Adult Learners' and Educators' Perceptions of how *Racialized Habitus* and *Cultural Capital* Impact Indigenous Students' Experiences in the *Field* of One Winnipeg Adult Learning Centre

by

Joel Boyce

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Department of Educational Administration, Foundations & Psychology
University of Manitoba
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Abstract

Indigenous learners are overrepresented in Manitoba adult learning centres (45% province-wide). Indigenous organizations like the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD), have introduced literacy and adult learning programs to meet the educational needs of their communities. According to Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) social reproduction thesis, schools tend to preserve existing social inequity across generations. But could the opposite be true in an Indigenous-led adult learning centre (ALC) explicitly designed to achieve better outcomes for Indigenous learners?

This case study of Indigenous learner experiences at CAHRD's Aboriginal Community Campus ALC draws primarily on data collected via semi-structured interviews of seven Indigenous adult learners and four adult educators, with the analysis of the interview transcripts applying a two-cycle coding process (Saldaña, 2016). The interview scripts and code list draw on neo-Bourdieusian and critical race theory scholarship.

The findings from this study suggest that a number of factors influence Indigenous adult learners' ability to reach their educational goals at the ALC. The provision of critical resources such as daycare, nutrition programs, and counselling referrals are often key. Social structures in the school are also found to be effective in shifting learner habitus in tandem with the building up of educational and cultural capital. Because these act in opposition to those observed by Bourdieu, reducing rather than preserving inequity, I label them as emancipatory field structures.

This study's findings also suggest significant opportunities for improvement in Manitoba adult education as a whole, with CAHRD's ALC as a potential model. Implementing these improvements would require an expanded investment in adult learning by the provincial government, but this cost would be more than justified by the societal benefits.

Acknowledgements

From the beginning of my graduate program to its now imminent conclusion I have experienced a major job change, the birth of a child, and a world-wide pandemic. Amidst all that I cannot imagine still seeing this thesis and associated research study through to its conclusion if I had not had the steadfast support of my advisor, Dr. David Mandzuk, dean emeritus at the University of Manitoba. He has provided unlimited encouragement, guidance, mentorship, and advocacy at every major juncture in my program, but also on the smaller day-to-day details. The care David took in everything he did and his sincere investment in my academic progress was beyond anything I had remotely expected at the outset of my program.

This thesis would look very different if not for the efforts of two other members rounding out my thesis committee, Dr. Lori Wilkinson and Dr. Nathalie Piquemal, both professors at the University of Manitoba. Every insight they shared and change they asked for made this work better and made me a more competent researcher in the process. They delineated a standard of scholarship that served as both a motivating goal and a guiding star. I will be forever grateful for the time they spent improving this work. Any errors that remain are my own.

My research on Indigenous adult learner experiences was undertaken in partnership with the Winnipeg-based Indigenous organizational community, the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resources Development (CAHRD). I am thankful to Chairperson Kevin Chief and the board of directors, Director of Education Heather McCormick, and Executive Director Marileen Bartlett, for hearing my research proposal and deciding to move forward with me on it. I am honoured they thought the research had the potential to be valuable enough to warrant the time and energy they expended coordinating with me on top of all the other work that they need to do to keep their programs running on a daily basis.

In the earlier and later planning stages of my study I received encouragement and valuable advice from two educational leaders at Seven Oaks School Division: Sherri Denysuik and Fran Taylor, both directors of education at adult learning centres in the school division at the time. Sherri Denysuik, now Assistant Superintendent of Indigenous Education, has been my go-to person for ensuring that I approach Indigenous Elders and knowledge-keepers with the proper protocol and respect. When I think I have everything in order I ask her anyway. When it came to seeking a community partnership for my research Sherri was again the person I went to, and her advice on how to put my best foot forward was invaluable. Before I met Sherri I met her mother, Mary Courchene, a much-loved Elder, through an Indigenous education research study I worked on. The apple does not fall far from the tree. Sherri's work to improve the educational experiences and opportunities Indigenous students experience has been an inspiration to me.

Fran Taylor, a major force in adult education who played a key role as a named participant in Jim Silver's recent Manitoba adult education studies, was the first person to offer to let me perform interviews at her site (when I had initially planned to make a comparative study of multiple adult learning centres rather than a deep case study at only one). But several years earlier I met Fran professionally after I moved into an education director role at an adult learning centre connected to the Manitoba Metis Federation. Even though we weren't working in the same school division I made liberal use of her open-door policy with many a call about administrative procedures or to ask advice on new projects. She made me feel welcome as a new school leader in a field we both cared about, as I'm sure she has done for countless others. For 20 years now she has strived to make all adult learning centres better for learners, not just her own.

When seeking a research assistant to aid in a portion of my data analysis I was concerned about finding someone who could quickly develop an intuitive grasp of the theoretical concepts

in my code bank knowing that they could not spend 50 hours reading the relevant literature. I did not anticipate that the perfect candidate would be sitting at a nearby desk in the same office I work out of in St. James School Division. But Matthew McCorquodale-Bauer, both a work colleague and a fellow master's student at the University of Manitoba, drew me into so many water-cooler conversations about educational philosophy, settler-colonialism, and systemic racism, once it finally occurred to me to ask him I realized I could not possibly do better. I am so thankful he agreed to spare some of his limited time to join my project, and I am eager to see the fruits of his own scholarship and hope that I will have the opportunity to return the favour by taking on some kind of supporting role myself when his research is fully underway.

In my time at the Manitoba Metis Federation I learned a lot of Métis history and general Indigenous history from long conversations with historian Lawrence Barkwell. Lawrie would saunter into my classroom or office for a wide-ranging discussion that lasted anywhere from ten minutes to a couple of hours. He was always interested in my own scholarly work and gave me constant recommended readings. At conferences and events, when everyone was shaking hands and rattling off their name, organization, and title, he would introduce himself, "Lawrie Barkwell, retired", but in truth he never stopped doing the work that was important to him, cataloguing artifacts, contributing to books, and giving lectures up until he passed away in 2019.

Lawrie's most well-known works were on the Métis shanty communities, Rooster Town and Dog Patch, but an early work of his criticizing anti-Indigenous systemic racism in the Manitoba Justice System is important in shining a light on what kind of person he was. He had never been afraid to speak truth to power, but in his later years he took like a duck to water the Elder role of ahneegay-kaashigakick (Michif for "the ones who know"), and used the position to call out injustice and stupidity in equal measure wherever he saw it.

Lawrie was known to say that it is better to be a co-conspirator rather than an ally, and a very willing co-conspirator he was. Though ethnically Scottish, for his work in historical scholarship and public education about the Métis, as well as his Indigenous rights activism, Lawrie was formally adopted to the nation and presented with honorary citizenship in the Manitoba Metis Federation, the first and only time this has been done.

I'm grateful to all interview participants for sharing their stories and insights about Indigenous adult education and about the school community where they spend so much of their time. I know neither teachers nor adult students have much time to spare and I was overwhelmed by the response to my request for volunteers and by the richness of the stories they shared.

I received financial support from the following organizations: the University of Manitoba (Manitoba Graduate Scholarship, Faculty of Education Truth and Reconciliation Fellowship, Master's Award for Indigenous Students); Full Circle Indigenous Education (Sustaining Our Ways Award); the Manitoba Metis Federation (Post-Secondary Education Support Program).

I want to thank my parents and godmother, each of whom encouraged my education from a young age and provided babysitting services throughout my graduate program. And I want to thank my grandmother, who never failed to ask for a thesis update when we spoke. When I reported that I'd had a successful defense she said she "loved me to bits". I love her to bits, too.

Lastly, I am eternally grateful to my wife and partner, Vanessa Boyce. Every weekend or holiday morning I spent working on my thesis, every night I went straight from work to the university, returning home after our children were asleep, I was able to do that because she did the hard work of caring for our family that much longer without a break. Everything that I am able to do is because of you. Thank you.

Dedication

For adult learners who seek a better life for their children, and those whose own parents sought a better life for them.

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ALC: An adult learning centre, as defined by the Manitoba Adult Learning Centres Act (2002). An adult learning centre offers high school credits primarily to adults (those aged 19 or older), both for the purposes of meeting individual post-secondary or employment-related credit requirements and for the purposes of earning a Manitoba regular or mature high school diploma.

CAHRD: The Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development. The Indigenous-led not-for-profit organization responsible for the physical site of Neeginan Centre and several nearby properties, and various employment and educational programs, including the Aboriginal Community Campus, a registered Manitoba adult learning centre, from which all study participants were drawn.

TCPS: The *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (CIHR et al., 2018), a book-length publication on ethical requirements in research, with which most university ethics boards in Canada are aligned, including the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, which approved this study.

Chapter One: Introduction

The Context

Winnipeg, Manitoba is home to Canada's largest urban Indigenous[1] population with over 90,000 inhabitants. On a percentage basis, it is the second most Indigenous city with at least 100,000 people, 12.35 percent compared to the 12.7 percent of the much smaller city of Thunder Bay, Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2021). Manitoba is also the only province to negotiate its way into confederation after a successful military resistance of federal military forces.

This negotiation occurred under a multi-racial but majority Indigenous leadership, not merely from Louis Riel himself, the elected Métis president of the pre-confederation Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, but his mixed European and Métis legislature. Further, these negotiators were also representatives of the Iron Confederacy of Plains Cree, Métis, and Saulteaux, when their efforts led to the 1870 Manitoba Act (Act, 1870). This Act served as a first step and a model for all the numbered treaties, starting with Treaty One[2], between the Canadian government and Anishinaabe and Swampy Cree in Manitoba (Government of Canada, 2010).

This is also a city and province which experiences significant inequities. Manitoba's 2018 on-time graduation rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students were 48.5 and 87.9 percent, respectively (Government of Manitoba, 2019). This stark and persistent difference is startling enough on its own, but there is overwhelming evidence that this single measure of

[1] In Canada, Indigenous Peoples are the First Peoples of the land, and are recognized as belonging to one of three groups: First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. When I use the term Indigenous in a Canadian context I am referring to these three groups inclusively, but I am also inclusive of people who self-identify and are recognized by their communities as Indigenous, but may not (yet) have Canadian, provincial, or territorial recognition, e.g., non-status First Nations people. In a non-Canadian context, the term Indigenous is mainly applied to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians (United States), Maori people (New Zealand), and Aboriginals (formerly Aborigines) as well as Torres Strait Islanders (Australia). These three countries are very similar to Canada in having settler-colonial contexts, and for that reason there are not many references to either other Indigenous peoples or to other colonial contexts within this work.

[2] Treaty One covered the geographic area of Manitoba as it existed only one year after the passage of the Manitoba, but the province was smaller then than it is today.

educational inequity is tied up with other economic, political, educational, and social disparities of various kinds.

Data shows that Canadian children born into poverty have lower educational attainment (Government of Canada, 2016), and in turn, those with lower educational attainment are more likely to live in poverty as adults (Ferguson, Bovaird, & Mueller, 2007). Disaggregated data shows that in Winnipeg, Indigenous people have by far the highest rates of poverty, with 44.0% of First Nations people, 19.7% of Métis people, and 27.5% of Inuit people living below the poverty line as of the 2016 census, compared to 14% in the overall population (Statistics Canada, 2016). While disaggregated rates of child poverty specifically are not available, it is reasonable to infer that they are similarly much higher among Indigenous children. Recent data also shows that Canadians in both the working and middle class are becoming less upwardly mobile (Government of Canada, 2016) and that there is a growing wealth disparity in our country (Uppal & LaRochelle-Côté, 2015).

Meanwhile, Indigenous people living off reserve are more than twice as likely to live in poverty as the national average (Government of Canada, 2016[3]), and are also the group least likely to complete high school (Statistics Canada, 2015). While Indigenous Peoples in Canada benefit economically from attaining the higher levels of education, they benefit less from educational attainment than non-Indigenous Canadians, who consistently earn more than Indigenous Canadians with the same level of education (Statistics Canada, 2015). This suggests that even with identical qualifications, Indigenous Peoples are undervalued by employers relative to non-Indigenous people. Since the statistics show that achieving the same qualifications is already more difficult, the fact that doing so is not enough to achieve similar economic outcomes

[3] Those living on reserve were not included in this data (Government of Canada, 2016).

suggests that systemic racism may be an ongoing burden that permeates multiple sectors of society.

In education, structural differences exist, such as the long-running gap in per-student funding in public schools versus federally funded First Nations students on reserve (a system which may apportion several years of many urban First Nations students' total schooling) up to $10, 000 per student per year in some cases (Assembly of First Nations, 2010).

And there are historical considerations, including the effects of intergenerational trauma from residential schools through most of the second half of the 20th century, to which Métis but especially First Nations students, were subjected in large numbers (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015a). In addition, the forced segregation of First Nations people under the Pass System of the Indian Act and the social and economic isolation of many Métis in road allowance communities, meant that most Indigenous people did not begin to rejoin the city proper until the 1960s (Toews, 2018). That is, even Indigenous Peoples' ostensible return to and participation in the same economic, political, and social systems they were pushed out of in the late 1800s occurred for the first time only a generation or two ago.

Keeping this history of exclusion in mind, there are theoretical frameworks which suggest that inequities persist not only because of the inertia of historical events (though surely this is significant), but because of the active renewal and protection of racist and classist social structures. The theorization of structural or systemic inequities is the academic context in which my thesis research lies.

My focus in this study has been to understand how sociopolitical structures influence educational experiences and outcomes for Indigenous students in the area formerly known as the Red River Settlement, particularly and in Canada more broadly, and how Indigenous students

navigate those structures, successfully or not. My population of interest is experienced teachers[4] and Indigenous adult learners[5] in one Indigenous-led adult learning centre (ALC) in Winnipeg. The observations from both participant groups about how this ALC is differently structured, as well as how students' worldview and access to resources may differ compared to their prior K-12 experiences suggest: a) specific strategies schools may use to support Indigenous students, and b) larger policy recommendations for systemic change in schools and other related systems.

My orientation is one that is grounded in the theories of structuralism, in particular, Bourdieu (1984), and critical theory, best exemplified by Crenshaw (1989) and Smith (1999). I examine structures, systems, policies, and the processes by which social organizations, including inequities, are perpetuated through the reproduction of these structures and processes, particularly as explicated by Bourdieu's (1984) social reproduction thesis.

Because the subject of my study is the specific impact of such sociopolitical structures on Indigenous students in the former Red River Settlement (modern-day Winnipeg and the surrounding area), I also draw on Toews's (2018) region-specific framework of settler colonialism, which is already inclusive of critical race theory concepts. This framework, an application of *racial capitalism*, covers the historical development of settler colonialist structures in and around Winnipeg. It identifies the groups which are harmed, and which benefit by these

[4] Under the Adult Learning Centres Act (2002), either certified teachers or instructors with specialized industry or vocational knowledge (e.g., carpenters) may be responsible for preparing and delivering related courses offered by adult learning centres (ALCs). Separate from instructors with specialized industry/vocational knowledge, some ALCs have funding to offer non-credit literacy instruction, and literacy instructors are likewise not required to be certified teachers (though they may be). I did not want to unnecessarily limit my data by excluding potential participants from this study whom fall into either of these other two categories. Ultimately all members of my teacher participant group did turn out to have certification, but going forward in this document, references to teachers in adult education can usually be understood to be inclusive of adult learning centre instructors and literacy instructors as well.

[5] Within the field of adult education, including the text of the Adult Learning Centres Act (2002), it is common to refer to students of adult learning centres as adult learners. I use the terms student and adult learner interchangeably throughout this paper. Current regulations within the Manitoba government's Adult Learning and Literacy unit requires that registered students in ALCs be 19 years of age or older in their graduating year.

structures, and is complemented well by Bourdieu's (1984) theorization of how existing structural advantages are passed on to each new generation.

Toews (2018) examines multiple social structures that differentially affect Indigenous Peoples in this region through a critical race theory and settler colonial lens, but not within the education system specifically. Meanwhile, Bourdieu's (1984) original work and important later work by Lareau (2003) both explicitly address social reproduction within educational systems but not within a racial context. Therefore, to fill in this gap, I also draw significantly on analyses by race-focused neo-Bourdieusians such as Gonzales (2012) and Wallace (2018), as well as related work on community cultural wealth by Yosso (2005).

I anticipate that the mechanisms that operate in the education system here will be found to be analogous to those operating in other regional contexts throughout Canada, although the historical, political, and cultural details will vary. I hope that a better understanding of these mechanisms will have broader applicability to understanding the forces that maintain inequity in a settler-colonial context and the challenges to be overcome in achieving reconciliation.

Positionality

My family on my father's side has roots in the Red River Métis community going back at least one generation prior to the 1870 Manitoba Act (at least two sets of my great-great grandparents representing multiple Métis families) and the subsequent assignment of scrip to recognized half-breed families by the Canadian government as laid out in that act. Scrip was a promise that land would be paid out to the Métis as part of the terms of Manitoba joining confederation, negotiated on behalf of Red River community members by the elected provisional government headed by Louis Riel.

My late paternal grandfather, James Boyce, was raised by his Métis mother alone for much of his childhood, but she eventually married a Scottish man whose surname he and my great-uncle also took, and from whom they would gain several much younger half-siblings. I am thankful that there was a reportedly kind father figure for at least the latter part of what had been a sometimes violent and poverty-stricken childhood.

As a young man, my grandfather married, then almost immediately left to serve in the Canadian military in the Second World War as an army medic. When he returned to Winnipeg, he was one of the founding members of the Henderson Legion, one of his most significant and durable social ties, and worked at Concordia Hospital as a physical therapist until his eventual retirement, initially working mainly with injured veterans learning to wear and move with prostheses for the first time. Although my grandfather, like his brother, was very Indigenous in appearance, I suspect these very visible emphases on his veteran status in his work and social life may have gone some way to override what might have otherwise been an "Othering" status in the working class East Kildonan neighbourhood where he and my grandmother settled.

On my mother's side, my background includes Irish, German, Scottish, and French heritage. From childhood, my siblings and I understood our Métis heritage although we also understood that we were largely white-presenting. I was an undergraduate student in 2003 when the Supreme Court case, R. v. Powley, settled the question of whether Métis were and are a recognized Indigenous group.

The Powley decision changed the way it felt to be Métis for me, and there was a period during which I avoided identifying as such or else set for myself an arcane set of rules with respect to when I would identify and when I would not. For example, I refused to identify as Indigenous in job applications or to apply to Indigenous funding opportunities; however, I did

self-identify in documents for the purposes of ensuring my successes were counted statistically. Although I wanted to be listed, albeit anonymously, in the number of Métis graduates, Métis honour students, and Métis teachers, I did not want my background to be a factor in how I was evaluated.

I had no shame in this part of my heritage in the way that at least some from my grandfather's generation did, but if it did come up, I tended to qualify it. I went out of my way not to overemphasize the significance of my ethnicity or to misrepresent myself by putting too much weight on it. I just wanted to live in a way that I felt was genuine. Referring to myself as Indigenous felt like it came with a whole array of other assumptions, good and bad, that I might be seen to be implying about myself if I just stated it with no explanation. Often it seemed easier just not to get into it.

Race is a complicated thing, one inextricably intertwined with social and political history as well as individual family histories, not to mention other identity markers like culture, language, and class. Both my immediate and extended family was largely working class throughout my childhood, with members of my generation being the first to attend university, first one older cousin and then me, a year later. There were things about how universities work that I did not know at the time because there was simply no one in my life who could tell me. I did not know about "easy A" GPA boosters, I did not know how many hours of part-time work were appropriate for a full-time physics student (apparently fewer than 30 hours per week would have been better), and I did not know about résumé-padding or letters of reference.

There were also things that I observed in other students that I recoiled to consider doing myself. I always felt that you take your lumps when they came your way—you do not pester your teacher for a higher grade, you do not try to scrounge for unfair advantages or special

extensions, and you do not try to become close to someone just because you think they can help you academically and socially. For that matter, you may not ask for help even when you need it.

How much of this was an inherited but unnamed Métis pride and how much of it was due to a simple working-class ethos, I suppose I will never really know. Although it seems impossible to disentangle the historical threads, I do think there is value in much of this ethos, and as a result, I think I developed a certain amount of old-fashioned grit doing things the hard way. I also understand that I closed some doors by not fully understanding the rules of the game at that time and by refusing to work the system in a way that I felt was illegitimate. Post-Powley, I came to characterize the claiming of Métis identity as one of those potential unfair advantages, especially so for one who is treated as white, as many but not all of my family are. So I preferred to compete even with those more privileged than me without invoking what I considered to be identity politics.

My personal and familial history probably goes some way to explaining my multiple interests in theories of race, capital, and social structures. I see in my life history and in my family's how we have been shaped by our past, our economic status, and the culture and ethos that goes along with all of these, not to mention the changing times of the larger society. And I have come to think that virtually everyone is shaped by such forces.

As a teacher, I spent about five years in public schools before moving into Indigenous education, working in two First Nations schools before ending up at the Manitoba Metis Federation, teaching in an adult learning program. In my on-reserve and urban Indigenous students too, I observed a 'swimming against the tide' of invisible forces whose shape I did not yet grasp but whose effects were obvious. After several years at the Manitoba Metis Federation, I was invited to fill the education director role for my adult learning centre program and after two

more years, I made the decision to apply to the Master's program at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education.

By this time, I was convinced that the sphere of Indigenous education was where I wanted to continue to do my work, that the inequity in Indigenous and non-Indigenous educational outcomes and life chances represented the greatest challenge in Canadian education, and that the chance to directly attack this inequity represented the greatest opportunity to make a meaningful, positive impact in the field. Conducting deep scholarship on the unquestioned ways in which we structure our society seemed to me to be the most obvious way to make some headway in that effort.

Traditionally, the Métis were, as my late colleague and friend, the historian Lawrence Barkwell put it, a polyethnic, multilingual group with unique cultural markers but broad familial connections among First Nations and European settlers alike. Prior to the Indian Act and subsequent reserve system, rules of enfranchisement, and other legislative tools to separate them out, Métis lived in and among their relatives on both sides and did not emphasize what made them distinct but what made them connected.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Métis' greatest strength was their ability to move between and form ties with multiple communities in Red River and the greater Northwest region, to serve as translators and traders and negotiators and diplomats. My experiences as an educator, whether by chance or disposition, have mirrored these long-standing traditions. From working with on-reserve First Nations students and staff, to urban First Nations and Métis students and staff, and to settler students and staff of all economic backgrounds, it has been impossible not to make those same kinds of connections and begin to synthesize some of these worldviews.

As a result of these experiences as much as anything else, I have been asked to represent Indigenous interests in union committees, professional learning communities, and government task forces. I hesitated for a long time, but I now accept that I am well positioned to play an in-between role, connecting one group to another, brokering talks, and carrying wisdom and insight between groups without fully belonging to any of them. I want to do my part to critically hold the educational system I work in to account, having spent so many years working with those who have been least served by it.

Up to this point in my academic career, I have learned from a broad coalition of thoughtful and justice-oriented people and synthesized a broad range of theoretical approaches that seem useful to my work or otherwise resonate with me. If I were not Métis, I might well want to do the very same work in the very same way, but perhaps not. I cannot definitively take any component of my personal or family history as incidental to either my positionality or the path I have taken.

My work in education lit a fire in my heart about justice and equity. My undergraduate studies in physics solidified what was already a strong predilection for a scientific mindset. My immediate and extended family helped a younger me figure out the basics of who I am inside: a curious, introverted, reflective, and sometimes stubborn but generally open-minded and well-meaning person. And a lifetime of experience has taught me to leverage my strengths and manage my weaknesses in each role I have played in these different periods of my life, from family member to community member, and from student to teacher to scholar.

The Problem

In my study, I argue that the work done in our schools plays a hitherto unmentioned role in the larger settler-colonial project that Toews (2018) operationalizes as a unique form of racial

capitalism. His book focuses on the process of land dispossession within governmental, legal, and commercial social spaces, and makes a convincing case that largely the same forces and interest groups have played an active and intentional role in it throughout the history of Manitoba. He spends less time explicitly addressing how these power relationships are maintained on a day-by-day basis. I apply the work of Bourdieu (1984), neo-Bourdieusians (Gonzales, 2012; Wallace, 2018), and critical race theorists responding to Bourdieu (Yosso, 2005) to understand how various phenomena, including non-economic forms of capital, interact to contribute to the maintenance of the same racial-capitalist hierarchies and power structures that land dispossession and oppressive legislation have helped to establish and maintain, particularly within the education system.

Due to the political and cultural origins of the Red River Settlement and the context of the negotiation of the Manitoba Act, which historian Gerald Friesen has referred to as "Treaty 0" (personal communication, August 16, 2017) in recognition of its role in laying the groundwork for the numbered treaties that followed; and due also to the existing and still highly resilient Indigenous population here, Winnipeg is described by Toews (2018) as a truly Indigenous city, albeit one under occupation. As such, he sees it as a fit archetypal subject for understanding settler colonialism as a specific form of racial capitalism in the Canadian context.

Per the settler-colonial project, neither the spirit nor the letter of the treaties, including the provisions for Métis people in the Manitoba Act, were honoured. In fact, both before and after the treaties, multiple levels of government in Canada have employed the concept of *terra nullius* (empty land) (p. 113), which justifies land appropriation and mass importation of European settlers by producing a narrative of desolation and wilderness. This later gave way to *urbs nullius* (p. 183), which frames Indigenous Peoples as antithetical to city life, characterizes their homes

and communities as derelict, and justifies their further displacement and land appropriation within cities.

Throughout his book, Toews (2018) describes a political and economic shift from one in which Indigenous Peoples in and immediately around the Red River Settlement—Métis and Anishinaabe and their allies—had political and economic control of their own destinies, and were able to feed and house themselves adequately, to one in which both groups found themselves living under a settler-dominated government, had lost nearly all their land, much of their autonomy, and were struggling to meet their basic needs.

Toews's (2018) focus is on the actual structures those at the top of the racial-capitalist hierarchy—a group he refers to as the "Dominant Bloc"—have built to facilitate land and resource dispossession and create a settler colonial society headed by themselves, and to make Indigenous people as well as non-Indigenous working-class and middle-class people worse off as a result. These structures include everything from direct legislation to government-business partnerships to the operating procedures of government-run social programs.

Bourdieu (1984) describes how fields (social spaces or systems with their own rules and mores) are particularly tuned to reinforce existing wealth and power relationships. He describes cultural, social, and other kinds of capital as key parts of "reproduction strategies, the set of outwardly very different practices whereby individuals or families tend, unconsciously and consciously, to maintain or improve their position in the class structure" (p. 125). These theoretical constructs were created based on an extensive survey he administered across social classes.

It is clear from data cited in the first section of this chapter that educational inequity plays a major role in broader social and economic inequities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous

people. It is therefore critical to examine how inequities manifest in schools if we are to understand and disrupt the settler-colonial project. Toews's (2018) racial-capitalist framework and historical grounding does much to identify the what, when, who, and why of current inequities, whereas scholarship from and inspired by Bourdieu (1984) explains more of the how.

In this study, I have drawn my research data from experienced teachers and Indigenous students in one Winnipeg adult learning centre (ALC). In Manitoba, secondary adult education, in the form of adult learning centres, is publicly funded by the Adult Learning and Literacy Branch of the provincial government, and its operations regulated according to the Adult Learning Centres Act (2002). As of 2019, there were 65 ALC sites across the province with dozens of them located in Winnipeg.

ALCs are often operated by public colleges, public universities, and public school divisions. Some were created and are operated by other organizations such as not-for-profits, unions, and churches, at least initially in partnership with one of the aforementioned types of educational institutions. Teachers at some centres are represented by the Manitoba Teachers' Society, others are represented by other unions, but many are non-unionized.

Students at ALCs, also known as adult learners, are usually 19 years of age or older, with no upper limit on age. Many seek a mature student diploma, an equivalent to the regular Manitoba high school diploma that requires fewer credits. To meet the different scheduling needs of adult students, most ALCs offer different combinations of daytime, evening, and weekend, as well as in-person or online, and regularly scheduled as well as self-paced courses. Since different ALCs may serve very different demographics and try to be responsive to their learner populations' needs, there tends to be quite a bit of variation in terms of courses, formats, and schedules offered by ALCs.

Adult education (at the secondary level) is a relatively under-researched sector of Manitoba's education system, and one that I believe contains a wealth of untapped data, particularly for Indigenous education research, given that about 45% of Manitoba's adult learning centre students in 2020 were Indigenous (Silver, 2022a). I also expect that data drawn from adult learning centres can provide insights that go beyond adult education because of their connectedness to other sectors of the education system. As a teacher myself with extensive experience across K-12 public schools, First Nation schools, and almost a decade in adult learning centres alone, I have observed these interconnections personally. Almost all adult learning centre students were once 'school age' (18 or younger), meaning that public K-12 school divisions and First Nations communities alike provide 'feeder schools' for adult learning centres.

Likewise, virtually all adult learning centre teachers come to the sector after having completed practicum teaching experiences in divisional schools and/or First Nations schools, where they worked with school-aged students. Many also work in these sectors for years before working at an adult learning centre. Bachelor of Education coursework likewise focuses more on developing pedagogical approaches and teaching philosophies in line with working with children and adolescents rather than andragogical approaches aimed at adults, so teachers bring awareness of these perspectives and approaches to their work in adult learning centres, exposing any vocational and literacy instructor colleagues to these ideas as well.

With adult learning centre teachers and students alike having educational experiences prior to their time in adult learning centres, they may have observations and insights about social structures both within adult education and from their prior school experiences. It is likely that

structural barriers may be observed that exist across these sectors, as well as some that exist in some sectors but not others.

There is some work on this already. Studies conducted by Jim Silver have provided some insight on the barriers faced by Indigenous students in Winnipeg high schools (Silver & Mallett, 2002) in contrast to the way that some (mainly Winnipeg-based) adult learning centres have better served Indigenous students via organizational and cultural change (Silver, Klyne, & Simard, 2003). A more recent study also details various systemic challenges currently faced by adult learning centres across Manitoba (Silver, 2022a).

The overlap between these studies and my own research questions suggested that focusing my own data collection on adult learning centre educators and adult learners as participants would be fruitful. I also anticipated that interview data from my participant groups would fit well within structuralist and critical frameworks, in part due to educator and adult learner participants' multi-sector experiences. For the same reason, I expect that some of the insights gleaned from this study are useful in suggesting either areas for systemic educational improvement or further inquiry that go beyond identifying what works in one Winnipeg adult learning centre.

In this study, I delve more deeply into the work of Toews's (2018) historical evidence, and the data and theorization of Bourdieu (1984) and various neo-Bourdieusians as the main part of my literature review in Chapter Two. Also in that chapter, I synthesize the relevant work and make a case for the theoretical frameworks I use to answer the research questions I pose.

The Purpose of the Study

Five years after the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015b) *Calls to Action*, educational institutions of all kinds are beginning to implement or at least explore

possible changes they hope will ameliorate gaps in educational outcomes or decolonize the educational experience, a concept which looks radically different from one anti-colonial theorist to another.

In the broader scholarly literature on structural racism, Bourdieusian and neo-Bourdieusian analyses have been applied to understand the invisible structures and phenomena which interact to not only maintain but also discursively conceal systemic inequities. This framework has not been applied to understanding the experiences of Indigenous Peoples in the settler-colonial context.

The purpose of this study has been to collect data related to the experiences of Indigenous persons in systems of public education and determine what insights and recommendations might be gleaned from analyzing this data with a combined neo-Bourdieusian and settler-colonial lens. My research questions were chosen in part because they might suggest ways to achieve the goal listed in Call #10, which asks school systems to improve educational success rates and the academic attainment of Indigenous students and to achieve improved accountability to Indigenous communities and parents on par with what their non-Indigenous counterparts enjoy (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b, p. 2).

The Research Questions

This study seeks to understand structural inequities in school systems via a case study of one Indigenous-led adult learning centre in Winnipeg. Interview data from two participant groups at the case study site are captured: experienced adult education teachers and Indigenous adult learners. Semi-structured interview questions are used to gather observations about the way the school environment is structured, the various types of resources accessed by adult learners,

and the behaviours and worldviews of learners, as well as how all the above may differ in comparison to those learners' prior experiences in public K-12 or First Nations schools.

The results are interpreted and coded in terms of Bourdieusian and neo-Bourdieusian concepts discussed more in the next chapter (habitus/racialized habitus, cultural capital, community cultural wealth, features of fields) and settler colonialism and settler-colonial discourse as appropriate. However, I list the main questions here without use of those specific terms.

The main research question and sub-questions in this study are as follows:

How do adult learners and adult educators at this adult learning centre think resource access, habitual behaviours, worldview, and the social organization of their school influence the educational experiences and outcomes of its Indigenous learners?

i. What structural barriers in both the K-12 and adult education systems do these teachers and students think negatively impact Indigenous learners' educational outcomes more than non-Indigenous learners?
ii. What structural features unique to this adult learning centre do these teachers and students think lead to improved educational outcomes for Indigenous learners?
iii. What strategies or resources do these teachers and students see as useful to Indigenous learners navigating structural barriers successfully?
iv. What role has Indigenous students' outlook and worldview played in their past and present educational experiences, as observed by these students and their teachers?

Methodology

A case study-based qualitative research approach is used here, with semi-structured interviews of teachers and Indigenous adult learners being undertaken to understand learner

experiences at one Indigenous-led adult learning centre in Winnipeg. This centre serves a mostly Indigenous student population and has explicitly Indigenous-focused programming.

I recruited seven participants for the adult learner group and four participants for the adult educator group. The adult learning centre chosen for this case study is not only an educational institution but is also an urban Indigenous community. It was selected in part because of its size, longevity, and cultural cohesiveness.

Interview responses were coded and a post-coding frequency analysis along with discursive analysis of interview scripts was conducted to determine common themes and sub-categories fitting into Bourdieusian, critical race theory, and settler-colonial frameworks, as well as to identify emerging concepts and themes.

The Significance of the Study

Although there has been some excellent work already in applying Bourdieusian analysis to understand and critique racial inequality in Canada (Cui, 2015), the United States (Gonzales, 2012), and the United Kingdom (Wallace, 2018), I was not able to find a study in which a Bourdieusian approach was applied to the understanding of Indigenous experiences within the published literature. Minority populations in Western countries each navigate social structures differently because they experience different kinds of racial discrimination, have different histories, and draw on different cultural resources. The experiences of people of Indigenous backgrounds represent a gap in the neo-Bourdieusian corpus that I feel needs to be addressed.

From my analysis of the existing literature, it appears that a Bourdieusian analysis has also never been applied to better understand settler-colonial forces. By providing a theorization of the social reproduction thesis (Bourdieu, 1984) as a mechanism by which settler colonialism

(per Toews, 2018) is reinforced, this study may create new theoretical linkages and possibly a new and useful framework for either neo-Bourdieusians or anti-colonial theorists.

This study is also important to me as a Manitoba Métis teacher, teacher leader, and educational scholar, because the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b) demand that we all take actions to close the educational and socioeconomic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, and I have come to see the Manitoba and Winnipeg contexts in which I have taught for well over a decade as perfect microcosms of this nationwide inequity.

As broad demographic categories, neither Indigenous nor non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada are heterogenous, and inequity has always been highly layered. Yet even when you separate out on-reserve versus off-reserve First Nations people, and rural versus urban Métis people, there are stark differences between the members of each Indigenous sub-category relative to the non-Indigenous population. As a result, there is an urgent need for research that seeks to better understand and disrupt structural inequities, but particularly educational inequity, which acts as a major predictor for future inequities.

As an experienced adult educator, I also find adult education to be under-researched and comparatively unknown to the public when compared to other sectors of the Manitoba education system. While one can search "adult education" and find scholarship centred on the experiences of college and university students, including the experiences of older adults in those settings, a literature review using search terms of "Manitoba adult learning centres" results in very little output. Outside of Manitoba government documents, I could find only three previously mentioned studies that directly study the operations and student experiences within adult learning

centres, all by the same author: Silver, Klyne, and Simard (2003); Silver (2022a); and Silver (2022b).

Since there are a number of unique features in administrative structure and school culture in many adult learning centres, and teachers here often have a broader set of experiences, I expected there to be a high possibility of receiving novel perspectives on our education system, and thoughtful suggestions for systemic change by undertaking this case study at an Indigenous-led ALC rather than a K-12 public school. It is no coincidence that Indigenous Peoples, who experience so much educational inequity, are over-represented in adult learning centres, and that Indigenous communities have formed to specifically meet the needs of Indigenous adult learners. I could not think of a better place to start in terms of identifying a different way of doing things.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This thesis examines one aspect of socioeconomic and racial inequity in Canadian educational systems, with a focus on systemic barriers to Indigenous students. I use two broad frameworks to study this topic. For the larger picture of Indigenous socioeconomic exclusion, I review Toews's (2018) theory of settler colonialism as a manifestation of racial capitalism as the first part of my literature review. I argue that the process of exclusion, which began with land dispossession, applies to other forms of wealth/capital.

In the second part of my literature review, I focus on how inequity is perpetuated within the educational system, and my framework is a variation on Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) social reproduction thesis, which considers invisible, non-economic forms of capital, and their interactions with a person's habitus and field. I look at Bourdieu's ideas in detail, as well as the refinements to his ideas by Annette Lareau (2003), the scholar whose prominent work expanded Bourdieusian thinking. At the end of this part, I make the case that Bourdieusian thinking has enough areas of consonance with Toews' (2018) framework to use them together without contradiction.

For the most part Bourdieu's (1984) work, and Lareau's (2003), did not explicitly account for race, so the third part of my literature review explores efforts to augment Bourdieusian analysis with a race-conscious framework, including applications of critical race theory. Several of the scholars I review here start from an explicitly Bourdieusian viewpoint, and then ask how the operation and interaction of cultural, social, and other forms of capital differs for families from non-white backgrounds in racially diverse societal contexts, and what role these types of capital, the field, and habitus may play in creating or perpetuating racial inequity. I place Cui (2015), Gonzales (2012), and Wallace (2018) in this category.

Yosso (2005) is deeply grounded in the tenets of critical race theory and does not take the validity of such Bourdieusian concepts as cultural capital for granted. She scrutinizes this concept specifically from a critical race theory standpoint, then proposes a complement to cultural capital that she refers to as *community cultural wealth*, which is developed directly from the postulates of that theoretical framework. Both Gonzales (2012) and Wallace (2018) took her work into consideration in their own efforts to observe the operation of the social reproduction thesis among non-white families and individuals navigating systemic racism.

A synthesis of the theoretical ideas of this group of scholars with prior work by Bourdieu (1984) and Lareau (2003) does not anticipate every detail of how Indigenous Peoples in a Canadian context might accrue and apply different forms of capital according to their habitus and the rules of the field. But I argue that concepts such as racialized habitus, community cultural wealth, and non-dominant culture capital are applicable when thoughtfully adapted to my research context and to formulating interview questions and interpreting responses. The literature review shows that a Bourdieusian analysis has not yet been applied to a settler-colonial context, so adaptations of these concepts, along with any new phenomena emerging from the data, are expected to add meaningfully to the body of neo-Bourdieusian scholarship.

Settler-Colonial Institutions and Racial Capitalism

Even a neutral recitation of the historical facts makes it impossible to deny that the shared history of what are now the province of Manitoba and city of Winnipeg is one in which Indigenous Peoples steadily lost and white capitalists steadily gained. First Nations and Métis Peoples went from having access to 100 per cent of the land to being limited to reserves and land grants comprising perhaps one per cent of Manitoba's land area today by some estimates (Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat, 2019 and Canadian Geographic, 2019). Toews

(2018) argues that this is an ongoing and intentional project, whose 150-year history he describes in great historical detail.

As a result of these and later numbered treaties, the former Northwest Territory became the province of Manitoba, and the white settler minority with which the Indigenous Peoples had shared land access communally became a white settler majority with private ownership of increasingly large swaths of land freely granted to white settlers by the same Canadian government that sidelined Indigenous land use. During this period, capitalist owners and investors of, initially, mostly white European or white Eastern Canadian origin (Manitoba-born white capitalist interests arose during the next period) also gained control of the Manitoba and Canadian governments—both directly, as elected members, and indirectly, through effective lobbying—and in the process, Indigenous interests were largely disregarded.

An 1876 advertisement circulated throughout Eastern Canada reveals how quickly assets were redistributed upwards along the racial-capitalist hierarchy. That advertisement read:

> It is probable, according to announcement of the Dominion Government, that during the Summer of 1876, the Half-Breed Reserves in Manitoba…will be patented to the grantees. These plots, lying near the Red and Assiniboine Rivers…make in all the most valuable tract of land in the North-west…will be sold at absurdly low prices…[The land speculator] will undertake, for intending investors, the purchase of these lands…through his former connection with the Land Office in Manitoba…[h]e is also fully acquainted with the value and quality of all land referred to. (p. 63)

The distribution of scrip, by which Métis were to receive land bargained for as part of Manitoba's entry into Confederation, was not yet underway, but a real estate speculator was already banking on the assumption that it would be very easy to buy most of the land for pennies

on the dollar. He understood, at least months in advance, that only a small sliver of the proceeds would be given out to the Métis themselves—most would be offered as public lands for sale to private investors who would profit from it based on their position in the racial-capitalist hierarchy. And indeed, this is what happened.

While the reserve lands set aside for First Nations communities and the amount of land offered per Métis family through the scrip system were strictly limited (and often not honoured), a small number of wealthy white settlers (mostly from outside Manitoba) were able to make a significant amount of money, and a larger number of working-class white settlers were able to access land and opportunity to raise families while the former Indigenous owners of that land struggled to do so.

But there is more to settler colonialism than the simple fact of land theft. It is also about how the settlers, particularly the capitalists in private industry who were connected to government, justify the theft, not only for themselves but for the working-class white settlers whom they make complicit. This is what Toews (2018) means when he speaks of capitalism as a tool by which not only racial hierarchies but ideologies (feelings and practices) are entrenched. We see it again and again throughout Toews' history of this land.

Toews describes how the long-standing concept of *terra nullius*, the false framing of the land as empty, allowed people like former land speculator and Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, to ignore Indigenous concerns in future plans (p. 113). In the last decades of the 19th century, he invited speculators from Eastern Canada to become involved in a "major investment in *repopulating* [emphasis added] the Prairie West through immigration" (p. 77).

This story repeats itself in the 1950s with Winnipeg's suburban housing boom. There were "hundreds of millions in private capital invested in new housing construction" (pp. 110-

111), and Winnipeg's planning authority "mandated large lot sizes and low densities, encouraging the construction of larger, pricier homes" (p. 110). But in the process, places like Rooster Town (Peters, Stock, & Werner, 2018) and other Métis road allowance communities (unsanctioned towns built on government-owned but undeveloped land by families whose scrip largely remained unfulfilled) were destroyed and its people displaced[6]. Developers, who themselves paid nothing or almost nothing for the land, reaped tremendous profits, and a space was carved out for middle-class white settlers, but at the expense of the Indigenous people who were already living there.

At this time, First Nations people were confined to distant reserves under the Pass System, but the Métis were still viewed as troublesome. Many had still never received their promised land and they were too near to non-Indigenous communities for comfort. They had "the instincts of the Indian thinly coated over by certain sophistications of the Aryan" and lived in "hovels on the fringes of little urban centres" according to a 1941 Free Press article (Toews, 2018, p. 114). This framing helped de-legitimize the Métis' claim to the space and paved the way for bulldozing their communities as the land became desirable.

A few more decades on, approaching the turn of the 21st century, the abandoned city centre had become once again an Indigenous space, with the abolishment of the Pass System leading many First Nations people to join displaced Métis from the paved-over road allowance communities on and around Main Street from the 1960s onwards. In 1999, Winnipeg's mayor declared Winnipeg "open for business" and set a goal of "every public dollar lever[aging]

[6] Rooster Town, which was bulldozed in order that today's Grant Park neighbourhood in Winnipeg's South End could be built, is the most famous, but other examples include Ste. Madeleine, near today's Russell, Manitoba, which was burned to the ground by government authorities in 1938 (Manitoba Museum of Nature, 2019) and Dog Patch, a smaller Winnipeg road allowance community once located near the CP rail yards that border Winnipeg's North End (Barkwell, 2016). This latter location features in Toews's book, but decades later and not by that name.

significant private sector investment" (p. 197). These were the early days of CentreVenture, whose many projects—shutting down Indigenous-frequented social spaces in and around Main Street, establishing a Christian evangelical and colonial space on the corner opposite Thunderbird House, building luxury condos along Waterfront Drive—take up the last third of Toews' book.

There is an important neo-liberal sleight of hand here. The word 'investment' is frequently used at a personal or family or community level, meaning to expend some portion of one's current resources for some future gain, like deposits to an RRSP account, or a government investing in future productivity and public well-being through educational spending. But investment also means buying a stake in something.

When CentreVenture endeavours to attract public investment, it is trying hard to sell community members' shared resources and assets. In fact, 'sell' is not necessarily the correct word. The use of public dollars to leverage private ones means many investors are actually being paid to take government-owned land, and generous tax subsidies along with the promise of public resources being turned to the ends of private profit often mean the upward redistribution of assets continues for years or decades later.[7]

Who gains from these transactions? Investors do not invest if they do not expect to gain. But it is clear from the language of politicians and businesspeople that Toews quotes that these ventures are meant to be seen as providing real benefit to people living in Winnipeg, that increased private spending, increased private profits, and the proliferation of upscale businesses catering to more affluent people are seen as a public good in some way, that the two very different uses of the word 'invest' really are one and the same.

[7] The Canadian Pacific railyards in the city centre have not paid taxes since they were built in the late 1800s.

While the expression 'trickle-down effect' is never actually used in any direct quotes, we do see this neo-liberal idea, that the accruing of capital among the very rich somehow benefits the poor, is integral to the CentreVenture project, thanks in part to an analogous turn of phrase. In a draft document that would lay out the core capitalist logics of CentreVenture, Toews describes how "*CentrePlan* [the guiding policy document for CentreVenture] reiterates the longstanding assertion of the urban wing that city-centre profits will create an economic 'domino effect' benefitting the entire region" (p. 189). This new metaphor expresses the same absurd trickle-down idea, just with a different visual.

Throughout the book, Toews identifies government legislation and de facto policy as purpose-built social structures that the Dominant Bloc, as he dubs them, have used intentionally to place themselves at the top of the racial-capitalist hierarchy. Scrip, the Pass System, and CentreVenture all fall in this category and played major roles in the separation of Indigenous Peoples from their land specifically, and from wealth and opportunity more generally.

The beneficiaries of racial capitalism are a small minority within an ostensibly democratic society, so the structures that serve them need to be rhetorically justified, and the capitalist logics of CentreVenture are one of the more recent efforts to do so. Narrative discourse, therefore, plays a key role in maintaining power structures in a settler-colonial society, in Toews's (2018) view. This is something with which Bourdieu (1984) would undoubtedly agree. In the next section I first review the work of Bourdieu (1984) and Lareau (2003) in detail, before discussing the points of connection and complementarity with Toews (2018).

Capital, Habitus, Field, and Bourdieu's Social Reproduction Thesis

One way we might define an equitable society is as one in which everyone, regardless of where they were born and into which family, has statistically equal life chances. Regardless of

parental income, race, gender, or family background, all children would be equally likely to get into law school or be a homeowner, not to mention just as likely (ideally, not likely at all) to live in poverty as an adult, drop out of school, be homeless, or to suffer from an addiction. Across demographic factors—gender, race, income—all students should earn their high school diplomas at the same rate, receive a similar distribution of grades and standardized test results, and be equally likely to take honours courses or attend university.

From the brief review of relevant statistics I provided in the previous chapter, however, it is easy to see then that we do not live in that kind of an equitable society. This inequity falls along socioeconomic as well as racial lines. The inequity in comparing Indigenous and non-Indigenous socioeconomic, education, and health outcomes is one major theme in the *Calls to Action* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b). Certainly, we could look at other dimensions as well, for example, gender identity, but I limit my scope to Indigenous identity and, secondarily, socioeconomic status. Next, I look at Bourdieu's (1984) explanation of how inequity persists across generations.

Combining and extending ideas about capital and power, upbringing and norms, and structural functionalism—as explicated by, respectively, Karl Marx (1906), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962), and Émile Durkheim (1915)—Bourdieu (1984) understood systemic social inequity as a self-reproducing, intergenerational phenomenon produced by the interaction of economic and invisible forms of capital along with learned behaviours and worldviews and arbitrary, classist societal norms.

Building on Marx's ideas about economic capital as power, Bourdieu described group membership, social knowledge, and prestige as additional types of capital, equally important to economic value when it comes to understanding power and wealth within society. Bourdieu used

the term *social capital* for the power of networks and in-group connections, *cultural capital* for the knowledge of dominant class behaviours, taste, and status markers, *educational capital* for academic knowledge gained primarily through formal education, and *symbolic capital* for everything from awards to formal certifications and university degrees.

Separate from capital, Bourdieu considered the influence of upbringing and culture on the internalized norms, perceptions, beliefs, and expectations of individuals, most of these so ingrained the individual is neither conscious nor questioning of them. He called these implicitly learned tendencies *habitus* and noted that most of us are no more aware of this than a fish is aware of the water in which it lives.

Bourdieu categorizes habitus as a social structure in the same way he does with formal institutions, and he refers to this individually situated social object as both a "structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices [and a] structured structure" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 170). By this he means that habitus is both a *result of* and a *factor in* the larger social environment. Senses of entitlement and fatalism might be examples of orientations closely tied to habitus.

For example, educational opportunities that are optional, like math Olympiads or advanced placement courses, will most likely be of interest to individuals who think of themselves as capable, high-performing students. Students who are equally academically capable but do not *see themselves* as high performers may not consider these opportunities for themselves.

Alongside capital and habitus, Bourdieu defined *fields*[8] as social environments that come with their own sets of rules and judgement. It is only within the context of the field that many kinds of capital have value. For example, the behaviours of the 'good student' (e.g., showing engagement in lessons, demonstrating knowledge of high culture) serve as cultural capital precisely because the field that comprises the school environment is one in which these behaviours are valued.

Bourdieu theorized that the interaction of an individual's habitus, capital, and the field determine the distribution of power within that field. Bourdieu observed that these interactions tend to reinforce the existing power structure, not disrupt it.

Bourdieu (1984) describes "reproduction strategies, the set of outwardly very different practices whereby individuals or families tend, unconsciously and consciously, to maintain or improve their position in the class structure" (p. 125), strategies that vary between families based on the quantity and types of capital they have access to and try to reproduce in their children. The passing on of privilege (or lack thereof) from one generation to the next, the maintenance and entrenchment of existing class boundaries and power structures through the interaction of capital, habitus, and field rules, is known as Bourdieu's social reproduction thesis.

The Leveraging and Conversion of Capital

It is no coincidence that Bourdieu's most important work, *Distinction*, was subtitled *A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Bourdieu, 1984). He noted that the dominant class determines what music, literature, fashion, and art is highly valued and that knowledge of and

[8] The first English edition of *Distinction* in 1984 translated Bourdieu's term "champ" as "social space" before field became the preferred English term in later works and translations. I occasionally use social space, social context, or social arena as synonyms for this term.

preferences within these spheres act as markers for a person as being either in the dominant social group or not.

The book's major ideas are supported by detailed survey data from 1,217 people across a variety of occupational and educational categories in France in 1963 and then from 1967 to 1968 (p. 13). The questionnaire Bourdieu administered collected information on indicators of economic capital such as rates of homeownership and holidaying, as well as simple annual income of participants, but also collected information on cultural practices indicative of high cultural capital, like museum visits and the quantity and types of books read (pp. 117-119).

Members of what Bourdieu referred to as the dominant class (engineers, factory owners, executives, civil servants, secondary and university teachers) scored highly in each case. Being a member of the dominant class in 1960s France generally meant being wealthy in multiple types of capital, and most members of the advantaged social class were born into it, a fact that Bourdieu was certainly not the first to notice. However, his data analyses did suggest that capital, not exclusively of the economic kind, is connected to the protection of family wealth from one generation to the next. Therefore, the use of capital is key to the social reproduction thesis.

It is worth taking a moment to consider why Bourdieu uses the term 'capital' to describe everything from academic knowledge (educational capital) to reputation and formal honours (symbolic capital) to connections and networks (social capital). Capital represents influence, value, and spending power. Capital can be saved, accrued, inherited, and converted from one form to another. This conversion from one kind to another is key, as one kind of capital is often a better long-term investment than another in certain contexts.

Cultural capital is one of the most significant here. Many advantaged families enroll their children in expensive private schools, outlaying economic capital for programs that they expect

will inculcate and reinforce cultural capital, along with educational capital and social capital, and open doors for their children to elite post-secondary programs and high-paying careers. Cultural and social capital are often closely intertwined, with patterns of speech and shared institution- or class-specific knowledge serving to identify and reinforce membership in informal and formal networks (e.g., country clubs, alumni associations).

But not every affluent family needs to pay private school tuition in order for their children to have an advantage. Thanks to the effects of cultural capital, children from affluent families can attend public schools and yet have far greater academic success on average compared to their classmates from non-affluent families (Sirin, 2005). Economic capital often pays for tutors and private extracurricular programs, and that can be part of the reason for the difference as well, but the major constant is the cultural capital that Bourdieu noted tends to be co-located within families of multi-generational wealth.

Bourdieu established that cultural capital is influenced by family background and education, and that schools are more effective at inculcating cultural capital in those students who are already from advantaged backgrounds (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 13). Cultural capital is the collection of behaviours, attitudes, and skills which the school system tends to recognize, reward, and contribute to even further. Even though he uncovered cultural capital with a survey instrument that measured knowledge of classical composers and literature, Bourdieu understood these simply as useful markers in the context of his time and place and recognized cultural capital as being much more than high-brow trivia.

Annette Lareau (with Michele Lamont) defined cultural capital differently, as "institutionalized, i.e., widely shared, high status cultural signals used for social and cultural

exclusion" (Lamont & Lareau, 1988, as cited in Devine-Eller, 2005). She then sought out this conception of cultural capital in her most well-known and comprehensive study from 1993-1995.

Lareau's (2003) research, based on an ethnographic study of 88 black and white families in the United States in that two-year period, and then a follow-up with those same families ten years later, concluded that the cultural capital demonstrated by children from more affluent families has a major influence on the paths their lives take. She noted a number of valued in-school behaviours these high-capital students employed: heavily participating in extra-curricular activities, having adult-like conversations with their teachers, displaying academic ambition, setting up relationships with teachers that position them to ask for extensions or modifications on assignments, and requesting the remarking or resubmission of assignments for higher grades, along with other advantages.

Change does not occur unconsciously. Lareau referred to the behaviour that more affluent parents engage in with and for their children as 'concerted cultivation'. She noted that, in contrast to the more 'naturalistic' parenting approach of working-class parents, these parents were strategically investing in their children's education, not only economically but via time spent coaching on classroom behaviour and attitudes, whereby they would pass on the knowledge, behaviours, and strategies known to be valuable in the field (e.g., "ask your teacher why you only got a B+ on this").

Lareau observed that parents, too, bring their own cultural capital to advocate for their children directly, asking for types of programming that specifically benefit their own children, attending school board meetings, and calling principals to influence school decisions. On a personal note, a few years ago I spoke with a (now former) principal in one of Winnipeg's school divisions who had helped to spearhead a project to offer extended free daycare in their lower-

income catchment neighbourhoods. It was specifically designed to boost resources for the least advantaged children who would one day be divisional students, but parents from more affluent neighbourhoods made their voices heard, and under the pressure they exerted, and at great cost, the school board decided to expand the program to schools in higher-income neighbourhoods as well.

The program had been carefully targeted to low-income students to meet a specific need and decrease the gap between economically advantaged and disadvantaged students. However, the complaining parents succeeded in ensuring the program would be provided equally, but not equitably, to include families with influence but not need. The effect of this use of cultural capital was to protect and entrench existing advantages from any potential equalizing force, to maintain that 'leg up' that most parents want for their children.

Gaps in cultural capital tend to grow with each year of schooling. The school system, like all fields, tends to situate individuals and social positions within a hierarchy of unequal distribution of power (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 169). The field that comprises the school system, like the larger society of which it is a part, is set up to cater to high cultural capital students best of all. This strongly increases the probability that the children of the dominant class will also *appear* to earn their way into that dominant class when this cultural capital eventually culminates in high-value university degrees from elite schools and prestigious high-paying jobs.

Social capital, the wealth of belonging to a network, is something Bourdieu touches on only briefly in *Distinction* at the same time as introducing field and habitus (p. 114), but it can be very influential when advantaged children borrow it from their parents or their parents expend other kinds of capital to acquire it for their children. News reports about a recent lawsuit that has forced Harvard to disclose details about its opaque admissions process revealed, among other

things, that legacy students, those whose parents also attended the school, are five times more likely to be admitted, just as students whose families made large financial donations to the school had also received special consideration (Taylor, 2018).

In the latter case, wealthy parents lacking existing social capital convert economic capital to gain for their children the same end. In both cases, though, those Harvard degrees, purchased by parental capital, serve to open doors closed to more capable students from less highly regarded schools which provide membership in less financially valuable networks. However, the uncomfortable questions this recent lawsuit has prompted prevent privileged students from blithely attributing their acceptance to Harvard to individual talent and effort, as generations of favoured children have done.

The 2019 "Varsity Blues" admission scandal (Golden & Burke, 2019) in which wealthy parents were found to have paid off coaches and standardized test proctors to do everything from falsifying athletic records to replacing test answers to ensure college admission for their academically less capable students led to a public outcry. But while these activities technically constituted criminal conspiracy, these specific examples of the expenditure of economic capital to access the social capital of elite universities are no more unmeritocratic than legal alternatives. The purchasing of expensive test prep efforts, the leveraging of parental social capital to ask favours of people with influence on admission decisions, the use of cultural capital system-exploiting strategies to inflate one's GPA as documented by Lareau (2003), each of these help already advantaged families maintain their privilege.

The Influence of Habitus

Of course, capital does not operate in a vacuum. Bourdieu (1984) introduces habitus as a complement to field, as the expectations, perceptions, beliefs, and tendencies of an individual,

taken in mostly unconsciously during upbringing, interact with the same sorts of expectations, perceptions, beliefs, and tendencies inherent to a field. Habitus is not entirely unrelated to worldview, but it is probably better described as a set of unconscious habits of thinking and being, mostly so ingrained that the individual is neither aware nor questioning of them.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Bourdieu described habitus as both a product of and a creator of the larger social structure in which we live. It is an outcome of our existing societal structures, but it is also a force in its own right that acts to maintain them. For the dominant class, habitus might take the form of a princely sense of entitlement and heir-apparent certainty, while for the disadvantaged, habitus may be a self-created cage of unconscious fatalism.

A potent example of this is the pursuit of medical school admissions. The minimum academic requirements are not overly stringent but because so many more apply than are accepted, the need to do everything right to maximize GPA and related experience means most successful applicants had committed to a pre-med path while still in early high school. Cultural capital, social capital, and economic capital each play a huge role in the success of some students over others in receiving an offer of admission.

The initial decision of pursuing medicine, however, has more to do with habitus. Data collected by Simmenroth-Nayda and Görlich (2015) found that 44 percent of applicants to a particular German medical program were the children of at least one physician parent. The same study reviewed available literature in other countries and found this result was not atypical, with the most similar study coming from Australia, in which 57 percent of medical school applicants had at least one physician parent.

Medical doctors make up a small percentage of the working adult population. Data from the World Bank (2022) lists the number of doctors per 1,000 people as 4.3 in Germany and 3.8 in Australia in 2018, numbers that are likely to be stable over time. We would need to revise these numbers upward slightly to calculate the rate of doctors as a percentage of the actual working population, but if we make a low-end estimate that at least one-third of each country's population comprises working adults, that still amounts to only slightly over one percent of each generation of workers being in the medical profession, and suggests that the children of physicians are conservatively 30-50 times more likely to pursue the same career than other children.

This does not mean the other half of medical school applicants represent a meaningful cross-section of the rest of society. Simmenroth-Nayda and Görlich (2015) cite previous data showing that between 65 and 74 percent of applicants have parents with university degrees, inclusive of but not limited to those with medical degrees. Children of more educated parents from all academic backgrounds are generally overrepresented in medical school admissions, though not to the same extreme as the actual children of physicians.

Khan, Apramian, and Kang (2020) explore the same lack of diversity in Canadian medical schools. While they note that this data is more difficult to come by in Canada, the information that they have been able to gather suggests that our medical program student demographics are likewise highly disproportionate to the general Canadian population, both socioeconomically and racially.

It is worth noting that Simmenroth-Nayda and Görlich's (2015) study did not find applicants with one or two physician parents to be stronger candidates compared to applicants without, nor did they find that the admissions process specifically advantaged or privileged those students. But since the demographic group of physicians' children is so highly overrepresented in

the applicant pool, the ranks of working physicians likewise cannot help but to also overrepresent dynasty professionals of this kind.

To be sure, working-class and lower-middle-class families do sometimes see their children apply to, earn admission to, and complete medical school. But children from upper-middle-class families, especially where one or both parents are physicians, are several thousand percent more likely to even attempt doing so. This suggests that a person's family background strongly influences the sorts of things they believe they are capable of and the available choices and possible futures they envision and seriously consider. To wit, our choices are not entirely free as our own habitus highly influences the way most of us see the world and the possibilities for us in it and of course, the effects are felt across generations.

There is certainly a question of where the expectations and perceptions that make up habitus end and where the learned behaviours and attitudes that make up much of cultural capital begin. They are learned together and similarly impact the way individuals approach and navigate a field and, consequently, the level of success they both pursue and achieve within that field.

When you put it all together, the difference between families that possess low or high quantities of economic, social, educational, and cultural capital along with the attendant types of habitus, can be very stark. Because these may manifest in subtle ways, from setting less ambitious goals (habitus) to being less strategic in working the system (cultural capital), much of the continued success of individuals from privileged families may seem, at a glance, to be a matter of personal choice and behaviour and, therefore, not only inevitable but fair.

Conversely, Bourdieu's description of habitus as both a structured and structuring mechanism implies that it, like the field itself, may be powerfully influential, but it is not immutable.

The Ideals and the Realities of School Systems as Fields

Even a cursory survey of priority goals, vision statements, and professional reports shows that educational stakeholders both value equity and hold themselves responsible for achieving it. Here are two brief representative samples from large suburban school divisions in Winnipeg: "Seven Oaks School Division realizes its goal of equity by truly grasping its mission and by creating policies, providing services, eliminating barriers and building community," (Seven Oaks School Division, 2014); "(e)veryone is unique and can achieve individual success," (River East Transcona School Division, 2016).

These are the beliefs that educational organizations, like school divisions, generally espouse, as well as nearly every educator with whom I have discussed this topic. But do our *actions* actually match our *words*? Are we in general agreement as to what we mean by equity? Are we in agreement about how to achieve it? As Davies and Guppy (2014) so insightfully put it, we need to "seek not just what schools may *profess* to do, but what they *actually* do" (p. 5).

A failure to understand school systems from a sociological perspective is key here. Policies which are put into place for some other purpose that do not account for the differential effects of phenomena like habitus and capital can have unintended consequences. For example, Leithwood and Earl (2000) describe the opening-up of school division borders as a neo-liberal market-forces approach to improving schooling. The stated rationale for this policy is that families can easily abandon poor-performing schools, making the system, therefore, directly accountable to students.

But not all families have the same access to this kind of choice, particularly families with a single working parent who may lack the time and money to take a child to a school out of their catchment area on a daily basis. If school migration in practice is limited primarily to higher-

income students, then mixed-neighbourhood schools, if they survive at all, will become less diverse. Since student enrollment typically affects funding, poorer families left behind will feel isolated and abandoned in a now impoverished school.

Alternatively, since only children from higher-income families are in danger of leaving, schools will have an incentive to focus more on the needs of high-income rather than low-income students. Therefore, a policy that is purportedly meant to improve schooling for all students could in fact lead to schools pulling resources from the poorest students and exacerbating an already growing inequity.

The disproportionate power of higher-income, mostly white parents who had only recently enrolled their children in one racially and socioeconomically mixed public school in Brooklyn was described in a multi-part investigative journalism series (Joffe-Walt, 2020). This power manifested in several ways: the creation of two competing and racially segregated parent groups; a French language program negotiated by and for the white parents; and a belief among the white children that the school, once failing, was now rapidly improving due to their own arrival.

Bourdieu (1984) notes that, “Once one takes account of the structure of total assets…one has the means of making more precise divisions and also of observing the specific effects of the structure of distribution between the different kinds of capital” (p. 115). Understanding not only the direct effect of economic capital but that of other types of capital that different families are able to bring to bear is key to understanding who will truly benefit from current or proposed structures that schools may have in place.

Field closely interacts with habitus and capital here, especially cultural capital, as it is the field that determines which behaviours, attitudes, status markers, and knowledge have value. The

field of a school may value such behaviours as respect, curiosity, and kindness, and be of benefit to students by encouraging the development of those behaviours. It could also value subtler things like certain speech patterns—as with Bernstein's (1971) research on the advantages of code-switching by those navigating higher social classes—communication approaches ("speak up, make eye contact!"), styles of dress ("what a clean-cut, well-dressed young man!"), and shared cultural knowledge found in some student demographics more than others.

Given that teachers and administrators play a major role in determining what is valued in their particular field, perceptive parents will pick up on these cues as they equip their children with specific kinds of cultural capital that match what is valued. Some of the beliefs of staff members which become part of the field—and are used to value or devalue certain student behaviours, attitudes, and qualities—are unconscious. If schools are to accomplish the equitable ends that they espouse, both conscious and unconscious value beliefs need to be examined and their continuation considered on a regular basis.

Having discussed Bourdieu's (1984) major concepts—fields, habitus, and non-economic forms of capital—I next discuss the intersections and areas of complementarity between Bourdieusian thinking and Toews' (2018) framework of racial capitalism for understanding our settler colonial society.

The Social Reproduction Thesis and Racial Capitalism

Toews's (2018) Marx-derived critique matches with Bourdieu's (1984) social reproduction thesis because the latter, too, is an extension of a Marxist critique of capitalist systems. The former expands Marxist ideas to a racial and settler-colonial context while the latter expands Marxist ideas to include non-monetary types of capital for a fuller picture of how power

is entrenched. But these theoretical pedigrees are not the only area of consonance as both theories importantly describe not only how inequity is maintained, but how it is rationalized.

Toews noted that the "unwavering support [by the] left-leaning NDP government [for CentreVenture]…is an impressive achievement" (2018, p. 283). Indeed, it is rhetorically impressive to convince a political party with labour and social welfare roots to go along with massive transfers of public funds to corporations and billionaires on the basis of neo-liberal talking points. But this is also a very well-practiced narrative.

This narrative is implicit to social systems—that is, Bourdieusian fields—and schools may be one of the most critical examples of this, given how much of our thinking is shaped during our student years. Certain kinds of knowledge, markers, and behaviours are treated as capital within the field, which is to say, they are imbued with value. If schools simply read each parent's tax statement and assigned student grades on this basis, the narrative would be shattered, but when a child of privilege is successful on the basis of their wealth of non-economic capital, the story of equal opportunity and social mobility can be maintained, since this is something that is ostensibly available to everyone.

Bourdieu's (1984) social reproduction thesis was clear that privilege is passed on from generation to generation, not earned anew. Even though the value assigned to various kinds of capital is an artifact of a field designed by and for the elite, many deficit theorists have framed cultural capital as an objective measure of merit, thereby justifying the poor educational and economic outcomes of low-income children, children of colour, and Indigenous children. One neo-Bourdieusian, Gonzales (2012) has remarked that, "[Bourdieu took pains to show] how schooling is drenched in institutional biases that serve the…elite in society. [Yet this was] co-

opted by deficit theorists to explain why some groups in society are more equipped with cultural capital to succeed academically and why other groups should attempt to mimic [them]" (p. 126).

In fact, this is quite instructive: deficit theoretical approaches pre-date Bourdieu's work, on both the ideological left as well as the right, and are part of an ongoing narrative discourse used to explain, excuse, and ultimately maintain inequity. In the American context, Banks (1993) describes the 1960s cultural deprivation theory belief "that the school must help low-income students to overcome the deficits that result from their early family and community" as "the most enlightened and liberal theory about educating low-income populations of the day" (p. 29). And it is true that this approach decoupled poverty from race, de-essentialized and de-pathologized both race and poverty, broke with scientific racism, and advocated for improved resources. However, it was still problematic since it failed to look critically at systems of oppression, placing the burden of adaptation entirely on the victims of structural oppression.

Deficit theory also played a role in the settler-colonial dispossession of these lands. As Toews (2018) notes, a shift from racial absolutism to "an ideology of assimilation that blamed Indigenous Peoples' circumstances on cultural inferiority and aimed to lift them up the racial hierarchy to the level of white settlers" (p. 65), was the main driver behind the creation of Indian residential schools more than a century ago. As reconciliation for the harm done by those same schools becomes the watchword in all parts of the political discourse, Toews argues that the racial uplift project "continues to this day as 'cultural heritage' is replaced by 'colonial trauma' as the primary force supposedly preventing Indigenous Peoples from obtaining acceptable standards of living in the city" (p. 310), rather than actively ongoing structural racism.

Bourdieu's framework is quick to point out what deficit theorists—whether concerned with racial uplift, cultural deprivation, or cultures of poverty (see Toews, 2018, p. 130;

Gonzales, 2012, p. 126) miss. Capital—cultural, social, or otherwise—does not necessarily have objective value outside of the field. It is a socially constructed currency which serves the interests of the dominant group, as part of a mechanism to reproduce social hierarchies from one generation to the next. But it is also a mechanism by which the elite rationalize and naturalize their privilege. And this is where racial capitalism and Bourdieusian/neo-Bourdieusian analyses most clearly overlap.

Throughout his book, Toews (2018) describes how racial capitalist logics not only facilitate but also naturalize a massive upward transfer of wealth by way of the meritocracy myth. In the face of tremendous social inequalities, this myth shifts attention from those who are accumulating wealth at an alarming rate to the dispossessed, who are framed as dragging society down in various, sometimes nebulous ways.

The free-market meritocracy myth is only the latest argument for structural racism, although it has been an effective one. Toews (2018) writes that, "(r)acism naturalizes the socially manufactured attacks and inequalities that capitalism requires, making them seem proper, inevitable, and just…while capitalist structures are not solely responsible for racism in our society, neither are they passive inheritors of it, as if racism was simply human nature" (p. 18).

What naturalistic arguments from divine right to genetic superiority to neo-liberal capitalist logics have in common is preventing white settlers from allying with their Indigenous class equals rather than with white capitalists. "Even as [capitalists] exploited [newly arrived white agricultural workers] in myriad ways, this racial solidarity—combined with the physical segregation of apartheid—kept the new agricultural workers from aligning with those who had proposed alternative economic agendas that would have benefited them more in the long run" (Toews, 2018, p. 66).

These working-class white settlers did not consciously support this system on the basis of being placed just above the lowest rung of the socioeconomic ladder. They were motivated by a narrative advanced by elite capitalists which overstated the opportunity for white upward mobility, and which framed Indigenous Peoples as simply lacking what was needed to succeed. Poor white settlers had to be convinced of the inherent fairness of the distribution of resources, and that their best opportunity to improve their lot in life was to work hard in the capitalist system rather than challenge it.[9]

Toews's (2018) critical point as he traces different explanations for Indigenous impoverishment (p. 310) is that each approach still situates the problem within Indigenous Peoples themselves. From genetic inferiority to colonial trauma, each updated narrative has shielded from criticism the settler-colonial system in which we all live. Deficit theories of Indigenous Peoples, joined with capitalist logics that obscure and conflate meanings of ownership, investment, and development, create a broader discourse.

This discourse suggests the massive transfer of wealth from Indigenous Peoples, from public assets, and from working-class people to already wealthy settler capitalists should be seen not as an unrelenting upward distribution and concentration of resources, not as theft of land, and not as yet more displacement of Indigenous and low-income people. Instead, it argues that this wealth transfer be seen, bizarrely, as an act of philanthropy—a gift of the beneficent to the rest of us. Our only reasonable response: shout out the patriotic name of a limited liability corporation in tribute to our betters at expensive hockey games[10] (Kives, 2020; Nelund, 2014).

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[9] Indigenous Peoples, who were largely socially isolated in reserves or road allowance communities from the late 1870s until the 1960s were also largely represented as a cautionary tale in daily discourse and media and unable to provide a counter-narrative since they were not physically present and had no access to channels of mass communication during this period. This apartheid therefore also supported the interests of the elite white capitalists.

[10] Shouting out "True North" during the Canadian national anthem at NHL games in Winnipeg's arena became a tradition when the team franchise was restored to the city after a long absence. It is a tribute to Winnipeg Jets

Toews (2018) describes the history of the city of Winnipeg, the province of Manitoba, and the Red River community that predated both, breaking it down to a series of distinct periods of our region. These periods range from pre-confederation to the export agriculture period starting in the 1870s to industrialization starting around the turn of the 20th century to suburbanization in the 1950s to city centre redevelopment which began in the 1990s. While these periods are distinct, he demonstrates that each has served as one chapter of a single long running settler-colonial project. Through each of these periods, active steps were taken to dispossess Indigenous Peoples of land and wealth while enriching essentially one group of individuals, the "Dominant Bloc", those Anglo-Saxon Christian capitalists who began manoeuvring to place themselves at the top of the pyramid from the moment the province of Manitoba was formed.

The author notes that while the specific strategies used during these different periods differed, the broad plan, to use a specific kind of racism, racial capitalism, as a tool to separate Indigenous Peoples from their land and working people from their labour[11], has stayed the same. The development of high-priced condos on Waterfront Drive and the redevelopment of Portage Avenue around the profit needs of specific hotel and sports franchise owners are, in this framing, new iterations of the same basic process that first displaced the First Nations and Métis peoples from the Red River settlement via land speculation in the wake of the Manitoba Act, the numbered treaties, and the Indian Act in the 1870s.

Hockey Club and True North Sports + Entertainment owners, the billionaire Chipman family, but a tribute in which patriotism and capitalism and (the perception of) philanthropy seem to melt confusingly together.

[11] Many of these working people through Manitoba's history, while white according to current Canadian norms, were racialized as non-white at one time. Toews (2018) notes that Sifton's goal of outnumbering Indigenous people by swamping Manitoba with European settlers earned him considerable criticism in both Manitoba's legislature and the Brandon Sun when, in 1899, a shortage of willing WASP immigrants necessitated accepting an inflow of thousands of Slavic immigrants that his class fellows found undesirable (p. 77). It is one good regional example of how the socially constructed concept of whiteness has changed over time and has served repeatedly as a tool of exclusion or oppression.

There is one area of apparent dissonance between Toews's (2018) racial capitalist framework and Bourdieu's (1984) social reproduction thesis and that is that the latter does not explicitly address race. The final section of the literature review examines some of the reasons for this as well as the work of several important neo-Bourdieusians (Cui, 2015; Gonzales, 2012; Wallace, 2018) and those responding to Bourdieu (most critically Yosso, 2015) in adapting Bourdieusian thinking to racially diverse contexts.

Bourdieusian Approaches to Racial Inequity

Davies and Guppy (2014) describe the competing roles that schools play in society: *socialization* (learning the shared values of society and how to be a good citizen), *selection* (the sorting of students into stratified social classes, supposedly on a meritocratic basis), and *organization* (the learning of specific job-related skills needed by employers/industry) (pp. 5-7).

It is the sorting role that is the biggest sticking point here. Metz (1989) posits that if we actually managed to help every student achieve academic excellence, if literally every student earned an "A", then universities would run out of space, low-paying but highly necessary unskilled labour jobs would be impossible to fill, and chaos would ensue. She concludes that "[a]s long as education is used to rank young people and sort them into occupational futures that differ substantially in the money, status, power, and intrinsic rewards they can yield, good education, or students' success at education, must remain a scarce commodity" (p. 85).

There are reasons to doubt this doom-saying. For one thing, with perfect equity we are still likely to see a normal distribution on measures of every kind of skill, merely one that is less socioeconomically and racially segregated. For another, history shows that the total amount of pain and misery in the world is not a universal constant, that average wealth, health, and happiness can and does increase, and that human society is not a zero-sum game.

Metz (1989) is correct in pointing out that economically and culturally, there is currently a professional hierarchy, wherein not all jobs are as valued as they could be. This hierarchy includes racial and other divisions[12]. It is a complex issue, and a more equitable educational system will not be able to change that entirely on its own. But if we take that first step, then the *products* of a more equitable education system—adult citizens who apply critical thinking and social justice principles to their politics—just might be able to do so.

These big picture questions hinge on whether one can reasonably apply Bourdieusian thinking to a very different, less homogenous society than Bourdieu (1984) had studied in France, including inequity along non-socioeconomic dimensions like race. More specifically, what does Bourdieu look like through the lenses of anti-colonialism and Critical Race Theory in the Canadian historical and political context?

In this country, as discussed earlier in this and the previous chapter, residential schools were the product of an unquestionably racist and destructive educational initiative which made a blanket decision that Indigenous students would be better off if they let go of everything related

[12] Since this line was first written, the 2020 worldwide pandemic caused by COVID-19 forced a conversation about this hierarchy, as many workers traditionally valued the least, as measured by hourly pay, including grocery store retail workers, farm workers, and delivery drivers, were correctly identified by governments as *essential* and continued to work while many operations employing highly paid individuals temporarily ceased or slowed their work during quarantines. In Canada, temporary boosts in pandemic pay for grocery store workers to recognize the increased risk of this critical work were dropped after a few months to great protest. These more specific employee-employer clashes have comprised a larger public debate about how fairly the labour market has differentially assigned value to workers, with some of those who have historically received very high compensation aiming to restore the status quo and those who have been exploited (and their allies) pushing to move beyond it.

There are racial as well as gender components to income inequity. Representing both trends is the fact that non-white women experience, on average, the highest rates of unemployment and the lowest rates of pay overall in the entirety of the Canadian labour market, just over half of what white men experience on average (see Block and Galabuzi, 2011, pp. 3-5). This is in part because non-white women are overrepresented in precarious and low-valued types of work while white men (and to a lesser extent, white women and non-white men) are more likely to have higher rates of pay and are less frequently laid off. But this raises the question of whether non-white women seek out precarious low-paying jobs or whether jobs become this way due to gender and racial discrimination of the workers who have historically held them. Block and Galabuzi (2011) conclude that discrimination *is* a contributing factor hurting racialized workers as well as women workers in the Canadian labour market (p. 17), a problem the pandemic has made more visible.

to their heritage. "Kill the Indian, save the child," was the mantra of the day[13]. We could argue that much of what was killed was truly valuable cultural capital that is slowly being rebuilt in those communities, much as Bourdieu observed the cultural destruction that French colonialism had wrought on the Algerians (English & Bolton, 2015, p. 5). But is a Bourdieusian analysis really useful when applied to structural racism and settler colonialism? The next part of this literature review focuses on answering this question.

Bourdieusian Theories of Capital in a Racially Diverse Canadian Context

Bourdieu (1984) broadened the Marxist idea of class and power dynamics flowing from economic capital by theorizing and then measuring various invisible types of non-monetary capital. He posited that all types of capital interact with fields and habitus in subtle ways to maintain class divides and income and wealth disparity across generations.

The question of whether this type of analysis is or can be useful in understanding inequity within our racially diverse population and settler-colonial environment is one that the sociologist himself, of course, never explicitly addressed. However, more recently, sociologists such as Wallace (2018) and critical race theorists like Yosso (2005) have taken it up.

In the remainder of this chapter, I review the literature in support of the argument that Bourdieu's ideas, with adaptations, can and do provide insight into the mechanisms of social inequity within populations that are not only socioeconomically but also racially diverse. I raise some of the limitations as well as many of the misuses of Bourdieusian thinking, and then

[13] The original version of this quote, "Kill the Indian in him, and save the man", comes from a speech given by American military officer and pioneer in American Indian residential schools, Captain Richard H. Pratt, in an 1892 speech at George Mason University (Pratt, 1892). In Canada, Duncan Campbell Scott of the federal Department of Indian Affairs took a similar approach. Scott considered Indigenous Peoples noble but doomed, and devoted his life to what he called "the Indian problem", stating before a 1920 Indian Act amendment that "Our object 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, that is the whole object of this Bill" (Scott, 1920). Pratt's quote is sometimes incorrectly attributed to Scott, who is not on the record as phrasing it that way, likely as a result of Scott's greater historical prominence and that the quote is in fact representative of his goals and approach.

discuss various extensions, modifications, and adaptations that theorists have suggested in order to tackle systemic classism and racism together.

Bourdieu's (1984) original survey data measured cultural capital by means of quizzing respondents on markers of high-status culture (frequency of museum visits, the number of classical composers they knew, etc.). Tzanakis (2011) argued against a literal interpretation of Bourdieu's social reproduction thesis based on empirical studies in the United States and the United Kingdom that failed to demonstrate a strong causal link between specific high-status knowledge and educational outcomes when controlling for factors like socioeconomic status.

However, there are weaknesses to this critique. The first is a failure to recognize that Bourdieu (1984) treated markers like knowledge of classical music and reading habits as more of a proxy (one unique to the context of France in the late 1960s) for a broader base of behaviours and skills in interacting and working within a system. Controlling for socioeconomic status, to a certain extent, misses the point. A closer reading suggests that Lareau's (2003) definition of cultural capital as "institutionalized status signals used for social and cultural exclusion" (Lamont & Lareau, 1988, p. 156) did not really add to the original concept so much as make its meaning more explicit.

Tzanakis (2011) acknowledges Lareau's (2003) research (if not her longstanding definition) on the unmatched social profit that middle-class families gain for their children through school relationships relative to working-class families. But he argues that schools are not complicit in reinforcing this, as they at least provide an opportunity to gain the behaviours and academic skills middle-class kids learn at home.

This, too, is a strange argument. Bourdieu pointed out that schools are more effective at inculcating cultural capital in those students who are already from advantaged backgrounds

(Bourdieu, 1984, p. 13) and Tzanakis (2011), rather than disputing this, plays a semantic game of whether schools are actively maintaining inequity versus doing little to combat it. That said, the fuzziness of many interpretations of Bourdieusian concepts is a valid concern raised by this critique, and later reinterpretations have sometimes had the same problem. Devine-Eller (2005), too, among other critiques to be taken up in the next section, noted how frequently habitus and cultural capital are misused or equated by those responding to Bourdieu (1984).

The Limitations of Bourdieu's and Lareau's Work on Race

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, despite their neo-Marxist pedigree, Bourdieu's (1984) ideas have been taken up by neo-liberal political actors and educational commentators drawing on a deficit view of children living in poverty as well as children of colour, something Gonzales (2012) criticized.

As Banks (1993) notes, deficit approaches in something much like their modern form date back to at least the 1960s, with cultural deprivation theory. When Tinto (1987) published research on post-secondary attrition in which he argued for minorities to disconnect from their culture in order to embrace the positive school culture of high expectations and academic competence, Bourdieu's (1984) terminology, if not his ideology, was incorporated.

Within the field of working educators, Gonzales (2012) notes that deficit approaches have been largely spread by people like Ruby Payne (2009) who works as a professional development provider for teachers working in low-income American communities. Payne's workbooks portray a litany of horrific stereotypes. They state that poor students know how to "locate grocery stores' garbage bins that have thrown-away food, bail someone out of jail, get a gun, even if [one] has a record…" (Payne, 2009, quoted in Gonzales, 2012, p. 126).

As with Tinto (1987), the case that Payne (2009) makes is that impoverished cultures need to be disregarded and valuable cultural capital needs to be pumped into marginalized students to give them a chance at saving themselves. Gonzales's (2012) research, discussed in the next section, is a direct rebuke of them both.

The intellectual and moral errors of deficit thinkers are their own, but it is true that Bourdieu's (1984) original work has limited direct application to heterogeneous contexts since he failed to take up race explicitly. Nor did Lareau (2003) in her most famous study, despite the book's title being *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life.* While both black and white families made up her study participants, what Lareau concluded is that concerted cultivation is similarly used by higher-income and high-cultural-capital families, whether black or white.

Before addressing how these theorists perhaps could have or should have considered race, or how others might do so, there are both theoretical and practical reasons to want to incorporate race in the first place. Critical Race Theory aims to understand racial inequity in terms of social structures, including the law and the mores of groups (see Crenshaw, 1989 and Collins, 1986, respectively for examples of these; see Ladson-Billings, 1998 as well as Yosso, 2005 for broader overviews). Bourdieu (1984) and Lareau (2003) aim to understand class inequity in terms of social structures, including educational policy and social norms. Both theories are part of a critical tradition, which understands the expression and distribution of power between dominant and oppressed groups and assumes that the dominant group employs various means to maintain power over time. Both theories look at the current power structure in historical terms, a precedent set by Marx (1906).

There appears to be nothing incommensurable about the two approaches—Critical Race Theory does not claim that class differences do not exist, nor does neo-Marxism or sociological structuralism deny that racism exists—and there are good reasons to at least attempt to open a dialogue between the various theoretical approaches. Understanding inequity in a country like Canada is impossible if only class or race are considered, rather than both.

In fact, Wallace (2017) argues that Bourdieu was quite race-conscious. However, at the time of Bourdieu's (1984) research on capital, habitus, and fields there were political restrictions on the collection of ethnic data in French research. He wrote much about race in earlier and later works, including his first major study in colonial Algeria. He did, however, tend to prefer using the term 'caste' rather than race. Wallace (2017) argues that it is because Bourdieu disagreed with the essentialist way that race was then used, and as a result, many readers of Bourdieu have missed how race-conscious he truly was.

Wallace's argument is not absolutely necessary for my purposes, as even a race-blind Bourdieu might have developed a theory of social dominance and power that could potentially mesh well with other critical traditions. And a highly race-conscious Bourdieu might well have produced a highly contextualized framework that was less applicable to Canada's racial history. However, the fact that Bourdieu saw the parallels between race and class is still worth noting.

Lareau (2003) is a more curious case, since she did her work in the context of late 20th-century America with white and black families. She may have wanted to avoid muddying her results by considering what appeared to be insignificant racial effects overly finely, but as Devine-Eller (2005) points out, there are many obvious questions she made no attempt to answer within this study. For example, how might white and non-white parents be perceived differently when advocating for their children? How is the habitus of black parents affected by historical

racism and racism in their personal life experience? How might teachers' biases affect their perceptions of children's behaviour? Does concerted cultivation look any different in black versus white families?

Devine-Eller (2005) cites Reay's (1995) claim of both racialized and gendered habitus, and several other studies that suggest habitus and capital look and play out differently for people of colour. Lareau would certainly have had to drill down deeper to see whether the activation of cultural capital varies, perhaps subtly, based on the racial positioning of persons employing it.

But as Devine-Eller (2005) points out, Lareau has done this work before, when she theorized on the interactions of racism and class on school intervention efforts by black parents (Lareau and Horvat, 1999). In this smaller-scale study, the experiences of black parents and their children in the schools of an anonymized American Midwestern town were examined in terms of how they were able to activate cultural capital and how the white teachers and administrators they interacted with interpreted or valued this activation of cultural capital. What happened was that school staff tended to perceive the same actions by black parents or children as combative, non-deferential, and difficult.

The authors argued that the obvious racism they observed (which the teachers themselves denied) could be conceptualized as "[whiteness] as a cultural resource that white parents unwittingly draw on…[and] in contrast, blacks do not have…available to them" (p. 42). In other words, simply being white, in this context, was an example of cultural capital.

This is, as the authors themselves admit, somewhat of an awkward use of the concept of cultural capital, and it is unfortunate that Lareau did not spend time refining or expanding it in her later work, especially within her largest and most influential study (Lareau, 2003). But it

does at least anticipate some of the work done by those who would more directly tackle race in the coming years.

Important Theoretical Attempts to Incorporate Race

Lareau's (2003) work remains significant in applying class-focused Bourdieusian concepts, especially cultural capital, to the American context, but the major work to incorporate race has been left to others. One of the most influential theorists to do so is Yosso (2005) who starts explicitly from a critical race theory perspective. In the first section of her paper, she provides a brief history of critical race theory, briefly describing its theoretical progeny (including TribCrit, LatCrit, and AsianCrit) as well as its pedigree (pp. 71-75). She then situates Critical Race Theory more generally as a scholarly successor to Marxism and neo-Marxism, as well as other critical traditions focused on distributions of power, such as feminism.

Yosso (2005) introduces an idea in this paper that shows up again and again in the literature, the idea of various types of community capital from minority groups which may stand alongside what Wallace (2017) would later dub "dominant cultural capital" (p. 912). In the process, Yosso calls out not Bourdieu himself, but certain "traditional interpretations of Bourdieuean [sic] cultural capital theory" (2005, p. 70). She criticizes the many (unnamed) people who have applied deficit views couched in Bourdieusian language to explain racial inequity in schooling. To counter such deficit views, Yosso lists six kinds of "community cultural wealth" available to racial minorities in a white-dominated system: aspirational capital, linguistic capital, familial capital, social capital, navigational capital, and resistant capital. She places all six under a larger heading of community cultural wealth.

Aspirational capital is described as "the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (p. 77). She notes that this resiliency has

been long observed in Latinx families and communities (but it is not exclusive to them), where studies show aspirations for their children remain high in Latinx parents relative to their own low educational outcomes. The apparent decoupling of present circumstances from future aspirations, an unwillingness to give up, is what Yosso refers to as aspirational capital.

Linguistic capital, which applies to many, though not all Indigenous communities, refers not only to the most direct advantages of being multilingual, but "the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style" (Yosso, 2005, p. 78) and that "repertoire of storytelling skills [which] may include memorization, attention to detail, dramatic pauses…bilingual children who are often called upon to translate for their parents or other adults…gain multiple social tools" (p. 79). In other words, members of minority communities with a connection to a heritage language and culture often have a broader intellectual view.

Yosso (2005) defines familial capital as "cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition". She notes that "*pedagogies of the home* that Students of Color bring with them to the classroom setting" (p. 79) are included within this type of wealth.

Social capital has a similar meaning here to the traditional Bourdieusian interpretation but Yosso (2005) identifies a racialized form of it, in which members of racial minorities draw on their larger racial or ethnic community to find connections or support within a system that, as a whole, may be less likely to value their perspectives, experiences, and skills. To put it another way, individual members of a racial minority community who have moved into positions of influence within fields may look out for members of their own group while members of the white majority might unconsciously default to favouring those who are most like them. So those who

have previously blazed a trail play a role in making a certain amount of social capital available to other members of an excluded group.

"Navigational capital refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions…not created with Communities of Color in mind…it also connects to social networks that facilitate community navigation through places and spaces including schools" (Yosso, 2015, p. 80). To put it another way, navigational capital is the skill of racial minorities working within hostile and racist systems. It might include comparatively subtle considerations, such as how to interact with a bureaucrat so that they are inclined to be helpful rather than hostile, but it also suggests more extreme scenarios, such as how to interact with law enforcement without becoming the victim of violence.

Lastly, Yosso (2005) defines resistant capital as "the knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality" (p. 80). She includes several examples, including the acts to resist racism and maintain dignity carried out by Japanese Americans placed in internment camps by the United States government during the Second World War (the Canadian government did the same thing to Japanese Canadians), as well as African American mothers teaching their daughters to resist anti-Black societal messages. Summing up the concept, Yosso (2005) notes that people of colour not only motivate their children to resist the status quo and fight for justice but also teach the skills and knowledge to do so effectively, combining "cultural knowledge of the structures of racism and motivation to transform such oppressive structures" (p. 80).

Devine-Eller (2005) has warned that the over-proliferation of types of cultural capital threatens to stretch the concept to meaninglessness. Capital, in a Bourdieusian sense, must lead to some advantage in the field. But I think that most of Yosso's (2005) new types of capital meet

that requirement. They could be categorized differently, as there seems to be overlap between some of the broader categorizations, especially familial, navigational, and resistant capital. But critically, Yosso establishes the idea of a racialized capital very well here, and provides an important foundation for later work, particularly that written by Gonzales (2012).

Gonzales draws on both Bourdieusian and critical race theory perspectives and interweaves them seamlessly. Her research data comes from interviews with 13 Latina academics at a United States university. In direct opposition to Tinto's (1987) aforementioned argument that minority students leave behind their culture in order to succeed in the dominant one, Gonzales found that the women in her study credited primarily their families and cultures for their success. She draws on Yosso's (2005) notion of community cultural wealth and argues that it interacts with the field in a different way than the dominant cultural capital that members of the dominant group rely on exclusively.

The most important type of wealth in Gonzales's (2012) study is familial capital given that the participants in her study, all employed PhDs, repeatedly cite the idea that education was always considered a family goal and responsibility. This meant their parents had done everything from working multiple jobs to allow their children to study and driving an hour each way to take their children to school, to enforcing quiet time on younger siblings to ensure a good study environment. The participants explained that they felt a responsibility to succeed after their families had given up so much.

Gonzales (2012) also proposes a fascinating counterpoint to the critical race theory concept of 'microaggressions' which she calls "micro-advantages" (p. 137). She defines these as the small moments of successfully activating and leveraging one's unique community cultural wealth in a way that has a positive and cumulative effect over time. This, too, is much in line

with the ethos of Yosso (2005), an emphasis on the unique *advantages* that minority groups can leverage, not just the disadvantages that we tend to hear so much about.

Cui (2015) takes a different tack, interviewing Chinese-Canadian students from both rural and urban communities in Alberta who are stereotyped as 'model minorities', a social construct described in critical race theory. Cui defines model minorities as "hardworking educational achievers [that are] socially and politically passive, silent, and, obedient" (p. 1154).

The model minority stereotype brings to mind an observation by Bourdieu (1984) about asymmetrical cases, specifically teachers, whom he described as having high cultural capital relative to their incomes (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 115). The model minority stereotype that Cui (2015) presents in the context of his study of Chinese-Canadian students might also seem to be one of these cases at first glance, since the participants he interviewed do not necessarily come from affluent families but do seem to have the kind of dominant cultural capital valued in the Bourdieusian field of Alberta public schools.

But there is more to this story than the capital at play. As a group, model minorities are not simply accepted as full-fledged members of the majority culture, they continue to be racialized to their own detriment and to the detriment of other minority groups. Lee (2015), an expert in Asian American studies and North American history sums up the issue:

> Asian Americans are now the poster children of American success and are sometimes even called "honorary whites". But this portrait is misleading. It masks persistent inequalities and disparities among Asian Americans and relies on a new and divisive language of racism. (pp. 373-374)

Lee argues that that this racism is exemplified in the news coverage of the events of April 29, 1992, known as the LA riots. This was a day of unrest sparked by the acquittal of the four on-

duty police officers who had been videotaped brutalizing Rodney King, an African American motorist whom they had pulled over. One aspect of the damage done included the destruction of over 2000 Korean American businesses, which media outlets emphasized. Lee describes why the media narrative that was shaped was dishonest and racist:

> Despite the fact that participants in the demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience, rioting, and looting were white, black, Latino, and Asian, mainstream media describes the events as a clash of black-Korean cultures. African Americans living in South Central Los Angeles were portrayed as unproductive citizens and welfare recipients who resented the growing economic presence of Korean Americans in their neighborhoods. In contrast, Korean American shopkeepers were portrayed as hardworking immigrants trying to achieve the American Dream…Such media coverage pitted African Americans against Korean Americans while ignoring the larger structural inequalities that helped to create the conditions for the Los Angeles riots. (p. 375)

The model minority stereotype, like the myth of meritocracy discussed previously, is another example of narrative discourse that serves the ends of the dominant ethno-class; both narratives promote the supposed fairness of an inherently unfair system, and both aim to sow discord between oppressed groups who would be better served allying themselves together.

The model minority stereotype is also used in the school system particularly in service of a deficit narrative. The apparent success of model minorities bolsters the argument that other minorities simply need to discard their low-quality culture and adopt a superior one in order to succeed as they have. Cui's (2015) research shows not only how this belief misses the mark but how damaging it can be to those whom the stereotype is thrust upon.

The results of this study make the case about as clearly as it can be made that race, or rather racism, still matters, noting that "racialized minority youth may still regard themselves as outsiders even if they are educationally successful and economically included" (Cui, 2015, p. 1155). As a case in point, even with high cultural capital, nearly one-third of Chinese Canadians experience racial discrimination. We have seen this is sometimes exacerbated by world events in which Chinese Canadians are unfairly associated with the actions of the Chinese government.

Cui's (2015) interest then is the effect this has on habitus. Do Chinese Canadians bring to the field a similar set of behaviours and a similar lens on the world compared to white Canadians? Not at all. The societal expectations and stereotypes around what it means to be Chinese affect the way his participants see the world and their place in it and affect their behaviour and life choices both consciously and unconsciously. Their habitus is racialized, and no matter how high their capital of all kinds is, Cui argues that racialized habitus, as a structured structure, "subjugates Chinese youth" (p. 1155). Some of his participants lean into stereotypes and some react against them. But all are affected by them, all are constrained by the mould of their own habitus, itself moulded by the expectations, mores, and assumptions of the field.

It seems reasonable to assume that all habitus is racialized in this way (as previously argued by Reay, 1995). Awareness of the racial group to which one belongs and the larger messaging around one's racial group and identity in society cannot help but affect a person's view of the world and their own place in it. Cui's (2015) concept of racialized habitus is likely to be useful in better understanding the experiences of any racialized group in Bourdieusian terms.

Two papers by Wallace (2017; 2018) draw on research conducted with youth of black Caribbean ancestry in London, U.K., who are of middle-class backgrounds. Wallace (2018)

coins the term "non-dominant cultural capital" to explain how black students' success in the school system and navigation of racism differ from middle-class white students' use of capital.

This appears to be the missing piece of Lareau's (2003) study. Wallace's approach is both deeply Bourdieusian and deeply race-conscious. He draws on Yosso (2005), Reay (1995), and Reay et al (2007), along with much of Bourdieu's corpus beyond *Distinction* (1984), in analyzing the behaviours and skills that middle-class black students use to succeed in a white-dominated institution. Wallace (2018) argues that these students have learned to combine dominant and non-dominant cultural capital and to be strategic and intentional in when to use each.

Wallace argues that cultural capital as Bourdieu conceptualized it "does not possess an inherent ethno-racial character…[but it is] a class resource that is unequally distributed across social fields" (Wallace, 2018, p. 468). The students he interviewed have a deep understanding of the field they are navigating and explain in detail how they do it, for example, when dealing with teacher assumptions. "Don't call them racists. If you do they will become your enemy. What I do is tell them about the books I have by Garvey or Giovanni, the places I've been to, the university I want to go to…It pushes them to think differently about young Black people" (p. 476).

Or "(y)ou don't have to imitate white people to get ahead…For me, being Black is about knowing Shakespeare, yeah 'cause you have to, but also knowing Sam Selvon, Chinua Achebe … my brother tell[s] me…that would be good in an Oxbridge interview" (pp. 476-477). Again, this is all very intentional. These students have learned from their parents and their own experiences that they can push back against racism, if first they trade on their dominant middle-class knowledge in order to be taken seriously by the school and their teachers. From here, they share advanced non-white cultural knowledge to reaffirm their own ethno-racial identities and

push for their mostly white teachers to expand their own views of what constitutes *high culture*. Yosso (2005) defines *navigational capital* as the ability to skillfully manoeuvre through a sometimes-hostile dominant system and *resistant capital* as the ability to strategically challenge inequality, and the approaches laid out in this study certainly demonstrate an abundance of both types of cultural wealth.

Wallace (2018) favours folding resistant and navigational capital into the category he dubs *non-dominant cultural capital*, finding Yosso's conceptualizations insufficiently Bourdieusian. He does a good job filling in the gaps, specifying how aspects of Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth interact with habitus and field where she neglected to do so. Regardless of the terms used, both authors agree there are significant skills that minority communities have developed to work within the systems of an oftentimes hostile dominant culture. Wallace (2018) does a better job, however, when it comes to understanding two things: 1) how minority students use dominant and non-dominant cultural capital together; and 2) how the field may be reshaped by intentional interactions of minority students within it.

Cui (2015, p. 1157) references a paper by Zhou (1997) which proposes a segmented assimilation model that specifically applies to immigrants of colour. There are three possible outcomes: 1) become "white-washed" and assimilate into the white middle class; 2) assimilate into the oppositional culture and (largely non-white) underclass in the inner city; and 3) achieve socioeconomic mobility while deliberately maintaining ethnic values and solidarity (albeit still with some social exclusion).

The families interviewed in studies done by Cui (2015), Wallace (2017; 2018), and Gonzales (2012) have all chosen that difficult third path which involves a constant tension and re-negotiation of race and class. Cui (2015) asks whether this is a good thing, or if Chinese

Canadians reinforce a white supremacist hierarchy even as they navigate it. His criticism of the lateral violence of Canadian-born Chinese toward those "Fresh-Off-the-Boat" is a fair one, but it seems to me that this broader criticism is not.

Cui seems to be implying that successful navigation of the field necessarily reinforces it, but this neglects Bourdieu's (1984) understanding of the nature of both habitus and field, and their implied relationship to each other as structured and structuring structures. I consider this in the next section.

Implications for Race and Capital

Taking all of these studies into account, the question one might ask is where, from a Bourdieusian perspective, racism sits. The answer, at least in part, is that it sits in the field. The designation of one kind of capital being dominant is a property of field, the racialized lens by which behaviours of people of colour are interpreted differently is also a property of the field. Cui (2015) points out that a person's habitus can be affected by its field over time. He worries about reinforcing the field's structure, perhaps fearing that a racialized habitus might serve as a microcosm of all the oppressive assumptions and valuations of the field and serve to cause even the victims of a field's racist structures to exhibit beliefs and behaviours that reinforce them.

But as the field comprises just the shared norms and views of the dominant culture, surely habitus affects field just as field affects habitus—they are both, to once again paraphrase Bourdieu (1984), *structured* as well as *structuring* structures. The participants in Wallace's (2018) study seem quite deliberate about not only getting ahead in the existing social structure but changing it for the better. And indeed, they might be doing so.

An analogous argument has been made in the context of reconciliation, in a study where Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) determined that most Canadian universities are simply taking steps

toward inclusion, even when they use much stronger terms like reconciliation or decolonization. Although this sounds like an unalloyed criticism, the authors also agree that the simple inclusion of more Indigenous people in positions of power within the academy will in fact lead to more significant structural change over the long term.

In Bourdieusian terms, as the beliefs of people in power change and/or the representation of people from different backgrounds in positions of power shift, the field should shift, too. Given this, I do not see a strong case for criticizing a person of colour who navigates and succeeds in the existing power structure. The social benefits of inclusion, for the community they represent, and for society at large, surely outweigh any harms.

But the argument Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) make, to focus efforts on stronger and more deliberate challenges to structural racism, is a good one. We should not be limiting our efforts exclusively to helping Indigenous and other minority students navigate their way through oppressive structures on an individual level. It is also important to note that it is likely to be close to a generation before the corps of Canadian teachers approaches something that comes even close to proportionate racial representation[14], so structural changes in individual classrooms, schools, and divisions cannot be the job of only Indigenous and other non-white minorities.

Goldenberg's (2014) suggestion that today's white teachers and principals recognize their racial and institutional power, undergo training in anti-racism, and make changes to better leverage the non-dominant cultural capital of non-white students, may be one way to make

[14] The latest *State of Equity in Education Report* (Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle, 2021) cites a figure of 8.6% self-reported Indigenous teachers across Winnipeg's six school divisions. The report authors compare this not to the overall Winnipeg population demographics but rather to the population of K-12 students themselves, which was 16.9% Indigenous in the same school year. By this measurement the number of Indigenous teachers in Winnipeg-area schools is, according to the most recent data, about half what would be proportional to the students it serves.

institutional change independent of legislative or policy shifts, by focusing on altering teacher culture. My own research suggests other approaches that I discuss in the last chapter.

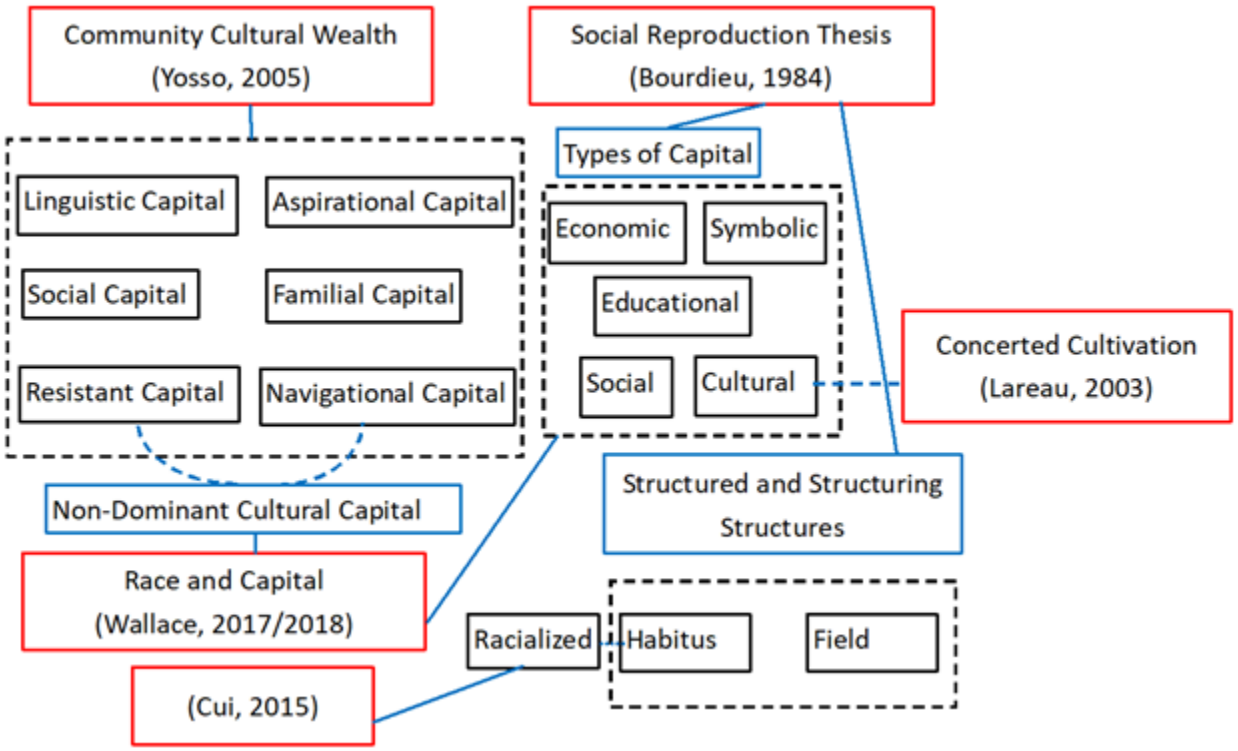
Whichever approaches one favours in pushing back against social injustice (individual, institutional, or societal), the works of Cui (2015), Goldenberg (2014), Gonzales (2012), Wallace (2018), Yosso (2005) and others demonstrate that Bourdieu's framework, with modifications and extensions, can provide much insight into how class and race intersect with power structures to maintain inequity. I am not suggesting that it is the only framework, but it has clearly demonstrated its applicability to be extended to diverse social contexts, and I am comfortable applying a race-conscious, neo-Bourdieusian framework to the problem at hand: an analysis of how one Winnipeg-area, Indigenous-led adult learning centre compares to the broader school system when it comes to differential effects on Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

In the next chapter, I explain my research approach, which combines deductive and inductive techniques from long-standing qualitative methodologies. The goal is to examine the role of theoretical phenomena discussed in this chapter as well as those phenomena emergent in the data to better understand the various internal and external factors that impact Indigenous students' learning experiences. Concepts explored in this chapter, including racialized habitus, field, and various types of dominant and non-dominant capital, play a major role in guiding the processes of data collection and analysis.

Figure 1 is a diagram I created that summarizes and organizes the major concepts of Bourdieu (1984) and related theorists discussed in this chapter, outlining the major connections between them.

Figure 1

Connecting Types of Capital and Related Structures



Chapter Three: Methodology

The first part of this chapter examines several Indigenous research philosophies in depth, especially epistemology, ontology, and axiology, and considers both how I apply these ideas in my own research design process and the expectations I have set for myself as an Indigenous researcher. The second part of this chapter outlines my research design in detail.

Indigenous Research Epistemologies

In this section, I examine the critical scholarship on research involving or relating to Indigenous Peoples. The scholars I focus on here, each one working in a post-colonial context like Canada, lay out the historical and ongoing harms traditional research paradigms have visited upon Indigenous individuals and communities, and propose alternative approaches in line with Indigenous philosophies. Several of these approaches were influenced by each other directly or indirectly. Rather than selecting one approach to follow exclusively, my analysis focuses on identifying core tenets these approaches have in common, so that I can operationalize these in my own study design.

Anti-Colonial Approaches

Indigenist Research. Indigenous Peoples "around the globe, are arguably the most studied people of the world" as Rigney (1999, p. 109), an Indigenous Australian scholar points out. As the author goes on to say, the results of this past work have helped to establish the careers of many non-Indigenous scholars, but they have seldom done much for the communities whose traditional knowledges were appropriated and brought under non-Indigenous control.

There has been an implicit ethos within academia that knowledge is for everyone, and that the open sharing of information is for the greater good of humanity, and yet it is not true that knowledge is freely given and not paid for. The consequences for using another person's insights

or data without attribution can be severe, and while there is not a clear one-to-one correspondence between academic knowledge and a university paycheque, it is certainly the case that researchers can and do profit from the knowledge and insights that their participants impart. Though Rigney does not explicitly make this comparison, it would not be inaccurate to compare the extractive nature of some Indigenous research to the seizing of land or resources, and the apprehension the author describes in some communities is therefore quite reasonable.

This is a question of axiology, the moral justification for the work of researchers and the decision of communities to contribute to this work. Rigney's most important conclusion in this article is that what he calls *Indigenist* research is of, by, and for Indigenous Peoples, and fundamentally emancipatory. It should tangibly improve the day-to-day lives, political representation, or dignity of Indigenous Australians as they define it.

To accomplish this, he lists three core tenets of the Indigenist paradigm: "resistance", "political integrity", and "privileging Indigenous voices" (p. 116). By resistance he means that the goal of the research should be to serve the cause of Indigenous self-determination and anti-colonialism. By political integrity he means that Indigenous academics should take the lead in this research (though non-Indigenous academics can and do contribute as allies). Finally, by privileging Indigenous voices he means that the knowledge these researchers draw on should also come primarily from Indigenous people themselves and not non-Indigenous people's thoughts and experiences about and with Indigenous people.

Besides axiology, Rigney (1999) discusses the need for an Indigenous ontology (fundamental assumptions about reality, that is, the worldviews we each have) and epistemology (the way in which we believe knowledge can be attained, for example, the scientific method, critical analysis) in Indigenist research.

In a previous article, I wrote about the tensions between institutional goals of reconciliation and faculty rights to academic freedom (Bartlett & Boyce, 2020). In that article, I also described an analogous tension between differing conceptions of knowledge and scholarship in academic and Indigenous communities, respectively. For example, there is often an implicit assumption that academic processes and knowledge are of a scientifically objective and universal nature, while cultural knowledge is subjective, contextual, perhaps even spiritual or faith-based.

Rigney (1999) is upfront about wanting to consider alternative epistemologies and ontologies. But he does not position this as a debate between the objective and the subjective. Instead, he brings up the historical and contemporary colonial context of Australia (one which closely mirrors that of Canada), he cites recent statistics on systemic anti-Indigenous racism in his country, and he cites Collins's (1991) book on black feminism, part of her foundational work on intersectionality.

A key insight of Collins's earlier work (1986) is the invisibility of subjectivity in white middle-class male-dominated scholarship. The dearth of sociologists from different racial, economic, or gender backgrounds has meant that for decades, that field has been largely unaware of its own implicit biases and ontological assumptions. In other words, as a group, sociologists did not know what they did not know. It fell to women and people of colour, especially women of colour, to bring some experiential and epistemological diversity and challenge the assumptions that might have been holding the field back.

So Rigney's (1999) argument is clear. Overcoming racist epistemologies and ontologies is equivalent to broadening the data collected and the academic tools employed to get a more complete picture—to improve objectivity, not discard it. The long history of colonialism and racism also informs the need for a different axiology as discussed earlier, one that challenges the

culture of oppression which tainted past research on Indigenous Peoples even by well-meaning scholars.

In practice, designing a study that qualifies as Indigenist research requires meeting several specific criteria: the research question must be such that the knowledge gained from the study is expected to benefit the Indigenous community involved; Indigenous people should provide data about their own experiences; and the study should be Indigenous-led.

Decolonization. Smith is a Maori scholar whose framework (1999) of decolonizing methodologies adapted Thiong'o's major post-colonialist theory (1986), *Decolonizing the Mind,* to her own New Zealand context. Thiong'o wrote that, in post-colonial Kenya, the internalized colonialism of the oppressed group would still take much work to undo even once the political and governmental machinery of colonialism had been dismantled. Smith likewise points out that decolonization is a long-term process that requires philosophical shifts and a reckoning of the academic community with its past role in reinforcing colonialism through its research on Indigenous Peoples.

Smith (2005) emphasizes this complex history and the diversity of voices and experiences in discussing what it has meant and what it currently means to be Indigenous, not to mention what Indigenous research ought to look like. Alongside Thiong'o (1986), Smith invokes Collins' work on intersectionality and black feminist thought (Collins, 1986, also Collins, 1991) as well as Rigney's (1999) Indigenist model, summarizing the Indigenous Australian scholar's three tenets in a single sentence: "[I]ndigenous research is research that is carried out by [I]ndigenous researchers with [I]ndigenous communities for [I]ndigenous communities" (Smith, 2007, p. 89).

Smith also makes explicit something that Rigney only hints at. Indigenous research by, of, and for Indigenous Peoples is not simply a refinement of methods but a re-envisioning of purpose and responsibility for research and researchers. This shift in axiology, ontology, and epistemology is more than a change in techniques but a challenge to political and bureaucratic institutions specifically, and even a "much broader but still purposeful agenda for transforming the institution of research, the deep underlying structures and taken-for-granted ways of organizing, conducting, and disseminating research and knowledge" (p. 88).

It is no wonder that she uses the much stronger term of decolonization. Indigenist research sounds like a specialized approach that a researcher can apply or not and which affects no one else outside of their own work. Decolonization is a direct challenge to the powers that be, a cry that long-standing sociopolitical structures should be torn down. To wit, "[d]ecolonization is political and disruptive even when the strategies employed are pacifist because anything that requires a major change of worldview, that forces a society to confront its past and address it at a structural and institutional level, that challenges the systems of power, is indeed political" (p. 91).

As mentioned in the first chapter, neo-Bourdieusians and anti-colonial theorists alike range from the reforming to the revolutionary, however, you cannot necessarily determine this by the terms they use. For example, not everyone studying Indigenous research, reconciliation, or university reform is operating with the same definition of reconciliation (Bartlett & Boyce, 2020). Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) focus almost entirely on the ambiguity of terms, ranking institutional reform efforts as representing Indigenous inclusion, reconciliation, or decolonization, regardless of the language used by the institution themselves. These categories represent increasing levels of structural change.

Ironically, Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) themselves equivocate, using the same term for two very different approaches in the same way they criticize universities of doing. Although the authors cite Tuck and Yang (2012), they fail to point out the more radical approach the latter authors advocate for when referring to decolonization. Tuck and Yang (2012) define decolonization as a complete reversal of colonization, that is, a repatriation of traditional Indigenous lands (e.g., all of the Americas) to Indigenous Peoples, and the departure of non-Indigenous people.

Gaudry and Lorenz (2018), like many scholars and educational commentators today, use an operational definition that is more consistent with Smith's (1999 and 2007) description. Essentially, institutions need to make space within the academy for Indigenous researchers to "buil[d] capacity and research infrastructure in order to sustain a sovereign research agenda", listen to and learn from "critique[s] of the 'rules of practice' regarding research, the way research projects are funded, and the development of strategies that address community concerns about the assumptions, ethics, purposes, procedures, and outcomes of research" (Smith, 2007, p. 90).

Therefore, Gaudy and Lorenz (2018) imply, by citing Tuck and Yang (2012) and omitting any mention of their different approaches, that these more radical scholars are working with the same definition of decolonization as other cited anti-colonial scholars, when actually, they are not. This error in an otherwise excellent paper does, however unintentionally, help make the point that the authors aimed to make: there are a range of approaches and reliance on terminology alone can be dangerous.

What Smith's (2005) approach means is that Indigenous researchers ought to be allowed to take the lead and, together with their communities, set the agenda and rules of engagement of research on or for Indigenous people. Non-Indigenous researchers looking to work in this space,

and indeed, Indigenous researchers more familiar with traditional non-Indigenous research paradigms, should follow the lead of forerunners in this area within their institutions, and work exclusively within the framework they establish.

Smith (2005) notes that this paradigm has already "encouraged nonindigenous researchers into a dialogue about research and, on occasion, to a more reformulated and more constructive research relationship with indigenous communities" (p. 90). There is also no reason to think that the insights of a different approach to research, including the core ethical idea that research should improve communities rather than take from them, cannot serve to guide the work of non-Indigenous researchers working with non-Indigenous participants.

What this means for institutions is a ceding of power: 1) to Indigenous researchers with greater expertise in the type of research described by Rigney (1999), Smith (2005), and others, rather than prioritizing only the more senior academics and administrators within an institution; 2) to local Indigenous communities with respect to deciding the purposes and processes of research that affects them or depends on them rather than considering only the interests of the academic institution in producing research that serves their needs; and 3) to frameworks not necessarily aligned with traditional Western paradigms.

This negotiation of space and the sharing of power is certainly political and should be expected to be somewhat painful for institutions. But Smith (2005) has correctly identified that while frameworks of research philosophy and practice shared by Thiong'o (1986), Rigney (1999), and others explain what ought to happen, there is a limit to what an individual researcher can do without institutional change. Indeed, even if they could, an Indigenist vision of research is only half the equation. Putting a stop to extractive and harmful research practices is also

necessary, which means wresting a certain amount of control from traditional institutional powers.

Smith's decolonizing methodologies reinforce Rigney's requirements that research be Indigenous-led, be of benefit to Indigenous communities, and that it draw on Indigenous subjects for its data, but it adds an additional requirement: that the Indigenous community itself share in the decision-making process rather than all power resting within universities.

Identity and Community-Based Research. When Riding In (2008) lays out his political vision of Indigenous research being of, by, and for Indigenous Peoples in the context of the United States, he does not shy away from difficult-to-talk-about problems such as claims to Indigenous identity and internal colonialism. "[Being Indian] is a way of life. Being Indian carries a responsibility to protect and defend the inherent right of Indian nations to determine their futures…and transmitting cultural knowledge and values to our children" (pp. 72-73).

As Rigney (1999) also points out, one cannot assume "the minds of Indigenous researchers are free of colonial hegemony (colonial internalization) or that being Indigenous will better represent us. Indigenous Australians, however, do tend to be more aware and respectful of each other's cultural traditions. Similarly, Indigenous researchers are more accountable, not only to their institutions, but also to their communities" (p. 118).

Amidst a flurry of discussion about white claims to Indigeneity on one side, historical government disenfranchisement on the other side, and accusations of lateral violence on yet another side, a key factor these scholars home in on is the living connection to one's community that tends to imply a shared interest in the common welfare. When Riding In (2008) emphasizes the need for Indigenous scholarship to be of service to the scholars' home communities, he is restating the axiology at the heart of Rigney's (1999) Indigenist research paradigm which has

already been reiterated by Smith (2005). When he emphasizes the role of identity and connection to community, he is describing the mechanism by which he believes that axiology can be safeguarded, a shared interest in and accountability to the welfare of one's own community.

Even when it comes to my own Indigenous community, which is in many ways still a diaspora after 50-odd years of organizing and reconnecting, accountability remains a critical measure, but it does not itself provide a roadmap. Whatever one thinks of one's own Indigenous identity (or role as an ally), it seems to me that purposeful, meaningful efforts must be made to ensure that research involving Indigenous participants and communities must be in the interest of Indigenous people and communities, which requires taking steps to align one's work with their priorities and goals. Simply claiming an Indigenous identity, legitimately or not, does not make any scholar's research automatically emancipatory, resurgent, or anti-colonial, it is the axiology that is key.

There is no surefire external process to measure or demonstrate the strength of an Indigenous researcher's connection to their specific community, nor their shared commitment to broader Indigenous interests. But Riding In's work suggests that regular introspection and the foregrounding of anti-colonial axiology may be a good starting point.

My Role as an Indigenous Researcher

The aforementioned work from Rigney (1999), Smith (2005), and Riding In (2008) goes some way to informing how I need to conduct myself if I want my work to be situated as anticolonial. There is a clear ethical throughline in their work that has influenced the way I have chosen to undertake this work.

Rigney (1999) calls for research that is by, of, and for Indigenous Peoples, and fundamentally emancipatory. I know from my experience in the Manitoba adult education sector

that most adult learning centre teachers are non-Indigenous, while Indigenous students are overrepresented in adult learning centres relative to their proportion of the Manitoba population. To ensure this research is *of* Indigenous people, I have chosen to partner with an Indigenous-led learning community—the Aboriginal Community Campus, which is located at Neeginan Centre and is a part of the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD), an Indigenous-led, not-for-profit organization and organizational community—and collect interview data from both students and teachers. The adult learner participants I interview are exclusively Indigenous, by the nature of the school's programming and mission and my own exclusion criteria. The educator participant group includes both those with Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities, although it was not possible to determine what the exact breakdown of this participant group would be in advance of the call for participants.

My research is also *by* and *for* Indigenous people. This is not only a matter of my own Indigenous identity, nor my own motivations in designing this study, although these do matter. It is also a matter of the community's own involvement in shaping and approving the research.

The *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS) includes a chapter that lays out ethical requirements for working with Indigenous participant groups or researching within community, including varying levels of consultation that range from a simple approval process to collaborative research design (CIHR et al., 2018). The TCPS also provides a working definition of an Indigenous community as "a collectivity with shared identity or interests, that has the capacity to act or express itself as a collective" (p. 111). The chapter goes on to describe three major categories of community, including organizational communities such as CAHRD, which "have explicit mandates and formal leadership (e.g., a

regional Inuit association or a friendship centre serving an urban Aboriginal community)" (p 112).

Before submitting my proposed research for ethics approval, I needed to consult with community leaders, and I discuss this in more detail in the Study Design section, in the subsection titled Community Consultation Process.

Given that it was necessary that I develop an initial draft of my research proposal prior to beginning this consultation process, and to ensure that it would be emancipatory rather than extractive, I turned to another guiding document. The 94 *Calls to Action* were produced by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015b) as a supplement to the findings of the report itself (2015a). It serves as a sweeping enjoinder written by an Indigenous-led commission and based on wide-ranging community consultations, hearings, and records research. It was one part of a mass settlement by the Government of Canada to survivors and in memory of victims of Indian Residential Schools, but it was also a broader reckoning for apartheid, the Indian Act, and broken treaties, amongst other historical wrongs, including ongoing inequity in the school system.

Calls #6 through #12 are grouped under the sub-heading of *Education* (pp. 1-2) with Calls #7 through #10 centred around the need to achieve equitable educational outcomes for Indigenous students and, consequently, more equitable economic outcomes for Indigenous people. Citing unequal per-student funding, gaps in both academic achievement and educational attainment, and the very different power relationship Indigenous families and communities have with their school systems compared to non-Indigenous families and communities, Call #10 is the most comprehensive Call with respect to educational inequity and has the most direct connection to my research focus:

10. We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:

i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.

ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.

iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula.

iv. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.

v. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.

vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.

vii. Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b, p. 2)

Also of particular relevance to my work is Call #65 (p. 8) which specifically cites a need for scholarship to advance reconciliation and asks the federal government to partner with funders and Indigenous groups to develop such a research program. In accordance with this goal, I chose as my research focus to study the mechanisms behind ongoing structural inequities impacting Indigenous learners. But I also sought approval and ongoing guidance from the leaders of the Indigenous community in which I wanted to conduct my research. And upon the completion of my data collection and analysis I invited stakeholders to enact any solutions the data may have suggested. I aim with my work here to make meaningful contributions to a mission that must

include not only scholarly analysis but policy recommendations and changes in educational practice and changes in the process of how research is undertaken.

Study Design

My research takes the form of a case study within one longstanding Indigenous-led Winnipeg adult learning centre. The data is mainly drawn from semi-structured, open-ended interviews with two volunteer participant groups, one comprising Indigenous students at the adult learning centre, and the other comprising some of its teachers. I interviewed seven in the adult learner participant group and four in the adult educator group, for a total of 11 interviews. These interviews took generally between 30 and 60 minutes for the adult learner participant group, and between 60 and 90 minutes for the adult educator participant group.

Under the Adult Learning Centres Act (2002), adult learning centres primarily serve adult learners seeking high school credits and/or a mature student diploma, which is an alternative to the regular Manitoba high school diploma for older students that requires fewer total credits. Adult learning centres (ALCs) may be operated by educational institutions such as public colleges, universities, or school divisions directly, or by other institutions including not-for-profits. As noted by Silver (2022a), Indigenous students are over-represented in the adult learning sector, comprising about 45% of ALC students in 2020. ALCs may vary in staff/student size, administrative structure, and in both course availability and delivery of instruction.

The school community I chose as my case study site is the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC. It is located at Neeginan Centre in the Point Douglas neighbourhood of Winnipeg's North End and has a primarily Indigenous student population that is mostly low-income. The Aboriginal Community Campus adult learning centre is operated by the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD), an Indigenous-led not-for-profit whose

various educational programs on their main Neeginan Centre campus and secondary campuses also include trades and college courses, and a closely connected adult literacy program called Neeginan Learning and Literacy.

Adult learning centres are diverse by nature. In terms of student demographics, they vary at least as much as the local communities they serve; administratively, the legislation that governs the creation of a centre allows for a broad range of organizations to offer adult education programming with an equally broad range of goals. CAHRD's stated mission is "(t)o relieve and prevent unemployment among Indigenous people in Winnipeg and help them to achieve self-sufficiency by providing education and training, employment services, and support programs, such as counselling, daycare, and housing; and [t]o do all such things ancillary and incidental to the attainment of the above purpose" (Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development, n.d.). CAHRD is an attractive partner in this case study research given its scope, mission, and its size, cultural cohesiveness, and longevity as an urban Indigenous community.

Harrison, Birks, Franklin, and Mills (2017) describe a spectrum of case study methodology, ranging from more quantitative to more qualitative approaches at either end. The theoretical underpinnings of my study fall toward the centre and are most similar to the slightly mixed approach used by Merriam (1998). My interview data is certainly qualitative, but the exploration of my research questions through two separate participant groups, along with some of my prior research and knowledge of administrative and legislative details of the adult education sector, and the overlap between my study and two studies published by Silver (2022a and 2022b) means there is some triangulation of data, an established quantitative technique.

In the following sections, I describe more specific details of the consultation process, interview protocol, participants, and data analysis.

The Community Consultation Process

Prior to seeking ethics approval, I needed to make a presentation to community leaders, including the CAHRD board of directors and the Aboriginal Community Campus director of education at Neeginan Centre, presenting the goals of the research, methodological details such as the draft interview questions and participant groups, and the theoretical frameworks on which I was planning to draw. These leaders were given time to make a determination on whether the research stood to benefit their community, whether the proposal as written met their approval or whether revisions were needed, and to approve a framework for ongoing consultation. Only after all of these details were worked out and the leaders determined that they were in favour of moving forward could the research proceed.

I started by making phone contact with the education director and followed up that conversation with an email outlining the basic goals of my thesis research and draft interview materials, and we scheduled a meeting afterward for me to give a more detailed presentation on the proposed research and work out details of the community's decision-making process. Once they decided, in principle, to move forward with the research, we had further discussions to work out the details of the consultation process, with me laying out some options for how the research, ongoing consultation, and reporting to the community might look.

After community leaders met privately to discuss the information and options I had laid out, they determined that I would proceed with the research plan as presented, to seek their approval if any major changes would be sought, but otherwise just provide regular updates on research progress, including milestone events such as receiving ethics approval, the beginning and completion of participant interviews, the completion of data analysis, the scheduling and the results of a thesis defense, and the publication or presentation of any papers related to the study.

Meanwhile they would aid me by disseminating my calls for volunteers and providing space on site for me to meet with and interview participants.

I wrote up a research agreement detailing these expectations which all parties signed and this was submitted as part of my Ethics application.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The development of the question prompts for the semi-structured interviews was partially guided by theoretical frameworks such as racial capitalism/settler colonialism (Toews, 2018) and the social reproduction thesis (Bourdieu, 1984), as well as extensions/adaptations of Bourdieu's work, such as the role of cultural capital in schools (Lareau, 2003), racialized habitus (Cui, 2015), non-dominant cultural capital (Wallace, 2018), and community cultural wealth (Gonzales, 2012; Yosso, 2005). The participants were not briefed on this theoretical background, but the interview protocols were informed by and organized under these frameworks.

The open-ended nature of the question prompts in the interview protocols for both sets of participants is such that some participants could answer multiple questions at once or out of order, as one idea leads to another. In such cases, rather than interrupting in order to bring participants back to the script, certain prompts were not used in all cases. Of course, it would sometimes be necessary to ask clarifying follow-up questions after some prompts, and these could not be anticipated in advance. For both these reasons, this interview is considered semi-structured. Interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed. All interviews were conducted in person, although participants were made aware of the option to conduct the interview using the UM Zoom web platform if this was preferred. The question prompts for participants are located in Appendices F and G.

Participants

There are two participant groups: current adult learners and current adult educators at the Aboriginal Community Campus adult learning centre. Members of the adult learner participant group were drawn from the pool of currently registered students at the adult learning centre. To be eligible to participate, participants needed to self-identify as Indigenous, be 18 years of age or older, and have been attending the school for at least one month at the time of their scheduled interview.

Members of the adult educators' participant group were drawn from the pool of those currently working within the adult learning centre. To be eligible to participate, participants needed to have had at least one year of total teaching experience in an adult learning centre (at a rate of half-time or more) at the time of their scheduled interview.

Separate emails requesting volunteer participants went out to all current teaching staff and all current students, both sent on my behalf by the administrative office. The emails provided my personal and office phone numbers and university email address. The emails invited prospective volunteer participants to contact me, as the Principal Investigator, with any questions, then to return the signed consent form if interested, after which I would follow up to schedule an interview.

I prepared two back-up plans in the event that I did not reach my expected number for either participant group and I did ultimately implement both of them. When I did not initially reach the minimum number of adult educator participants, I sent a follow-up email to school staff noting the number of volunteers I was still seeking and speaking in a bit more detail about my goals for the research. As a result, I received more respondents after this email.

I used a snowball sampling method to collect additional student participants. Three volunteers said they had classmates who might be interested in participating, and I was able to

add two of these to my interview list, though the last referral came too late in the day for me to accommodate.

Informed Consent. Copies of the consent forms are attached as Appendices D and E. They were printed on University of Manitoba letterhead and were signed by each participant and returned to me prior to their interview. Upon contacting me via email or phone and agreeing to volunteer, an electronic copy of the consent form was sent to the participant via email to be reviewed, then signed and returned to me electronically, with each participant keeping the original for their records. The same email to participants included a copy of the interview script itself for optional review, and the consent form also invited participants to contact me with any questions they had about any details in the consent form or with regards to the study itself. The consent form explained that information provided during the interview was confidential, that all questions were optional, that responses would be anonymized prior to publication, and that participants would have the right to withdraw at any time before data analysis began.

For interviews arranged the same day and on site, I took time to go through the consent form in person and gave participants time to review and think about whether they wanted to sign it and proceed with the interview or not. Those participants received an electronic copy of the signed consent form on a subsequent day.

At the scheduled interview time, participants were reminded orally that any and all answers (excepting disclosure of unreported child abuse) were confidential, that their participation, even having signed the consent form, remained voluntary, and that they therefore retained the right to refrain from answering any or all questions or to withdraw from the interview entirely at any time without any penalty. The participants were asked if they had any

questions about these rights and once they indicated that any questions they had had been answered to their satisfaction, we agreed to move ahead and begin the interviews.

Debriefing. Once the interviews were transcribed, participants were asked to member check their transcripts and to add, delete, or change material to better represent their views as either intended or revised. I generally aimed to return transcripts within two weeks of each interview date. Participants were also able to mark or delete remarks they felt might be personally identifying, although all participants were informed that anything deemed potentially identifying by the Principal Investigator would be removed whether or not the participant requested it, with pseudonyms used for any direct quotes appearing in the published study.

Participants had two weeks to review the transcript from the time I sent it. If there was no response after two weeks, approval of the transcript as written was assumed, and the option to withdraw consent to participate in the study ended. Participants were informed of all these details during the consent process and were reminded again in the email that included their transcript for member checking.

All participants were informed that they could receive a copy of the final report by request and that it would be sent to them directly by email.

Risks and Benefits

This study was deemed to be of minimal risk to participants, as confirmed by the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board. Discussing past and present educational experiences, challenges, and successes is common for educators, and comparing current experiences in an adult learning centre to prior educational experiences is also common for adult learners. Nevertheless, there were two identified risks that should be mentioned here.

First, adult learner participants were at risk of experiencing some psychological or emotional distress as they recounted adversity or challenging situations they had experienced in their present or past schooling experiences. Likewise, adult educator participants were at risk of experiencing such distress when recounting adversity experienced by students or recounting challenging situations they had experienced with students or other staff. I instructed all interview participants what the protocol would be if this occurred. If feelings of distress occurred during our interview, I would first ask participants if they needed to take a break. Once they had done so (or declined to do so), I would ask if they wished to continue where we left off or go onto the next question. If their distress continued, I would offer to reschedule the interview, or if they chose, to withdraw them from the study.

Second, there could have been some degree of professional risk if adult educator participants shared any sensitive student or staff details with me and the data was not sufficiently anonymized in the published report. To avoid any such risk, I paid particular attention to anonymizing all details related to any particularly sensitive situations shared, ensuring that the data could not be re-linked to specific people, due to the inclusion of either individual details or data that were identifying in any combination. During the member checking phase of the project, I asked participants to pay particular attention to how I had anonymized any stories of that nature.

Actual interview transcripts will not be published in full anywhere, even after being anonymized, but instead the resulting data appears in aggregate form in subsequent chapters, via coding and thematic analysis, with representative anonymous or pseudonymous quotes to contextualize this data. The school itself was identified as the site of the case study, but

individual participants and other members of the community mentioned in interviews were not identified.

The direct benefits for adult learners participating in the research include having the opportunity to reflect on their educational experiences and growth. Insights gained from this process might be employed toward future educational success. The direct benefits for adult educator participants included having the opportunity to reflect on and identify factors that have had a positive impact on the educational experiences of their Indigenous students, as well as those that have negatively impacted the educational experiences of their Indigenous students. Insights from this self-reflection process might thereby inspire potential mitigating or navigational strategies that teachers can employ to better serve their students.

At the school level, several teachers and learners having the opportunity to reflect on their adult learning centre operations allowed them to help identify existing strategies that should be maintained and new strategies that could be adopted. The opportunity to reflect might also have suggested policy or organizational changes the organization might employ that benefit students and staff alike.

The indirect benefits for participants participating in the research included contributing to a body of academic literature that may suggest systemic changes to improve the experiences of Indigenous students in the education system.

Another possible indirect benefit is that the published research could lead to increased public visibility of both the positive work being done in adult education, including Indigenous-led adult education, and to the need for specific increases in resources or other supports in order for the sector to be more effective.

Confidentiality. Measures to protect confidentiality are included in the consent forms in Appendices D and E. Each participant reviewed and clarified their understanding of these measures with the Principal Investigator before signing in advance of each interview. Each interview was audio-recorded. Only my thesis advisor and I had access to these recordings and they have not been published or shared. The recordings were all manually transcribed by me, with details anonymized as necessary. Only my thesis advisor and I had access to the codes linking the transcripts to the real participant names.

During the member checking phase, participants were given two weeks to review the anonymized transcripts and provide feedback on their interviews. When no response was received within that time, approval was assumed. The only pieces of demographic information to remain attached to each transcript were gender identity, Indigenous identity, age category (in five-year groupings, e.g., 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, etc.), and teaching or schooling experience (for the adult educator and adult learner groups, respectively).

Participants were asked to describe their school experiences and, in some cases, mentioned the names of specific students or school staff. These references were deleted as a part of the transcription process, even before it had been determined if these mentions would appear in any published quotes.

During the data analysis phase, a student research assistant was retained to aid in coding and the discursive analysis of the transcripts, while I performed the same task. This research assistant was provided only with the anonymized transcripts and not any materials linking transcript data to the real names of participants. He was asked to return all coding and discursive analysis data to me once the analysis had been completed and to destroy his own copies of the

original transcripts and their analyses once he had confirmed the analyses had been received and reviewed by me.

Student records or any other confidential information were not accessed at any point in this study. If any other personal information relating to the participant or their acquaintances was mentioned inadvertently, it was omitted from the transcript.

Audio recordings of in-person interviews were kept temporarily on a password-protected laptop before being moved to Sharepoint, UM's encrypted cloud services. These recordings will be deleted no later than one year after the study is complete, that is, after my thesis has been defended successfully. Transcripts of interviews, codes linking transcripts to real names of participants and the adult learning centre, and raw coding analyses will also be destroyed no later than one year after the study is complete. All physical and electronic copies of these documents are expected to be deleted by March 1, 2027 at the latest.

Compensation. Each participant was provided with a twenty-five-dollar Visa gift card prior to the beginning of the interview as a thank you for their time. This was not contingent on the interview being completed and they were instructed that it was theirs to keep even if they decided not to go ahead with the interview.

Dissemination. This research forms part of my Master's thesis and will automatically be published as such upon my successful defense. The results may also be disseminated via one or more academic publications in professional journals and/or academic conference presentations both prior and after this thesis defense.

Analysis

I applied a mix of inductive and deductive analysis in this study. Per Saldaña (2016), a concept coding method (pp. 119-124) was employed for the first-cycle coding analysis, with

codes assigned manually to the interview transcripts by myself and a research assistant working with me. A bank of concept codes related to the theoretical frameworks being applied that was created in advance (deductive) was used as a reference document, and emergent concepts in the interview data were assigned their own codes (inductive). The secondary level of analysis was performed by me alone, using pattern coding as the second-cycle coding method (pp. 236-239). The coding process is broken down in more detail in the next section.

The overarching focus, reflected in the design of the interview script and the coding process is on potentially identifying specific structural barriers experienced by Indigenous learners in prior school experiences or in non-school contexts, and any specific structural advantages in the way the Indigenous learning community of the case study site is organized. That is, any ways in which Indigenous adult learners have resisted or navigated any structural barriers, and any role that the adult learning centre has played in helping them to do so.

In terms of specific mechanisms, I seek to identify which types of capital Indigenous students apply toward navigating and succeeding within their learning contexts, when and whether these types of capital are actually acquired, and what role the school plays in determining the operation of capital or improving learner access to capital. I also seek to gain some insight on the effects of habitus on Indigenous learners' experiences in school, to what extent habitus may be shaped by experiences in a different kind of field, and whether changes in student habitus might be observed by teachers over time.

Previous research suggests several issues that could be expected to influence the educational experiences of mostly low-income Indigenous students, including teacher class prejudices (Gorski, 2008), students' modes of speech (Bernstein, 1971), structural prejudices related to racial/ethnic background (Wightman, 1997), the mental health effects that minorities

experience in majority cultures (Beiser, Sack, Manson, Redshirt, & Dion, 1998), cultural bias stemming from the types of achievement measures institutions use to rank students (Sawyer, 2013), and the effect of grit (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007).

Potentially, any of these could show up in the data. However, none of this research draws specifically on Indigenous learner experiences in adult learning contexts in Canada, and my research design is not intended to replicate any of these previous studies.

Coding. Coding is used to identify recurring themes. A combination of post-coding frequency analysis and discursive analysis of interview transcripts is used to suggest the relative importance of different themes to participants. A concept coding method (Saldaña , 2016, pp. 119-124) is employed for the first-cycle coding analysis, with codes assigned manually to the interview transcripts by myself and my research assistant.

During first-cycle coding recurring and/or significant concepts are marked with pre-created codes. Emergent concepts in the interview data are assigned newly created codes as they are identified. When comparing and combining the analyses of my research assistant and myself, codes created for any emergent concepts appearing in much the same way in both sets are aligned by selecting a single code term to replace the different codes each of us created on our own.

Areas of consonance between both sets of coding (those created by my research assistant and those created by myself) as well as areas of direct disagreement are considered in the second level of analysis. Likewise, the results from each participant group are combined for the second-cycle analysis but also individually compared to determine areas of agreement or disagreement in the perceptions of Indigenous students and their teachers within the Indigenous learning community.

The second level of analysis (performed by me alone), uses pattern coding as the second-cycle coding method (pp. 236-239). At this stage, a larger pattern of the roles of the field, habitus, and types of capital is identified, along with additional emergent categorizations or relationships suggested by the frequency and distribution of codes after the first-cycle analysis.

Throughout our parallel first-cycle coding process my research assistant and I refer to a reference sheet I created in advance with 12 pre-set concept codes. A final list of important codes can be found in Table 1 in the next section, but the codes on the original reference document were listed in this order along with a colour legend: dominant cultural capital, non-dominant cultural capital, racialized habitus, oppressive field structures, emancipatory field structures, familial capital, social capital, educational capital, symbolic capital, microaggressions, micro-advantages, and economic capital. Most of these have been previously defined, but some explanation is needed for the two types of field structure as well as for habitus.

The distinction between oppressive and emancipatory field structures is my own. Per Bourdieu's (1984) social reproduction thesis, fields tend to maintain differences in capital and the associated privileges by default. But one of my interests in this study is how an organization built around Indigenous resurgence and adult education principles might have different field structures compared to a typical K-12 public school.

I thus define oppressive field structures as those default social structures that maintain educational inequity, whether intentionally or not. In contrast, I define emancipatory field structures as those that increase educational equity. The social reproduction thesis suggests that the latter type of structure would not arise spontaneously, and so I would expect to see evidence of these kinds of structures mainly in schools where there is real intentionality around organizing for equity.

I have also taken the standpoint that for members of a racialized group, habitus is always racialized, regardless of whether race or racism are explicitly mentioned. This argument was first made by Reay (1995), but in my use of this code concept I draw mainly on Cui's (2015) study, discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, which observed that Chinese-Canadian high school students were constantly aware of being othered and of being judged against the model minority stereotype. While the Indigenous context is different, here, too, the effects of being racialized seem too pervasive in everyday life not to impact a person's view of the world and their own place in it.

Code Frequencies.

As an organizational tool I made four separate counts of the frequency with which each code is used during the first cycle analysis: the number of times a code appears in the adult learner participant group according to my research assistant; the number of times a code appears in the adult educator participant group according to my research assistant; the number of times a code appears in the adult learner participant group according to myself; the number of times a code appears in the adult educator participant group according to myself.

Table 1 shows 14 codes, 12 of those from the pre-created bank along with the two added emergent codes (learning disabilities/mental illness; external costs), ranked in order of decreasing total frequency across all transcripts. Some previously mentioned codes are absent from this table and are discussed in the next section. Frequency values should not be taken as exactly determining the relative importance of each concept in all cases, but it did suggest areas of focus for the second cycle coding analysis, for example, potentially marking cases where coders or participant groups were particularly in agreement or disagreement.

Table 1

Code Frequencies by Coder and by Participant Group

Code	Coder 1 (RA)			Coder 2 (PI)		
	Student	Teacher	Total	Student	Teacher	Total
Emanc. Field	46	55	101	37	70	107
Rac. Habitus	27	26	53	46	61	107
Opp. Field	24	37	61	28	19	47
Dom. Cult. Capital	10	18	28	25	55	80
Non-Dom. Cult. Capital	23	42	65	3	20	23
Economic Capital	8	7	15	17	43	60
External Costs	0	0	0	14	54	68
Social Capital	18	11	29	10	17	27
Educational Capital	5	12	17	21	16	37
Familial Capital	12	5	17	21	14	35
Disability/ Mental Ill	17	2	19	18	9	27

Absent Codes.

Symbolic capital, microaggressions and micro-advantages were included in the pre-created code bank but these concepts did not appear in the data enough to warrant further

investigation during the second cycle coding, and thus I do not include them in the table. Microaggressions are defined as actions taken toward and experienced by racialized minorities in oppressive systems that have a cumulative effect over time; micro-advantages are defined as moments in which racialized minorities successfully navigate or resist the same kind of oppressive system (Gonzales, 2012). I suspect that there are very few mentions of experiences or actions that could be coded this way simply because the participants being interviewed do not perceive the adult learning centre they are a part of to be a racially oppressive system (a small number of mentions came up from a minority of adult learners when referring to their adolescent school experiences).

The very few mentions of symbolic capital suggest that the accumulation or leveraging of certifications or awards is not a primary activity or pre-occupation at the school. There are a handful of mentions in adult learner interview data of the need to have a grade 12 diploma, but the context in which this is shared almost always indicates that the accumulation of knowledge and skills, that is, educational capital, is of primary concern rather than any prestige associated with the diploma itself.

Yosso's (2005) remaining two cultural wealth concepts are also not included in the table. I elected not to include aspirational capital on the pre-created code list because it seems to me that one's level of hope for the future is better understood as an aspect of habitus, for which I favour Cui's (2015) definition of racialized habitus.

I also left linguistic capital off the pre-created code list. I correctly anticipated that there would be few mentions of heritage language proficiency in the interview transcripts (there were none). Having previously taught in a Winnipeg Indigenous-led ALC myself, I did not anticipate the advantages of being multi-lingual to be a major factor in adult learner experiences, given the

urban location and heterogeneity of Indigenous cultures represented, and indeed, no mentions of this appear in the interview data. Of course, in another context, like Northern Manitoba, it might be quite different.

Chapter Four: Findings

As described by Saldaña (2016), a concept coding method (pp. 119-124) is employed for the first-cycle coding analysis, and this is performed in parallel by my research assistant and myself, drawing from a common bank of 12 pre-created codes, although some are not used enough to justify further investigation during the second cycle analysis. Two emergent codes appear in the first-cycle coding. For my second-cycle analysis I employ pattern coding as the major method (pp. 236-239). A brief context section describes the case study site, then I cover the first-cycle and second-cycle results separately in this chapter.

Context

The school community I chose as my case study site is the Aboriginal Community Campus adult learning centre. It is located at Neeginan Centre in the Point Douglas neighbourhood of Winnipeg's North End and has a primarily Indigenous student population that is mostly low-income. Under the Adult Learning Centres Act (2002), adult learning centres (ALCs) primarily serve adult learners seeking high school credits and/or a mature student diploma, which is an alternative to the regular Manitoba high school diploma for older students that requires fewer total credits. All adult learning centres are tuition-free, and though some charge a small registration fee, this one does not.

The Aboriginal Community Campus ALC is operated by the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD), an Indigenous-led not-for-profit. The ALC is led by a director of education who reports, like all program leaders, to CAHRD's board of directors. Staff within the ALC have their own union but are not part of the Manitoba Teachers' Society.

CAHRD's various educational programs on their main Neeginan Centre campus and secondary campuses include trades and college courses operated by Neeginan College, and a closely connected adult literacy program called Neeginan Learning and Literacy.

Other programs offered by the school include Neeginan Village, which provides subsidized student housing nearby, and Kookum's Nursery, which provides free daycare for the young children of adult learners onsite. Both programs are available to full-time students whether they are enrolled in the adult learning centre, the literacy program, or one of the college programs in Neeginan Centre or nearby buildings. Adult educators mentioned in their interviews that there are waitlists to access either the housing or daycare programs and that not every learner who asks for a space is able to be accommodated.

Like other educational institutions, the ALC moved to a remote learning model in March, 2020 as a response to the coronavirus pandemic. It had a mix of fully remote and blended learning in cohorts for different parts of the 2020-2021 school year and had moved to the blended model fully by the 2021-2022 school year. With the blended model students were not able to attend in person five days per week, instead they attended physically with their cohort on designated days and worked remotely the rest of the time.

The ALC had resumed near-normal operations for the fall of 2022, but an electrical fire in November caused significant smoke damage and made the building unusable until March. A small nearby building was used as office space for the school staff but the school had to shift back to a remote learning model again for the duration as there was no classroom space available. For the duration staff scheduled one-on-one meetings with adult learners on site, about one hour per week for each student.

My interviews were completed in October and November of 2023, the school year immediately following the fire.

First Cycle Coding Results

The following 11 code concepts are those important enough to be carried over for second cycle coding: emancipatory field structures, racialized habitus, oppressive field structures, dominant cultural capital, non-dominant cultural capital, economic capital, external costs, social capital, educational capital, familial capital, and learning disabilities/mental illness.

Nine of these concepts were listed on the original code reference sheet my research assistant and I made use of, the other two are emergent concepts discovered and assigned codes during the first cycle: learning disabilities/mental illness and external costs. Learning disabilities/mental illness refers to instances of learners being impacted by ADHD, depression, anxiety, low mental health, mental illness, and so on.

External costs refers to external barriers or adverse events on which adult learners have to expend energy, time, or attention, and/or which obstruct their pursuit of education. In one example, an adult learner participant is describing a previous attempt to resume her education some years after first leaving school, but "family problems happened so I said 'no, not going'". In another an adult learner describes how her school experiences were negatively affected when the building was shut down due to a fire and had to shift to emergency online learning. "I wasn't in a cohort with any of my friends that I made the past few years, so it was kind of isolating."

There are 68 mentions of outside factors interfering with adult learners' education to which I apply the code of external costs, making this one of my most frequently identified concepts. This concept came up in nine of the 11 total interviews from both participant groups.

Second Cycle Coding Results

In this section I delve more deeply into the actual interview context of each of the 11 important codes identified in the First Cycle Coding Results section, seeking to identify the ways in which the different concepts coded act as factors in school operations and learner experiences. I seek out any larger patterns within individual code concepts, including similarities and differences across the two participant groups as regards the impact and nature of the concepts coded for. I also look for relationships between code concepts, exploring how they might interact with or affect each other, either directly or indirectly.

Highest Frequency Codes

Emancipatory Field Structures. Emancipatory field structures have by far the most appearances in first-cycle coding, appearing at least twice as often as all other codes, save habitus. I define emancipatory field structures as any of the ways in which the field is designed, not to maintain existing inequities in power and capital but to counteract them. Oppressive field structures, meanwhile, are those that do maintain inequity.

There are two kinds of emancipatory field structures described in interviews from both participant groups. One kind of structure aims to counteract differences in capital, generally by directly supplementing students with additional resources. The other kind of structure represents a conscious shift in the way value is assigned and recognized within the field, that is, the kinds of behaviours, viewpoints, and prior knowledge associated with being a "good student" within the culture of the school.

The first kind of structure comprises an expansive suite of programs woven into the fabric of the school to supplement students with virtually every type of relevant capital. Most adult learners mention the well-stocked pantry, which serves not only to fill the stomachs of students who miss breakfast but also allows for students in need to fill a grocery bag and take it

home with them. Homework club is also mentioned by most adult learners. Twice a week during the lunch hour teachers make themselves available to students working on schoolwork from any of their courses. Lunch is also provided to all students who drop in.

Most students who mention homework club make note of the fact that it is providing two kinds of support at once. One student confesses, “I’ve been going through a bit of a financial rough patch, and lunches have been hit or miss…[It’s] a big help, it keeps me going through the day,” but he then goes on to say it is helpful academically “because teachers are there, too. Literacy, EAL, and math teachers, and me being terrible at math, that’s perfect. So it’s just good, it's a good program that they have here.”

Some programs are mentioned only by certain students, but often in terms that make clear how important they are to those who benefit from them. These include clothing drives, career and employment services, mental health supports such as a weekly men’s health support group and an Indian residential school survivor’s support program, and a free laptop loan program. One student describes the process of working with employment services, “[you] tell them your work background and they’ll help you get a résumé ready, they’ll help you with job listings and prep for interviews and stuff. And I actually got a part-time job because of them.”

There are a wide variety of cultural activities adult learners can take part in, including beading, smudging, and medicine gathering. As one student describes it, “they say that like for Aboriginals getting back to the land and connecting to the land is therapeutic. So I’ve been doing that a lot…and that takes place during the day and they excuse me from class so I can attend those things and it doesn’t count against my attendance. So they’re really thoughtful about that.” Another student says, “Oh, it’s the traditional teachings [that make this school different] for sure. It gives me that boost.”

While several students appreciate the cultural activities offered by the school, one First Nations student shared that he is less interested in activities like smudging or sharing circles, although he is not against them. “I understand the importance of traditional stuff, but I just didn’t—me being Indigenous…I’m just not into that kind of thing.” Later in his interview he explains how much he appreciates that everything at the school is opt-in. Having praised various other programs, including homework club, he reiterates, “I like just, here’s your work, get it done. I’m just that kind of person I don’t like the extra stuff because it wastes time.”

Other programs offered by the school include Neeginan Village, which provides subsidized student housing nearby, and Kookum’s Nursery, which provides free daycare for the young children of adult learners onsite. Both are available to full-time students whether they are enrolled in the adult learning centre, or in the literacy program or one of the college programs also offered by CAHRD in Neeginan Centre or one of the nearby buildings. Adult educators mentioned in their interviews that there are waitlists to access either of these and that not every learner who asks for a space in daycare or housing is able to be accommodated.

It is clear from just the seven students interviewed that not every student uses every resource. But every resource is used by a significant number of students, and each student makes clear that they appreciate having access to those resources that they personally need. All students, when asked, said that the many kinds of resources that are available are well-advertised. Everyone knows what is available to them, not only the things they have personally used. Adult learners are generally able to list several examples without stopping to think about it.

Two adult learners mention support from family and one mentions support from their Employment Income Assistance worker, but all are aware of and most put the largest emphasis on the multiple resources provided by the community itself. Adult learners in the Aboriginal

Community Campus ALC, but also those enrolled in the Aboriginal Community Campus adult literacy program (where some current ALC learners may have started out) or one of the post-secondary training programs offered by CAHRD's Neeginan College (which some ALC learners join after earning their grade 12 diploma), have access or potential access to groceries, additional tutoring, clothing, breakfast and lunch, daycare, housing, bus tickets, a clinic, school supplies including laptops, counselling, career and employment services, and a broad array of cultural teachings and activities.

One adult learner, after having listed several examples of services provided by the school, observes "this place has everything actually." Adult educator participants make similar comments, noting that "the good thing is almost everything you need, this building has it," and "we all try to work as part of one compete system".

One of these adult educator participants gives an example of the ways these programs are integrated together:

> So we have two or three designated people just to work with The Village [student housing]. They go door-to-door, 'do you need anything, daycare, clothes, a stroller'—we got someone a wheelchair the other day. Our organization is well connected with other organizations as well, and we kind of give and take as we need with each other.

As this participant notes, not all programs are offered by the school directly, but the school does have dedicated staffing for connecting with partner organizations and making student referrals to external programs, so it does feel as if the school has everything. One student describes this process:

> [T]hey offer a student liaison, who can point you in the right direction of getting resources that you need, or mental health services that you need…My depression started

getting the best of me the last year and if it wasn't for the student liaison referring me to a bunch of resources for my mental health I probably wouldn't be here.

This student goes on to explain how well-coordinated the school and the organization where she receives weekly counselling are. Regular three-way communication between the school, mental health organization, and learner ensure that her classes, counselling sessions, homework, and travel back and forth are all sorted out without anything ever falling by the wayside. "[It's] really easy. They're all in touch with each other. They'll relay to each other 'so and so student is here today, she'll be back tomorrow' if I don't get a chance to let them know."

This quote is also a good bridge to discussing the other type of emancipatory field structure frequently described in the transcripts, shifts in the way value is assigned within the field of the ALC as compared to traditional K-12 schools. Adult learners and adult educators alike speak frequently about the culture of the school being different. While some students have a difficult time articulating exactly why, they agree that the feeling they get from the school and the teachers is different than they have previously experienced.

In response to a question about what has been the most significant factor in their school success, every adult learner credited the school's culture and their teacher's attitudes. As one put it, "I think it's the school. I feel welcome here. It kept me coming back. I like the teachers here, they're all respectful." Another student says, "Just the teachers. They've been a big impact on me and my confidence…they knew I could do whatever I set my mind to, I just needed that little push…they've been really understanding of my appointments, and I have kids too." One student observes "how teachers are willing to go out of their way. [In my adolescent school experiences] it just was, I don't know, like colonial? I don't know what word to use. Where you have to follow the rules forever."

Most adult learners emphasize two things when it comes to the culture of the ALC and their relationships with their teachers. They feel cared for, that their teachers are really invested in their success. But they also feel like the atmosphere is safe and calming. Several adult learners talk about the different way school staff respond to absences and punctuality in contrast to the approach they remember being taken in high school.

> They're not gonna make you get a slip for being late. Like today I missed my bus, I go across the street and catch [another one] and then it stops somewhere and 'okay, last stop,' and I'm waiting for another one. So, get here at ten, I'm supposed to be here at nine. It's just the fact that they won't get mad at me, they just understand.

This is not to say that attendance is ignored, as another adult learner explains:

> They reached out to me because they saw my grades slipping, there was a dip in my attendance, like I stopped showing up, and they actually emailed me, they called me multiple times in like a week to make sure that I was okay…she was like 'are you okay, do you need help? I'm here to help you with what whatever you need,' and…she decided to give me resources for mental health evaluations and therapists and counsellors.

These and other stories shared by adult learners make clear that while regular attendance is encouraged, no one is ever shamed for being late, they are instead welcomed for showing up. As a result, when a student misses the bus, they arrive late rather than skipping school entirely to avoid an uncomfortable conversation. The adult educator participants also speak to the way they feel about student attendance and lateness:

> They come running to me when they're new, say 'I'm so sorry I missed yesterday!' and I say, it's okay, it's okay. We encourage you to be here, but I know as adults, things happen…your kids get sick, you get sick, you have adult problems, we understand that."

> …Class starts at nine, but for some adults, they have kids they have to take to school first. They need that 15 minutes. So I have this scheduled 'get settled time', because many students, they come 9:15, 9:20. They need that extra time before we get started.

This is a sharp contrast to prior punitive school experiences adult learner participants make reference to, which my research assistant and I identify as an example of an oppressive field structure. As one adult learner describes it:

> It was like a big shift from high school to adult education. The high school was just you need to attend you need to get good grades and that's it. They didn't delve deeper into what the person was experiencing day to day.

Another adult learner participant makes a similar suggestion, noting that one way that high schools could be more like adult learning centres is approaching behaviour differently, "say if someone has a breakdown and starts yelling in class. Not blaming the student themself [sic], but learning how to work with them and maybe help them."

A third adult learner participant says of her K-12 experiences that "It was very difficult. [The teachers] would just ignore you and do what they need to do."

A fourth adult learner participant says, "When I was a kid I felt like I was looked down upon, from like other people. Because I went to like an all-white-person school. I was the only Native kid there and felt like the odd one out." Elsewhere he noted, "I wasn't doing too well to be honest. It was frustrating. I would just leave."

A fifth adult learner participant says, "I had some difficulties. I remember one teacher trying to make me write with my right hand. That didn't work. I remember getting smacked on my hand with a yard stick, one on each hand, by the principal." (For context, this adult learner would have attended school as an adolescent mainly in the 1980s.)

One adult educator participant describes how she tries to intervene if an adult learner starts to panic due to some outside circumstance such as a family death interfering with their school attendance:

> They spiral when they tell me that they're not gonna be here. And they think, 'oh, they're gonna drop me too, since I'm not gonne be here, they don't care about me'. They don't understand that it's not like that. I'm in your corner no matter what…So I'm like no, I'm not gonna let it get there…we calm each other down, and we make a plan. I might adjust the assignment.

Again, this does not mean that school staff do not care about attendance. Attendance is a major focus, as one adult educator participant explains, but it is treated as an act of caring and not an act of punishment. "[W]e have a policy here where if a student misses two consecutive days in a row, we call, we text, we email just to see if they're okay." Sometimes these conversations reveal a specific problem the adult learner is experiencing which has been preventing them from coming to school, and in examples shared within both participant groups the school has sometimes been able to help resolve the problem. In other cases, these conversations simply serve to renew the student's motivation and encourage them to return to class.

Adult educators espouse understanding and even admiration for the adult learners they work with. The general consensus is that a lot of persistence and courage is required to attend school day after day, week after week, when juggling adult responsibilities and problems. Adult educator participants seem determined to make the most of whatever class-time they have with adult learners on a given day. Rather than complaining that poor attendance makes it impossible

for them to do their job, they work with each person enrolled in their classes and give as much individual attention as possible when it seems to be needed.

The flexibility applies to more than the management of attendance—two adult educator participants mention individualized scheduling. The norm is for enrolled learners to take one class that runs all morning and a different class for the afternoon. But for some learners, focusing on one class at a time feels less overwhelming, and administrative and teaching staff work out a plan that allows the student focus on that one course through the morning as well as the afternoon and still have access to teacher support.

Three adult educator participants mention multiple modes of course delivery, from the standard in-person classroom to printed homework packages to an online learning platform. Adult educators note that not all of these ways of adult learners accessing course materials have the same rates of success, and in-person learning is preferred whenever possible. But all of these options are useful to some learners at least some of the time. So the ALC finds it worthwhile to have options available for adult learners to stay connected to their courses if they undergo a period wherein they can no longer attend in person. To improve the chance of success, teaching and non-teaching staff alike make an effort to communicate with adult learners while they are away.

The ALC's overall student-centred approach represents a significant shift in thinking from more highly regimented formal school models. Rather than expecting students to conform to school expectations (or leave), the ALC shapes its own programming around student needs. It is clear from the adult learner interviews that this supportive, holistic model is much appreciated. But it is also clear from the adult educator interviews that this model corresponds with a different set of beliefs around what it means to be a good student.

Racialized Habitus. References to worldview, self-concept, self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and habitual behaviours are included in the concept of racialized habitus. As discussed in Chapter Three I have taken the position that for members of a racialized group, habitus is always racialized, regardless of whether race or racism are explicitly mentioned (although my Indigenous adult learner participants sometimes do make specific references to these).

Racialized habitus also emerges as a major concept during the analysis because, as with emancipatory field structures, participants do not talk about it only when they are specifically asked about it. Upon reviewing references to habitus within the adult learner participant group, the clear pattern is that students' confidence, hopefulness for the future, and belief about the paths available to them have changed significantly compared to when they were adolescent learners.

In some cases, adult learners suggest that these shifts in thinking are partly connected to their growing maturity and greater life experiences. All seven students, when asked, say that they have experienced personal change in the time they have been enrolled at the ALC. For five of the seven participants in this group, that enrollment time was a little over two months at the time of their interviews, while the two other participants were both enrolled at the ALC for more than one full school year at the time.

In terms of how they have academically changed, adult learners say they are more confident, more hopeful, feel more strongly that they can improve their lives through education, and are more motivated to reach their goals. One student describes how she has changed in response to a question about the post-secondary program she is planning on enrolling in. "When

I first started, no, it was not something that I thought I could [but after several terms enrolled in the school] I knew that it was something that I wanted to do and I could do it."

Four of the seven students have very specific post-secondary goals regarding school or other training programs they want to enroll in after grade 12 graduation, two others have general fields they are interested in but have not worked out the specifics of their role or career path, and one participant has a broad goal of finding a better paying job in the future but has not yet decided on any specific next steps after earning her grade 12 diploma.

Adult educators identify habitus (though the interview questions do not use that term) as important to student success. Thriving learners are described as positive, having a sense of control over their future, and confident. Struggling learners are described as being overwhelmed, pessimistic, in some cases self-sabotaging. One adult educator puts it this way: "They look at [the world] through what I call grey foggy glasses. They're only seeing it from one point of view. They think there are always gonna be hardships but there's not."

Adult educators also make observations about the change of habitus that are very similar to those shared by the adult learner participant group, noting that some students start out as struggling learners but begin to thrive after some time has passed, with their habitus being one of the most noticeable markers of that change. One participant from this group describes this change over time:

> They started off small, they started off quiet, and as their knowledge of their own knowledge grew, they understand 'Hey, I can do this! Hey, I can do that! Maybe being a teacher isn't out of reach.' Their goals become larger, and they become more attainable, more reasonable.

This progression is not always smooth and linear. More than one adult educator participant mentions that adult learning sometimes includes multiple false starts, with learners perhaps enrolling two or three times in different school years before the first time they complete a term and earn some high school credits. “I have this student right now—it’s his third time taking the course, but he’s coming a lot more.” Some of the adult learner participants have also had this experience, but they tend to be sanguine rather than regretful about it. “It’s more or less like, I could have gotten this done before, but I’m getting it done now.”

Two Kinds of Cultural Capital. The context of this study differs from Wallace’s (2018), which studied black student behaviours and strategies in a white-run school. This made some identified instances of the activation of cultural capital harder to sort clearly into the dominant or non-dominant category. But broadly, adult learners and adult educators report the building up of dominant cultural capital as the forming of good student habits and attitudes. “They care, they show up, they participate, they invest so much into it, and it makes a very big difference,” one adult educator puts it, while an adult learner similarly notes, “I’m more focused on meeting my deadlines for assignments and attending class, and not falling into my old ways”.

Some of the examples of non-dominant cultural capital include “speaking out, being an active questioner in their own education”, the “knowledge to our students that they have these [instances of post-secondary funding, accommodations, and support] opportunities”, and “resilience”. The most frequently mentioned example, however, has to do with adult learners being able to deal with adverse events or ongoing barriers and still stay on track with their education.

All four participants in the adult educator group mention this. One adult educator says that when successful learners have an outside problem they “deal with it head-on” in order to get

back to focusing on school. Another adult educator gives the specific example of a student being shot the day before an exam and showing up to the school after being released from hospital to explain the situation and make arrangements to still finish his courses.

There is agreement among the adult educator participants that their Indigenous adult learners experience more adverse events, structural barriers, and mental health concerns on average than students in non-Indigenous schools. Some of these are related to multi-generational historical trauma, including but not limited to residential schools, and some to the statistical risks that low-income families are exposed to.

Not all members of the adult learner participant group speak to this, but several do, mainly in the context of managing mental illness or learning disabilities. These participants refer to the need to find allies at their school and reach out for help when they need it.

Economic Capital. Several of the most-relied-upon programs provided by the ALC for its learners relate to financial support. Though the school does not charge either tuition or administrative fees, there are other monetary considerations. Daycare, housing, and food are all essential needs whose main barrier to access is cost and which the school provides directly or in partnership.

Adult learner participants make many references to the importance of economic capital. Different participants mention struggling to afford daycare, bus fare, groceries, computers or other electronic devices, and home internet. Some adult learners discuss the sources of financial support that allow them to attend school, including receiving band funding to cover some of their living expenses, receiving approval from their Employment Income Assistance program to attend school while continuing to receive that government support, or finding a part-time job, with or without the help of CAHRD's employment services.

Most adult learner participants mention receiving more than one kind of financial support from the school, for example, help finding a job as well as bus tickets to get to and from school. There is a clear match between the variety of co-located resources, not all of which are financial in nature but many of which are, and the most persistent and obtrusive financial barriers faced by adult learners. However, a secondary theme is those instances in which a lack of economic capital continues to limit opportunities for some adult learners, either because the extent of financial need is too large for CAHRD to shoulder alone, or because it falls outside the scope of the community to address as an educational support program.

Adult educator participants speak highly of Kookum's Nursery, which is surely one of the more expensive programs the ALC provides to support its adult learners. It's a great boon to many adult learners with young children, however CAHRD does not have the financial ability to provide daycare seats for all the preschool-aged children of adult learners who need it.

One adult educator, when asked whether it would be helpful to significantly increase the number of childcare spots, says, "Oh, yeah, that would up attendance. I can name two or three students right now that aren't here because of childcare."

The other largely unmet need relates to technology. Many adult learners do not have access to home internet or personal computers they can use for schoolwork. School staff are aware of this and have both free Wi-Fi and a laptop lending program on-site, however it is not financially possible to send every adult learner home with a laptop. Several adult educators mention in their interviews that this is one of the most significant unmet needs.

"In a perfect world it would be nice to provide those things," says one adult educator, with another saying, "If we're going to use technology and internet for learning then they have to have it…It's hard to draw the line for when something is a luxury or a necessity but every

student in Winnipeg, Northern Manitoba, Southern Manitoba, should have internet." There are other examples where adult learners and adult educators alike mention room for improvement by increasing the resourcing of existing programs. But when it comes to economic capital childcare and technology seem to have the most persistent gaps between the available support and the level of need.

Social Capital. A portion of adult learners mention forming supportive connections among classmates. The value of a peer social network is certainly not to be ignored, but this is not the major source of social capital according to my research participants. The majority of members in both participant groups focus on one or more purpose-built networks provided by CAHRD for its learners. Note that this falls under Yosso's (2005) definition of social capital rather than Bourdieu's (1984). One very direct example is the student liaison, who directly refers learners to external services they might not otherwise know about. Another is employment services, who, in addition to providing cultural and/or educational capital related to interview skills and work culture, also leverage connections to employers to find learners appropriate work.

In addition, representatives of Indigenous student networks from post-secondary institutions like Red River College, the University of Manitoba, and the University of Winnipeg regularly visit the program. These include members of Indigenous Student Associations, Access programs, Indigenous support services, and so on. One adult educator says, "universities have spots for Indigenous students, if they just take the right channel to it, they can have everything they want."

Lastly, there is also a significant amount of internal networking that benefits adult learners. Staff members with different roles within the ALC or the larger CAHRD organization

refer learners back and forth in order to meet different needs that come up, and some learners move from the literacy program to the ALC and then to Neeginan College, all educational programs under the CAHRD umbrella. While the wide variety of supports available to adult learners have been discussed at length in a previous section, it would be difficult for learners to make full use of these without being connected to a network of support from the moment they enroll. As one adult educator puts it, "we all try to work as part of one complete system."

When adult learners enroll at the ALC they are connected to a network, and when some of them leave the ALC and attend a post-secondary institution, ALC staff try to transition these graduating learners directly into another network at that institution to improve their chance of post-secondary success. This does not mean that learners completely lose access to that social capital they built up while attending the ALC, for example, the ability to reach out to staff for reference letters, advice, or advocacy.

Familial Capital. Yosso (2005) and Gonzalez (2012) define familial capital as including direct social and emotional support from families, but also cultural values and teachings passed down through families. These are closely related but it is worth discussing them separately.

Most adult educator participants do not think their learners have access to very much family support, with one not mentioning it at all, and three others explicitly mentioning the lack of family support for some of their learners. The statements from these participants are that "a lot of [adult learners] don't have someone back home thinking about them," that adult learners have to manage their schoolwork and other responsibilities with "little to no support," and that "they're unsupported".

However, this is not true for all adult learners. Only four out of seven adult learners interviewed make absolutely no mention of a family support system. Of the other three, one

implies that there were family members she had previously relied on but they have passed away. Two others mention having some level of active and ongoing family support, with one saying that she returned to school in part because "my mom forced me," and the other saying that he "had a lot of people looking out for me, my mom, my grandmother, all my siblings." Both of these participants reference family members at more than one point in their interviews.

When it comes to the passing on of cultural knowledge, both sets of participant groups make mention of the ALC itself playing a role in re-connecting adult learners to knowledge that had been severed at some point in their families and/or communities. Cultural activities offered within the school such as smudging, ribbon-skirt making, beading, and sharing circles are mentioned by many adult learner participants, even if, as has been noted, not all of them choose to take part.

Adult educators likewise mention the importance of school programs to connect students with cultural knowledge that may have been lost to their family at some point, but one participant is an exception. She describes activating her learners' existing knowledge, "I hear you talking 'on my reserve, we did this, we did that,' you have that base, because of what you did, because of what your grandma did, you have that already."

This adult educator, who is First Nations, seems to have more direct experience and knowledge of life for First Nations students who grew up on reserve rather than in an urban setting compared to the other adult educators interviewed. She is aware that while much knowledge has been lost and much trauma endured by Indigenous communities, not everyone is starting from zero. Along with those students who reference receiving valuable family support, this provides an important counterpoint to the implication that familial capital is universally absent for Indigenous adult learners.

More than one adult learner participant notes that compared to the ALC, their adolescent school experiences fell short in terms of students' ability to connect with or learn about Indigenous culture, with one saying, "When I was in high school I used to go to this class, Native Studies, and sometimes it was only me there."

Two Emerging Concepts as a Complement to Capital

There are two important emerging concepts revealed in first-cycle coding: 1) mental illness and learning disabilities; and 2) external costs. These concepts both demonstrate that not every challenge adult learners face in the pursuit of their education can be framed purely as a shortage of capital, although the extent of certain kinds of capital available to an adult learner can ameliorate or exacerbate the extent of these challenges.

These emerging concepts demonstrate the most significant divergence in perspectives of the two participant groups. Mental illness and learning disabilities appear to be much more front of mind for adult learners than for adult educators. External costs, however, are much more front of mind for adult educators than for adult learners.

Both emerging factors in the Indigenous adult learner experience at this ALC are discussed in detail in the two subsequent sections. Their interactions with capital and the field are covered in the section after that.

Mental Illness and Learning Disabilities. All but one of the adult learner participants mention mental illness, learning disabilities, or supports in their interviews. Three of the seven participants cite an undiagnosed mental illness or learning disability as a major factor in why they originally left school as an adolescent. Quotes from two of them follow:

> Crazy. I just acted up because I have ADHD, so I would get emotional and be throwing things…I don't know what to say, I was just angry.

> I suffer from depression and like getting going. And my depression started getting the better of me last year…My mom was in day school and her mom and my grandpa were residential school survivors, so they experienced a lot of trauma.

The same three participants have recommendations for how their high schools could have better served their needs when they were adolescents. Quotes from two of them follow:

> They would say, 'Oh, well, just go home, you're having a bad day' and just, it was swept under the rug almost…High schools really should do it differently because like once you're older it's a lot harder…you need to get those diagnoses early on and start managing those symptoms and what you're going through.

> I mean, I understand these teachers have hundreds of students to teach, so it's hard to be one-on-one with everyone. But if they could have sort of a general idea on certain things, it would really help those students who are struggling with things, like mental health. Because that's sort of why I was a terrible student. So just learning how to deal with that stuff properly instead of lashing out. Because I have had some teachers like that, no patience, lashing out, no patience.

In contrast to the adult learner group, three out of four participants in the adult educator group make little to no mention of mental health or learning disabilities. But the sole exception is a teacher who puts a large emphasis on these factors. In describing adult learners in her class who are thriving she states that "They've healed. They've healed from their childhood because Aboriginal childhoods have trauma. And that trauma is intergenerational, and they recognize it, even though sometimes they don't know where it comes from." In contrast, the single word she uses to describe adult learners who struggle is "undiagnosed".

External Costs. Interestingly, adult educator participants place a larger emphasis on external costs affecting their learners than do the adult learners themselves. Members of the adult educator participant group tend not to frame these challenges as deriving from a lack of capital, and for good reason. Even if it might seem in the abstract that a surfeit of costs is essentially equivalent to a dearth of resources, delving into the specific examples shows that this is not the case.

In the case of an adult learner who was a victim of a random act of gun violence from a stranger, the adult educator recounts, “It doesn’t make sense, a lot of these times they’re like, that didn’t make sense, why did that happen to me?” Clearly anyone who experiences a traumatic event like this will be affected by it, and the straightforward application of capital can neither guarantee that such an event will never happen to a person nor erase the effects if it does.

Two more broadly experienced examples of external costs are the coronavirus pandemic that began affecting adult learners in the spring of 2020, and a fire that occurred in Neeginan Centre in the fall of 2022 and forced adult learners and CAHRD staff out of the building for several months (Heather McCormick, personal communication, February 23, 2023).

When it comes to closures related to the pandemic, many adult learners are parents and, understandably, they were unable to attend classes at the ALC when their own children were sent home for several months of remote learning. Even after in-person classes resumed, there were ongoing barriers related to the pandemic, including more missed class time due to illness on average, the sorting into cohorts cutting back on the hours of teacher access each learner received per week, and the difficulties of working from home with inconsistent access to technology, especially in the case of learners sharing with their kids.

One adult educator discusses working at the ALC in the spring of 2020 and beyond into the next two school years:

> [T]he school went through phases, we did cohorts, then full remote, then when we came back to the building but it was socially distanced, we were wearing masks and constantly cleaning tables to mitigate the risks. Not all students were comfortable with that and some weren't coming. It was really bad for consistency, students who were coming every day suddenly couldn't, it was really hard for everyone.

The same adult educator describes the fallout of the fire and building shutdown that occurred in the fall of 2022:

> [W]e were just starting to get some consistency and students were getting their footing and then bam! Another barrier thrown in their path…The ones that are extroverted really struggled. Really they all struggled, even the introverted ones.

Another adult educator describes how individual learners might be derailed from their schooling by individual adverse events:

> [O]ften it's not the fact that they aren't able to do their work, it's outside situations that prevent them from being here. Some students are experiencing homelessness, addictions, outside things that prevent them from coming to school…I had a student who was experiencing homelessness and that's pretty draining, trying to find a place to sleep and not getting much rest.

A recurring visual from adult educators is the idea of some learners experiencing a series of blows that have a cumulative damaging impact on their ability to continue. "Some people have just had enough sometimes," says one participant. "[I]t's just one thing and then another

thing and another and it's overwhelming," says another. "They get knocked down and knocked down—it's hard to get up again after the eighth or ninth knockdown," says a third.

So in the view of some of these adult educators, there is an unfortunate element of luck in learner success. Some capable and motivated learners experience so many external costs in a short period of time that they are unable to keep up with their schooling, whereas if even one fewer adverse event had occurred, the outcome might have been different.

There are fewer mentions of external costs within the adult learner participant group, and this is likely due, in part, to the fact that the call for volunteer participants reaches more adult learners who are in the ALC regularly and not those whose attendance has been heavily affected by outside events. But two of the adult learner participants had been in CAHRD programs long enough at the time of their interview to have been affected by the fire that shut down the main building for parts of 2022-2023. One of these students was registered in CAHRD's literacy program at the time:

> Well, I was just starting and that whole fire happened, and they set up a school next door—I'm not sure what that building's called—so we just showed up there once or twice a week. That kind of really impacted my—like I was trying to move out of literacy as fast as possible, so it just kind of impacted.

The other adult learner participant had been working on high school credits when the fire happened, and was also slowed down by the fallout from this event:

> Transitioning from here to there, because it was like a smaller space, I wasn't in a cohort with any of my friends that I made the past few years, so it was kind of isolating…[Support staff] moved over there too but because they had to deal with the fire on top of it and the smaller classes, so they were constantly checking in with students,

> and there would be students doing online learning too…so it was hard for me to squeeze in an appointment.

The Interaction Between Mental Illness/External Costs and Field/Capital. Members of the adult learner participant group who self-identify as managing learning disabilities or mental illness emphasize the importance of the ALC's field structures—its support programs and teacher attitudes and behaviours—in helping them to achieve school success:

> They're understanding and they know, because I'm very open about my mental illness, because I think that's the only way to get the help that you need, and not get stuck. Because when I lived [out of province] I got stuck, in adult education previously they just didn't have resources…But then I come here and I'm not on my own. They're always there. If I need to talk to someone their door is always open.

Field structures may also have an ameliorating effect on learners experiencing external costs, with adult educators recounting everything from seeking a place in student housing for a learner experiencing homelessness to finding flexible learning options for learners who miss several weeks of school due to a family death (which for some First Nations learners requires travelling back to their home reserve) or even a physical assault.

The challenges experienced by learners managing mental illness/learning disabilities as well as those experiencing external costs can often also be lessened or worsened depending on their access to economic, cultural, or social capital. When it comes to managing mental illness, learning disabilities, affected adult learners explain the importance of understanding their own learning styles, communicating with teachers when they are having difficulties, and making connections with teachers and other staff to get the support they need. "I feel a lot more developed, in terms of just dealing with that stuff. Of course, I still have my challenges with my

emotions and stuff…I used to just not ask for help when help is needed. [Now] I know what I need help with, and I ask for that help. I'm still terrible at math, but I'll ask for the help if I need it."

When it comes to external costs, learners' unequal access to technology during periods of online or hybrid learning during the pandemic and in the period after the fire are cited by adult educators and by both of the adult learners who were affected by at least one of these events. One learner explains, "I didn't really have the resources. I mean I did have a computer, but it was pretty dated."

These disrupted learning periods also separate adult learners on the basis of how much cultural capital they have access to. According to adult educators interviewed those learners with higher cultural capital, who are in the minority, were able to, if not thrive, at least still succeed during the periods in which the ALC was forced to transition to a different educational delivery model. These few learners had developed strong enough daily work routines by that time and also knew how to access and make the most of the more limited teacher support.

The different periods of fully online, cohort-based, and hybrid learning—which occurred both after the pandemic began as well as after the fire—may have showed the most significant effects of capital because the ALC was less equipped to directly counteract the acute inequities of this period as effectively as it does so during normal operations. The availability of an on-site laptop loaner program did not help students who were working from home either 50% of 100% of the time and did not have a computer there, the school was not able to provide learners with home internet, and the school could not provide daycare services. So, to a larger extent the learners themselves had to overcome new barriers to learning and still make progress during

these difficult times and, according to the adult educators I interview, many learners discontinued or were delayed in their schooling as a result.

The Interrelation of Habitus, Capital, and Field

I observe three relationships in the second-cycle analysis of the interview data: 1) the development of educational and cultural capital seems to be associated with changes in learner habitus; 2) the presence of emancipatory field structures appears to be associated with the development of educational and cultural capital among learners; and 3) the presence of emancipatory field structures seems to be linked to changes in learner habitus.

A majority of the adult learners interviewed describe the development of their cultural and educational capital in relation to their changing habitus one or more times in their interviews, as these two sample quotes show:

> The first couple days I felt like I regretted [enrolling]. Because it was challenging. [What changed was] I kept coming. I kept doing the work. And after a while I started getting the work and learning how to do it.
>
> [M]oving up higher in the levels of math and English, losing my confidence, feeling my stress levels build up, learning how to manage my stress and manage my time. It gives me a different outlook on life and on my education.

Adult learners also frequently describe emancipatory field structures, particularly the encouragement and respect they feel their teachers have for them, as playing a role in the development of their cultural and educational capital:

> I got a lot more help from my teachers from like the first year and second year and the third…[they] knew I was not applying myself, so they started pushing me and giving me more work and more work and they're like 'you're smarter than this, you can do

it'…[B]efore I would always come late, or leave early because I didn't want to be here. But that's changed, now I'm here on time, and I'll stick it out to the last hour, until like 4:00 pm. That habit was a really hard thing to change in like my day-to-day life.

Almost every adult learner participant makes a similar comment at some point about the importance of the teacher-student relationship and how it differs from their past high school experiences, to wit: "[The] most significant thing [in my academic success] is the change in teachers. Like how teachers are willing to go out of their way."

Two adult learners also describe emancipatory field structures as having a direct effect on their habitus, one explaining, "[The teachers] believed in me more than I believed in myself, so that's how it helped me. It built up my confidence extremely."

Adult Educator Habitus and the Field of the ALC

All adult educators interviewed note that learners who express high dominant cultural capital behaviours are among the most successful. Examples include being respectful, handing in work on time, arriving punctually for class, forming good relationships with staff members, making school their first priority, putting effort into their personal grooming and dress, exhibiting high class participation, showing interest and curiosity during lessons, and, as one adult educator puts it, "conduct[ing] themselves appropriately for the classroom".

But these same adult educators also express commitment to the success of those learners who are not able to do all these things, or at least not able to do them yet. As one adult educator puts it, "We express empathy for the students who are here because we understand the multi-barriered backgrounds they come from, and we also know the traditional school setting didn't work for them in the past…so we need to do something different with them in order for us to be successful."

When adult educators describe how the adult learning centre is organized, they tend to make direct comparisons to K-12 public schools, drawing on their own teaching or student teaching work, or their experiences as primary and secondary students themselves. The aspects of the ALC's field that they find most noteworthy are the different perspective on attendance, punctuality, and assignment deadlines, and the generally holistic and non-punitive approach to learner behaviours and learner needs.

Adult educators seem convinced of the effectiveness of the ALC's processes and procedures and appreciate the culture and leadership of the organization. But the way they explain the field differences at the ALC, by comparing it to how K-12 schools tend to be organized, implies that most participants have changed their views about how schools should work since becoming adult educators. To put it another way, it appears that over time the habitus of adult educators interviewed for this study have come to align themselves with the field of the ALC when it comes to philosophies around learning and the general framing of learner behaviour. For example, the belief that lateness or absenteeism should be seen as a barrier that learners are managing and may need support with, rather than seeing it as a choice that learners make that requires some form of discipline.

While the ALC's field appears to have influenced the habitus of adult educators who have joined the organization over time, it seems to also be true that the habitus of staff and leadership in the organization play a significant role in reinforcing the structure of the field. The main way in which the assigned value of behaviour and capital in the field are observed is through the words and actions of individuals within it.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

In this case study, I compile data on Indigenous learner experiences in one Winnipeg adult learning centre situated within an Indigenous organizational community. By interviewing Indigenous adult learners at the adult learning centre on their past and present school experiences, and interviewing their teachers as well, I have endeavoured to glean insights on how public schooling does or does not meet Indigenous student needs, whether Indigenous community leadership and the adult education system has made some headway in filling in those gaps, and what opportunities for improvement may remain in the K-12 or adult education systems.

My axiological orientation is aligned generally with anti-colonial approaches (Rigney, 1999; Smith, 2005; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b). This means that in my role as an Indigenous scholar I need to ensure I conduct research that is additive to rather than extractive of Indigenous communities, that furthers reconciliation, and in which Indigenous community members are partners rather than subjects. Before it could be gotten underway, this study involved a number of steps in respectfully proposing and establishing a partnership with CAHRD's Neeginan Centre and ALC community. A series of meetings and correspondences with community leaders led to the co-creation of a set of roles and expectations for both the community and me before data collection began.

In this study, I use a modified Bourdieusian theoretical framework (Bourdieu, 1984), which incorporates elements of critical race theory, particularly via race-focused neo-Bourdieusian scholars (Wallace, 2017; Wallace, 2018; Cui, 2015; Gonzales, 2012) and one critical race theorist responding to Bourdieu (Yosso, 2005). My semi-structured interview scripts include questions designed to elicit information about Indigenous adult learners' racialized

habitus, access to capital, and experiences with the field of the adult learning centre and prior schools. I created separate interview scripts for the two participant groups: Indigenous adult learners and adult educators teaching in the ALC.

I analyze the interview data via a two-cycle coding process. The first-cycle coding resulted in 11 code concepts, which are explored further during second-cycle coding: 1) emancipatory field structures, 2) racialized habitus, 3) oppressive field structures, 4) dominant cultural capital, 5) non-dominant cultural capital, 6) economic capital, 7) external costs, 8) social capital, 9) educational capital, 10) familial capital, and 11) learning disabilities/mental illness. The second-cycle coding process looks at each of these concepts in more detail in order to understand their impact on the Indigenous adult learner experience, and to identify any major patterns or relationships between concepts.

In this chapter, I synthesize my findings and compare my results to similar published research and reports. The chapter includes sections on my study's major theoretical implications, as well as its limitations. This is followed by sections describing my recommendations for future research, and finally my own policy recommendations for Manitoba education generally, and more particularly for Manitoba adult education.

Theoretical Implications of Main Findings

The Significant Role of Capital

While I had anticipated that the types and quantities of capital Indigenous adult learners have access to would be major factors in their educational experiences at this adult learning centre, the extent to which either a shortage of a certain kind of capital or the timely supply of needed capital appears in interviews does exceed my expectations. The most important kinds of capital to Indigenous adult learner experiences are cultural capital, educational capital, economic

capital, and social capital. There are fewer mentions of familial capital, but its role also warrants further discussion. I discuss cultural capital and educational capital in a separate section, but go through the other types of observed capital here.

It is hard to overstate the importance of economic capital. Unlike cultural capital, about which many of my interview questions were designed to elicit information, none of the scripted interview questions directly ask about the finances of Indigenous adult learners at the adult learning centre. But it comes up again and again in learners' responses. Adult learners are not vague when they bring up their financial need—they almost always mention specific costs they struggle with, everything from groceries to bus tickets to home internet to housing and childcare. Adult educators likewise emphasize the critical role finances play in whether a learner can or cannot continue their education, noting that losing a subsidized daycare spot or being unable to pay for home internet has sometimes been enough to completely derail the educational plans of some learners at the ALC.

I have found social capital—as defined by Yosso (2005) as a form of community cultural wealth—to be an important albeit little noticed resource for adult learners. CAHRD has made significant and deliberate efforts to create a network with a shared goal of supporting Indigenous learners. This network connects not only the ALC, Neeginan College, the adult literacy program, and various community support programs throughout the main campus and other nearby buildings, it also connects to non-CAHRD organizations, including university and college Access programs and not-for-profits dedicated to everything from low-income supports to the provision of mental health resources.

There are many participants who do not directly mention examples of social capital, but for whom it has played an implicit role, as in how smooth the referral process is for learners in

being connected with what they needed. But there are also members of both participant groups who are explicit in describing the value of the network Indigenous learners gain access to when they register as ALC students. For one adult learner participant, the referrals she has received and the ongoing communication between services she accesses are critical for her to continue in school. In fact, she states directly that she would not still be enrolled if not for the help of a student liaison, a member of staff whose job is to make connections between internal and external programs and services to meet individual learner needs.

The role of familial capital, as Yosso (2005) defines it, is harder to understand in this particular Indigenous context, and this has impacted the coding process. Yosso's (2005) definition of familial capital blends cultural knowledge and values with immediate family connections and support. This may make sense in some contexts, but as became obvious during the second cycle of coding, for Indigenous participants it makes much more sense to fold cultural knowledge into racialized habitus and/or non-dominant cultural capital, and let familial capital refer only to the wealth of a close support network. I thus recommend separating these out in future studies involving Indigenous participants and/or communities.

Some adult learner participants indicate they are regaining cultural knowledge lost to previous generations of their family, and that the ALC cultural programming they are accessing is helping them do this. This is unrelated to how close these participants are with their immediate family and the process of discovery seems to be somewhat unique to each individual. Likewise, some adult learner participants indicate that emotional and other kinds of support from their close family members are important, even when these do not include a cultural aspect and even if their family is not connected to Indigenous cultural traditions.

The consensus among adult educator participants is that their learners suffer from a dearth of familial capital when it comes to connection and support. While it is true that many adult learner participants interviewed fail to list family support as a part of their current stable of resources, there are almost as many who do mention having these supports. So, the takeaway is mixed: school resources and staff seem to be prepared to serve a role analogous to family in terms of encouragement, emotional support, and life planning; in other cases, learners may have family already actively supporting them, and staff might consider leaving it to them or informally coordinate supports with them.

Co-Location of Resources. This ALC has proven to be in a good position to meet many of the capital-related needs of its Indigenous adult learners. It plays so central a role in its learners' lives, some of them spend almost as much time in the building as they do at home. So it is a natural fit to serve as a community hub, where a variety of services are accessed so that learners' needs can be met.

Neither public K-12 schools nor adult learning centres are typically funded to a level that allows for the extensive provision of services beyond those directly related to teaching and learning. But CAHRD and its Aboriginal Community Campus ALC have made the decision to direct a portion of their limited funding and staffing to either directly provide or form partnerships to access ancillary supports for its learners.

While it is not uncommon for teachers or administrators to describe their K-12 buildings as containing a *school community*, this cannot usually be taken in a literal sense, as a school is ordinarily one critical part of a larger community, not a complete community in and of itself. But CAHRD's Neeginan Centre—with its literacy, ALC, and college programming all being fully integrated along with many community services (such as daycare)—comes quite close.

Silver (2022a) performed a comprehensive study of Manitoba adult learning centres, citing an interview participation rate of 43% of all ALC education directors over a six-month period in 2021. One of his major recommendations for Manitoba's adult education system is to adopt a *hub model* with "at least three elements at each centre: an Adult Learning Centre delivering the mature grade 12, an adult literacy program, and a childcare centre" (p. 28). He notes that additional elements beyond these three can strengthen the effectiveness of an ALC hub even more, listing examples such as various support services and community housing.

This co-location of resources Silver (2022a) describes is exactly what has been happening at CAHRD's Aboriginal Community Campus ALC for a long time. Because this ALC contains not only the three minimum elements he recommends but many more, it is the first example Silver cites as the model of a successful adult learning centre hub, one with a plethora of resources "created to address the physical, emotional and spiritual wellness of their [Indigenous] students." (p. 35)

There is a powerful connection between Silver's (2022a) results and my own interview data. His study is broad, reviewing the services available at ALCs across the province, and interviewing nearly half of ALC directors. My study focused on only one adult learning centre, but it is coincidentally the same site that Silver lists as an exemplar of his hub model. Silver does not interview adult learners or adult educators in his study[15], but I do, and our results match with respect to emphasizing the importance of this co-location of resources.

In his province-wide survey Silver (2022a) was able to find two other examples of fully functioning Manitoba ALC hubs (amounting to well under 10% of ALCs in the province), along

[15]Although there was no adult learner participant group Silver (2022a) does note that "two recent graduates of Adult Learning Centres (ALCs) and one current ALC student were invited to comment on the impact adult education has had on their lives, and their experiences are described in sidebars in this report" (p. 4).

with four other ALCs that are either part of the way to having a complete hub, or are well-positioned to expand into a hub model based on their location, physical space, and proximity to other services. Because it meets the needs of a different learner and community demographic, including many newcomers (attending classes alongside Canadian-born Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners), it is worth mentioning the Seven Oaks Adult Learning Centre also in Winnipeg, as a second example of a fully functioning hub.

> Located close to the Elwick Manitoba Housing complex, this centre includes an ALC that offers the mature grade 12, and a childcare program accessible by (a limited number of) adult learners. The Centre includes English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes, and related immigrant and refugee services. Efforts are underway to add an adult literacy program. (pg. 36)

Although there is no reason to suspect that any of my study participants were familiar with Silver's recent studies (2022a; 2022b) at the time that I interviewed them, one of my adult educator participants shares her belief that more adult learning programs need to include this kind of co-location of resources.

> Well, I think to help those adult learners that have kids, that have to get them to school earlier or leave to pick them up later—I have one student who has a half-hour ride from daycare to school here and another half-hour ride to get back there after. I think that school divisions or maybe Manitoba Education needs to integrate adult learning programs somehow. People need to be able to drop their kids off, maybe at 8:30 or 8:15 am and go to their adult ed school.

The Limitations of a Bourdieusian Analysis: Other Factors Besides Capital

Two important emergent concepts appear in the interview data, which I have categorized as 1) mental illness/learning disabilities, and 2) external costs. What these concepts have in common is that while they may interact with capital, they are important factors separate from capital that affect the Indigenous adult learner experiences this study set out to examine.

While this is not a quantitative study, it is striking how frequently adult learner participants cite mental illness or learning disabilities as having played a major role, even the primary role, in interrupting their K-12 education. I do not have the data to say whether this frequency is statistically representative of the learner population as a whole; however, the description by one participant of the ALC's quick referral of her to an external mental health service, and the ALC staff's practiced ease at maintaining ongoing three-way communication between teachers, counsellors, and learner, suggests that mental health support is a frequent enough concern in the school to have well-established procedures.

While it is not true broadly speaking that mental illness and learning disabilities affect all demographic groups equally, it is true that everyone, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, has a non-zero chance of experiencing one or more mental illnesses and/or learning disabilities in their lifetimes. That is, it *can* happen to anyone, even if it is not equally likely for everyone. Interview data collected in the study indicates that receiving a variety of different supports is critical for affected adult learners in being successful this time around. These supports might simply include flexibility in scheduling or daily routines, it might mean referral to counselling services, and it might mean being provided enhanced one-on-one academic support, either within or outside of regularly scheduled classes.

Similarly, external costs, whether they appear as limited-duration events or ongoing challenges, might happen to anyone, even though the chances are not identical across all

demographic groups. Anyone can suddenly lose a family member, experience an injury, or have ongoing external concerns (care duties for a family member, custody issues, a chronic illness) to which a certain amount of time and energy must be dedicated.

External disruptions are enough of a concern among the adult educators interviewed that there is already a clear consensus on how to deal with absenteeism or disruptions to academic work as a result of outside forces affecting adult learners' ability to keep up with their classes. Adult educators share that they attempt to be as flexible and supportive as possible, adjusting timelines, due dates, and assessment approaches wherever they can.

Failing all that, they earnestly assure learners that the door is always open to return when circumstances change. More than one adult educator note in their interviews that sometimes an adult learner is successful in their mature grade 12 diploma program, or successful even in an individual course, on the second, third, or fourth attempt.

Bourdieu's (1984) various types of capital, and interactions with racialized habitus and field, have a significant influence, but my analysis makes it clear that these alone can not provide a complete model for understanding Indigenous adult learner participants' experiences at my case study site. Mental illness/learning disabilities and external costs, as powerful but decidedly non-capital factors, could be incorporated into settler-colonial or critical race theory models. Critical race theory takes for granted that there may be active forces working against racialized people that need to be navigated and overcome (Crenshaw, 1989), that is, that racial disparity amounts to more than a lack of resources. And certainly many of the non-capital factors described by participants could likewise be connected to historical or present-day settler-colonial forces like residential school abuse, the Scrip System, and the modern Indian Act (Toews, 2018).

I leave that possible theoretical integration to future researchers working in this area. But regardless of what theoretical model is used, resources (or capital), worldview (or habitus), the social context (or field), and other factors (including external costs and mental illness/learning disabilities) all need to be taken into account when it comes to understanding Indigenous learners' educational experiences.

Participant Groups' Different Emphases. Most references to mental illness or learning disabilities come from the adult learner participant group while most references to external costs come from the adult educator participant group. It is not clear that either of these differences is a problem.

Even though, with one notable exception, most adult educators have little to say about helping their learners manage a mental illness or learning disability, the learners themselves usually report that they are receiving more academic, emotional, and counselling support from the ALC than they previously received as K-12 learners. This may indicate that supporting these particular learners either does not seem to be of special note to the adult educators interviewed, or that the general approach to teaching and learning in the ALC is one that is already inclusive of diverse academic, emotional, and even logistical needs.

Those references to external costs are notably higher in the adult educator participant group may in part speak to the broader perspective on learner experiences that comes from teaching dozens or hundreds of individuals each year. Those learners whose education was severely impacted or stopped entirely due to some kind of outside circumstance, seem to be at the forefront of most adult educators' thoughts. There is also likely to be a selection effect. Learner participants, by virtue of being present at the school and able to take part in interviews,

were actively involved in their education at the time I spoke to them. Previous disruptions and barriers sometimes come up in discussion but it is not what they tend to focus on.

Interactions with Capital. Although mental illness, learning disabilities, and external costs including personal tragedy or injury are clearly separate from capital, these factors can often be worsened or ameliorated depending on how much of certain kinds of capital affected learners have access to. For example, one learner describes the management of symptoms associated with depression. Counselling can be difficult to access for an individual lacking knowledge of or connections within Manitoba's limited network of mental health services, and private therapy or counselling is usually expensive. Fortunately, the social capital afforded this learner due to her enrollment in the ALC means she was able to access the support she needs and able to prevent her education from being disrupted.

Adult educators indicate that each time Neeginan Centre was inaccessible, which happened for a few months at a time during pandemic lockdowns as well as after the fire, they pivoted to either an online or a cohort hybrid learning model, and the proportion of learners who were experiencing success decreased noticeably during each period. Those adult learners who have experienced at least one of these disrupted learning periods also agree that their education was set back as a result.

According to adult educators, the most successful learners during these periods had access to more capital, whether a little more or a lot. Some had lots of cultural capital and knew exactly how to make the most of the situation, organize their schedule and physical space at home, and maintained the pace and habits they had established in the classroom up to the moment the building became unavailable. And certainly, only the learners who had access to laptops or desktop computers and reliable home internet, or the economic means to secure them

when they were suddenly needed, were able to make effective use of the online lessons and resources staff were scrambling to put together.

The Aboriginal Community Campus education director Heather McCormick brought up the fallout of the fire in our first phone conversation: “This school year has been difficult, because a lot of the things that ACC does that makes it different from a traditional learning space, it was harder to do these things while the building has been shut down” (personal communication, February 23, 2023).

For all that CAHRD does to support its learners’ needs beyond the classroom, the ALC is in no position to pay learners’ home internet bills or provide a home computer each time the building is suddenly forced to close its doors. So the reason these abrupt shifts of online learning provide such a stark example of the effect of capital on the ability to weather a crisis is that they were some of the few times in its history that the ALC was not able to directly alleviate capital shortages among its learners. As a result, although some learners had the resources to make it through at the time, many did not.

The co-location of resources, in addressing capital needs, provides much-needed relief from the difficulties associated with managing external costs, mental illness, or learning disabilities, and prevents these from being absolute barriers to learning. Not every problem can be solved with money or non-monetary support, but many can be. This is never clearer than when targeted resources to support those with lower capital are not available.

The Interrelation of Habitus, Capital, and Field

Original to this work is my distinction between oppressive and emancipatory field structures. As I define them in Chapter Three, oppressive field structures are the default social structures that tend to maintain educational inequity, while emancipatory field structures, those

that improve educational equity, would tend to exist only when created intentionally by an equity-seeking organization. This matches my interview data from the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC, which is replete with examples of emancipatory structures and is, by all accounts, quite deliberate about putting all learners on an equal footing and with the best possible opportunity for success.

I observe that these emancipatory field structures seem to fall into two major categories. The first comprises those field structures representing a significant shift in how resources are marshalled and used in response to learner needs. Those learners with the lowest capital receive targeted supports to remove barriers and put them on a more equal footing. The far-reaching nature of the support is beyond what any teacher could reasonably accomplish at the classroom level. The ALC devotes significant portions of its budget and staff attention to meeting learner needs—such as groceries, counselling, daycare, and cultural teachings—that are outside what has traditionally been considered to be within the direct scope of a school.

There is evidence that adult learner participants in this study have made significant progress in developing their own educational capital and cultural capital because of specific field structures that have supported them. Not every learner benefits from the same field structures, but most benefit from one or another. These learners describe the building up of their own educational and cultural capital as having caused a concurrent shift in their racialized habitus over time. More specifically, these learners have become self-reportedly more confident in their own abilities and more hopeful and motivated with respect to achieving their goals.

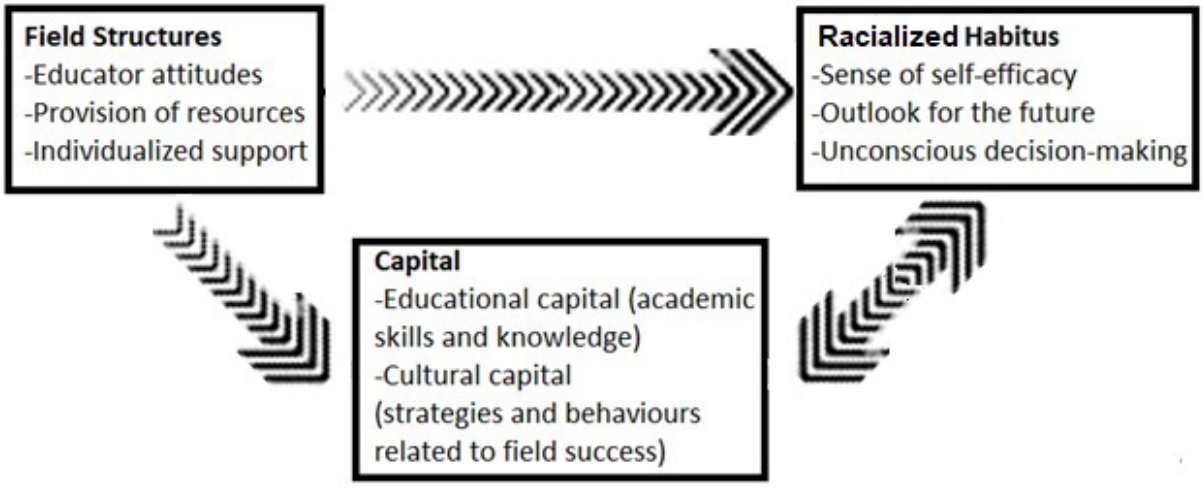
The other type of emancipatory field structure has to do with the way adult learners, their experiences, needs, and challenges, are judged and valued. The adult educators I interviewed have adapted their attitudes to match the views around their learners' value and potential that are

most predominant in the field of this particular school community. The empathy and support these adult educators express has, according to the adult learners interviewed, a direct impact on learners' own racialized habitus, although adult learner participants do not indicate this has had as large an impact as the increase in their own cultural and education capital.

Synthesizing all of these observations, Figure 2 illustrates a proposed theoretical model that attempts to explain how school field structures at the adult learning centre may work to shift learner habitus over time, both directly and indirectly via the building up of educational and cultural capital. Inspiration for the model came in part from Hasinoff and Mandzuk's (2005) theoretical model of how social capital and background variables influence the formation of teacher identity in bachelor of education students.

Figure 2

A Proposed Model of How Field Structures May Shift Learner Habitus



Data from the adult learners interviewed in this study suggests that field structures have had the largest impact on habitus via the building up of learner educational and cultural capital. The relationship between these two kinds of learner capital and habitus is reportedly two-way, the building up of capital affects how learners see themselves and their place in the world, and

this change in their habitus impacts their success in continuing to build up capital. Interview data suggests there is also an effect on learner habitus that is in direct response to field structures, e.g. learner confidence increasing because of the sense of belonging and direct encouragement provided by adult educators and other staff.

Our habitus does so much to shape our choices and the way we experience the world. The potential role of the field at the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC in changing the racialized habitus of its Indigenous adult learners—both directly and as a secondary effect of the building up of educational and cultural capital—should be expected to have far-reaching consequences, perhaps for the rest of their lives. With appropriate adjustments depending on context, this ALC might serve as a model for how to make far-ranging societal impacts by meeting learner needs more holistically and consequently, helping them to reshape their own futures.

Limitations

I believe the rich data my participants have provided constitutes a real contribution to the literature on adult learning centres, but there are several limitations to my study. For example, I applied a case study research design to one Winnipeg-based Indigenous-led adult learning centre, the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC operated by CAHRD. My conclusions regarding the factors that have had the most impact on learner success, and my theoretical model on the relationship between the school's field, learners' cultural and educational capital, and learners' racialized habitus, could be unique to this particular Indigenous organizational community, or even to the small number of learners I interviewed[16].

[16] The relationship between field, habitus, and capital suggested by the participants in this study and summarized as the proposed model in Figure 2 is certainly elegant. But in order to determine whether this observed relationship applies more broadly to the larger Indigenous adult learner population of this ALC, or perhaps to learners in the adult education system generally, it will be necessary to test this model by collecting data via a larger-scale quantitative study.

To see whether one or more of my conclusions applies more broadly to these sorts of contexts, it would be necessary to study other urban Indigenous-led adult learning centres primarily focusing on Indigenous learners, and to collect similar data. Yellowquill College and Urban Circle Training Centre are the most similar organizations operating ALCs that come to mind, although neither has the full expanse of programs available to learners at CAHRD's Aboriginal Community Campus.

Likewise, because my research is focused on an urban Indigenous learner population, most of my conclusions should not be applied, even as a working hypothesis, to Manitoba ALCs with primarily non-Indigenous or more heterogeneous learner populations, nor ALCs in rural or Northern Manitoba locations. The research question for any studies undertaken in those contexts should be adjusted accordingly.

There is one exception, thanks to the research conducted by Silver (2022a). The concordance between his study and my own on the importance of the co-location of resources at the Aboriginal Community Campus does suggest that this could be an important factor in learner success at other Manitoba ALCs with different learner demographics. But since Silver's study relied on director interviews only, this should still be confirmed by further research with data from the learners themselves.

Data from both of my participant groups indicate factors that improve the rate of success with respect to remaining enrolled in and ultimately completing the mature student diploma program, while data on Indigenous adult learners' life chances come primarily in the form of self-reported shifts in *current* learners' confidence and hope for the future, and secondarily from anecdotal mentions of past graduates by adult educator participants. Data from former adult

learners would be needed to determine to what magnitude medium- or long-term educational outcomes and life chances have been affected by participation in the ALC program.

The relative importance of different factors in determining Indigenous adult learner experiences is also not directly determined in this study. I do not ask interview participants to rank various factors in terms of their importance and I do not collect quantitative data, which would require a larger participant base and a different data collection technique, likely a survey instrument. While I identify a number of factors that seem important and several that do not appear to be important, I do not have a precise statistical ranking of the importance of external costs versus dominant cultural capital versus economic capital, et cetera.

Recommendations for Future Research

The interview data collected at one Indigenous-led adult learning centre allows me to glean some insights but it also raises a number of questions warranting further investigation. This section briefly sketches out several suggestions for future research.

To my knowledge, a large-scale, five- or ten-year study of adult learners from one academic year has never been done. The Government of Manitoba's Adult Learning and Literacy Branch collects registration, course completion, graduation, and demographic data for all funded adult learning centres in the province every year. But it does not track learners after they have left their ALC, and I am not aware of any ALC doing so in a detailed and organized way. The information from a longitudinal study of enrolled adult learners tracking educational attainment, employment, and income would be very valuable for Manitoba's government and citizens to understand the societal and economic impact of its investment in adult learning.

A comparative study across multiple ALCs seeking relationships between total per learner funding, adult learner supports, and adult learner per-course completion and graduation

rates might suggest optimal per capita funding levels as well as the relative impact of dollars invested in different budget lines. Government data already exists on ALC budgets, adult learner enrollment numbers, and course completion and graduation percentages via various yearly reports.

My interviews with adult educators indicate a two-way relationship between school culture and individual staff attitudes, in line with Bourdieu's (1984) description of habitus and field as both structuring and structured structures. A study exploring the relationship between teacher habitus and the field of a school couched in these Bourdieusian terms could give a better understanding of the mechanism by which these phenomena interact with each other, and provide a model for how school cultures are formed and changed.

After all, an individual's habitus has a tremendous effect on their life choices and way of experiencing the world. A study or series of studies of one or more specific Indigenous communities (e.g. a Northern Manitoba Cree community with no road access, a Saulteaux community that is part of a mixed Indigenous/non-Indigenous town) using a methodology broadly similar to Cui's (2015) study might provide insights into the factors influencing racialized habitus that are unique to different contexts, as well as larger societal and historical forces whose influence are felt across multiple contexts. Research in this area might even suggest a model useful for understanding the long-term effects of both settler colonialism and Indigenous resurgence more broadly.

Policy Recommendations

In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015b) *Calls to Action*, governments, political parties, and educational institutions at all levels and in all forms have publicly expressed their intentions to advance reconciliation. Reconciliation and related terms

such as decolonization and Indigenization are not used consistently from one individual or organization to another, especially among non-Indigenous organizations like provincial governments. But the *Calls* themselves provide plenty of specifics, none of them seeking platitudes. Within the sphere of education, goals such as eliminating gaps in per-student funding and in educational outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, are both measurable and actionable.

Since the focus of my study and much of my educational career has been devoted to Manitoba adult education, what policy recommendations can I make that would advance reconciliation and at least begin to reverse the effects of centuries of settler colonialism in this region? Moreover, what recommendations can I make for the K-12 schools my participants attended prior to joining the school community of my case study site? I have two major categories of recommendations I cover here: those related to government funding and those related to school operations.

Funding

One of the most prominent themes in my interviews—and this is the case among both participant groups—is the role of direct resource provision in allowing learners to continue to attend classes and continue to advance toward their educational goals. While specialized grants and not-for-profit partners might allow ALC funding dollars to stretch further, money must certainly be spent on school nutrition programs, student liaison staff, and daycare services for adult learners with young children.

Community leaders within the school and at CAHRD clearly believe that these investments are necessary and that the benefits outweigh the cost of spending that same money elsewhere—additional literacy instructors, for example. And interview data from both adult

educators and adult learners I spoke to suggests that this is correct. But there is evidence that if more funding or else direct in-kind support were made available, adult learners would benefit. The two most significant unmet needs for adult learners currently are childcare and computer/internet access.

Childcare. CAHRD operates a daycare program. It is well utilized but staff have indicated that there is always a waitlist. That the number of spots falls short of the need means that individuals interested in improving their educational attainment are delayed by years, waiting for their kids to be old enough to attend school themselves.

Childcare is too large a responsibility for one Indigenous community organization to take care of all by itself, but CAHRD is trying. In attempting to address this the community has shone a light on how large the need actually is, and how significant an impact it can make when an adult learner does or not manage to secure one of these limited spots. Silver (2022a) has likewise identified childcare as one of three required components of an adult learning hub, along with a literacy program and the adult learning centre itself.

There is more than one way logistically and administratively that childcare could be made available to those adult learners who need it. An additional budget line for childcare that is funded above and beyond regular school operation costs could be made available to adult learning centres that have demonstrated a need for an on-site daycare, meaning that ALCs set up and operate the daycare themselves. Or a special allocation of daycares could be directly funded by the province, perhaps with the help of federal funds related to the Canada-wide childcare strategy, and at the request of and with input from adult education directors, all to be located at or right next to existing ALCs.

In either case, all daily fees should be waived, childcare spots at these sites should be exclusively available to the children of adult learners at the same site, and there should be, as much as possible, the availability of both part-time and full-time daycare spots. These spots should be synchronized with the availability of either part-time or full-time ALC class schedules at a given site. Part-time might mean two days per week rather than four or five, or it might mean mornings but not afternoons.

Computers and Internet. Recognizing that computer and internet technology continues to play an increasing role in learning, the Aboriginal Community Campus at Neeginan has both robust Wi-Fi and a laptop loaner program for its on-site adult learners. But during unplanned periods of fully online learning related to the coronavirus pandemic and a fire in the school building, adult learners without both home internet and a reliable personal computer appropriate for school use found their education disastrously interrupted.

What would it cost to provide every low-income household with the requisite technology to learn online when necessary? Refurbished Windows laptops or Chromebooks can likely be acquired for under $200 each on the high end and should be good for three to five years. High-speed internet bills in most parts of Manitoba should cost under $100 per month. If the province were to start a low-income computer technology access program and secure hardware and internet services in bulk, it could probably negotiate lower unit prices, perhaps drastically lower. Other options such as the establishment of a Crown corporation for the provision of internet and the subsequent reframing of internet as a public utility like water or electricity might also lower the cost to access in the long-term.

ALCs would be well-equipped—along with, perhaps, provincial employment income assistance workers and front-line staff at not-for-profits serving people of low income—to

connect individuals in need to such a program. It should not involve any threat of cut-off of services if a learner stops attending an ALC, adult literacy program, or post-secondary institution, nor should that be a requirement to qualify for computer technology access in the first place. Below a certain income threshold, regardless of whether one is currently a registered student or not, access to a computer and internet should simply be a necessity that we commit to providing as a society.

The approximate prices I list here do not account for isolated Manitoba communities that lack adequate internet infrastructure. This is a separate investment but also one that should be committed to and followed through on as quickly as possible.

Best Practices to be Implemented at Most ALCs

In the previous two sections, I mention two areas in which the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC has reached its limit when it comes to being able to meet certain needs of at least some of its learners, but there are a number of things the community does for its adult learners that go well beyond what the average ALC is able to do. Given appropriate government support, these last few sections describe what all or most ALCs could and should do to align with CAHRD's successful model.

Co-Location of Resources. The provision of a wide variety of resources, none of which are used by all adult learners but all of which are much needed by some portion of the student population, is spotlighted by adult learners themselves as well as the adult educators in my two participant groups as a defining characteristic of the school and larger community. But there is no reason to suspect that the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC is unique in with respect to there being a variety of needs among its learners.

As noted, Silver's (2022a) research, concurrent with my own, makes the co-location of resources its single largest recommendation. In a follow-up study, Silver (2022b) goes on to say that the need for ancillary resources and services for learners—beyond the classrooms, courses, and teachers themselves—is high in ALCs across Manitoba.

According to my interview data, many of the well-used resources at my case study site are supports that directly reduce the financial burden on learners, including breakfast programs, the provision of bus tickets for those who need them, and supplying food twice a week for a lunchtime homework club. But this, too, would seem to be a need that would be found well beyond the walls of the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC. Silver's (2022b) study confirms this, directors he interviewed noting that they could use additional funding for nutrition programs.

My interview data also suggests that the provision of social capital to adult learners via the school, while it can be subtle or even unnoticed, still has a large impact in some cases. Accessing everything from educational funding to housing to mental health supports is enormously difficult and time-consuming, and many individuals are overwhelmed even thinking about them, especially if they have several of these things to deal with at once. Whatever a learner is dealing with, staff members, especially those specifically focused on holistic non-academic support, always seem to be able to find someone who may be able to help. In at least some cases shared with me during interviews, this has had a huge impact on whether difficulties beyond the classroom have derailed learners or if these challenges have been overcome.

Silver (2022b) also cites this as a well-identified and widespread need. "It is very likely that almost every ALC and ALP would benefit from being able to hire a full-time or in some cases a part-time support worker to respond to these needs" (p. 16).

Taken altogether, it is clear that almost all ALCs would benefit from a co-location of many of the same resources found at Aboriginal Community Campus ALC, and in some cases surely some different ones (e.g., settlement services at ALCs with more newcomers in the learner population). This of course requires funding, so the government of Manitoba should allocate more funds to adult learning centres across the board, in order to bring the provision of services at most ALCs up to or even beyond the level of support the Aboriginal Community Campus has been providing on average, although individually as appropriate to the total learner needs of a particular ALC.

Community Leadership. My case study site was specifically chosen in order to allow me to explore the experiences of Indigenous adult learners in an ALC that is part of an Indigenous organizational community. My interviews reveal that Indigenous adult learners are overwhelmingly grateful for the level of critically needed support they receive at an adult learning centre designed just for them. The directors of the ALC, CAHRD itself, and the board of directors of the organization are comprised of Indigenous community and educational leaders.

The ALC I chose for my case study is not the only one to boast Indigenous adult learner success under the aegis of dedicated Indigenous leaders. But with 45% of all adult learners being Indigenous, there is probably room for more Indigenous educators in classrooms and more Indigenous leadership at the director and board level of ALCs and adult literacy programs alike.

Likewise, there are ALCs and literacy programs which serve sizeable newcomer populations. If educators, support workers, and leaders can be found who also have gone through the experience of being a newcomer in Canada, they might likewise have insights into learner needs and connections to their learners that Canadian-born staff do not attain as easily.

I therefore recommend that ALCs across the province prioritize having their overall staff and leadership be as representative demographically of the adult learner population being served as possible. This is something to be done, in part, at the hiring stage, but could also be one aspect to keep in mind when developing any longer-term recruitment strategies to bring people into the field of adult education, whether as certified teachers, support workers, or any other needed role.

Graduating adult learners themselves are a potential pool of future ALC staff, teachers, and leaders, and might be encouraged to consider working in adult education in some capacity. Winnipeg School Division operates a program meant to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in its schools, *Build from Within/Ozhitoon Onji Peenjiiee* (Winnipeg School Division, 2021). The program, launched in 2018, identifies current Indigenous high school students in the division with an interest in teaching, provides financial and social support to these students throughout a five-year integrated bachelor of arts/bachelor of education cohort program, and then hires program participants as teachers in divisional schools when they complete their university education. Even a much more financially modest version of this program, one limited to maintaining a social connection and providing some advisory support to adult learning centre graduates pursuing teacher certification, might pay some dividends.

Recommendations for K-12 Schools

Even if divisional K-12 schools and First Nations community schools were operating optimally, there would be a need for a robust adult education system. It meets the needs of former graduates requiring upgrading courses, adult newcomers whose educational opportunities in their originating country were limited, and, as noted by more than one adult learner participant in my study, those who are just more emotionally suited for a high school program when they are a bit older as opposed to during their teenage years.

A majority of Indigenous adult learners interviewed, along with several of the adult educator participants, feel that there is room for improvement at the K-12 level given their prior schooling experiences. The general consensus is that K-12 schools would be better if they adopted some of the attributes adult learners most appreciate about the Aboriginal Community Campus ALC. The specific recommendations vary depending on the participant, including everything from improved mental health supports, to a lunchtime or after-school homework club, to school nutrition programs, to more access to resource or guidance staff members, to adopting a more holistic approach to meeting student needs.

There is significant overlap between the techniques, policies, and practices of high school alternative education programs and those of most adult learning programs. These recommendations could be taken to mean that K-12 schools should be more like adult learning programs, but they could also be taken to mean that K-12 schools should expand access to alternative education models for more students or adopt more of these approaches in all classes where possible.

The need for improved and expanded mental health resources is the strongest recommendation, being mentioned by three out of seven Indigenous adult learner participants. The same three also note that they might not have dropped out of high school if they had received sufficient support in managing their mental health at the time.

Concluding Thoughts

This case study of how one Indigenous community organization serves the educational needs of its adult learners suggests a variety of policy recommendations by which the Manitoba government and adult education system could better serve Indigenous adult learners. If there is a common theme, it is that the needs of these learners are as diverse as the learners themselves,

who vary in age, community, parental status, and myriad other details. The supports provided at the case study site ALC are not all needed by all learners, but the learners that do need any given support may critically depend upon it.

Many of these supports amount to targeted financial relief for learners, such as providing bus tickets and food, or via some kind of direct funding or sponsorship. As to the supports that do not fall into this category, like in-house student liaisons, cultural teachings, and employment services, they also typically involve an increased cost for the ALC or its operating organization, if only in the form of staffing. So a big part of heeding the *Calls to Action* and achieving better educational outcomes for Indigenous adult learners comes down to the government increasing its financial investment in the adult education system, in which Indigenous learners are so highly represented, and to ancillary government services like childcare and technology subsidy programs.

Outside of operating budgets, the success story of CAHRD's Aboriginal Community Campus ALC is in its organizational culture and staff attitudes. The Indigenous adult learners interviewed in this study have benefited from representative, community-based leadership, and from a school culture that aims to keep learners on track via empathy, frequent communication, and targeted individualized support rather than disciplinary measures.

This is not the only Indigenous-led ALC, but there is room for still more Indigenous leadership in the sector, and leadership representative of other marginalized groups that use ALCs. I also do not mean to suggest that the school culture represented in CAHRD's school community is unique, or even rare among Manitoba ALCs, but the more universal it can be, the more I suspect not only Indigenous but all adult learners will benefit.

Appendix A: Email to school director of education and board of directors

Dear _____,

I am a graduate researcher in the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education and a Manitoba teacher interested in exploring similarities and differences between how adult learning centres and K-12 schools are organized, identify critical student behaviours and resources, discover best educational practices, and determine additional resources needed by the educational system in order to better meet the needs of Indigenous learners. I am seeking 6 adult learners and 3 teachers/instructors from your school as volunteer participants in one-on-one interviews of 45-60 minutes (adult learners) or 60-90 minutes (teachers/instructors) as part of this study.

I request that you forward the appropriate "Invitation to participate" documents to your instructional staff and adult learners, respectively, which includes a more detailed breakdown of the study and lays out next steps for those who are considering becoming voluntary participants. If you have any questions, please email me at [REMOVED] (university) or call me at [REMOVED] (work) or [REMOVED] (personal mobile). This study has been approved by Research Ethics Board 2 at the University of Manitoba.

Best regards,

Joel Boyce
Master's Student, Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba

Appendix B: Invitation to participate for adult learners

Dear Neeginan students,

I am a graduate researcher in the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education and a Manitoba Métis teacher interested in designing a case study of how your school operates and supports Indigenous adult learners. The study will include student as well as teacher interviews about how your adult learning experience differs from your past K-12 experiences. Through this study I hope to discover best educational practices and determine additional resources needed by the educational system in order to better meet the needs of Indigenous learners.

After first consulting with the leaders of your school community and receiving their approval, I then received permission from the University of Manitoba's Research Ethics Board 2 (REB2) to conduct this research as a representative of the university. I am seeking six student volunteers from your school to participate in an interview that will be no more than 60 minutes. To participate you must be a currently registered student at the Aboriginal Community Campus adult learning centre in Neeginan Centre, be 18 years of age or older, and self-identify as First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit.

I plan to use the UM Zoom web platform to conduct semi-structured interviews of up to 60 minutes in length that will be scheduled when it is convenient for you. The interviews will be audio/video recorded with your prior consent, but please be advised that only the audio data will be analyzed, and the recordings will only be accessible by me. Once transcribed to text form, a member check process will occur, wherein interview participants will have the opportunity to check their own transcript for accuracy or to request changes for other reasons prior to any interview data being used. All identifying details (of both the participant and any other persons

discussed in the interview) will be removed in the process of creating the transcript, and pseudonyms assigned in place of real names.

If you participate, at the beginning of the interview I will ask you for some basic demographic details. Next, I will ask you a few questions related to your childhood and adolescent school experiences and your current experiences at Neeginan, and any adversity you may have faced in pursuing credits, upgrading, and/or seeking your high school diploma. I will also ask questions related to school and community resources that you have found useful, and ask you to reflect on what areas of the K-12 and adult learning sectors are in need of change or improved resourcing. Finally, I will ask some brief questions about the impact of the pandemic on your schooling, and any insights derived from these experiences.

If you agree to participate, please note that you will also be able to skip any questions you prefer not to answer, and agreement to participate may be withdrawn at any time before data analysis has begun, up to and including the member check process wherein the interview transcript is being reviewed. This study is considered to be of minimal risk, meaning that participating in the study should be of no more physical or emotional danger than ordinary daily life. It is possible you could experience emotional distress when recounting past school experiences, or social harm if there is inadvertent sharing of confidential details. There is a consent form that will explain procedures that I will have in place to protect against these risks for participants.

This consent form will be provided to interested potential participants to review, sign, and return and will contain more details about your rights as participants and the steps taken to keep you and your data safe. The main benefit of participating in the study is being able to share your experiences and expertise in order to the body of academic knowledge about the school

system and provide insights that may be used to better serve Indigenous learners and communities.

If you are willing to participate in an interview or if you want more information, please email me at [REMOVED] (university) or call me at [REMOVED] (work) or [REMOVED] (personal mobile). This study has been approved by Research Ethics Board 2 at the University of Manitoba.

Best regards,

Joel Boyce
Master's Student, Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba

Appendix C: Invitation to participate for teachers/instructors

Dear Neeginan adult educators,

I am a graduate researcher in the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education and a Manitoba Métis teacher interested in designing a case study of how your school operates and supports Indigenous adult learners. The study will include student as well as teacher interviews about student experiences, the centre's support strategies, and other observations. Through this study I hope to discover best educational practices and determine additional resources needed by the educational system in order to better meet the needs of Indigenous learners.

After first consulting with the leaders of your school community and receiving their approval, I then received permission from the University of Manitoba's Research Ethics Board 2 (REB2) to conduct this research as a representative of the university. I am seeking six teacher/instructor volunteers from your school to participate in an interview that will be between 60 and 90 minutes. Participants may be certified teachers, adult learning centre instructors, or literacy instructors, but must have at least five years total experience teaching or instructing in one or more adult learning centres (at a full-time equivalent, or FTE, of 0.5 or higher), and this teaching experience must include at least one year of teaching that has occurred since March, 2020 (also at an FTE of 0.50 or higher).

I plan to use the UM Zoom web platform to conduct semi-structured interviews of about 60-90 minutes in length that will be scheduled when it is convenient for you. The interviews will be audio/video recorded with your prior consent but please be advised that only the audio data will be analyzed, and the recordings will only be accessible by me. Once transcribed a member check process will occur, wherein participants will have the opportunity to check their own transcript for accuracy or to request changes for other reasons prior to any interview data being

used. All identifying details (of both the participant and any other persons discussed in the interview) will be removed in the process of creating the transcript, and pseudonyms assigned in place of real names.

If you participate, at the beginning of the interview I will ask you for some basic demographic details. Next, I will ask you a few questions related to your observations about Indigenous students you have worked with, the assets they have drawn on, and any adversity they may have faced in pursuing credits, upgrading, and/or a diploma in your adult learning program. Then I will ask a few questions related to school and community resources that you have found to have notably positive impacts on educational outcomes, as well as areas of the K-12 and adult learning sectors that are in need of change or improved resourcing. Finally, I will ask some brief questions about the impact of the pandemic on your school and students, and any insights derived from these experiences.

If you agree to participate, please note you will also be able to skip any questions you prefer not to answer, and agreement to participate may be withdrawn at any time before data analysis has begun, up to and including the member check process wherein the interview transcript is being reviewed. This study is considered to be of minimal risk, meaning that participating in the study should be of no more physical or emotional danger than ordinary daily life. It is possible you could experience emotional distress when recounting past school experiences, or professional harm if there is inadvertent sharing of confidential details. There is a consent form that will explain procedures that I will have in place to protect against these risks for participants.

This consent form will be provided to interested potential participants to review, sign, and return and will contain more details about your rights as participants and the steps taken to

keep you and your data safe. The main benefit of participating in the study is being able to share your experiences and expertise in order to the body of academic knowledge about the school system, and provide insights that may be used to better serve Indigenous learners and communities.

If you are willing to participate in an interview or if you want more information, please email me at [REMOVED] (university) or call me at [REMOVED] (work) or [REMOVED] (personal mobile). This study has been approved by Research Ethics Board 2 at the University of Manitoba.

Best regards,

Joel Boyce
Master's Student, Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba

Appendix D: Consent form for adult learner participants (to be printed on University letterhead)

Date:

Dear _____,

My name is Joel Boyce and I am a graduate researcher in the department of Educational Administration, Foundations and Psychology at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study focused on studying aspects of our school system that either improve or limit educational outcomes for Indigenous learners.

This consent form, a signed copy of which will remain with you, for your records, is a part of the process of informed consent. It will outline the basic goals of the research and your role as a voluntary participant. I will happily provide more detail about any aspect of the consent process, this research study, or anything else mentioned in this form or which has not been mentioned at your request.

1. **Goal of the study:** The goal of this study is to gather qualitative data from several registered adult learners as well as teachers/instructors at Aboriginal Community Campus adult learning centre about their experiences and observations of key assets and resources of the school, and to potentially identify best practices, resource needs, and systemic challenges of the adult learning and K-12 sectors of the education system in meeting the needs of Indigenous students. I hope this data will ultimately provide insights into some of the major factors that have led to student success in this school and might be applied to achieve greater success elsewhere in the future.

2. **Procedure:** I will be conducting semi-structured interviews in person at your school at a time of your convenience. If meeting in person does not work with you we can also perform the interview on the UM Zoom platform. Semi-structured means that the list of questions is determined in advance but that follow-ups and points of clarification may occur organically based on your answers. You can expect the formal interview to take no more than 60 minutes of your time and you may review the questions in advance not only to prepare your answers, but to consider whether there are some questions you prefer not to answer. You have the right to decline to answer any question during the interview itself or to have answers removed during the "member check process", described in the member check section of this consent form.

3. **Recording:** In-person interviews will be audio recorded only and the audio file stored on my password-protected laptop. Audio-video interviews will be conducted using the UM Zoom virtual platform. I will have my camera on and you will be encouraged to use your camera as well, but you can participate while keeping your camera off if you prefer. The meeting will be recorded and securely stored in the University of Manitoba's cloud-based storage services. Only the audio data from the interview will be transcribed and analyzed, and only I, the person interviewing you, will have access to the recording.

4. **Benefits:** The <u>direct benefits</u> for participating in the research are:
    - Having the opportunity to reflect and thereby identify or reaffirm factors that have had a positive impact on the educational experiences of their Indigenous students;
    - Having the opportunity to reflect and thereby identify possible factors that negatively impact the educational experiences of their Indigenous students, and thus explore

potential mitigating or navigational strategies that would be of benefit to your students; and

- Having the opportunity to reflect on your centre's operations and identify existing strategies that should be maintained and new strategies that should be adopted, and to advocate for these.

The indirect benefits for participants participating in the research are:

- By sharing their experiences working with Indigenous students, they will be indirectly contributing to a body of academic literature, which may suggest systemic changes that improve the experiences of Indigenous students in the education system;
- By sharing their experiences working in an adult learning centre, they may contribute to increased visibility of both the positive work being done in adult education, and whether additional resources or support are needed to allow the sector to be more effective.

5. **Description of potential risk**: This study is of minimal risk to participants, since reflecting on and discussing student experiences and systemic challenges in schools are a daily experience for most educators. However, there are two risks that should be explored in detail:
    - You may experience some psychological or emotional distress as you recount adversity or challenging situations you have experienced as a student.
      If this happens during our interview, I will first ask if you need to take a break while you take steps to reduce your distress. I will then ask if you wish to continue where we left off, go onto the next question. If necessary, I will also note that the interview can be rescheduled, or that you can withdraw from the study if you find completing the interview will be too distressing.

    - There may be some degree of social risk if you share any confidential student or staff details with me and the data is not sufficiently anonymized.
      To avoid any risk to you of this nature, I will pay particular attention to anonymizing all details related to any particularly sensitive situations shared, ensuring that the data cannot be re-linked to specific people by individual details or by data that are identifying when combined. During the member checking phase of the project, I will ask you to pay particular attention to how I have anonymized any stories shared that were of this nature. Finally, all demographic data will be aggregated and reported on separately and as a whole rather than attaching that data to specific participants.

6. **Member check:** After the interview has been completed, I will produce a written transcript as soon as possible (aiming within two weeks). I will provide you with a copy and allow you time to review it and to request additions, deletions, or changes either for accuracy or your own comfort. These requests may be extended to your demographic data, for example your sex or gender identity, which will be recorded as "prefer not to say" should you decline to answer in the interview or ask for it to be removed after reviewing the transcript. You also have the right to withdraw your participation entirely at any time, including after the interview has started or during the member check process, in which case your data will be destroyed. You will have two weeks to review the transcript from the time I sent it before analysis may begin. If you do not respond after two weeks, approval of the transcript as written will be assumed, and the option to withdraw will have ended. Likewise, if changes are requested and implemented during this period, the option to withdraw will still end once the two-week period has elapsed, and analysis may begin.

7. **Confidentiality of data:** The following measures will be taken to maintain your anonymity: 1) personal data (your own as well as that of any person you discuss in your answers, and the name of the adult learning centre itself) will be removed from transcripts automatically—with names replaced by assigned pseudonyms—while participants will be able to request the removal of any additional data in the transcript for any reason during the member check process, 2) audio recordings of in-person interviews will be stored on my password-protected laptop, while audio-video recordings of Zoom meetings will be stored in secure UM cloud servers. All recordings of meetings will be only accessible to the interviewer, and these files will be deleted no later than one year after the conclusion of the study (no later than March 1, 2025), 3) the anonymized transcripts will be read and organized or "coded" by theme by the principal investigator in parallel with a research assistant, but participant names will not be attached to the individual transcripts, so the research assistant will not know the identities of the participants whose transcripts are being read or where they teach, 4) signed consent forms will be stored separately and securely from interview transcripts and only the principal investigator will have the key connecting transcripts and the real names of participants, 5) all identifying electronic data will be password protected and encrypted in UM cloud services and accessible only to the principle investigator, 6) at no time will personal identifiers be used in the analysis stage or in the reporting of the results of the study, 7) the anonymized transcripts will not be published in full but as part of aggregate results with the occasional quotation, 8) all remaining electronic data (other than audio or audio-video recordings) will be deleted three years after the completion of the study (no later than March 1, 2027).

8. **Dissemination:** The research results may include direct quotes from participants using only their pseudonyms, as well as overall results in aggregate form. This research forms part of my Master's thesis and will automatically be published as such by the University of Manitoba upon my successful defense. The results may also be disseminated via one or more academic publications in professional journals and/or academic conference presentations both prior to and subsequent to a successful thesis defense.

9. **Summary of findings:** As a participant in this study, if you have indicated that you would like a summary of my findings, I will send you a one- or two-page summary by email as soon as possible after the data collection phase of the project has been completed, which I anticipate will be before the end of 2023, and a copy of the completed thesis once it has been successfully defended.

10. **Credit/remuneration:** A $25 gift card will be provided as a small thank you for your time.

If you wish to participate and have not already done so, please contact me to arrange an interview time. Sign and return this consent form to me by email and keep the original for your records. To withdraw from this study at any time, including after signing the consent form and after completing the interview, simply contact me to make the request any time prior to the end of the two-week member check period.

Consent:

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject, including the audio or audio-video recording of the interview and the steps discussed to safeguard your personal data. In no way does signing this form waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, funders, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your

continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board 2. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the principal researcher as below, or the Human Ethics Coordinator at [REMOVED], or e-mail [REMOVED]. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

_____ _____
Participant's Signature Date

_____ _____
Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature Date

Sincerely,

Joel Boyce
Graduate Student, Faculty of Education
[REMOVED]
[REMOVED]

Appendix E: Consent form for teacher/instructor participants (to be printed on University letterhead)

Date:

Dear _____,

My name is Joel Boyce and I am a graduate researcher in the department of Educational Administration, Foundations and Psychology at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study focused on studying aspects of our school system that either improve or limit educational outcomes for Indigenous learners.

This consent form, a signed copy of which will remain with you, for your records, is a part of the process of informed consent. It will outline the basic goals of the research and your role as a voluntary participant. I will happily provide more detail about any aspect of the consent process, this research study, or anything else mentioned in this form or which has not been mentioned at your request.

1. **Goal of the study:** The goal of this study is to gather qualitative data from several registered adult learners as well as teachers/instructors at Aboriginal Community Campus adult learning centre about their experiences and observations of key assets and resources of the school, and to potentially identify best practices, resource needs, and systemic challenges of the adult learning and K-12 sectors of the education system in meeting the needs of Indigenous students. I hope this data will ultimately provide insights into some of the major factors that have led to student success in this school and might be applied to achieve greater success elsewhere in the future.

2. **Procedure:** I will be conducting semi-structured interviews on the UM Zoom platform. Semi-structured means that the list of questions is determined in advance but that follow-ups and points of clarification may occur organically based on your answers. You can expect the formal interview to take 60-90 minutes of your time and you may review the questions in advance not only to prepare your answers, but to consider whether there are some questions you prefer not to answer. You have the right to decline to answer any question during the interview itself or to have answers removed during the "member check process", described in the member check section of this consent form.

3. **Recording:** In-person interviews will be audio recorded only and the audio file stored on my password-protected laptop. Audio-video interviews will be conducted using the UM Zoom virtual platform. I will have my camera on and you will be encouraged to use your camera as well, but you can participate while keeping your camera off if you prefer. The meeting will be recorded and securely stored in the University of Manitoba's cloud-based storage services. Only the audio data from the interview will be transcribed and analyzed, and only I, the person interviewing you, will have access to the recording.

4. **Benefits:** The <u>direct benefits</u> for participating in the research are:
    - Having the opportunity to reflect and thereby identify or reaffirm factors that have had a positive impact on the educational experiences of their Indigenous students;
    - Having the opportunity to reflect and thereby identify possible factors that negatively impact the educational experiences of their Indigenous students, and thus explore

potential mitigating or navigational strategies that would be of benefit to your students; and

- Having the opportunity to reflect on your centre's operations and identify existing strategies that should be maintained and new strategies that should be adopted, and to advocate for these.

The indirect benefits for participants participating in the research are:

- By sharing their experiences working with Indigenous students, they will be indirectly contributing to a body of academic literature, which may suggest systemic changes that improve the experiences of Indigenous students in the education system;
- By sharing their experiences working in an adult learning centre, they may contribute to increased visibility of both the positive work being done in adult education, and whether additional resources or support are needed to allow the sector to be more effective.

5. **Description of potential risk**: This study is of minimal risk to participants, since reflecting on and discussing student experiences and systemic challenges in schools are a daily experience for most educators. However, there are two risks that should be explored in detail:
    - You may experience some psychological or emotional distress as you recount adversity experienced by students or challenging situations you have been involved in with students or staff.
      If this happens during our interview, I will first ask if you need to take a break while you take steps to reduce your distress. I will then ask if you wish to continue where we left off, go onto the next question. If necessary, I will also note that the interview can be rescheduled, or that you can withdraw from the study if you find completing the interview will be too distressing.

    - There may be some degree of professional risk if you share any confidential student or staff details with me and the data is not sufficiently anonymized.
      To avoid any risk to you of this nature, I will pay particular attention to anonymizing all details related to any particularly sensitive situations shared, ensuring that the data cannot be re-linked to specific people by individual details or by data that are identifying when combined. During the member checking phase of the project, I will ask you to pay particular attention to how I have anonymized any stories shared that were of this nature. Finally, all demographic data will be aggregated and reported on separately and as a whole rather than attaching that data to specific participants.

6. **Member check:** After the interview has been completed, I will produce a written transcript as soon as possible (aiming within two weeks). I will provide you with a copy and allow you time to review it and to request additions, deletions, or changes either for accuracy or your own comfort. These requests may be extended to your demographic data, for example your sex or gender identity, which will be recorded as "prefer not to say" should you decline to answer in the interview or ask for it to be removed after reviewing the transcript. You also have the right to withdraw your participation entirely at any time, including after the interview has started or during the member check process, in which case your data will be destroyed. You will have two weeks to review the transcript from the time I sent it before analysis may begin. If you do not respond after two weeks, approval of the transcript as written will be assumed, and the option to withdraw will have ended. Likewise, if changes are requested and implemented during this period, the option to withdraw will still end once the two-week period has elapsed, and analysis may begin.

7. **Confidentiality of data:** The following measures will be taken to maintain your anonymity: 1) personal data (your own as well as that of any person you discuss in your answers, and the name of the adult learning centre itself) will be removed from transcripts automatically—with names replaced by assigned pseudonyms—while participants will be able to request the removal of any additional data in the transcript for any reason during the member check process, 2) audio recordings of in-person interviews will be stored on my password-protected laptop, while audio-video recordings of Zoom meetings will be stored in secure UM cloud servers. All recordings of meetings will be only accessible to the interviewer, and these files will be deleted no later than one year after the conclusion of the study (no later than March 1, 2025), 3) the anonymized transcripts will be read and organized or "coded" by theme by the principal investigator in parallel with a research assistant, but participant names will not be attached to the individual transcripts, so the research assistant will not know the identities of the participants whose transcripts are being read or where they teach, 4) signed consent forms will be stored separately and securely from interview transcripts and only the principal investigator will have the key connecting transcripts and the real names of participants, 5) all identifying electronic data will be password protected and encrypted in UM cloud services and accessible only to the principle investigator, 6) at no time will personal identifiers be used in the analysis stage or in the reporting of the results of the study, 7) the anonymized transcripts will not be published in full but as part of aggregate results with the occasional quotation, 8) all remaining electronic data (other than audio or audio-video recordings) will be deleted three years after the completion of the study (no later than March 1, 2027).

8. **Dissemination:** The research results may include direct quotes from participants using only their pseudonyms, as well as overall results in aggregate form. This research forms part of my Master's thesis and will automatically be published as such by the University of Manitoba upon my successful defense. The results may also be disseminated via one or more academic publications in professional journals and/or academic conference presentations both prior to and subsequent to a successful thesis defense.

9. **Summary of findings:** As a participant in this study, if you have indicated that you would like a summary of my findings, I will send you a one- or two-page summary by email as soon as possible after the data collection phase of the project has been completed, which I anticipate will be before the end of 2023, and a copy of the completed thesis once it has been successfully defended.

10. **Credit/remuneration:** A $25 gift card will be provided as a small thank you for your time.

If you wish to participate and have not already done so, please contact me to arrange an interview time. Sign and return this consent form to me by email and keep the original for your records. To withdraw from this study at any time, including after signing the consent form and after completing the interview, simply contact me to make the request any time prior to the end of the two-week member check period.

Consent:

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject, including the audio or audio-video recording of the interview and the steps discussed to safeguard your personal data. In no way does signing this form waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, funders, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your

continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board 2. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the principal researcher as below, or the Human Ethics Coordinator at [REMOVED], or e-mail [REMOVED]. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

_____ _____
Participant's Signature Date

_____ _____
Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature Date

Sincerely,

Joel Boyce
Graduate Student, Faculty of Education
[REMOVED]
[REMOVED]

Appendix F: Interview script for adult learner participants

Research project title: Adult Learners and Educators' Perceptions of How *Racialized Habitus* and *Cultural Capital* Impact Indigenous Students' Experiences in the *Field* of One Winnipeg Adult Learning Centre

Introduction/preamble

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Just a reminder of some key points from the consent form that you signed: this meeting is being securely audio (if in person) or audio and video recorded (if on UM Zoom) so that I may create transcripts of the interview later, but this recording will not be published or shared.

While you have given your consent to participate you are able to withdraw that consent at any time before data analysis begins, including right now, partway through the interview, or up to two weeks after you receive your copy of the transcript for review. If you withdraw consent any recordings or transcript that have been made will be destroyed and not used in the study.

I also want to remind you that every question in this interview is optional, you may decline to answer any question (or follow-up question) and you do not need to explain why. If you become distressed at any point during the interview we will pause, take a break, and afterward determine whether to resume, reschedule, skip sections of, or discontinue the interview.

Are there any questions before we start?

Okay, let's begin.

A. Demographic Questions

To start I have some demographic questions. As with every other question in this interview, if you prefer not to answer any one or all of these questions, no problem, I will just record it as "prefer not to say".

1. How do you self-identify in terms of sex/gender?
2. What age category do you fall into? (18-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, etc.)
3. What Indigenous community or communities do you belong to?
4. Please briefly describe your past school experiences prior to being an adult learner: specifically, where you attended school, the last grade you attended before you left school, approximately how many schools you attended, and whether you attended other adult learning centres prior to joining this one.

B. Dominant Forms of Capital (Bourdieu, Lareau, Wallace) in Different School Fields

For the next set of questions. I'll be asking about your previous school experiences as well as your recent experiences at this adult learning centre. Just a reminder that any names that you may mention will be replaced with pseudonyms in the transcript of this interview before anyone besides myself sees it and any potentially identifying information will be changed or removed.

5. For this question, think about your *past* school experiences as a child or adolescent:
a) What were you like as a student back then, e.g., what words might your teachers and classmates have used to describe your personality, academic ability, and behaviour in class?

b) Do you remember facing challenges in the pursuit of your education during this period? If so, please describe how you handled these challenges.

6. For this question, think about your *recent* school experiences at this adult learning centre:

a) Compared to your past school experiences, are there ways in which your attitude or behaviours as a student have changed? Please explain.

b) Compared to your past school experiences, has your understanding of how to be academically successful changed? Please explain.

C. Racialized Habitus

7. What are your goals, expectations, and/or hopes for the future?

8. How confident are you that you will achieve your goals?

9. Has your outlook for the future changed since you became a student here? If so, how?

D. Community Cultural Wealth and Non-Dominant Cultural Capital

10. What are the small and large bits of help you have gotten that have made it easier for you to attend school and be successful? These could include family and friends, communities or organizations to which you belong, and school staff or programs. If so, please explain the type(s) of help you received (babysitting, advice, emotional support, funding/sponsorship, etc.).

11. How did you find out about and learn how to use these resources?

E. Schools as Fields

12. What are the main ways in which this adult learning centre is different from schools you attended previously?

13. Comparing your experiences in this adult learning centre to your experiences at the school(s) you attended in your childhood/adolescence, are there any things that you think those schools should be doing differently?

F. Effects of the Pandemic on School Equity

14. Has your education been impacted, positively or negatively, since the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, how?

G. Final Reflection Question

15. Considering everything we've talked about today, what do you think has been the most significant thing so far in helping you to achieve school success?

Closing statement

Thank you for your participation in this interview, I believe it will be of value to the scholarship and the working fields of adult education and Indigenous education and I appreciate you making your time available to contribute to this study. I will be in touch via email with a transcript of the interview in the near future for your review, but if any questions or concerns come up before then, please feel free to call or email before then. As a small token of my appreciation, you will also receive a gift card at your physical school address. Are there any questions before we end the meeting?

Thank you and take care!

Appendix G: Interview script for adult educator participants

Research project title: Adult Learners and Educators' Perceptions of How *Racialized Habitus* and *Cultural Capital* Impact Indigenous Students' Experiences in the *Field* of One Winnipeg Adult Learning Centre

Introduction/preamble

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Just a reminder of some key points from the consent form that you signed: this meeting is being securely audio (if in person) or audio and video recorded (if on UM Zoom) so that I may create transcripts of the interview later, but this recording will not be published or shared.

While you have given your consent to participate you are able to withdraw that consent at any time before data analysis begins, including right now, partway through the interview, or up to two weeks after you receive your copy of the transcript for review. If you withdraw consent any recordings or transcript that have been made will be destroyed and not used in the study.

I also want to remind you that every question in this interview is optional, you may decline to answer any question (or follow-up question) and you do not need to explain why. If you become distressed at any point during the interview we will pause, take a break, and afterward determine whether to resume, reschedule, skip sections of, or discontinue the interview.

Are there any questions before we start?

Okay, let's begin.

A. Demographic Questions

To start I have some demographic questions. As with every other question in this interview, if you prefer not to answer any one or all of these questions, no problem, I will just record it as "prefer not to say".

1. How long you have been teaching, in total, in adult education, and at this centre?
2. How do you self-identify in terms of sex/gender?
3. What age category do you fall into? (25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, etc.)
4. How do you self-identify in terms of ethnicity?
5. Is there anything else you feel like sharing at this time related to your teacher identity or professional experience that you think will help me better understand your perspective on education?

B. Dominant Forms of Capital (Bourdieu, Lareau, Wallace) in the Field of an ALC

For the next set of questions. I'll be asking about your observations of the experiences of your Indigenous students, including challenges and successes, within adult learning centres you've worked at. Just a reminder that any names that you may mention will be replaced with pseudonyms in the transcript of this interview before anyone besides myself sees it.

6. Think about a student or several <u>students you have had that struck you as particularly academically capable and/or as thriving</u> in an adult learning program where you taught.
a) List any words that come to mind when thinking about this/these student(s).
b) Tell me about their behaviour in class, and relationships with you, classmates, and staff.

c) Do you remember this/these student(s) facing particular challenges and how they handled them? Can you give any examples of how they typically dealt with adversity?

7. Next, please think about a student or several students who struggled in your class and in the school environment generally, one whom you have struggled to get moving in the right direction academically, socially, or in terms of preparing for the future.

a) List any words that come to mind when thinking about this/these student(s).

b) Tell me about their behaviour in class, and relationships with you, classmates, and staff.

c) Do you remember this/these student(s) facing particular challenges and how they handled them? Can you give any examples of how they typically dealt with adversity?

C. Racialized Habitus

8. Think again about that student or those students you found to be thriving.

a) What did you observe about their worldview, expectations, and hopes for the future?

b) Would you characterize the above as overly optimistic or pessimistic? Why?

9. Now think again about that student or those students you found to be struggling.

a) What did you observe about their worldview, expectations, and hopes for the future?

b) Would you characterize the above as overly optimistic or pessimistic? Why?

D. Schools as Fields

10. From your experience, how do the cultures of adult learning centres compare to the cultures of K-12 schools? What impact do you think these differences have on your students?

11. Are there any intentional strategies that your school has used to counteract inequities experienced by your Indigenous learners prior to enrolling with you? This can include improving their ALC educational experience as well as their post-secondary transition.

12. What, if any, current structural inequities do you think are experienced by Indigenous and other student groups enrolled in adult learning programs, and how can Manitoba adult education be improved, be this at the classroom level, school level, or at government or other levels?

E. Effects of the Pandemic on School Equity

13. Which groups of students seemed to fare better than others during the changes in school operations that were made during the pandemic? Why do you think that was so?

14. Given your experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, are there any sectors of the education system or related systems in society you think could be made more equitable?

Closing statement

Thank you for your participation in this interview, I believe it will be of value to the scholarship and the working fields of adult education and Indigenous education and I appreciate you making your time available to contribute to this study. I will be in touch via email with a transcript of the interview in the near future for your review, but if any questions or concerns come up before then, please feel free to call or email before then. As a small token of my appreciation, you will also receive a gift card at your physical school address. Are there any questions before we end the meeting?

Thank you and take care!

References

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