimination provisions of the Indian Act would be amended. As the Native Women's Association of Canada wrote about the process of entrenching Aboriginal rights in the Constitution: "These arrangements are required to provide an arrangement that gives Native women and their children a destiny that they can participate in full and direct themselves" (Blackstock, 2003, p.68). Women fought battles in this century to win the right to vote and to be recognized as legal persons, and it was only within the past few decades that the final legal restrictions upon their right to contract and own property were lifted.

The imposition of new values and cultural standards brought about tremendous historical, social, and economic changes which, for the most part, were destructive to Aboriginal communities. Castellano (2002) wrote:

> The razing of Indian societies and their traditions is well-documented. Symptoms of this dislocation are evident in high rates of unemployment, suicide, alcoholism, domestic violence, and other social problems. This loss of tradition has seriously damaged the oral means of preserving cultural norms, and the values which prohibit deviant behaviours have been obscured and often forgotten. Native peoples often appear reluctant to adopt "white" solutions to problems that stem from the latter's apparent destruction of their societies (Long and Dickason, 2010).

Helen Betty Osborne's tragic story depicts ongoing struggles for First Nation women,

> Helen Betty Osborne was a 19-year-old Cree student from northern Manitoba. She dreamed of becoming a teacher. On November, 12, 1971, four white men abducted her from the streets of The Pas. She was sexually assaulted and brutally murdered. A judge said later "...the men who abducted Osborne believed that young Aboriginal women were objects with no human value beyond sexual gratification. . . . Betty Osborne would be alive today had she not been an Aboriginal woman. (Amnesty International Canada, 2007, p. 1)

The *Sisters in Spirit: Missing and Murdered Native Women in Canada* (2004) author Beverly Jacobs shared in a newspaper interview while studying law she realized the ways the law had failed to protect native people and, in many cases, had been used against them, such as the Indian Act of 1876, which set up a system that discriminated against native women's land ownership and legal status. It really opened up for me how European and Canadian law was used as a tool of assimilation. (p. 5)

Cindy Blackstock, a member of the Gitksan Nation, extends the work of Longstaffe and Jacobs and actively engaged with First Nations to courageously confront the gross inequities in resources and opportunities that deny First Nations families the same range of possibilities afforded as other Canadians to safely care for their children. Blackstock applauded the collective and growing movement in First Nations communities to work with non-Aboriginal peoples to ensure that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children are able to form relationships that respect their distinct identities with all their rights recognized; as she notes: "To me this is what reconciliation is, and it takes life in our personal and professional relationships and actions" (Ontario Association of Social Workers, 2008, para 2). Jordan's Principle is an excellent example of reconciliation in action. Jordan River Anderson was a First Nations boy who spent over 2 years unnecessarily in a hospital while provincial and federal governments argued over who should pay for his at-home care. The costs for Jordan's at-home care would have been paid by the province without question if Jordan was non-Aboriginal. Sadly, Jordan passed away at the age of 5, never having spent a day in a family home.

> In memory of Jordan, and with the support of Jordan's family and community, we created Jordan's Principle which simply says that where a jurisdictional dispute develops between federal and provincial governments around services for a First Nations child and those services are otherwise available to Canadian children, the government of first contact pays the bill and then figures out the jurisdictional dispute later. Jordan's principle became the most broadly supported First Nations children's policy in Canadian history bringing together First Nations leaders, political parties of all stripes, unions, corporations, youth, Elders and children's

> advocates and professionals to ensure a private member's motion in support of Jordan's Principle unanimously passed in the House of Commons on December 12, 2007. (Ontario Association of Social Workers, 2011, para. 8)

First Nation women and children have experienced transformational shifts, so too, have First Nation men.

Economic factors served as the initial catalyst for change within Aboriginal societies. Aboriginal people were first directed away from hunting into the economic order of the fur trade society (Newhouse & Belanger, 2010; Jake Thomas Learning Centre, 2004). Gradually, more and more of them became removed from the land and went into settlements with a welfare economy. These changes to Aboriginal lifestyle distorted the traditional Aboriginal male and female roles. With the loss of Indian male roles and as a result of being reduced to a state of powerlessness and vulnerability which their own culture deemed highly inappropriate, Indian men came to experience severe role strain (Jake Thomas Learning Centre, 2004; LaPraire, 1987). McCaskill (1983) sums up Aboriginal transformation in the following:

> After Indians were no longer useful for economic or military purposes, the government established a system of reserves designed to "protect and civilize" native people in order that they might eventually assimilate. ... In theory, Indians were to learn to exercise self-determination and assume responsibilities for their own affairs. … [But] encouraged to become self-sufficient, the Indian was prevented from being so in almost every area—economic, political, and administrative. (p. 290)

There have been extensive historic transformational shifts to address the "Indian Problem" and despite the systems of colonization, Six Nations has developed strength and resilience.

Six Nations' Contemporary Contexts

Six Nations is one of 133 First Nations in Ontario (Chiefs of Ontario, 2008). More compelling, Six Nations along with the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (Tyendinaga) are the two remaining schools in Ontario federally funded by the colonial empire of Indian and Northern Affairs. Mendelson (2008) writes that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has been involved with school administration since the early 1970s through federal funding for students normally resident on reserve to attend schools (whether the schools are on or off-reserve); student support services such as transportation, counselling, accommodation, and financial assistance; and school administration and evaluation. The federal funding formula under which INAC funds band-operated First Nations (and Six Nations) schools was established in 1988 and has not been revised since that date (Six Nations Education Commission, 2004). All other Aboriginal educational systems are band-operated schools with integrated provincial curriculum.

In 2003, Six Nations attempted to take on their own education system through establishing the Six Nations Education Commission (SNEC; Six Nations Education Commission, 2004). SNEC was tasked to prepare a Report to the Minister of INAC detailing an update of Six Nations education, requesting funding for the upcoming school year, and identifying goals aimed at improving elementary education for Six Nations

students. A consultant team was established and collaboratively the team submitted issues and recommendations to INAC. Unfortunately, their diligent work was halted in 2004.

The Office of the Auditor General's (2004) report stated, "there is concern that a significant education gap exists between First Nations people living on reserves and the Canadian population as a whole and that the time estimate to close this gap has increased slightly, from 27 to 28 years" (p. 6). In 2005, after the Auditor General's report, SNEC disbanded and minimal work has been completed in making Six Nations a band-funded education system.

During 2001-2004, the Six Nations Police Service's Community Service Section was alarmed by the number of youth who were involved in crime or were on the verge of quitting or had quit school (Six Nations Police Service, 2005). This frightening statistic corresponded with a decade-old 1996 census found that approximately 60% of First Nations on-reserve residents aged 20 to 24 had not completed high school or obtained an alternative diploma or certificate. In the 2001 census, once again approximately 60% of First Nations on reserve residents aged 20 to 24 reported not completing high school (Statistics Canada, 2001).

The 2006 census figures for First Nations on reserve are the most recent statistics to have been released by Statistics Canada (2006). The results are unchanged: approximately 60% of First Nations on-reserve residents aged 20 to 24 still have not completed high school or obtained an alternative diploma or certificate. However, there are problems with the census data as they do not accurately reflect the population of many First Nations communities, as those residing in First Nations communities are not required to complete the census and only a small percentage complete it voluntarily. Despite these difficulties

with the census, the data are somewhat reflective of the educational realities on Six Nations as there have been concerns about low high-school graduation rates. Within the Six Nations community, there has been increasing awareness of the difficulties faced by our youth. Difficulties, such as academic achievement and absenteeism, were shared by a nearby School Board's Aboriginal Community Liaison personnel: "Almost half of those high school students are at risk for dropping out" (P. Davis, personal communication, 2004). Other community agency personnel shared challenges they faced in addressing youth needs and concerns they had about the realities facing community youth. This led to the formation of a group of personnel from various community agencies who wanted to take a collective approach to exploring student success. The group met from 2003 to 2005 when members' decided to explore a research relationship with Brock University.

Following a series of meetings with various Brock University personnel, a research team was established and a grant application was submitted to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's (SSHRC) Aboriginal Development program. Upon successful receipt of the grant, the Six Nations Student Success Research Consortium (SSRC) was formed which included many key Six Nations community stakeholders: Six Nations Welfare; Six Nations Health Services; Six Nations Social Services; Children's Aid Society—Native Services Branch; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; Grand River Employment and Training; Duke of Edinburgh Award; Six Nations Police; Royal Canadian Mounted Police; Grand Erie District School Board; and research partner Brock University. The formation of the SSRC was the culmination of the group's development of a Memorandum of Understanding[1] (see Zinga, Styres, Bennett, & Bomberry, 2009). Once

[1] Student Success Research Consortium Acknowledgements: The information that formed the basis for my thesis was collected under the Student Success Research Consortium project funded by a Social Sciences

ethics approval was secured from the Six Nations Ethics Committee and Brock's Research Ethics Board, SSRC members met with parents, youth, and community members to explore what factors influence student success. Through the focus groups the SSRC was able to uncover "the lay of the land" for the 1,300 elementary students (Indian and Northern Affairs, 2010) and approximately 800 high school students attending on- and off-reserve schools (Grand Erie District School Board, 2008/2009). In winter 2010, the SSRC presented the final report of the research to the Six Nations Elected Council (see Zinga, Bomberry, Bennett, & Styres, 2010).

While the SSRC was working on developing the final report, INAC was working in conjunction with the Six Nations schools to address student success within the elementary schools. In the fall of 2009, INAC in conjunction with the five Six Nations schools established Teacher Leads specific to: Numeracy, Literacy, Culture, Technology, and Student Success to complete an internal scan of INAC programs, determine resources and gaps, highlight what works/ best practices for all educators, and develop a comprehensive 5-year work plan to boost Educational Quality Assistance Office (EQAO) scores. The SSRC final report was shared with the schools and INAC through the Teacher Leads. In order to fully appreciate the contemporary educational realities of Six Nations, it is important to not only focus on education but also consider the compounding societal trends transpiring at Six Nations.

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and Humanities Research Council of Canada Aboriginal Development Grant. The "Student Success Research Consortium" consists of the following individuals and organizations: Sheila Bennett; Terry Lynn Brant; Jeff Cooper; Pam Davis; Evelyn Martin; Sharon Martin; Deneen Montour; Steve Montour; Arliss Skye; Sandra Styres; Leslie Thomas; Faye Williams; Dawn Zinga; Brock University; Child and Family Services, Native Services Branch; Grand Erie District School Board; Oliver M. Smith School; Royal Canadian Mounted Police; Six Nations Police Services; Six Nations Social Services; Six Nations Welfare; Tecumseh Centre for Aboriginal Research and Education. I greatly thank the consortium and all the participants who shared their stories as part of my thesis.

Six Nations' Demographic, Educational, and Societal Trends

Six Nation programs and services have expanded considerably in the last 25 years. In 1985, there were nine services operating at Six Nations (Community Asset Mapping, 2011): Six Nations Police, Drug and Alcohol Program, Elementary Schools, Senior Support Services, Public Health, Native Horizons Treatment Facility, Six Nation Speech Services, Six Nations Parks and Recreation, and Six Nations Welfare. As of 2011, there are over 150 departments, services, and programs located within Six Nations. The increase in services was in line with the dramatic increase in population (Six Nations Membership, 2010) below average educational test scores (Fraser Institute Report, 2010), and drop-out rates (Statistics Canada, 2006) at Six Nations.

According to the Six Nations Lands/Membership Department (2011) website, Six Nations band members' population as of December 2010 was 23,924 individuals. The on-reserve population is slightly under half of the total population sitting at 49.6% or 11,873 members. According to December 2010 Membership statistics, 19% or 2, 264 members are under the age of 25, including 496 members aged 10-14 years; 531 aged 15-19 years; and 481 aged 20-24 years. This represents a young Six Nations population. Of that total membership on reserve, Six Nations had approximately 1,300 elementary students registered in 2009 (INAC, 2010). In discussions with a geographically close learning centre, a system offering diagnostic and prescriptive instruction over 75% of their clients are from Six Nations (Slyvan Learning Centre, personal communication, 2008). The Fraser Institute Report, (2010) which collects a variety of relevant indicators of school performance to track trends in academic performance of a school, ranks Six Nations

schools within the last 200 of 2,642 schools measured province wide. Statistics on the number of students excelling were not available.

Grand Erie District School Board responsible for Six Nations secondary students had 576 Six Nations students registered in 2008-2009 (Six Nations Tuition Agreement, 2008-2009). The Report of the Grand Erie District School Board to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Six Nations of the Grand River celebrates the following in 2009: 77 Six Nations students graduated; 24 students won Six Nations High Average Awards; 35 students won Six Nation Attendance Awards; and 6 students received an Imperial Oil Science Education Award (2008-2009). Attendance remains to be an issue with well over 110 students averaging 14.4 days absent (2008-2009).

Grand River Post Secondary Education Office (GRPSEO) had 786 Six Nations band members enrolled in post secondary programs in 2008-2009 (GRPSEO, 2010). As shown in Figure 1, the number of Six Nation students pursuing undergraduate studies is below 400 students (GRPSEO, 2010).

Grand River Employment and Training (2008), the service body responsible for training and employment, partnered with Human Resources and Social Development Canada's *Looking Ahead: A 10 Year Outlook for the Canadian Labour Market* and found the top three Canadian occupational growth areas in the next 10 years are: health; trades, transport, and equipment operators; and business, finance, and administration. However, Six Nations Post Secondary graduates studied predominantly in the areas of: social sciences, education, and government services; business, finance, and administration; and health.

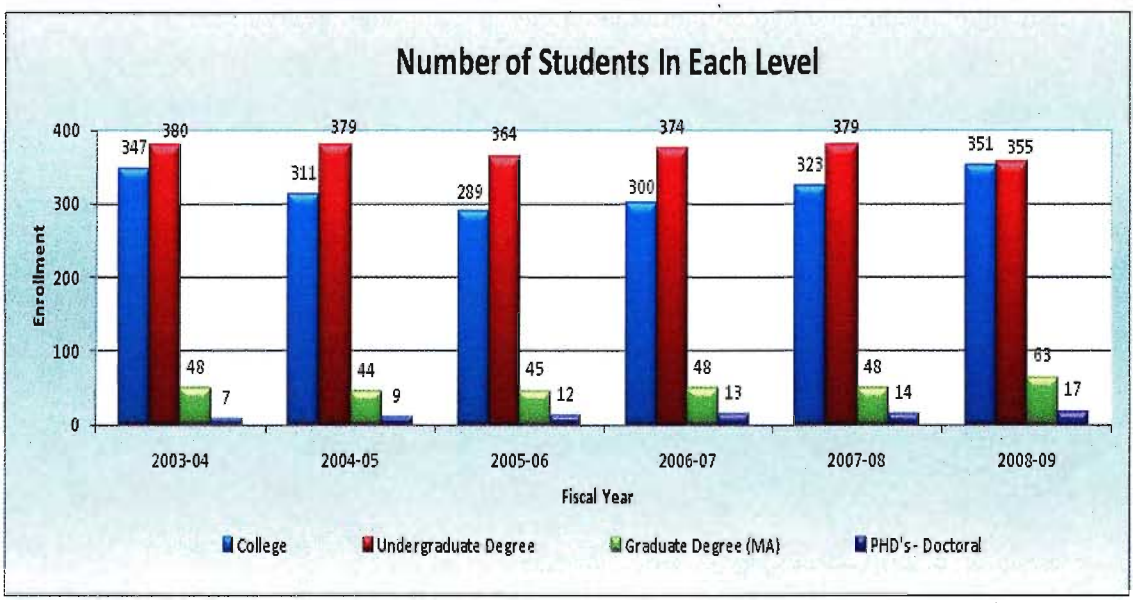

Figure 1. Grand River Post Secondary Education statistics for 2010.

Chapter Summary

This chapter included a brief overview of Haudenosaunee cultural underpinnings, a thorough description of five influential agreements that would change the face of Six Nations cultural landscape, and the delivery of federally underfunded Six Nation elementary schools. Chapter 2 concluded with contemporary educational and community trends. Taken together, these aspects provide a solid foundation to understanding the Six Nations context and the methodological approach detailed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: HOW IT ALL BEGAN

In the summer of 2005, having been at the Six Nations Police Service for 4 years and interacting with young people involved with law enforcement (most of whom had quit high school), I became more disheartened when I met three young boys who never completed their junior high years. It became important to me to explore our young people's realities within the context of our Six Nations community, realities which often led to school dropout and criminal activity. At the same time, I had seen an advertisement recruiting First Nation students for the adult Aboriginal Education program through a nearby university. I attended the session and posed a question to the program recruiter: How can we (Six Nations) engage in research with the goal of developing collective, long-term solutions for the youth of Six Nations? And the journey began.

The Agency Realities

In this thesis I explore Six Nations youth and adults' educational and community realities. Utilizing the Iroquois Creation Story and symbolic Tree of Peace—the white pine tree is a symbol of the unity of the nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, its needles which always grow in clusters of five are symbolic of the uniting of the nations (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, 2010)—I plot participants' responses onto the developmental tree stages. The use of the tree analogy provides my audience with a snapshot of the realities participating Six Nations youth and adults experience in both worlds. Before we explore my research, the reader needs a flavour of the larger scoping exercise that Student Success Research Consortium (SSRC) undertook.

Initial contact with community agencies resulted in a clear message that they were concerned about the community and educational challenges faced by young Six Nations people (see Styres, Zinga, Bennett, & Bomberry, 2010; Zinga et al., 2009). During research group sessions that were organized to collect information community agencies, a consistent message emerged. Elementary educational principals shared anecdotal information that revealed problematic attendance and lateism in the primary grades, the social services identified a steady increase in welfare applications by younger people, and secondary school personnel reported high case loads with half of the student high school population at risk for dropping out of school. As discussed in chapter 2, the SSRC was formed after the loose group of Six Nation agencies decided that they were tired of seeing reactionary band aid programming being implemented in their community as a way of addressing various issues. That chance meeting at Brock University and my posing of the question "How can we engage in research with the goal of developing collective, long-term solutions for the youth of Six Nations?" lead to the application for a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada grant and, upon funding, the scoping exercise from which I drew my participants. Together, the SSRC conducted a scoping exercise designed to explore the young peoples' realities from the perspectives of youth, parents, and community members and examine what could be done to promote academic success.

Student Success Research Consortium

The SSRC was formally founded in the spring of 2007 through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU; see Zinga et al., 2009). At that time, the collaborative group consisted of 11 Six Nation community agencies and two school

boards (listed in chapter 2). Since then SSRC has grown to include: Six Nations Elected Council departments (Health Services: Therapy and Speech Services, Early Childhood Development, Children's Roundtable: Social Services; Welfare and Innovations and Economic Development; Community Planner); Grand River Employment and Training; Grand Erie District School Board; Native Advisors; Six Nation District Schools; DAM Studio, a private media company; Six Nations Police Service; Royal Canadian Mounted Police; Native Liaison department: Duke of Edinburgh Award program; and Brock University's Faculty of Education and Faculty of Child and Youth Studies. SSRC membership is somewhat fluid and other organisations and individuals from within the community have contributed as well and will be moving forward as part of SSRC in future research activities. The SSRC is developing a new MOU and is on the verge of conducting new research.

The scoping exercise conducted by SSRC focused on conducting focus groups with various stakeholders (students, parents, educators, service providers, and community members) in order to identify what factors would emerge as being contributors to the social and academic difficulties faced by Six Nation's young people. I will discuss the aspects of the research that are relevant to my research as much of the process and results from that scoping exercise are detailed elsewhere (see Styres et al.,2010; Zinga et al., 2009; Zinga et al., 2010).

It is important to note that the MOU developed by the SSRC outlined the roles of the various participants and stressed that the research had originated in the community and would continue to be community based and community driven. The MOU stipulated that all research activities and findings would be presented to Six

Nations Elected Council before dissemination and that Six Nations Records department would house the records and reports emergent from SSRC research. Ethics approval was secured from the Six Nations Research Ethics Committee and Brock University's Research Ethics Board. Included within those applications was ethics approval for my master's thesis research.

The Scoping Research Grant

The SSRC's scoping exercise included 12 focus groups that drew participants from varying groups within the community. The participants were drawn from the following stakeholder groups: youth who experienced success at school; youth who experienced challenges; parents; social services agencies; and community members with knowledge of the education system. In total, 68 participants (35 youth and 33 adults) participated in the research. The youth ranged from ages 16 to 25 and adults ranged from 30 to 70. All focus groups were video and audio taped to ensure accuracy and all participants completed consent forms as well as providing verbal consent prior to commencing the sharing part of the focus group.

The focus groups were held within community facilities in convenient locations for the participants. Throughout the 12 focus groups, two SSRC personnel were always present, one university researcher and one community researcher. Each session lasted between 90 and 140 minutes with a social time prior to commencing the group's dialogue. Each focus group was transcribed and participants were provided with an opportunity to review their transcripts.

Honouring Their Stories

It is extremely important to respect and represent the stories of all 68 participants and ensuring anonymity is paramount. Each participant is a member of a relatively small community where everyone knows everyone; therefore, participants were provided with pseudonyms to protect their identity. Being an active member of the community, I thought my intimate knowledge of most participants might make them feel that they must respond in a certain way. In appreciation of that possibility, I coordinated and welcomed each focus group but only observed the youth groups. In addition to honouring participant's stories, I must honour the process as well.

A significant piece of the SSRC MOU and ethics included provisions for additional emerging research or literature derived from SSRC's scoping exercise, under the condition that such research must have the SSRC approval. With that, the SSRC was informed and allowed me to explore the anonymous Student Success data (transcripts that had been created using pseudonyms). I reciprocate and acknowledge the Consortium for allowing me the opportunity to utilize the data to complete my graduate studies.

A Row Taken From the Student Success Research

I see my thesis as connected to the SSRC research as if I am taking a row out of the SSRC wampum belt. The entire scoping exercise is the belt and it has its own pattern and weave that has been explored in the SSRC final report. In examining the row that I have chosen to focus on, I am exploring the voices from a unique perspective that allows me to look at the voices and nuances in the stories that they share in a more detailed way. My research goes beyond the broader SSRC scoping exercise as it

explores the voices in a more detailed way that is situated within the current educational and community realities and exploring how Six Nations has transformed. In addition, a greater depth and richness is added through the illustration of how my personal journey, as a parent, a student, and a community service provider reflects the current societal and educational realities faced by Six Nations youth. To honour the participants' voices and to describe the richness of Six Nations youth and parents stories, I employ auto ethnography, a qualitative research paradigm.

My attraction to the qualitative methodologies of auto ethnography is its direct, first-hand observation of daily participation. Ellis (2002) and Taber (2010) discuss the importance of connecting social movements and personal stories. Smith (2005) states that "auto ethnography allows personal experiences to become valid data... Auto ethnography freed me to write reflectively, thoughtfully and introspectively about a very personal subject close to my heart" (p. 6). As a social service provider, a parent, and a member of a First Nations community, the issue of youth success is of both personal and social importance.

Auto ethnography allowed me to share the youth participants' experiences, and since I continue to be an active player in my community, the stories of our younger generations will not only be beneficial to themselves, but also to the entire Six Nation community. Smith's (2005) work, offered "a framework for understanding the dynamic and complex interdependence of cultural, familial and individual meaning systems" (p.142). Along this vein, I decided to pull data from all six youth Student Success focus groups and selected only two adult focus groups from the larger Student Success scoping exercise. All the participants had varying, intertwined personal and societal

challenge and success definitions and auto ethnography allows the exploration of just that, "the self and the social with different emphasis on self and social" (Taber, 2010, p. 61). There were some limitations to using auto ethnography.

Smith (2005), Ellis (2002), and Taber (2010) suggest that some auto-ethnographers tend to focus more on the self than the social. Walford (2004) asserts that auto ethnography as a research methodology must do more than explore the self. Taber (2010) states there must be an argument and an empirical basis to research, otherwise it is perhaps more aptly termed storytelling which is an important contribution to understanding our world, but cannot be necessarily categorized as research. Using auto ethnography, I will first explain my rationale for the participant selection I employed and describe how the participants' stories will fit in the Haudenosaunee Two Row ideology.

Description of Two Row Methodology

In keeping with the sacredness and great value of the Haudenosaunee teachings, the participants voices were plotted on the tenets philosophized in the Two Row Wampum. The Two Row Wampum is a historical treaty based on respect and states:

> The white wampum background meaning, purity, good minds, and peace; and the two purple wampum rows meaning, the two parallel paths signifying the White man's belief and laws; and that they shall never interfere with one another's way as long as Mother Earth is still in motion. The Onkwehónwe gave the white man an understanding that this agreement shall last as long as the sun shines, the rivers flow, and the grass grows green at a certain time of the year (Jake Thomas Learning Centre, 1998).

Figure 2. Two Row Wampum Treaty (a friendship agreement based on respect).

The book *Wampum Belts of the Iroquois* (Faffen Tehanetorens, 1999) provides a more in-depth, significance of the Two Row Wampum:

> In the words of Kaneseraga; "Our first and most sacred covenant is with Nature and our Mother, the Earth." The Two Row starts here. When we say the Ohenton Karihwatehkwen or the "words before all else" we do this to convey our respect to all of creation. We start with the People and cover every relationship we have; from the most distant stars in the sky to the stone, soil and water at our feet. The Two Row with its magnificently simple design depicts two rows of purple wampum set against a background of white. The two rows are equal and run side by side with each other. We represent one of those rows. The other is for all that we share a mutual respect. Any one of those mentioned in the Ohenton Karihwatehkwen can be placed on that second row. When we say those words before all else, we describe our connection to creation and all that it has produced. The key is respecting our relations as equals and respecting that while we all have our own path; we are still connected.
>
> When the Two Row is described as two vessels on the river of life, it is the river that connects us. The distinction of the separate and equal rows show a respect for the distinct paths our vessels travel. It is said that everything that is ours must stay in our canoe while everything that is theirs must stay in their ship. This concept of possession was foreign to our ancestors. What they did understand was responsibility and the consequences of losing our way. It was told to me that much of the problems of today are that too many want the "things" or benefits of every path or vessel they see with the responsibility of none. When

> we disrupt the paths of others simply for the taking or when our path is disrupted, there are consequences.
>
> The Two Row started with us. We used it to show respect to all that accept the responsibility of maintaining their path. Nature has always done this unequivocally. This concept was put in place between the people of the Haudenosaunee and shared with people of other cultures. The Two Row Wampum was also put in place with other Onkwe Ohnwe as a path for peace without coming under the Kaianerehkowa and the protection of the Tree of Peace. When helpless strangers reached our shores and expressed a desire for peace the Two Row was offered and accepted, first by the Dutch and followed by the French, British and ultimately by their offspring that would come to be known as Americans.
>
> The Two Row Wampum began as covenant of respect that we shared with and offered to all that we knew. When the concept was offered to a foreign people with no common history, language or culture it would become the first and only treaty ever offered by our people to the white man. Perhaps we should have stuck with offering the Two Row to what and who we knew. (para. 1-4).

Both Rows (cultures) had quite distinct prescriptions. For my research, I differentiated both cultures: Haudenosaunee people are engrained with holistic, circular tenets of Peace (Good Mind), Power (Personal Strength), and Righteousness (Nationhood), whereas some European mindsets, in my opinion, focus on individualism and capitalism. In chapter 5, the writer's auto ethnographic story will examine how Six Nations is living in both Rows.

Participants

The participants selected for this study were chosen from the larger Student Success research described earlier in this chapter. Through my participation in the larger project and through the coding of that data (Student Success Final Report, 2010), it became clear to me that a deeper analysis of the words would lend depth and a more comprehensive understanding to the data collected. Since I am an avid proponent of early childhood development, I selected to use all youth focus groups. I truly value our young people and understand the importance in fostering their potential. However, I only selected two adult focus groups. In reviewing the adult raw data there were similar stories articulated. Two adult focus groups were selected based on the uniqueness of their differing stories. I chose to honour 45 participant stories: 35 youth and 10 adults.

The participants were drawn from the following stakeholder groups: youth who experienced success at school, youth who experienced challenges, and parents. The youth ranged in age from 16 to 25 as we included those in their 20s who were enrolled in higher education or who had recently completed higher education and identified more with the youth population than the adult/parent population. Youth groups were categorized according to their school experiences, as well as their level of secondary or postsecondary completion. The adults included in my research ranged in age from 30 to 50. Participants had to be members of the Six Nations community either through working in the community or living in the community (at least part of the time) and they had to be willing to share their experiences with us.

The youth focus groups were categorized as per their story detailed: high school students with good experiences, high school students enrolling in postsecondary, high school youth who experienced difficulties, post secondary floaters, post secondary floaters II (these two groups were termed floaters because they had completed high school, completed one year of post secondary but were uncertain about school and future employment), and elementary immersion high school and post secondary graduates. Brief explanations of each group are provided below.

- *High school students with good experiences* were young males who were in their 2nd or 3rd year at an off-reserve high school. These males were very assured and committed to doing well in secondary school. These youth participants came from both single- and two-parent families.
- *High school students enrolling in postsecondary* were keen, aspiring young females who had career aspirations and valued themselves and their families. These young ladies were raised by their mothers in single-parent homes.
- *High school youth who experienced difficulties* were a mix of 4 males and 3 females. Each youth had dropped out of school within the past year or two. The youth ages were 16-20. All of this group's participants had single-parent rearing or had been in the child welfare system.
- *Postsecondary floaters* were youth (2 males and 4 females) who had successfully completed high school, attempted postsecondary but withdrew and were employed. They had a strong family support and planned on reregistering for postsecondary studies.

- *Postsecondary floater II* were 5 young ladies, all attempted postsecondary studies but failed and engaged in the work force. These ladies ranged from 18-21. All ladies remained at home with both their parents.
- *Elementary immersion high school and post secondary graduates* were a group who had attended immersion throughout their elementary school career and successfully achieved graduation in either secondary or post secondary studies. There was 1 female and 3 males. One youth had both parents at home while the other youths had their parent's divorce during their elementary years.

(Table 1 on the following page presents a quick summary of the youth group characteristics.)

Using data from the initial Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada grant research, as well as my intimate, community knowledge regarding the adult participants, I chose two adult groups. These two groups perceived the community differently. The two adult groups went beyond surface problems and suggested targeting areas using an inclusive approach.

Data Analysis

Keeping in mind that my research was extracted from Student Success Research where the scoping exercise examined, "what factors emerge as being contributors to the social and academic difficulties faced by Six Nation's young people," I decided to report only on the findings that corresponded to my research questions: What are the current educational and community realities perceived by youth and adults living at Six

Nations and using the original respectful cohabiting of two cultures how has Six Nations transformed?

Table 1

Youth Focus Group Summary

Focus group	Age range	Gender
High school students with good experiences	15 - 17	4 Males
High school students enrolling in postsecondary	16 - 17	4 Females
High school-age youth who experienced difficulty	16 - 20	4 Males 3 Females
Postsecondary floaters	16 - 25	2 Males 4 Females
Postsecondary floaters II	18 - 21	5 Females
Immersion high school and postsecondary graduates	16 - 25	3 Males 1 Female

During my data analysis I coded using themes taken from the Two Row Wampum. One Row being the Native canoe (Haudenosaunee culturally based values) and the other column or Row being the European vessel (Western values). Plotting the participants' voices was extremely easy, however, this coding method did not capture Six Nations' cultural philosophies, or maybe it was that most of the youth and adult words were not, from my perspective, culturally grounded in Haudenosaunee values of respect, sharing, caring, and reciprocity. I struggled with how to culturally capture the distinctiveness of Haudenosaunee culture – perhaps this illustrates the limitations of a binary. By fate or coincidence, my family decided this year we would tap trees and it dawned on me that the Iroquois Creation Story's Tree of Peace would be a relevant coding approach.

Using the tree analogy, I read through two transcripts and used post-it notes to highlight a tree's developmental stages. After completing two youth transcripts with the post-it method, I decided to complete coding by cut and pasting quotes under their appropriate theme. Using my developed interpretation of tree growth, I plotted participants' voices into a theoretical interpretation of tree development. Tree development, in my opinion, is synonymous with my understanding of human development and the Tree of Peace is synonymous to strength in Haudenosaunee culture. The six developmental stages are: Planting the Seeds/Germination, Supports, Branching Out, Threats, Fulfilment, and Journeying On. However, stories that fit within the stages of Fulfilment and Journeying On were not often discussed. Since the majority of participants were youth, to me, there was a sense they had not reached those stages. The Journeying On stage replicated the same results although one group shared reasons for

Six Nation youth passing on but those words do not fit in what I described as Journeying On. These headings are capitalized and bolded.

Planting the Seeds

Planting the seeds refers to being rooted into the ground or rooted in ideologies as new life begins. Most people would cognitively think planting the seed would be the first step in human development, but for First Nations people, it is not. First Nation cultures revere the sacred relationship between the stages of germination or spirit world and planting the seeds (McGregor, 2000). In Haudenosaunee culture there is a connection with the Spirit. The Spirit World or the germination stage of life is an understanding that all people who move into the Spirit World (i.e., who pass away) will always have a spiritual presence. Therefore, to plant the seeds, we must first recognize our Ancestors and Elders who have gone on before us. In relation to human life, we give thanks to our Ancestors and continue bearing children to carry on new life.

Supports

Support is analogous to the hearty, breadth of a tree trunk. A tree's trunk is as important as the planting of the seeds. The trunk ultimately supports the growth of the tree, has a responsibility of flowing nutrients and is the protection for the internal system. Human resources, health, and social program supports do the same for Six Nations children and youth. Sharing knowledge and mentoring young people is paramount to nourishing a healthy balanced individual.

Branching Out

Branching out refers to the opportunities and experiences people experience. As a tree, branches emerge in various ways, shapes, and forms, and so too, do human

experiences. People branch out (try various paths); some branches will break, some will grow into another branch (just as some paths may not be strong or appropriate) for youth. The paths that are not appropriate are viewed as threats.

Threats

Threats are simply outside forces impeding one's path. In First Nation culture, threats equate to life's lessons. Elders have always encouraged our people by sharing, "the Creator only puts lessons before you that he knows you can handle." Therefore, regardless of one's path travelled, all experiences good and bad have meaning and are meant for that person. Experiencing threats leads to the fulfilment or blossoming stage. As a tree blossoms with leaves and adapts to change seasons, humans do as well.

Fulfilment

Fulfilment refers to the recognition of happiness and wellness. This stage is a response to being nurtured, taking the lessons put before you and growing. Fulfilment comes at different stages and for most people nearing the latter part of the Cycle of Life (Appendix B) (McGregor, 2000). The Cycle of Life is a belief First Nation people are gifts from the Spirit World. All individuals are born into the Physical World as infants, gradually grow through the toddler, child, and teenager stage. From adolescence, individuals physically become young adults, followed by an adult role and then become parents. Grandparents and Elders are individuals we hold with high regards, although there is fulfilment in all areas, Grandparents and Elders are part of the life cycle of pure fulfilment. The elderly provide encouraging words, share their life's lessons, and are respected for being the Creator's gift until they return to the Spirit World.

Journeying On

Journeying On means having fulfilled the Creator's Physical World role and return to the Spirit World. Celebration of one's life or a Condolence ceremony honours each individual. Dependent on personal beliefs, some First Nations mourn for a short period of time, or at Six Nations the traditional individuals mourn for 3 days, bury their loved one, and complete a feast on the 10th day, and a year to the date the soul's journey was believed to be completed and a feast was held to signify the soul's arrival in the Spirit World. The youth and adult participant's words are categorized with these understandings.

Ethical Considerations

My research study's ethics were approved during the initial Student Success Research scoping grant. Since the research pertained directly to my career objectives and I had commenced my graduate degree, the ethics applications approved by the Brock University Research Ethics Board and Six Nations Elected Council's Ethics Committee were written to include permissions for graduate students to utilize the Six Nation youth and adult data. As a participant in the writing of the ethics, I am very familiar with all of the methodology and ethical protocols that we chose to incorporate into the research, both for the main scoping exercise and for the additional analyses.

My role in the SSR was to be the liaison with Six Nations Council's Ethics Committee and provide insight into the application completion. I recall this process was lengthy and I shied away from inputting my personal voice because I was intimidated. I have never engaged in "proper" research, meaning outlining prescribed boundaries and having another institution approve my anticipated work. Research, as I understood it,

was others coming into the community and administering a closed-ended, quantitative survey, seldom engaging in dialogue with participants. Focus groups (which are small group of people engaged in discussions) was a brand new concept for me and a research methodology I aligned myself with, since this information gathering process would capture the participant's story. Although I favoured the concept, there was continued uncertainty.

Some of that uncertainty was connected to my worries about research exploitation. I was nervous because I did not want the research to exploit the truths our community was going to share, a common reality Six Nations has endured or that the research would not be accepted by the Six Nations community. During my undergraduate studies I had volunteered with Six Nations' justice initiatives, in particular, community consultations into having "a Six Nations court system" within the community. The community members were angry research was completed without "everyone's" approval and that Six Nations was trudging into Eurocentric ways of business, or assimilative practices. This was my first exposure to the realities of completing research in a First Nation community and it remains fresh in my memory.

There are also other challenges and insecurities I grappled with; for instance, I could not articulate my words as eloquently as my colleagues and those stereotypes of "the dumb Indian" reared its ugly head. I found community nuances were only understood by those of us who lived it and how could others truly understand what we say. Despite all of my cautions, I went with my instinct, engaged in qualitative research, and have been able to pull from the Student Success Research participants' words to articulate my thesis.

Chapter Summary

I have provided the reader with a sense of how this journey started, an in-depth background on the Student Success Research scoping exercise, the focus group process, and how my study was derived from the bigger SSRC findings. My auto ethnographic methodology was introduced and I referenced the Two Row Wampum and Tree of Peace analogy. In chapter 4, I will explore youth and adults realities and present their voices in the form of direct quotes from the participants. When I selected quotations, I ensured common and rare perspectives were captured. Rare influences are those stories that were not commonly shared by the majority of participants. Yet, rare words are significant to those individuals who shared them and add another frame of knowledge to the diversity of challenges and influences experienced at Six Nations. Within each development stage—Planting the Seeds/Germination, Supports, Branching Out, Threats, Fulfilment, and Journeying On—there are subcategories, there are three to eight themes listed in each subcategory. (The Threats category had various themes and is tabled formatted followed by a narrative piece.)

The words are not a comprehensive picture of all Six Nations youth and adult experiences, yet, the participants' words hold significant meaning to the transformation that has occurred at Six Nations.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE VOICES OF SIX NATIONS

This chapter identifies the current educational and community realities faced by 45 youth and parents at Six Nations. Using the Tree developmental analogy, the participants provide us with an extensive picture of the factors impacting their lives. The participants' voices are mapped in the development stages of Planting the Seeds/ Germination, Supports, Branching Out, Threats, Fulfilment, and Journeying On. Within each developmental stage are positive and negative realities experienced by all participants. They are described under headings of Right Handed Twin and Left Handed Twin (see Appendix A).

The Right Handed and Left Handed Twin are found in the Haudenosaunee Creation Story and represent the positive and the negative aspect of all creation. Within any culture there are the good and the bad. Within First Nation, the good and the bad are important, since both are understood as lessons, but more significant is the balance between both extremes. Balance supports healthy living and community wellness. In the developmental stages of the tree there were varied Threats, and this stage was coded into four subcategories of Home, School, Community, and Culture, and under those subcategories three to five themes emerged. For this stage there was no "Right Handed Twin"; however most participants understood "balance was needed."

Before we examine the participants' voices, I wish to emphasize that it was important for me to use cultural teachings or words in my research. From my perspective it seems to me that our generation does not identify themselves as Haudenosaunee or incorporate our teachings, this could be by choice or because of assimilative processes. Also I wanted to educate the wider audience of the cultural relevance and connectedness

that Haudenosaunee people once had. Therefore, if I can plant the seed of revitalization through my graduate work, I will carry on the task meant for me.

Planting the Seeds

Planting the seeds appreciates the development of naming your world and developing yourself within that world. This initial contribution is embedded with social, educational, and cultural relations.

Right Handed Twin

The majority of youth participants shared that student success "starts in the home." The majority of students indicated "parents have a big role to play," and that those roles "start right from elementary school, that's when they've got to push their children." "Motivating," "guidance," "encouragement," and "role modelling" were key words used by youth regarding student success. Youth reflected on how their parents raised them and commented that parents have "huge responsibilities." Parental responsibilities include "helping with homework," "making sure your child has lunch," and have a positive attitude: "[she] wanted us to go far in our education."

Strikingly, yet reaffirming, during our discussions on parenting, most youth chatted about their mothers; "our dad never came, our dad would never go to our games or anything, it was always our mom, but then again our dad was an alcoholic." Mothers planted the education seed, as well. One student struggled with certain subjects through secondary school but went on to complete an undergraduate degree and praised her mother: "she always encouraged us and wanted us to do more. It was get your high school, then it was just get your degree and now it's just get your Master's." This example parallels strongly with Six Nations' matriarchal society and the importance

mothers and aunties have in rearing children. There were a small number of students who shared and described their reciprocity of appreciation to their parents for planting their seeds (e.g., parents "loved us," "let us make mistakes," and "would come pick us up from school or even give my friends a ride") and those youth shared they wanted "to make their parents proud."

Youth participants also shared that parents need to have values and support the notion that "education is important." If parents believe education is important they will encourage students to keep pushing and "get the extra help to her their child." For most youth their parents modelled "sharing," "responsibility," and "involvement" and promoted "encouragement," "freedom," and "motivation" which youth attributed to their achievements. However, there was one student whose mother provided "too much encouragement" which for him resulted in him choosing not to attend school. For the most part, the participants felt planting the seeds "starts in the home with parents." Participants shared if children do not have basic nutrients of respect, sharing, involvement, encouragement, and motivation then some youth will not care about an education.

Left Handed Twin

Students were honest and shared some parents "just don't care" and they are not planting positive seeds. Most students witnessed families who "didn't pack a lunch for their child" or "were never involved in their child's school activities" as those students who tended to experience more challenges. Participants noted that they saw parents struggle with threats of "addiction," "fast money," or "maybe [parents] didn't finish high school themselves and they don't really see school as an asset," and thus they sometimes

struggled with nourishing their planted seed. However, participants shared that although some seeds were not nourished at the onset, there was time through the support of others, meaning extended family or teachers "people" and "programs" that provided support.

Supports

The second critical point is developing critical and solid relationships. Supports effect social, cultural, and educational transformations by developing one's own perspectives.

Right Handed Twin

Youth participants were very keen on the "many resources in the community" and "parents" were instrumental in laying the foundation for a child's success. All youth focus groups voiced "parents are important" but there were other individuals who impacted students' lives: "extended family," "cousins, aunts, and uncles," as well as professionals were also shared as important supports. "Teachers and coaches boost self-esteem by telling students 'good job,' and set rules that must be followed." Youth felt "guidance counsellors, certain people within community organizations, and peers" attributed to youth success.

"Respect for teachers" and "teachers giving [the student] respect" along with teachers who "helped you understand better" were very important determinants for participants. Youth participants shared they liked the "caring teacher" meaning the teacher who got to know you, as opposed to the teacher who has no relationship with his students or as one participant commented, "the teacher–pupil relationship." Participants shared some of their elementary and secondary experiences: "It is good if you can relate to your teacher, my history teacher was an easy going guy, good to get along with, he was

fun, he made class fun, he joked around with us, got us into what we were learning, it brought a new light of how to learn."

There were a variety of motivators youth participants shared as being supports for Six Nation youth: "Friends," "go where the money is," "desire for a good job," "maturity," and "parents." In addition, one participant shared "unsuccessful people"; this participant shared how "her oldest brother didn't finish high school, her older brother flunked out of college and is working in a job he doesn't like, so my brothers' situations have encouraged and motivated me to remain in school." "Sports" was also another motivator, however one participant was angry that the mindset of certain Six Nation athletes: "One thing that bothers me is people think they are good in lacrosse and the world is going to hand everything to them on gold plates, it's not going to happen, you get out there in the real world and where's lacrosse going to get you." Another student commented, "education is the key to educate people on anything is something and you could be told something 10 times but unless it effects you or someone close to you, you're not going to take it to heart and it's not going to get through to you."

There were also community programs that supported Six Nation youth. Programs such as Six Nations Police Services' Police Athletic League for Students ("PALS") and "extracurricular" sports were also touted as strengthening youths' school career. Elementary immersion school philosophies were also listed as one of the supports that influenced student success. Overall, there were numerous Six Nation human and social service resources. Besides physical supports, intellectual and spiritual supports guided youth. Youth correlated longhouse to spiritual support and

"knowing the culture" was support. "Knowing who you are" provided identity and strength for their success. "Elders" were instrumental and provided insight of Haudenosaunee identity for some students. There were many supports within Six Nations and participants felt youth needed to find help, if they needed it.

Left Handed Twin

Youth participants did not share many negative aspects to supports. Most felt, "there are a lot of resources but people don't know they are out there." Participants felt that there were some supports who "did not keep your information confidential." The community was rampant with "gossip," "jealousy," and "competition" and that using Six Nations "counselling services" could be a problem. Students felt "people use services off-reserve" because of the "gossiping" and expressed some reluctance to use on-reserve services.

Branching Out

Branching out refers to the opportunities and experiences students engage in.

Right Handed Twin

There were 2 common experiences youth discussed: transitioning to secondary school and future plans.

Transitioning to secondary school.

All youth who attended secondary school transitioned off-reserve. This was their first significant path of branching out. Youth who participated in organized Six Nation sports had some exposure to another culture and explained "we already knew what to expect because we go and play hockey against them" whereas youth being off-reserve for the first time, "it was tough." Students who had a strong sense of identity—albeit a

Haudenosaunee or assimilated Western view of themselves—had a smooth transition into secondary school. Students aware of their values and morals commented, "we were taught to go to school, that is what we had to do and respect everyone."

"Freedom" and "opportunity" were synonymous with branching out, although with branching out, students found they encountered new "responsibilities." Youth participants had dreams and aspirations and some saw themselves beyond Six Nations as they journeyed on their path.

Future plans.

Youth were split on the question of remaining at Six Nations; some were undecided, others "don't think so or don't want to" leave the reserve, whereas others wanted to leave for schooling but "return one day." Students felt they needed to spread their wings and see what the world had to offer, "Six Nations can not employ everyone." Being prepared for interaction with another culture or curriculum preparedness was also themed in branching out. Participants also compared generations. The older generation felt the younger generation were "spoon fed" and had "had it easy" and would venture into the bigger world "unprepared" and that those factors would hinder their success, whereas there was a sense the young generation were at "ease" and were handling the transition rather "good." Branching out are opportunities put before each of us, and undoubtedly there are negative aspects. Participants mentioned transportation and racism as two challenges they faced.

Left Handed Twin

Physical transitioning was a difficult change for Six Nation youth. Most youth mentioned that their first experience of branching out was transitioning to secondary

school, off-reserve. Transportation or "the bus ride" was the first challenge. Students had the option to attend any of the surrounding District School Board schools and some students had "an hour" to "an hour and a half" bus ride to and from school. With a lengthy bus ride, students had to be up early in the morning to prepare for school, which tended to be difficult, especially if "you had brothers playing sports." One student shared "sometimes we didn't get home till midnight and I had to be awake at six." The lack of sleep was a challenge but if they didn't "catch the bus," it was difficult to get to school especially if there was not a household vehicle. In addition to the physical branching out, there were mental hurdles.

There were a few students who participated in secondary school sports. Those students felt peer pressure from both Native and non-Native individuals. One student shared, "it made me mad, they [non-Natives] didn't know Natives still existed." For another student, participating in sports was not only for the love of the sport, but "to teach others we are still here." For most students engaging in sports, it is a time for meeting new people, building team camaraderie and fun, but one postsecondary student explained how "other Native people called her apple, red on the outside and white on the inside." The same comment resonated with Native students who befriended non-Native peers: "they would call me an apple for hanging out with new non-Native friends." Native students who had non-Native peers claimed their non-Native peers were not as "racist as their own people." There were other youth who commented that during their transitioning into another school culture, they encountered a lot of discrimination.

Discrimination or stereotyping was commonly found in secondary curriculum. All youth focus groups commented on the lack of language classes offered. "You can

only take Mohawk and Cayuga and they are not offering that." Other students shared how schools offered Native Studies but it was more "art class," "you made crafts and stuff," and "it was an easy course." Youth participants wanted the curriculum to teach history: "the truth of Six Nation people." Students felt the remedy for the negative aspects of their transitioning hurdles was to revise the curriculum to include an Indigenous Studies class. This was evident with one group who thought branching out had to be reciprocated and if "we [Six Nations students] have to take their French class, then they should be taking a course on Native people." The next stage of personal development is threats; this was the biggest theme discussed.

Threats

Threats are simply outside forces impeding one's path. In First Nation culture, threats equate to life's lessons, hence the adage, "the Creator puts forth lessons, to make you stronger." Students had a good handle on the gamut of challenges put before them. Threats ranged from home obstacles to community issues. In order for the reader to understand the youth participants' varying obstacles, I have included four subcategories: Home, School, Community, and Culture. The subcategories have between two to six themes. Some of the threats could have been categorized in previous stages, however I chose to illustrate their concerns in one area. (Table 2 illustrates the four subcategories of threats shared by youth participants.)

Home

In planting the seeds, "parents who cared" was very important. Students felt that youth needed their parents when branching out and transitioning. Participants had a sense there are many parents who "expect the schools to teach your child everything."

Parents were a significant piece of the discussion. Participants shared there is a generational shift in the family make-up: a lot of "single moms" raising "one or two kids." In a single-parent home, some parents "have to be at work before their kids wake up, so it's up to older brother or sister to get the younger sibling up and ready for school." In certain situations, the "extended family" isn't there or is not disciplining children. Another participant shared his thoughts on disciplining children: "When they try and discipline them, it's like pulling teeth. It's a totally different world that they know or own up too."

Participants agreed social pressures have impacted child rearing and respecting others: "it is an opportunity for them to see all of the media and the hype like movies, *Grand Theft Auto*—it promotes prostitution, running from the cops, all that kind of stuff and you know their looking at that, how they have to look a certain way, you know they make fun of one another or there is a standard among kids"

Another threat within the home was "sometimes there is no food." Basic sustenance was not available for some youth. One participant shared: "students don't come to school because they don't have food or clean clothes." Especially in high school, "everyone buys their lunch" or "goes up town and go to [names restaurant] to eat lunch." One participant shared that everyone has money, explaining that, "one student pulled three fifties out of her wallet at school," so for those people without "money," "iPods," and electronic gadgets, the lack of material resources" can deter students from attending school.

Table 2

Threats Shared By Youth Participants

Home	School	Community	Culture
Parenting	Academically prepared	Addictions/lateral violence	Elders
Resources (financial, social)	Peers	Land claims	Immersion/language
	Skipping/truancy	Policing/criminal behaviour	Longhouse
	Student incentives	Racism/stereotypes	
	Teachers	Residential school effects	
		Respect	
		Wealth (easy money)	

Another category discussed within the home setting was the "intergenerational Six Nation families." One participant commented on his experience with one particular family: "it's a generation cycle again because kids we deal with now, we do research on their parents and it is the same family history troubles when we went to school with them." The participant further explains that "[names family] had trouble in grade school, scrapping every day, you grow up with the kids and now they had kids and it's the same. So again, it is parenting." Focus group discussions related to schooling were also voiced.

School

Students discussed five main areas as being challenges within the educational context: academic preparedness, peers, skipping/truancy, student incentives, and teachers.

Academic preparedness.

Youth were candid about their views on elementary schooling and some youth commented after attending on-reserve schooling that they "wouldn't send [their children] on reserve to school." They explained their comments with their experiences of academically "being behind in subjects," "core subjects like math and science" and that "off reserve school, it's more advanced." Youth were very knowledgeable regarding current student education, because they had extended family attending Six Nation schools and the majority of them felt, "on reserve education has been behind for years."

Some students do not see education as important because, "there are negative parts that make some families less inclined to push education" and current educational trends are linked to historical schooling practices. For instance, residential schools was voiced as "we were forced to, our tradition was forced out of our blood."

Peers.

Youth participants were mixed with their comments relating to peers. Youth participants shared how peers have a lot of influence "from your clothing and you have to have brand name everything or people will look down on you," to "picking who hangs out with you." Youth participants thought high school was a time for a "social life" and that there were many new experiences, such as "new friends," "diversity," and "the freedom to make their own choices regarding class selections." Some students thought "peers are very supportive" and there were others "who had friends who skipped and so I skipped." Peers were instrumental in the skipping and truancy equation.

Skipping/ truancy.

Students mentioned "everyone tries skipping" but for some students they do not become habitual skippers because "I was scared my mom would find out" and so that student shared, "I hardly ever skipped." Others had school deadlines to contend with and were motivated to complete their work to finish school: "I didn't skip, I was in the kind of situation where I have to get everything done to graduate." Interestingly, during the discussion on truancy and skipping students again reaffirmed "it starts with parenting," meaning parents have influence over students' choices at school.

Student incentives.

As part of Six Nations Council's Education program, students are provided with a stipend for attending secondary school. Students brought up Six Nations Council's Education Incentive program and knew somewhat of the program and that "if you had good attendance you get your cheque after 2 months." Six Nations also provided

cooperative education placements with a financial bonus as well: "if you do co-op you get money too." Youth were knowledgeable of the resources Six Nations had to offer and thought students do not utilize them: "we have a lot of resources, but nobody takes advantage of them."

Teachers.

One student shared how her elementary experience was difficult because her teacher had gone away and "she had supply teachers and they taught different." In high school participants seemed to have a more difficult time with teachers because they were not "as easygoing" or "lenient" as the teachers at Six Nations. One participant shared his experience coming into the classroom; recognizing he was late and his [names subject] teacher would "holler and then I got sent to the office." Teachers played a huge role in whether students enjoyed their classes or not. Participants shared their school experiences and were very aware of societal issues impacting Six Nations.

Community

The following themes emerged under community: lateral violence, policing, racism/stereotypes, land claims, respect and easy money.

Lateral violence.

"Bullying has a huge impact" in the educational and societal realms of Six Nations youths' lives. There are a lot of cliques and "fights all the time." One girl shared the time she was physically beaten years before and the bullies still pick on her 7 years later: "I think I was 16, and the girls that beat me up, they were 17 and 18, both mothers and they jumped me right in front of the principal. Like one jumped on my back and I curled up into a ball and the other one just kicked my head."

Policing.

Youth felt Six Nations Police "need to be doing more in the community." Doing more related to enforcement or "ticketing people for speeding," "pulling people over for running the stop signs" and "getting rid of illegal youth drivers and vehicles" were areas of concern for participants. The next area of concern was racism.

Racism/stereotypes.

The area of racism and stereotypes was mixed. Youth shared various examples of racism: experiences at school, racism directed at Native people, inverted discrimination or Natives being racist to another Native person. Many of the youth felt, "schools don't give Natives the benefit of the doubt" and were more likely to blame natives for fights and suspend Native students as opposed to non-Native students. There were discussions around the "segregation of Natives in one homeroom." One school had all the Native students in one room during the playing of the Canadian national anthem. Students voiced there were numerous negative assumptions they faced: "all natives do drugs or are on welfare," "Natives live in trailers or tepees" or at school "Natives are tough and like to fight." These assumptions were heightened with the recent Douglas Creek Land Reclamation.

Land claims.

The Douglas Creek Land Reclamation (Chief Praises Potential of Deal, 2007) was a parcel of land on the Haldimand Tract, 1784, which Six Nations claims is their property however Ontario sold to a developer. Participants felt the effects both within the community, but more so, when they would travel outside Six Nations. Youth participants shared how "teachers wouldn't talk about it or they would tell us that we are not to talk

about it in class." Youth were frank and acknowledged that everyone, including Natives and non-Natives, "need to deal with it."

Respect.

Participants discussed the term respect often and that many students did not have respect "at school," "in the home," or "in the community." There were students who were taught respect, but shied away when other students saw it as a "weakness." Those youth faced pressure to conform to a youth culture of disrespect or at least the appearance of "failing to respect." Adult participants thought respect is not present because of the "changes in discipline" or "change in the community" such as easy money and the connection of material goods and status.

Easy money.

Many of the participants spoke about how "easy money" generated through the cigarette business provided an incentive for the kids to drop out of school. One participant shared, "they see that easy money and they see it at a young age, they get a couple of thousand bucks on them at 15 years old." Adult participants thought that the youth "see it as social status. You have to have the big wads of cash and the Hummer to have high social status." Participants explained further how "easy money did not lead to planning or anticipating the future" or "there is no long-term goal for anybody, they are always reacting to their life." Youth participants see "cigarettes were affecting elementary kids as a lot of adults are into cigarettes." One participant shared her rationale on the Six Nations cigarette trade: "All the smoke shops around here prey on the little kids. My cousin asked a youth what he wanted to do when he got older and he said

drive an Escalade and run a smoke shop." She further elaborates that "children see their parents doing that" and want to be like their parents.

Youth also saw the cigarette business as "a quick buck." The significance of "working hard" to be a doctor or attorney was absent during the discussion of smoke shops. The cigarette trade is overrunning the community; one youth mentioned how a newspaper wrote a smoke shop comparison story: "they did a statistic with other Reserves and that [names Reserve] was first and then Six Nations, we have 100 smoke shops." Some students shared how "everybody around here just competes with each other." Easy money was an extensive discussion, some participants shared the cigarette industry was creating a false economy that could collapse if the tobacco rules changed.

Adults suggested the cigarette trade was undermining the message that youth need to stay in school. One parent was very forthcoming and stated, "some of the kids that I talk to will miss a credit. I'll say why don't you go to summer school? They say no, I'm going to work at a smoke factory and make thirty-six dollars an hour this summer." The short-term gain was seen as a reality for many participants. The mindset of a short-term gain is opposite of traditional Haudenosaunee culture. The Haudenosaunee culture was a long-term, Seventh Generation Philosophy, that today's actions must plan for the future seven generations from now; however, with many of the social, health, political, and cultural issues facing Six Nations, that philosophy is not paramount in today's Haudenosaunee culture.

Culture

There were significant discussions relating to culture from identity, native language, immersion, ignorance and ceremonies.

Identity.

Identity stood out as "a piece missing" within many of the participants. There was confusion surrounding traditional values and present day leadership: there was Confederacy Council, Six Nations Council, and other factions emerging at Six Nations. In addition to the uncertainty of cultural identity, participants expressed a more unsettling perspective that the broader population "paints all Native people with the same brush." Youth participants shared "people should not assume that students know things about Six Nations history and culture because if students don't fit the stereotypical Longhouse native, that does not make them less native." Participants had a basic history and knowledge of Six Nations and were "proud to be from Six Nations" and didn't want "Six Nations to fade away." One of the female youth acknowledged "it's good to have the Native perspective at school," because as another young man in the same group stated "culture is fading." The youth were very keen on cultural confusion and melding of the culture: "it [culture] is going to be lost in the mix in a few years." Six Nation Elders play a huge role in culture; as one student shared: "as the Elders die the information is not brought forward."

Native language.

Language was very important at Six Nations and youth acknowledged "Cayuga and Mohawk language are taught at day care." It was interesting in the youths' perspective on learning culture, as some thought "it would be better to learn it when you're young instead of when you're older," but there was a youth who "paid more attention when I'm older as opposed to when I was younger."

Immersion.

Immersion or Longhouse were two systems that participants recognized taught respect. "When we had our teacher, she always told us to respect everyone and that if we went off to high school that you go to school, you have respect for other people and yourself and that is why I went to school because she told me to." One student saw the influence of respect between his student cohort and another Six Nations school, and shared, "that was the difference when we went to high school because you could just see that the kids from [names school] didn't have any respect for anybody, that is why they didn't go. They thought they didn't have to go because they were too cool, whereas everybody who came from [names school] always went because we were supposed to."

Longhouse.

Participants spoke of the diversity at Six Nations. There were some families who attended Longhouse, some families practiced in the Church and there were people who do not follow either. One student felt cultural challenges from his own people: "[names school] has a lot of it, they are all about the culture around here and I didn't really know it because we were always raised in church, we were never Longhouse." Another student commented, "I would go to school and they would do socials, I would feel uncomfortable because I didn't know what that was, I was never taught that or I never grew up with that and so like other kids would like say I was White."

Youth feel centred out if they don't follow the traditional way: "I was in Cayuga class and everyone was asked their Indian names and when the Cayuga teacher asked what my Indian name was, he was like you don't have one." The action of the teacher "embarrassed" the student because the other students asked "why don't you have one?"

Participants shared the legacy of residential school and how it has impacted cultural dynamics: "a lot of families on the reserve hate each other. They don't talk. My mom's dad's side of the family, they all don't talk to each other, and they were brought up in residential schools." She further explains, "they don't know how to love and stuff like relationships."

Ignorance.

Participants shared stories of the layers of ignorant experiences: "In high school other students would be making almost fun that we are from Six Nations. They'd ask stupid questions, like do you live in tepees? We get offended by it." Another participant talked about her teacher's ignorance in the classroom: "when I went to take my business administration, there were four of five Natives in the class and the teacher asked, "What do I call you?" I asked, "what do you mean, my name is [states her name]." The teacher said "well yes but what do you like to be called, Aboriginal, Native, Indigenous, you know,"; the participant said "I like to be called [states her name] and I asked what do you like to be called, honky, white woman, Caucasian?" The teacher responded by saying "I see your point, you like to be called your name." The group explained that "others try to be culturally sensitive" but at times it goes too far. Yet when First Nation people want others to understand and respect Iroquois peoples' traditional ceremonies, they don't.

Ceremonies.

A participant used the "passing of" or death of someone in the community. The ceremony is quite different than non-Native practices and there was a disconnect participants felt "teachers and outside agencies did not understand." When a person passes on they are returned to their home to be watched over by their family and friends.

A youth said that at times, depending on his role in the Longhouse, he "would be called to attend the wake and sing through the night" (someone must remain awake with the body). The Haudenosaunee way of "mourning" is seen to be a good thing, and that youth may be absent from school but their absence is a result of a more important cultural role. This one cultural ceremony was seen as fulfilment to use the "youth that are in training, because they will be our next leaders."

Fulfilment

The SSRC research did not explore areas of fulfilment but I captured some of our participants' achievements. The most common achievement heard was "getting through elementary school" or "getting a high school diploma, because my mom or dad didn't get one." There were a lot of comparisons with being the "first to go to postsecondary" and for those youth attending postsecondary that was an achievement.

Journeying On

The SSRC findings did not reflect Journeying On data; however, a female participant shared that every year at Six Nations, "since I have been in grade 9 I've seen people die, the first one I knew that died had cancer, and it's car accidents and drugs are the big things down here; suicides." There was a sense these young lives moved onto the Spirit World prematurely in their early life. Adult participants thought societal issues were creating a lot of uncertainty for the youth.

Throughout this chapter adult voices were shared sporadically, yet the adult perspectives provided vast insight into the generational paradigm shifts. Table 3 summarizes the words and concepts adults shared and demonstrates the changes from their generation to those of today's Six Nations youth.

The research participants experienced a wealth of educational and community issues. By mapping the positive and negative realities under each developmental stage, we can now examine the cultural transformation. In chapter 5, utilizing the participants' words from chapter 4, I examine how Six Nations has transformed from a once culturally invested, family-orientated, connected nation to an independent, bewildered, and social-status conscious society.

Table 3

Adults' Perceptions of Today's Six Nations Youth

Cultural relevance	Good mind	Physical world
Youth need to be connected to an internal motivation	Peer pressure has powerful influence	Increase in youth criminal activity
Discipline and respect begins at home in the early years	Frustration over peer selection	Social pressures (e.g., clothing, technology, vehicle)
Thanksgiving	Desire for material goods	Parents need to communicate with their youth
Culture teaches youth morals and values	Puberty and self-image are significant	Youth need rest and nutrition
	Youth need a sense of belonging	Loss of extended families for some families
	Parents do not have the capacity to discipline	Parents need to begin supporting the education system
	Exclusion	Parents need to be involved in their youth lives
	Community lateral violence (e.g., gossip, pessimism)	Curriculum does not educate about First Nations people
	Angry because of disregard of Six Nations history	

CHAPTER FIVE: WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

Six Nations constitutes a distinct cultural community which was elucidated by participants' voices. Acknowledging participants' voices, there were four key findings of this study:

- The majority of the youth agreed an individual's achievement "starts in the home"; "parents" and "culture" are important.
- The youth also had a good handle on the social issues (e.g., "fast money," "racism," "academic unpreparedness," "good teachers," "land claims," etc.) that plagued Six Nations completion rates.
- Participants knew culture was "the piece missing."
- Participants alluded to a "generational shift."

The participants' stories are grounded with important Haudenosaunee culture and relationship elements of transformation in Six Nations' contemporary worldview. When I initially engaged in the larger, collaborative Student Success Research Consortium research, I was determined to explore how we achieve Student Success and decrease Six Nations' high drop-out and truancy rates (Grand Erie District School Board, 2009). I heard parents' anecdotal reasons for Six Nations' high drop-out rates: "children were not academically prepared to pass secondary courses" (G. Farmer, personal communication, 2004), and both educational systems enrolling Six Nation students needed to pour more money into resources and hire vibrant teachers with experiential teaching styles, then Six Nation students would be excelling. As a student, a parent, and a community service provider, I partially agreed with these statements but I had a deeper, pluralistic

explanation that many factors or connections played a role in student achievement. Our history and culture are premised on interconnectedness and balance but present-day Six Nations is a singular oppressive-force society.

In this chapter, using participants' voices, my personal experiences, and supporting academic literature, I looked closely at Six Nations' educational and community transformations through the developmental stages of the Tree: Planting the Seeds, Supports, Branching Out, Threats, Fulfillment, and Journeying On. I conclude with future recommendations for Six Nations' reawakening or relational cultural transformation.

Planting the Seeds

Participants suggested planting the seeds was a three-rooted approach: "it starts in the home," "in the schools," and "in the community." There are a wealth of resources supporting participants' voices and my personal testament that "it" (meaning laying a child's Haudenosaunee foundation or value system) "starts in the home" (interestingly, most participants referred to culture as "it," as if it were something foreign or a "commodity," hence the wording participants used supported transformation as well). Participants saw planting seeds at home as important as planting seeds in school. Parental involvement in the development and administration of programs and practices encourage student achievement and positive learning outcomes (Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999).

Participants agreed "residential school" attributed to the transformational shift and suggested culture needs to "start in the school." Haig-Brown (1995) writes about contradiction transformed and says that the outcome of a concrete contradiction, the outcome of real clashing of opposites is a result of something determinate, a new thing,

which is equally contradictory and hence equally subject to change and eventual dissolution. Aboriginal scholars write about First Nation communities and the absorption of Eurocentric beliefs. Battiste (2000) states "transforming any of the entrenched Eurocentric contexts will be difficult; yet such a transformation is a prerequisite to obtaining respect for Indigenous world views" (p. 21). Further, Swisher & Tippeconnic (1999) explain that some classrooms are deeply implicated in the continuation of colonial education, it stretches far beyond classrooms and schools and it is the connected approach that must be adhered to.

Youth, teachers, administrators, and school boards were seen to play equal roles in supporting and including First Nation culture within curriculum. Bazylak (2002), in his article *Journeys to Success: Perceptions of Five Female Aboriginal High School Graduates,* writes that teachers and students who adhere to the principle of sharing power will foster and centre on the relational mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual development of the child. The integrated approach also needs to be transcended in the community.

Participants voiced "community has a role to play" in promoting culture. Understanding this complex reality in detail and depth is a major challenge. To understand this complex reality, let's examine the core aspect of identity. There are Six Nation members who strongly identify with being Haudenosaunee, follow Longhouse ways, understand cultural teachings, and walk the talk. There are Six Nation members who may not attend Longhouse (but adhere to a belief system), understand the teachings, and walk the talk, and then there are Six Nation members who take bits and pieces from cultural teachings, seem to have a differing Other Row value system, but purport to be

Haudenosaunee when it benefits them. I only use these three types of Haudenosaunee identities playing out at Six Nations - there is a lot of melding interpretations or "confusion." But there is one distinction with the varied Haudenosaunee identities—that there is utmost pride belonging to their group, hence the various factions at Six Nations. Given identity's importance, instilling values, morals and discipline needs to start in the home and needs to be promoted in the school and together we will build a strong cultural community.

At the onset of my thesis writing, I acknowledged and expressed gratitude to many people for their guidance and support through my graduate journey, but there were two outstanding people I am indebted to for planting my seeds of respect, determination, strength, caring, and encouragement: my parents. My parents planted me (seed) in a strong and stable environment with an abundance of nurturing; they were active then and still remain a daily part of my family, my education, and my life. They provided me the foundation of being raised with two Indigenous cultures (Haudenosaunee and Inca), established a disciplinary structure between "good and bad," encouraged me to find the balance in life and to "be somebody." Even though my great-grandparents were impacted by residential schools, my grandparents and parents wanted their children to be raised with a cultural identity as a respected, intelligent First Nation person. My parents' decision to allow me to absorb Indigenous knowledge and values, mentored me with supportive relationships and created an environment that was respected and valued, were all nutrients aiding my growth. My seed was planted, rooted in a strong cultural foundation and connected to relational supports.

Supports

Youth participants were aware of many Six Nation supports; physical supports were "teachers," "police officers," "parents," "friends," "high school counselors," "sports," and "programs"; intellectual supports were "immersion," "elementary schools," "homework programs," and "extracurricular activities"; and emotional supports were "counseling," "peer mentoring," and "friends"; however, except for the immersion students, "there was a piece missing" and that was spiritual supports. When youth participants shared their stories, each realm was compartmentalized or fragmented and never discussed from a holistic perspective which adults saw as a result of crossing of the Two Rows.

In Western experience, it is common to separate the mind from the body and spirit, and the spirit from the mind and body. Within Indigenous worldview, compartmentalization ideology is an imposition that attempts to displace a more interconnected experience (Villegas, 2009). Six Nations has paddled too far into the Western Row by thinking that highly qualified educators, highly specialized police men and women, and numerous resources and technology were the answers. The answer lies within Enkonnentishi:ne, a Mohawk word for walking hand-in-hand (mentorship) programs and transitional supports that will help to narrow the gap between the levels of skills and abilities. Within the last 25 years, Six Nation community agencies have evolved into a myriad of Western-based services, exploding from 9 agencies in 1985 to over 150 agencies and services in 2011 (L. Davis Hill, personal communication, 2011). Six Nations Community Asset Mapping (2011) was a two-fold exercise that provided participants with: (a) a map of Six Nations communities' assets (services and

partnerships) and illustrated areas of liabilities (threats); and (b) a collective vision for Six Nation service providers. In my opinion, the Asset Mapping exercise was a clear indication most Six Nations service providers take on a Western Row's individualistic or fragmented service delivery approach and could not grasp the collective and collaborative approach organizers proposed.

After engaging in the last asset mapping question of "what are next steps," I was deflated because the majority of focus groups continued to stress the Brigham and Gouthro (2006) commodity of "education," "governmental agendas [names the government body]," the "status quo," and multitudes of their singular interpretations were noted as specific targets for follow-up. With my vast experience, this approach simply does not work. We do not need more money in policing for more officers to tackle the social issues, we do not need more services to stand adjacent to the stack of existing silos; we need to define who and what our vision is and incorporate holistic relevance.

There were a few Six Nation service delivery staff that understood the dysfunctional silo service delivery happening at Six Nations (and the overarching assimilative mechanisms at play) and have progressed beyond the tangible, subjective drug and alcohol areas as "the" areas in need of change." For my definition of supports to be true to its meaning, I suggest we need to rethink Six Nations service outreach agencies' relevance, linkages and start mentoring from a holistic perspective. My mentoring journey over the past 4 years described in the following section is a testament to a plausible holistic approach.

Johnny [pseudonym] was 6 years' old when his mother called me pleading for help. Malia [pseudonym] was a single mother, raising three boys, a 14-year old, a 12-

year old, and 6-year old Johnny. All boys were struggling to "get to school" and Malia was "hopeless" because she had reached out to the school, to the social service agencies, and to off-reserve school officials, but she was always bounced from one service to another. I was frustrated too because all too often, I had seen the siloing and was angry that a First Nation community full of intelligent, culturally based people would not help. I agreed to meet Malia and our journey began.

Malia's realities were saddening; both older sons were pushed through elementary school, teachers always told her "boys tend to be slower in learning than girls" and that her boys "would catch up." All three boys missed an average of 2 days per week. She struggled with her self-esteem and lived on $929 per month. Undoubtedly, Malia had a lot of hurdles but together we decided to foster a mentoring relationship. The two older boys, after various attempts to support them, were reluctant to engage and together we decided to focus on young Johnny.

First, we both attended the school and met with Johnny's teacher to discuss his education; he was behind with his comprehension and the high number of absences did not help. Second, we reviewed their home structure and found there was little food in the house; Johnny went to sleep when he pleased and woke up when he wanted. Plus, Malia was depressed as a result of her recent marital break-up and did not provide emotional or physical support for her children, let alone for herself. Together, Malia and I tapped into various services, an educational learning environment that provided Johnny with literacy skills, accessed the food bank for additional food, attended social assistance to assist with possible training or possible employment, outreached for personal and family counselling, and we developed a structured routine for Johnny. Through Malia's time of

struggle she had found strength in learning Haudenosaunee culture and the connectedness one's life has.

Through this journey there have been many ups and downs, but Malia and her family are more than what I once perceived as victims; we have built a strong relationship and she has become part of my family. The services remain siloed but our holistic approach to accessing services, maintaining communication, and fostering relationships has proved to be beneficial.

Johnny is now reading a grade-level ahead and he supports younger children with reading; he is actively involved in horseback riding, one of his many interests. Last year he was absent 2 days of the entire school year and Malia is in a relationship, has a part-time job, supports Johnny, and is a strong proponent of holistic wellness. Although I do not see them regularly, we continue to communicate often.

As I noted in chapter 2, First Nation students often face a more complex range of barriers and challenges than non-First Nation learners, and First Nation learners require a higher level of broad-based supports (e.g., housing, child care, health services, food services, transportation, etc.). As well, some require targeted services designed to respond to challenges unique to First Nation people. Similar to the support I provided to Malia and her family, the literature suggests such supports are particularly effective when delivered in a holistic and individualized way by First Nations organizations and agencies (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007). Enhanced support is crucial when youth branch out.

Branching Out

Secondary education for most youth participants was the first time branching out. Transition from on-reserve to off-reserve school was a time of "freedom" and "opportunity" and students found they encountered new "responsibilities." Adult participants referred to branching out as a negative time or left handed twin was at play, and acknowledged Western educational and societal differences. Battiste (2000) explains education is not only the arena in which academic and vocational skills are developed but also the arena in which culture, mores, and social values are transmitted to the student. To respond to the needs of Six Nation youth and increase academic levels, numerous studies emphasize the importance of others having an understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing (Ignas, 2004), however, Indigenous knowledge is not found in the secondary arena. Wexler (1982) writes, the restructuring of society takes people who are not afraid of change and Binda and Caillou (2001) elaborate and suggested the postmodern perspective need not reflect societal goals but could evolve around worldview and peoples' personal goals. Teachers and school boards need to be able to understand systemic barriers within their own context and identify the effects of these barriers to the success of First Nation learners.

For teachers to learn about First Nations, knowing the issues such as racism must be addressed and researchers argue that feelings of guilt and anger are important parts of anti-racist education (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007). Battiste's (2009) work in the *Promising Practices Within Diverse Educational Systems* suggested "that without working through these feelings, racist ideas about Aboriginal people cannot be addressed. Without addressing racism, it is difficult to understand the implicit power relations that

affect pedagogy and curriculum that often times dismisses or renders irrelevant Aboriginal worldviews, epistemologies, and knowledge" (p. xi) and found teachers often blame families, communities and students for low academic achievement levels.

Right handed and left handed disparities are pervasive at Six Nations. When individuals achieved or acquired recognition, other community members tend to be "jealous," "gossiping," and discouraging. A heartfelt example has been my educational trek. In elementary school, I was seen as the person who "thinks your better than us" for attending off-reserve schooling; in high school, I was seen as the mediator between Natives and Non-Natives, again, I have been told "you think you are better than us"; and in university, achieving my Master's, again, I have been told, "don't think you are better than us." The left-handed marginalization is one of many disparities playing out at Six Nations. Despite the marginalization of First Nations people, the invert racism is another significant cultural value eroding from Six Nations.

Threats

In chapter 4, "Threats" was such a prominent discussion that the themes had to be categorized under headings, Home, School, Community, and Culture. During the planting the seeds stage, I shared a lot of the same Home and School experiences and related my "planting the seeds" transformation at the beginning of this chapter. Under the Threats developmental stage, participants saw many "trigger events" that played a significant role in Six Nations' cultural transformation. Participants shared Community and Culture as two areas that needed to be reexamined because surface or tangible factors (Bridge & Gouthro, 2006) of "substance abuse," "curriculum," "discrimination," "land claims," and "native language" were identified as problems; however, threats to culture

and identity or as the participants explained "there is a piece missing" and "culture is fading away," from my perspective, are the most important transformational areas Six Nations encountered and continue to struggle with.

Academic literature details historical treaties, residential schooling, and assimilative educational policies as the sources of transforming Six Nations culture and identity. Paquette and Fallon (2010) propose and support a convincing hypothesis that the choice of an educational paradigm is based upon the choice of a sociocultural paradigm; oppressive policies have been disseminated to First Nation communities and detrimentally impacted First Nation people. Having worked in policing for 10 years, I see how influential Indian and Northern Affairs school structure contributes to Six Nations' complex and endless cycle of meaning making. There are 2 prominent attitudes alive at Six Nations: (a) "cultural self-hatred," a term used by Jane Middleton-Moz in her workshop with students in Native Family Violence training, which refers to learned self-helplessness, a socialized belief that no matter what you do, as a member of a particular cultural group you can not make a difference (Battiste & Barman, 1995) and thus blame others (e.g., government, services, parents, spouses, etc.) for personal problems or people have brought the negative attitude upon themselves; and (b) ownership of their personal choices.

The arena of policing engages both attitudes in Six Nations current educational and community contexts.

Cultural Self-Hatred

Within the school context, police are often called by school officials and/or parents to intervene and discipline "bullies" or disrespectful students. I find numerous

parents believe if police are called to intervene at the school, their mere presence and deterring words should cease students' negative actions. For some Six Nations students, bullying is more profound and can be connected to "intergenerational issues of sexual and physical abuse" (S. Montour, personal communication, 2009). My experiences have given me the rationale that families who have experienced such trauma may not understand the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual connectedness nor have the ability to impact their child/youth's actions and instead displace the responsibility to community agencies and leave their parental role out of the equation. This mindset is transcended through Six Nation community agencies' individualistic service delivery approach and grant-based funding.

Most Six Nations services are developed as a result of government or ministry granting call-outs and work to service quantity as opposed to quality. I vividly remember one of my grade school teacher's profound words: "the government wants to divide and conquer." Through grant-based funding and silo services, which I see as colonizing mechanisms, Six Nations is caught in an contradicting "competing" cycle for money to offer a service which deals with a single area of trauma. Therefore, when grants are sought after, I am muddled in thought about service creation or project-based funding since these mechanisms perpetuate learned helplessness. From my perspective, service creation if not culturally researched and organized within a holistic context provides "an out" for community members and services, thus promoting learned helplessness.

Since the start of my policing career, I have encountered many families who blame police services for the destruction happening in our community. There are Six Nations community members who understand they have a role in curbing social issues

but the voices we heard feel Six Nations police are not doing enough to rid Six Nations of "drugs," "alcohol," "speeding," and "drinking and driving." Youth participants shared the same sentiments that "police need to give tickets" and that would decrease the speeding at Six Nations. I agree with this youth's comment to a certain extent. "Giving [speeding] tickets" would be a deterrent for genuine, value-based citizens but not good-minded individuals who do not respect their own self, let alone others' wellbeing, ticketing and laying charges is pointless. The ticket system has promoted a transformation of thought. This thought has taken away from individual responsibility and provided police with authority to change such behaviour. One participant sums up the "learned helplessness" and shared his thoughts on this: "it is always someone else's fault; they [Six Nations youth and adults] are always pointing the finger when I look at the ones pointing back at them because they are just as much involved." Positively, there are some people who are deterred by imposing systems at Six Nations and those are the individuals, in my opinion, who are grounded in a value system and take responsibility for their actions.

Taking Ownership

Most of chapter 5 has discussed the negative or left-handed impacts assimilative policies played in Six Nations transformation. I do not minimize the appalling stories or struggles that happened for Six Nation families, but there are families who have taken ownership for their actions. Within the educational setting, little Johnny's story was a testament to overcoming hurdles. Similarly, I had an older acquaintance that has taken ownership for his actions and transformed from his left-handed tendencies to those of right-handed positive choices.

I met Marcus (pseudonym) during my first year of employment. Marcus had a lengthy, negative history: quit high school, abused alcohol for 20 years, incarcerated for domestic assault and possession of stolen property, and had two children by the age of 20 (he did not participate in his children's young lives). While Marcus served his 2 years of incarceration, an Elder visited the jail and taught First Nation male inmates their history and the essence of Indigenous culture. Marcus's story is common at Six Nations. Fortunately for Marcus, the Elder had planted the seed, provided him with support, motivated his change, and Marcus took ownership of his life. Marcus branched out and is currently planting the cultural seeds and supporting incarcerated First Nation individuals.

Participant voices and Marcus's journey, along with my educational and community experiences, have heightened the planting of seeds and support I promote in my career. Six Nations Police Services' Community Service Section was developed uniquely different than other police services and focused on "out of the box" approaches to promoting strong, un-dependent youth (E. Garlow, personal communication, 2011) and victims. Six Nations Police established a youth mentoring program inclusive of their families and promote a balanced approach based in values of sharing, respect, honesty, and strength, provide ongoing communication with victims and safety planning and more significant have outreached to families in a holistic way. For me, this is our way of transforming away from western assimilative ways of policing. Transformation or decolonizing (Leulani, 2010) is occurring not only in policing but it is also happening on a broader scale in education.

Decolonizing curriculum to accommodate Indigenous ways of knowing begins within the inner world of teachers (Battiste, 2000). Thinking "out of the box" and becoming open to other ways of knowing requires ongoing self-reflective talk. Teachers need to interrogate the ideologies and practices they use, which may not be suitable for all Indigenous learners. In the article entitled Decolonizing Science Education and the Science Teacher: A White Teacher's Perspective, the author shares her personal experiences with her own learning journey as a science teacher in an Indigenous setting. She encourages teachers to become immersed within the culture, worldview, language, and values of Indigenous people in order to teach science that is balanced and life enhancing for all students regardless of heritage (Weaver, 2009).

Six Nations elementary schools are working in line with the decolonizing curriculum and understand inclusive parent, family, social, political, and spiritual supports are essential. Rick Hill, Program Developer for the Indigenous Knowledge Centre at Six Nations Polytechnic wrote a paper (2009) titled *Hodinohsoni/ Rotinsonhsyonni Intellectual Rights and Responsibilities* and shares intrinsic ethics is the basis for progress for our people:

> Sken:nen (peace) is more than just the absence of conflict or war; it has spiritual, social and political foundations. Sken:nen is the active striving of humans for the purpose of establishing universal justice and is the product of a unified people on the path of righteousness and reason. That represents the ability to enact the principles of peace through education, public opinion and political unity. It is the product of a spiritually conscious society using its rational abilities. (p. 3)

Individuals and some community agencies have mandated a holistic approach to plant seeds and support one another within Six Nations, but there are many more seeds that need planting and nourishment so that fulfillment will be met.

Fulfillment

In chapter 4, fulfillment was not heavily discussed since students were young and understood fulfillment came later on in life. Students were content "they passed" or "finished high school." Having the opportunity to hear the stories and views of Six Nation youth and adults, along with my occupational holistic approach, I sensed a revitalized fulfillment transcending at Six Nations. Since youth and adult participants did not share many fulfillment stories, this section will describe my personal fulfillment stage. My fulfillment has been the growth I have gained through my graduate studies. Originally, my motivation to complete graduate work was to be granted the magical paper that allows me credibility to "play the game" and in some respects, I still hold that rationale. However, during my research, being supported by patient, open-minded, and honest supervisors who reciprocated and listened to my Haudenosaunee experiences, respected my culturally relevant analogies, and supported my life's lessons, has provided my personal understanding that Haudenosaunee people can plant seeds beyond their First Nation to share Indigenous knowledge. The SSRC research has been one branch I choose to journey and the experience has been fulfilling.

The SSRC research partnership was based on respect and grounded in First Nation protocols between postsecondary institutions. Brock University and Six Nations established a Memorandum of Understanding acknowledging Six Nations as the holders of the knowledge and their protocols would be adhered to. The qualitative focus group

process was the first time I engaged in research using the Haudensaunee Research Methodology (HRM; Hodson, 2007) which details four meaningful research engagement processes when completing research within a First Nations context:

1. a time for the participants and researchers to get to know one another;
2. a time to share a meal and exchange in communal dialogue;
3. a time to discuss the issues and share experiences/stories around educational success and its challenges; and
4. a time to reflect and develop a collective vision of understanding.

The HRM mirrors cultural protocol succinctly. The informal sharing and community dialogued and the presence of First Nation researchers captured, I believe, more meaningful and honest truths. Although the latter part of my graduate research experience has been fulfilling, the academic institution has a long road ahead to better understand First Nation organizations. Graham H. Smith (2010), a distinguished professor with a decolonizing lens, writes about the university setting is promising practice and understanding more shifts need to occur as

> when you look critically at such struggle, there is an obvious contradiction of being simultaneously inside an institution that is dominated and controlled by non-Indigenous interests. That is we need to appreciate the limits and capacities of what can be achieved and indeed, what should be achieved within an institution that we do not own or have much power in. Thus, doing a degree in a dominantly white institution requires Indigenous scholars and faculty to make compromises all over the place. The problem arises when Indigenous people do not own up to this fact. Developing sovereignty and self-determination in an institution where

> we do not have the power just doesn't ring true. We need to know the terrain on which we are struggling. We need to know the limits and capacities of what can be achieved in particular sites. I think we need to make strategic concessions to win what we can, but the critical understanding here is that this is only one site of struggle—we ought to be developing transformation in many sites. (p. 215)

Developing transformation in many sites does not only put the onus on academia to break down systemic barriers; First Nation people need to understand their identity, hold true to their value system, and respect their tree developmental stages. Villegas (2009) conceptualizes a "role centred paradigm" based on relationships. There are very few academic articles regarding role-centred paradigms, yet there are many scholars attempting to describe it. Erroneously, scholars premise role within current educational deficient based systems. Villegas suggested that "role centred success draws on a cosmogonic paradigm that emphasizes relationships in places; over time; and across human, natural and spiritual realms and makes apparent the dangerous roots of a standards and accountability paradigm" (para. 8) that we are cultured in. "Learning or development through stages of life is the indispensable investment required for success" (A Nation At Risk, 1983).

Journeying On

My journey as a parent, community member, and graduate student has been without a doubt difficult, transformative, and a balance of both worlds. My old way of thinking shared synonymously with participants' voices, of singular meanings to the complex educational and communal issues facing Six Nations. I recognize my assimilative knowledge and understd how my Ancestors' cultural ways of knowing have

been marginalized, and as much as I profess to be true to my Haudenosaunee values, I continue to perpetuate the marginalization of my culture. For instance, this year I chose to uproot my son from his on-reserve school and transferred him to an off-reserve school. My rationale for his transfer was to provide him with a solid educational foundation, so that he may not struggle through his formative years and to keep him away from the cultural misconceptions and negativity occurring at Six Nations. Although his education will be grounded in Western thought, his home environment will be of Haudenosaunee culture. I have instilled values of respect, sharing, honesty, and fun with him and realize his journey is his to take. I concur with Brayboy and Maughan's (2009) bean analogy:

> Well, first off, I wouldn't do it this way. I'd have to start at the beginning. . . . I would get a bunch of seeds that we plant over the course of a year and lay them out on a table and show them what the differences are . . . so, you know, a bean seed is different than a corn kernel and is different than a seed for pumpkins and other melons we might grow. They [the students] have to know what is what before they go planting these things. (p. 1)

I have been exposed to many Western forces and continue to journey in both worlds, one grounded in my interpretation of Haudenosaunee culture and one of dominant mainstream pursuing higher learning.

Planting My Seeds

Despite the systemic nature of the countless oppressive forces that continue to burden many First Nations people, First Nation communities are making great strides along their path. There are now many Indigenous scholars, artists, activists, and leaders working to challenge the status quo for First Nation peoples and create a world that offers

meaningful opportunities. During my research, I learned a great deal about resiliency, my community, myself, and cultural transformation. I am armed with new broader realities and tools, tools to engage in transforming or decolonization. It is not by chance that schools are structured as they are—it is how the Other Row (mainstream) culture perpetuates itself, one that Six Nations has adapted to. I understand how having fundamental values and interconnectedness with family, schooling, culture, and spirit can ground, impact, and support individuals. There are two significant lessons I have learned through this research: first is to walk hand-in-hand with others, as we all have been impacted by varying influences and regardless of our race, share many parallel realities; second is to be an example for my son, my nieces, and the Six Nation community. I am a content, proud First Nation woman who continues to uphold the Two Row ideology and strives to maintain First Nation identity and culture in a modern society.

The intent of the Two Row Wampum was not to create One Row; it was to respect one another's row. How do we understand the Two Row ideology with the melding of Two Rows? I am not completely sure we have to, or, ever will be able to, but there is one benchmark that promotes First Nation culture and that is the interconnectedness with our spiritual, physical, and intellectual worlds. Six Nations has recently started their reawakening (Riley, 1984) and Haudenosaunee people are saying that they are not satisfied with Canada's attempt at shaping our future and running political affairs. As Newhouse and Belanger (2010) write, "Indians want a future that will take into account spirituality and traditional forms of government which will allow us to live the kind of lives we desire" (p. 15). What will the spiritual and traditional form of government be? My research has me speculating and wanting to engage in future

research examining what the future may hold for Six Nations and other First Nations, and with different factions and different interpretations, what will Indigenous mean?

Our Ancestors had a solid cultural understanding and I am grateful for their thought out, forward-thinking treaties they entered into. I am also appreciative for the people (planting seeds) during my journey and the youth and adult participants (supports) for providing me the gifts of perseverance, open mindedness, and dedication to pursue graduate work and who offered insight to Six Nations educational and communities realities (branching out), balancing of social forces and cultural attitudes (threats), and the lessons (fulfillment) brought before me. As I near the end of my writing (journeying on), I enter another stage to journey into. I support Newhouse and Belanger's (2010) statement on Indigenous transformation: "slowly, both worlds are transforming itself into a society with foundations in the political thought of its Indigenous inhabitants and that enables its original inhabitants to live with dignity and respect as Indigenous peoples" (p. 16).

As Barnhardt and Kawagley (2009) explain, "Our challenge now is to devise a system of education for all people that respects the epistemological and pedagogical foundations provided by Indigenous as well as Western cultural traditions" (p. 244). Sayers (1980) sums up the duality of the right handed and left handed twins occurring in contemporary society:

> Nothing comes into being except through struggle; struggle is involved in the development of all things and it is through struggle that things are negated and pass away. Conflict and contradiction are inevitable. ...Struggle and the negativity involved in it, are not merely destructive, but also productive. Struggle is a good thing, not a bad thing. (p. 23).

As the Haudenosaunee Creation Story illustrates, there is a duality in society or the right and left handed twin at play. We are the Creators messengers and must find the balance between the Two Rows of Assimilative Transformations Impacting Six Nations' Educational and Communal Circles.

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Appendix A

Creation Story: The Woman Who Fell From the Sky

In the beginning, in the Sky World, a pregnant wife asked her husband to fetch the delicacies she craved. But she wanted the bark of a root of the Great Tree in the middle of the Sky World, which none were permitted to touch. Finally, however, he gave in, and scraped away soil to bare the root of the Tree. Underneath was a hole, and as the woman peered down into it, she fell through. The birds helped transport her as she fell, and the great Sea Turtle received her on his back.

Here, on the Sea Turtle's back, she planted bits of the roots and plants she had brought from the Sky World. And she walked across the turtle's back, planting, praying and creating the Earth that we know as Turtle Island.

The woman who had fallen from the sky then had a daughter, who became impregnated by the West Wind. While in the womb, the daughter's unborn twins began to quarrel about how they should emerge, the left-handed twin refusing to be born in the usual way. Instead, he forced himself out of his mother's left armpit, killing her as a result. The newborn twins then buried their mother, who became Corn Mother, source of corn, beans and squash, the Three Sisters of the Iroquois. From her heart grew sacred tobacco, used to send messages and thanks to the Sky World.

The two brothers continued to compete with each other as they created the animals and plants, and in the process, represented different ways of living. Right-Handed Twin created the beautiful hills, lakes, blossoms, gentle creatures; Left-Handed Twin, the jagged cliffs and whirlpools, thorns and predators. Right-Handed Twin was always truthful, reasonable, goodhearted, and "straight-arrow"; Left-Handed Twin lied, fought, rebelled and made "crooked" choices.

Because Right-Handed Twin created human beings, he is known as "Our Creator," and "The Master of Life." But Left-Handed Twin helped, and invented rituals of sorcery and healing. The world they built included cooperation and competition, loving, kindness and aggression.

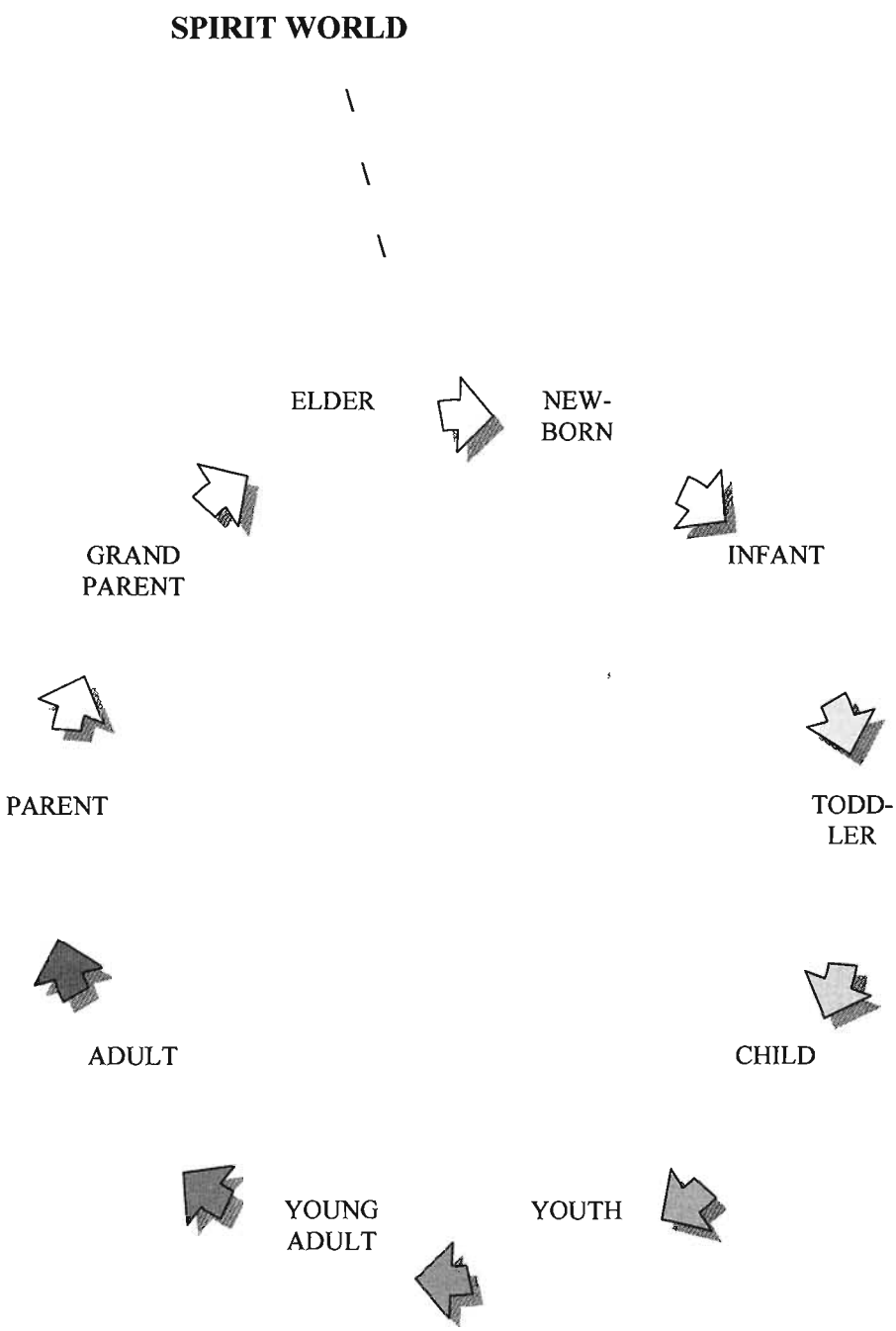
After they finished their creations, they continued to compete in other ways - by gambling, by playing lacrosse, then fighting with clubs. One day, grasping a deer antler, Right-handed Twin finally prevailed, and killed his brother, throwing the body of Left-Handed Twin over the edge of the earth. As a result, Right-Handed Twin rules day and the Sky World and Left-Handed Twin prevail over night and the lower world.

Grandmother Sky Woman was furious that Right-Handed Twin murdered his brother, and accused him of wrongdoing. Angry, and believing that grandmother had always favored the errant Left- Handed Twin, he cut off her head and threw it up toward the sky, where it became the Moon. Then he threw her body into the ocean, where it became all the fish of the sea.

The Iroquois believe that both Left-Handed Twin and Right- Handed Twin are necessary for the world to be in balance. During festivals, day activities honor Right-Handed Twin, and night activities such as feasting, singing and dancing honor Left-Handed Twin. This tension and struggle for balance between the two brothers and principles of life is incorporated into Iroquois festivities and cycles of life.

Appendix B

Cycle of Life



Appendix C

Cultural Teachings

The family structure of the Haudenosaunee is primarily based on the clan system. Families start with a female ancestor with all those dwelling in her long house linking back to her. Each family was called the longhouse family with the Clan mother as the head. All female descendants including her sisters, her sisters' daughters, and their daughters would live in the long house their entire lives bringing their husbands to live with them.

Sons stayed in the same house with her until they married and moved into their wife's house, though they would still be members of their mother's longhouse and their loyalty would always go there first. Children all lived in the long house where they were surrounded by their family and could be taught by their elders. Every child was welcomed and cared for by its mother, mother's sisters and their husbands.

Children in the long house family were much closer to the women living in the long house who were more often around while the men were off hunting and trapping. Children called their mother and their mother's sisters all "mother" leaving them with a great sense of security with so many mothers. Following this, Haudenosaunee children also had many "brothers" and "sisters." They not only referred to their biological siblings as brothers and sisters, but also to their cousins as brothers and sisters.

Traditionally, women handled village concerns like property and crops while men took care of hunting, fishing and trade concerns. No member of a Haudenosaunee family was over looked with Elders holding respected positions within the communities as the wisdom keepers: the ones to impart traditions and to help raise the children.

Misbehaving children were not physically disciplined as Europeans of the time might but instead were punished by having water thrown on them. The idea was that the water would wash away the badness. Older children were dunked in the flow of a stream. If the water method does not work older children and teenagers would be hit three times with a red willow whip, each time asked if they will behave. Usually Haudenosaunee children's own sense of morals would leave them ashamed and embarrassed of their own actions upon seeing the sadness and disappointment of their Elders.

Family structure today is more like the common nuclear family consisting of a mother, father and children. However, the Haudenosaunee still follow the traditional matriarchal structure with clans being passed down through their mother.

VALUES

Among the nations of the Haudenosaunee is a core value called the Seventh Generation. While the Haudenosaunee encompass traditional values like sharing labor and maintaining a duty to their family, clan and nation and being thankful to nature and the Creator for their sustenance, the Seventh Generation value takes into consideration those who are not yet born but who will inherit the world.

In their decision making Chiefs consider how present day decisions will impact their descendants. Nations are taught to respect the world in which they live as they are borrowing it from future generations. The Seventh Generation value is especially important in terms of culture. Keeping cultural practices, languages, and ceremonies alive is essential if those to come are to continue to practice Haudenosaunee culture.

Wampum

Bound on strings, wampum beads were used to create intricate patterns on belts. These belts are used as a guide to narrate Haudenosaunee history, traditions and laws. The origins of wampum beads can be traced to Aiionwatha, commonly known as Hiawatha at the founding of the League of Five Nations. Archeological study however, has found it to have been used long before the union of the nations.

Most commonly made from the Quahog, a round clam shell, the word wampum comes from the Algonquin term for the shells. While it is called Ote-ko-a in the Seneca language, wampum is the most widely recognized term.

The process of making the wampum beads is arduous. Once acquired, the shell was broken into white or purple cubes. White wampum signifying peace while purple relates messages of more serious or political matters. The cubes were clamped and a stone or reed drill was used to bore into the cube. Later, as technology advanced, iron drills were used. Droplets of water prevented the drill's friction from heating up and breaking the cube. A hole was drilled halfway through and then reversed and drilled from the opposite side. In order to shape and smooth the beads they were strung on lengths of thread and ground against a grooved stone. Through this process wampum beads, long cylindrical beads about ¼" long and 1/8" in diameter, were created.

The use of wampum beads has been much debated throughout the years with many claiming that Aboriginal people used the beads as currency. Historians however have proved that it was first used as currency by the American colonists. For the Haudenosaunee, wampum held a more sacred use. Wampum served as a person's credentials or a certificate of authority. It was used for official purposes and religious ceremonies and in the case of the joining of the League of Nations was used as a way to bind peace. Every Chief of the Confederacy and every Clan Mother has a certain string or strings of Wampum that serves as their certificate of office. When they pass on or are removed from their station the string will then pass on to the new leader. Runners carrying messages would not be taken seriously without first presenting the wampum showing that they had the authority to carry the message.

As a method of recording and an aid in narrating, Haudenosaunee warriors with exceptional skills were provided training in interpreting the wampum belts. As the Keepers of the Central Fire the Onondaga Nation was also trusted with the task of keeping all wampum records. To this day wampum is still used in the ceremony of raising up a new chief and in the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving ceremonies. True wampum is scarce today and only wampum strings are used. Many belts have been lost or are in museums to this day.

WAMPUM BELTS

Hiawatha Belt

A broad dark belt with 38 rows. It has the symbol of the great tree in the centre with two white squares on either side. All are connected by rows of white wampum. This wampum belt conveys the unity of the five nations.

Wing or Dust Fan of the Confederate Nations

This belt symbolizing an everlasting tree is the widest wampum belt known.

Wampum Strings

These strings can have a variety of meanings. Some strings are invitational, some call for mourning or condolence and some are used to call a council.

SIGNIFICANT HAUDENOSAUNEE WORLDVIEW

A cluster of arrows

Recognized from the creation story the cluster of arrows is a symbol of unity for the Haudenosaunee. The Peacemaker used this symbol to point out how if the nations joined together they could not be broken. This symbol represents the strength that results from the joining of the nations.

Eagle

Said to be a messenger to the Creator the eagle is the protector of peace. Placed atop the Tree of Peace it alerts members of the confederacy if danger approaches.

White Pine Tree/ Great Tree of Peace

The white pine tree was the tree chosen by the Peacemaker as a symbol of the unity of the nations of the Haudenosaunee confederacy. Its needles which always grow in clusters of five are symbolic of the uniting of the nations. The white pine also has broad branches that can provide shelter and it is beneath the tree that the Peacemaker asked the Chiefs to join him.

Four White Roots

The roots at the base of the Great Tree of Peace are said to be the four white roots which represent the points north, south, east and west. Following these roots other nations can find the Great Tree of Peace and seek to join the nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The number four is also significant as there are four winds that blow and the four sacred medicines.

Long house

The longhouse is symbolic of the traditional territories held by the Haudenosaunee. Within long house families all live together in harmony. With the nations united they are all one family living territorially in one long house.

Circle

The circle is a widely used symbol in many cultures and nations. For the Haudenosaunee it represents unity, strength and the cycles of life. Gathering the original Chiefs in a circle around the Tree of Peace the Peacemaker had them hold hands to make their circle strong. He showed them that if they kept their circle united, they would always be able to keep the Tree of Peace standing. If they let go of their grip to each other and broke the circle the Tree could fall to the ground and then so too would the peace.

Sky World

A pattern of a semi-circle is often seen in many beaded designs or quill work and represents a huge overhead dome to recognize the Sky World from where life came.

Turtle

Aside from being one of the clan animals the turtle is a symbol for North America as it is said that the turtle carries it on its back. From the creation story it was the turtle that carried sky woman on his back.

Thanksgiving Address

The Thanksgiving address is a daily thanks for the spiritual Creator, and the gifts of life, learning and love he provides each human being. Below captures the essence of the powerful address.

We thank the Creator for his desire that there should be people on the Turtle Island and that the people would generate for a time to have memory. We thank the Creator for the way he gave the people to speak with each other - our languages. We thank the Creator for the beings of the waters and the growing things and the animals who give of themselves so that the people can make those things which they need beautiful - our traditional arts. We thank the Creator for the messengers he sends to the people and for the way he gives the people to remember - the Elders, the Creation, the Great Law and the Code, among many things. We

thank the Creator for the way of making a place for the people to be with each other in a good way - the longhouse. We thank the Creator for the long lives protected in the "good mind" of the Elders of the people so the people would have a memory of how to honour the good ways of the Creator (Thomas, 2004).

Appendix D

Brock University Research Ethics Board Clearance Letter

Brock University
Office of Research Services
Research Ethics Office
St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada L2S 3A1
T: 905-688-5550, Ext. 3035/4876 F: 905-688-0748
www.brocku.ca

DATE: August 21, 2007

FROM: Michelle McGinn, Chair
Research Ethics Board (REB)

Michelle K. McG

TO: Dawn ZINGA, Child and Youth Studies
Shiela Bennett

FILE: 07-009 ZINGA

TITLE: School Success: A Community Initiative to Support the Success of Aboriginal Students in Education

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The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above research proposal.

DECISION: Accepted as Clarified.

Please Note:

- **The REB recognizes that Six Nations Police Services are partners in this research however, you are asked to please give careful consideration to the safety of participants who will be leaving the research site with cash compensation.**

This project has received ethics clearance for the period of August 21, 2007 to April 30, 2008 subject to full REB ratification at the Research Ethics Board's next scheduled meeting. The clearance period may be extended upon request. ***The study may now proceed.***

Please note that the Research Ethics Board (REB) requires that you adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and cleared by the REB. During the course of research no deviations from, or changes to, the protocol, recruitment, or consent form may be initiated without prior written clearance from the REB. The Board must provide clearance for any modifications before they can be implemented. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to http://www.brocku.ca/researchservices/forms to complete the appropriate form **Revision or Modification to an Ongoing Application.**

Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and clearance of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored. A Final Report is required for all projects upon completion of the project. Researchers with projects lasting more than one year are required to submit a Continuing Review Report annually. The Office of Research Services will contact you when this form ***Continuing Review/Final Report*** is required.

Please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence.

MM/bb