

**Tribulations and Tears:
Stories from the Youth of the Norway House Cree Nation**

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late parents, Dorothy (Wesley) and Henry Fredette, who never let me forget who and what I am - a proud Cree/Innu Indian. I would like to acknowledge a very special person, Albert Tait, a Cree Elder from the Norway House Cree Nation. He has helped to open my eyes and has given me the opportunity to find the lost child within, and let that child know it is time to heal and pass on the knowledge so others can heal and grow from within. This is just one teaching from an Elder that I continue to use in my life today.

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Abstract

The nuances within the youth of the Norway House Cree Nation along with the escalation in drugs, gangs and violence have led to climbing incarceration rates within the youth population. This has resulted in social devastation in the community over the last few decades. Statistics alone do not provide individual or community perspectives, or the nuanced understanding that insider qualitative research provides. In-depth interviewing provides personal accounts from the youth, community members, and respected Elders, and helps to provide insights on the complexity of community life that are absent from statistical accounts. By the time this thesis is defended, another noose will tighten, another fatal gunshot will be fired, and another youth will overdose on drugs or another suicide attempt might succeed. For many who manage to escape death, they will continue to face a life of abuse, poverty, and an uncertain future that may lead to a lifetime of incarceration, and premature death. This is the reality for too many youth of the Norway House Cree Nation. The community looks directly to their leaders not only to guide the economic development of the community, but at a very personal level. Our youth are very astute and observant; community leaders must demonstrate positive and healthy behaviour within the leadership in order for positive youth outcomes. Ekosani!

Chapter One: Introduction and Community Background

Norway House Cree Nation

Norway House is a community that has a proud history of leadership and innovation. On September 24, 1875, Chief David Rundle signed the first Treaty 5 at Norway House that represented 90 families who selected the reserve land in what is now known as Fisher River. Descendants of these families still reside in Fisher River. An adhesion to Treaty 5 was then signed in 1908, almost thirty-three years after the signing of the first Treaty 5. In this adhesion, additional groups from Norway House, Cross Lake and Fisher River participated in the signing of this agreement. The Treaty 5 Adhesion was signed by three Principal Men and two hundred and twenty-four people of Kinosao Sipi (Fish River), now the Norway House Cree Nation. Both the 1875 and 1908 treaties were grounded in principles of peace and friendship, with the intention of sharing the land in partnership with Britain and the Crown. For the signatories and their subsequent descendants the true intentions of this treaty lie in the spoken words exchanged during negotiations, not with what was written down on the paper. In Canada today, Treaty 5 stands as a constitutionally recognized agreement between the people of Norway House and the Crown.

In the early development of Norway House Cree Nation as an Indian reserve, community members were participating in subsistence activities and families had extensive traplines and fishing camps and participated in seasonal food gathering activities to support extended family networks. As the reserve developed, community members began to limit and in some cases abandon these traditional subsistence activities, becoming more sedentary residents in the community. As houses were constructed, families who may not have normally resided in the same areas were now living together as neighbors in a 'subdivision' settlement. This was a challenge for

many families who had long resided in extended family networks and lived geographically within the same parts of the community.

The current Norway House Cree Nation is located approximately 860 kilometres by road north of Winnipeg. It is located at the confluence of the Nelson River and Lake Winnipeg and was an isolated reserve until 1974-76 when the all season road was opened. Until that time Norway House was a transportation and service hub in the development of Northern Manitoba. It was a thoroughfare and fur trade post for the Hudson's Bay Company until the steam-powered boats were introduced to the North. Subsequently the decline of the fur trade resulted in an increase in economic dependency on the welfare system as traditional means of economic development diminished. Since 1815, Norway House has been part of the larger colonial project much like most communities in Canada when the British adopted a policy to begin civilizing Indians. This process included efforts to destroy governing systems and an attempt to put an end to cultural heritages.

One residential school, Rossville, was built in Norway House Cree Nation in the heart of the community. This school opened in 1900 until 1946, and re-opened in 1952 and closed in 1965. The impact of this school not only on those children who attended the schools, but also on the larger community is consistent with the experiences of many First Nations communities across Canada. Many community members also participate in several Christian churches in the community and currently there are five churches. Norway House Cree Nation is also well renowned for their York boats and every August the community hosts 'York Boat Days', week long activities which include competitive boat races that are a draw for tourists in the region as well as the local community. In 1974-1976 a ferry was developed which opened access to the community in all seasons. This increased access to other parts of Manitoba, resulting in an increase of new

supplies such as construction materials but also goods and service into the community. Prior to the operation of the ferry, Norway House was only accessible during the opening of the winter road.

Norway House has experienced significant population growth. According to the *Norway House Cree Nation 2006 – 2009 Report* (Balfour), the total band membership was 6000 people in 2006 with 44% of the population under the age of 19. By the year 2016, it is estimated that the Norway House Cree Nation population will increase to approximately 7,500. Interestingly, the Statistics Canada Census from 2011 reveals that the population was only 4,758, grown from a population of 4,071 in 2006. This represents a community growth rate of 16.9% in only five years (Statistics Canada).

The Norway House Cree Nation is the 15th most populated First Nation in Canada and like many First Nations communities has a large youth population. Of the 7,506 members, approximately 48% of the total population is under the age of 19 (only 4% is over the age of 65, and 33% fall under 20-44 years of age, 15% 45-64). According to the Norway House Youth Justice Committee Policy Guidelines:

The NHCN has been challenged with social and economic problems due to chemical and substance abuse amongst the youth. These factors have been contributing to the increase of family and youth violence, gang related activities.

Also there has been an increase in Elder abuse, child apprehensions, suicide, home invasions, robberies, and serious incidents resulting in premature deaths (1).

These statistics only partially reveal the experiences of youth in the community and further understanding needs to be obtained through direct engagement with community members to truly grasp the inter-generational effects of the colonial project. Statistics provide an oversimplified perspective on the human devastation of the Residential School experience. Since 1998 there has

been a steady increase in home invasions, along with associated violence related to the constant increase of drug trafficking, alcohol abuse, and gang growth within the Norway House Cree Nation. When these factors are mixed in with poor living conditions, high unemployment rates, poor educational outcomes and suicide, the result is a community out of balance. According to Lalonde (2006) the issue of suicide amongst Aboriginal youth is not just one that concerns Indigenous communities, but Canada as a whole. Kirmayer describes the uncertainty of the history of youth suicide in Aboriginal communities. What is known is that there is an

...accumulating body of contemporary evidence (evidence forcibly brought to public attention by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples) demonstrating that, at least among certain of Canada's First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, youth suicide rates have reached calamitous proportions – rates said to be higher than those of any culturally identifiable group in the world (45).

This overwhelming reality is played out in First Nation communities across Canada. What the literature does reveal is that suicide and other violent acts cannot be understood in a vacuum. As Yang and Lester tell us, the unit of analysis cannot be the individual youth, but rather the whole cultural community in which they live. Understanding the broader social and cultural context of youth violence and suicide is essential. Chandler and Lalonde also describe the need for contextualization of First Nation suicide, with a focus on communities in British Columbia. According to these authors, the suicide rates in British Columbia are between 5 and 20 times the non-Aboriginal population, pointing to this as the

...need to be understood as “actuarial fictions” that regularly hide more than they reveal.

Indiscriminately painting the whole of Canada's (or British Columbia's) First Nations with the same broad brush not only obscures the real cultural diversity that marks the lives of

Aboriginal peoples, but also mistakenly substitutes the banner headline of “Aboriginality” for a much larger set of factors that could better explain the variability in suicide rates across First Nations communities (35).

In recent years, the media has bombarded Canadians with images of reserve life showing poor living conditions, lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation. Images from the James Bay Cree in the community of Attawapiskat are well etched into the minds of Canadians because of the media attention. This perception of isolated communities full of individuals who are unwilling to make the necessary changes to their condition overshadows the complexity of issues bound by a tumultuous history. Youth have their own private code for dealing with violent situations such as suicide, sexual abuse, or dealing with a death within the family unit and other situations that lead to high-risk behaviour. For instance, many youth find themselves devastated by the death of their grandparents. This is mainly due to the fact that in many communities grandparents are the direct caregivers to the youth. This bond is cultural and spiritual. Once this bond is broken by death, the youth have lost their connection to unconditional love and spiritual and cultural guidance. In the cases I have personally witnessed since 1998, youth who do not adequately grieve end up making poor personal choices which result in dangerous and unhealthy decisions. Once these triggers are in motion not only the youth but also the community as a whole is affected, which is why the youth are only as strong as the structure within the community itself.

Identity development has been shown, by Chandler and Ball, to be a direct link to suicide risk, failure to construct a sense of ownership of one’s personal and collective past, and difficulty committing to future prospects. The loss of connection to grandparents, the experience of trauma and the learned dysfunctional behaviour all become a part of one’s identity. One youth participant described this identity challenge:

For me I don't understand who we are supposed to be, only my nimosom(ak) grandfather would teach me how to act, and tell me stories about our history. After losing him I felt alone, angry, and thought no one else cared about me.

This connection must be retained within our community through the work of our Elders and program workers. Part of the social fabric of the community has been to support families and individuals facing challenges by offering assistance, guidance and other support mechanisms. This cultural and social support system has diminished and has been replaced by the child welfare system. This cultural practice must be restored for the betterment of our children, families, and community.

Scope of Research

The specific research question that this thesis explores is how the complexities associated with intergenerational trauma from Residential Schools and subsequent social isolation shapes the psychosocial losses experienced by youth as exhibited in youth criminal behaviours, physical violence, lateral violence, gangs and addictions. This research also explores the issues facing youth in the larger historical context of the changes that have taken place in the community. It sheds light on the statistics that have shaped the Canadian narrative on First Nations communities by providing first hand perspectives on the issues shaping the youth experience which has become so prevalent in Norway House. This includes violence, psychosocial issues, suicide, and educational and economic disadvantages. This research is shaped by the voices of Elders both in this community and across Canada. The *Royal Commission on Aboriginal People* describes the perspectives of Elders in trying to understand the complexity of changes facing First Nation's communities:

When the Elders look at their communities today, they no longer see a place where everyone has a role. Traditions have been eroded, and the values that once bounded society together have been lost or abandoned. There is no harmony; the circle has been broken. Instead they see alcoholism, substance abuse, violence within families, unemployment, welfare, economic instability, and suicide (136).

The psychosocial effects of colonialism are shared amongst many First Nation communities. My personal experience with losing family, friends, and community members due to suicide and self-destructive behaviour inevitably shapes this research. Witnessing my brother self-destruct right before my eyes for the better part of thirty-five years is not something that is an isolated experience.

The growth of tragic social and economic circumstances can easily justify the statistics on youth incarceration, home burglaries, sexual assaults, social welfare recipients and other such indicators. However, these statistics shed little light on the complex factors shaping these outcomes. This thesis provides an exploration into the experiences of youth by exploring the heartaches, hopes and transitions of Norway House youth.

The statistics we have become so accustomed to reading and reporting provide such a limited interpretation of the issue. Each statistic documented is like dropping a pebble into a pond. The reader only sees the pebble; what most people don't see is the after effect of the continuous ripples of statistics which lead to personal pain and suffering, and which unfortunately end within another statistic like suicide. The "ripple effect" provides one way of understanding the complexity of issues regarding suicide, sexual abuse, alcohol abuse, which has a direct link to the Indian Residential School past. This concept, while helpful in understanding some of the initial complexity is inadequate in addressing the inter-relationships between role of (1) Residential

Schools, (2) geographic and economic Isolation, (3) Psychological, and (4) Social impacts on youth (Chrisjohn, Young, & Maraun 278-9). This framework, (RIPS Effect) helps us to understand the colonial entrapment facing First Nation youth specifically. The RIPS framework will be used as the main conceptual framework to understand the experiences of Norway House youth.

Understanding the youth experience was accomplished using a qualitative approach that was crucial given the richness of experience that was explored. Nine interviews were conducted with youth, adults and Elders. One specific Elder played a key role not only in terms of providing a perspective, but also assisting in shaping the analysis. This Elder has played an important part in the health of the community, and remains an active promoter of culture as well as providing guidance. His perspective was shaped by his commitment to “Indian living”. Since the opening of the roads into the community, there have been significant impacts to youth, community and Elders. The Elder poignantly described the relevance of this thesis as helping to hear “the unheard screams of Aboriginal youth within the Norway House Cree Nation and the lingering effects of drugs, alcohol, and lateral violence consuming their life which makes for a lifetime of incarceration, dysfunction and premature death” (Tait). This thesis aims to give voice to these countless youth who are suffering in the community and provide a perspective not shaped by statistics, but of experience. As described by S. Folster:

Our youth are continually being judged by the statistical realm of ‘Canadian society’.

They read these statistics and that’s how First Nation youth are being perceived. What the statistics don’t tell us is the human, emotion, and cultural devastation, which our generation and the next generation will be adopting.

The perspective that has been taken within this research has a cultural, spiritual, and emotional shadow. This metaphoric presence is a reality within the community, and is carried by

everyone whether they are aware of it or not. When a youth is lost within the community the RIPS Effect concept can help youth, families, and the community identify and understand the complexity of the Residential School experience and the resultant inter-generational devastation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Copious scholarly literature has been written in recent years attempting to unravel the damage inflicted on First Nations people and communities through the process of colonialism. In many cases, scholarly analysis has taken place with limited perspective from First Nations people, or from an insider First Nations perspective. The first section of the literature review is framed around three main themes that are then echoed in the findings and discussion chapter. The first section explores the experience of Residential Schools. The second section identifies the issue of social isolation experienced by First Nation's people. The psychosocial losses associated with Residential Schools and isolation will be discussed in the third section. The remaining sections examine literature that includes youth and criminal justice, institutionalization, criminal activity, internal oppression, and violence and the state apparatus.

Residential Schools

The extensive cultural devastation within the historical context of what is known as the Residential School Experience still lingers within Canada's shameful past. Chrisjohn, Young, and Maraun describe many disturbing facts about rationale for the creation and implementation of the Residential Schools system:

The creation of Indian Residential Schools followed a time-tested method of obliterating indigenous cultures, and the psychosocial consequences these schools would have on Aboriginal peoples were well understood at the time of their formation. Present-day symptomology found in Aboriginal Peoples and societies does not constitute a distinct psychological condition, but is the well-known and long-studied response of human beings living under conditions of severe and prolonged oppression. Although there is no doubt that individuals who attended Residential Schools suffered, and continue to suffer, from the

effects of their experiences, the tactic of pathologizing these individuals, studying their condition, and offering “therapy” to them and their communities must be seen as another rhetorical maneuver designed to obscure (to the world at large, to Aboriginal Peoples, and to Canadians themselves) the moral and financial accountability of Euro-Canadian society in a continuing record of Crimes Against Humanity (4).

This social, political, and educational perspective is still well hidden within the mainstream Canadian narrative. Howard Adams in *Prison of Grass* describes not only what has taken place in Residential Schools, but how this ideology continues to present day society:

The school systematically and meticulously conditions natives to a state of inferiorization and colonization. It does this in a number of ways; most important, however, is that it teaches the language, literature, and history of the colonizer and thus forces the students to deny their language, culture, and essential being. The school and its teachers operate within typical racial stereotypes and coerce students into feeling ashamed and unworthy (132).

Adams describes an antiquated logic of assimilation, which continues to perpetuate itself in contemporary policies and programs. This ideology promoted by Canadian policy and programs has led to confusion and diminished self-worth for First Nations people today.

Milloy’s seminal work provides a historical overview of the development and inter-workings of the government, involving Churches and other stakeholders who initiated policies to determine the fate of Indian children and their families. This was the first prominent account of assimilation, cultural genocide, and the experiences of students who attended Residential Schools from coast to coast. The cover of this book depicts a photograph of a young Thomas Moore; a propaganda tool which attempted to demonstrate to Canada the positive impact of Residential Schools:

There, in the photograph on the left, is the young Thomas posed against a fur robe, in his beaded dress, his hair in long braids, clutching a gun. Displayed for the viewer are the symbols of the past-of Aboriginal costume and culture, of hunting, of the disorder and violence of warfare and the cross-cultural partnerships of the fur trade and of the military alliances that had dominated life in Canada since the late sixteenth century (4-5).

When the Residential School program was fully underway, so also was the process of hasty nation building. It is no surprise that there was little opposition to the assimilative policies and programs like Residential Schools. Indian people were considered an impediment to the development of Canada, and Residential Schools were integrated with policies such as the Indian Act that helped to pave the way for unhampered expansion of the colonial project.

Isolation

Canadian First Nations reserve communities exist as a type of mythology in the minds of many Canadians. The media portrayal of communities who are not only geographically isolated, but also socially and economically marginalized from the rest of the country only perpetuates the image of a self-destructive society that remain a hopeless burden that the rest of the country has to bear.

Hawkes describes some of this isolation:

One recent examination of the economic status of Indian communities highlighted many of the commonly recognized problems, including, their small size (the average reserve band includes less than 500 people), their mostly rural, often isolated locations offering no proximity to goods markets and employment opportunities, low levels of education compared to the non-Indian community, low incomes and low employment rates (105).

This characterization of First Nations reserve communities is an accurate portrayal of many communities in Canada. Despite this accurate characterization, it is important to consider the larger

process of the way in which communities went from thriving, self-sustaining communities to being economically and socially isolated, lacking integration with the rest of Canada, and how this was all a part of the larger nation building process which enabled settlement and expansion to occur from coast to coast. The result is compounded community dysfunction stuck in a system that does not allow for healthy, sustainable economic and social development. As Elder Tait described in the interviews:

When you take away our people's land for their economic growth, where does this leave us? It leaves us with these generational effects we have today on every reserve I've seen; it's the same picture over and over again, unemployment, alcohol, drug abuse, and our young men finding their culture within the walls of the Stoney Mountain Penitentiary.

The experience of isolation manifests itself in the geography of communities. For many First Nations communities in Canada, and certainly in Northern Manitoba there is a dependency on ice roads. Ice roads are constructed across frozen bodies of water during the winter and allow for road transportation in and out of otherwise geographically remote areas. Ice roads have become integrated into the larger economic survival of communities for the three to four months that they are open, because it allows for the transportation of goods into the community. For the remainder of the year, many communities remain as remote 'fly-in' only communities. This isolation coupled with the dependency of the welfare system only hinders personal, family, and community growth. The development of these largely inaccessible communities was an intentional component of the 'isolate then assimilate' process. Residential Schools were also a part of this ideology, with schools built far from home communities, and largely inaccessible to parents and families. In *The Circle Game*, the authors describe this process:

Both [the Church and the State] wished to civilize and Christianize the Indians and to fit them into the lower echelons of the new economic order... Consequently, the schools were deliberately located away from reserves so that parental influence on the inmate would be reduced to a minimum (47).

The isolation of children from parents and family is at the heart of the subsequent social breakdown, substance abuse, violence, and premature deaths, all associated with collective and intergenerational family dysfunction.

As a community member I have witnessed how isolation has influenced the violence that is repeated generationally and exacerbated by alcohol, drugs, and learned behaviors. A compounding factor is the proliferation of social media and mainstream media that has served to highlight to community members the stark contrast of their material lives with those of mainstream Canadians. Youth are continually faced with images of what is considered to be a 'normal' lifestyle, which then serves as a reminder of their own bleak surroundings. As youth struggle to develop their own self-identity, they are faced with a complex set of messages of what is 'normal'. The result is a poor sense of self-worth and self-esteem that plays out in premature deaths, poor educational choices, early incarceration and a broad range of psychosocial issues.

Psychosocial Impacts

The term 'psychosocial loss' describes the disruption of social growth of all children. In his findings, Erikson defines the eight stages of emotional, psychological, and physical development that contribute to the psychosocial behaviors of children. The basis of Erickson's work comes from time working with the Sioux of South Dakota and the Yurok of northern California where he gained an awareness of cultural, social and environmental influences on a child's social development. Erickson used this time to understand the complex and long-term devastation

associated with assimilation, Residential Schools, and isolation and the larger breakdown of a once strong cultural system. Erikson's description of stage four where competence is developed between the ages of 5-12 years old is essential to understanding the role of Residential Schools during the critical competence development period for children. In addition, the development of fidelity for youth in the ages 13-19, and love and intimacy versus isolation for ages 20-24 and 25-39, are connected to the losses suffered by children who attended Residential Schools. One of the main elements of Erikson's psychosocial stage theory is the development of ego identity. Ego identity is the makeup of the crucial interactions of the conscious sense of self that we develop through social interaction. The psychosocial stage theory described by Erikson connects to the larger sets of issues facing Indigenous communities. Elder Tait poignantly describes some of the psychosocial experiences of First Nations people:

It's no secret that once a child is taken away from their home fire [parents, community], the impacts if not dealt with become a pattern which is displayed in other unhealthy forms; sexual abuse, substances, violence, and community dysfunction, which is still alive and well within First Nation communities. This is because of the destruction of the inner child. They were destroyed by ripping apart their culture, language, and most of all their home fire was extinguished forever, thanks to the Residential Schools, government, and the many Churches involved.

Residential Schools impacted people's ability to come to terms with the messages of inferiority by governments and Churches and then the return of Residential School students who had been inculcated with these very same messages. This was confusing for individuals and families and led to what Erikson describes as stage 5, "Identity vs. Role Confusion" (3). The guilt and shame for parents and grandparents who had "allowed" (although they were indeed forced)

their children to be taken away resulted in a great deal of guilt and shame. In order to dull this guilt, alcohol provided an unhealthy outlet. As participant Duncan describes, “In my time when many children returned home, there was confusion on both sides; alcohol, violent outcomes, and a loss of what was a family”. Erikson’s Stage 6, “Love: Intimacy vs. Isolation” describes a critical element of what was missing for children who returned home from Residential Schools to guilt ridden parents, who were told they were inferior parents whose belief system was harmful to themselves and their families (4). Children spent years in an institutionalized setting feeling unloved and abandoned.

The impact of isolation is compounded by the psychosocial losses First Nations people experienced in Residential Schools. As Elder Tait describes: “just look at the isolation of today's reserves, there are many people and places that don't have any chance to heal, or find their true understanding of who or what they are”. Erikson also argues that the wounds left open by trauma become a part of a person’s identity and character makeup. He states: “the personality is engaged with the hazards of existence continuously, even as the body's metabolism copes with decay” (5). Erikson is describing the damage inflicting upon the early cognitive development of children through Residential Schools, which, if left unhealed will result in delayed personal and cognitive growth which manifests itself into many personal dysfunctions such as substance abuse, violent tendencies, and lack of interpersonal communication skills.

Understanding the impact of the colonial experience within the framework of RIPS - Residential Schools, Isolation, and Psycho-Social Loss (Carsten 25) provides one way to systematically understand how assimilative programs like Residential Schools and the geographic, social, economic and cultural isolation of the reserve systems has fed into a complex set of psychological and social losses for First Nations people. The literature on this is robust, however

for the purposes of this thesis, the RIPS framework provides a way of having a conversation between the literature and the research participants about their own lived experiences in Norway House Cree Nation. The RIPS framework provides a means to unpack the perpetuating inter-generational challenges hindering the youth and adults in our community.

Youth and Criminal Justice

In *Returning to the Teachings: Exploring Aboriginal Justice*, Rupert Ross provides us with an in depth and, still after almost two decades, a relevant perspective on how the Canadian justice system is failing First Nations people:

I first began to glimpse how desperate the world really was for so many Aboriginal people. I despaired of ever finding something powerful enough to change things for the better. I knew only that my own system was unlikely to penetrate more than the surface of that huge social cancer (49).

The overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the court system as well as jails leads us to the obvious reality that the system is not responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people. As Hill describes:

In Manitoba, Aboriginal people comprise 12 percent of the population, with males accounting for 63 percent of the male inmates in provincial prisons and females 73 percent of the female inmates. Not unexpectedly, a female Treaty Indian is 131 times more likely to be admitted to a provincial jail than a non-aboriginal person, while a male Treaty Indian is 25 times more likely (22).

Institutionalization

The forceful end to the so-called “Indian problem” in the Canadian West from 1867-1885 had two major advantages for the newly formed Canadian government in the 1880’s. First was to get the

last remaining Chiefs of the plains, Mistahi-muskwa (Big Bear) and Pitikwahanapiwiyn (Poundmaker), to surrender and sign treaties through starvation and the constant reminders of force from the North West Mounted Police, then give away their lands to the influx of Western Europeans for farming and economical expectations, then to quash the so called Métis Rebellion. These actions would pave the way for the nation building to commence, and concretize Canada's boundaries with the United States. From 1867 to 1967, Canada would store away the Indians of Canada (total isolation) onto reserves. These lands were not suitable for farming and were located sufficiently away from urban centers where products could be sold.

First Nations communities underwent drastic institutionalization through the process of colonialism. Part of this was through Residential Schools, but also the imposing Indian agent, the presence of RCMP officers, and the other assimilative policies such as bans on cultural practices. The result is a devastation of culture. The colonial process has resulted in a "total institution" as articulated by Goffman in his seminal work *Asylums*, describing them as a

range of institutions in which whole blocks of people [Indians] are bureaucratically processed, whilst being physically isolated from the "normal" round of activities, by being required to sleep, work, within the same confines of the same institution. The term is used to describe psychiatric hospitals, prisons, army barracks, and boarding schools [residential] concentration camps [reserves], institutions whose residents are controlled, regulated, or manipulated by those in charge (7).

The impact of Residential Schools, isolation and psychosocial losses can be seen in the many social, economic and health related issues including high unemployment, suicide, alcohol and drug issues and poor educational outcomes and premature deaths. As Goffman states,

Any group of persons- prisoners, primitives, pilots, or patients develop a life of their own that becomes meaningful, and normal once you get close to it, and see a good way to learn about any of these worlds is to submit oneself in the company of the members to the daily round of petty contingencies to which they are subject (10).

Within the last fifteen years, I have personally witnessed many of these characteristics in the community of Norway House. As Elder Tait describes the devastating outcomes of the Residential Schools:

We as Indian children have to live with these memories for the rest of our lives, and knowing at one time or another we also passed these alcoholic, violent behaviors, to the next generation only deepens our pain of what was done to our culture.

While Goffman's important work was not written in relation to Residential Schools, it was done in reference to other institutions such as psychiatric asylums, boarding schools, prisons, and concentration camps; the connections are indelible.

Within the last forty years or so the opening of many isolated communities has brought drugs, gangs and criminal dysfunction within these First Nations communities. As well, there are still a number of First Nations communities that are extremely isolated. These communities are dependent on government monies and outside help for the necessities of life, such as fuel, groceries, building materials and health care. In the late 1950's and 1960's the times were changing, and First Nation(s) peoples started to look outside the psychological boundaries of the reserve, only to find themselves lost, hated, despised in what was their own lands. This hatred towards First Nation peoples is a direct result of propaganda and stereotypical history portrayed by

Europeans and directed to destroy any credibility of thriving Indigenous cultures within North America.

Within the community of Norway House Cree Nation, the effects of the opening of the community in 1974 from isolation to an all season road have had its impacts both in positive and negative ways. Elders who obtained their livelihood through fishing, trapping and other land based ways have experienced profound personal losses as these ways have almost been entirely eliminated by the continuous hydro projects like the ones in Grand Rapids and Jen-peg. The poor health status amongst First Nations people is certainly related to this drastic change in livelihood and food consumption patterns but it is also important to consider the impact on behavior. As Linden states “the assumption is that the deviant behavior of individuals can be at least partly explained by some physical or psychological trait that makes them different from normal law-abiding citizens” (36). The institutionalization of First Nations people and communities and the enormous shifts that have taken place have multiple layers that result in many dysfunctional behaviors within communities.

Criminal Activity

While the statistics are unclear, it is sufficiently evident that there are high rates of criminal activities in many First Nations communities. Linden asks Canadians to consider another perspective on criminal activity in First Nations communities, contending that the actual amount of crime is unknown:

The total amount of crime in a community consists of crimes that are known or recorded and the dark figure of crime. Criminologists have used differing methods (such as victimization surveys) to try to decrease the amount of unknown or unrecorded crime (70).

Crimes that are often unreported include assaults, drug distribution, and domestic violence. As one youth participant describes, “Most crimes being committed within our community are not reported, this is because if you show weakness by calling the RCMP you are labeled a snitch. What that means is more beatings, threats, or other harmful tactics”. This form of peer criminal pressure extends beyond the code of the reserve. It follows the youth right into the jails, into cities, and becomes even more dangerous for First Nation youth who become prey to the gangs in cities right across Canada. This dark shadow of crime as described by Linden is increasingly more apparent in northern Manitoba cities. As First Nations people continue to flock to urban centers for a chance of a better life, most of these individuals leave without an education, with poor social skills and little comprehension of the challenges of urban life. Undoubtedly Canada has a growing concern when it comes to the increasing incarceration numbers of both Aboriginal men and women.

Internal Oppression

As Justice Murray Sinclair describes, much of the oppression experienced in First Nations communities comes from internal sources. At a University of Manitoba Colloquium in 2011, he stated, “we as First Nation(s) people, within the Northern communities in Canada are now the main contributors of oppression within our own people.” For most of his lecture, Sinclair was stating that since the Residential School experience, the oppression has turned from being perpetrated by the Residential Schools and the State to the people who were directly affected by this traumatic event. These factors lie within our leadership, trickle down to the Churches, and are exacerbated by nepotism, favoritism and other forms of corruption resulting in internalized oppression and widespread dysfunction. Inevitably, the result is an “Indian elite” who benefit significantly from the flow of resources into poverty stricken communities. The Center for

Aboriginal Policy Change describes these actions as being directly related to the Indian Act, which excludes band chiefs from accountability for reserve expenditures. This example of the government understanding of corruption, nepotism, and greed that will destroy any or all progress within the reserve itself has proven to be a great colonial tool for submission.

Violence and the State Apparatus

Fanon identifies the foundation of colonial values as rooted in the self-belief of total dominance. This self-belief is evident in captured historical propaganda which “dehumanizes the native; it turns him into an animal”. Fanon further describes this portrayal:

The settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil. Native society is not simply described as a society lacking in values. It is not enough for the colonist to affirm that those values have disappeared from, or still, better never existed in, the colonial world. The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. He is . . . the enemy of values . . . the absolute evil. He is the corrosive element, destroying all that comes near him; he is the deforming element, disfiguring all that has to do with beauty or morality; he is the depository of maleficent powers, the unconscious and irretrievable instrument of blind forces (32).

It is within these tools of colonial dominance that we find the “superstructures” such as concomitant racist ideologies and social institutions which favour Whites/colonizers, and which hold the colonized prisoners within their own reality. These ideologies are the reinforcement of the physical, psychological, and economical state apparatus that holds the foundation of colonialism and dominance. These tools of submission are clearly used within Canada today. The Canadian Justice system, the Churches, and the scores of Provincial and Federal penitentiaries are filled with

First Nations people. The institutional actors such as the RCMP and the local police act as "agents of government and speak the language of pure force" (29).

The current crisis facing First Nations youth does not exist in a vacuum. In fact, it is due to a complex set of factors that layer upon themselves and reinforce negative behavior across generations. These factors must be examined not only as individual areas of emphasis, but as a part of a larger system that includes the role of Residential Schools and the isolation of First Nations communities, resulting in a complex set of psycho-social impacts that are most evident in youth criminal activity. However the development of Residential Schools and the designation of reserves happened within a much larger narrative of oppression, violence, and the state. Duncan Campbell Scott's infamous sentiments, recorded in the National Archives of Canada, remind us of this vast and powerful narrative that has existed as a part of the development of the nation:

I want to get rid of the Indian problem....Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department.

This absorption has failed to take place, and in fact, the Indian administration continues to maintain a powerful grip on the lives of First Nation's people in Canada. The literature is replete with statistics that attempt to document the reality of First Nations people; it is only through the direct voices can we come to understand the complexity of the social reality of youth.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Several methodological approaches guide this research, being the most appropriate given the intensely personal nature of the topic. This research also embraces the work done by Indigenous scholars such as Wilson and Alfred who have paved the way for the acknowledgment of the validity of Indigenous research methodology in mainstream scholarly work. The methodologies that guided this thesis include 'Native Insiders' (Smith), 'Research as Ceremony' (Wilson), and 'Grounded Theory' (Corbin and Strauss). These approaches have many similarities in terms of the development relationships, personal inter-relatedness and connection to community, which will be described further. The approach to research is to attempt to maintain a balanced perspective between the perspectives of youth, adult and Elders. These approaches will be described followed by a description of the research tools that were used.

Native Insider

The approach to this research required a qualitative understanding due to the close guarded inner complexity of the criminal and violent nature of the topic. As consistent with academic approaches to research, formal ethical approval was received through the University of Manitoba's research ethics board. Nine video recorded interviews were conducted with participants. One was an Elder, four were youth and four were adults. Two of the adults were considered Elders respectively, because of their life long work within the community. I know the research participants in the community and we have had a prior personal relationship and friendship. For instance, one of the Elders has been my traditional teacher for many years, and thus our foundation of trust was already pre-established. Interviews were conducted in person, video recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were coded to identify emergent themes that are presented in the thesis.

This approach fit within the Indigenous research paradigm that provided the foundation for this inquiry. The words of Maori scholar Smith guided the tools used for the thesis. As she describes:

Methods are the particular tools or techniques that you use to actually gather data. To continue the research journey analogy, methods are the means of transportation. These methods are only means to an end (your methodology). Thus, as long as the methods fit the ontology, epistemology and axiology of the Indigenous paradigm, they can be borrowed from other suitable research paradigms (39).

This research project is based on my own experiences as a First Nation person who has dealt with many challenges as a youth. I have spent most of my adult life working in several capacities with First Nations youth, and as such, I am able to provide an insider's perspective on the complexity of the situation. Rather than an insider looking in, which is what most research does, this thesis is based on an insider looking "around" and "out". Being an insider within my community of Norway House has its advantages for insight, understanding, and seeing the inner workings of a particular situation. Smith describes this type of Indigenous insider approach as requiring the same ethical, respectful, critical approach as outsider researcher. One distinction she describes is the quality of humility. When one belongs to a community, the researcher has a different set of roles, relationships, status and position compared to an outsider. Smith describes the problematic role of expert outsiders; while "non-indigenous experts have claimed considerable acceptability amongst their own colleagues and peers, government officials and society on the basis of their research, Indigenous voices have been silenced or 'Othered' in the process" (139).

As Smith purports, the Native Insider sees, feels and understands the community perspective in ways which an 'outsider' never could. I believe that having spent the better part of my life living within the City of Winnipeg and then finding my way home has also given me a

perspective from two worlds, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. Smith also explains the struggles Indigenous researchers have between the demands of the research and the realities that exist in their community. Many of these encounters are with people with whom they have shared lifelong relationships, and a number of difficulties- ethical, cultural, political, and personal, are faced when conducting research. They are working partially as an insiders and also as outsiders because advanced Western education allows them to work across “clan, tribe, linguistic, age and gender boundaries” (5).

The conundrum that Smith describes applies to my situation in several ways. For the last sixteen years I have lived and worked in the community, I have an extensive family network, and have many friends and colleagues. However, I am still looked on as an outsider because I was not born and raised in the community. When my Mother was taken to the Residential School my connection to this community was severed. This factor is important given the long history of poorly done research by outsiders, which has exposed shame and harm to family, friends, and community. Despite being a Norway House band member living in the community for sixteen years, along with my formal academic education I am viewed both as an insider and an outsider. This is a fact that I must live with. As long as the community benefits from my research, that is all that matters to me at this stage of my life.

Reflexive Praxis

Due to the nature of this research, which focuses on issues relating to violence, Residential Schools and lateral violence - all experiences that I have been exposed to, an approach that provides the opportunity for reflexive praxis is most appropriate. Reflexivity will provide a deeper understanding of the complexity of these issues by offering an insider’s perspective. The opportunity to use reflexivity is also important within a Native Studies graduate thesis, as it allows

for transformations in academic environments. This is consistent with the work of Taiaiake Alfred who discusses Indigenous perspectives as an important part of changing “universities so they become places where the values, principles, modes of organization, behavior of our people are respected in, and hopefully, even integrated into, the larger system of structures and progresses that make up the university itself” (88).

Qualitative approaches are well suited to reflexive praxis as they provide an opportunity to critically engage with the research process using the values, principles, modes of organization and behaviors described by Alfred. Reflexivity and insider approaches are indelibly linked. Smith describes the insider research as requiring reflexivity; “insider researchers have to have ways of thinking critically about their process, their relationships and the quality and richness of their data and analysis” (137). An Indigenous reflexive approach demands that the research itself must always be linked to themselves, their family and community. These demands are not required of the non-Indigenous researcher although all research must reflect integrity and be respectful of relationships developed through the research process itself, or through kinship relations that existed prior to the research. Reflexivity in research is an important process because it goes beyond the subject/researcher monologue. Instead, it is a process that provides the researcher with the space to duly consider the environment or context that they are working in, the people who they are interviewing, and their own positionality.

Research as Ceremony

Wilson writes about the concept of research as being a part of a larger reciprocal process. He describes the research paradigm for Indigenous people as one that involves not only a relationship to the topic, community and participants, but a larger responsibility to re-shape the

academic environment to promote the value of reflexive practice, insider approaches and critical reciprocity. Wilson describes Indigenous research as requiring reciprocity because

...after all, this is what our teachings are all about. There is little doubt that the researcher and the participants will have a cultural relationship, which is meant for the betterment of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. In both critical theory and constructivism, knowledge in itself is not seen as the ultimate goal, rather the goal is the change that this knowledge may help to bring about (37).

Wilson's perspective is particularly culturally salient because he is a scholar also from a northern Manitoba First Nation community, Opaskwayak Cree Nation. A Cree cultural approach was also described to me by the Elder who was interviewed which is consistent with concepts of reciprocity (or research as ceremony), native insider, praxis and reflexivity. In discussing methodology, the Elder stated, "this thing you are looking for, this research, is looked at from my point of view as traditional knowledge, shared, given, taken. One thing for sure, it's been around and shared for a thousand years". The Elder considers research to be a culturally based knowledge-building system that is interwoven with the traditional teachings. Wilson echoes Elder Tait's consideration of research as happening within a holistic circle, distinct from the Western approach to research and knowledge generation:

If we're going to educate Aboriginal people through the hierarchical process, what you're basically teaching them is the hierarchical process. Therefore the process is the product. If you teach or do research within the traditions of the circle, which is inclusive, participatory, proactive, that sort of thing—very general terms on this—then you're teaching the individuals within that circle to become participatory, inclusive and so forth (103-104).

Grounded Theory

Indigenous methodologies also fit within the grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) approach.

Creswell defines grounded theory as

an approach that generates or discovers a theory or an abstract analytical schema of a phenomenon that relates to a particular situation. This situation is one in which individuals interact, take actions, or engage in a process in response to a phenomenon (43).

For the topic of this thesis specifically, little is known about the issue of inter-generational violence and the consequences for First Nation's youth. Due to the reciprocal nature of this research process, and the relationships that had existed with the participants, grounded theory offers the most respectful approach to understanding the common themes uncovered through the interviews. This approach is consistent with Indigenous worldviews that allow for a more organic understanding of complex issues rather than pre-judging circumstances based on experiences of other communities and perspectives of other scholars. Relatedly, the process of engaging in dialogue with the respondents was ceremonial in itself because it provided an opportunity for two-way sharing, understanding and healing between myself as the researcher, and those who were interviewed. This approach to research is consistent with the approach described by Clarke in her book *Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory after the Postmodern Turn*. Clarke considers the possibility of seeing and feeling the context of an idea, a person, a community, or a practice *not* as outside of, but within that idea, person, community, or practice. This approach acknowledges the importance of taking into account the reality of the lived experience of participants, but also the long lasting impact that this research will have on the individuals and community.

Research Tools

Nine interviews were conducted with youth, adults and Elders in Norway House. These interviews were video recorded, transcribed and coded. The predominant themes were identified and described in the discussion chapter. A relationship was already in place with all the participants, and this was based on mutual trust and respect. Due to the deeply personal nature of the questions, this foundation of trust was important because it provided for open and honest discussion.

Research participants were all contacted to solicit their interest in participating in this research. After a description of the inquiry was provided, a meeting was set up. The academic ethics protocols were followed and all respondents signed a consent form. A video camera was set up and interviews were conducted which lasted anywhere from forty-five minutes to one and one half hours. This research followed a semi-structured interview style similar to the one used by Cresswell (64). The questions that were asked included: (1) what are your concerns regarding youth violence within the community? (2) What are the leading causes behind youth criminal behaviors in our community? (3) Gangs and the problems which are associated with them? (4) What is needed to help our youth deal with social problems such as: suicide, violence, and peer pressure? (5) What can our leadership do to alleviate the overwhelming issues that seem to be consuming our youth today?

There were two sets of questions for this interview process. Each set of questions was broken down into two categories. One set of questions for the youth, and then another five set of questions for the adult group. This was done for the complexity of questions, which had to be understood by the youth. This is said with no disrespect to any of the participants; the reality is that the scope of questions had to remain clear and understandable.

The interviews were broken into three parts. The first set of interviews was conducted with the adults within the community. This was broken in two female, and two male groups ranging in age from ages of 30 to 60. These adult participants have worked within their community and continue to strive for the betterment of the youth and community. The second set of interviewees was made up of two women and two men ranging in ages from 20 to 29 years. The last interview was with the Elder and was done at the end based on request by the Elder. I had requested the interview almost twelve months prior to being granted the interview, which is when he called me and said “OK boy, I'm ready”. This twelve month waiting period was a teaching from this Elder. He smiled and said “I had to make sure you're ready to do this in a respectable and positive way.”

Of particular interest to note is one interview conducted with my own Elder and teacher, Albert Tait. I had discussed an interview with my Elder for over one year, and while he initially agreed to participate, it took more than a year of time spent with him in ceremony and listening to teachings, doing cultural foundational work such as learning how to gather the ‘Grandfathers’ (rocks), and learning the meanings of the sweat lodge and pipe ceremony. I now know what was behind this waiting period; it is about patience, understanding, and the Elder’s ‘feeling out’ process through which he knew I was ready for the true meaning of traditional knowledge before he actually agreed to participate.

This is an example of the different type of access that someone from the community has compared to ‘outsiders’. This interview was conducted at his home and in his teepee, and before we could begin he sat with me and began to talk about my understanding. Then he started with a ceremonial Cree song, then he played the drum, and all the while sage filled the air with a mystical dance of smoke. I can still smell the sage and I still feel a shiver of acceptance. Then he smiled at

me and said, “You can turn on that recorder now,” then he shared a lifetime of heartache, love, and cultural awakening which it seemed like I had been waiting for since I was a little boy.

At this point in my research, I now could see the whole puzzle, pieces were falling into place, and for that couple of hours I truly felt and accepted the teachings, and was proud to have had the chance to understand what “Indian research” truly means. At the end, this interview was worth the wait, and in fact provided a basis for the analysis of the other interviews conducted with all of the other respondents. The words of Elder Tait provided me with insight that assisted in the development of the themes that emerged from the other interviews.

This thesis represents something larger than a step towards the completion of a graduate degree. It provides me with the validity of Indigenous research methodologies as being as rigorous and important to understanding the experiences of First Nation’s people. It acknowledges that research has always been done in Indigenous communities, and that this research helps to build a foundation for others who are interested in the topic of youth and violence to conduct their inquiry in a way that that shows respect, understanding, and cultural compassion.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Conducting research in one's own community as an insider carries its own set of challenges. In the last sixteen years living in this community, I am still labeled a *wemistikosiw(ak)* (white man).

When I first heard this word I was unaware of how it would impact my life and my personal identity. As a researcher, these comments never escaped my mind, because while I was an insider, in that I am a registered community member on my deceased Mother's side, I had grown up in inner city Winnipeg. As a researcher, I was now an outsider again, because an academic investigation, no matter who is doing it, is still an outsider's activity. The ways in which my research unfolded can be described through a simple interaction I had at the local gas bar. While waiting to be served two community members stood behind me talking in Cree and I heard that word again, *wemistikosiw(ak)*. The lady serving me started to laugh. Without hesitation I turned around and said *mona, mwac*, boy! which translates into "no sir" in English. I continued saying that "just because I look different doesn't mean I'm not Cree." As I was walking out one of those men said "*Tansi*, boy" (hello), which was followed by "who's your Mom?" and after a discussion of my family relations, he smiled and walked away. This interaction is how the research process unfolded, with initial suspicion, the development of kinship connections, and then relationship building.

There were three prominent themes that emerged from the research. The first was Residential School and the inter-generational effect on youth and the community as a whole. The second theme that emerged was youth violence and the impacts within our community. Related to this, the third theme that emerged was the impact of gangs and drugs.

The outcomes, which I found interesting with all the adult interviews, were the impacts of the Residential School experience and the generational link with the youth of the community. As one participant described:

As far as I'm concerned the youth of today don't know about what happened within the Residential School system and the gap that we see within the community. It's like the ongoing issues that many of our youth are having in regards to drug use, alcohol, gangs, and of course the violence, which we are dealing with today, is a direct result of the Residential School system. Yet our youth don't understand this part of their history, there's a gap that needs filling.

This participant is describing the link between the impact of Residential Schools on subsequent generations and youth violence. One youth respondent puts the violence into this perspective: "parents don't care enough about their kids, when they do something wrong [youth] they say good for you, see what happens. So the message is I don't care what you do, it's your own fault if you get into trouble." This is an example of the lack of parenting skills and poor coping by parents, which leads to children and youth being poorly monitored and guided. The result is often a lifetime of criminal behaviors, drug and alcohol abuse, and violence.

One respondent describes how easily youth become in conflict with the law: "we are losing our youth to the criminal justice system, they don't comprehend their actions and the "white man laws". By the time they start to understand that criminal records follows them to adulthood, for many it is too late. This is why our community justice system is so important. It gives community members the chance to intervene and help our youth before they are lost forever.

As a member of the Norway House Community (Youth) Justice Committee I have a first-hand perspective on how youth become quickly entangled in the criminal justice system. I sat on

this committee since 2010 and I have learned the importance of rebuilding, reclaiming, and most of all restoring identity for youth so they have the confidence to recognize that they have a choice other than the criminal path that is so often placed in front of them. As Ross describes, the justice system is not working for First Nations people, because it is not connected to the larger collective healing that has yet to take place. After spending the better part of sixteen years working, volunteering, and just reassembling the broken part of my own family history, it is my understanding that the three themes emerging from this research are important in recognizing the dysfunctional traits, which consistently contribute to community imbalance.

Intergeneration Impacts of Residential Schools

Intergenerational trauma is the result of unresolved trauma that then manifests itself in subsequent generation when behavior is not adequately modified or positive behaviors learned. The result is a complex set of negative behaviors that become self-perpetuating and harmful, and are compounded in each succeeding generation. McCaslin describes the effect of intergenerational trauma at both the individual and collective level:

Unresolved trauma continues to affect individuals, families, and communities. Intergenerational or multigenerational trauma happens when the effects of trauma are not resolved in one generation, allowing for patterns of abuse to continue. The patterns of abuse that are passed from one generation to the next include not only physical and sexual abuse but also low self-esteem, anger, depression, violence, addictions, unhealthy relationships, fear, shame, compulsiveness, lack of parenting skills, body pain, and panic attacks (43).

Within the last generation, the impacts of the Residential School have been well hidden. In *The Circle Game* the authors describe the intergenerational impact of Residential Schools:

The creation of Indian Residential Schools followed a time-tested method of obliterating indigenous cultures, and the psycho-social consequences these schools would have on Aboriginal Peoples were well understood at the time of their formation. Present-day symptomology found in Aboriginal Peoples and societies does not constitute a distinct psychological condition, but is the well-known and long-studied response of human beings living under conditions of severe and prolonged oppression. (4)

These intergenerational impacts of Residential School are now becoming more and more apparent. Respondents described an immediate disconnect upon returning to the community and attempting to reintegrate into the home and the community. The natural bonds that exist between parents and grandparents and children were disrupted and in some cases, the home fire was extinguished altogether when children died in the schools. One participant who lived his whole life in the community from the time he was born up to when he went to residential school and then returned home, described his experience:

You had to go to residential schools and there were a lot of other community members that had to leave when they were five or six years old. That bonding was broken between your parents. Even then I knew I couldn't really connect to my dad or mom the way I should have when I first came back. It was only after my early thirties that I started sobering up that I was able to make the connection with them.

What this participant further discussed is that parents were overwhelmed with guilt and shame over this lost connection with their children. For families who had an outlet available to them such as practicing traditional spirituality or participating in Church based activities, they had a mechanism to attempt to deal with these losses. However in most cases, communities did not have their traditional culture available to them. What was readily available was alcohol and the

subsequent widespread alcohol abuse. This participant describes coming home from residential school to full-blown alcoholics who were grieving the loss of the opportunity to rear their own children. Another participant similarly describes their experiences:

The Residential School has left a major hole within not only the community but the generations which has followed. The children or youth of today don't understand what has happened to their grandfathers and grandmothers, there are missing pieces within their history, which are contributing to their own demise. When bad things are passed on to the next generation without understanding you have social, economic, and unhealthy choices being made without any reason why.

These statements coincide with Goffman's description of asylums where people are physically isolated from typical activities, administratively processed as blocks of people rather than individuals. While Goffman was not referring to Residential Schools specifically, what he describes is a much a larger ideology around institutionalizing human populations in a dehumanizing way. Much like Residential Schools, the result was a total destruction of family, love, and cultural shame. What I have personally witnessed within my own family is that the intergenerational impacts are alive and well, hidden beneath the shame and abuse, and in most cases go untreated.

Erikson's work is also connected not only to words of the participants but also to Goffman's understanding of the impact of institutionalization. Children were forcibly removed from the home by Church and State as blocks of people rather than individual children and they were removed from the normal activities associated with being raised by parents. The lack of influence by parents on the development of the child has resulted in what Erikson describes as a lack of "encouragement from parents, teachers, or peers [which] will doubt their abilities to be successful"

(6). Erikson attributes this to stage 5, which corresponds to children aged 5 to 11. Notably, children were typically removed from the home at age four to five to attend Residential Schools. This core age of development was inhibited for most Indian children who attended Residential Schools. In many cases and personal testimonies including my own, the intergenerational trauma that flowed from this was transferred to current generations because of the lack of healing. For many survivors, their pain, suffering, and actions towards others have been hidden so deeply within their own psyche that it has taken forty or even fifty years to talk about their inner child nightmares, if they do at all.

The process of healing is one that requires tremendous personal resiliency, as well as a set of circumstances that enable such change to occur. The reality, however is that many First Nations communities, including Norway House Cree Nation have appalling living conditions, lack of health care, and a political structure which is much more reflective of the assimilative government structures than of the cultural leadership structures that are more conducive to positive, collective governance. This environment provides little opportunity to address and move beyond the intergenerational effects of Residential Schools, and in fact exacerbate current challenges such as suicide, addictions and violence.

The Impact of Youth Violence on the Community

The second theme that emerged from the respondents is the community impact of youth violence. As stated early within the thesis, youth violence has emerged as one of the lingering effects of the Residential School experience. As Elder Tait describes:

We are now witnessing the aftermath of the Residential School generational effects within our young people. You know the young people of today are more violent than ever, their high on drugs, full of rage and looking to kill one another. These actions are what happens

when bad things are passed down generation-to-generation, what we have is a lost generation who don't know how to deal with all this stuff.

What Elder Tait is relating to is the stream of premature deaths that are directly related to the anger, shame, and violence, and which consumes the youth of today. This anger and violence has a direct link to Residential School and inter-generational impacts including the lack of parenting, poor educational choices, and the compounding impact of addictions. Chrisjohn, Young, and Maraun describe the self-perpetuating impact of Residential Schools under the caption “Freedom Is Slavery”:

Therapeutic misdirection is not just a game played on former Residential School students. Time and again we hear how the current, troubling conditions in Aboriginal communities are do to a kink of “ripple effect.” Aboriginal Peoples, mistreated in Residential Schools, returned home to pass on the mistreatment in their own time. Sometimes this is because their pathology provokes the former students to acts of violence or perversion that will themselves become self-perpetuating, and sometimes because the former students, in the grip of some school-induced shortcoming (say, “lack of parenting skills”) simply can't contribute as they should to the health of the next generations of their community (278).

From Elders to scholars, the complexity of the situation is overwhelming. The violence within the community is concerning, but what should be sounding more alarm bells are the cases of violence which are never reported. I know personally in this community that assaults on other people are rarely reported, due to the threat of recurring violence towards another sibling. This is even more pronounced when it comes to partners, spouses, common law, girlfriends, and other people connected to an individual or family. As reported in Linden the “Dark Figure of Crime” can be described as the criminal activities that not only go unreported but also are unknown. Linden

describes the total amount of crime in a community as consisting of “crimes that are known or recorded and the dark figure of crime. Criminologists have used differing methods (such as victimization surveys) to try to decrease the amount of unknown or unreported crime” (70). This technique of understanding criminal activities is problematic in First Nations communities because of the high turnover rates of law enforcement personnel who fail to have adequate cultural comprehension and understanding of the broader social, political, economic and cultural context of the community shaping such criminal activity. Fanon’s description of the criminal justice system as being another state mechanism which is underpinned by a foundation of colonial values and the self-belief of total dominance provides a basis for analysis of the current management of criminal activity in First Nations communities. The RCMP and local police are the “agents of government speak, the language of pure force” (29).

Gang Involvement and Drugs

Respondents spoke to a third pressing theme for First Nations youth in Norway House: the role of gangs and the perpetuation of drugs in the community. As interviewee Folster describes,

The gang issue within our community has seen a dramatic fluctuation for the worse over the past decade or so. The violence has escalated to new and dangerous proportions. This growing trend is a direct to the unhealthy life choices, which are consuming our youth.

Almost thirty years ago, the Youth Justice Committee predicted the upcoming challenges facing youth in the community when they were first established. According to the Norway House Youth Justice Committee:

The (NHCN) has been challenged with social and economic problems due to chemical and substance abuse amongst the youth. These factors have been contributing to the increase of family and youth violence, gang related activities. Also there has been an increase in Elder

abuse, child apprehensions, suicide, home invasions, robberies, and serious incidents resulting in premature deaths (3).

The Youth Justice Committee has evolved since this early report in a concerted and collaborative response. Organizations that participate include the Health Division, RCMP, Corrections Canada, and Minisowin Child and Family Services. This committee now works under a restorative justice model to divert youth from incarceration and having a youth criminal record, to a more holistic path through collaborative and responsive interventions.

Elder Tait describes how gang activities have played out in recent years in the community, and the high levels of lethal weapons and tactics used by members of these gangs:

The gangs and the drugs have a deadly impact within our community. These so called gangs use the younger boys to do their dirty work. It's a deadly game of violence, drugs, and money. When you have these individuals high on drugs they are looking to kill you one of these days. Gone are the days of honorable fistfights between two people. These gang members have concealed weapons knives, eight-balls, and even guns.

These concerns are well justified based on my personal experience working in many areas within the youth structures such as schools, treatment centers, Child and Family Services, Community Wellness and the Social Division. As one youth participant describes the violence:

Our youth are more violent these days, I know personally it's because of the gangs, drugs, and lack of family involvement. The age of these gang members are getting younger and younger. You now see kids twelve, thirteen, years of age carrying knives and other concealed weapons.

The older gang members are very familiar with the court system and they subsequently have those who are younger carry out risky activity because if they are caught, it is unlikely that

they will be sentenced. The result is early age gang involvement that makes it challenging to escape from.

There is little doubt that the hardships and growing psychosocial effects have a direct link to the Residential Schools and the larger assimilative nature of reserve life. The impacts are now becoming more and more evident with the rising reported criminal activity undertaken by First Nations youth. Complex social issues burden many First Nations communities, and are documented not only in academic literature, but also through other mediums such as songs, documentaries and literature. The overwhelming obstacles are challenging for any individual to comprehend and move beyond.

In my own Mother's case, her personal pain and shame were taken to the grave without resolution but still passed onto her children (next generation). This pain remained unresolved for two siblings who have also been taken away from our family. The term 'inter-generational trauma' is what some Elders have known for generations as 'passing on the bad spirits.' Many traditional healers have the ability to revisit and help others individuals who seek out their spiritual insight. I feel obligated to share another piece of my transformation from the alcoholic, substance user, abuser, and many other dysfunctions I've had passed on through the 'passing of the bad spirits.' I have lived a life and witnessed violence, dysfunction, premature death, suicide. This method of dealing with the inter-generational trauma has been through what I would call 'subconscious cultural suicide' (SCS), which manifests itself in behaviors such as substance abuse, pre-mature death, and suicidal tendencies. Much attention has been given to post traumatic stress disorder, which is characterized by general psychological distress associated with specific events (such as war) or stressful experiences. Within a First Nations context, PTSD does not go far enough to address the ongoing cultural trauma experienced through colonialism. Bombay, Matheson & Anisman de-

scribes the limitations of ascribing symptoms of PTSD to First Nations people because it fails to take into account “loss of culture and languages, loss of identity, including pride and a sense of kinship with other First Nations peoples” (7).

Chapter 5: Personal Story

This thesis has provided an opportunity to understand some of the issues affecting my own community, and also how these issues have impacted my own personal experience. Research in an academic sense is often considered a colonial tool. However, for Indigenous scholars it can also provide a window into personal analysis and a tool for healing. This chapter provides some reflections on my own life as it relates to the topics uncovered in the interviews and the academic literature that was reviewed.

Residential Schools and the Inter-generational Effects: My Story

The year was 1933; the place was Norway House Indian reserve. This was an isolated reserve which is located about eight hundred kilometers North of the City of Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Residential School system was in full swing, and a seven-year-old Cree girl named Dorothy Wesley was on her way to a place named Birtle, Manitoba. As she was waiting to board the boat, the steady stream of tears down her face were those of uncertainty and the shattering of a young girl's innocence. This is all my Mother would speak of; her traumatic family foundation, shattered like a Grandfather (rock) which shatters on the fire before entering the sweat lodge, an experience that she would never recover from. The words ofresound with the sentiments expressed by my own mother in terms of devastation to the inner-child. What Foucault felt as an adolescent during World War II devastated his view of the world and would forever haunt his inner child:

I cannot experience pleasure. I have very early memories of an absolutely threatening world that could crush us. To have lived as an adolescent in a situation that had to end, that had to lead to another world, for better or for worse, was to have the impression of spending one's entire childhood at night waiting for dawn. That prospect of another world

marked the people of my generation, and we have carried with us, perhaps to excess, a dream of apocalypse (qtd. in Miller 39:1993).

This quote instantly made me think of my own mother's experience, equally traumatic and psychologically damaging. The thousands of Indian children who were able to leave Residential Schools alive also experienced the same profound psychological damage as Foucault describes. Indian children at the time possessed their culture, language and innocence. The imposition of Residential Schools resulted in years of child-abuse, sexual exploitation, and in many cases resulted in death would haunt them and their children to this very day. This place would become my mother's home for the next twelve years. My mother and scores of Cree children from Norway House were taken by boat to different locations within Manitoba. The reality was that some would make it back home and some would become memories and stories about the ones who didn't make it home. These memories would remain in the hearts and minds of Elders who were children at that time but who never forgot their friends, family and community members. Residential Schools would destroy their very concept of self, and even though my mother took all her pain to her grave the effects would become my family's dark history.

In the late 1950's early 1960's my mother made her way to Winnipeg. It was at this time she met my father, Henry Fredette, an Innu Indian from Northern Quebec. Together they raised five children- three boys and two girls. As the youngest boy I had to learn quickly about being an Indian within the inner city of Winnipeg. You see, it was the mid 1970's and being an 'Indian' much less acceptable than it is today. I remember that we lived in a four-bedroom house located on Laura Street. I was seven or eight years old, and what I thought about 'being Indian' was not a good thing. I recall going to the 'Bum shows' on Main and Logan, with some childhood friends. It was named that because drunken people would go there to pass out and sleep, and the clientele

was usually 'drunken Indians' as the term was widely and openly used within the streets in those days.

Being a City Indian meant you were teased, beaten up or just looked at in a way you know was not with good intentions. That is why I did not want to be known as an Indian, so when people used to ask me my name and it was French they would assume I was French. This would be my first attempt at 'passing' as anything other than Indian.

My life as I knew it would change forever in November 1976. I was now ten years old and my mother had just died. I can write about it today with a sense of understanding and reflection which took me more than twenty-five years of personal struggle with alcohol, drugs and suicidal thoughts, to overcome. I was sixteen years old and in grade ten when I became a drop out, not worrying about an education. My life was spent working odd jobs and trying to become a father. I often wonder about the childhood friends and other Aboriginal people who didn't make it through the troublesome times of city life. I lost too many friends to suicide, pre-mature death due to drugs or alcohol, and the countless others who lived within the cycles of poverty, jail and an education level less than grade six. I remember an old friend named Faron Hall, who is remembered as the hero of Winnipeg who saved two people from drowning in the Red River in 2010. We both went to the same high school in the North End of Winnipeg; it was an alternative school called Argyle High. We were both around the same age, sixteen or seventeen, and like many of our Aboriginal classmates our addictions were deeply rooted within our past. I see this trend in our youth of Norway House. The family foundation has been broken; youth looking for answers and no clear answers are given.

Inner City Indian

As I look back on my life, I can honestly say that the RIPS Effect model can be found historically in three ongoing agendas of the Canadian government. The first was the settlement or opening of the Western half of Canada. The second was the termination of the roaming Indians and their subsequent isolation onto reserves across Canada. The third was the introduction of the Residential School system and assimilation into white society. These three processes are indeed inter-related and provided an important foundation for the development of Canadian society. The impacts of these processes also resulted in an increased migration of people into urban communities such as Winnipeg. First Nations people often left their own communities not only to seek better opportunities in cities, but in the case of many First Nations women who married non Indian men, they were forced to leave because of the Indian Act legislation at the time.

Our family lived in the inner city of Winnipeg and we lived in an area with a large population of new Canadians and First Nations people. As someone who was born and raised in an urban environment, I remember being confused at the activities of First Nations people who would come in from the reserve communities to the city. For instance, in the summer months a small group of Indians would walk around looking like they just were rescued from a desert island. They would walk from Main Street, down Logan Avenue and head into a bush area just off the Railway line. This is where my friends and I would hide and listen to them. After they would leave we would investigate what they were doing there. This was their drinking, fighting and gathering place. We called this location “Dirty Hill” because of all the rubbing alcohol, wine bottles, vanilla extract and hairspray containers that were left behind. Later in the summer I would see one or two of them squatting by City Hall or China Town, begging for change and looking through garbage cans. For a six-year old City Indian these actions were disturbing and left a lasting impression on

me. Whenever we would come across the beggars we would throw them a quarter or whatever we had at that time.

Twenty-five years later this City Indian was heading to the Rez. Norway House was the community where everything started to come together for me. I can clearly recall an early example of some of the experiences that would later become so commonplace for me. Looking out my living room window I noticed groups of people walking by, in most cases intoxicated. This became a daily summertime event. I started to observe them closely and noticed they would be making their way to a house with their whiskey, beer and drugs. Afterwards I would hear screaming, fighting and then some of the group would make their way down the rez dirt road heading to their home, or just looking for another party.

Within our community there is a bar and beer vender and directly across from the bar we have the famous Trap-Line. This is a gathering place for groups of people who walk, or get dropped off at the bar. The Trap-Line is a bush area that in the summer months becomes an outside lounge, for people young and old. This place is for people who cannot afford to buy beer inside. They gather in groups, put their money together make a fire and drink, get high and in many cases fight. Looking back on my childhood experiences at Dirty Hill, it began to make sense; I saw the same type of behavior but in a reserve context rather than in the city.

Sacrifice and Ceremonies: Time to Heal

The information shared by my participants is intertwined with my own personal experience. The activity of reflection and sharing is a larger part of personal healing and cultural awakening which is central to this thesis. When one searches for acceptance, guidance, or personal justification of our history within the annals of the Canadian perspective, one thing is certain. To find our true Indian perspective one must understand the cultural teachings. This is our research, our cultural

comprehension of what has been done to our people. These stories of personal comprehension are important for no other reason but to find our true path, which consumes our history of yesterday and today. Teachings also require sacrifice. In order to truly participate in the experience of healing, one must sacrifice vulnerability, evaluate their current situation, and make some decisions which may mean sacrificing unhealthy behaviors or relationships.

My first teaching was humility. This was done with kind words, hard work and the comprehension that I was no better than anyone else. The traditional teachings started with the DE-assimilation of the City Indian, through the appreciation of the simple feeling of acceptance. Letting go of the past is the hardest lesson that I had to understand. The second lesson was healing. At the time I was not aware of just what my Elder was teaching me. My Elder told me that we all have to heal the inner child from within. This comes in many forms, and while listening to my Elder about his inner childhood I started to have knots in my stomach and tears began to build. I knew right then and there I was at the very beginning of my youth. After doing some soul searching in the sweat lodge, it was clear that this experience would be like no other. In my lifetime I was in treatment, had seen many school counselors and yet for the first time in thirty years of my life I finally had a sense of the meaning of true healing.

The third teaching was about the power of ceremonies, specifically sweat lodge teachings and how to prepare for the sweat. This starts with the gathering of the Grandfathers (rocks). Each Grandfather weighs about 5lbs and before we can start to collect the Grandfathers we must make an offering of tobacco. One Grandfather is selected, then a prayer to the Creator asking the Grandfathers to give up their life for our sweat. Once this is completed our Elder gives us the go ahead to gather as many Grandfathers as we can bring back in the truck.

Before any sweat can begin there are many steps that must be done under the watchful eye of our Elder. This process is another teaching in itself. The logs for the fire are placed, and before the Grandfathers are placed the Elder offers a blessing. Once this is done, the process can begin. When I was instructed to do the honors of the placing of the Grandfathers, I was nervous and proud at the same time. I felt the presence of the father figure, and the guidance that can only come from a true Elder. Once the Grandfathers are in place the logs come next. This seems simple enough yet there is a way of doing this correctly. Finally the fire can be started. The Grandfathers must be at a certain temperature before the Elder allows the ceremony to proceed. All participants must get into the sweat lodge before the Sun goes down. The Elder goes in first, then all the men to the right and the ladies, if present, would go to the left. Before the flap (door) is closed the Elder instructs the helper to make sure that the fire is burning at all times. The helper is also responsible for the opening and closing of the flap as directed by the Elder.

Once everyone is in place, the Grandfathers can come in, and the helper brings in eight Grandfathers, one at a time. This is called the first round. The flap is then closed and the sweat begins. The Elder gives instructions or rules about what to expect. The men are only in their shorts, and the women have on tee shirts with a traditional skirt. The heat begins to escalate, and the Elder pours water onto the Grandfathers. There is a hissing sound like a steak on the grill and then comes the Cree teachings of humility, growth, and prayers for the people who are suffering in our community.

The sweat proceeds in four fifteen-minute rounds. After every round the Elder instructs the helper to open the door quickly. This is because of the steam and heat from the poring of the water continuously just before the door is opened. People are instructed to leave between rounds for fresh air, water or just to regroup. For myself, once I crawl into the sweat lodge I do not move

again until the full four rounds are completed. This allows for inner feelings and thoughts to fully take hold within me. This has been the strongest form of healing that I have ever encountered in all my years of substance issues. In the twenty five years or so of searching for answers to the questions of why I feel this way about myself, and why do I continue to search out the slow death or destruction within myself, the answers are only now being answered today, within the last seven years of walking the 'Red Path', living the traditional teachings. My life as I once knew it was gone. Through the sweats, ceremonies and traditional teachings I have learned to love myself, my culture, my traditions, and to decolonize myself. This process is a combination of academia, Elder teaching, and the inner strength to continue for the betterment of children, grandchildren, community members and myself, all of us who are still suffering within.

Brushing-off Colonialism: An Elder's Perspective

There is another teaching which is called the brushing-off ceremony. This is when an individual calls upon an Elder to brush away bad karma, spirits, or whatever else ails that individual. Within the last three years I have personally been asked to participate in this ceremony many times. The majority of people who show up are older people, the Elder, the person asking for the brush-off (no pun intended) and supporters for that individual.

My first experience was one of anticipation, and an uneasy feeling of insecurity. Knowing that there was a person and some supporters who would be witnessing an Indian healing journey became all I could think of. It starts with the Elder walking in with his suitcase, filled with rattles, traditional medicines including sage, sweet grass, cedar and of course his traditional ceremonial pipe and eagle fans. Watching him unpack his traditional Cree instruments like a modern surgeon getting ready for an operation is truly a gift in itself. The Elder starts to roll seven or eight little Ping-Pong sized balls of sage; this is for the ceremony, which will last up to two hours long. Once

the Elder lights the first ball of sage, it must be continuously burnt during the whole ceremony. Before this takes place, a Cree prayer is said, then he lights the first ball of sage and he mixes it with some medicine which creates a unique and soothing smell that sets the mood for the rest of the ceremony.

Once the Elder gives the order the lights are all turned off, the darkness, mixed in with the soothing smell of sage, medicine and sweet grass takes one on a traditional experience like no other. I was fortunate enough for the Elder to ask me to make sure that the sage was burning throughout the ceremony. It was as if he was giving me another teaching. With the darkness come the eagle fans. Their strength, power and sounds create a realistic feeling of traditional healing, teaching and spiritual significance. The one receiving this powerful brushing-off was a medical doctor. For confidentiality purposes I can't reveal his name. All I can say is that he was white and he truly believed that to become a true healer he must look beyond modern medicine for his own comprehension. For me to witness his look of uncertainty mixed with a cultural awakening was profound. He wasn't the same young doctor I had met just a few hours earlier. When the lights were turned on again, it was as if he had been given a gift or glimpse if only for a movement in spiritual time, of what our traditional teachings were all about. I remember clear as day his first words after his transformation from a white doctor, after his first full traditional ceremony. He said, "I feel like I was visited from another time, another culture and know that what I felt was real and powerful." I have to say that he said this with utter honesty, and I know from his facial expression that he changed his perception if only for that period of time. To truly participate in a true healing ceremony is to have a great understanding of our traditional life, not for any other reason than to heal, teach, and pass on traditional knowledge.

Indigenous Masculinities Within Our Community: a Call for Balance and Healing

On Friday October 25th 2013 at the University of Manitoba's Aboriginal centre, I had a chance to talk with a personal friend of mine, Dr. Kim Anderson, Associate Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University. Dr. Anderson was at the university to lecture about a topic that is directly related to my thesis. Her talk was titled *Bidwewidam* (“to come speaking” in Anishinaabe): *Indigenous masculinities, identities and mino-bimaadiziwin* (“good life”). There is an old saying that everything happens for a reason, and this is true for myself in this case. Dr. Anderson interviewed me last year for another similar project, the results of which will be released in 2014. The shifts in Indigenous masculinities are important to consider in the context of youth issues, since so many of the youth in conflict with the law are young men. Indigenous masculinity is related to the larger issue of balance. The gender imbalances imposed through colonial transformations are well documented. Since the arrival of the first settlers, the integration of male dominance ideology from Europe has infiltrated Indigenous communities on this Continent.

The following story shows how Elder teachings and traditional knowledges have been all but lost within many First Nation communities. Within my time, and in my countless visits to First Nation communities, I have personally witnessed violent behaviours, verbal abuse, and countless unprovoked belittling towards older and younger women. One day I was talking to a young man about life on the reserve and how relationships work between men and women. He said “when you go with a girl she becomes yours”. I asked whether this was a part of a dating pattern that resulted in a committed relationship. He looked at me and laughed, no! He said “she’s mine and I can do whatever I want to her. If she needs a beating to remind her of that then she gets one, and that’s just the way it is here.” Over the years I have seen firsthand what that young misguided boy meant. I have witnessed a variety of violent actions towards our women. This behaviour is caused

mainly by insecurity fuelled by alcohol and is becoming a public health crisis within our communities:

This is the real emergency: the relentless accumulation of victims and perpetrators whose relationship to each other and to others around them is altered forever. The very act of family violence is dreadful; it is dehumanizing. The effect of this violence in the genesis of more violence could be one of the major public health crises of our time. Domestic violence, also referred to as family violence, includes all forms of violence directed against someone on the basis of their residence or family ties. It includes the physical dimension implicit in domestic abuse, spousal abuse, child abuse, elder abuse, intimate partner violence, and other violent acts between family members. The majority of cases affect women (Renzetti, 2000; García-Moreno et al., 2005) to such an extent that the United Nations Population Fund has described domestic violence as “the ultimate manifestation of unequal relations between men and women” (UNPFA, 2006) (Anderson 74).

These acts of violence against women have to be looked at from a community perspective. This taboo within our community, families, and our youth is unacceptable; we must start the community healing through education, family foundational workshops and cultural awareness of the important role women hold within our culture. Protecting the medicine of ‘the First Woman’ must be extended to protecting women in general. Men did not have domain over women, just as they do not have domain over Mother Earth. It was the men’s job to protect life, and according to our ways this never involved domination or control. This wisdom has been lost, taken away, and replaced with the foundational violence that was taught to us from the Europeans. This is consistent with what Elder Tait stated: “we have to reteach our values and respect towards our women, too many times its the women who are left with their children while the man goes on with

his life without any consideration towards his wife and family”. If we don't intervene and stop the cycle of abuse, then what are we saying about ourselves as fathers, brothers, uncles, and role models? It is not only physical scars we leave behind. The traumatic experiences of abuses that are carried by the women lead to substance abuse, poor educational choices, prostitution, and in some cases leads to premature deaths. Elder Tait describes how the issue of male dominance over women has played out in the community:

We as First Nation men, lost our ability to love, instead we drink, fight, and beat our women. This is a community problem that is hidden; because of the Residential Schools we learned to be violent, and this also affected the parents who started drinking after their children were taken away. The cycle of violence towards our women must stop, and we as a community must heal, educate our young and older men that this was not our way.

Anderson's work on native women describes this imbalance as being initiated with the introduction of Christianity. After Christian ideology took hold in communities, the balance between men and women would never recover:

According to many Native peoples, women's bodies, by virtue of their capacity to bring forth life, were powerful and celebrated through all their cycles. Respect for their bodies was related to the respect and responsibilities they commanded in their families, villages, and nations. Because of this respect, women were not seen as “sex objects,” and as well they had a great deal of individual control over their own sexuality (85).

This message must remain a tool for the sole purpose of educating our next generation before this cycle is passed on. The term “inter-generational trauma” describes “the effects of sexual and physical abuse that were passed on to the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of Aboriginal people who attended the Residential School system” according to the

Aboriginal Healing Foundation Annual Report (143). This intergenerational aspect of family violence in Aboriginal communities is one of the primary reasons conventional strategies have failed to reduce family violence.

Digital Storytelling as Healing: Ininiwag Dibaajimowag Ojibway

While attending the University of Manitoba, I became aware of a digital storytelling project about Inter-generational Residential School and men. This was a program funded through the Aboriginal Healing Foundation through the University of Winnipeg. I submitted my personal abstract and was accepted. The title of this project was *Ininiwag Digaajimowag*, an Anishinaabe phrase meaning “Men telling their story”. This project would become part of my healing journey from an experience that has haunted me since I was ten years old. My personal story is connected with my Mother’s tragic experience, and this project gave me the chance to finally put the pieces together within my own journey. This digital story healing and information package will be utilized as a community teaching tool, and will give First Nation people a positive way of telling and sharing their own personal journey as they lived it.

This project was held in Winnipeg and would be conducted within a four-weekend period. As it turned out I had to travel 6800 kilometers just to finish my story. We wrote a personal account of our story that was then interwoven with digital images, songs and other sounds to reflect my experience. What follows is the written component of my digital story:

When I look back on the summer of 1978 in Norway House I feel grateful for those memories, yet I feel saddened when I think of my late mother who had all that taken away from her at the age of seven because of the Residential School system. She never made it back home to Norway House; she died in the City of Winnipeg in November of 1976. I often think about my mother nowadays, and think of what would be her memories of our

home in Norway House. I sure would like to know many more things about her first seven years before her life was altered forever. I do know one thing for sure, that she did make it home through me and her grandchildren.

As long as my heart is beating my mother is living her life through me, I guess in a way good things do find their way home after all. I dedicate my journey to my mother and the song I wrote for her!

Within Me

*I'm an Indian man who was born to this land, my poor Mother she died in the City
It was so long ago when she left on a boat, just a bag, a name and treaty
She was seven years old taken from her home, from the banks of Kino Sao Sipi
Stayed in Birtle you know till twenty years old, hid her pain with beer and whiskey
My poor Mother she died some long years ago, I know her heart still beats within me
She said I'll make it home where the York boats still go, my home is Kino Sao Sipi
It was some years ago when I made it home, and yes Mother you are here with me
Norway House is my home where your grandchildren grow, will unite when the Creator calls me
To the people you know who left on those boats, some made it home some died in the City
Their spirits come home on a York boat I'm told, to the banks of Kino Sao Sipi
Our people are strong and proud to live free; we are the people of Kino Sao Sipi
My poor Mother she died some long years ago,*

I KNOW HER HEART STILL BEATS WITHIN ME.

The Call of the North

In the summer of 1978, my sister phoned my dad and asked if she could take me to Norway House for a month or so. I remember it was a windy, rainy day and the small plane bounced in the air like I was on a roller coaster ride. I recall looking down for a town or small city but all I could see was trees and water. All of a sudden the plane started to dive down. As we burst through the clouds I could see some houses, a road and the airport. When that plane finally bounced off the runway a few times I realized that we had arrived in Norway House. My sister Doreen greeted me with a hug. She asked “how was the flight” and then she laughed because she already knew the answer. For me it was like going to camp, with trees everywhere and lakes to swim. Upon arriving at my sister’s house, I quickly realized that I was far from the comforts of the city. Even though my sister had a toilet, tub, and other familiar household items, I soon realized that they did not have running water. For the next few weeks, I was the running water! Their house had a huge tub of water and it took about fifteen trips to the lake and back with two pails of water to fill up that giant tub.

One day my sister dropped my nephew Jason and myself off at our cousin’s house. His name was Vernon Monias. I had to spend the weekend at my cousin’s house because my sister wanted me to meet and play with my newly found family. It was supertime, and all I could smell was the fresh bannock. I remember that sweet smell because my mother would cook bannock for us in the city. My auntie Mary Monias called us to eat in Cree. Of course I was the only one wondering what she said. As we sat together I grabbed a piece of fresh bannock and asked Vernon where the butter was kept. He looked at me and pointed with his lips (a Cree way of pointing), and said, “its right there”. All I could see was a lump of lard. He looked at me and laughed, replying,

“that’s what we use here”. It came to pass that the first piece of bannock I ever had in Norway House was with nothing on it at all.

The Boat Ride for Mail

The other memory I have of that summer is the boat ride for mail. One day as we played baseball and tag, my other cousin Edward Monias asked if I wanted to go get the mail. Being from Winnipeg, I had assumed the mailman delivers the mail to each house. In the north, the mail is handed out at the post office, you could either drive there if you were one of the lucky families to own a car, or you could go by boat. For the Monias family it was by boat, so we all piled into the boat and headed to the post office. I was so happy to go for a ride on the Lake! We headed around an Island or two under a bridge and we were there. Edward got out at the dock where there were many boats, cars, and people walking just to get their mail. It was a big deal in those days to get the mail. There could be anything from Family Allowance payments, magazines or catalogues or receiving word from family from places like Winnipeg.

Television, the old Band Hall, York Boat Days

I also recall that in the mid-70s only some families had a television set in their homes. Fortunately Vernon’s family had one and we could watch TV even though they could only get two channels at that time. Even with the limitations of the reserve, the lack of running water, proper plumbing and two television channels I found myself getting used to the fun and games we would play without the comforts of the city.

One night I was at my other cousin’s home. Her name was Debbie Forbister, and she said to me “hey do you want to go with me to the dance tonight?” I thought, where could there possibly be a dance here, it was nighttime and there were no streetlights, it was pitch dark outside of the house. She said to just follow her, and she started down a bush trail, winding through

stumps and other obstacles. It seemed like we were walking for hours but it turned out to be just thirty minutes or so. As we got closer to the dance I heard some music coming from the clearing. There it was, the old Band Hall. I was wondering what would happen next, and followed her inside where at least fifty to a hundred young First Nations youth were dancing, talking, laughing and just standing around. The bell-bottoms were flying! I recall dancing and for the first time feeling like I was finally home after being away since birth.

Once people starting to know who my family was, they would greet me with “Tansi boy”, which meant “hello”. It was a great night; I remember thinking what great stories I would have in the fall for sharing time at my school in Winnipeg. The last great memory I have was when my sister told me that York Boat Days were going to start that week. By this time Vernon and I had become good friends and I would tag along with his family for the week-long celebrations. Thompson Monias and his family would set up their tent in Rossville, which was the base for the family. I clearly recall all of the excitement in the air with the whole community celebrating.

Church vs. Culture:

Internalized colonialism plays out in Norway House in the perceived chasms between Church and traditional culture. Rather than acknowledging the value in believing in something greater than humans, hostilities between those who actively participate in Christian Churches, and those who practice traditional spirituality is evident. Within our own community of Norway House, there are five denominations within the community- Catholic, Anglican, Pentecostal, United, and the Christian Revival. Within the community each denomination claims to be better than the other, not accepting the traditional culture as their own culture. I have had many conversations with a grandmother who would not Cree culture as her own culture. She insists that if you don't go to church and praise the Lord and if you participate in First Nations cultures you are doing the work of the

devil. This kind of religious oppression within the Norway House Cree Nation is confusing and hurtful to our youth. One participant describes her experiences growing up as a Catholic:

We were taught that it was the only way and if you do things you are a sinner and you're going to hell. Now that you pass these messages onto the youth they are afraid of God.

They are afraid of going to Church because they are already getting themselves involved with the wrongdoing. When they do that they feel that they are no good. But in our culture, in our way of life, we believe that there are things that we need to deal with to change to positive thinking.

There is confusion among our youth when it comes down to religion and Cree culture. A dear close friend of mine was having a chat with a young girl in one of our schools; she asked the girl what she does when she has problems. The young girl replied, "I pray; what do you do?" My friend said, "I pray for guidance to the Creator." After this was said, the young girl said, "so you pray to the devil?" My friend asked her why she would say that and the girl said, "that's what my parents said about that cultural stuff."

There is little doubt that the lasting oppression from the Residential Schools has now shifted to our own leadership. For example when people arrive to our community of Norway House, they are greeted with signs saying "In God We Trust"; this is just another example of religious oppression that our leadership continues to stand by. Here is just one other example of religious oppression; the leadership will consider giving out houses only to a married couple, married in a church. I guess this makes the leadership of our community think this will make for a happy, functional and religious marriage. After seeing some of these young married couples struggle with their own personal issues, in most cases the couple splits and the concept of marriage just becomes another lost attempt of religious oppression. My point is that if we as Indian people

don't comprehend our own history and culture we will continue to become lost and confused about just who we are.

Warry found in his research that there was and still is conflict within many First Nations communities with respect to the imbalance of traditional culture and the Church(s). This is still happening in northern Manitoba, and plays a part in who gets what within the inner workings of the Band council. Warry describes these tensions:

The influence of Christianity...has left many people with distrust, if not fear, of traditional medicine. For example...a number of individuals who vehemently denied that traditional approaches had any value, or who associated the revival of such practices as purification lodges or other forms of spiritual healing with paganism, 'the devils work' and 'bearwalking,' or what is commonly known as bad medicine (114).

I personally know about the “religious oppression” due to the Residential School. My late Mother who died in 1976 went to church, prayed and tried to grasp the forced, and in most cases traumatizing religious experience that was meant to ‘kill the Indian, and save the man’ and which in many stories didn’t have a good ending. I still remember clearly like it was yesterday, a day at Dufferin School in Winnipeg, 1974. We were required to stand and sing the national anthem, Oh Canada, and say the Lord’s Prayer. On this day I didn’t want to stand for this rigorous and confusing ritual, and so I did not stand. The teacher came over to me very swiftly and aggressively pulled my ear to make me stand up and participate. In response to this abuse, I just stood there without singing or reciting the Lord’s Prayer. This action got me a one-way ticket to the Principal’s office, whose name was Mr. Peters. He was an older balding White guy, tall and with a black suit that he always seems to be wearing.

Then he asked me, “why are you acting out in this way?” I responded with “I don’t like to do that every day.” This is when he reached into his desk and pulled out a long black, leather or rubber strap. He then slammed it on his desk and said to me, “would you rather have this, or are you going to listen to the teacher?!” Without any hesitation I replied, “I will listen.” I remember being so scared of the teacher, and when I saw Mr. Peters in the hall I felt as if I was being watched. Being in my forties now, I started to put all the pieces of the religious oppression together; I can only think in utter horror what my Mother, sisters and friends went through in the Residential Schools. So when I look at my community and see postings such as “In God We Trust” I can clearly see the religious oppression within many isolated reserves in Manitoba alone.

I hope within the next generation there will be an educational, spiritual, and cultural awakening. What is the reasoning behind such an expectation? The recent grass roots Aboriginal movement *Idle No More*, which originated in Saskatchewan in 2012 has shown me that change must come from within each and every reserve and community within Canada. The recent conditions that are at the makeup of many communities are poverty, isolation, nepotism and Chief and council domination within the community. We as community educators must refrain from the political dysfunction that seems to dominate much of the population. This is why *Idle No More* must remain a grassroots movement. For this to take hold and for change to begin it will have to start with our youth so they can see that change is possible, and needed.

While *Idle No More* activities in Norway House have been limited, what we have seen in terms of youth engagement is most evident in the youth council. Norway House has had a youth council starting in the 1980s, but its level of engagement has fluctuated partially due to the limited opportunities to access funding and programs. Over the years, as opportunities for youth have opened up, the youth council has responded with years of highly active leadership despite

limitations on funding. The youth council has also resulted in ongoing leadership development. For example, in the current sitting council of six members, two councillors were once youth councillors. Currently, the youth council are actively participating in decision making at the Chief and Council level. While this is important, it is equally important for the current leadership to demonstrate healthy and positive leadership models for the youth council.

Political activism and participation provides an important outlet for youth to address their issues in a productive manner. When it comes to youth issues, it is primarily the youth who are so closely connected to the lived experiences of other youth. Youth have their fingers on the pulse of the community, and additionally are the ones who initiate, facilitate and ultimately control the youth geared programs such as after school activities like gym nights, youth dances, and youth competitions like York Boat races. The youth council, an elected group of six council members and one junior chief, are a select group of individuals who are important peer mentors for the wider youth population. They are expected to participate in a healthy lifestyle and to reflect the broader community's values. It is critical for this type of engagement to continue as one way to address the issues facing youth.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

This research has been both fulfilling and saddening. The process of making sense of the aftermath of assimilation and Residential School beyond the academic literature provided a window into understanding the inter-generational violence within my own family. While I was looking for answers as to why our community is so dysfunctional, I realized that I was searching for my own personal answers within my family. Was I prepared for what I had found within my own community? As an insider researcher, the stories that I heard soon became part of my own narrative.

RIPS Framework: a Useful Tool

1. Intergenerational Impacts of Residential Schools

Intergenerational trauma is the result of unresolved trauma that then manifests in subsequent generation when behavior is not adequately modified or positive behaviors learned. Within this thesis there is abundant research, personal testimonies, and my own true accounts within my lifetime. These intergenerational impacts of Residential School are now becoming more and more apparent. As one respondent, Duncan, described:

The Residential School has left a major hole within not only the community but the generations which have followed. The children or youth of today don't understand what has happened to their grandfathers and grandmothers, there are missing pieces within their history, which is contributing to their own demise.

When bad things are passed on to the next generation without understanding you have social, economic, and unhealthy choices being made without any reason why.

The ongoing healing process has to reinvent itself, to help heal and close the generational gaps between the Residential School survivors and the Intergenerational youth and adults of today. My hope for using the model of the RIPS Effect is one of perception, understanding, healing, and education. After all, when the inner child doesn't heal, this forces the adult to relive, and find other unhealthy ways to deal with, the trauma that is the hidden legacy of Canada and the Churches, and continues to become our nightmare.

2. The Impact of Youth Violence on the Community

When it comes to the youth population within the Norway House Cree Nation and the increase of violence reported and not reported, there are many factors or triggers. Fanon's description of the criminal justice system being another state mechanism which is underpinned by a foundation of colonial values and the self-belief of total dominance provides a basis for analysis of the current management of criminal activity in First Nations communities. The RCMP and local police are the "agents of government speak the language of pure force" (29). There is little doubt that the misrepresentation of Canadian law vs Aboriginal Justice has done a lot of damage. Within many First Nation youth and the RCMP, along with the court system there is a gap of mistrust, misunderstanding, and cultural imbalance.

The impact of Residential Schools is a contributing factor to these ongoing violent issues. When examined within the context of the community, lateral violence is the main contributor to the escalating community youth violence that in turn contributes to a domino effect of community unrest. My personal findings are as follows: community oppression leads to internal lateral violence, which in turn spills down to the weakest and uninformed of our youth. This turns into pure and intentional violence that is a result of these contributing factors. As Elder Tait describes:

We are now witnessing the aftermath of the Residential School generational effects within our young people. You know the young people of today are more violent than ever, they're high on drugs, full of rage and looking to kill one another. These actions are what happens when bad things are passed down generation to generation, what we have is a lost generation who don't know how to deal with all this stuff.

The tools of colonialism reach deep within the colonized, as Fanon clearly states:

You do not disorganize a society, however primitive it may be, with such an agenda if you are not determined from the very start to smash every obstacle encountered. The colonized, who have made up their mind to make such an agenda into a driving force, have been prepared for violence from time immemorial. As soon as they are born it is obvious to them that their cramped world, riddled with taboos, can only be challenged by out and out violence (4).

The complexity of violent behavior among our youth must be looked at within the history of colonization itself. The many forms of violence are a primitive reaction that coincides with the history of our very existence. So its safe to claim that when one thinks, reads, or tries to understand violence there is little doubt that the colonial propaganda tools of colonization have confirmed the personal perspective of violence.

3. Gang Involvement and Drugs

The comprehension of this last finding is clearly interwoven within the overall complexity of the community itself. As Folster describes,

the gang issue within our community has seen a dramatic fluctuation for the worse over the past decade or so. The violence has escalated to new and dangerous proportions. This growing trend is a direct to the unhealthy life choices that are consuming our youth. This is echoed by many community members who say such things as, “we have to get rid of the gang problem!” and “why is there so much violence these days?”

In my personal observations within the youth, gangs, substance abuse, drug dealers, and the aftermath of these outcomes, one thing is clear. Most people within the community including the youth are searching for an understanding to these social, economic, and violent demonstrations. For things to change we must have a leadership with a clear and powerful foundational perspective. We as a community must take on the powers of the state. This is done through the educational, cultural, and historical comprehension of the state itself. If you want to challenge the authoritative power you must be able to understand their intentions in order to succeed.

Future Research

Several areas were identified for further examination, in the research along with my own personal experience. The impact of the all-weather road that opened between 1974-76 has brought both positive and negative consequences associated with modernity to the community of Norway House. Some of these implications are seen in the infiltration of drugs and alcohol into the community. Other impacts have been the introduction of modern conveniences and increased economic development opportunities. An examination into the dramatic nature of this shift would provide insight into how the all-weather roads have shaped the community today.

The opening of the all season road that linked Norway House to the “outside world” in 1974 brought both opportunity and misery. Since 1974 there has been growth in infrastructure, as well as an increase of alcohol, drug and suicide related deaths. The growth is mainly due to the

flood agreement between Manitoba Hydro and the Norway House Cree Nation. After this agreement was ratified, Norway House transformed from a typical sleepy reserve to one with street lights, paved roads and a new chief and council building, a new shopping mall and many new homes for the ones fortunate enough to be part of the ever growing “inner circle” of leadership.

Norway House First Nation is now leading the way in Northern Manitoba and other isolated reserves are now connecting to the outside world through the building of winter roads. In 2002-2003 the winter road from Norway House to Oxford House became a reality. Following that joint partnership in 2008, another winter road from Norway House to Island Lake, Wassigamac, God's Lake First Nation was also added. These makeshift winter roads usually open as soon as the ice is thick enough to handle heavy loads of trucks, ice road equipment, and travelers. These roads in my opinion have two uses; one is the need for transporting goods, such as groceries, and materials for much needed infrastructure. The second use is for exploring, exploitation and looking for an escape from the dysfunctional routines, which comes with isolation.

The total isolation within Northern reserves is slowly coming to an end, however the ongoing health issues, addictions, and criminal activity currently underway will also continue. According to Chief Marcel Balfour in the annual Report *State of Our Nation* 2006-2009, he met with the late Minister Lathlin and Ministers Roundeau (who was a teacher in Norway House), and Minister Oswald from the Province of Manitoba. One of the issues they talked about was an all-weather road from inland communities of Island Lake area to pass through NHCN Territory. Planning for such a venture, the NHCN advised the Ministers that proper planning must be made for: Additional policing needs (and increased cost) that may occur due to bootlegging, illegal drug traffic and other illegal activity that would most likely accompany the all-weather road. This

report gives proof of the repeated issues and effects of all-weather roads and isolated communities within Northern Manitoba.

According to interviewee Duncan “the only reason for the government to start projects like the all-weather road into Norway House was the implementation of the Hydro project like Jenpeg Generating Station.” This participant’s observations are consistent with the claims of the Norway House Cree Nation Annual Report:

Manitoba Hydro began regulating water levels on Lake Winnipeg in 1973 and operating the Churchill-Nelson River Diversion Project under an interim License granted by the *Manitoba Water Power Act*. Both the Federal and Provincial governments stated that impacts to Northern First Nations caused by these projects were justified in order to provide for the power needs of the province. Today, Manitoba Hydro has very different focus-maximizing export revenues (10).

After forty years, Manitoba Hydro projects have done more damage to the resources such as fishing, hunting, and water quality than any other resource extraction endeavor. Many fishermen, hunters and trappers have told similar stories of how their way of life has changed for the worse because of these so called power needs of the province. The connection to all- weather roads, hydro development and the social impacts on communities like Norway House merits further consideration.

In closing, this thesis is part of a cultural reclamation journey I began in 2006. Until then, the typical clinical based model of healing had proven ineffective, and cultural based healing provided the means for me to recover. Despite the colonial nature of university and graduate school, this thesis has provided another step in my cultural reclamation and healing through revisiting my own personal past and understanding the importance of reconnecting with the inner-

child as being essential to holistic health. The use of ceremony and the writing of songs and poems, along with this thesis have all provided me with a form of self-expression that was not possible before 2006.

In the last seven years I have completed my grade 12, a three-year Bachelor of Arts Degree, a four-year pre-master's Degree, and now a Master's of Arts in Native Studies at the University of Manitoba. In addition to this I was honored with representing my graduating class twice as the Valedictorian, and I was awarded the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba Gold Medal. I participated in the Inter-generational Digital Story created for the sole purpose of educating First Nation men to start the process of healing. I've been published in five books and will soon work on my personal autobiography called *Rezlections and Transformations*. All this was accomplished while being sober, clean, and with a 2001 spinal cord injury. After 39 years of personal torment, the Creator has shown me how to reclaim, to rebuild my family's experience with 500 years of "bad spirits". I hope we will see at least another 500 years of growth, prosperity, and a healthy understanding of our culture.

Chapter 7: Reflections from an Inner City Indian to Community Leader

Before my academic journey began, my perspective on the experiences shaping my family and my community were limited to what I saw in front of me in the inner city. When I was younger and growing up in an Indian family, the dysfunctional lifestyle was a normal experience for a young boy. The alcoholism and chaos that existed in my family were the experiences that shaped me, and the unhealthy behaviours that I continued to exhibit for years. In order to justify what I perceived as normal behaviour, I tended to seek out other families in similar situations to make me feel accepted. A strong First Nations family needs to keep a home fire burning in order to maintain resilience from trauma and to maintain cultural connections. When my mother was taken away from her own family at such an early age, her own fire began to diminish. As a parent, she was unable to keep this home fire burning, or to strengthen those flames for the sake of her children and husband, despite the love she had for us. The result was child neglect and perpetual chaos associated with alcohol. Our home fire was extinguished when my mother passed away. The loss of a parent, especially a mother caused an absolute breakdown of our family foundation. My experiences with the Digital Storytelling project provided an outlet for me to process this tremendous loss and how it shaped me as father, sibling and now as a leader.

Thirty-eight years later, I have master's degree within my reach. I have won provincial medals, I have been a valedictorian twice, and now I am an elected leader and Band Councillor for Norway House Cree Nation. I can look back over the last 38 years and recognize key turning points in my life. In 1998 I returned to Norway House, decided in 2006 to stop drinking, and returned to school. I embraced my culture, which provided me with the foundation that I needed to develop strength and resiliency. As a leader, I can look at the people in my community with not only love, but also empathy based on years of hard living, bad decisions, and eventual major

turnaround. Recently, a woman that I went to university with in Norway House came to my office. She was there to discuss employment opportunities, and the topic turned to my current role in the community and how I got there. We reflected on where we were in 2006, and the major strides that I have taken not only academically, but also in a holistic healing journey. This woman said that she was so proud of me because not only have I accomplished so much, I have brought these successes to our people both professionally and personally. It was this conversation that made me consider my full circle experiences. I reflected on my life as a young man, a father, and a community leader. My older brother who was raised in the same house, with the same parents, had the same experiences growing up ended up going down a much darker and difficult path. His path has been riddled with dysfunctional behaviour, violence, incarceration, alcohol and drug abuse and an overall unhealthy lifestyle. And that could have easily been me.

I often think about the two paths that we have chosen for ourselves. What makes a person have the ability to bend with an extreme amount of pressure, but not break? What characteristic allows some people to persist towards positive outcomes, and others, like my brother, to spiral into a life of trauma? I do not have these answers. All I know is that we need to build resiliency at an individual level, but also at a community level. One way to do this is by embracing and returning to our traditional culture, which was stolen from us through the colonial project.

In closing, this thesis is a reflection of a young man and a student. My culture has taught me that when you talk about your experiences from the heart, it can never be wrong. While others may not agree with how I have contextualized the experiences of my participants, it should be considered through the eyes of a man who has faced many personal difficulties and triumphs. For First Nations students who are embarking on their academic journey, do not consider the university as a hostile environment, but as a way to embark on your own healing journey. Ekosani!

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