The Politics and Praxis of Culturally Relevant Sport Education: Empowering Urban Aboriginal Youth through Community Sport

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

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ABSTRACT

Community sport organizations (CSO) are the most predominant type of nonprofit and voluntary organization in Canada (Gumulka, Barr, Lasby, & Brown-lee, 2005), and, it is vital that researchers recognize the critical, and often contradictory, social roles that these organizations are expected to perform. Community sport is both lauded as a progressive force of individual and community development (Sport for Development and Peace, International Working Group [SDP IWG], 2006) and criticized for reproducing race and class-based stereotypes that marginalize Aboriginal peoples (Canadian Heritage, 2005). Added to these challenges is the fact that sport leaders are expected to negotiate conflicting interests and unequal power relations (see Forester, 1989) while relying on a very limited body of research in which to guide their work in designing, delivering and facilitating culturally relevant sport programs for Aboriginal youth (see Forsyth, Heine & Halas, 2007; Maskawachees Declaration, 2000).

Positioned within a transdisciplinary theoretical framework and guided by principles of indigenous research (Schnarch, 2004; Wilson, 2008), I conducted a multi-layered community-based study with sport leaders and youth participants at the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Center (WASAC), a successful urban Aboriginal sport organization in Manitoba, Canada. Building on similar research in the area of culturally relevant physical activity and education (e.g., Carpenter, 2009; Forsyth et al., 2007), the purpose of my research was to examine the politics and praxis of culturally relevant sport education (CRSE) – specifically, program planning and leadership practices - as an alternative to deficit-based and culturally inappropriate sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth.
Findings reveal that WASAC’s organizational, administrative and program leaders utilize a complex and dynamic set of explicit and tacit cultural teachings and educational models rooted within a context- and relationship-based approach to program planning and facilitation. Findings also indicate that culturally relevant sport leadership practices are strongly related to the personal, experiential and cultural background and knowledge of sport leaders. The study concludes by suggesting that sport leaders who understand the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth - through lived experience or education, work/volunteer experiences - and utilize critical self-reflexive practices are more likely to recognize and build upon the resilience of urban Aboriginal youth and culture while proactively responding to the complex challenges that shape the lives of youth.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude to the people who walked this journey with me…

To my advisor, Dr. Joannie Halas – You gave me the skills, tools and courage to transform academic adversity into an opportunity for self-discovery. In doing so, you helped me tap into a deep well on inner power that I continue to draw on today. Thank you for being my teacher, friend, mentor and source of inspiration.

To my committee, Dr. Piquemal, Dr. Watkinson, Dr. Field and Dr. Lavallée – You planted a garden of ideas in my heart and spirit with your detailed and thoughtful advice! My deepest gratitude to Dr. Lavallée for her gentle teachings and compassionate understanding of my struggle to reclaim my Métis identity.

To my partner, Greg Kristalovich – Creator blesses us with many gifts… your gift of transforming raw thoughts into inspirational prose illuminated many of the nameless and formless ideas that lie dormant within my work. Every kindness you shared, I remember.

To my parents, Edna and Archie McRae - Everything that I am and strive to be is a reflection of the lessons you continue to teach.

To Dr. Poonwassie, Dr. Kirkness, and Ph.D Studies for Aboriginal Scholars (PSAS) Council members – Your wisdom and commitment to nurturing future generations of Aboriginal students, leaders and allies is carried within the hearts of all PSAS students.
DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to amazing and wonderful sport leaders at the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Center (WASAC). Since 1999, they have been the ‘dream keepers’ of community sport (see Ladson-Billings, 2009), successful sport educators of Aboriginal youth who demonstrate the catalytic power of culturally relevant programming and leadership practices. To the Aboriginal youth participants in the photovoice project and exhibit, I give my heart filled thanks. As a Métis woman who still struggles to confidently claim my cultural identity, I understood the difficult task I put before you – to take photographs and tell stories about something you felt existed just outside your reach. It takes courage to break the silences that exist around Aboriginal identity and identifying processes in mainstream society and in sport. You taught me that the journey towards building a culturally relevant sport system must account for our silences as much as our speech (S. Griffith).¹

I also wish to dedicate this dissertation to Brenda-Lea Tully who passed away due to chronic health issues three years ago. She was my best friend for 25 years and her courage to name her experiences and challenge the small injustices that pave the way for larger ones inspired me to do the same. Those who inspire us to defy what we are told must be and introduce us to the transformative possibilities of the imagination become our heroes. Brenda-Lea was mine.

¹ I am paraphrasing a quote by Susan Griffith, a feminist poet who once said “A story is told as much by silence as by speech.”
² These words are attributed to Charles Wood, NAIG Founding Member and Elder on the NAIG Council. See Paraschak and Forsyth (2002, p. iv).
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CHAPTER 1: BUILDING A GRASSROOTS BASE

The Spirit Strong, Brave and True

Charles Wood, Founder of NAIG²

In 2005, Canadian Heritage released the Sport Canada’s Policy on Aboriginal Peoples’ Participation in Sport, a policy document that acknowledged the existence of barriers (e.g., racism, cultural insensitivity and poverty) to Aboriginal peoples participation in sport. Unfortunately, Sport Canada focuses almost exclusively on competitive and elite level sport in Canada;³ a position that inevitably reflects the bureaucratic interests and language of powerful sport bodies, not the routine concerns and vernacular of community sport leaders or the wholistic understanding of sport advocated by Aboriginal peoples (Paraschak, 2011). And, although Canadian Heritage’s policy document was an important first step in validating concerns by Aboriginal sport organizations, the development of an inclusive sport system for Aboriginal peoples demands much more of researchers and policy-makers.

² These words are attributed to Charles Wood, NAIG Founding Member and Elder on the NAIG Council. See Paraschak and Forsyth (2002, p. iv).
³ According to Green and Houlihan (2005), the administration of sport was divided into elite and mass participation sport with elite sport remaining the purview of Sport Canada and mass participation programs being devolved to the provinces and territories. According to Sport Canada’s policy (Canadian Heritage, n.d.) and website, Sport Canada remains interested in participation-driven sport initiatives. However, participation-based initiatives appear to be administered by external government agencies such as Public Health Agency of Canada while Sport Canada retains direct responsibility for competitive sport and athlete-driven sport initiatives (Special Initiatives, see http://www.pch.gc.ca/pgm/sc/init/index-eng.cfm). In addition, of the three funding programs listed on their website, only one program, the Sport Support Program includes financial support for participation-based sport initiatives. However, the language and images reflected within the Sport Support Program Project Stream Component Guidelines (2011-2012) almost exclusively focus on elite sport.
Until its closure in early 2012, the Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC) acted as the national voice for Aboriginal sport within Canada’s mainstream sport system. Since its creation in 1995, the ASC nurtured and advocated for an Aboriginal sport system parallel to, yet distinct from, Canada’s mainstream sport system. Like its primary funder, Sport Canada, the ASC focused on providing support to amateur and elite level athletes – namely, First Nations, Métis, Inuit or non-status – on their journey from playground to podium. Despite the ASC’s success regarding elite/competitive sport opportunities for Aboriginal athletes, it had “only begun to scratch the surface of having a meaningful impact at the grassroots level” (Brant, 2002, p. 34).

Aboriginal sport leaders recognize that in order for sport to have a meaningful impact for all Aboriginal peoples, it must be defined sport by its antecedents and extensions such as physical activity, play, and recreation (Maskwachees Declaration, 2000; Paraschak, 2011), rather then by its most narrow exclusionary form (that of competitive, organized and elite sport). Without such a wholistic definition, it becomes easy to dismiss sport as a luxury rather than a basic human need. According to Brant (2002), efforts to build a more inclusive sport system for Aboriginal peoples must address two issues: creating a wholistic understanding of sport, and directing more attention and resources to the grassroots base of sport (e.g., physical activity and recreation).

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4 In an on-line news article published by Postmedia News on January 16, 2012, Jeff Davis reported that the ASC lost its federal funding due to financial and board governance issues. As Sport Canada funding represents 90% of its organizational budget, this funding cut represents a serious threat to the future of the ASC. Note: No information about this funding cut was found on Sport Canada’s website or the federal government website. Retrieved April 7, 2012 from http://www.canada.com/Aboriginal+sports+organization+loses+federal+funding+after+management+probe/6004642/story.html
Community Sport: The Issues

As a Métis woman working in the area of community sport, I have noticed that sport policy and funding for Aboriginal peoples remains stuck on the issues of barriers to participation (Paraschak, 2011). According to Forsythe, Heine, and Halas (2007), there are three gaps in sports-related literature that impede the development of relevant and meaningful sport programs for Aboriginal youth:

• Despite the plethora of information about barriers to sport participation, this information, in of itself, provides little theoretical or practical information about successful program processes and mechanisms attributed to sustainable, long-term sport programming.

• The assumption that culturally relevant sport programming will lead to increased physical activity levels for Aboriginal youth is not clear. More information is required regarding the processes and mechanisms attributed to increased physical activity levels.

• The inclusion of indigenous methodologies within sport-related research, particularly projects regarding culturally relevant sport programming for Aboriginal youth, would likely improve the quality of research findings in this area (see p. 94).

Knowing that poverty, racism, cultural insensitivity, and geographic isolation have negatively impacted the physical health, coaching and sport infrastructure of Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal people’s participation in sport (see Canadian Heritage, 2005) simply identifies the conditions of exclusion, it does not identify the processes and mechanisms of inclusion. Just as peace is not the absence of war (Galtung,
 culturally relevant sport is more than the absence of barriers to sport participation.

If we truly support the participation of Aboriginal people in sport, we must move beyond our current – and almost exclusive - focus on barriers to participation. Research on barriers to participation only marks the beginning of our journey to understand culturally relevant sport; the information we discover about exclusionary processes in mainstream sport systems, while invaluable, needs to be understood in relation to the inclusionary processes in culturally relevant sport programs.

Like Forsyth et al. (2007), I believe that we must begin producing research with scholarly and practical information about the design, delivery and facilitation of culturally relevant sport programs (see also Maskawachees Declaration, Federal-Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee on Fitness and Recreation, 2000). Furthermore, it makes sense that any investigation or advocacy of culturally relevant sport for Aboriginal youth requires us to use indigenous research principles to guide our research.

*What is culturally relevant sport?*

Entering graduate school, my intention was to investigate the pedagogical philosophies and practices of non-Aboriginal sport organizations and ‘white’ sport leaders who work in urban areas with a high demographic of Aboriginal youth. However, as my course work neared completion, I became increasingly concerned with the immediate and long-term use value of my proposed research topic to community sport

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5 Galtung (1990) argues that war (direct violence) is one of three forms of violence (structural and symbolic). For peace to take root, all three forms of violence must be abolished.
organizations in general, and urban Aboriginal youth in particular. While critical race theory and whiteness studies affirmed my belief that interrogating privilege is integral to the quality and integrity of social science research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), in the field of community sport, a greater need existed regarding information about the design, implementation and facilitation of culturally relevant sport programs for Aboriginal youth (Forsyth et al., 2007).

As a community-based educator (i.e., mentor, leader, coach), I see community sport through the lens of my academic discipline. Consequently, I turned to the fields of adult education and physical education (which incorporated Aboriginal, anti-racism and critical theory) to ground my investigation of culturally relevant sport. My research is inspired by and closely parallels the work of my thesis advisor, Joannie Halas (2002a, 2003a, 2006) and her colleagues (Carpenter, 2009; Champagne, 2006; Champagne & Halas, 2003). As a community-based researcher studying culturally relevant physical education and physical activity in elementary and high school settings, Joannie introduced me to Ladson-Billing’s theory of culturally relevant education which inspired my research project.

Ladson-Billings’ (2009) theory of *culturally relevant education* emerged from her research involving star educators of African American students. My research begins with a similar premise: to identify the characteristics and processes that promote relevant and meaningful sport programming for urban Aboriginal youth, I should identify a *star*
Aboriginal sport organization. The research partner and ‘star’ of my dissertation is the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC). WASAC is a highly respected Aboriginal sport organization located in the North End of Winnipeg. They have a strong reputation for empowering urban Aboriginal youth which, when combined with the high number of registered Aboriginal youth in their programs, warrants investigation – particularly the successful planning and facilitation practices that can inform the field of culturally relevant sport.

My examination of culturally relevant sport is based on parallels that exist between formal and non-formal components of educational systems (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Comparing school- and community-based education

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Community-based education</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Institutional Structure</td>
<td>• Organizational Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Curriculum</td>
<td>• Program, activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teacher</td>
<td>• Leader, mentor, coach</td>
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This comparison illustrates the educational dimensions and features that span formal and non-formal education and the sociological levels of inquiry that ground Ladson-Billing’s research on culturally relevant education (see Chapter 2). Although my research topic is

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6 Ladson-Billings (2009) does not state that star educators of African American children need to also be African American educators even though the majority of her star educators were of African American descent. In addition, in her research, she used a process called community nomination where she asked parents for names of teachers and asked principals to help her sort through and pick nominees. I propose a similar approach, having chosen an Aboriginal sport organization that has received numerous awards and community recognition regarding their work with urban Aboriginal youth.
multidisciplinary in scope, I maintain theoretical coherence by grounding my analysis within critical and indigenous educational perspectives.

The purpose of my doctoral research project is to investigate and analyze how the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre uses sport to address issues of social exclusion in mainstream sport and to provide experiences of empowerment by encouraging and developing the social, cultural, physical, and life skills of urban Aboriginal youth. My research project can be divided into three strands of inquiry:

- **The cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth**: What is the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth and senior leaders involved with WASAC programs? How do WASAC leaders understand the cultural landscape of youth participants and how is this understanding reflected in their programming?

- **The landscape of community sport**: What societal conditions and structures shape the landscape of community sport and how does this impact WASAC’s work? How does WASAC’s organizational approach to sport programming resist deficit-based interpretations of Aboriginal people and empower urban Aboriginal youth?

- **Community sport education**: What theories of change and practice do WASAC leaders reference and use in their sport programs? What tools, processes and mechanisms do sport leaders use to promote success for Aboriginal youth? What are the sport and non-sport benefits of WASAC programs for Aboriginal youth?

Guided by these strands of inquiry, my study will attempt to weave the voices and experiences of WASAC leaders and participants into a research story which addresses the question, “What is a relevant and meaningful sport program for urban Aboriginal youth?” In doing so, I demonstrate that culturally relevant sport is a philosophy for building an
inclusive sport system as well as a concrete, contextually-specific practice for planning and facilitating sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth.

A Research Journey

Now that the need, purpose and research questions that influenced my doctoral research project from conception to completion have been addressed, it is necessary to build the reader-writer relationship that is so integral to indigenous research and worldviews (Wilson, 2008). This sharing is a form of analytical accountability that allows the reader to understand the filters and perspectives that shape one’s worldview and, by extension, the research project.

How I came to study culturally relevant sport

I grew up in a small rural community where active living was a vital part of everyday life. When I went to school, I translated my love of physical activity into physical education classes and later, community sport programs. For me, sport is and has been a space of belonging. Just as others feel a connection to art, music, writing, or gardening, sport provides membership to a unique community. Unfortunately, many youth do not have positive experiences with sport. Although not all who dislike sport have had a negative experience, many who dislike sport do so because they were excluded or felt pushed out of sport spaces (see Orlick & Botterill, 1975; Orlick, 2006). If not for the experiences of my friends and family, I, too, may not have witnessed the subtle forms of exclusion that occur in sport.
While it is unlikely that teachers intentionally exclude students in phys ed classes,\(^7\) I have noticed that very few know how to create an inclusive sport environment for all students. For example, my best friend was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at a very young age and required a wheelchair and health attendant to attend school. While our phys ed teacher did not intend to exclude her from phys ed, by not knowing how to include her, the outcome was the same. Some may argue that my friend’s experience, while unfortunate, is addressed in physical education teacher education programs,\(^8\) however the poem, *I am (Un) Canadian: (A Middle of the Night Reflection from CAHPERD Conferences Past,*\(^9\) written by Halas (2003b), a physical education scholar in Manitoba, states that exclusion in sport, not inclusion, is the norm for many students.

Growing up, I did not take action against exclusionary sport practices that I witnessed because I wanted sport to be uncomplicated by such issues and because of my fears about how others may respond; I was all too aware that membership in a community often involves following, not challenging, accepted rules of practice. Like so many others, I helped maintain an exclusionary sport system by ignoring inequitable practices that did not directly impact me. However, everything changed when I walked into my first amateur boxing club. My first impression of amateur boxing was not the (lack of) cleanliness of the club, the bad side of town where it was located, or the drill

\(^7\) *Phys ed* refers to physical education. I use the abbreviated or slang version of physical education in the introduction because this is the terminology commonly used by students. 

\(^8\) Most physical education degree programs provide adaptive physical education courses that promote the inclusion of people with disabilities.

\(^9\) CAHPERD is the acronym for the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. Halas’ (2003b) poem reveals the silences and shadows that serve to obscure the experiences of marginalized groups within physical education conferences and classrooms.
sergeant coaching style of the instructors. Rather, I was immediately aware of the
diversity of those involved in the sport. Prior to this, the majority of my sport experiences
were shaped by white middle class people and values. Because the process of my
conscientization occurred gradually, it remains difficult to explain however through my
involvement with amateur boxing, the smallness of my previous sport experiences were
revealed.

Popularly known as the sport of the underdog, boxing has been both applauded
for its ability to help racialized minorities and those living in poverty and criticized for
exploiting the same populations.10 Boxing attracts youth who are typically ‘pushed out’
of mainstream or whitestream sport programs11 and I was struck by the large number of
Aboriginal youth attracted to the sport as participants and fans. And, as I became more
deeply involved with the sport, I began to wonder what it was about boxing that attracted
Aboriginal youth. Prior to these experiences with the sport of boxing, I had not
considered myself an educator nor had I considered how I could help make sport a
positive experience for different types of learners.

My first teaching and coaching experiences with boxing was training
predominantly white, middle-class adults. However, about a year into teaching, I was
approached to develop and deliver boxing workshops for northern Aboriginal youth and

10 Like many sports (e.g., basketball and football), boxing is often touted as a way out of
poverty, or getting kids off the street, etc. For a discussion of the issues, see Sugden
11 Halas (2003a) argues that the emotional and behavioural issues that some racialized
minority youth display in physical education classes should not be read as an indicator of
student pathology (e.g., emotional and behavioural disorder) but as possible reactions to
real and perceived cultural and racial injustice.
youth-in-care (in a detention facility or residential home).\textsuperscript{12} While my education and work experiences demonstrated that different types of learners need different types of programs, I also realized that awareness was not an adequate substitute for cultural competence (see Stairs, 1995).

In essence, my experience with amateur boxing was a process and period of ‘hypothesis’ testing. To enhance my practices, I used an action research spiral process of action, reflection, and practice (Herr & Anderson, 2005); I studied the pedagogical practices of sport leaders who worked with Aboriginal youth and reflected on what appeared to work and what did not appear to work. I scoured my memories, filing cabinet and bookshelf for information and lessons that I learned through Aboriginal education courses during my Master’s degree and my volunteer and work relationships within the Aboriginal community. I began to think about planning, teaching, and coaching from a cultural perspective, paying special attention to processes that I witnessed or was told would engage Aboriginal youth (e.g., Carpenter, 2009; Halas, 2002, 2003a, 2006).

Through this experience, I determined that the low participation rates for Aboriginal youth is not an accurate measurement of their interest in sport (see Champagne, 2006).\textsuperscript{13} Instead, I began to consider how low participation rates may be an

\textsuperscript{12} I was approached to develop and deliver boxing workshops for Aboriginal youth by two groups: (1) a local amateur boxing association / club, and (2) an Aboriginal colleague who frequently travelled to northern Manitoba for work-related events.

\textsuperscript{13} According to findings from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey (see Findlay & Kohen, 2007), Aboriginal youth (ages 5-11, and ages 12-14) are participating in sport at similar levels to other Canadian youth. However, Findlay and Kohen note that the results are based on parental reports and from one question about sport participation rates in the survey. While little statistical information exists about sport participation rates for Aboriginal youth, it is evident that Aboriginal leaders and government policy makers believe that Aboriginal youth participation rates are low (see Canadian Heritage, 2005).
indicator of Aboriginal youth being *pushed out* of mainstream or Euro-Canadian sport -- not necessarily because sport planners and policy-makers want to exclude Aboriginal youth -- but because they do not know how to build relevant and meaningful sport programs and policies. This led to the question: why do many Euro-Canadians overlook exclusion and culturally irrelevant practices in sport as factors responsible for the low participation rates of Aboriginal youth in sport? After all, did the increasing number of Aboriginal participants and fans attracted to *culturally-based* sport events like the North American Indigenous Games, Arctic Games, and physically-based cultural practices like Pow-Wows (see Canadian Heritage, 2005; Paraschak, 1998) not provide evidence to the contrary?

Exclusion and intercultural conflict in sport are not isolated incidents (Robidoux, 2004) or a problem between individuals (Lewis, 2001). Rather, they represent a legacy of colonization and racism that infiltrates every level of North American society (King, 2008). After reflecting on my early sport experiences, I realized how deeply ingrained colour-blind and culture-blind ideologies (Ladson-Billings, 2009) had become in Euro-Canadian society and how difficult it was for Euro-Canadians to understand the social power associated with being white (McIntosh, 1989; Tatum, 1994, 1999). And, despite my own Métis heritage, my earlier sport experiences demonstrated that I, too, was not immune to such blindness.

**My research standpoint**

In my Master’s thesis I wrote that I was a “‘white’, healthy, able-bodied, thin, 26 year old, heterosexual, female graduate student in Canada (2003, p. 7).” While almost 10 years have passed since I spoke about what it means to be a person of privilege (which I
remain today), I still struggle to claim and understand my Métis heritage. This struggle and tension, as I will explain later, appears to be endemic among urban Aboriginal youth as well.

Why is it that Aboriginal peoples cultural and political identity is regulated by federal legislation? Aboriginal identity is closely associated with treaty rights and Aboriginal rights, and thus, federal fiduciary responsibilities.\textsuperscript{14} The Royal Proclamation of 1763 included all First Nations, Métis and Inuit in Canada, however, in later legislative policy, the Indian Act focused primarily on First Nations people (Driben, 1983). These two legislative documents simultaneously guaranteed a set of rights for Aboriginal peoples and imposed a system of socio-cultural and political stratification among Aboriginal peoples. As a result, Aboriginal identity is a contentious issue not only between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples but among Aboriginal peoples as well. The story of how I came to know my Métis heritage is part of a larger story of the struggle of Métis people for legal recognition by the federal government, how racism shapes public discourse to portray treaty and Aboriginal rights as \textit{undeserved} and \textit{unearned} economic benefits, and more generally, how all cultures evolve.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} The relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Federal government, documented and enforced via the Indian Act, is unique to other cultural groups in Canada in two legal respects: treaty rights (e.g., political negotiation regarding education, health, land, economic development, hunting, etc) and Aboriginal rights (e.g., rights Aboriginal people possess by virtue of original occupation, such as self-government, traditional territory, cultural integrity, spirituality, language, etc) (see Slattery, 2008). Therefore the Indian Act legally defines and denies First Nations identity (status, non-status) and rights based on legal, not cultural, grounds.

\textsuperscript{15} Many Inuit and Dene peoples, along with Métis peoples, never entered into treaty negotiations with the federal government.
I grew up in a very small all-white rural community in southern Manitoba. My mother worked in a local credit union and my father worked as a long-distance truck driver and auto-body mechanic. Growing up, I considered myself white. I knew that my cultural heritage included French and Scottish roots, but as I associated culture and ethnicity with skin colour, that was the extent of my reflections on the matter. In other words, I was a typical white Canadian. When I was approximately 15 years old, the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) initiated a membership drive in my rural area that forever changed how I thought about race, culture, and identity. During the MMF membership drive, racist discourse was rampant within the community. Nevertheless, many people within the community applied for a Métis card because they realized that tracing their family lineage to early colonization and settlement might reveal their Aboriginal ancestry.16

Among many Euro-Canadians, racist ideologies quickly surface when discussions of Aboriginal rights emerge in the media or around the dinner table. The myth that Aboriginal rights are undeserved and that all Aboriginal peoples receive free federal monies is pervasive; almost as pervasive as the ignorance among Euro-Canadians of the social power and influence associated with whiteness and Euro-Canadian cultures and values (Warry, 2007). In my community, racism and ignorance combined to produce predictable yet astounding contradictions: people applied for MMF cards because of imagined economic gain while simultaneously criticizing Métis people for receiving

16 Sleeter (2000) states that many Euro-Americans in the United States like to describe their country as a nation of immigrants. Not only does this ignore the indigenous peoples of North America but it also ignores that some groups did not choose to immigrate (e.g., Africans forced into slavery).
unfair economic privileges and chastising the MMF organization for creating a politically and economically motivated membership drive. By ignoring issues of cultural and political rights, the history of colonization, and the colonial roots of settler ancestry, many community members were able to rationalize their motives and racism.

My mother applied for a Métis card for similar reasons. As a member of the working class, she visited the MMF office because she had heard about possible post-secondary education funding and wanted my sister and I to attend university. And so, at 15 years of age, amid a flurry of racist discourse about Aboriginal rights and Métis cards, I learned that I was Métis. While I wish I could have learned about my heritage at an earlier age and within a Métis cultural community, I did not. Now, looking back, I wonder what would have happened if the MMF had never visited my community or if my mother never applied for a Métis card. Would I have learned about my cultural roots? Would I have been drawn to critical theory and Aboriginal education in university?

These concerns resurfaced when I was approached to participate in the Ph.D. Program for Aboriginal Scholars (PSAS) program at the University of Manitoba. I revealed my concerns about my cultural identity to the PSAS coordinator who asked me

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17 Increased membership numbers would increase political power of the organization.
18 My mother and sister applied for and received their MMF card. I did not because I felt conflicted that my motivations might be regarded as driven by economic, not cultural reasons. My mother, feeling guilty for these same reasons, began to volunteer with the local MMF branch as a way of giving back to the community.
19 Approximately five years after my mother learned of our Métis heritage, my sister investigated our tribal lineage. Our Aboriginal ancestors were the Gros Ventre, an Algonquian tribe of northern Montana and Saskatchewan. Nearly all Gros Ventre people were killed through warfare and disease, although some still live on a reservation in northern Montana.
20 Almost 18 years later, my maternal side of my family has still never openly discussed our Métis heritage.
this simple question, “Heather, do you tell people about your Scottish and French ancestry?” After I replied yes, he said, “Well, then what is the problem with claiming your Métis heritage?” It is important to name and be held accountable for the power and privilege associated with my light-coloured skin and settler heritage but not if such actions affirm the white voice (King, 2005) or deny my Métis heritage (for a discussion of the complexities of Métis identity, see Richardson, 2006).

As a Métis woman living in a colonized country, I embrace my mixed heritage as a gift; a standpoint for my work as an intercultural ally and a more compassionate researcher. I chose to investigate the topic of culturally relevant sport for urban Aboriginal youth for three reasons. First, I am passionate about sport, social justice, and community-based education; components which are integral to culturally relevant sport. Second, I noticed the exclusionary nature of sport and want to support calls by Aboriginal sport leaders for a culturally relevant sport system for all youth (see Horn-Miller, 2006).21 And, finally, I believe in the transformational possibilities of community sport.

Before I begin to talk about culturally relevant sport, it is important to provide a brief description of how I understand sport in relation to the diverse approaches to investigating sport-related research.

Scope of research topic

Multidisciplinary approaches and sources of research

In social science literature, sport-related research is found in numerous disciplines such as leisure studies, sociology, history, and education. In leisure studies, recreation is

21 For example, Ennis (1999) published a paper about culturally relevant physical education for girls.
considered a physical leisure practice (Paraschak, 1998), with sport representing a more competitive and organized form of recreation (Karlis, 2004). In the fields of sociology and history, sport is considered a social institution and scholars examine sport practices as historically and culturally bounded physical expressions whose meaning shifts between local and global contexts (e.g., Dunning, 2004). In physical education – an applied academic discipline – educational theory focuses primarily on the transmission and acquisition of physical leisure practices within institutional contexts (i.e., university, schools).

Notwithstanding the clarity and usefulness of these approaches, the complexity of the social and sport world defy disciplinary borders. Since the blurring of genres between the humanities and social sciences in the 1970’s, qualitative researchers have struggled to understand and explain the increasing complexity of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). In discussing the evolving criticality of qualitative research, Kincheloe and McLaren (2008) argue that investigations of social phenomena must be grounded in an epistemology of complexity that respects the contradictory nature of lived experience and tangled webs of power. My investigation of culturally relevant sport builds upon and extends the theoretical and conceptual insights of these approaches, while also incorporating relevant insights from such disciplines as peace studies (see Chapter 2).

Despite my self-professed love of sport, I do not essentialize the positive attributes of sport or ignore its conflict-ridden history. Like any social or cultural expression, sport is contradictory, complex, contextual and evolving. Although

\[\text{22 Karlis (2004) characterizes leisure as discretionary time, free-time activities, or a personal experience or state of mind.}\]
significant events such as the Olympic Games are held as exemplars of sport, throughout history, sport has served as a “rehearsal and celebration of the skills and predatory spirit” of warfare (Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group [SDP IWG], 2007, p. 165), a tool of social control which has privileged “males and masculine ways of thinking and Europeanist forms of cultural expression” (p. 166) and able-bodied people above persons with a disability.

Sport is a form of human expression assigned meaning by individuals and groups and located within complex social and historical factors and relations (Tomlinson, 2006, p. 266). As a social construction, sport shapes and is shaped by individuals and groups with differing levels of power (Guilianotti, 2005). Sport is neither good nor bad; it is a tool and we make of it what we will. And, like any social space, sport can reproduce many of the social ills it purports to remedy (Andersson & Ledogar, 2008; Coakley & Donnelly, 2004; Lea-Howarth, 2006).

To tap into the transformational possibilities of sport, we need to understand the mechanisms and processes that make culturally relevant programming possible, and in doing so, distinguish it from culturally irrelevant programming.

The transformational possibilities of sport

Well-designed sport and physical activity programs are powerful tools for fostering healthy child and individual development, teaching positive values and life skills, strengthening education, preventing disease (particularly HIV/AIDS) and improving health and well-being. These programs can help empower and promote the inclusion of marginalized groups, especially women, migrants, and people with disabilities. Further, sport and physical activity programs can assist in

The right to access and participate in sport, physical activity and play is a recognized human right, embedded within Article 1 of the Charter of Physical Education and Sport adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1978. Since 2001, the United Nations and in particular, the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDP IWG),\(^{23}\) have promoted sport as a complementary and necessary development tool that could assist national governments to achieve social development goals.\(^{24}\)

Consequently, when the SDP IWG began to champion sport as means of achieving their Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),\(^{25}\) they began with the fundamental premise that sport is a human right, not a luxury and that sport “should not be positioned as an end itself, but rather as a low-cost, high-impact tool to achieve broader development aims (2006, p. 3).” The SID movement defines sport in wholistic terms, as “all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-

\(^{23}\) The SDP IWG was previously known as the United Nations Interagency Task Force of Sport for Development and Peace

\(^{24}\) In 2001, the United Nations appointed a special advisor for a UN Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace. In 2003, the UN General Assembly released an Inter-Agency Report on work and research in this area. The UN proclaimed 2005 as International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE). In 2008, the Secretariat of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group was integrated into the UN Office on Development and Peace. For more information on the history of the UN activities in this area, please see their website http://www.un.org/themes/sport/

\(^{25}\) The Millennium Development Goals were established in 2000 and are “an ambitious effort to focus world attention and resources on the eradication of global poverty” (SDP IWG, 2006, p. 9).
being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games (UN Interagency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2003, p. 2).”

In 2007, the SDP IWG released a literature review of the SID field which documented the “ever-growing need for evidence around the effectiveness of sport for development” (p. 3). A University of Toronto research team was hired by the SDP IWG to examine the use of sport in five main areas: “1. Foster child and youth development and education. 2. Achieve health objectives. 3. Promote gender equity. 4. Foster inclusion, health and well-being for people with disabilities. 5. Foster social cohesion, prevent and reduce conflict and build peace” (SDP IWG, 2007, p. 3).

The research team found a “well-established direct positive relationship between physical health and physical activity” (SDP IWG, 2007, p. 4) but the psychological, social, and mental health benefits of sport were less clear. When these benefits appeared, results were more closely associated with the context and social interaction that sport provides rather than a direct outcome of sport participation. As a result, two key areas of future research were identified: (1) detailed investigations about the precise circumstances and different contexts in which sport can contribute to positive outcomes for different groups and individuals, and (2) detailed investigations on leadership and leadership training (SDP IWG, 2007, p. 4). The research team argued that this information would assist sport organizers to develop, plan, and implement appropriate sport intervention programs.
Issues with Sport-Related Research

Methodological issues

Researchers have long assumed that identifying barriers to participation and successful practices would address the exclusion of Aboriginal people from sport (for critique, see Forsyth et al., 2007). However, the vast majority of sport research regarding barriers to participation “provide atheoretical examples of successful practices that are often short term and unsustainable… [and] very little information on how to design culturally relevant interventions” (Forsyth et al., 2007, p. 94). As a result, there is little theoretical or practical information about successful program processes and mechanisms attributed to sustainable, long-term sport programming. The atheoretical nature of SID research is the central focus of Coalter’s (2007) book, A Wider Social Role for Sport, which argues that the methodological shortcomings of sport-related research can be addressed by paying attention to the program theories underpinning sport inventions.²⁶

Theory-driven evaluation targets the ideas and philosophies of different program practitioners and stakeholders. Through dialogue and structured conceptualization research techniques, researchers discover participants’ assumptions about the problems or issues they seek to redress, how this is accomplished at the program design and delivery stages, and the specific tools, mechanisms and processes of the program which are presumed to produce immediate benefits and long-term social outcomes (Coalter, 2007; Rossi, Lipsey & Freedman, 2004).

Program evaluation could be considered less theoretical than traditional social science research but it ultimately represents a “critical site where theory, method, praxis, action, and policy all come together” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 35). Thus, theory-based evaluation offers important insights into understanding why ‘what works’ in one situation or context, may not in another. Or, as Clegg (2005) observes, “to understand the inconsistency of outcomes we need to understand how an intervention produces effects… [which] involves a conceptual shift from programme interventions to the identification of mechanisms that span programme interventions in different areas of practice” (p. 421).

Absence of indigenous research methods and principles

In their critique of sport-related research, Forsyth et al. (2007) identified that few researchers adopt indigenous research methodologies in their work. This methodological gap is disconcerting given the relationship between research, knowledge, and power. The politics of research, particularly the question of what constitutes ethical research, is central to emerging research discussions and guidelines created by Indigenous scholars and groups (e.g., Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Nunavut Research Institute, 2006; Schnarch, 2004). As research involving Aboriginal peoples in Canada has generally been initiated, constructed and told by non-Aboriginal researchers, has not reflected Aboriginal worldviews nor directly benefited Aboriginal participants or communities (Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 [TCPS 2], 2010), and data gathering and

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27 Program evaluation is conducted for practical versus academic reasons. Like action research, program evaluation is more concerned with generating knowledge to improve program activities than generating knowledge that is generizable beyond the actual setting.
knowledge transfer processes continue to be owned and controlled by non-Aboriginal researchers (Scharch, 2004), there is a clear need for more reciprocal and relevant research protocols when conducting research with Aboriginal peoples.

Researchers should be no less immune to criticisms of culturally irrelevant research practices than educators. And, as the basic premise of most research methodologies is the presumption of a causal link between the relevance of research methods and the validity of research results (Guba & Lincoln, 2008), the knowledge that research relevance and validity is defined differently than Western research approaches (Bishop, 2008; Wilson, 2008) calls into the question the transferability of research findings conducted with non-Aboriginal populations or culturally irrelevant research methods conducted with Aboriginal peoples. For, if research participants do not trust the researcher or question how the research results may be used, it is highly unlikely that they will participate or willing share the required information, or that the researcher will use the information appropriately.  

*The politics of research*

The moral authority and international prestige of the UN-affiliated SID (sport-in-development) movement pushed community sport into the public consciousness and the political radar of international governments. In doing so, it energized sports-related research fields with national governments investing greater research and public monies in

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28 For example, in my research project, numerous sport leaders shared that they trusted me to use the information they shared in a respectful and appropriate manner and that this trust was the basis for their participation and sharing. Another example that I read (Wilson, 2008) and heard (at a conference, told by the story teller) comes from Cora Weber Pilliwax. Cora’s grandfather was quoted in a book by a non-Aboriginal researcher who did not correctly translate or interpret his words and message (see Wilson, 2008, p. 71-72).
this area. Implicit in the philosophical relationship between sport and social change is the relationship between sport and social, economic, and cultural policies/interventions.

Although many people view sport as a neutral social space (Guest, 2007), sport is not apolitical, there are simply too many interests involved. For example, the discourse (see Darnell, 2007) and strategy (Nicholls & Giles, 2007) employed by the SDP IWG and its secretariat, Right to Play, reveals a two-tiered system. Low Middle Income Countries (LMIC)\(^{29}\) are targeted for SID program implementation as part of a broader toolkit of development practices, yet Euro-Western, industrialized countries like Britain and the United States, are not. Instead, these countries are asked to fulfill the role of benevolent benefactor by providing financial assistance (see United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2003) and outside experts and volunteers to develop and facilitate the programs (Darnell, 2007).\(^{30}\)

Nicholls and Giles (2007) have critiqued Canada’s early involvement in the SID movement, arguing that Canada positioned itself as a champion and advocate for the use of sport for development purposes without seeking to apply this type of learning domestically. It is impossible to tell whether Canadian sport policy makers are responding to its critics yet interestingly enough, Canada’s role in the SID movement

\(^{29}\) LMIC is the preferred terminology used by the SDP IWG to refer to ‘transitional and developing countries’, developing countries’, and ‘global South’. For a discussion of the term, please see SDP IWG (2007, p. 11).

\(^{30}\) For example, Right to Play, secretariat of the SDP IWG, brings in primarily white, middle class volunteers to work in designated LMIC countries with SID programs (see Darnell, 2007).
appears to be shifting to include supporting the delivery of domestic SID programs. Consequently, now more than ever, it becomes important to examine the socio-politics of sport and SID-type programs at both international and national levels.

Another example can be found in the recent calls for evidence-based policy making and research in the social sciences and in sport which has been largely critiqued and resisted by critical social scientists who argue that such research represents a retreat to the status quo. Coalter (2007) calls SID programs social interventions and states that policy-makers are increasingly interested in evidence-based research in order to justify funding these programs. Social science scholars like Lincoln (2008) have criticized evidence-based policy-making as creating a knowledge hegemony that marginalizes critical and alternate epistemology research. In addition, Forester (1989) states the planners (program planners, policy analysts and public administrators) are future-oriented actors whose work involves social welfare and justice initiatives. As such, planning SID programs is both a technical and political activity.

However, academic research that communicates the real-world implications of sport research in a language that is accessible and relevant to practitioners and policy-makers should not be conflated with evidence-based policy making, though it clearly shares some of its characteristics (e.g., focus on program impact and outcomes). As Clegg (2005) observes, the debate over what constitutes evidence has re-energized the

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31 Right to Play (RTP), the secretariat of the SID movement, has recently initiated programming in Canada. In June 2012, RTP initiated the Promoting Life-Skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) Program. For more information about PLAY, see http://www.righttoplay.com/canada/our-impact/Pages/PLAYProgram.aspx.
paradigm war between quantitative and qualitative researchers despite the mutual recognition that effective practice inevitably involves both approaches.

Unfortunately, SID programs and policies often contain implicit and contradictory theories of change that often reproduce the problems they intend to address. Evidence-based research and policy, while rightly critiqued for disguising the interests of the powerful behind discourses of neutrality, can be claimed “for critique and emancipatory projects” (p. 415) when infused with a critical socio-political lens. For example, when evidence is defined “as work that can give insight into the structures, powers, generative mechanisms and tendencies that help us understand the concrete world of experience” (Clegg, 2005, p. 421), researchers are more likely to help planners and practitioners develop sport programs that are contextually-appropriate, relevant and meaningful to participants.

Levels of Analysis

Creating relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth involves more than simply bringing a group of Aboriginal youth together to play games and engage in physical activity. It is about recognizing that fundamental interactions are occurring within mainstream sport which are strongly influenced, and often limited by, issues of race, culture, and class.

32 Clegg critiques Pawson’s (2002) realist evaluation as a ‘social engineering’ approach to research rather than a critical mode.
Premise of research

My research is based on four premises. The first premise is that sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth, more so than Euro-Canadian youth, are based on social control ideologies rather than social opportunity (see Donnelly, 2007).

The second premise is that the majority of mainstream sport programs, particularly physical education programs, are based on the values of white, middle class, Euro-Canadians and are often culturally inappropriate for Aboriginal youth (Halas, 2003a, 2003b, 2006; Halas, McRae, & Carpenter, in press).

The third premise is that community sport research lacks detailed information about the sufficient conditions required for sport to produce positive social impacts and outcomes (SDP IWG, 2007) and more research is needed to answer the larger question of “which sports, in which conditions, have what effects for which participants?” (Coalter, 2007, p.7).

The fourth premise is that community sport, like any social sphere, is an educational space. It is a site of non-formal teaching and learning which is almost rendered invisible due to the dominance of school-based education research (Duguid et al., 2007) and the marginalization of physically-based education (Whitehead, 2007b).

As a result, culturally relevant sport is an inherently political activity for practitioners and researchers. My first two premises delineate the political nature of WASAC’s work with urban Aboriginal youth and the latter foreshadow the methodological challenges I address in my literature review and research design.
Critical race theorists, such as Irvine (1990), and peace theorists, such as Dugan (1996) and Lederach (1997), argue that intercultural issues need to be framed relationally. Consequently, I examine *culturally relevant sport* as a system of webbed relationships. This web includes macro-level structures (e.g., colonization or Aboriginal / non-Aboriginal relations in mainstream sport, etc), mid-level organization processes (e.g., issues impacting community sport organizations, etc), sub-level program processes (e.g., program planning and implementation) and micro-level interpersonal relations (e.g., relations between sport leaders and youth, etc).33 A brief description of the purpose and research method associated with each dimension is included in Table 1. The far right column of the table identifies the chapters where the research results and analysis are discussed.

Table 1. *Dimensions of inquiry*

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33 This typology of macro, mid-level, and micro-level relationships is borrowed from Irvine’s (1990) research.
Definition of Terms

Aboriginal sport

Conceptually, *Aboriginal sport* is a broad expression that represents the collective, physical cultures of Aboriginal peoples. It represents the attitudes of political and cultural resistance with which Aboriginal sport and political organizations negotiate the terms of their engagement in mainstream, Euro-Canadian sport. In other words, political solidarity should be inferred by the term Aboriginal and Aboriginal sport, not cultural sameness. At an immediate and practical level, Aboriginal sport is defined by the cultural landscape of youth participants. Consequently, while a broad-based understanding of Aboriginal issues is necessary, advocating for a pan-Aboriginal approach to planning culturally relevant sport programs may lead to ineffective, culturally inappropriate sport programs (such as an organizer who overlooks the differences between the day-to-day challenges of northern and urban Aboriginal youth). Given such complexities, sport will continue to be more than *just a game* for Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Community sport

Community sport is a part of civil society, operating at the interstices of the public and private sector. Throughout this paper, I connect sport-in-development (SID) literature, referring to the United Nation’s affiliated sport for development and peace movement, with my discussion of community sport. I do this to highlight how national and international governments have taken up sport as a political tool to address social development aims. Although the *politics* of sport, evident in how governments politicize sport development objectives (e.g., increasing participation rates) in conjunction with
social intervention aims (e.g., build career and leadership skills), forms the basis of this comparison, I later highlight how *praxis* distinguishes the two sport spaces.

*Community-based research*

As a form of participatory action research, CBR is a research approach and process that emphasizes relationship building, reciprocity, collaborative partnerships, capacity building, and social change (Burke, 1998; Maiter, Simich, Jacobson, Wise, 2008). It requires that researchers are or become part of the community they study and is attractive to indigenous researchers because it defines community in relation to the research context (Carpenter, 2009). CBR is a popular research approach among critical social scientists as it challenges many entrenched Euro-Western research values (e.g., objectivity, hyper-rationality) and privileges the voices of silenced and marginalized groups (Herr & Anderson, 2005). When informed by principles of indigenous resistance, worldviews and ways of understanding the world, CBR reflects an indigenous approach to research (Smith, 2008). However, it is important to note that CBR is not necessarily an indigenous research method as both the *research paradigm* and *process* must be grounded in tribal-based knowledge and knowledge-generating practices (see Kovach, 2009; Lavallée, 2009).

*Cultural landscape*

Cultural landscape refers to the social relations of inequity that shape the lives of racialized minority youth and foreground intercultural relations and conflict between and among racialized groups. Halas (2003a) uses this term in her work with physical

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34 Racialized minority and racialized groups refers to the fact that all people are *raced*. That is, even in a white dominant society, white people are members of a racialized group
educators (scholars and teachers) to help them navigate the quandaries and contradictions of unlearning colour-blind discourses and becoming race-conscious educators. She argues that physical educators need this heightened level of awareness to challenge deficit-based assumptions about racialized minority students and their families and to teach from a strength-based (see Blaikie, 2002) and culturally responsive manner.

*Culturally relevant education*

Culturally relevant education is a “pedagogy of opposition” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160) that is committed to the individual and collective empowerment of marginalized ethnocultural youth. There are three main principles of culturally relevant education which state that students must “experience academic success”; “develop and/or maintain cultural competence”; and “develop a critical consciousness” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). A more in-depth discussion of culturally relevant education is included in Chapter 2.

*Culturally relevant sport*

Culturally relevant sport is not an Aboriginal or cultural approach to sport, rather it is a philosophy and practice of planning and facilitating sport programs that acknowledges the role that culture plays in the individual and collective empowerment of marginalized ethnocultural youth. This sport outcome requires that program planners and facilitators understand the cultural roots as well as the contemporary cultural landscape of youth participants. A more detailed explanation of culturally relevant sport is provided in the research results.

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as much as racialized minority groups (e.g., black people). Thus, while race may be an obsolete biological concept, its socio-historical influence on relations of power in addition to its psychological legacy, means that it remains a potent social category.
Cultural violence

Cultural violence, as understood in this paper, is a concept borrowed from peace theory; a derivative of Galtung’s definition of symbolic violence. Symbolic violence is one of three ‘super-types’ of a triangle of violence, which also include direct and structural violence. According to Galtung (1990), these three ‘super-types’ feed into and support the other, though, at different times, one or two may become the main form of violence. “Direct violence is an event; structural violence is a process with ups and downs; cultural violence is an invariant, a ‘permanence’ (p. 294).” Critical theory, and in particular, critical education perspectives have long recognized the insidious nature of cultural violence (e.g. ideology, hegemony, linguistic/discursive power, see Kincheloe & McLaren, 2008, p. 411-413), and how it supports direct and structural violence. Cultural violence becomes more salient as it becomes the main form of power, and thus more complex in its ideological manifestations. For example, racism is a form of cultural violence and is linked to the inequitable inclusion of urban Aboriginal youth in Canadian society and community sport.

Deficit-based thinking

Deficit-based thinking or pathologizing discourse is a form of cultural violence rooted in racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, etc. In essence, deficit-based thinking blames marginalized groups for becoming and remaining marginalized. For example,

35 Direct violence (e.g., war, death, murder), structural violence (e.g., poverty, cultural alienation, etc), cultural violence (e.g., racism, sexism, sanitation of language, etc).
36 Kincheloe and McLaren (2008) reconceptualize a critical definition of hegemony and ideology (p. 411-413) and discuss power in relation to four factors: hegemony, ideology, linguistic/discursive, and culture. Their analysis closely parallels Galtung’s (1990) focus on cultural violence in religion and ideology, language and art, empirical and formal science.
Aboriginal youth who are pushed out of school because of poverty, racism or culturally irrelevant schooling, are blamed for ‘dropping out’. The onus for change is placed on the student rather than the society, schools or teachers. In this way, the invisibility of power and privilege remains unthreatened.

**Inequitable exclusion**

Inequitable exclusion refers to the fact that social exclusion is a multi-dimensional and dynamic process shaped by inequitable power relations (Popay, Escorel, Hernandez, Johnston, Mathieson, & Rispel, 2008, p. 2). Social exclusion has differing impacts on different groups and peoples based on context-dependent variables such as historical period (e.g., early colonization), and geographic location (e.g., northern reserves or inner city neighborhoods). Consequently there is a continuum of exclusion ranging from subtle to extreme forms of exclusion. For example, Donnelly (2007) characterizes the community sport landscape as a two-tiered system which reinforces race- and class-based stereotypes. Sport programs that provide social opportunities for youth (e.g., career and leadership development) are based on middle-class values and target middle to upper class youth. Alternatively, sport programs that target poor, marginalized ethnocultural youth are based on a social control model whereby sport is intended to control youth participants who are presumed to pose a threat to individual and community safety.

**Physical culture**

Physical culture refers to the embodied physical acts and activities of ethnocultural groups and the meanings particular groups attach to these activities (Paraschak, 1998). On the one hand, Aboriginal sport can be understood as an embodied or physical expression of the spiritual and cultural ways of life of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
Conversely, Aboriginal sport can represent a site of cultural contestation where Aboriginal peoples fight to retain control over their physical culture by either creating a separate sport system (e.g., North American Indigenous Games, Arctic Games), working to build a more inclusive sport system (Horn-Miller, 2006), or some combination thereof (see Paraschak, 1998).

Brief description of Research Methods

This study was divided into two research phases over a one-year period from May 2010 to May 2011. I conducted a community-based research project with the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC). The results of this study are based upon three research methods: ethnographic observations of WASAC sport leaders during program planning and delivery activities, a photovoice project with urban Aboriginal youth, and workshop evaluations utilizing an adapted version of Trochim’s (1989, 1998) concept-mapping technique with WASAC leaders.

The ethnographic research methods and workshop evaluations addressed three dimensions of culturally relevant sport for urban Aboriginal youth: mid-level organizational issues that impact WASAC’s vision, mission, and mandate; sub-level program processes and mechanisms presumed to produce positive benefits for WASAC participants; and micro-level interactions between WASAC leaders and participants. In addition, the photovoice project helped uncover the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth in a WASAC leadership program.

Delimitations

This research study was conducted within the following parameters:
• This study does not examine culturally relevant sport in formal education settings (i.e., physical education) or elite sport.

• This study does not examine gender-related issues in community sport.

• The issue of culturally relevant sport investigated in this study pertains to sport programming and leadership practices (and sport experiences) of urban Aboriginal youth living in Winnipeg, Manitoba, particularly those in the urban neighbourhood known as the ‘North End’.

• Multidisciplinary research that embraces indigenous principles (e.g., reciprocity, relationship-building, etc) and transgressive research methods (e.g., photovoice) challenge deeply entrenched beliefs about research validity (e.g., subjectivity versus objectivity, spirit-based knowing in secular spaces) and research ethics (e.g., confidentiality and anonymity). I take these issues very seriously in my research study as they concern the nature of power and knowledge and directly address them in Chapter 3.

Limitations

Due to a conflict with the Education / Nursing Research Ethics board regarding the design of the photovoice project, data collection for Phase Two was delayed eight weeks (for a description of the issues, see Chapters 3 and 4). Although I continued working with WASAC during this period, the imposed time constraints decreased the number of photovoice sessions with youth participants and required that I eliminate data collection during the photovoice Exhibit.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Nothing comes into being except through struggle; struggle is involved in the development of all things; and it is through struggle that things are negated and pass away. Conflict and contradiction are inevitable... Struggle, and the negativity involved with it, are not merely destructive, but also productive. (Sayers, 1980, p. 23)

In an ethnographic research study investigating a First Nations’ adult education centre, Haig-Brown (1995) discussed Aboriginal-controlled education in Euro-Canadian society as a type of dialectical contradiction. Indeed, the contradictions that shape Aboriginal education and politics also shape Aboriginal sport, as do the possibilities. For example, Haig-Brown describes the dialectical contradictions that shape First Nations’ adult education using the example of the relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal society. Haig-Brown speaks of “relations between success, accompanying growth, and increasing bureaucracy”, the relationships among a diverse urban Aboriginal population, and the “notion of cultural self-hatred” (p. 262). These same contradictions can also be said to influence relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in mainstream sport.

Planning and facilitating relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth is a contradictory and complex activity. Like Palmer’s (2007) assertion that a paradoxical model of teaching and learning promotes a richer understanding of our social and natural world, Haig-Brown (1995) also posits that “struggle is integral to development” and that “transformative work is often fraught with conflict” (p. 262). As a community-oriented scholar, I recognize that the term community means different things...
to different people, and that this meaning can change as one’s membership to her or his community changes. Thus, my literature review investigates the multiplicity of meanings and interpretations that likely shape the philosophical and practical activities of WASAC programs and leaders. Throughout my research study, I focus on the planning and facilitation practices that WASAC leaders use to understand and work within those contradictions in order to empower urban Aboriginal youth in sport and in life.

**Organization of Chapter**

The literature review is divided into four sections. The first section examines the relationship between social exclusion and cultural violence, particularly in relation to how they inform my understanding of the inequitable inclusion of urban Aboriginal youth in community sport. The second section introduces my position that community sport is a form of non-formal education or, in different terms, that community sport is an educational space. The third section describes the multi-disciplinary roots of my theoretical framework and, in particular, Ladson-Billing’s (1995, 2001, 2009) principles of culturally relevant education as they have been applied to physical education settings (see Halas, 2003a, 2006). The final section describes the counter-story as an analytical framework that guides my research on culturally relevant sport for urban Aboriginal youth.

**Social Exclusion and Cultural Violence**

Exclusion consists of dynamic, multi-dimensional processes driven by unequal power relationships interacting across four main dimensions – economic, political, social and cultural – and at different levels including individual, household, group, community, country and global levels. It results in a continuum of inclusion /
exclusion characterized by unequal access to resources, capabilities and rights which leads to health inequalities. (Popay et al., 2008, p.2)

Unlike theory, conceptual frameworks provide a meaningful way to bridge academic disciplines and build multidisciplinary research fields. Henderson, Presley and Bialeschki (2004) state that “conceptual frameworks are used to describe the main factors…in a study and the assumptions made about their relationships” (p. 413). They further clarify that a “body of knowledge is developed through elucidation of conceptual meanings and relationships” (p. 413). In other words, a body of knowledge can bridge disciplinary borders because of the philosophical relationships that transcend diverse fields and theories.

In Chapter 1, I examined the issue of social exclusion in sport. I began by defining sport, moved to a personal story of my friends’ gradual exclusion from physical education classes and sport spaces, and concluded with a description of my conscientization within amateur boxing. Throughout my studies, I found social exclusion to be a valuable multidisciplinary concept and a highly nuanced analytic tool that reveals how Aboriginal sport organizations and youth manage social, economic, and

37 For example, a large part of my graduate studies has been funded by the National Environ and Applied Health Research (NEAHR), formerly the Aboriginal Capacity and Development Research Environments (ACADRE). The majority of graduate studies funded by NEAHR are directly health-related, for example, within the medical sciences. However, an increasing number of students are funded from outside the medical sciences, in the Arts (e.g., architecture) and Fine Arts (personal communication). While an argument can be made that NEAHR is an extremely unique organization and health funding body, by grounding my research in the concept of social exclusion, I have been able to establish connections with graduate students in research fields that have traditionally been highly separated and distinct.
cultural barriers in mainstream sport (see Iwasaki, MacKay, Mactavish, Bartlett & Ristock, 2005, p. 1). When used to analyze unequal relations of power (Popay et al., 2008), social exclusion becomes a powerful conceptual framework by:

1. expanding previous definitions of social exclusion as a “state experienced by particular groups of people” (Popay et al., 2008, p. 7) to focus on unequal power relations, therefore placing equal emphasis on how unequal power relations are maintained and reproduced, and

2. acknowledging the potential “for groups and/or nations to actively resist exclusionary processes and their ensuing negative consequences” (p. 8).

The exclusion of Aboriginal peoples within mainstream sport parallels their social, economic, and cultural exclusion within Canadian society. While the term social exclusion is not used or favoured in all disciplines, similar concepts exist in various disciplines which enhance its analytic power. For example, many peace scholars characterize violence as a triangular relationship composed of direct, structural, and cultural forms of violence such as war, poverty and racism. First introduced by Johann Galtung (1990), the typology is now widely used in the field, and has been adopted by sport researchers (e.g., Lea-Howarth, 2006) to describe exclusionary practices which fuel intercultural conflict in divided societies (for more information, see Sport in Divided Societies by Sugden & Bairner, 2000). This typology of violence is necessary to understand intercultural conflict within multi-cultural societies like Canada and the subtle forms of exclusion that operate in mainstream sport.

As a conceptual framework, social exclusion draws attention to the multiple dimensions and levels that shape program theory and practice. According to the Social
Exclusion Knowledge Network or SEKN (Popay et al., 2008), social exclusion is best understood as relations of inequity as opposed to states of extreme marginalization. The use of a relational approach is recommended for a number of reasons:

- It recognizes that “exclusionary processes will impact in different ways to differing degrees on different groups and/or societies at different times”
- It recognizes “an inclusion/exclusion continuum and allow(s) for the possibility of inequitable inclusion and extreme exclusion as well as the possibility of differential inclusion/exclusion along difference dimensions” (p. 8).

In this section, I explore exclusionary processes that shape non-Aboriginal / Aboriginal relationships in sport and promote ‘colour-blind’ sport programs and policies. Based upon the two characteristics of social exclusion presented above, I selected two parallel sport-related issues that illustrate the varying degrees and types of exclusion:

1. *Inequitable Inclusion:* Examines how the current environment for urban Aboriginal youth in Canada has been marked by inequitable inclusion.

2. *Variations in Race Relations:* Explores how geographic location (e.g., north / south, urban / rural) and time (see Paraschak, 1997) impact the exclusionary processes experienced by different groups of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

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Popay et al. (2008) state that social exclusion has typically focused on states of exclusion versus relations of inequity. This focus resulted in policies which overlooked a large number of instances of social exclusion, which though less extreme, still resulted in inequity.
Inequitable Inclusion

On April 14, 2008, Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz authored a newspaper column announcing funding for Sport Programs in Inner-City Neighbourhoods (SPIN). The article consisted of ten paragraphs; eight of those paragraphs reviewed criminal statistics and the problems of youth gangs with only two describing the program. As a component of the Winnipeg Police Service’s LiveSAFE crime prevention policy, SPIN exemplifies the contrast between social opportunity (strength-based) and social control (deficit-based) sport programs. Donnelly (2007) notes that social opportunity programs are marketed towards middle-class youth and values, typically focusing on personal development and the enhancement of “career- and community-related skills, such as leadership and teamwork” (p. 23). Social control programs however, have a different philosophical orientation; youth are portrayed as potential delinquents with sport acting as a hook to attract and manage youth, thus protecting public safety (see Brown, Higgitt, Wingert, Miller & Morrissette, 2005).

Moreover, many social control sport programs like SPIN implicitly reference race and class without directly naming them (Donnelly, 2007; Coakley, 2002; Coakley & Donnelly, 2004). For example, inner city residents in Winnipeg are largely composed of poor/working class peoples, Aboriginal peoples, new immigrants, or racialized minorities (Silver et al., 2006). As mayor, when Katz focused on crime statistics and community safety, he was well aware of Winnipeg’s inner city demographics and the stereotypes his message would evoke. Indeed, SPIN may provide a valuable space and opportunities for urban Aboriginal and racialized minority youth living in Winnipeg’s inner city.
neighborhoods, but it also reveals problems with mainstream sport. In particular, the prevalence of social control interventions and deficit-based discourse aimed at urban Aboriginal youth highlights the subtle forms of racism that shape their cultural landscape and their experiences within mainstream sport (e.g., engagement and participation rates, etc).

Language “transmits the knowledge and values that constitute a culture” (Belsey, 2002, p.4) and politicians and policy makers understand the power of words; the most successful elections and policies rely on expertly crafted messages. Urban Aboriginal youth also know the meanings conveyed by politicians who speak about inner city issues and the power of such labels when applying for funding. As a personal example, I was once asked to seek input on a funding proposal from Aboriginal youth in a community program. When I asked them what I should write, they stressed that I should use the words inner city Aboriginal youth on the funding application.

Language is power. When used as a form of cultural violence (Galtung, 1990) words can be as harmful as sticks and stones. Thus, when we pretend that deficit-based discourse is innocuous, we are not only reinforcing colour- and culture-blind policies (see Lewis, 2001) but we fuel intercultural conflict and misunderstanding.

It is not my intention to devalue sport programs like SPIN or those who work for such organizations. Sport is political and sport planners and leaders often operate in the face of power. For example, it is a truism to state that sport organizations require external funding to survive. In the non-profit world of community sport, increasing time and resources are required to acquire and maintain funding to continue program operations (Gumulka, Barr, Lasby, & Brownlee, 2005; Misener & Doherty, 2009). Sport staff and
leaders often devote considerable time applying and reporting to a diverse array of funding sources. They are often placed in situations that challenge their ethical convictions, but to maintain programming, they must negotiate the contradictions they face.39

Understanding the dialectical contradictions that shape community sport or the SID movement does not preclude me from critiquing sport programs with social control philosophies and practices. Deficit-based language, as exemplified by Mayor Katz, is one way in which the inequitable inclusion of urban Aboriginal youth is reproduced. Inequitable inclusion means that Aboriginal youth remain marginalized despite having access to sport; their marginalization is, however, different or less extreme on the exclusion continuum.40 Inequitable inclusion is a form of social exclusion that reproduces inequitable power relations. In the case of SPIN, sport and program funding became a matter of politics and public relations. Nevertheless, sport staff can resist reifying such discourse if they respect the cultural landscape of racialized minority youth and adopt

39 For example, with the increased reporting demands by funders, many community program staff must spend more time away from working with clients to manage the bureaucratic needs of their organization and funders. Or, like the earlier example, to acquire funding, sometimes staff must focus on crisis stories to establish need and compete for limited funding dollars (Murray, 2006).
40 Sleeter (2000) discusses how the civil rights movement, in many ways, pushed racism underground and rendered white privilege invisible. For example, affirmative action policies -- designed to address historic inequities of power -- created a backlash against racialized minorities as such policies were regarded as unnecessary and evidence of reverse discrimination against white people, particularly males. In addition, policies designed to foster gender equality in the workplace were proven to promote intra-group inequity as affirmative action policies led to an increase in white women hired versus racialized minority and Aboriginal women (see also Douglas & Halas, 2011).
culturally relevant sport education practices. Examples of race- and class-based stereotypes implicit in social control sport programs are listed below (see Donnelly, 2007, p. 22-23):

- Young people are inclined toward deviance, particularly inner city youth (e.g., lower class, racialized minority);
- Youth need protection from their environment and themselves;
- The parents of inner city youth are uninvolved in their lives and unable to control them (e.g., extends language of pathology to family), so youth need structured sport settings controlled by responsible adults (e.g., white middle-class adults);
- Communities and society are safer when these youth have sport programs that control their behaviours and expose them to proper socialization.41

At a recent physical education conference, I discussed the difference between social control and social opportunity sport programs, and how social control sport programs had implicit race- and class- based stereotypes. Following my presentation, an audience member stood up and announced that she worked in a similar type of sport program and implied that her organization was compelled to use such language when applying to funding sources. I certainly understand the struggles community sport organizations face, but the fact remains that sport programs for Aboriginal youth have

41 While Donnelly (2007) does not explicitly address which communities benefit from social control programs and what cultural values determine proper socialization processes, critical theorists (e.g., critical race, post-colonial, etc) argue that these distinctions favour white middle class culture and values and negatively stereotype racialized minorities (for a critical discussion of the concept of social capital, see Morrow, 1999).
been criticized in Canada for utilizing a ‘language of pathology’ (Forsyth et al., 2007, p. 93). This language of pathology is rooted within the cultural violence of neo-colonialism. And, as argued earlier, when deficit-based or pathologizing language is translated into social policy, it reduces structural barriers and complex social problems to the problems of Aboriginal communities, families, and youth (Brown et al., 2005; Forsyth et al., 2007, p. 95; Halas & Hanson, 2001; see also Morrow, 1999; Reading, Kmetic & Gideon, 2007).

While I empathize with the difficult challenges that community sport staff must negotiate (e.g., time, money, and human resource challenges, see Misener & Doherty, 2009), I still believe that our thoughts and actions are not wholly prescribed by structural constraints. That is, I believe we have agency.

Quite simply, deficit-based sport programs negatively impact and limit social opportunities for urban Aboriginal youth; we cannot feign ignorance or rationalize the acceptance or impact of these constraints. Research indicates that poverty, culturally insensitive environments, and racism are key barriers to the participation and engagement of Aboriginal youth in organized sport (Canadian Heritage, 2005) and physical education in Canadian high schools (Champagne & Halas, 2003; Halas, 2006; Douglas & Halas, 2011).

Without question, community sport organizations and leaders experience organizational challenges. Yet, if they truly wish to build a more inclusive sport system, they must address these issues to the best of their ability, knowing that sometimes, they may not be able to do so. Equally, researchers will need to display a similar level of political awareness in order to uncover and appropriately contextualize the deeper
meanings that underscore the actions, behaviours and comments of sport planners and leaders.

*Variations in Race Relations*

Poverty is highly concentrated in Winnipeg’s inner city neighborhood (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2009). Much like the ghettoization of African Americans in the United States, urban Aboriginal people primarily reside in inner city, lower-income neighborhoods (Silver, 2006; 2011; Silver, Hay, Klyne, Ghorayshi, Gorzen, Keeper, MacKenzie, & Simard, 2006). In the mid 1940s, Aboriginal peoples began relocating to urban areas (see Silver, 2006), often for survival purposes (e.g., education, jobs, access to health care, etc). The geographic marginalization that began with the creation of the reserve system (i.e., isolated northern areas that were often infertile and inhospitable) is now reproduced in the geographic mobility patterns of Aboriginal peoples.

For example, Razack (2002) argues that the mobility patterns of Aboriginal peoples travelling back and forth between northern reserves and low-income inner city neighborhoods reflects the movement from one marginalized community to another. The isolated location of reserves and the bordered nature of inner city neighborhoods means that many *non-Aboriginal* peoples (primarily those living in southern rural communities and sub-urban neighborhoods) have no meaningful personal contact with Aboriginal peoples.

Scholars in the area of social geography have noted the racialized nature of geographic marginalization and privilege (Ford, 1994; Jackson, 1987). Space, place and race in Canada play an important role in the exclusion of Aboriginal peoples from important economic, political, social and cultural dimensions of our society (Silver et al.,
2006) and our education system (Halas & van Ingen, 2009). For example, the Indian Act created geographic and political divisions among Aboriginal people by “dividing up communities and even families according to externally created administrative categories” (Bourassa, 2009, p. 1) whereas the residential school system forcibly removed Aboriginal children from their families and often re-located them hundreds of miles from their home communities (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012).

The exclusion of Aboriginal peoples in Canadian society today must be understood in relation to various forms of historical, current and emerging patterns of exclusion, including geographic exclusion. Spatialized patterns of exclusion are evident in the physical isolation of northern reserves to the symbolic isolation of the inner city to the mobility patterns of northern Aboriginal peoples who must travel and temporarily reside in urban areas in order to access adequate health and education for themselves or family members. These spatialized and racialized patterns of exclusion have disrupted traditional ways of cultural transmission, identity, and a sense of community / belonging (Paraschak, 1997; Silver et al.). For urban Aboriginal peoples residing in ethno-culturally rich and diverse inner city neighborhoods, the pathways to cultivating or maintaining a strong sense of cultural identity and community are extremely challenging yet have catalyzed interesting patterns of resistance and revitalization (RCAP, 1996; Silver et al.).

Despite acknowledging the role that geography plays in the experiences of Aboriginal people and identity, little is known about the experience of urban Aboriginal peoples (RCAP, 1996) or the perspectives of urban Aboriginal youth (see Brown, Higgit, Wingert, Miller & Morrissette (2005). According to Silver (2006), existing research is outdated (dating back to the 1960s and 1970s) and offers little insight into the experience
of urban Aboriginal peoples since it was written from the perspective of non-Aboriginals. This research describes urban Aboriginal peoples unwillingness to assimilate into Canadian life as a problem (Silver) and portrays deficit-based stereotypes of urban Aboriginal youth, particularly males (Brown et al., 2005).

In the field of sport research, I have discovered very little research that directly examines the experiences of urban Aboriginal youth in community sport. Often, researchers conflate the experiences of northern/reserve and southern/urban Aboriginal peoples and distinct Aboriginal groups such as First Nations, Métis and Inuit. This pan-Aboriginal identity obscures diverse and rich cultural traditions and can reproduce inequity as inter-group (e.g., First Nations and Métis) and intra-group (e.g., male and female) power relations are ignored. Yet, there is value in the term Aboriginal itself as it denotes a common context of social, cultural, and political struggle that unites First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Clearly, a ‘pan-Aboriginal’ identity is useful when speaking of colonization and referencing political solidarity but dangerous when it obscures power relations within communities or if it is applied without attention to context and history.

In the article Variations in Race Relations: Sporting Events for Native Peoples in Canada, Paraschak (1997) delineates the different socio-historical forces that impact Aboriginal sport experiences between northern reserve communities and southern urban environs. Paraschak (1997) comments that southern Aboriginal peoples, more than northern Aboriginal peoples, adopted mainstream (or Euro-Canadian) sport practices. Her analysis of variations in race relations based on geographic factors is compelling and provides valuable insights into the challenges facing urban Aboriginal youth in urban
sport environs. Paraschak (1997) continues to suggest that the relative isolation of northern Aboriginal peoples (on-reserve and Inuit) has contributed to stronger social and cultural networks. She attributes this to the fact that the Inuit did not sign treaties and the influence of Euro-Canadians and experiences of racism for many Aboriginal peoples living on-reserve was muted since Aboriginal peoples represented a majority population.\(^{42}\)

In contrast, racism is more pervasive in urban areas dominated by Euro-Canadians and Euro-Canadian cultural traditions (RCAP, 1996, Vol. 4). Aboriginal people in inner city areas live, but do not share, the same sense of community (Silver, 2006), and cannot draw upon the same social networks that exist for northern Aboriginal peoples (Brown et al., 2005). While many Aboriginal peoples can trace their urban roots through multiple generations, the issues that drive their urban mobility patterns are similar to northern Aboriginal peoples (Silver, 2006). Thus, geographic mobility is a useful adaptive survival strategy but it is not conducive to developing community.\(^{43}\) As geographic mobility can involve travelling between northern, southern, and within urban communities, social capital (an extremely important wellspring of individual and cultural health, see Mignone & O’Neill, 2005) becomes de-stabilized.\(^{44}\) In this shifting and unstable environment, a

\(^{42}\) For a slightly different perspective on how racism in sport impacts Aboriginal youth living in northern and reserve communities, see Robidoux (2004).

\(^{43}\) The factors that create geographic mobility among Aboriginal people should not be mistaken with the historical nomadic nature of Aboriginal peoples. While many Aboriginal peoples, pre-colonization, were highly nomadic, this was due to subsistence patterns and cultural ceremonies based on a lifestyle adapted for living in harmony with natural systems.

\(^{44}\) Social capital is a very popular social concept among policy makers (Morrow, 1999). While there are a number of problems with the term (see Morrow, 1999; Blackshaw &
sense of belonging, cultural identity and integrity may be difficult to nurture and maintain. Although organizations such as the Indian and Métis Friendship Center help provide a sense of community and belonging for urban Aboriginal residents, the need for such services often far outweighs their organizational capacity.\footnote{For example, in Winnipeg, there is only one Indian and Métis Friendship Center (IMFC). See http://www.mac.mb.ca}

Sport has often been used as a tool of assimilation (re: civilization) by Euro-Canadians (Paraschak, 1997). The term *Aboriginal sport* is meaningful when used to denote collective solidarity and cultural connectedness but has limited explanatory power when applied to program planning processes and mechanisms for specific groups of Aboriginal peoples. Thus, as noted earlier, when evaluating culturally relevant sport programs, sport researchers and educators (e.g., program planners and leaders) need to understand the unique political, historical and cultural landscape of *urban* Aboriginal youth.

**Sport and Education**

The creative body and all that comprises it – mind, body, and spirit – are the creative, moving center of Native science. Although this may seem common sense, modern thinking abstracts the mind from the human body and the body of the world. (Cajete, 2000, p. 26)

Most of the time, we learn and teach in ways and in places that are invisible to us. We are socialized to believe that education must meet certain *prerequisites* in order to occur: a trained or certified teacher / instructor, a hierarchical and age-related learning Long, 2005), it is valuable in that it links three important constructs: “citizen engagement, interpersonal trust, and effective collective action” (Rohe, 2004, p. 158).
system, a pre-established body of knowledge, and a bureaucratized system of teaching and learning (see Livingstone, 2001, 2007). And yet, most Aboriginal and Euro-Western educational philosophers argue that teaching and learning is part of the human condition; it transcends historical shapes and structures. To find food and build shelter, we learn from knowledgeable people, observe other people or living creatures, or learn via experimentation. The relationship between educational and spiritual development is intertwined within Aboriginal worldviews as learning is regarded as “a journey to discover and understand what our spirit is here to accomplish” (Anuik, Battiste & George, 2010, p.66). The recent catchphrase ‘life long learning’ is an attempt to elucidate the wholistic and ubiquitous nature of education.

Through my involvement with community sport, I realized that the term coach and athlete did not capture the diversity of educational roles and relationships that exist outside of institutional spaces. In school, the term physical education describes the dynamic relationship between institutional learning (e.g., physical education teacher training), teaching and learning (e.g., pedagogical relationships), planning (e.g., curriculum), and educational structures (e.g., schools and gymnasiums, sport fields, etc).

In reviewing literature regarding non-formal and informal education, I discovered that formal education structures and processes receive more attention from educational researchers (Duguid, Mundel, & Schurgurensky, 2007) while non-formal and informal education tends to be devalued by education authorities and researchers.

46 Recently, scholars studying non-formal and informal education coined the term social movement education to describe teaching and learning via social change spaces such as unions, food banks, etc (see Duguid et al., 2007). As the literature in this area is emergent and largely draws from non-formal and informal education, I chose to frame my discussion of sport education in community sport programs within these fields.
This marginalization appears to stem from two issues. The first issue relates to the historic interest in studying structures, institutions, and associated processes (i.e., structural functionalism). The second factor is research-related issues. Simply put, it is easier for scholars to study concrete institutions, structures and regulated rules of practices such as schools, provincial curriculum, and teacher education preparation programs (e.g., formal education, see Livingstone, 2007).

Non-formal and informal education in community settings (or community-based education as I call it47) is a far more challenging area of study as teaching and learning are more diffuse, fluid and undefined. Teaching and learning is often tacit (e.g., a daughter learning to fix cars by working with her father) and difficult for participants to verbalize and researchers to neatly summarize and define (see Duguid et al., 2007).

Because so little research exists regarding community-based education and sport education, my investigation of planning and facilitating culturally relevant sport programs is forced to draw from comparable work in institutional settings (e.g., physical activity / education, see Carpenter, 2009; Champagne, 2006; Forsyth et al., 2007; Halas, 2003a, 2006). The term sport education respects the continuum of institutional (i.e., physical education) and community-based (i.e., community-based sport education) forms of sport education, while recognizing that parallels exist between these two typologies. For example, many program planners and sport leaders fulfill the role of educator in their sport organization by developing, delivering and facilitating sport programs. In my

47 Non-formal and informal education fall under the umbrella of adult education. However, I do not like to use the term adult education in my study as the name preemptively excludes examining information and non-formal education from the perspective of youth.
research, I demystify and concretize the tacit knowledge of sport educators (i.e., sport leaders, program planners)\textsuperscript{48} and processes and mechanisms attributed to the development of relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth (i.e., evaluation workshops).

Physical educators and coaches are arguably the most recognized sport educators but far more exist in their shadow. In community sport programs, sport staff or volunteers fulfill multiple roles and may be known, at different times and by different people, as a program planner, sport leader, coach, mentor or role model. Community sport programs may offer the only viable sport opportunity for urban Aboriginal youth who have been pushed out of school (Champagne, 2006; Halas, 2003a) or cannot afford competitive or elite sport (Canadian Heritage, 2005).

Aboriginal sport leaders consider community sport an important vehicle for improving Aboriginal peoples’ health, wellness, cultural survival and quality of life (Federal-Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee on Fitness and Recreation, 2000; see also the NAIG Conference Symposium Proceedings by Forsyth & Paraschak, 2006). Additionally, they have also argued that a strong and vibrant grassroots Aboriginal sport community not only helps build healthy communities but is an important stepping stone for future organized sport and competitive involvement (Brant, 2002).

I believe the dominance of school-based education research (Duguid et al., 2007; Livingstone, 2001, 2007; Schurgurensky, 2000) and marginalization of physically-based

\textsuperscript{48} Sport educators are people who either plan sport programs (e.g., curriculum) or facilitate sport programs (e.g., coaches, sport leaders). In community sport settings, sport educators may be volunteers or hired staff and fulfill a variety of roles for the sport organization (e.g., plan and facilitate sport programs).
education (Whitehead, 2007b) are responsible for some of the difficulties I faced as a graduate student. Not only did I pursue a multidisciplinary research topic in a relatively new field that creates considerable administrative difficulties, but I challenged Eurocentric beliefs regarding the primacy of the mind (and mind-based teaching and learning), and paired educational perspectives in unorthodox ways (e.g., community-based education with physically-based education). After witnessing the skepticism and suspicion that my research topic produced among some educational administrators and physical educators,\textsuperscript{49} I realized I had discovered a \textit{blind spot} in the educational imagination. This blind spot or inability or unwillingness to consider sport as a valid educational issue, stemmed from the normalizing influence of particular educational paradigms (e.g., see Kuhn, 1996) and the bureaucratization and political economy of universities (Greenwood & Levin, 2008).\textsuperscript{50}

Through this experience, I learned a great deal about the challenges of multidisciplinary research, particularly the philosophical tensions that exist within the educational community, and the internal political economy of universities. By disrupting assumptions about the nature, definition, forms, and location of education, I came to fully

\textsuperscript{49} It was strange that in courses external to the Faculty of Education, students and professors had no problems understanding what I meant by sport education, yet within my faculty and among some physical educators, a communication barrier existed. I am not sure why it was easier to explain my research to non-education audiences but I think it might have something to do with the fact that paradigm-based thinking did not hinder them.

\textsuperscript{50} Greenwood and Levin (2008) argue that as universities increasingly become knowledge management organizations and academic disciplines become more businesslike, academic administrators are pressured to treat students as clients and disciplines (e.g., professors, courses, funding, etc) according to cost-effectiveness schemes. Thus, a non-education student entering the faculty of Education under the guise of multidisciplinary research may be regarded by administrators as diverting valuable funding, human resources, etc from \textit{traditional} education students.
grasp the imbalanced nature of the Euro-Canadian education system. For example, mind-based education has gained such a dominant hold on our educational imagination that alternative ways of knowing -- such as our emotions, our body, and our spirit -- must be suppressed; as if somehow, by accepting these ways of knowing as valid, they invalidated or weakened mind-based ways of knowing.

In discussing the concept of physical literacy, Whitehead (2007a) emphatically states, “No apology is made for using the term 'literacy' in relation to the physical. Criticisms inferring that the concept is being deployed to gain status for physical education… are not accepted” (p. 128). The marginalization of physically-based education also impacts physical education teacher candidates who are are often made to feel less than their non-physical education teacher counterparts. As a graduate student, I anticipated potential resistance when I characterized my research as culturally relevant sport education; I never imagined, however, that it would be the latter construct of sport education that would be regarded as a transgressive act.

As a result of these experiences, I discovered how different philosophical paradigms (e.g., adult education, physical education, etc) within education signify their designated field of inquiry; the sub-field precedes the discipline’s title. And, since sport is generally associated with kinesiology, leisure, and recreation (external, not internal fields of inquiry), the assumption was that education was the tangential, not principal, discipline. As most education scholars soon discover, the fields of inquiry one chooses

51 While visiting with a group of physical education teacher candidates last year, a number of students remarked how they were teased by non-physical education students and public citizens about ‘not being a real teacher’, ‘taking easy courses’, and ‘not having a real job’.
significantly impacts the direction and scope of research. It structures our rules of practices, determines our avenues of inquiry and relevance, delineates appropriate research questions, determines which methods ‘match’ our questions, and establishes how we should infer meaning. While this type of paradigm-based research is an invaluable means of introducing new members to a discipline and differentiating disciplinary borders, when our academic imagination is artificially curtailed, we become incapable of understanding and respecting the messiness of the real-world.

What is Sport Education?

Sport education is an educational philosophy concerning the relationship between the physical culture of human beings, and teaching and learning as an embodied experience. On one hand, sport education affirms a philosophy of physically-based learning (Cajete, 2000) whereby our body plays an important role in coming to know and interact with the world. Conversely, sport education explores the pedagogy of teaching and learning physical literacy (Whitehead, 2007b), sport activities (e.g., rules, strategies) and healthy living.

As noted earlier, sport education is an extension of school-based education and a critical examination of physically-based education. By placing the body and embodied learning on par with the mind and intellectual thought, I draw attention to the marginalization of other forms of knowing (i.e., emotion, spirit) in educational spaces. As Whitehead (2007b) observes, the mind/body dualism so prevalent in Western education

52 Since Euro-Western education systems marginalize the body, emotions, and spirit, in the effort to glorify the mind and intellect, I compared the body to the mind. However, from a wholistic perspective, the body, mind, emotion, and spirit are intraconnected / interconnected and are considered equally important ways of engaging with the world.
casts “the body as a mere mechanism, essential to ‘housing’ our intellect but of little value in itself” (p. 283). The result? An overly mechanistic view of the body and physically-based education, the low priority and status of physical education and educators in schools (Whitehead, 2007b) and universities.

Methodological challenges

Community sport leaders are not constrained by the rigidity of institutional structures. As planners and educators, sport leaders operate within a unique set of freedoms and constraints; for example, the freedom of an undefined curriculum or teaching method is constrained by time and resources provided for planning and educational training. While sport leaders work in non-formal educational spaces, insights from anti-oppression educators in more formal settings are likely to provide the greatest source of guidance while research in social movement and service learning literature grows.

The challenges of planning and teaching encountered by sport leaders can be understood by the research gaps in social movement learning. For example, how do sport leaders carve out spaces for sustained learning when their work is focused on “action rather than reflection (Duguid, Mundel, Schurgurensky, 2007, p. 44)”? As Duguid et al. (2007) note, “understanding the ways adults learn in social action is important because it provides insight into organizational strategies to create, foster or improve learning opportunities that can help promote sustainability (p. 44).”

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53 Freire states that social change education “cannot be confused with or restricted to adults... What defines [it] is not the learners’ age but the political option... (1985, cited in Torres, 2007).
Thus, a vital role for sport researchers and policy-makers is legitimizing community sport as an educational space and promoting opportunities for sport leaders (through specialized funding or subsidized public learning opportunities) to embrace their educational role so that their learning is both intentional and conscious (Duguid et al., 2007). Education scholars need to reexamine the marginalization of physically-based education, and, in particular, the levels of marginalization that have afflicted the fields of physical education and non-formal education.

Multidisciplinary Theoretical Framework

The Multidisciplinary Imagination

For nearly four decades, a quiet methodological revolution has been taking place in the social sciences. A blurring together of disciplinary boundaries has occurred. The social sciences and humanities have drawn closer together in a mutual focus on an interpretive, qualitative approach to inquiry, research, and theory. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. vii)

The sport-in-development (SID) movement (see Coalter, 2007; Darnell, 2007; Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, SDP IWG, 2006, 2007) exemplifies the need for multidisciplinary research as scholars from diverse fields such as development, peace studies, health, sociology, and education struggle to bridge ideological, methodological and theoretical differences to build a coherent body of knowledge. Akin to the catalytic power of Kuhn’s (1996) anomaly in shifting the way
academic communities theorize social phenomena,\textsuperscript{54} multidisciplinary research fields such as the SID movement require a new type of researcher and approach.

To address the real-world issues, namely the need for culturally relevant sport programs, sport practitioners and policy-makers need a body of knowledge that harnesses the collective knowledge, experience, and skills of diverse academic fields, methodologies and scholars. In particular, community sport leaders designing and facilitating sport programs which address pressing social issues (e.g., social exclusion) need practical and accessible research studies and reports that fit the context of their work environments.

To thrive and remain relevant, community sport research needs a body of knowledge that reflects the perspective of practitioners and policy-makers, not academic audiences. In other words, community sport or SID research cannot be disengaged from the social world because it is intended to create change in the social world. And, as political interest increases in community sport as a social intervention (Coalter, 2007), so does the need for research about critically reflexive sport practices that can help sport planners and leaders plan and teach in the face of power (see Forester, 1989).

To do this, my theoretical framework must meet two key criteria. First, the research methodology must embrace the evolving criticality of multidisciplinary social science research. Second, the theoretical paradigm must be relevant and meaningful to Aboriginal worldviews and peoples and include perspectives that can challenge the plethora of research crisis-stories about Aboriginal peoples (Schnarch, 2004).

\textsuperscript{54} Kuhn (1996) was a philosopher of science (i.e., physics, chemistry, etc) not social science. However many of his ideas have been taken up by social scientists.
Aboriginal Education and Principles: A Theoretical Foundation

On being a community scholar

As a community scholar, I view research, education and ethics as inextricably intertwined. I also view communities wholistically; I see them as sites of both belonging and exclusion, where diversity can divide or strengthen the whole depending upon the willingness of people to engage in critical dialogue and social action. When I engage in research as a community scholar, I understand that my subjectivity and social location impact my relations and that, in some situations, I am better suited to some types of work than others. Thus, my work as a community scholar is shaped by my particular set of strengths, skills and values, the context of my work, and relationships and my responsibilities as a Métis woman.

As I worked to determine what it meant to be a community scholar, I began reading Shawn Wilson’s (2008) book, Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods. In it, I found a methodological framework that articulated ideas that I was just beginning to fully understand. His description of indigenous research methods extends and enriches my understanding of what it means to be a community scholar.

Community scholars are not scholar activists. Certainly, both can be found in universities and tend to view themselves as social change agents but scholar activists prioritize their professional academic identity above their community identity and membership. Conversely, community scholars view themselves as community members working or studying within academic institutions. As a community scholar, my work is contextually situated in relationships external to the university and I consider my research methods, processes, and goals according to my relationship with research participants and
the needs of the communities where I live and work. Wilson (2008) addresses this axiological shift and devotes an entire chapter to describing the concept of relational accountability.

As a community scholar, I believe that researchers who pursue emancipatory goals (regardless of how small the steps or circle of influence) cannot hide behind an illusion of objectivity. I am also grateful for indigenous scholars who publish articles about research and knowledge from their perspective and who reinforce the sacred as a vital component of academic writing (e.g., Ermine, 1995; Hampton, 1995, etc). To respect the complexity of the webs of power which complicate and enliven our world (the sacred, synergistic, and oppressive), researchers must respect and reflect this complexity in their theories, methods, and research relationships.

Although Aboriginal worldviews and research approaches are similar to critical theory and research, Kovach (2005) cautions against indigenizing western theoretical and research models which take a secular and individualistic approach. There are additional limitations to critical education perspectives, particularly those that favour power over models of analysis that position intercultural conflict as an antagonistic relationship of us versus them. These models are unsuited to the analysis of culturally relevant sport for two reasons. First, the models are not well suited to Western multicultural societies where people occupy multiple and contradictory positions of power (Choules, 2007). Second, peace scholars and Aboriginal educators require a model that addresses two additional

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55 By ‘power over’, I mean social science theories which focus on the destructive aspect of relationships of power inequity. While this analytic piece is key to understanding oppression and its impact, it privileges secular understandings of power and overlooks productive aspects of power.
dimensions of power: power with (e.g., peace-building) and power within (e.g., spirituality).

Aboriginal education and worldviews

Like culturally relevant education, Aboriginal education – post contact – is dedicated to the individual empowerment of individual learners and the collective empowerment of Aboriginal peoples. Its departure from culturally relevant education is rooted in the fact that, for Aboriginal peoples, culturally relevant education is a political, not necessarily cultural, approach to education for Aboriginal people. At an individual level, Aboriginal education is a context-driven approach to teaching cultural knowledge and ways of being. Here, the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and cultural ways of knowing are reflected in locally-grounded education systems. At the collective level, Aboriginal education is best described in terms of shared principles and worldviews rather than a universal approach to teaching and learning. By acknowledging the diverse cultural principles inherent within Aboriginal education, we resist homogenizing distinctive cultural traditions.

Urban Aboriginal peoples are not culturally homogenous. They may be Inuit, First Nations, Métis, status or non-status. They may come from different cultural regions, geographic locations or linguistic groups. Because of this diversity, it is more appropriate (and coherent) to focus on Aboriginal education principles instead of delineating specific cultural approaches to education.

Aboriginal worldviews are based on a spiritual and cosmological connection to the world, where everything is sacred and through the act of creation, everything is imbued with a living spirit. The Choctaw scholar Eber Hampton (1995) described twelve
standards or components of Indian (Aboriginal) education. Although his original article was written over fifteen years ago, his description of Aboriginal education still holds true today.

**Standard 1: Spirituality**

Spirituality refers to the inner life of human beings. Spiritually-based educators like Parker Palmer (2007) talk about the inner landscape of teachers and students. Aboriginal education nurtures the inner development of students, reaffirms their role and importance within their cultural community, and teaches them about the interdependence of all living creatures.

**Standard 2: Service**

Spirituality and service are intertwined. There are no altruistic actions when you see the interdependence of the world. Aboriginal education is based on the recognition that the strength of a community is enhanced by the strength of individual members and its purpose is to give back to our communities and the world; the purpose of Aboriginal education is not “individual advancement or status” (Hampton, 1995, p. 21). As a student in the Ph.D. Studies for Aboriginal Scholars (PSAS) cohort program and community scholar, this notion of service permeates the entirety of my graduate student experience and shapes my understanding of what it means to be a community scholar.

**Standard 3: Diversity**

Colonization and racism have indelibly shaped the cultural identity of Aboriginal peoples. In describing Indian identity post-contact, Hampton (1995) recounted a story where a group of Indian students were asked to identify themselves and responded by identifying their tribal identities. When these students were asked what they had in
common, one replied “the white man”. Through this story, Hampton demonstrates the impact of colonization on Aboriginal people’s tribal identity.

Aboriginal education is often understood, interpreted and enforced from a monocultural perspective, which erases the cultural diversity that existed among Aboriginal peoples pre- and post-contact. In discussing the principle of diversity, Hampton (1995) states that Aboriginal-controlled education does not simply refer to non-Aboriginal education systems but, equally, the local control of Aboriginal schooling by particular tribal groups.

Hampton devotes considerable attention to discussing how Aboriginal education honours the diversity that exists among Aboriginal peoples by creating respectful learning environments, where different learning styles or ways of knowing co-exist and are nurtured by reflective teacher practitioners. This concept of reflective learning environments and reflective practice is especially important to educators working with urban Aboriginal youth.

*Standard 4: Culture*

While distinct, the validity of Aboriginal knowledge and ways of knowing are equal to Western ways of knowing (Battiste & Henderson, 2000) as expressed through such ideals as scientific reductionism, rationality, objectivity and individualism. Consequently, Aboriginal education involves an extremely difficult task; re-discovering cultural ways of knowing, learning, teaching and communicating to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal cultures while respecting the contemporary cultural landscape of Aboriginal students.
Standard 5: Tradition

As noted above, Aboriginal culture continues to evolve and Aboriginal education must ensure that cultural traditions remain relevant in contemporary educational spaces. As Hampton states (1995), ensuring cultural continuity “is neither a rejection of the artifacts of other cultures nor an attempt to turn back the clock” (p. 29). Preserving and celebrating traditional cultural activities, such as the potlatch or the contemporary potluck, fosters a sense of cultural connection and positive affirmation of Aboriginal identity.56

Standard 6: Respect

The interdependence that connects all living creatures demands interpersonal relationships based on mutual respect. Deficit-based thinking about Aboriginal cultures, communities, and students permeates the Canadian educational system and represents a dangerous form of cultural violence; it fosters intercultural violence between non-Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginal students, and between non-Aboriginal students and Aboriginal students. Cultural violence reinforces the experiences and perceptions of Aboriginal students about their inequitable treatment in schools. Hampton quotes Wolcott, a ‘white’ teacher who, upon reflecting about his teaching practices with Aboriginal students, stated:

I think that I might have been a more effective teacher if I had taken the perspective of regarding the teacher, me, as an enemy. By effective I mean that I

56 Hampton (1995) references potluck gatherings as a source of traditional Aboriginal culture. The potluck gathering referenced by Hampton is quite different from potlatch ceremony of Aboriginal peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast which represented a gift-giving ceremony and a way to redistribute resources more equitably among community members.
would have remained more objective about my lack of success, and I would have been more sensitive to the high cost for each pupil by accepting me or my instructional program (Wolcott, 1987, p. 420).

**Standard 7 and 8: History and Relentlessness**

Unlike the Canadian education system, Aboriginal education does not ignore the colonial roots and violence associated with the European settlement of Canada (see Willinsky, 1998). The terms *pre-contact* and *post-contact* refer to the disruption and near-extinction of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Hampton (1995) describes the two standards of history and relentlessness as twin concepts; with oppression also comes the seeds of resistance. Colonization is experienced as a form of direct violence (e.g., war), structural violence (e.g., residential schools, the Indian Act, the reserve system) and cultural violence (e.g., racism). The term post-contact does not mean that colonization stopped, rather that the forms of violence began to shift from direct violence to structural and cultural forms of violence.

Hampton (1995) describes relentlessness as the battle for the “life of our children” (p. 32). The battle is not between people but for the right to define their lives: it is an external and internal battle. At a political level, the struggle by Aboriginal people for self-determination includes the right to self-government as well as reconciliation efforts that would address past wrongs as a part of the necessary healing required for intercultural relationship building. Aboriginal education also recognizes the destructive influence of cultural violence on the inner lives of Aboriginal youth. Aboriginal education therefore seeks to prepare Aboriginal youth for both the internal and external battles that will shape their lives.
Standard 9: Vitality

Just as counting the dead plants is an inadequate measure of the life of the seeds, so counting the deaths, the alcoholism rates, the suicides, the murders, and the dropouts is inadequate to measure the vitality of Native life. The horrors and indescribable pain of Native existence after the European conquest cannot be minimized. Neither can the vitality of Native resistance and resurgence.

(Hampton, 1995, p. 35)

The ninth standard of Aboriginal education, vitality, honours the resilience of Aboriginal peoples and cultural ways of life. By directly addressing the history of colonization and the intergenerational trauma carried by Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal education builds the conscientization of Aboriginal youth. Through this process of conscientization, the resilience of Aboriginal peoples is honoured and the destructive nature of internalized oppression is reduced.

Oppression and resistance have shaped contemporary ideas about the meaning of Aboriginal education and the politics of intercultural relationship building. For example, Hampton (1995) returns to Wolcott’s reflection about his teaching practices with Aboriginal students when he states that the “resistance and hostility of Native students (can be understood as) an assertion of Indian integrity” (p. 35). This standard of Aboriginal education is also shared by culturally relevant educators like Halas (2006) who state that reflexive teaching practices, paired with an awareness of the cultural landscape of oppression are required to develop caring, respectful relationships with students.
Standard 10: Conflict

Regardless of where intercultural conflict occurs, it is an inevitable fact of life for urban Aboriginal youth. Intercultural conflict is fueled by perverse ignorance, best evidenced by those who claim they are colour-blind or culture-blind. “The educator who sees education as culturally neutral is similar to the spouse of an alcoholic who denies the alcoholism. There are implications for practice, self-concepts, and feelings that both are unable to face” (Hampton, 1995, p. 37). Perverse ignorance attempts to deny that the everyday reality of Aboriginal youth is shaped by a history of colonization and racism.

Of course, cultural conflict exists at all levels of education just as it does in community sport. The sociological lens of my inquiry delineates the multiple dimensions of this conflict, from a macro-societal context to mid-level issues, sub-level program conditions, and micro-level interpersonal relationships.

Standard 11: Place

The connection between Aboriginal people and the land represents their spiritual connection to life, their sacred responsibilities as stewards for Turtle Island, and the cultural diversity of their various geographic territories.

Standard 12: Transformation

The final standard of Aboriginal education is the need to transform relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, our inner landscapes, and the improvement of the overall quality of our societal relationships at the local, national, and global level. Aboriginal education honours the transformative potential encapsulated

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57 Many Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the United States, particularly Ojibway/Anishinabe peoples, refer to North America as Turtle Island.
within every living creature; it is the transformation of knowledge about intercultural conflict into the wisdom of building intercultural relationships.

*Transforming intercultural environments*

In their quest to find meaning in the outer space, Aboriginal people turned to the inner space. This inner space is that universe of being within each person that is synonymous with the soul, the spirit, the self, or the being. (Ermine, 1995, p. 103)

In response to the limitations of antagonistic education models which often advance justice-making at the expense of intercultural relationship building (see Lederach, 1997), Calliou (1995) developed an indigenous peacekeeping pedagogy to explore the relationship between racism, multiculturalism, antiracism and peacekeeping. Central to her notion of peacekeeping is the concept of *right relations* or *harmony*, composed of two parts, *unconditional respect* and *compassion*.

Unconditional respect is defined as a form of unconditional love that is freely given and “not conditional upon an appropriate response, failing which love or respect may be withdrawn” (p. 67). She expands this concept by linking it to indigenous spiritual beliefs and the unconditional respect for “all beings because we all begin as seeds from the same materials” (p. 67). Calliou continues by describing the term *compassion*, equating its sub-components, *celebration* and *justice-making* with multiculturalism and anti-racism education. Together, respect and compassion are central pedagogical principles in intercultural educational spaces because they recognize both the harm

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58 Calliou (1995) notes the influence of the work of Matthew Fox, a Dominican scholar, for fleshing out these ideas.
created by us/them dichotomies and pedagogical models that create an illusion of human separateness.

Throughout her writing, Calliou (1995) reinforces the sacred nature of life and the strength and humility required of educators who pursue such work. Inspired by her peacekeeping pedagogy, my theoretical and methodological framework is guided by a similar wholistic and spiritually-grounded perspective. As a community scholar who embraces multidisciplinary research, I understand that I must be like a willow tree, flexible enough to gather nourishment from various disciplines, yet possessing deep theoretical roots with which to ground my work.

*Insights from sport for peace and peace theory*

Every culture has a history of sport yet, as a social construction, development through sport programs can also create their own culture, rituals, and forms of identification. Sport for peace researchers believe that sport programs can act as a transcultural relational space that can link healthy societal frameworks and through team-building activities, bridge social, political, and cultural divides (Lea-Howarth, 2006; Sugden, 2006).

In our rapidly changing world, sports offer a simple societal framework that is an important contribution to self-development and realization. Sport is especially useful in fostering identity among children and youth and counteracts the problem of social integration (Schwery, 2003, p. 18).

Perhaps the most intriguing benefit of sport for peace research is its ability to embrace the contradictory nature of sport recognizing sport as a ‘concrete unity of
opposites’ (Sayers, 1980)\textsuperscript{59} which has the capacity to foster positive relationships and exacerbate conflict. Sport for peace practitioners involved with the Football for Peace (F4P) program in Israel cite the contradictory nature of sport and the passion it creates in both players and spectators as being central to its importance as a peace-building tool: “It is this capacity to generate conflict which allows the ‘teachable moments’ to emerge… and sometimes the coaches even deliberately engineer a confrontation (Lea-Howarth, 2006, p. 31).”

A teachable moment, according to F4P program developers, is a pedagogical device used to illustrate core values of development and/or peace efforts whereby youth are provided leadership opportunities in situations of conflict to help them develop appropriate peace-building skills and instill confidence in their ability to move from confrontation to resolution. However, as noted by sport for peace researchers, the successful use of teachable moments requires carefully designed program structures (Sugden, 2006). This includes the creation of sport as a politics-free zone, particularly in deeply divided societies (Lea-Howarth, 2007; Sugden, 2006), refined facilitation skills (especially for outsiders to the conflict), and sustainable leadership (often accomplished through internal leadership development programs) (Coalter, 2007).

Critical theory and education perspectives have long recognized the insidious nature of cultural violence (e.g. ideology, hegemony, linguistic/discursive power, see Kincheloe & McLaren, 2008, p. 411-413), and how it supports direct and structural violence. Cultural violence becomes more salient as it becomes the main form of power,

\textsuperscript{59} These ideas by Sayers (1980) are more fully explored in relation to Aboriginal education by Haig-Brown (1995).
and thus more complex in its ideological manifestations.\textsuperscript{60} However it is also the site where critical education theorists, culturally relevant sport researchers and sport for peace scholars believe that sport education can contribute to the creation of a culture of peace. The explicit focus on ideology critique, conscientization, historicity of knowledge, and problem-posing dialogue attest to the parallel analytic concerns in critical education fields and the mutual influence between peace theory, critical theory and social change education. While critical theory and social education have more advanced understanding of cultural violence in educational settings (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2008), peace theory both complements and strengthens social change education because of its practical, theoretical focus on intercultural relationship building.

Culturally relevant sport and sport for peace programs pro-actively seek to rebuild intercultural relationships in divided societies. Key to their success is the focus on fun, strength-based sport education programs, an explicit educational focus on training and developing local sport leaders, and partnerships with grassroots community groups and university researchers. Considerable differences exist between the theoretical terrain, geographical context and educational philosophies and approaches within each program but they are not inimical to comparison or strategic synthesis. Indeed, contradictions between the two programs elucidate the processes and mechanisms in which intercultural relationship building is theorized and enacted in different sport spaces.

\textsuperscript{60} Kincheloe and McLaren (2008) reconceptualize a critical definition of hegemony and ideology (p. 411-413) and discuss power in relation to four factors: hegemony, ideology, linguistic/discursive, and culture. Their analysis closely parallels Galtung’s (1990) focus on cultural violence in religion and ideology, language and art, empirical and formal science.
Educational principles

Ladson-Billings (1995) states that culturally relevant teaching is a pedagogy of opposition similar to critical education theories but is “specifically committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment” (p. 160). Traditional multicultural approaches to education have attempted to fit culture into education, rather than approach education via culture (see Pewewardy, 1993). Banks (2001) characterizes culturally relevant teaching as ‘equity pedagogy’, adding that it requires high quality teachers “who are experts in their content specialization, pedagogy, and child development (2001, p. 13-14).”

In Crossing Over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers into Diverse Classrooms (2001), Ladson-Billings notes that traditional educational approaches in high-poverty and diverse classrooms tend to pathologize children. Although Canada and the U.S. are multicultural societies, a cursory scan of educational and physical education faculties reveals classrooms that are increasingly heterogeneous and teachers who are increasingly homogenous (see Douglas & Halas, 2011; Howard, 2003; King, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2001). This paper does not question whether or not white teachers and sport educators should teach in diverse educational spaces but, like Ladson-Billings (2001), I wonder what type of education sport leaders currently receive, if they are properly prepared and supported, how they relate to students and their communities (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Taylor, 1995), are they considered critically aware ‘allies’

61 While this question is likely an area of considerable debate, in my view, such a question ignores the current realities facing students of colour in diverse multicultural societies.
(Champagne, 2006), and if they have developed a positive white race consciousness (Halas, 2006; Tatum, 1999).

In the field of physical education, Ennis (1999) has examined culturally relevant teaching practices for disengaged girls, whereas Douglas and Halas (2011), Forsyth et al. (2007) and Halas (2003a, 2006) have focused on culturally relevant teaching for Aboriginal youth and students with emotional or behavioural difficulties. In order to develop relationships with Aboriginal youth, Halas (2006) states teachers “must move beyond colour-blindness which seeks to treat all students equally in ways that ignore how advantages and disadvantages are differentially associated with different race, class, or gender inequities (p. 157).” Colour-blind strategies have been shown to de-racialize racial incidents and “reinforce the victim’s sense of outsiderness (Lewis, 2001, p. 791), mute attention to white privilege, culture and white supremacy (hooks, 2000; Sleeter, 2000), and overlook cultural ways of knowing and learning (e.g., Ermine, 1995; Hampton, 1995; Stairs, 1995). Colour-blind strategies also reinforce deficit-based thinking by constructing student resistance as evidence of ‘bad attitudes’, ‘laziness’, ‘incompetence’; it ignores student’s feelings of cultural alienation and the cultural irrelevance of the curriculum (Champagne, 2006; Halas, 2002).

What does a culturally relevant sport and a sport educator-as-ally look like? Halas (2008) created a circular graphic to depict culturally relevant physical education for sport leaders as allies.\(^{62}\) In the centre of the circle, Halas notes that “everything is interconnected” reflecting an Aboriginal worldview based on interdependence (Hampton, 2008).

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\(^{62}\) The source of this information was a course handout for a pilot course in culturally relevant physical education and health in the Winter term of 2008.
In each quadrant, Halas poses a series of questions to encourage critical reflection.

- Teacher as ally: How can teachers use their positions of privilege to build equitable, respectful, supportive relationships with all students?
- Student: What do you know about their day-to-day cultural landscape?
- Learning climate: How can you create a supportive and engaging gym climate?
- Curriculum: What activities are meaningful and relevant for the students?

As Halas’ model implies, a central pedagogical principle for sport allies is the notion of critical reflection (see Halas, 1998; 2006; also Howard, 2003). Although I discuss critical reflection in greater detail in the following two pages, culturally relevant education requires that sport allies critically interrogate what they think they know about their students. Sport allies need to pay close attention to negative automatic thoughts or images and the ‘commonsense’ discourse that fuels them. They must seek alternative explanations and turn their critical gaze upon themselves and consider how students might see them in the same light.

Culturally relevant sport is more than critical self-reflection. As Halas (2006) notes, successful teacher practices include: viewing your role as educator as a key determinant of your students’ success (see also Ladson-Billings, 2001); incorporating a variety of activities that are “personally meaningful and socially relevant” (p. 172);
working for the collective empowerment of youth by treating them as individuals (getting to know them, showing an interest in their lives, asking for suggestions to enhance their enjoyment or participation); clearly outlining expectations to ensure they are reasonable; fostering group cohesiveness and accountability; and encouraging but not forcing participation.

Principles of culturally relevant sport education

The decision to focus on the relationship between sport, education and culture relates to two challenges noted by SID researchers: the lack of information regarding (1) how to plan and (2) how to teach/facilitate sport in different contexts and to different populations (SDP IWG, 2007). Physical education and coaching offer valuable pedagogical insights into teaching sport skills in formal and non-formal settings, but as research from physical education scholars such as Halas (2003a, 2006) and Champagne (2006) have demonstrated, constructive information about culturally relevant physical education practices is only now emerging and often amid great resistance. For these reasons and those listed below, I have chosen to blend culturally relevant physical education with community-based education perspectives (e.g., critical adult education, 

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64 Sugden (2006) has also commented on program planning challenges related to achieving humanitarian objectives through sport. He states that sport for peace initiatives require appropriate programming and specially trained facilitators to achieve the peace objectives of sport.

65 For example, at a number of sport-related conferences over the past two years, I have noticed that researchers or practitioners who directly address and name racism or white privilege in sport experience either silence from audience members or heated debate. After one conference where I discussed racism in sport, an audience member told me how much she appreciated such a frank discussion of the issues as most scholars adopted colour-blind practices. For a discussion of the relationship between racism, colour-blind discourse, and silence, see Fox (2001), Ladson-Billings (1996), Lorde (2007), and Tatum (1994, 1999).
Aboriginal education, peace education) to frame my understanding of *culturally relevant sport education* (i.e., program planning and facilitation practices). An eclectic theoretical framework is necessary because:

1. These theories represent strong critical educational perspectives that do not abandon theory in the pursuit of practice.

2. The issue of culture and power in sport requires educational perspectives that can confront and challenge macro-level, mid-level, and micro-level forms of social exclusion in sport (see Irvine, 1990).

3. Aboriginal education and adult education emerged within community settings (e.g., Battiste & Barman, 1995; Horton & Freire, 1990) and are well-equipped to deal with the pedagogical challenges of community-based education (e.g., sub-program level issues) in multi-cultural environments (see Choules, 2007).

The field of physical education only partially addresses the impact of community sport on youth participants. Physical education offers valuable insights into organizing sport programs and teaching sport skills but, as a field of study and practice, it offers less theoretical and practical insights into community-based sport education and multi-cultural education spaces than others, such as adult education, Aboriginal education, or peace theory. This assumption was confirmed in my research results when it became apparent that WASAC leaders and programs’ priorities heavily favoured the social and leadership benefits of their work, rather than traditional sport benefits such as sport skill development and conditioning.
I use Ladson-Billings’ (1995) definition of culturally relevant pedagogy to guide my initial assumptions about planning and facilitating relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth.\(^6^6\) I chose this definition because researchers have applied Ladson-Billings’ principles of culturally relevant education in school-based sport programs and have demonstrated promising results (see Carpenter, Rothney, Mousseau, Halas & Forsyth, 2008; Carpenter, 2009; Forsyth et al., 2007).

The three principles of culturally relevant education state that students must “experience academic success”; “develop and/or maintain cultural competence”; and “develop a critical consciousness” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). In translating Ladson-Billings’ research to physical education settings, Halas et al. (in press) equate academic achievement with *physical literacy*;\(^6^7\) and cultural competence and critical consciousness with educational practices that affirm the *cultural identities, physical culture* (e.g., physical leisure practices) and *cultural landscapes* of Aboriginal youth in sport.

Recognizing and nurturing the relationship between the sport program (curriculum), sport educator (teacher), and Aboriginal youth learner (student) is an implicit condition of culturally relevant sport education. Halas et al. (in press) argue that culturally relevant physical education applies to both students and educators (see Ladson-

\(^{6^6}\) As part of my research involves asking Aboriginal peoples to define what is a relevant and meaningful sport program, this definition may later change. See *Section 3: Methodology* for more information.

\(^{6^7}\) Physical literacy is a complex construct. Whitehead (2007) describes physical literacy as a combination of body awareness, mastery of physical movement and the ability to capitalize on, and exercise our physical potential. Physical literacy is not dependent upon physical ability and will be expressed differently by different cultures and different peoples.
Billings, 2001; Howard, 2003). To develop caring and authentic relationships with students, Halas (2006) posits that physical educators must “respect young people and make efforts to understand the cultural landscape of their… day-to-day lives” (p. 155). To accomplish this, teachers must understand and interrogate their own cultural landscape, particularly since the large majority of teachers (Banks, 2001; Howard, 2003) and physical education teachers (Douglas & Halas, 2011) have white, middle class backgrounds. This broader socio-analytic view allows researchers to examine student success and failure in light of institutional and teacher practices (Halas et al., in press).

Consequently, one of the main issues that shapes culturally relevant sport education is the prevalence of colour- and culture-blind discourse that creates inequities in education (Fox, 2001) and sport policies and programs (Donnelly, 2007; Forsyth et al., 2007). Wolcott (1987) highlighted this problem with the controversial statement that white teachers of Aboriginal youth would become better teachers if they realized that they represent and have often become cultural, not personal, enemies of Aboriginal youth. Specifically, Wolcott’s use of the term cultural enemies refers to the historical role that education (and by extension, teachers) has played in colonization (for detailed examination of this issue, see Willinsky, 1998).

The Counter-story

At a recent thesis defense, a professor commented that everyone can write a story but not everyone can write a good story. As I reflected on this comment, I came to the realization that good storytelling is often a part of good research. Most social science researchers understand that academic writing requires strong technical skills, the ability to untangle and analyze the social world, and the skills necessary to communicate theory
and research in a comprehensive textual manner. Storytelling adds a layer to academic writing that has been filtered out of Euro-Western research. Obscured and marginalized in Euro-Western research due to the influences of Enlightenment thinking (e.g., objectivity and rationality) and Western science (e.g., reductionism and fragmentation), social science writing is only beginning to connect with the heart, body, spirit, and sacred nature of our lives (Palmer, 2007).  

At an academic level, effective research requires a reflexive and creative approach to writing. By telling the stories that enliven our research questions, we humanize our research participants and ourselves. Thus, a reflexive approach to writing requires that researchers acknowledge that how we write about the social world implicates our social location within it. This does not legitimize the dominance of the storyteller’s voice above the research participant or subject. Rather, by accepting subjectivity as a factor that impacts research, knowledge is understood as a human construction that is shaped by context, history, and culture.  

Yet, good storytelling requires more than this. Alice Walker is quoted as once saying, “I’m not sure a bad person can write a good book. If art doesn’t make us better, then what on earth is it for?” For many graduate students, this dimension of good storytelling and good research is hidden; we are told that storytelling is the domain of journalists and activists, not academics (see Malkki, 1997).  

68 For example, most academic disciplines discourage writing in the first person (e.g., I) as it is too subjective. Conversely, feminist scholarship encouraged writing that connected the political with the personal and is exemplified by such writers as bell hooks (1994, 2003) and Audre Lorde (1984).  
69 See Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, chapter 9) for a discussion of ethnographic writing.
Many Aboriginal scholars choose to incorporate stories into their research because it creates a relationship between the reader and writer (Lavallée, 2007; Wilson, 2008), and moves beyond mind-based knowledge to include ways of knowing at emotional, spiritual, and sensual levels (Cajete, 2000). Speaking about the relationship between Native American science and storytelling, Little Bear (2000), stated that indigenous worldviews filled the gaps left by Western science, or “the sacredness, livingness, and the soul of the world” (p. xii).

This observation is supported by Palmer (2007) who states that Western science is “thinking the world apart” as truth is reduced to an antagonistic relationship of “either-or” propositions. In contrast, good stories replace the antagonistic relationship of “either-or” empirical truths with profound truth (Palmer). Profound truth embraces dialectical contradiction, allowing for the presence of multiple truths (e.g., “both-and”). Fact and fiction are not hard lines but a continuum of possibilities shaped by a kaleidoscope of multi-dimensional patterns such as history, culture, and geography.

_The counterstory in culturally relevant sport research_

Critical race scholars refer to academic storytelling that privileges the voice of the Other as the counter story (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). It emerged in response to the plethora of crisis stories about marginalized groups or the Other in academic research. Crisis stories occur when researchers decontextualize their work and examine issues such as diabetes, gangs, or high school graduation rates without critically examining how these issues came into being (for a health related example, see Reading, Kmetic & Gideon, 2007). Crisis stories ignore social-historical factors and processes and create a language of pathology about Aboriginal peoples and racialized minorities (e.g., population health,
social capital, etc).

To make the world a better place, researchers must examine social exclusion as relations of unequal power. The counter story is not about painting a rosy picture about the problems facing Aboriginal peoples.\footnote{An Aboriginal friend told me this while discussing the difference between counter stories and crisis stories.} Rather it involves shifting the margins to the centre (hooks, 1984) and examining the centre from the margins (McRae, 2003). It occurs in spaces of heavy silence,\footnote{Ladson-Billings (1996) discusses this issue in her article, \textit{Silences as Weapons: Challenges of a Black Professor Teaching White Students}.} conflict,\footnote{Fox (2001) writes about intercultural conflict in anti-racism courses.} misunderstanding, and in ways that connect to people on levels deeper than intellect.

Power and resistance are common themes in critical theory. The counterstory is a political response to the crisis story that permeates deficit-based research and education practices. The crisis story, though seemingly invisible, is a well-told story. It is so pervasive that a few words or images are enough to reference a catalogue of problems that exist in Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal youth know the story, as do politicians and the general public. If you ask people their opinions about Winnipeg’s North End or downtown neighborhood, you will hear a litany of crisis stories about ethno-cultural and Aboriginal youth, new immigrants and people living in poverty. We do not have to create crisis stories; they already exist in our imaginations.

The counterstory does not exist in the public’s imagination or the popular media because, while a crisis story can be captured in a sound bite, word or image, a counterstory requires the formation of respectful relationships across the differences that separate us. These relationships require time, honesty, respect, openness, a willingness to
be vulnerable, and an admission of our ignorance and personal and collective trespasses (Orlie, 1997).

Good research stories require both the crisis story and the counterstory. Good research stories do not collect and itemize empirical truths in a vacuum, but explore the relationship between context and contradiction (Palmer, 2007). Akin to Kincheloe and McLaren’s (2008) epistemology of complexity, my research illustrates that stories of profound truth transcend binary and reductionist thought and embrace the contradictory, synergistic, and interdependent patterns that reflect the lived experiences of research participants.

Conclusion

An openness to multi-disciplinarity marks the current moment of ‘blurred genres’ in social science research. In this space, theoretical bricolage emerges in response and “respect for the complexity of the lived world and the complications of power” (McLaren & Kincheloe, 2008, p. 421). As a community scholar, I believe that theory is the everyday practice of “making sense out of what [is] happening (hooks, 1994, p. 61)” and, as social scientists, we organize, break down, pull apart and re-formulate this knowledge according to our individual experiences, needs, and worldviews while simultaneously accepting and resisting disciplinary paradigms and ideologies.

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73 Palmer (2007) bases his definition of profound truth on the work of Western physicist Neil Bohr who demonstrated that parts of nature and other systems interact synergistically and often in contradictory ways.

74 Bricolage, as described by Denzin and Lincoln (2008), is the “pieced together set of representations that is fitted to the specifics of a complex situation” (p. 5). While bricolage tends to be used in relation to a creative and eclectic methodological approach, Denzin and Lincoln have also noted that it is a useful process for organizing and constructing trans disciplinary theoretical frameworks.
As a result, my methodological framework examines gaps that exist between complex academic concepts and the reality of everyday life. The counter-story begins when we build research relationships based on mutual trust and respect in order to create stories that are meaningful to participants. The short-term goal of empowerment of individual research participants ultimately supports our long-term goals of collective empowerment and the elimination of pathologizing discourses.

I believe that research, like sport, is an educational space. Our success as researchers, educators and sport leaders is determined by our ability to recognize the transformational potential of our work. As a proponent of non-formal education, I believe that a good radical education is less influenced by techniques and methods and, instead, is defined by the way we respect and value the experiences of others and our confidence in people’s ability “to learn and to act and to shape their lives” (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 177-178).

As fields of study, social research, sport and education cannot transcend historic and existing relations of oppression. But, the wisdom of those within these fields tells us that while we cannot transcend these amorphous relations of ruling, we can transgress the constraints which whisper, seduce, and threaten our abilities, as living beings, to rebuild and recreate our reality – even if only in our imagination.
I wish one word could be used to describe the methodology of my qualitative research study, yet I know that even if such a word existed, I would likely find fault with it or find it lacking. This difficulty directly relates to current tensions within the qualitative research community, where researchers struggle to make sense of the diversity, innovation and creative re-imaging of methodological practices that have shaped their field (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, Epilogue).

The following chapter is divided into four sections. The first section describes the dynamic interplay between the five components of my methodological framework (Figure 2): the philosophical foundation, research design and strategy, research methods and their purpose, research process and implementation, and the research analysis and communication. The second section describes the four dimensions of sociological inquiry and how these dimensions influenced the components and cycles of inquiry. The third section examines the first three (of five) components of the research study and outlines the cyclical nature of my inquiry, foreshadowing many of the issues that will be addressed in later chapters. An annotated description of the five research components (Figure 3) and cycles of inquiry is also included. The final section examines silence as an ethical issue.

Methodological Framework

Respecting synergy and living with uncertainty

My research methodology is best understood as a synergistic framework, maintaining theoretical coherence through a philosophical foundation that shapes my research perspective and guides the research decision-making process. Synergy refers to
the interdependence between the individual components within my research study, meaning that each research component is associated with, and becomes animated within, a cyclical process of inquiry (see Figure 2 below). As such, research components can be understood as relational constructs; their meaning determined by their relationship to other components within the methodological framework (Wilson, 2008).

Figure 2. Research components and cycles of inquiry
Describing the Cycles of Inquiry

Metaphorically speaking, my methodological framework resembles a multi-dimensional spiral; each component of the spiral representing one of the five research components. Each research component is linked by an interactive cycle of inquiry, which, combined, form the spiraling chain.

The individual momentum and patterns of each cycle of inquiry is shaped by my philosophical foundation which attracts certain research components and guides - but does not define - their purpose, construction, and interactions. Individually, each cycle of inquiry has a distinct pattern, but when these cycles interact, the outcome of the interactions can be ambiguous and difficult to predict, therefore, individual cycles of inquiry must be understood in relation to the entire research process. The researcher must therefore let go of certain assumptions about how the research process should proceed and adapt to the unfolding research moment.

Dimensions of Inquiry

My research project spans four dimensions of sociological inquiry: macro-societal conditions, mid-level organizational issues, sub-level program activities, and micro-level relationships. My understanding of these dimensions and their interdependence is informed by Aboriginal education and research (see Calliou, 1995; Hampton, 1995; Wilson, 2008), culturally relevant education (see Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2001, 2009), peace and conflict studies (see Dugan, 1996 & Lederach, 1997), and theory-based evaluation (Rosas, 2005; Trochim, 1998; Yampolskaya, Nesman, Hernandez & Koch, 2004). I investigated macro-societal conditions influencing the delivery of culturally relevant sport programs (as discussed in the first two chapters of my dissertation) and the
remaining dimensions of inquiry represent my research focus which I address from Chapters 4 through Chapter 10.

Figure 3. *Dimensions of Inquiry*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-level Societal Conditions</th>
<th><em>Roots &amp; Manifestations of Oppression &amp; Power</em></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-level Organizational Issues</td>
<td><em>Community Sport Context</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-level Program Activities</td>
<td><em>Program Planning &amp; Implementation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro-level Interactions</td>
<td><em>Cultural Landscape &amp; Relationships of Sport Leaders &amp; Youth Participants</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sociological nature of my research inquiry is evident within all five research components and cycles. Mid-level organizational issues are investigated when I examine the organizational capacity of WASAC and the socio-historical and cultural conditions that precipitated and gave rise to its emergence within community sport (WASAC, see Chapter 5). A detailed examination of the sub-level program activities attributed to WASAC’s success with urban Aboriginal youth is explored in the evaluation workshops with WASAC senior leaders (see Chapter 4 for the evaluation process and Chapter 7 for the analysis and interpretation of findings). Information about the cultural landscapes of WASAC senior leaders and youth participants, as well their micro-level interactions within WASAC programs, are explored in Chapter 6. Research findings and analysis are based on ethnographic observations and interactions with WASAC leaders and Aboriginal youth, including the photovoice project (see Chapter 4 for details about the photovoice process).
Table 2. Summary of research components and cycles of inquiry

1. Philosophical Foundation
   • Weaves together strands from indigenous worldviews and critical theory, paying close attention to the intersection of the personal and political.

2. Research Design and Strategy
   • Bricolage: Helps explicate the complexity of my multi-method research strategy
   • Action research: Guides my research interactions with participants and my reflections on the research process.

3. Research Methods and Purpose
   • Describes the multiple layers and methods used in the study, their intended purpose, and the dynamic relationship between the methods and their findings

4. Research Process and Implementation of Methods
   • My research praxis: I account for what I said I would do, the actual reality of my practice and my reflections on it.

5. Research Analysis and Communication
   • The manner in which I analyse and describe the research findings from each method and how I weave them together to create a counterstory depicting the complexity of culturally relevant sport education.

Initial Components of Research Study

Philosophical Foundation

The term community resists easy definition (Pedlar, 2007). As a community-based researcher, I understand community from a cultural and geographic perspective shaped by indigenous worldviews that stress the need to respect and honour our interdependence (Calliou, 1995) and relationships with others (Wilson, 2008). Indigenous research paradigms are a complex interplay between cultural worldviews and research as a form of resistance. Critical and indigenous research approaches are characterized by their focus
on research reflexivity, social justice, and efforts to challenge the “epistemic privilege of the scientific paradigm (Kovach, 2005, p. 21).”

For indigenous and community-based researchers, a good research question requires dialogic conversation between the researcher and his/her participants and partners.\footnote{I refer to the relationship between dialogue and conscientization that is the foundation of a number of critical education perspectives (e.g., critical pedagogy, see Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003, Introduction).} In turn, dialogic conversations between researchers and indigenous participants require the formation of relationships based on trust, understanding and respect. While the research question may initially begin with the researcher, it is ultimately refined and realized through conversations and relationships with participants. The role of a community-based researcher is often that of an educator or facilitator, with the research project being transformed into a learning environment and space for action. Thus researchers fulfill the basic obligations of community membership; that is, as individual members, they share their knowledge and skills in service of the collective interests of the community.\footnote{Hampton (1995) states that indigenous philosophies are based upon the idea that the strength of the community is directly linked to the strength of the community. In indigenous communities, this means that individuals learn to value their skills, knowledge and strengths as it directly benefits the community.} My understanding of my role as a community-based researcher is based on the following indigenous research principles and values.

*Webs of Connection*

For indigenous and other marginalized communities, research ethics is at a very basic level about establishing, maintaining, and nurturing reciprocal and respectful relationships, not just among people as individuals but also with people as individuals, as collectives, and as members of communities, and with humans.
who live in and with other entities in the environment. The abilities to enter pre-
existing relationships; to build, maintain and nurture relations; and to strengthen
connectivity are important research skills in the indigenous arena. (Smith, 2008,
p. 129)

The wholistic nature of Aboriginal worldviews is grounded in a sacred
cosmological understanding of the interdependency between all living creatures (Calliou,
1995) and is often described as the root of their collective connection (e.g., see Hampton
1995, Ermine, 1995). Unlike Western worldviews and academic theories, Aboriginal
worldviews are grounded in the sacred and the notion of a secular world is non-existent
as the spiritual and material world are considered one and the same (Ermine, 1995). Thus,
every living creature is a manifestation of the sacred and our actions – positive or
negative – can enliven or harm our collective existence. There are no altruistic actions
when we acknowledge our interdependence; what harms one, harms us all just as that
which benefits one, benefits all. As the secular nature of Euro-Western science and
research does not acknowledge the sacred nature of our world (Hayward, 1997), Denzin
and Lincoln (2008) believe that the future of critical qualitative research will look to
indigenous researchers and methodologies to help us understand our interconnectedness.

Webs of Power

Although many positive changes have occurred within Western universities since
Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (2001) scathing critique of academic research – “the word itself,
‘research’, is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary” (p.
1), much work remains. In 2004, the First Nations Centre – a branch of the National
Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) - produced the article Ownership, Control,
Access, and Possession (OCAP). The author, Brian Scharch, critiqued Western academic research for its failure to rectify colonial research practices and described OCAP as an evolving set of research principles “broadly concerned with all aspects of information, including its creation and management” (p.1).

- Ownership: “a community or group owns information collectively in the same way that an individual owns their personal information (p. 2).”
- Control: Aboriginal people, their communities and organizations have the right to “control all aspects of research and information management processes which impact them” (p. 2).
- Access: Past, current and future research involving Aboriginal people should be owned and managed by Aboriginal people.
- Possession: Past, current and future research involving Aboriginal people should be held in their stewardship. Information about Aboriginal people that is held in external hands, especially if historic relations were problematic, is at risk of misuse and/or deepening mistrust.

Indigenous researchers represent a growing collectivity within academic research communities. They have become an increasingly influential force within the Western academy (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Smith, 2008) and have been a powerful voice in the call for greater research accountability at the community level. Indigenous scholars have delivered scathing critiques of research ethics and institutional ‘rules of practice’ by inquiring about the recipients and distribution of research funding, institutional barriers to culturally relevant research methodologies (Bishop, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Smith, 2008), and the marginalization of indigenous worldviews (Battiste & Henderson,
In the last thirty years, indigenous researchers like Smith (2001), Schnarch (2004), Menzies (2001) and Aboriginal organizations (e.g., Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Nunavut Research Institute, 2006) have developed research principles and protocols to ensure ethical research and culturally relevant research methodologies. Recent revisions to the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS 2, 2010) – policy guidelines by which Canadian universities and their research ethics boards must adhere – have acknowledged the issues addressed by indigenous researchers. However, the degree to which this recognition will have any meaningful impact on researcher practices, research ethics boards, and the ownership and control of research findings remains to be seen.

In any event, the simple fact that the TCPS (2010) and Canadian universities have acknowledged the validity and importance of indigenous research protocols reveals the beginning of a gradual shift in research attitudes. As qualitative research slowly becomes reconnected to its social purpose, where the research is intended to do more than “satisfy scientific curiosity… (but to serve) an ameliorative purpose… solve some problem… or meet a genuine need (Lincoln & Denzin, 2008, p. 542)”, it should become obvious that the methods we use should reflect similar goals. Consequently, if Aboriginal peoples create a set of research principles for the ethical conduct of research in their communities, researchers should follow these principles and research ethics boards, by virtue of their power, should try their best to support researchers who adopt these principles.

Webs of Responsibility

While an inherent ideological conflict between Western academic communities and Aboriginal communities remains, Aboriginal scholars have been steadily carving out a greater space for indigenous research methodologies. For example, Aboriginal
epistemology and ontology are based on the sacred cosmological interdependency between all living creatures. In community-based research, indigenous worldviews help researchers approach communities in a wholistic manner which respects the philosophies of interdependence, relevance and reciprocity (e.g., Fitznor, 1998; Hermes, 1998; Wilson, 2001) and social change praxis of participation, resistance and individual-collective empowerment (Smith, 2001, 2008; Weber-Pillwax, 2001).

Unlike conventional notions of research ethics, indigenous research is based upon the concept of relational accountability (Wilson, 2008). Researchers are accountable – first and foremost - to their research participants. These immediate responsibilities are balanced in relation to their larger responsibility to conduct research that respects the wholistic nature of the world (see Wilson, 2008). The rules governing academic and institutional research give way to the researcher’s responsibility to ensure the research process is respectful, reciprocal, and relevant to research participants. To assess whether a research project meets these criteria, Wilson (2008) advises researchers to ask themselves a series of questions including:

- How do my methods help to build respectful relationships between myself and the other research participants?
- How can I relate respectfully to the other participants involved in this research so that together we can form a stronger relationship with the idea that we share?
- What am I contributing or giving back to the relationship? Is the sharing, growth and learning that is taking place reciprocal? (Wilson, 2008, p. 77)

As a Métis woman in the PSAS cohort, I feel the tension between the ethical principles that guide my daily actions and the institutional rules of regulatory bodies that
determine the ethical implication of my research study. I have come to see that there are inherent, and sometimes irreconcilable, ethical differences between indigenous and western research principles. These ethical differences remain at the forefront of indigenous research methods (see Wilson, 2008), research principles such as OCAP (Schnarch, 2004), and discussions regarding the need to protect indigenous knowledge and culture from western commercialization processes (see Battiste & Henderson, 2000). These differences are based on fundamental notions such as respect, reciprocity, responsibility and relevance – all rooted within the evolving dynamic relationships set into motion through colonization – that foregrounds intercultural research contexts involving Aboriginal and white Euro-Canadian settler peoples.

Recent Statements of Apology delivered by the Prime Minister of Canada (June 11, 2008) and President of the University of Manitoba (October 27, 2011)\textsuperscript{77} acknowledge the existence of intergenerational trauma within Aboriginal communities wrought by residential school system and colonial policies. As universities move towards intercultural reconciliation, it is vital that academic and administrative leaders respect and understand that the spiritual and socio-historical foundation of indigenous research principles represent a higher standard of ethical responsibility than that of its regulatory bodies like Research Ethics Boards. For example, my doctoral research project was delayed three months due to a dispute regarding the ownership of research data and

\textsuperscript{77} A full text version of the Prime Minister’s apology regarding the Residential Schools System can be found at \url{http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=2149}. A full text version of the President of the University of Manitoba’s apology can be found at \url{http://umanitoba.ca/about/media/StatementOfApology.pdf}.
paternalistic interpretations of research protections for Aboriginal youth (see Appendix A and B).

3b) Research Design and Strategy

Research design refers to the structure of a research project. During the preliminary stages of research before data collection and analysis has begun, researchers assess the research context, the needs of research participants, and type of research methods required to determine the relevance of potential methods and the overall research plan. This assessment helps determine the feasibility of the research design and the ability of each component to answer the research questions on an individual and collective level. Research design is similar to a map of the research terrain, however, in my study, the map is drawn out in pencil rather than pen due to the ambiguity and uncertainty of emergent research designs.

Research design and strategy are intertwined. Although many scholars collapse the two terms, with research strategy representing the implementation of the research design, I feel it is important to separate the two definitions. My research strategy represents how I plan to conduct myself when I am immersed in the research context and interacting with research participants. Following the same metaphor, if the research design is the map of my research project, then the research strategy is my compass. The research design maps the terrain of the research landscape, formulates a plan of action to address research questions, and foreshadows the types of issues one might encounter and be prepared to address. The research strategy (my compass) represents the shift from plan to action; it guides my path through the unknown complexity of engaged research and my micro-level interactions with participants.
**Bricolage (my map) and Action Research (my compass)**

Bricolage is a multi-method / multi-mode approach to interdisciplinary research characterized by research eclecticism (Kincheloe, 2005). Action research emphasizes the role of researchers as critically reflexive facilitators in the unfolding research moment. As a research design and strategy, bricolage and action research are complementary concepts. Each is grounded in critical theory and share an open and flexible approach to research that emphasizes the needs of research participants and larger social change goals.

An analogous educational comparison is the relationship between critical pedagogy and popular education. Critical pedagogy is characterized by a “well-developed social justice vision and sociological critique… but lacks a coherent body of work as to how it can be implemented in a concrete educational setting” and is criticized for “its complexity and inaccessibility beyond the academy” (Choules, 2007, p. 160). At the theoretical level, bricolage is well-developed but lacks detailed information about how it is applied in research contexts (see Kincheloe, 2005).^78^ Conversely, popular education “arose from the lived experience of working with groups denied access to resources and power…” and it has a stronger focus on… “the ’how to’ or the instructional form it takes” (Choules, 2007, p. 160). Action research, especially participatory action research, is guided by a long-term social change vision that, at the level of research practice, is translated into research projects and processes that are intended to empower research participants and build their research capacity.

^78^ An interesting side note - Kincheloe and McLaren (2008) are both critical pedagogy scholars and advocates of bricolage.
And, although the action research field remains critical of institutionalized research, it is better developed at the level of practical application.

Agency plus Action

Bricolage is considered a multidisciplinary, “multimethod mode of research” (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 323). It reveals a myriad of conceptual and methodological linkages that connect different disciplines which are otherwise invisible because of the historically closed nature of academic disciplines. Kincheloe (2005) distinguishes between two types of bricoleurs, noting that both roles are necessary; the researcher who is “committed to research eclecticism allowing circumstance to shapes methods employed”, and the scholar activist who wants “to engage in the genealogy/archaeology of the disciplines with some grander purpose in mind” (p. 325). More than many research designs or methods, bricolage asserts the agency of researchers to re-imagine their methodological practices (Kincheloe, 2005). Because research methods are inherently human constructions, researchers must reclaim their right to creatively construct and adapt research methods.

In my relationships with research participants, I have adopted the methodological ingenuity and eclectism of the bricoleur-as-researcher, continually adapting my research methods to their needs, my own, and the unfolding research context. As a graduate student, I reclaim my agency as a bricoleur-as-scholar-activist to create a research design that challenges and interrogates the contradictions within institutional and academic processes; processes that both support and undermine my research ideas, partnership, questions, methods and processes.
In terms of research praxis, action research principles provide practical guidance for researchers seeking to understand their role as research facil\textit{it}ator. Action research promotes a critically reflexive cycle of inquiry (e.g., plan-act-observe-reflect), promoted by adult education scholars such as Paulo Freire (Herr & Anderson, 2005). It advances concepts such as dialogic conversation, relationship building, collaborative problem-solving, individual and collective empowerment as well as capacity-building. These concepts are the cornerstones of this research tradition, and have influenced research fields such as ethnography (critical ethnography, see Foley & Valenzuela, 2008), photovoice (Strack, Magill & McDonagh, 2004; Wang & Burris, 1997), program evaluation (e.g., empowerment evaluation, see Burke, 1998) and undoubtedly, bricolage.

3c) Research Methods and Purpose

As opposed to describing the research process or timeline (this is detailed in Chapter 4), the purpose of the following section is to provide an overview of the three research methods that I used during the study, their purpose, and their synergistic relationship.

\textit{Method #1: Ethnography}

When conducted overtly and with the permission of participants, ethnographic research is a natural fit for community-based research. Because ethnographic researchers directly participate in the lives of community members, usually over an extended period of time, they ultimately become a part of the lives and communities they study (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Ethnographic researchers are deeply integrated into the life of the community and record information about daily activities and conversations of individuals and groups. At the same time, ethnographers also study the documents,
artifacts and symbols that work to shape each individual’s internal and external interactions (i.e., interactions inside and outside of the community). Of course, the willingness of each individual to accept the research into their life and community varies according to the strength and quality of the research relationship; factors such as the length of the research commitment and the participant’s assessment of the integrity and validity of the research topic and researcher can enhance or restrict this relationship.

It is important to note that ethnographers do not create research conditions, they engage in naturalistic inquiry in open-systems (Robben & Sluka, 2007). They search for patterns within the messiness and complexity that form the concrete world of experience. Data collection is primarily unstructured and informal with research themes subsequently emerging during the data analysis process. The extended, detailed study of everyday life facilitates the in-depth study of settings or groups and produces a rich source of data - both in quantity and quality.

The primary data sources and gathering activities for ethnographic research consist of informal and formal conversations, individual and group activities, the study of concrete representations of the group (e.g., documents), and the observation of the daily lives of community members (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). An ethnographer interprets this information by sorting through the variety of meanings this information may represent and comparing it to the purpose that individuals and groups within the community ascribe to the data, including the potential consequences and implications of these meanings within local and global contexts (Holmes & Marcus, 2008).
Application of Ethnographic Methods

During my pilot study or Phase One, ethnographic research methods were used to build relationships with sport leaders. From the beginning, it was fundamentally important that WASAC leaders invited me to participate in program activities as a friend and ally. Although I had permission from WASAC organizational leaders (Executive and Program Director), I did not want to begin my research project as a stranger with other leaders. To that end, I concentrated my initial energies on developing relationships with WASAC leaders, placing the importance of establishing friendships above that of my research objectives. This approach worked well once I became acquainted with leaders at WASAC’s main office; they invited me to shadow them during program-related activities such as summer camp recruitment. At the end of Phase One, I had a better understanding of WASAC’s research needs. My relationship with senior leaders was integral to the planning phase for Phase Two as we created a mutually beneficial research plan (this is fully detailed in Chapter 4).

Just as theory and practice are intertwined, the ethnographic research process (e.g., component and cycle of inquiry) was shaped by the philosophical foundation of my research methodology. In addition to the influence of indigenous worldviews and research principles (e.g., relationship building and relational accountability, see Lavallée, 2007), my research perspective was also shaped by critical theory. Despite the fact that ethnographic research methods are not inherently critical, recent changes within the field have led to greater interest in social critique and action (e.g., see Holmes & Marcus, 2008; Foley & Valenzuela, 2008 on critical ethnography). This trend is apparent in the critical nature of my methodological framework and directly influenced the type of
information I chose to examine and the questions I posed. For example, my research questions and observations attempted to discover how WASAC, at an organizational level, engaged with the underlying issues of power and social inequality in the daily lives of leaders and youth participants. Consequently, I examined organizational documents (e.g., strategic plan) for information about the socio-political nature of WASACs programming efforts and engaged in informal discussions with staff about issues of racism, poverty, and sexism in community sport.

Method #2: Photovoice

Photovoice is a form of action research that gives voice to the ideas of marginalized groups through photographic images which they create, produce, interpret and present. The theoretical foundation of photovoice is drawn from the philosophical tenets of "documentary photography, feminist research theory, and Freirian empowerment" (Strack et al., 2004). According to Wang and Burris (1997), “photovoice has three main goals: (1) to enable people to record and reflect their community’s strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important community issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and (3) to reach policymakers (p. 370).”

The social action component of photovoice generally involves the public display of photographs to empower participant researchers, facilitate community awareness, provide tangible evidence to funders, inform social policy and educate sport leaders (for examples, see Strack et al., 2004; Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang & Minkler, 2007). Photovoice projects also build the research capacity of participants through individual and group reflection activities about problems in their communities and by
learning about the fundamental issues which govern informed consent (see Chapter 4, Part 3). As a result, photovoice is a resource and time intensive research process which requires considerable planning, funding, and strong facilitation skills by researchers.

Application of Photovoice methods

The decision to conduct a photovoice project emerged from feedback I received following my dissertation proposal, specifically my committee’s suggestion that I choose a research method that was more youth-friendly and provided opportunities for meaningful engagement by Aboriginal youth participants. When a member of my PSAS cohort overheard this comment, she suggested I explore the photovoice method. I discussed the photovoice process with my research partners who responded positively and felt it would provide their youth with valuable educational, research and photography skills, and strengthen their public speaking abilities and overall self-confidence.

Unfortunately, visual research methods such as photovoice are relatively new and are not yet fully understood (or endorsed) by many research ethics boards:

Visual methods lend themselves to participatory and emancipatory approaches. In such contexts, participants explicitly and voluntarily waive their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, contravening one of the cornerstones of normative ethical practice in social science research. We can envisage cases arising where visual projects will be invited to change important components of research design, in order to avoid breaking with number and word-based conventions… Visual researchers cannot afford to sit on the sidelines when ethics are debated, but

79 My dissertation proposal occurred near the end of Phase One, as I was beginning to formulate my research design for Phase Two.
should think through and argue their ethical position. (Prosser, Clark & Wiles, 2008, p. 11)

Regrettably, my personal experience with the ethics of photovoice encountered similar resistance when Phase Two was delayed because of my proposed photovoice project with WASAC youth participants. While it is beyond the purview of my dissertation to delineate the challenges that photovoice may pose for research ethics boards (see Appendix A, B & C for an account of the difficulties I faced in attempting to receive ethics approval), I am compelled to address the ethical concerns that first delayed, then threatened to derail the photovoice project.

- First, the photovoice project challenged conventional, protective mechanisms of confidentiality and anonymity. With respect to the value of these protections, these mechanisms often condone paternalistic ethical protocols which claim to protect vulnerable populations when, in reality, they can just as effectively prevent meaningful participation in research (see Bruzzese & Fisher, 2003; Mishna, Antle & Regehr, 2004).

- Second, the use of photovoice challenged institutional norms regarding the control and ownership of research materials (see Schnarch, 2004) by allowing

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80 There were three research methods described in my ethical protocol submission form for Phase Two: ethnographic methods, evaluation workshop and photovoice project. Although I made changes to all methods, the photovoice project was the only method that delayed the approval of Phase Two.

81 I wanted youth participants to have control over their photographs (e.g., they got to keep the cameras and memory cards at home) and I wanted WASAC to be able to own the photovoice photos following the Exhibit (providing photovoice participants gave WASAC permission to keep their photographs).
youth participants to keep their cameras and give their photographs to WASAC (if they gave permission).

When preparing my arguments for the Research Ethics Board, I sought to locate support for my concerns regarding the ownership of visual research materials in photovoice projects. Unfortunately, I did not find any photovoice articles which addressed concerns regarding the ownership and control of photographic data. If my review is indicative of the entire field of photovoice literature, this issue will need to be addressed in the future as research methods that claim to empower participants must address the ownership, control, access, and possession of research projects, processes and data (Schnarch, 2004).

**Method #3: Theory-based Evaluation**

Social science research and theory must address real social issues and connect to the concrete worlds of experience to remain relevant (Lincoln & Denzin, 2008). According to Rossi, Lipsey and Freedman (2004), “program evaluation represents an adaptation of social science research methods to the task of studying social inventions” (p. 2). In turn, social interventions or programs represent a form of social action aimed at improving social conditions. Unfortunately, many social programs and interventions are limited to the treatment of the symptoms of social inequity and need to ground their work within a broader vision of social change (Cervero & Wilson, 1994; Forester, 1989; Grace, 2006; Mills, Cervero, Langone & Wilson, 1995).

While research that examines the barriers to participation in recreation for Aboriginal youth exists, it includes very few examples of culturally relevant recreation programs and far less information about their creation and design (Forsyth et. al., 2007).
The absence of research into community sport programs for Aboriginal youth may be linked to the methodological challenges of evaluating alternative recreation programs that are loosely structured with variable participation rates (Mercier, Pieat, Peladeau & Dagenais, 2000; Gallego, Rueda & Moll, 2005). The difficulty of evaluating programs that are guided by principles, rather than structured programming where youth participation varies according to convenience and interest means that theory-driven evaluation may be a more appropriate approach (Mercier et al, 2000). Theory-driven evaluation is also valuable in areas where little research exists and can provide theoretically-based account of successful practices (Trochim, 1998, p. 244). Furthermore, theory-driven evaluation can also help clarify program conceptualizations and improve program implementation (Rosas, 2005), and validate the ‘implicit theories’ of the program stakeholders (Trochim, 1998).

Theory-based evaluation investigates praxis: the relationship between theory and social action within social programs. Researchers speak with program staff in an effort to uncover their thoughts and opinions regarding program planning and implementation. Theory-based evaluation techniques, such as concept-mapping procedures (Trochim, 1999) or logic modeling (Yampolskaya, Nesman, Hernandez & Koch, 2004), are useful in discovering the gaps between what people think and what they are actually doing as it relates to organizational improvement. These techniques provide additional benefits, such as facilitating organizational learning and reflection-in-action (see Friedman, 2001).

82 For example, one of Ray Pawson’s articles about theory-based evaluation is titled, “Nothing as Practical as Good Theory” (2003).
The concept mapping procedure outlined by Trochim (1989) was used to guide the theory-based evaluation workshops with WASAC leaders. Concept-mapping is an interactive research process which places the researcher into the role of facilitator and has participants work collaboratively in large groups or smaller teams. It is a valuable heuristic technique for research participants (Caracelli & Riggin, 1994; Mercier et al., 2000; Yampolskaya et al., 2004) due to its focus on discovery and problem solving which enhances group learning and provides participants with an immediate sense of feedback.

Concept mapping is a “multi-step process that helps articulate and delineate concepts and their interrelationships” (Rosas, 2005, p. 390) and is designed to detect the participant’s “theories-in-use through trigger questions” (e.g., focus statements) (Yampolskaya et al., 2004, p. 192). Trigger questions are statements or questions directly linked to program theory and are designed to encourage brainstorming on specific themes relevant to the evaluation focus. Concept mapping illustrates the importance of ‘successive approximation’, a procedure where evaluators seek to draw out the implicit theory of participants through continuous feedback loops, thereby refining and articulating their program theory (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 148). Moreover, concept mapping is a valuable tool that uncovers rich details and conceptual ideas hidden within the tacit theories of program staff and stakeholders which are brought to life as the researcher translates their ideas into a visual format.

Traditionally, concept mapping combines qualitative data with quantitative analysis (Mercier et al., 2000, p. 76) through a series of codification procedures where the ideas generated in the original brainstorming session are gradually narrowed, refined and
grouped until a visual representation of the relationships between the key program elements and clusters is complete. My evaluation workshops with WASAC leaders borrowed heavily from Trochim’s concept mapping technique, however, I removed the quantitative procedures to afford additional time for exploring the heuristic value of the workshops for research participants. This approach aligns with bricolage, whereby researchers exercise their agency to re-imagine the purpose and value of research methods (Kincheloe, 2005).

Multi-layered Research Design and Strategy

As a stand-alone research method, ethnographic research provides a wealth of information regarding the social and cultural life of human groups. In conjunction with other research methods, such as program evaluation, the research findings provide a valuable source of comparative data. For example, Weiss (1997) recommends that theory-based evaluation would benefit from a pilot study where evaluators can observe the programs in operation, staff at work, and the actions of program clients. This background information would then help theory-based evaluators create a conceptualization of the espoused program theory.

Ethnographic research can inform theory-based evaluation in the pre-, mid-, and post-evaluation stages. Weiss (1997) addresses its usefulness in the pre-evaluation stage but neglects to mention how ethnographic research, if extended beyond a pilot study, can inform the data analysis process during and after participant workshops. Ethnographic research complements theory-driven evaluation. In workshops, participants can provide information about the espoused theory of a program, for example, staff reflections about programs often reveal their motivations, ideas and philosophies about how and why a
program should work. This information can then be compared to the researcher’s observations about program implementation, thereby providing information about its theory-in-use.

One criticism of theory-based evaluation is its failure to compare the espoused theory (evaluation workshops) with the theory-in-use (actual observations as to how a program is actually implemented and facilitated). In comparing theory-based evaluation to action science, Friedman notes that although both methods investigate the “theories of action” embedded in program planning ideas and practices, theory-based evaluation pays little attention to the discrepancies between espoused theories (what people think or believe their programs do) and theory-in-use (what is actually happening in programs). But in fact, these discrepancies are extremely important since social programs, especially those delivered by small non-profit organizations, are rarely delivered as planned (Pawson, 2003) due to the lack of sustainable and core program funding (see Hall et al., 2003; Misener & Doherty, 2009). Researchers who dedicate attention to these discrepancies can therefore play an important part of organizational learning and program improvement.

Silence is an ethical issue

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Throughout the past four years, my doctoral research topic and methodology has continually transformed, every idea and experience containing the catalyst for another. Each year of study presented new opportunities to embrace the interdisciplinary nature of my research interests. I held tight to my belief that all forms of education should enliven
the spirits of students and instill a respect for the depth and complexity of our world (Palmer, 2007). In this way, my graduate experience was anchored to my inner self and my connectedness and responsibilities to the world.

In the epilogue of the third edition of *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) predict that as qualitative research evolves, a new ethic will emerge that is “communitarian, egalitarian, democratic, critical, caring, engaged, performative [and] social justice oriented (p. 542).” Denzin and Lincoln (2008) predict that this new ethic will face serious institutional resistance, particularly where researchers challenge the relationship between ethics, research, and knowledge.

For community-based researchers, social critique and social action are intertwined. Unfortunately, institutional barriers can prevent researchers from pursuing transformative community-based research projects. Consequently, we must openly and bravely discuss the institutional barriers that threaten our research because they play a much greater role in the methods we use, the participants we include, the questions we ask, and the topics we pursue, than we fully realize. Like Denzin and Lincoln (2008), I believe it is important to name the socio-political and methodological challenges that threaten to erode the quality and integrity of my research because their repercussions extend far beyond my individual experience.

Social science research is full of unasked questions and unfulfilled research visions; these questions and visions are considered too lofty, too controversial, or too dangerous to pursue. It is only when we challenge the secular, fragmented nature of

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83 Foley and Valenzula (2008) criticize social scientists who only critique structural oppression and make no efforts to contribute to social change in their research.
academic inquiry or critique powerful institutions (Bourgois, 2007) that the figurative and institutional mechanisms that muzzle our collective academic imagination and the transformational possibilities of research are exposed. Too often, research ideas and projects that inspire critical or community-based graduate students meet an unfortunate fate in the face of the institutional barriers that inevitably emerge. Consequently, students are told that the risk of failure is too high, the work too onerous, or the timeline too strict for them to pursue. Students are advised by well-meaning professors to delay this work until they become tenured professors or conform to the research status quo. I, too, have heard and received the same advice, one time being advised to write a letter critiquing the problems I encountered after my research was complete. I understand that some professors may provide this advice because they care about students and want them to succeed but there is an inherent danger with this approach.

As a graduate student pursuing transformative research goals, I am frustrated by the fact that teachers and academic leaders do not realize the inherent danger of their well-intentioned advice or the systemic problems that our silence and passivity permits. We will not be able to connect social science research with its social purpose (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) if we undermine the agency of any scholar, any graduate student, or any professor.

In critiquing the institutional rules of practice that undermined my research project, it may be argued that I reduce the complex terrain of research ethics to an oppositional and ideologically-charged battleground between indigenous and critical research traditions and institutional bureaucracies and rules of practice. I may have disagreed with the Education and Nursing Research Ethics (ENREB) board’s
interpretation of what constitutes ethical research but I do not question the need for Research Ethics Boards or guidelines such as the TCPS2, even if my research is guided by indigenous research principles and protocols such as OCAP (Schnarch, 2004).

As a graduate student and human being, it is my right and responsibility to question and challenge the intent, practice and implications of an ethical code that I have been directed to act within. It is also my right and responsibility to speak candidly about my experiences for subtle speech rarely serves those who have been silenced. It is a truism that similar research projects have been delayed, rejected or inalterably changed due to the decisions of Research Ethics Boards. If we choose to ignore such issues, we choose to condone the silencing of hundreds, possibly thousands of, research participants whose words, insights or images might impact the ideas, policies and practices of academic researchers and their audiences.

As a Métis woman and member of the Ph.D. Studies for Aboriginal Scholars (PSAS) program, I, along with other cohort members and Aboriginal students, encountered a series of academic and institutional challenges that negatively impacted our graduate student experience. Were it not for my sense of responsibility to the cohort program, I would have likely quit my doctoral program in the first year. I have never considered myself a ‘troublemaker’ if, for no better reason than the fact that I neither seek nor glorify conflict. But, in spite of this, I gradually began to feel that I was perceived as such because I felt compelled to defend my beliefs (and had to do so more often than I wished).

If I choose to fight, it is because I believe the fight has meaning beyond my individual experience; that the struggle is worth the personal risk because my actions will
help others. Two years into my doctoral program, my closest friend passed away from muscular dystrophy. Many years ago, she told me that she was tired of fighting everyday of her life for the things that others took for granted. She was a reluctant fighter, fighting only when her health and sense of self were threatened. Her courage to fight in spite of her dislike of conflict created ripples of change that positively impacted the lives of others living with chronic illness. We are powerful when we connect our struggles to a larger purpose and when we believe our actions matter.

Our struggles and our actions do matter. They matter to those who have been silenced, to those who cannot or are tired of fighting, and to those for whom the potential risks are too great (e.g., children or family responsibilities). If I did not write about my experiences or the socio-politics of research in my dissertation, I would feel the weight of my silence, even if no one else knew. As a self-proclaimed warrior poet, Audre Lorde (2007) believed that social change begins when we transform our silences into language and action. So do I.

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CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH PROCESS, IMPLEMENTATION AND REFLECTIONS

This chapter explores the creative potential of community-based research and how I combined, altered and adjusted my research methods to address the needs of research participants and the unfolding research context. The research process described here represents the fourth component of my research methodology (see Figure 2 & Table 2). This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section provides a summary of the various research processes and procedures used during the research project. The second section describes the ethnographic research methods used in the study. The third section focuses on the photovoice project and process. The fourth section discusses the evaluation workshop sessions, including details related to the planning, preparation, and administration of the sessions. And the final section reveals seven research lessons that I learned during the research project.

Overview of Research Process and Procedures

As a consequence of using three distinct – yet synergistic – research methods, it is difficult to provide a relatively simple description of my research process. And, in describing my multi-layered research design in chronological or linear terms, I have to be mindful of the fact that each method did not have a clearly defined beginning and end. In fact, as each research method was introduced, it overlapped and interacted with the previous method and this synergistic relationship added to the complexity of my interpretation and analysis of the research findings.

With this in mind, the following section describes the implementation of each method and the feedback loops created by the multi-layered research design. My doctoral
research project was divided into two phases: Phase One (or the pilot study) and Phase Two. A timeline and description of the research activities is included below.

Table 3. *Chronology of research activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Research Method</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 2010 – May 2011</td>
<td>Critical ethnography</td>
<td>Participant observation, informal interviews,</td>
<td>Total: 16 participants</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>document analysis</td>
<td>7 female, 9 male</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural background:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 Aboriginal</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Filipino</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Italian</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 Euro-Canadian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2010 – May 2011</td>
<td>Photovoice</td>
<td>Photovoice project</td>
<td>Total: 20 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13 female, 7 male</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Aboriginal youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2011 – May 2011</td>
<td>Evaluation workshops</td>
<td>Concept-mapping</td>
<td>Total: 15 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural background:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9 Aboriginal</td>
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<td>3 Filipino</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 Euro-Canadian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Study Participants*

Participants were given the option of whether they wish to be identified in my research study. Where permission was granted, I use the first name of research.

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85 The ‘official’ start of Phase Two is mid-November 2010, that is, when I received ethics approval for the photovoice project and evaluation workshops. However, while waiting for ethics approval, I continued to work with WASAC leaders, acting as a volunteer in their programs.
participants. Participants who did not wish for their first names to be used were provided with a pseudonym. Individuals who were assigned a pseudonym are identified each time their name appears in the dissertation.

Through my contacts in community sport, I became aware of the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC), an urban Aboriginal sport organization with a strong reputation within the Aboriginal and sport community for delivering relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth. WASAC has received two sport awards from government bodies and was recently approached to develop sport programs for Aboriginal youth in three northern Aboriginal communities.

In January 2010, I approached WASAC’s organizational leaders – Kevin (Executive Director) and Pino (Program Director) – and asked for permission to conduct a two-phased research project with the organization’s sport leaders and Aboriginal youth participants. I explained the overall research process to Kevin and Pino and provided details about the methods and purpose of each research phase. Following our discussions, Kevin and Pino granted me permission to approach WASAC leaders and Aboriginal youth to voluntarily participate in the research project.

Informed Consent

WASAC Leaders (Phase One and Two) - I provided separate informed consent letters for WASAC leaders in Phase One and Phase Two. Each letter provided details about the research activities and methods, and expectations, and the required time commitment from research participants.

WASAC Youth Participants (Phase Two) - I created a separate informed consent letter for Aboriginal youth participants (ages 15-19) in the photovoice project. I discussed
informed consent procedures with Aboriginal youth and provided them with consent letters for their parents or guardians to sign.

The informed consent process for all research participants, particularly the youth, relied heavily upon oral informed consent processes (e.g., I developed PowerPoint presentations for youth participants to explain the informed consent process and potential strengths and problems associated with visual research methods). This decision was also based on the recognition that oral consent processes are considered culturally appropriate means of ensuring informed consent in Aboriginal communities (see Piquemal, 1999; 2001).

Data Collection

Ethnographic research methods (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) were used to collect information and details about program planning, implementation and service delivery (e.g., preparation, best practices, resource management, and facilities); day-to-day interpersonal interactions between staff and youth; actions and behaviours of staff and youth; and the perceived sporting and non-sporting aims and impacts of the sport organization. Visual research materials and methods were used to collect and generate information about the experiential aspect of the organization’s programs (e.g., service delivery, staff - youth interactions), and to build the artistic and research skills and capacities of youth participants.

The decision to layer research phases and use multiple research methods was intended to create a multi-layered feedback process whereby research participants could compare and contrast their reflections and ideas at different stages in the study and with other participants. In turn, this allowed participants to prioritize the mechanisms and
processes attributed to culturally relevant program planning and leadership practices in sport (see Mercier, Piat, Peladeau & Dagenais, 2000; Rosas, 2005; Trochim, 1989).

Details pertaining to each data collection method are described following the description of data analysis procedures.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in Phase One focused on the relationship between social theory and social reality. In other words, as I analyzed ethnographic materials I examined how the philosophical and practical orientation of WASAC and its leaders were enabled and constrained by larger social structures. Similarly, I explored how WASAC and its leaders reproduced and transformed these structures. The data analysis in Phase One corresponded to the first ‘strand of inquiry’ related to my research question about the landscape of community sport:

What societal conditions and structures shape the landscape of community sport and how does this impact WASAC’s work? How does WASAC’s organizational approach to sport programming resist deficit-based interpretations of Aboriginal people and empower urban Aboriginal youth?

In Phase Two, data analysis of the ethnographic and evaluation workshop findings focused on the program planning and sport leaders practices that produced important sport and non-sport benefits for urban Aboriginal youth. Because many WASAC leaders perform multiple roles (e.g., developing and facilitating the programs), I layered the data from Phase One and Phase Two and compared responses from sport leaders and youth participants, specifically their opinions about the programming and leadership practices.
that contribute to the success of WASAC programs. This analytic process addresses questions related to my second ‘strand of inquiry’ regarding community sport education:

What theories of change and practice do WASAC leaders reference and use in their sport programs? What tools, processes and mechanisms do sport leaders use to promote success for Aboriginal youth? What are the sport and non-sport benefits of WASAC programs for urban Aboriginal youth?

Data analysis for the photovoice project examined the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth. This analytic process addressed my ‘third strand of inquiry’:

What is the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth who participate in WASAC programs? How do WASAC leaders understand the cultural landscape of youth participants and how is this understanding reflected in their programming?

My use of a bricolage research design and action research strategy meant that data analysis occurred as the research project unfolded and influenced subsequent data gathering and decision-making processes (e.g., Herr & Anderson, 2005). To assess the validity and authenticity of my research findings, I used an interdependent set of research criteria described by Guba and Lincoln (2008) which included: validity as an ethical relationship, fairness, and ontological, educative authenticity, catalytic, tactical, crystalline and transgressive authenticity (p. 274-278). In sum, these criteria address imbalances of power in academic research and the social world by judging the processes and outcomes of research.

Consequently, these criteria provided me with a framework that I used to continually assess the validity and authenticity of my research processes and methods and
allowed me to make adjustments where necessary. For example, I included more group work opportunities in the evaluation workshops to increase their use-value to WASAC senior leaders (see Part 4, this chapter). Throughout, WASAC leaders were excited about the workshops, the lessons they were learning (e.g., educative authenticity) and how workshop findings could be incorporated into programming (catalytic authenticity). Their words and actions confirmed the overall validity of the research process and findings.

The interdependent set of criteria described by Guba and Lincoln (2008) ensured a rigorous process of data collection and analysis throughout my study. By seeking and listening to the feedback of research participants, I was able to assess the use-value of my overall study and adapt specific research methods.

**Ethnographic research methods**

I used ethnographic research methods such as participant observation, document analysis, and informal interviews throughout my doctoral research project. The ethnographic research process provided rich details about WASAC programs, interactions between WASAC leaders and urban Aboriginal youth, leadership practices of senior leaders, and the opportunity to build strong relationships and friendships with senior leaders.

In Phase One, these methods were used to collect detailed information about WASAC’s organizational operations and program service delivery (e.g., location of programs, resources and facilities). In Phase Two, ethnographic research methods were used to collect and structure data for the evaluation workshops with WASAC senior leaders. During Phase One and Two, I focused on WASAC’s program planning practices,
formats, schedules, expenses and human resource needs; the sport and non-sport aims of their programs and interactions between leaders and Aboriginal youth.

From January to March 2010, I held meetings with Kevin and Pino, WASAC’s Executive Director and Program Director to discuss my doctoral research project (Phase One and Two) and to request permission to conduct research at WASAC. In May 2010, I began visiting and working with WASAC leaders to build relationships with participants and become familiar with the organization’s programs. Pino permitted me to review WASAC’s organizational and program documents (electronic and paper copies), and I conducted several informal interviews with WASAC leaders during my first month of research. Gradually, as WASAC leaders became more comfortable with my presence, my initial role as an observer shifted towards that of a WASAC leader.

While conducting my research at WASAC, I toured seven of ten youth programs and directly observed and participated in the Lil Moose Program, the Eco-Kids on Campus, and the SMART program. I was also invited on three trips to northern Manitoba as part of the WASAC North program.

The results of my ethnographic research are woven throughout the dissertation, serving as a supplementary data source rather than a set of stand-alone research findings (e.g., photovoice project). In addition, ethnographic data supplemented the evaluation

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86 I visited the WASAC Kids Camp, WASAC Eco-Kids Camp, and WASAC North camp (summer programs), in addition to the following four programs: HONOURS, SMART, Lil Moose, and Eco-Kids on Campus (fall / winter programs). I was unable to visit their summer football camp and Youth Achievement Program - YAP (summer camps), or their Lil Kicker’s program (fall / winter program).

87 The Eco-Kids of Campus program is a partnership between the University of Winnipeg and WASAC. The University of Winnipeg hired me to work as a program supervisor with the program.
workshop data in Chapter 7 by providing comparative data between the espoused theory (evaluation workshops) and theory-in-use (ethnographic data).

For more information about:
• Data results and analysis: see Chapter 5 through 7

Photovoice

Description of Participants

WASAC senior leaders chose the Student Mentor Aboriginal Role-Model Tutorship (SMART) program for the photovoice project. The SMART program is a youth leadership development program partnership between WASAC and St. John’s High School. Lindsay, SMART program coordinator, works closely with Mr. Kazin (pseudonym), WASAC’s teacher champion at St. John’s High School, at the start of the school year to confirm program logistics and requirements (e.g., room bookings, etc) and to promote the program and recruit Aboriginal high school students (grades 10-12) as participants. The responsibility for selecting SMART participants rests with Mr. Kazin, who selects Aboriginal students that he feels will benefit from, and contribute to, the SMART program. To participate in the SMART program, Aboriginal students must maintain a good attendance record and be in good academic standing (as determined by St. John’s High School). Once the program logistics are confirmed and interested students return the completed registration form to Mr. Kazin (who then forwards this information to Lindsay), the SMART program can start.

All SMART participants selected by Mr. Kazin were accepted into the photovoice project provided they demonstrated an interest in the project and completed four
mandatory sessions on photography and research. I initially began working with the SMART program in September 2011 and the photovoice project started in mid-November.\footnotemark I delivered a 30-minute PowerPoint presentation to SMART participants which provided a general overview of my research, the photovoice project and the informed consent process. At the end of the presentation, I provided SMART participants with the informed consent letter for their parents or guardians to sign and return.

Twenty-five SMART participants (ages 15-19) were initially accepted into the photovoice project (15 female and 10 male students) and 3 students left the program (and research) due to school-related issues. Attendance fluctuated throughout the SMART program as students were encouraged to participate in school sports which often resulted in numerous program-approved absences. Of the remaining 22 SMART students that attended photovoice sessions, 20 participants (13 female and 7 male) met the attendance and participation criteria required to become a youth researcher in the photovoice project. At the conclusion of photovoice sessions, 5 female and 1 male participant volunteered to present photographic displays at the photovoice Exhibit.

Each photovoice participant received a Sony Cyber-Shot digital camera (with rechargeable battery), memory card and binder for storing the information from the photovoice sessions. Monetary honourariums were not provided.

\textit{Photovoice sessions}

The photovoice sessions were held from November 2010 to March 2011, following the SMART tutoring sessions that occurred bi-monthly on Tuesdays.

\footnotetext{While awaiting ethics approval for Phase Two, I volunteered to help with the SMART program. WASAC was short-staffed at the time, so I supervised Aboriginal language classes every Monday, in addition to helping with regular program activities on Tuesday.}
Photovoice sessions were held at St. John’s High school in a room chosen by the school. Nine, one-hour photovoice sessions were held 5:00 to 6:00 pm with an average attendance of 17 youth participants per session.

Three SMART leaders assisted me during the photovoice sessions: Lindsay (Program Coordinator), Stephinie (senior leader) and Joel (senior leader / bus driver). I facilitated all the photovoice sessions with the exception of the photography sessions. As mentioned earlier, SMART participants were required to attend two photography and two research sessions. An elementary school teacher attending photography school facilitated the photography sessions and I facilitated the research sessions and photovoice sessions.

While the photovoice sessions were held once every two weeks, I also interacted with participants on a weekly basis when they participated in SMART program activities and twice a week in the fall when I supervised the Cree language sessions held each Monday. Our regular contact allowed many photovoice participants to ask questions about the project, ‘catch up’ on sessions they missed, and discuss their photographs. Interestingly, when I met with participants at the conclusion of the five-month photovoice sessions to summarize our work, most were surprised to learn that there had only been nine ‘official’ photovoice sessions.

Structure of sessions

Wilson et al. (2007) recommend that photovoice projects with youth begin with team building activities. However, since photovoice participants were from the same school and were members of an existing group (SMART), this aspect of the photovoice process was not necessary. Instead, I began the photovoice sessions with mandatory photography and research sessions (youth participants could not receive their digital
cameras or begin taking photographs until they completed these sessions). During the photography sessions, the instructor discussed the basic principles of photography, including how to frame an image, the do’s and don’ts of photography, and the basic mechanics of operating a digital camera.\(^8\) The instructor brought magazines to the first session and invited students to make a collage of images, paying attention to the aesthetics and composition of the images. In the second session, the instructor had youth participants explore the various functions of their cameras and practice taking photographs of each other (I temporarily provided the digital cameras to participants during this session).

Table 4. *Outline of photovoice sessions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandatory Research Sessions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Research Lesson</td>
<td>Introduction to photovoice, distribution of informed consent letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Photography Lesson</td>
<td>Basic principles of photography, framing images, aesthetics of visual images.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Research Lesson</td>
<td>Research ethics, review informed consent letter (youth researchers give to their photography subjects).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Photography Lesson</td>
<td>How to use a digital camera.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^8\) My cousin learned about my photovoice project and volunteered to assist with the photography lessons. As an elementary school teacher and photography student, she was well-qualified to teach the sessions.
Table 4. continued…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection Meetings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Introduction to reflection meetings</td>
<td>Overview of reflection meetings (e.g., timeline and purpose), discussion about meaning of sport and culture, handout digital cameras.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Reviewing photos of SMART activities</td>
<td>Learn how to download their photos to research laptop, review photographs of SMART participants during cultural dance activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Brainstorming walk</td>
<td>Walk around school and brainstorm images that relate to sport or culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Discussion of visual images</td>
<td>Discuss images of sport and culture provided by researcher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Group discussion</td>
<td>Download photos, group discussion about sport and culture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mandatory research sessions were highly structured (e.g., PowerPoint presentation) and provided detailed information about the photovoice process and responsibilities of youth researchers. The first session provided an overview of my research, the photovoice project and timeline (history of photovoice, its purpose, goals and objectives), and the informed consent letter. The second session focused on research ethics, their roles and responsibilities as youth researchers, ethical issues related to photography, and personal safety rules.
### Sample Lesson 1. Role-Playing Game about Informed Consent

**Materials:**
- Informed Consent form for youth researchers (see Appendix D)

**Preparation:**
- Each youth participant was given an informed consent letter for the photovoice project. If they took a photograph of a person for their photovoice project, they were supposed to review this letter with him/her and ask him/her to sign it. We reviewed the letter as a group and then participants were given five minutes to read it over on their own. After the five minutes, there were told to find a partner for a role-playing game.

**Instructions for the role-playing game:**
- Researcher - review the important parts of the letter with their participants and record words, ideas or phrases that were difficult to explain; Photography Subject – ask researcher questions about their rights as research participants for 10 minutes then switch roles.

**Follow up:**
- After the role-playing game, I asked groups to hand me a sheet with the words, ideas or phrases that they had difficulty explaining. At the next session, we would review their feedback.

The five reflection meetings provided an opportunity for youth researchers to discuss their ideas about sport and culture as well as what it means to be a researcher. The reflection meetings were loosely structured; rather than ‘teaching’ youth researchers about research (mandatory sessions), I acted as a facilitator, posing questions and encouraging youth to think critically about the meaning of sport and culture in their lives. We discussed the photovoice project, research procedures (e.g., how to download photos to a research laptop), and ethical issues related to photographing others and displaying their image. I collected various images of culture and sport from SMART program materials and the internet and used them as examples of the kinds of photographs they could take. I also used the images to help gain insight about the participants’ definition of
culture and sport and what they looked for in a sport program. An example of a group activity from the reflection meetings is included below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Lesson 2. Discussion of Visual Images (Session 8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rationale:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many youth researchers found it difficult to discuss the meaning of sport and culture in their lives and even greater difficulty when asked to photograph people, places or things that reflected the role or impact of sport and culture in their lives. I printed ten images collected from the internet that portrayed sport, recreation, physical activity and play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Examples of the images included an empty playground, an old soccer ball, a child playing with his/her parents, and someone walking down a street. The purpose of these images was to provide youth researchers with realistic examples of images they could photograph in their community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I asked youth researchers to form a circle, explained the activity, and circulated the images around the circle. Each youth had one minute to look at the photo and then pass it to the next person. Once everyone had an opportunity to look at the images, I asked them what they thought the image represented and how it related to sport and/or culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• During the discussion, I stressed the fact that although photovoice typically depicts images of problems in people’s communities, youth researchers could also take photographs that showed positive images of sport and culture in their lives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exhibit sessions**

A separate set of meetings was held with participants to discuss the Exhibit. The decision to hold separate meetings was strategic since the success of the Exhibit would hinge on my ability to identify youth researchers who were fully committed to attending the remaining meetings and sufficiently motivated to create a photograph display. During the final photovoice sessions, I stressed the voluntary nature of the Exhibit and the additional time and work that it would require from those who participated. I reminded participants that there were no penalties for those who did not want to participate in the
Exhibit (e.g., they could keep their digital cameras). And, because the promise of food played an important role in attendance levels, I encouraged all participants to stop for a snack prior to Exhibit meetings regardless of whether or not they were attending the meeting. Seven youth decided to participate in the Exhibit, and, on average, five youth attended each session.

Exhibit participants met every Tuesday between March 2011 and April 2011 at St. John’s High School in a room chosen by school officials. Each session was between one and two hours in length and was held between 4:00 to 6:00 pm. The Exhibit sessions focused on encouraging youth researchers to take photographs (sessions 2 to 4), creating captions for photographs (sessions 5 to 7), and group discussions about the photographs (session 5 to 7).

Table 5. Outline of exhibit sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Overview of Exhibit sessions</td>
<td>Review Exhibit timeline and sessions; group discussion about sport opportunities for urban Aboriginal youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Photography outing</td>
<td>Visit the Forks to take photographs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Photo bingo activity</td>
<td>Supervised photography expeditions around community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Photo bingo activity; downloading photos</td>
<td>Supervised photography expeditions around community, downloading photos for Exhibit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Choosing photos for Exhibit &amp; caption writing</td>
<td>Youth participants fill out <em>photography information handout</em> (based on SHOWED method, see Photovoice Hamilton, 2007); group discussion about photographs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Caption writing; Exhibit information</td>
<td>Continuation of session 6 activities, information about Exhibit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Caption writing</td>
<td><em>Note: This session was provided to youth who missed one or more sessions.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the photovoice project proceeded, it became clear that youth researchers were not taking photographs for the Exhibit. I remain uncertain as to the reasons for their reluctance to take photographs but I am aware that many participants were confused about the types of photographs they should take (see Chapter 6 for discussion).

In response, I created a photo bingo activity which I used to provide real-life examples of images they could take for the Exhibit (see Appendix E for example). The activity involved dividing youth participants into three groups and accompanying them as they went on a ‘photo walk’. Each group was independently supervised by Lindsay, Stephnie or myself.

To further encourage participants to take photographs for the Exhibit, I provided each with a separate memory card for the photo bingo activity which I collected at the end of each walk (I also brought extra cameras). Youth participants enjoyed the opportunity to walk around their community and take photographs as a group. In addition, the presence of a supervisor helped youth feel more confident about their photographs since they could ask questions and received encouragement. The photo bingo activity was very successful and WASAC leaders asked to incorporate this idea in future photovoice projects.90

The caption writing activity and group discussions were based on my adaptation of a photo sharing activity (SHOWED) recommended in a photovoice manual and resource kit published by Photovoice Hamilton (2007). The photography information

90 Trevor and Brittany, WASAC’s financial staff, were very interested in the photovoice project as a way to report results to their funders. I provided WASAC with a photovoice binder, complete with all our sessions’ activities, including the photo bingo template and instructions.
sheet, referenced in Table 5 above, was given to each participant who was asked to choose his/her top five photographs and explained how these photographs met certain criteria. First, the image had to be meaningful in other words, it had to be “more than a pretty picture”) and secondly, youth had to explain how the photograph related to sport or culture. If the photos did not meet these two criteria, I asked them to choose another.

After youth chose their five photos, I provided them with a six-page photograph description handout (five photograph description sheets, plus instruction sheet) and explained how to complete the handout.

Figure 4. Sample of photograph description sheet

| Title of photo: ______________ | Your Name: _________________ |
| Date of photo: ________________ |

| What is seen here? (describe what you see) | e.g., The swing set near my house is completely rusted. Or, this is the front door to the local neighborhood centre. |
| What is really happening? (the unseen ‘story’) | e.g., They shut down the sport field because no one was using it but we couldn’t use it because it was fenced and locked. |
| How is this image related to culture or sport? |  |
| Why is this image important to you? |  |

During sessions 5, 6 and 7, participants had thirty minutes at the start of each session to fill in as many details as possible. During this time, I visited with participants to answer questions and review their work to make sure they were on the right track.

Next, I held a group discussion and asked each youth to pick one photo to share with the group and explain the meaning of the photo according to the photography description directions. As a group, we discussed the participants’ photo to help them
revise or complete the description. If youth participants were having difficulty talking about a photograph, Lindsay and I would ask a series of questions:91

- Does this image portray something good or something bad?92
- Why do you think this problem exists? – OR -
- Why do you think this positive message is important?
- Who is responsible [problem/positive message] and why?
- What is the role of government or community organizations?
- What role can youth play?

These conversations were recorded on audiotape or videotape and I requested permission during each session to record our group conversations. Once the participants realized that the group discussion could help them finish their handout, it helped relieve some of the worries they had about presenting their photos and ideas. At the end of the activity, I provided a large envelope and asked participants to put their five photos and photography description inside which I would keep until the Exhibit was finished, at which time, they could take home their work.

A number of youth were unable to attend the final exhibit meetings (meetings 5 and 6) which would have prevented them from completing the necessary preparations and participating in the Exhibit. In response, I arranged to hold an extra meeting (meeting 7)

91 I asked Lindsay if she would like to help me facilitate the group discussions since she expressed interest in listening to the youth participants’ feedback.
92 As mentioned earlier, photovoice typically asks participants to take photos of problems within their community. I encouraged participants to take photos of good things in their community such as family or friends. I started each group discussion with this binary question because I did not know how participants viewed particular images (e.g., good thing or bad thing). In addition, by asking this question, many participants would say an image contained both ‘good’ and ‘bad’ elements which would then lead to further discussion on the complexity of their images.
at a local restaurant since I no longer had a room booked at their school and participants were accustomed to receiving snacks. Once participants were finished eating, I handed out their *photograph description* sheets and we stayed until everyone had completed their work.

*The Exhibit*

The photovoice exhibit was a huge undertaking. Although planning began at the beginning of the photovoice project, most of the preparations took place six weeks before the actual Exhibit date.

First, I approached Pino to inquire about booking a venue for the Exhibit. When we first began the photovoice project, Pino indicated that WASAC would find space for the Exhibit and cover any rental costs. The chosen venue was a room at the North Centennial Recreation and Leisure Facility which had capacity for forty people. After booking the venue, I told WASAC leaders about the Exhibit date and invited them to attend.

Next, I began planning the feast with the help of my mother. My mother is familiar with organizing community feasts and generously agreed to prepare the food. We planned a hot, sit-down meal for fifty people.

After making the arrangements for food and refreshments, I reviewed research literature about photovoice Exhibits to understand the types of materials needed, space requirements, and potential challenges. Two weeks before the event, I purchased black poster board (cut to size), photo corners and photo tape to mount the photos. I also created title cards (to display photo information) from card stock which could be glued onto each participant’s photo display. I also reviewed youth participants *photography*
information handouts and compiled photograph descriptions that would subsequently be placed beside their photographs.

Following this, I created event invitations that participants could use to invite family and friends to the Exhibit. Youth participants were told they could bring up to five friends or guests. In addition to WASAC senior leaders, I also invited Mr. Kazin and my advisor.

A week before the event, I purchased all the food and borrowed necessary food supplies such as slow cookers and utensils. I made a final confirmation of the venue, booking and finalizing my plans. Two days before the event, my father and I prepared the photo displays for the youth.

On the day of the Exhibit, things went very smoothly (due, in no small part, to the pre-planning work and assistance of others). I had time to visit WASAC before the Exhibit and unpack most of my materials in the early afternoon. Pino asked a number of WASAC leaders to assist me with the Exhibit and they helped me with the afternoon set-up, during the Exhibit, and assisted in the clean up after the event concluded.

I sent phone texts to participants reminding them about the Exhibit and Lindsay and I picked up them up from their school and drove them to the Exhibit at 5:00 pm. Youth participants were told that their responsibilities at the Exhibit would include setting up their photography displays and helping prepare the feast (e.g., set up tables, serve food). I provided youth their Exhibit packages complete with the mounted photos, a photo description sheet, comment sheet, and instructed them to find a space on the wall in which to display their personal Exhibit. A sign-in sheet for guests and information sheets about the Exhibit were affixed to a table near the entrance.
Evaluation Workshops

Description of Participants

In January 2011, I asked senior leaders to participate in five, two-hour workshop sessions related to program planning, sport leadership and the benefits of WASAC programs. Leaders had been aware of the workshops since September 2010, when I began preparations for Phase Two while waiting for ethics approval. In total, 15 leaders participated in the workshops, with an average of 10 leaders attending each meeting. Workshop participants included Kim, Stephine, Helen (pseudonym), Brittany, Lindsay, Wendy, Denise, Rob, John (pseudonym), Trevor, Martin (pseudonym), Darren, Lance (pseudonym), Joel, and Pino. Of the 8 male and 7 female leaders, 9 identified as Aboriginal, 3 as Filipino, 1 as Italian and 2 as Euro-Canadian.

The first session began with a brief overview of my doctoral research and methodology, followed by a quick reminder about the informed consent process (e.g., time commitment, benefits of participation) and concluded with a discussion about the overall structure of the five sessions. Excluding the first workshop, each session began with a summary of the previous sessions’ results, a brief outline of the current session’s

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93 Wendy was away during the research period but returned for a visit during one of the staff sessions and asked to participate. Joel and Lance (pseudonym) were only able to attend the final session due to university and school classes. Pino volunteered to provide information for the first staff session but declined to participate in group discussions as he felt his presence might hinder a free flow of conversation among senior leaders. Kevin was not able to participate due to his busy schedule and external commitments.
agenda, and a reminder that participation was voluntary. I ended each session by thanking leaders and scheduling the next workshop session. During breaks between sessions, I visited WASAC leaders to discuss the previous sessions, solicit feedback, re-check schedules (this was very important as their schedules change constantly), and send email reminders. This *sandwich* format for workshops with its start (introducing the workshop session topics and structure, informed consent reminders), middle (concept mapping steps and activities), and end (thank you, scheduling availability, and foreshadowing next session) provided a sense of stability and consistency through the workshops. A summary of the workshop topics and activities is included below.

Table 6. *Chronology and description of workshop activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session One,</td>
<td>Brainstorming statements for three thematic</td>
<td>• Generate statements for each thematic question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 25 / 11</td>
<td>questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Two,</td>
<td>Sorting and Categorizing Statements (Question 1)</td>
<td>• Edit statements &lt;br&gt; • Sort statements into groups &lt;br&gt; • Create category names for each group &lt;br&gt; • Evaluate statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 16 / 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Three,</td>
<td>Sorting and Categorizing Statements (Question 2)</td>
<td>• Sort statements into groups &lt;br&gt; • Create category names for each group &lt;br&gt; • Rank statements &lt;br&gt; • Evaluate statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 23 / 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Four,</td>
<td>Sorting and Categorizing Statements (Question 3)</td>
<td>• Rank statements &lt;br&gt; (Question 1 and 3) &lt;br&gt; • Evaluate statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 13 / 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Five,</td>
<td>Storytelling Platform (Questions 2 and 3)</td>
<td>• Pick statement and tell story about it &lt;br&gt; • Team building activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4 / 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session One: Brainstorming

1a. Preparation

The goal of the first workshop was simple: brainstorm and generate as many statements as possible (up to 100) for three thematic questions: program planning, sport leadership and program benefits. While themes are useful conceptual constructs, when turned into a focusing question, thematic questions narrow the potential scope of participants’ responses thereby increasing the use-value and meaning of participants’ response, an important aspect of construct validity (see Trochim, 1998). Theory-based researchers use thematic questions to help participants develop clear and concise statements during the brainstorming activity. Later, these questions also act as a framework for future concept mapping activities (e.g., participants can assess potential category names for their ‘fit’ with the question).

I created three thematic questions for the brainstorming activity which would also guide subsequent workshop discussions.

- Program planning: What strategies, actions, and processes are important to the successful planning and implementation of a sport program for urban Aboriginal youth?
- Sport Leadership: What type of experiences, knowledge, and personal characteristics do you think sport leaders who work with urban Aboriginal youth should possess?
- Benefits of WASAC programs: What are the sport and non-sport benefits (e.g., social, personal, cultural, etc) of WASAC programs for urban Aboriginal youth?
I created a handout that listed each thematic question and included examples of statements to help leaders. These statements were drawn from personal observations and informal discussions with senior leaders.

1b. Workshop (February 25, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA (2 hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Brainstorming activity (program planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Brainstorming activity (sport leaders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Brainstorming activity (benefits of WASAC programs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1, 2 and 3

The brainstorming activity was divided into three, thirty-minute sections, each section addressing a thematic question. For each thematic question, participants were instructed to generate as many statements as possible to a maximum of 100 statements. I explained that it was very important for statements to include one idea (e.g., strategy, action or process) and statements should be simple and share a similar grammatical structure (“provide food and beverages” or “develop strong partnerships with local schools”). Leaders were encouraged to create as many statements as possible and record everyone’s ideas.

After providing these instructions to the leaders, I asked leaders to divide themselves into two teams and ensured that leaders with the most seniority were equally divided among the teams. Interestingly, leaders divided along gender lines and maintained this division throughout the sessions. Due to the busy schedules of leaders, I explained that I would limit brainstorming activities to a maximum of 30 minutes. Handouts were given and collected at the start/end of each brainstorming section.
On March 4, 2011, I met with Pino and Kim separately to repeat a similar brainstorming process. With their permission, I recorded each conversation on audio-tape in order to capture discussion that I might miss while facilitating the sessions. Although the research process was identical to previous brainstorming sessions, less time was required (approximately 45 minutes / person).

Session Two: Program Planning

2a. Preparation

After the group sessions and individual meetings were complete, I compiled the statements that participants prepared for each thematic question. I created a separate document for each question and inserted their statements into a table (two columns, plus as many rows as necessary). If necessary, I edited statements for errors and clarity. I highlighted statements I did not understand for review and, if necessary, edited it with the group.

2b. Workshop (March 16, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA (2 hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review, edit and approve generated statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Sort statements into groups / categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Name each group of statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rank statements within each group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Evaluate statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(spontaneous addition by researcher in response to workshop observations)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1

Before the session began, I asked Brittany to assist me by editing the program planning statements. While I was facilitating the large group discussion, Brittany used my
laptop to make any necessary revisions to the statements. Once we were finished reviewing each of the statements, I printed a copy of the revised program planning statements for each group.

Although Activity 1 required 40 minutes (double the allotted time), it provided more time for reflection by participants than the previous session when teams did not have time to review their ideas or those of the other team. And, of the three thematic questions, the program planning activity also generated the most statements. This activity served two essential functions. First, it provided an opportunity for leaders to clarify the meaning of their statements, if necessary. Second, the activity provided a refresher for participants and helped them become more comfortable with the information before sorting and prioritizing statements during Activity 2.

Activity 2

Next, leaders separated into their respective teams and I provided each team with a set of cue cards (each containing one program planning statement) and Post-It notes. Once the cue cards were distributed, I asked leaders to pick a WASAC program (for urban Aboriginal youth) that required considerable time and energy to plan by leaders; the leaders chose WASAC Kids Camp. Next, I instructed groups to sort similar statements into groups with each group containing a minimum of three cards. After the

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94 A breakdown of the number of statements generated for the three thematic questions in Session 1 includes: program planning – 87 statements, sport leadership – 80 statements, and benefits of WASAC programs – 60 statements.

95 Although intended to aid groups, this approach did not help either group as their perspectives reflected an organizational, not program-specific perspective. For example, as a large group, we chose WASAC Kids Camp as a reference program for developing categories, yet when it came time to create categories, many leaders did not like being restricted to the chosen program. As a result, I did not ask groups to pick a WASAC program for session 3 to use as a reference point for their work.
teams sorted the cards into categories, they were instructed to provide a category name, write that name on a Post-It note, and place it near its group. Participants were given 20 minutes to complete the activity but ultimately required 40 minutes.

**Activity 3**

In the third activity, teams were initially asked to rank the statements by order of importance (e.g., most important statement would be the first statement listed under the category name). However, leaders responded that the statements were all equally important and ranking them this way would not be appropriate. In response, I replaced this activity with a reflection and evaluation exercise (Activity 4).

**Replacement Activity (Activity 4)**

After cancelling activity three due to participant feedback, I used the remaining 20 minutes for a reflection and evaluation activity. Leaders were instructed to switch tables and review the other teams’ categories, making note of how they had sorted statements and which category names they chose for their statement groupings. Next, I asked them to place a star next to statements that represented something WASAC excelled at (particularly in comparison to other community sport groups) and, following this, to circle statements that corresponded to areas that WASAC needed to improve.

**Session Three: Sport Leaders**

3a. Preparation

The preparation process for Session Three provided me with an opportunity to reflect on previous sessions and make necessary adjustments. Based on my observations and feedback from leaders, I made three important changes; I reduced the time dedicated
to editing statements, revised the ranking activity, and added new topics to the reflection exercise.

The first change was to reduce the amount of time dedicated to editing statements. Due to the time constraints of Session Two, I decided to edit the statements for grammar and clarity and secondly, I eliminated the large group editing activity that was used during the first activity of Session One. This allowed me to print the cue cards in advance of the session, thereby increasing the amount of available time for other activities. To ensure that I did not completely exclude groups for the editing process, I added an editing component to the general instructions for Session Three.

The next change was to revise the ranking activity used in Session Two. Instead of asking each team to order statements by individual importance, I placed multi-coloured Likert scales on the worktables and asked groups to place statements under the appropriate ranking on the Likert scale (i.e., extremely important, very important, somewhat important, neutral, not important).

My final change was made to the reflection exercise (Session Two, Activity Four). In addition to the question which assessed discrepancies between WASAC’s espoused theory and theory-in-use, leaders were asked to identify statements that addressed one or more of the following three topics: *Aboriginal peoples or culture; Sport, recreation, physical activity or play*; and, *Training or education of sport leaders*. These topics were added because I noticed how infrequently they were raised during informal conversations with leaders during Phase One, Phase Two, and workshop sessions. I found it surprising that senior leaders – many who were Aboriginal or Filipino - rarely talked about culture when they described WASAC programs. I hoped that adding these
questions would ‘break the silence’ and allow us further exploration of these topics. Although these questions drew attention to the intersection of sport and culture, in comparison with other topics, it was the most difficult conversation to facilitate.

3b. Workshop (March 23, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA (2 hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a. Sort statements into groups. Edit statements, if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Name groups / categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rank statements in each category using Likert scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Evaluate statements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1

After explaining the workshop agenda, leaders returned to their regular teams. Cue cards and Post-It notes were provided to the leaders who then sorted and edited the statements. Leaders had the option to draw a line through the statement to delete it, create a new statement on a green cue card, or revise existing cue cards. Once leaders had sorted the statements into groups, I reminded them to write the group / category name on the Post-It note and place it next to the statements. I allotted additional time to the activity (30 minutes), however teams still required an extra 10-15 minutes to sort statements and create category names.

Activity 2

Next, each group received a set of coloured Likert scales and were asked to rank the statements in each category by positioning them under the appropriate Likert ranking. I allotted 20 minutes for this activity but participants required 40 minutes to complete the tasks.
Activity 3

In the final evaluation activity, leaders used colour-coded stickers to evaluate statements. Red for statements related to Aboriginal peoples or cultures; blue for statements about sport, recreation, physical activity or play; green for training or education for sport leaders; and yellow stickers for areas that required improvement.

Session Four: Benefits of WASAC programs

4a. Preparation

For the fourth session and final thematic question, I made two significant changes to the workshop format. The first change was eliminating the team process of sorting statements. Although I struggled with this decision, I felt that the most useful results were emerging from the ranking exercise and evaluation activities, not through grouping statements into categories. Instead, I sorted statements into categories before the session and asked the larger group to rank the statements with each category. I also added six new statements – drawn from WASAC’s strategic plan and sport-in-development literature – that leaders had not identified during the brainstorming workshop in Session One.

Secondly, I changed my approach to summarizing team results. Since each team generally sorted statements and created categories differently, I could not compile the results without altering the work of one (or both) teams. Therefore, when teams created similar categories and statement groupings, I used this information in the final results. Conversely, when teams created different category names or statement groupings, I created my own category names or groupings of statements based on my research observations and SID literature. The final results of Session Two (program planning),
Session Three (sport leadership) and Session Four (benefits of WASAC programs) were compiled, analyzed and synthesized in this manner.

4b. Workshop (April 13, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA (2 hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ranking activity (WASAC benefits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Evaluation activity (WASAC benefits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ranking activity (program planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Explaining data analysis process and changes (sessions 2, 3, &amp; 4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 1**

We began the session by ranking the sport and non-sport benefits of WASAC programs for urban Aboriginal youth. To streamline this process, I created a large scale version of the Likert scale on two pieces of flip chart paper. Unlike Session Three, we ranked the benefit statements as a large group. Flip chart papers were taped to the wall and I asked for a volunteer to read the statement and another to tape the cue card / statement under the appropriate ranking.

**Activity 2**

Next, leaders were asked to fill out an evaluation table. The top row contained five cells, each containing one of the five Likert scale rankings. In the far left column, individual cells contained one of six evaluation criteria. Leaders were asked to assess each benefit and indicate which of the following criteria it addressed: 1) required careful planning, 2) required well-trained leaders, 3) required considerable funding, 4) needed improvement, 5) was difficult to measure or prove, or 6) an area that WASAC excelled at compared to other organizations that work with urban Aboriginal youth. These criteria...
were selected because of their relationship to previous workshop sessions. For example, the “careful planning” and “well-trained leaders” criteria (#1, #2) helped inform data analysis for Session Two (program planning) and Three (sport leaders) while the “required considerable funding” criteria (#3) helped inform Chapter 4’s examination of the financial capacity of CSOs. Additionally, the criteria replicated evaluation questions from previous workshop sessions; criteria four was used in Sessions 2 and 3 and criteria six was used in Session 2. The use of these criteria also helped WASAC’s financial leaders since criteria five identified program evaluation areas that required attention, especially those statements that leaders ranked as “extremely important” or “very important”.

To complete this activity, teams were asked to review the flip chart paper and list as many statements as possible on the chart. The rule for this activity was simple: leaders could place each statement along one (or more) of the six evaluation criteria rows but the statement also had to be placed under the column that matched the Likert scale ranking they selected for that statement.

Activity 3

The next activity involved the ranking of program planning statements collected from Session Two since it had been cancelled. Working together in a large group, leaders ranked statements using the Likert scale (flip chart paper). This activity ran more effectively than the first activity (this session) since leaders had already edited and approved the statements during Session Two.
Activity 4

I used the final activity to provide leaders with a brief update on the workshop results and the data analysis process. I addressed four issues:

- I changed category names for the first two thematic questions because both teams had such divergent category names. Although the category names that teams selected were quite different, there were a lot of similarities in the way teams sorted statements into categories.

- Unlike the first thematic question related to program planning, leaders were not provided with time to edit the statements. Instead, I edited the statements in advance and asked groups to make changes during activities. Teams only made few changes during Session 3 but, as a larger group, we made a significant number of edits during the ranking activity.

- I noted the six benefit statements that I added from WASAC’s strategic plan and sport-in-development literature.

- I eliminated the process of creating category names and grouping statements into categories. Instead, I completed this process myself and consulted with leaders to seek approval for the category names I created.

I ended the workshop session by informing leaders that I would create a workshop binder for WASAC in the fall of 2011 which would include an annotated guide with tips and successful practices for facilitating the workshops, an overview of the sessions, a summary of the workshop results, and a CD containing important documents. Leaders were interested in this collection of materials and hoped to use it to guide annual workshops for WASAC staff.
Session Five: Story-telling Circle

5a. Preparation

More than any other session, my plans for Session Five underwent constant change. Initially, the purpose of this session was straightforward: summarize and connect the results of the workshops to my research and the ideas in WASAC’s Strategic Plan. However, after reviewing this approach, the session seemed to take the form of a university lecture instead of an indigenous or community-based approach to sharing and celebrating research results.

Reflecting on the plan, I asked myself: “Of all that I’ve learned thus far, what type of session do WASAC leaders need and want?”. In posing this question, the agenda for the final session revealed itself. First, I realized that WASAC leaders rarely had time to share stories of their successes and challenges; they were a tight-knit team but often unaware of each other’s roles and responsibilities. Secondly, I returned to the importance of storytelling as an integral component of indigenous research methods (Archibald, 2008; Wilson, 2008), not to mention an extremely powerful mode of communication and teaching. Focusing on these two concepts – the need for WASAC leaders to share and the fundamental importance of storytelling in indigenous research – I revised my plans as follows.

For Session Five, I would print the highest ranked statements (those identified as “extremely important” and “very important”) from each thematic question. Next, leaders would pick a statement from each thematic question and share a story that closely paralleled or demonstrated that statement. Finally, I added a team-building activity since the desire for such activities by WASAC leaders was evident throughout my research.
Activity 1

I started the session by explaining that I had changed the focus of the workshop. Instead of summarizing the research results - which I would subsequently provide in the research binder – we would be sharing stories about the statements that leaders indicated were most important. As we sat together sharing breakfast, I spread cue cards with the highest-ranked program planning statements from Session Two across a nearby table and asked leaders to choose their favorite statement (leaders could pick the same statement). When leaders returned to the table, I asked their permission to audio-record their stories since I would be unable to capture everything in written form. At first, the recorder seemed to intimidate leaders but as the workshop progressed, leaders made a game of passing it around and reminding story-tellers to speak into the recorder.

During the first ten minutes, leaders appeared uncomfortable as the centre of attention and sharing was minimal. Eventually, however, the leaders began to speak at length about their chosen statement and also add to each other’s stories. It quickly became a pattern that one statement would evoke stories from three or more leaders.

The activity called for one round of stories per thematic question but leaders wanted to add a second round. So, after the first round related to program planning statements concluded, leaders returned their statements to the pile and drew new statements. As had occurred in previous sessions, we ran out of time. We were able to tell
stories for the first two thematic questions, but not the last question related to the benefits of WASAC programs.

Activity 2

I noticed that WASAC organizational and senior leaders valued a personal approach to expressing gratitude and appreciation. For example, WASAC gives home-made gifts and crafts to their funders and school partners. With this in mind, I created a team-building activity which I entitled “Around the World”. It is based on the popular image of people holding hands around the world. I purchased two large orange poster boards – orange being WASAC’s organizational colour - to fashion into the shape of the Earth and multi-coloured construction paper to create cut-out people. Leaders were given a piece of paper and asked to write their names and the name of all senior organizational and program leaders at WASAC. Next, they were to write a short phrase or list a few nice qualities about each person on the list. Following this, leaders chose a cut out person, printed the name on its chest, and, in merry-go-round style, passed the cut-out people around the circle, each leader adding their personal comments to the cut-outs. At the end of the activity, we placed all the cut-out people around the world to represent the unity of the WASAC team. This turned out to be an extremely popular team-building activity. Lindsay and Wendy have subsequently asked to borrow this team-building activity and have implemented it into their summer youth leadership programs.

For more information about:

- Data results and analysis: see Chapter 7
Research Reflections

Honouring research participants

During my final year of undergraduate studies, I enrolled in a socialist feminism course at the University of Winnipeg. The course represented my first exposure to critical theory and I was quickly overwhelmed by the diversity and complexity of the literature. At the conclusion of the course, I was amazed to discover that the instructor had given me an ‘A’ on the paper and the course; I did not feel the mark was deserved especially since there were far more advanced students in the class. The instructor told me that the grade was based on my internal development and learning; she did not believe that learning was a competitive or comparative activity, but an internal process of self-development and discovery.

Even though my doctoral studies represent the pinnacle of my formal learning, I am and will always be a student. Although I have extensive experience as a youth worker and workshop facilitator, I am not an accredited teacher and I have never facilitated a photovoice project or concept-mapping workshops. Kevin and Pino understood that I was not only a researcher but a student. They realized that my research was just as important to me as a student as its benefits were to their organization. In the end, it was WASAC’s commitment to education (and, by extension, my success as a student) that strongly influenced their decision to have me conduct my research at WASAC.

Kevin and Pino were eager for staff to participate in the workshop evaluations and excited about the benefits that the photovoice project could provide to WASAC participants and my research. When Phase Two was delayed due to concerns by the Education / Nursing Research Ethics Board regarding the photovoice project (see
Appendix A, B & C), Pino and Kim told me to drop the project. Even though the loss of the photovoice project would negatively impact their organization, WASAC put the quality of my graduate student experience above their own needs.

These experiences reinforced the importance of connectedness in education (Palmer, 2007) and research (Wilson, 2008), and the principle of service (Hampton, 1995) that is integral to Aboriginal worldviews. Research, like education, “cannot be reduced to technique… but comes from the identity and integrity” (Palmer, 2007); our identity and integrity defines us as human beings and as researchers. If we honour our inner landscape, our personal ways of being will be reflected in our research practices. As a community-based researcher, I discovered that the transformative potential of research is kindled within our research relationships. We do not create it; it emerges from the integrity and authenticity of our work.

*The transformative potential of community-based research*

When community-based researchers immerse themselves within the lives of research participants, we are changed by the research experiences. Producing good research is an emotionally exhausting process filled with contradictory moments. Throughout my research, I often questioned whether my abilities as a researcher and community-based educator were strong enough to accomplish the research goals that WASAC and I had established. I worried that photovoice participants would be too tired

96 Pino and Kim offered to write a letter to ENREB and Kevin offered to meet with ENREB members to explain the importance of the photovoice project, particularly the opportunity for Aboriginal youth participants to choose whether or not their image and names appear in my research and associated academic work. Pino, Kim and Kevin understood that few Aboriginal youth had an opportunity to define themselves in research, particularly strength-based research projects.
to participate after a full day at school or because they had little sleep or nourishment. I worried that I was asking too much of participants who, despite their incredible resilience, did not have the basic supports needed to complete a time-consuming research project. When my instructions to WASAC leaders during workshops resulted in confusion or silence, or when I underestimated the time needed to complete activities, I questioned my abilities as a facilitator and planner.

Despite my feelings of inadequacy and doubt, I found comfort and reassurance in moments of understanding and accomplishment. Moments like the time a photovoice participant exclaimed, “Oh, I get it. PhotoVOICE” or the thank you letter I received from WASAC leaders that stated how I had brought their team closer together and helped them see “how special WASAC really is”.

The contradictory nature of life and learning, illuminated in the movement between these extremes, allows us to see our perceived failures and successes as researchers with a newfound clarity that is rooted in a deep appreciation for the complexity of the concrete worlds of experience. In the conclusion to this chapter, I describe six important lessons that reaffirmed my commitment to community-based education and research. I sincerely thank all of WASAC’s senior leaders and photovoice participants for teaching me these valuable lessons.

97 Through my relationships with photovoice participants, I learned that many participants ‘couch surfed’ (a term that denotes a type of transient homelessness), lived by themselves (e.g., parent had to travel extensively for work), or had limited access to food, etc.
Table 7. Lessons from research process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Learned</th>
<th>Research Method or Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Food and friends</td>
<td>The photovoice project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Time</td>
<td>The evaluation workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relational accountability (Wilson, 2008)</td>
<td>Ethnographic observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The use-value of research</td>
<td>The evaluation workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Changing perceptions about research</td>
<td>Ethnographic observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Honouring participants’ knowledge</td>
<td>Letter from WASAC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson 1. Food and friends

“The meaning of food.”

Most community organizers realize the pivotal role that food plays in meeting attendance, participant energy and the overall enjoyment and atmosphere of the group setting. For my part, I regularly provided fresh fruit, bannock, sausages, cheese, bagels, coffee, tea, fruit juice, chocolate milk and desserts at the photovoice and workshop sessions (coffee and tea were reserved for leaders).

WASAC senior leaders considered the workshops a treat and often joked that the only reason they attended was for my snacks. With their extremely busy work schedules, the workshops offered a rare opportunity to come together, share stories, recount lessons learned, and discuss programming.

Beyond the social environment, the role of food can also be understood in terms of its political significance. Researchers new to community-based research and working with marginalized ethnocultural youth might underestimate the critical role of food. It can be difficult for researchers from privileged backgrounds to fully understand the role of food in the daily lives of their participants. During my research I was aware that the
snacks I provided represented the first meal of the day for a few of the photovoice participants; and, regrettably, the fresh fruit and vegetables were a rare treat for others.

Youth looked forward to their snacks and would often wait at the front doors of the school for me to arrive. As a result, I always had three or four volunteers ready to help me carry meeting supplies and food. Our meetings were scheduled to start at 4:00 pm, but participants usually arrived 15 minutes early for snacks. Because of this, I had to place a limit on how much of each snack a participant could have to ensure everyone received an equal variety. And, after learning about the importance of leftovers from Stephinie, I always brought extra food and containers for participants to take home.

Many teachers were surprised by the retention rate of SMART participants in the photovoice project, expecting that participants would have left after receiving their cameras. Undoubtedly, the cameras were responsible for my successful recruitment of participants, but I am equally convinced that the high retention rate was attributed to the quality and quantity of food provided at meetings (as well as the corresponding social opportunity the meetings provided).

*Lesson 2. Time*

“There’s never enough time in community-based research.”

Regrettably, some research participants cannot participate to the degree which they desire. This is especially true when the participants come from non-profit organizations where heavy staff workloads leave little in the way of spare time. The high-pressure, high-intensity nature of the non-profit world puts great demands on the time and energy of leaders. As I witnessed firsthand, leaders rarely have (or allow) time for self-reflection (see Duguid et al., 2007) without the external motivation of a researcher. It was
apparent how enjoyable the workshops were for WASAC leaders as they often chose to work through breaks and asked for additional time. The workshops received positive feedback from leaders and many indicated that they hoped to institute similar workshops in the future. In fact, one leader will be learning how to plan and facilitate these workshops by working with me during my next series of evaluation workshops with another community-based organization.

Lesson 3. Relational accountability

“Negotiating the dual roles of researcher and friend.”

I welcomed the opportunity to become friends with research participants. I was not concerned that my friendships with participants would negatively impact or bias my research findings. On the contrary, my friendships enhanced my findings. Friendship is a form of relational accountability (Wilson, 2008); if you care for your friends, you look out for them. If a potential problem exists, you share what you have learned with your friend to help them and you do so respectfully.

It is not necessary to record everything during one’s research; researchers continuously make decisions about what information they will and will not include. When the friendship between the researcher and participant is authentic and meaningful, the researcher becomes privy to information based on the friendship, not because of their role as researcher. This type of disclosure and vigilance is essential to ethical community-based research since researchers are often exposed to confidential information that participants would not otherwise have shared in traditional research contexts (see Lavallée, 2007).
For example, if I noticed that the tone of a conversation with a WASAC leader shifted from professional to personal, I would ask if they were sharing this information with me as their friend, or as a researcher. Occasionally, the leaders would ask that I share their information anonymously and only for internal purposes (hence, not in my dissertation). In other case, they gave me permission to share their stories (e.g., Stephinie’s story in Chapter 6), particularly if they thought the information would help other sport organizations or leaders.

Lesson 4. The use-value of research

“Making research educational and fun.”

Some researchers might have avoided including activities such my “Around the World” team-building exercise in their research projects (evaluation workshop, Session 5). I, too, debated whether or not to mention this activity in my dissertation as it was not intended to produce research data. However, I eventually changed my mind when I reflected on the fact that, in spite of the increasing amount of scholarly discussion about community-based research processes, very few research articles or courses address the importance of making research fun.

Including the team-building exercise seem warranted in light of the fact that so few non-profit organizations have the opportunity to reflect on their work (see Duguid et al., 2007) or participate in fun team-building activities (personal conversations, WASAC senior leaders). If, at the same time, these organizations volunteer their knowledge
through time-consuming research projects that typically benefit the university and researcher more than the participant,\textsuperscript{98} are we not obligated to address this reality?

WASAC leaders enjoyed the team-building activity because it reflected their organizational approach to strength-based programming, the value they place on ‘home-made’ gifts, and their appreciation of visual materials (some of which will soon be displayed at their main office). For these reasons, the figurative research \textit{toolbox} must dedicate more space to activities which are fun and educational.

\textit{Lesson 5. Changing perceptions about research}

\textit{“Surprise! This is research!”}

Towards the conclusion of my research, Pino spoke to me about my future career plans. He was shocked when I expressed how much I enjoyed community-based research projects and that I was considering future work in the area. Pino thought that the difficulties I encountered during the ethics approval process for the photovoice project and my interest in community-based education would have excluded any further interest in research. Yet, when I explained to Pino that the evaluation workshops and photovoice project \textit{were} examples of community-based research, his initial surprise gave way to enthusiastic encouragement.

Community-based research is different than traditional research, so much so that community members like Pino may not recognize it as a form of academic research. The power and ownership of the research shifts from the university to the community, thus

\textsuperscript{98} \textit{Since most public benefit non-profit organizations struggle financially (Scott, 2003, see Chapter 5 for description of public benefit organizations), it is likely that staff may receive less pay and fewer benefits than others. In addition, research typically benefits the researcher more than participant. E.g., students learn that research incentives cannot be too high as to unduly influence research participation.}
changing the priorities and perspective of the researcher. As a community scholar, I may choose to work in a university but my subjectivity as a scholar will be shaped by who I am and my larger social responsibilities. Looking back to when I first approached Pino and Kevin about a research partnership, they were less interested in my research topic and more interested in me and my subjectivity as a researcher. They wanted to know if Heather – the daughter of Edna and Archie McRae – was the same person as Heather, the doctoral student. In essence, they were assessing my values, philosophies and principles because they were bringing me into their family.

Lesson 6. Honouring participants’ knowledge

“You taught us to appreciate the efforts we make to provide programs, showed us the unique things we do that we never noticed....”

The lessons my parents taught me have served me well in my community development work. My parents always told me to genuinely compliment people when their actions or behaviours warrant recognition and, while I still struggle to master the art of accepting compliments, I freely provide them to others when I can genuinely speak from a place of personal truth.

Looking back, one of the most poignant research moments occurred at the end of the evaluation activity in Session Three. Rob and other leaders asked me to sit with them, share what I had observed over the past year, and explain why I thought WASAC programs and leaders were so successful with Aboriginal youth. In answering their questions, I realized the incredible power that researchers have to validate and give voice

99 This is an excerpt from a thank you letter I received from WASAC staff at the completion of the research project.
to the strengths of others. At the same time, I witnessed the desire by participants for feedback during those candid, immediate moments of research.

The counter-story must be told as it is lived. If we wait until our research is written in the inaccessible academic text of a dissertation or the sterile and analytic research summary, we have missed a critical research moment. We have missed an opportunity to reflect the knowledge we have gained from research participants back towards them, to reveal what we learned from them and why their knowledge is important to our world. As sacred beings, our spirits are lifted when we see how our lives have greater meaning; meaning that extends far beyond the immediacy of our individual experiences and our own ability to see the worth of our actions.
CHAPTER 5: INTRODUCING WASAC

Of the estimated 161,000 non-profit and voluntary organizations in Canada, approximately 33,600 (21%) are considered sport and recreation organizations, and just under half (45%) operate as public benefit organizations (i.e., services are available to the public and, in most cases, are free to clients) (Gumulka, Barr, Lasby & Brownlee, 2005; see Murray, 2006, Chapter 1 for discussion of membership benefit versus public benefit organizations). According to Misener and Doherty (2009), sport and recreation organizations are the most prevalent type of non-profit and voluntary organization in Canada, with community sport organizations (CSOs) representing the largest subsector (71%). As governments increasingly turn to the non-profit sector to deliver programs aimed at improving the quality of life of Canadians, there has been increased interest in the factors impacting the ability of non-profit organizations to achieve their goals (Misener & Doherty, 2009).

In many respects, sport-in-development (SID) organizations are similar to public benefit community sport organizations in Canada. Although SID literature primarily focuses on Lower Middle Income Countries (LMIC), the humanitarian issues (e.g., poverty, violence, discrimination, etc) that gave rise to the SID movement can be found in the vision, mission and mandate of many Canadian CSOs. This chapter positions WASAC as a Canadian example of a SID organization. In Part One, I explore WASAC’s vision, mission and values and delineate their congruence with the values of culturally relevant education. I argue that WASAC can be characterized as a ‘plus sport’ SID

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100 LMIC is the preferred terminology used by the SDP IWG to refer to ‘transitional and developing countries’, ‘developing countries’, and ‘global South’. For a discussion of the term, please see Donnelly (2007, p. 11).
organization, that is, WASAC initially uses sport as a means of attracting Aboriginal youth to their programs but, ultimately, its programs are largely influenced by, and designed to reach, non-sport goals. In Part Two, I examine the organizational dynamics and dimensions that shape the landscape of Canadian CSOs generally, and WASAC, specifically, in order to contextualize the external organizational factors attributed to WASAC’s successes and struggles. This level of analysis is necessary to avoid reducing culturally relevant sport programs to the responsibility of individual CSOs.

This chapter is based primarily on ethnographic research data collected during Phase One (May 2010 – August 2010) of my doctoral research project, which I was able to further explore and validate during Phase Two (November 2010 – June 2011). I draw on discussions with WASAC organizational leaders and senior leaders, observations of organizational operations and programs, as well as program documents. This chapter contextualizes the macro-social issues and broader social systems that shape WASAC programs and the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth. It provides a framework for understanding the complexities, challenges and opportunities that WASAC negotiates as its leaders work to provide culturally relevant sport programs to Aboriginal youth.

Cultural Relevance of WASAC programs

Two coaches who shared a love for sports, who recognize that it's not just about speed and agility but friendships, life lessons, and memories that last forever. The goal was to embrace the pride of Winnipeg's Aboriginal children, youth and adults through sport, culture and recreation.
In the summer of 2000, the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre opened its doors to make a difference in the lives of Winnipeg's Aboriginal children, youth and adults.

It has succeeded and thrived.

(About WASAC, WASAC website)\(^{101}\)

Philosophical, Cultural and Axiological Roots

While few SID advocates argue that community sport transforms larger systems, such as exclusion and racism, many believe that the transformation of these systems is not possible without stimulating change at the community level. The SID movement is characterized by a diversity of tactics and social change goals. Some SID organizations are grounded by a deep understanding of social change; their vision, mission, mandate; and organizational practices that exemplify the transformational possibilities of sport. Other SID organizations embrace the idea of social change but do not have a full understanding of the philosophy and principles which shape critically reflexive practice. Often, their good intentions are undermined by their dangerous and problematic practices. When class and race-based ideologies shape SID organizations, program success will be sporadic, limited to individual change and will regrettably continue to support social inequity.

In the non-profit world, strategic plans articulate the relationship between an organization’s purpose and strategy of action (Vakil, 2006). Strategic plans simultaneously guide and reflect an organizations’ work, and, in terms of ethnographic

research, are an extremely important and revealing textual artifact. They delineate an organization’s emergent history and inform research observations, questions, and relationships. In this way, strategic plans encourage organizations to ask important questions about the historical factors that led its development and how those factors shaped the organization’s vision, mission, mandate, and ultimately, programming efforts. In this next section, I examine WASAC’s strategic plan as a framework for developing and implementing culturally relevant sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth.

The primary objective of WASAC is “to provide a safe, culturally sensitive and healthy environment where Aboriginal children, youth and adults are provided with opportunities to participate in aboriginal gatherings and other socially enhancing activities (WASAC Strategic Plan, 2006-2009, p. 1)”. Although WASAC’s official story begins with the shared vision and partnership of its key visionaries, Pino and Kevin, its primary objective provides a backdrop for larger socio-historical and individual inequities that WASAC programs try to address. WASAC is committed to the cultural empowerment of Aboriginal peoples by empowering individual Aboriginal youth in their sport programs using cultural and socially enhancing activities.

WASAC’s strategic plan references four powerful political documents that validate the need for culturally relevant sport programs and guides their programming. Combined, the following documents create a framework for informed social engagement that challenges class and raced-based ideologies while supporting culturally relevant sport programming.
• The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996) provides a historical context for the inequitable social conditions that shape the lives of Aboriginal peoples.

• The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry (AJI, 1991) recommends the integration of sport and cultural programming that foster leadership development opportunities for Aboriginal youth.

• Article Three of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) emphasizes the economic, social and cultural development of Aboriginal peoples as part of their rights to self-determination.

• The Maskwachees Declaration (2000) applies these insights and recommendations and calls upon the sport community (e.g., CSOs, government, non-governmental organizations, communities and individuals) to develop and invest in sport programming for Aboriginal youth that addresses pressing social issues, builds intercultural understanding, supports family and community involvement and incorporates cultural values.

The vision, mission, mandate and values contained in WASAC’s strategic plan provide a framework for planning and action that emphasizes the social, cultural and developmental goals of Aboriginal youth and their communities (see Figure 5). In keeping with Coalter’s typology of SID programs (2007, see Chapter 5), WASAC can be characterized as a ‘plus sport’ organization, where participation in sport and the acquisition of sport skills are less important than participation in social, cultural and development activities, the acquisition of life skills, or the creation of social opportunities for Aboriginal youth.
Figure 5. WASAC vision, mission, and mandate

**Vision**
WASAC changes and strengthens the lives of Aboriginal people by working with community partners to develop programs that promote success.
The vision will achieve a better tomorrow by….
  - Children, youth and families connecting to further their learning and educational opportunities.
  - Having a culturally sensitive environment in which to learn, develop and grow.

**Mission**
WASAC supports and encourages Aboriginal people to choose healthy lifestyles while enriching social development and community leadership.

**Mandate**
To operate a non-profit organization that is highly valued and respected by the Aboriginal community as well as by the community at large. WASAC will develop dynamic and leading edge public / private partnerships in order to achieve the overall vision and mission of the organization. A range of appropriate programming in culturally sensitive settings that will positively impact the status of the Aboriginal community of Winnipeg will be offered.
Positive change will come from participants choosing to further their education - both formally and informally - and by adopting healthier lifestyles. Success will derive from focusing resources primarily in the area of programming for Aboriginal youth that will, in turn, positively influence their families. Leadership development opportunities within the Aboriginal community will be provided through the training of Aboriginal role models to deliver the programming. (WASAC Strategic Plan, 2006-2009, p. 4-5)
Cultural Values and Model

WASAC’s organizational values are based on the Seven Teachings of the Anishinaabe peoples (Benton-Banai, 1998). These teachings act as the “foundation of their organization” and guides their decision-making process and the manner in which they conduct their business (p. 5). The Seven Teachings, as described by Benton-Banai (2010), describes a code of conduct for human relationships based on the following values: love, honesty, respect, courage, wisdom, humility and truth. These values are further explored in the Circle of Courage, a youth empowerment model that provides guidance for adults and youth-serving agencies to support and respect youth who have experienced difficulty in their lives.

The Circle of Courage is an educational model grounded in resilience research, positive psychology, and Native child care philosophies (Brokenleg & van Bockern, 2003). Unlike traditional approaches to youth issues, the Circle of Courage challenges deficit-based approaches to youth programming and interventions. In keeping with Native worldviews, the model regards children and youth as sacred beings, emphasizing that their healthy development is a communal responsibility, not simply that of individuals and families (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 2005).

102 The Strategic Plan (2006-2009) does not provide any references for the Seven Teachings, however, I have noticed that many Aboriginal organizations in Winnipeg post these teachings in their office, or cite them in their Strategic Plans and newsletters. Edward Benton-Banai wrote about the Seven Teachings in his book, The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway (1988). Variations of the Seven Teachings can be found within the cultural teachings of different Aboriginal groups.

103 This Circle of Courage utilizes the medicine wheel to depict their philosophy of youth empowerment. The model developed when the authors conducted an anthropological comparison of child rearing practices among Western and North American indigenous cultures (see Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 2003).
In using a strength-based approach to youth programming, the Circle of Courage does not ignore the challenges facing marginalized children and youth, nor does it reduce them to the sum of the difficulties they experience. Experiencing and overcoming hardships builds resilience and must be recognized, respected and celebrated by adults working with marginalized youth. The Circle of Courage rejects both charity and deficit-based approaches to youth programming.

Figure 6. *Circle of Courage*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WASAC through its programming will constantly and consistently strive to develop and enhance desired personal qualities as identified within the Circle of Courage in each individual.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belonging:</strong> The universal longing for human bonds is cultivated by relationships of trust so the child (and everyone) can say, <em>I am loved.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mastery:</strong> The inborn thirst for learning is cultivated, by learning to copy with the world so the children (and everyone) can say, <em>I can succeed.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generosity:</strong> Character is cultivated by concern for others so that the child (and everyone) can say, <em>I have a purpose for my life.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interdependence:</strong> Free will is cultivated by responsibility so that the child (and everyone) can say, <em>I have the power to make decisions.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(WASAC Strategic Plan, 2006-2009, p. 7)

WASAC and Community Sport

As noted in the introduction, WASAC is a public benefit CSO or SID organization driven by a broader social purpose – the empowerment of Aboriginal peoples and youth. WASAC understands the multi-functional benefits of sport. It is an inspirational symbol and powerful social medium, as evidenced by the North American Indigenous Games; a unique teaching device which emphasizes and develops team work,
patience, and discipline; and a hook that attracts youth. Since its establishment in 1999, WASAC has garnered the respect and attention of governments and local Aboriginal and community organizations. This recognition has translated into significant financial support which has fueled the growth of WASAC, increasing the number of full and part-time leaders, expanding the variety of sport programs and locations where they are offered, and increasing youth registration numbers. See Appendix F for an overview of WASAC programs.

Even in light of these successes, WASAC remains one of many organizations competing for funding within Winnipeg’s non-profit sector. WASAC’s ability to offer culturally relevant sport programs to urban Aboriginal youth is inevitably determined by its ability to seek and secure financial resources. And, while my research does not investigate WASAC’s organizational health, resources, and long-term sustainability, these factors unquestionably shape WASAC’s current and future ability to deliver culturally relevant programming. Indeed, in brainstorming the key processes, mechanisms and strategies attributed to the success of WASAC programs, over half of the responses by sport leaders addressed organizational issues such as funding (see Chapter 7). These findings reinforce the close relationship between organizational health and program success. In the following section, I borrow a five-point typology created by non-profit researchers that is used to measure the relative strength and weakness of an organization across five dimensions.

Organizational Capacity and Dimensions

Organizational capacity refers to the ability of a non-profit organization to achieve its mission and objectives (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Five dimensions are
considered critical to the success of a non-profit organization: human resources, financial resources, relationships and networks, infrastructure and process, and planning and development capacity. While each dimension is a distinct unit of analysis, in practice, these dimensions overlap and influence each other, and may be difficult to identify and separate for evaluation purposes (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Drawing on WASAC plans, policies and documents - as well as informal discussions with WASAC staff and my experiences as a participant observer - I use the typology of organizational capacity dimensions to structure my observations and analysis. Throughout this section, I highlight organizational processes which have been critical to WASAC’s success; I refer to these processes as innovative practices.

a) Human Resource Capacity

The WASAC staff and recreation leaders are composed of talented and energetic young Aboriginal men and women with a wide range of skills and experience including hockey players, pow-wow dancers, fiddlers, square dancers, scholars and national track and field athletes. These leaders are instrumental to the success of the WASAC programs as they are regarded as the inspirational role models to the Aboriginal children and youth attending our programs. We rely on the unique abilities each leader possesses to create a solid foundation for success (WASAC website).  

Human resource capacity refers to the quantity and quality of an organization’s paid staff and volunteers. Depending upon the organization’s size and characteristics,

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human resource needs will vary, as will the organization’s ability to meet these needs. To be effective, an organization requires an adequate number of staff with the appropriate skill set, subject matter knowledge, attitude, and a personal philosophy that aligns well with the organization’s values. In addition, the organization must be able to effectively manage, support, and utilize staff in the delivery of programs (Misener & Doherty, 2009).

WASAC’s human resource capacity is well-developed, innovative, and exemplifies their commitment to mentoring Aboriginal youth leaders. For example, WASAC does not hire sport leaders by using traditional, external recruitment activities (e.g., job posting and advertisements). Instead, WASAC prefers to identify potential leaders through relationships that have developed internally with organizational or senior leaders or via their mentoring processes. Non-profit researchers may also be interested in examining WASAC’s unique approach to strategic human resource planning.

WASAC’s staffing composition mirrors their programming phases. WASAC has two program phases: summer camps from May to August, and fall / winter programs from September to April. Summer camp leaders are typically youth ages 16 to 24, with little or no work experience. Summer leaders are employed full-time hours, however the employment is seasonal and, as a result, staff turnover is more likely to occur as they may find employment in the off-season. Fall / winter senior leaders are generally older than summer leaders (20 – 35 years of age) and have considerable work experience in the non-profit field. Senior leaders are employed full-time and work throughout the year, although their work roles and responsibilities shift during the summer months. Although there is some staff turnover among senior leaders, retention is much higher than summer leaders; in fact, many senior leaders have worked at WASAC since it first opened in 1999.
Senior Leaders

WASAC organizational, administrative, and program leaders

In the fall and winter, WASAC’s senior leaders shift their focus from supervising summer camps to overseeing and operating four core fall / winter sport programs.\(^\text{105}\) There are approximately eleven full-time senior leaders: two organizational leaders (Kevin and Pino), six senior administrative leaders (Kim, Rob, John (pseudonym), Trevor, Brittany and Darren), five senior program leaders (Lindsay, Wendy, Stephanie, Joel, and Helen (pseudonym) – Elder), and between four to five youth leaders who assist with programs on an ‘as needed’ basis. Senior program leaders are responsible for implementing WASAC programs and building relationships with local and Aboriginal youth participants (this includes an Aboriginal elder), whereas senior administrative leaders are tasked with managing WASAC operations (e.g., finance, strategic plans, stakeholder relationships, etc).

While senior leaders come from diverse cultural backgrounds, most are of Aboriginal (Métis and First Nations) and Filipino heritage. Among the 11 full-time senior administrative and five senior program leaders, 10 identify as Aboriginal, 3 as Filipino, 1 as Italian, and 2 as Euro-Canadian. The tenure of senior leaders varies; some having worked with WASAC since its creation in 1999, while others have left and returned over the years. See Appendix G for details about the specific roles, responsibilities of senior leaders, as well as the length of their involvement with WASAC and their educational background.

\(^{105}\) My ethnographic observations are based on WASAC’s fall/winter programs.
Summer Camp Leaders

The number, ages, and experience of summer leaders fluctuates with school and university schedules. In the spring and summer, the number of sport leaders swell in anticipation of WASAC’s two summer camps: Eco-Kids Camp (diverse ethnocultural youth) and WASAC Summer Camp (urban Aboriginal youth). These camps bring in the largest numbers of registered youth participants (approximately 1,770 children and leaders). Each spring, 8 to 10 university students of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds are hired to begin recruiting camp participants. In June, approximately 30 local Aboriginal high school students are hired to act as role models and camp leaders. Additionally, an elementary school teacher and resource aid are hired to supervise and coordinate the administration of the WASAC summer camp (which serves the largest number of participants).

During the spring, senior leaders (full-time, year round staff) supervise and mentor summer camp leaders until the camp coordinators can assume this role. Although there is staff turnover among summer camp leaders, many university and high school leaders return to WASAC and help new summer camp leaders as they acclimate to their roles and responsibilities.

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106 Given that my research focused on WASAC’s fall/winter programs, I did not have an opportunity to learn a lot about the background of summer leaders (e.g., education, skills, etc), nor develop meaningful relationships with them.
Summer camp leaders are generally hired for developmental purposes or as a part of WASAC mentorship process. As an example of WASAC’s mentoring philosophy, WASAC selects several non-Aboriginal university students who display an interest in learning about Aboriginal culture and working with Aboriginal youth. WASAC’s organizational leaders - Kevin and Pino - believe it is important that non-Aboriginal youth work at WASAC as it nurtures cross-cultural understanding and relationships. Similarly, WASAC often hires Aboriginal high school students in their youth leadership programs (fall / winter programming) for summer camp leader positions. By hiring Aboriginal youth from within their programs to act as summer camp leaders, WASAC creates a cyclical and sustainable mentoring process.

_innovative Practice #1: Employment incubator for urban Aboriginal youth_

WASAC believes in cultivating and nurturing local and Aboriginal youth as future leaders. WASAC often hires youth whose leadership skills need further development, whose skills are not recognized in traditional hiring processes, or who present behavioural or life challenges that exclude them from hiring processes or limit their chances of securing employment. Pino, WASAC’s program director, shared that WASAC makes a point of hiring two types of Aboriginal youth as sport leaders. The first type of youth leader they hire are Aboriginal youth with demonstrable leadership skills that are recognized by their teachers and community leaders. The second type of youth leader is Aboriginal youth who are in the process of becoming a leader. That is,

107 WASAC hires non-Aboriginal university students. Many of the university students are hired based on their relationships with organizational or senior leaders but they must also display an awareness of issues impacting inner city and Aboriginal youth and enjoy working with kids.
Aboriginal youth who require an investment of time and energy by senior leaders to fully develop into future leaders. After being hired by WASAC, it is not uncommon for these developing youth leaders to attempt to ‘sabotage’ their new job. Pino remarks that many developing youth leaders try to get *shown the door*, that is, fired from their job by engaging in negative behaviours that would otherwise result in immediate or eventual job dismissal (see Halas, 2003a). WASAC’s organizational philosophy understands that marginalized youth, when presented with an opportunity for achievable success, often become afraid of failure. Youth leaders who try to get fired are surprised when WASAC leaders interrupt this pattern.

WASAC works hard to avoid *showing youth the door*, preferring instead that youth leave by their own accord, as prepared, confident individuals that can be successful in their next job. In explaining this concept, Pino talked about the fact that many Aboriginal youth anticipate rejection and are used to the low expectations of others; in many cases, these feelings are instilled in youth by the media and society, in addition to their teachers, parents, or other adults who play a significant role in their life. Pino and Kevin believe their job and that of senior leaders is to act as role models, mentoring youth leaders as they develop their leadership skills, and interrupting negative patterns and replacing them with new, positive behaviours.

This is similar to Ladson-Billings’ (1995, see also Howard, 2003) discussion that culturally relevant education means that teachers, or in my study, sport leaders, must replace the low expectations that marginalized youth have internalized as a result of societal and institutional racism, with higher expectations of the innate abilities and capacities of marginalized youth. An authentic and caring relationship with Aboriginal
youth begins when sport leaders genuinely believe that Aboriginal youth can succeed in the sport program.

WASAC organizational and senior leaders are committed to interrupting this pattern, providing these behaviors do not negatively impact their programs or other youth. WASAC leaders work to bring out the latent skills and abilities of young leaders and use them in WASAC summer camps. WASAC believes that youth leaders can be shown the door when organizational and senior leaders feel they can be successful. In this way, WASAC summer camps serve as a kind of employment incubator for Aboriginal youth. This incubation allows youth to develop the necessary employability and job search skills, experiences, and confidence required to find employment. According to Pino, WASAC’s summer camps are intended to act as a stepping-stone for future employment opportunities for urban Aboriginal youth.

_Innovative Practice #2: Educational Support and Flexibility_

Kevin and Pino are advocates of post-secondary education and training, and support senior leaders who want to pursue further education. Almost all senior leaders are either enrolled in, or have completed, university and college degrees/diplomas while working at WASAC. Kevin and Pino do not believe that senior leaders require post-secondary education and training to be effective employees (with the exception of finance staff who require certification) since many senior leaders have extensive experience in their fields. Nevertheless, leaders are encouraged by WASAC to enroll in relevant courses and are supported when they do.

Put simply, this level of support is amazing and deserves acknowledgement. Kevin and Pino understand that senior leaders do not work at WASAC for financial gain
and are attracted to the organization because they believe in its mission, vision, and values. And, realizing that non-profit organizations cannot compete with the private sector in terms of salaries and benefits, Kevin and Pino use some of the unique characteristics of non-profit work and WASAC programming to support senior leaders who pursue post-secondary education and training. For example, senior leaders continue to receive their salary while attending school during work hours provided they make up the time at a later date. This approach works well since many senior leaders also volunteer their time outside of work hours, limiting the time they might otherwise have for paid employment or personal activities.

Kevin and Pino also encourage senior leaders to mentor each other. If a colleague has an educational, volunteer, or work background that aligns with the classes that a senior leader is pursuing, they are paired together and allowed time during the work day to work together. And, in some cases, where senior leaders are young or need extra assistance, Pino sets a schedule and deadlines to ensure leaders do not fall behind in their schoolwork. Other examples of educational support include WASAC’s financial support for important tests (e.g., driver’s license test) and school materials, free use of WASAC computers, printers, and other resources (e.g., binders, paper, pens, etc), as well as hosting celebratory events for leaders who accomplish their educational goals.

_Innovative Practice #3: Employee Benefit Program_

Within the last year, WASAC’s Financial Director, Trevor, helped secure an employee health and dental benefit program for full-time senior leaders. Within the non-profit sector, particularly for small, public benefit organizations, this is an amazing feat. While this accomplishment could not have been achieved without confidence in the
organization’s financial capacity, Trevor’s initiative - with the support of Kevin and Pino - demonstrates the value leaders place on their work and each other.

b) Financial Capacity

Financial capacity refers to the organization’s ability to generate revenue, build assets, manage expenses and liabilities, and maintain financial accountability. In the non-profit sector, organizations are often forced to compete for scarce resources from the public and private sector. As a public benefit CSO, WASAC’s financial capacity relies solely on public and private sector funding. The main financial challenge facing non-profit and voluntary sector organizations remains locating substantive, flexible and long-term funding (Hall et al., 2003).

Although my research did not evaluate WASAC’s financial capacity, funding issues were often raised during the program evaluation workshops with senior leaders (see Chapter 7). In the absence of measures such as operating budgets that clearly delineate an organization’s financial capacity, there are other indicators that reveal the basic financial health and sustainability of an organization. Observing WASAC’s operations and the costs associated with programming provide some insight into their financial capacity. For example, WASAC continues to expand its operations and programs each year, hiring more leaders and developing partnerships with more schools. They provide free transportation, meals, sport equipment, as well as free recreation, sport and cultural programming for approximately 2,200 Aboriginal children and youth each year. In addition, they recently expanded their programming to remote northern Aboriginal communities, routinely flying to the north during the fall to develop relationships within the community and flying select youth leaders to sport leadership
camps in Winnipeg during the summer. While these observations only provide limited
evidence of WASAC’s financial capacity and are not part of a formal financial
examination of the organization, they are supported by discussions I had with senior
leaders.\footnote{WASAC senior leaders did share information relating to their operational budget and
funding sources. However they did not want this information included in my dissertation.
I agreed and said it was not necessary since my research interest was culturally relevant
sport program and leadership practices.}

The financial capacity of an organization is directly related to its human resources
capacity. In order to deliver high-quality, sustainable sport programming, CSOs need
well-trained financial staff who can identify and secure financial support from public and
private sector funders. As mentioned earlier, WASAC has built a strong reputation in the
non-profit, private and public sector. That reputation, combined with the high value
WASAC places on developing and nurturing strong relationships with funders, has
resulted in seven main funding sources (i.e., financial and in-kind funding from the public
and private sector). WASAC’s financial health is largely the result of the following
organizational processes and practices:

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Highly skilled senior administrative leaders combined with high organizational
priority on funding:}

The administrative team is composed of seven senior administrative leaders and
two organizational leaders. Eight of the nine leaders have a combination of duties related
to financial accountability, management or fundraising. Based on my observations over
the past year, the majority of fundraising responsibilities tend to be shared among the
following staff:
\end{enumerate}
• Trevor and Brittany (Finance Director and Supervisor): These financial leaders manage organizational expenses and liabilities, including payroll administration, wages, and benefits.

• Kim (Program Supervisor): In addition to her general program supervision duties, Kim also acts as WASAC’s funding coordinator. Working directly with Pino, Kim establishes relationships with funders and works closely with Trevor and Brittany to assess program funding needs, distributes and assesses funding across programs, and maintains WASAC’s financial accountability (e.g., securing and monitoring funding, preparing funding reports, conducting funder evaluations).

2. The political acumen of organizational leaders

As Directors, Kevin and Pino promote WASAC programs to the public and private sector. Their reputation in the Aboriginal and sport community, dedication to Winnipeg’s inner city, ethnocultural and Aboriginal youth, and charismatic personalities are largely responsible for the number, quality and diversity of WASAC’s funding sources. Kevin and Pino have a finely tuned sense of political awareness and understand the importance of building and balancing social networks among powerful stakeholders (e.g., corporate, government and philanthropic funders) and community members, organizations, and partners.

Pino often refers to the complementary nature of the Program and Executive Director roles. While both positions share responsibility for WASAC’s financial capacity, Kevin’s work is primary external, developing relationships with funders, program partners, and key stakeholders. Pino’s work responsibilities are primarily internal, managing WASAC operations in addition to maintaining relationships with funders,
partners, and stakeholders. Naturally, these roles can shift if Kevin should require assistance,\textsuperscript{109} or if Pino can leverage his external relationships to create funding opportunities (e.g., financial, in-kind, etc). For example, Pino played and coached elite level hockey and has used his social networks within the professional hockey circles to develop WASAC’s highly successful hockey program, Lil Moose.\textsuperscript{110}

3. Tapping into existing social networks

The concept of social capital is that social networks have value and that people or groups can draw upon these networks for widely divergent purposes, from community development or financial gain (e.g., employment opportunities) (see Rohe, 2004; Reading, Kmetic & Gideon, 2007). Kevin and Pino understand the value of their social networks and use them strategically to enhance the social capital of WASAC. To illustrate the relationship between human resource capacity and financial capacity and its influence on WASAC’s social capital, I will examine Kevin’s role as Executive Director.

As a highly respected Métis leader and inner city resident, Kevin has cultivated a diverse and powerful social network, drawing from his personal, work and political life. As a former university basketball player and current member of a Métis jigging group, Kevin is a respected community member and athlete. As a coordinator of a university learning centre and former Aboriginal school consultant, Kevin is also well established in

\textsuperscript{109} Small non-profit organizations often require that staff share job roles and responsibilities or provide assistance where necessary. And since finding and developing strong relationships with potential funders is incredibly important to the financial capacity of WASAC, Kevin’s external responsibilities are often shared with Pino. 

\textsuperscript{110} The Lil Moose hockey program is a partnership between WASAC, the Manitoba Moose Yearling Foundation and three Winnipeg schools. The name “Lil Moose” is derived from the former Winnipeg’s American Hockey League team, the Manitoba Moose.
Winnipeg’s academic and education community. As well, he has nurtured strong relationships within the Aboriginal community through his former roles as President of the Métis cultural centre and Board Director of an Aboriginal economic development organization. In 2011, Kevin was elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Province of Manitoba and was later appointed to the position of Minister for Children and Youth Opportunities in January 2012.

During my research, many senior leaders talked about Kevin’s relationship with influential business leaders, government agencies, and philanthropic organizations and his success in promoting WASAC programs using multimedia and oral presentations. Wendy mentioned that Kevin invites senior and youth leaders to presentations with key stakeholders to support their professional development. By inviting WASAC leaders to these meetings, Kevin mentors future leaders and helps develop their human capital – that is, the skills, knowledge and experiences that enhances one’s employment opportunities and life skills.

_Innovative Practice #4: Visual Images in Promotion and Marketing_

WASAC believes that _seeing is believing_. Program registration requires parent / guardian permission that allows WASAC to photograph and record youth participants and use these images in promotional materials. Over the years, WASAC has produced a number of videos about their programs.\(^\text{111}\) Realizing the power that visual imagery has in promoting programs to the general public and funders, WASAC recently hired a permanent staff member to take photographs and record participants. Pino and Kevin

\(^{111}\) Many of their older videos are posted on YouTube. Please see, http://www.youtube.com/user/WASACable
provide direction about the programs and ideas that the videos should capture and approve the final product. However, the creative interpretation of the program and ideas, and photography and videography skills rests primarily with John (pseudonym), WASAC’s visual media staff person. Supported by Rob, they use the power of visual media to tell success stories to the public and funders about WASAC programs. Senior leaders love the videos and agree that the use of visual media is a powerful communication strategy that helps build and sustain WASAC’s financial capacity.\textsuperscript{112}

Like most public-benefit non-profit organizations, WASAC faces the challenge of having to devote considerable staff time to identifying sustainable and stable sources funding. Securing stable, long-term and flexible sources of core funding is ideal as it would remove many of the administrative pressures of managing project-based funding which requires frequent reporting to multiple funders. In the absence of adequate and sustainable core funding, WASAC must invest considerable time in locating funding sources and reporting to different funders. This is further complicated by the fact that funders often have different funding requirements, competing or divergent goals (e.g., funder requirements versus client needs determine programming), and staggered funding timelines which results in funding gaps for programs.

\textit{c) Relationship and Network Capacity}

Relationship and network capacity is an organization’s ability to develop and draw on relationships with key stakeholders, funders, government agencies, businesses and community members to support their work. By leveraging the resources, knowledge, and

\textsuperscript{112} In 2010-2011, John (pseudonym), WASAC’s photographer, created several videos for programs like WASAC North, Lil Moose, and a photo book for the SMART program. These examples are only a small sampling of his work.
skills and experiences of others, non-profit organizations can achieve goals that might otherwise be impossible if they were working in isolation. This capacity is also influenced by the human resource capacity of an organization as research indicates that many non-profit organizations need staff with media relations and community skills (Hall et al., 2003).

Much of the previous discussion regarding WASAC’s financial capacity is also relevant here. For example, Misener and Doherty (2009) refer to this dimension as an aspect of an organization’s social capital. Although I have covered this aspect of WASAC in great detail, it is important to highlight one aspect of this dimension that is responsible for the high participation rates of Aboriginal youth in WASAC programs – their relationships with local schools.

Innovative Practice #5: Relationships with Partner Schools

Most youth-serving agencies understand the strategic importance of linking their programs with schools. For example, after-school programs and summer camps are planned in relation to the daily and seasonal nature of the school calendar. In addition, many youth-serving agencies operate within or near schools. WASAC builds relationships with schools by cultivating relationships with teachers, principals, and school board members to build a program, recruit students, and book classroom or gymnasium space (see Chapter 6 and 7). Senior leaders invest time and energy building these relationships and when cultivating a new relationship; if initial attempts to partner with school contacts fail, senior leaders continue networking at the school until they find someone or group to champion their program. Senior leaders look for program
champions among school teachers and administrators who have a good reputation with students and their colleagues.

School partnerships and program champions are vital to the success of WASAC programs. Senior program leaders have direct contact with program champions to address the following administrative functions:

- Arranging program logistics related to program timelines, facilities, etc.;
- Soliciting feedback on programming (e.g., what life skills training do youth need and what training does schools provide?);
- Recruiting potential participants. For example, the school often selects participants based on internal criteria;
- Arranging class credits for students who are eligible to receive course credit for participating in WASAC programs;
- Establishing the rules of participation. Some schools can remove youth from WASAC programs if they do not maintain adequate academic performance or attendance; and
- Organizing classroom or gymnasium space and other necessary resources or equipment.

WASAC’s partnership with schools is based on the assumption that both groups want to provide Aboriginal youth with opportunities for success. While WASAC provides Aboriginal youth with recreation programming and leadership, interpersonal and lifeskills training, school partners and program champions recruit and encourage Aboriginal youth and provide valuable facility space. Together, WASAC, partner schools and program champions provide a continuum of care, encouragement and support where
the synergistic outcome of their efforts results in a higher level of success with Aboriginal youth than they could achieve in isolation.

For example, Silver (2006) states that urban Aboriginal people are primarily located in inner city, lower income neighborhoods, and, similarly, WASAC’s partner schools serve families in low income or isolated communities. And, because the level of financial and social capital within a community directly impacts school funding (e.g., taxation, volunteer fund-raising, etc; see Halas, McRae & Carpenter, in press), schools and families must overcome significant barriers to accessing limited resources. In response to these conditions, schools partner with WASAC because they have witnessed the challenges and barriers facing Aboriginal youth and understand the need for sport programs that respect the cultural landscape of the children and youth.

*d) Infrastructure and Process Capacity*

Infrastructure and process capacity refers to the organization’s ability to successfully manage day-to-day operations. Examples include managing facilities and resources, developing organizational policies and procedures, and providing operational infrastructure such as computers and databases. A common challenge for many non-profit organizations relates to information technology. In particular, organizations struggle to find staff with the skills necessary to maintain databases and teach staff (see Hall et al., 2003).

WASAC summer camps are run out of two City of Winnipeg recreation facilities (old hockey arenas that are not used in the summer) about four kilometers apart. These hockey arenas are close to new or recently renovated City of Winnipeg recreation facilities and on select days, WASAC is permitted to bring youth from their summer
camps to these newer facilities to use their pools and other specialized equipment.\textsuperscript{113} In the fall and winter, WASAC programs are run out of the classrooms and gymnasiums of partner schools.

Located at 100 Sinclair Street, near the heart of Winnipeg’s inner city, WASAC’s main office sits adjacent to two municipal sport facilities and is a non-descript and unassuming building.\textsuperscript{114} Organizational and senior leaders work from the main office. In addition, all of WASAC’s sport equipment is stored here. The main office is an in-kind donation from the City of Winnipeg.

Despite the size of the office, it is easy to miss since there is no signage or name on its whitewashed exterior, just a street number on a metal mailbox next to a steel front door. There is no doorbell and people usually use their feet or fists to kick or bang the door to gain entry. Once inside, leaders either head directly upstairs or turn and walk down the hallway on their right. Most senior staff work upstairs with only three - Pino, Kim and Rob – working downstairs.

As is common with non-profit organizations, WASAC staff make do with very little. A few threadbare office chairs can be found scattered throughout the building and long plastic fold-away tables and folding chairs are the primary office equipment used by staff. Senior leaders share desktop computers and laptops (except financial staff who have their own laptops) and there are two printers – a newer high production printer

\textsuperscript{113} Through an in-kind donation from the City of Winnipeg, WASAC runs both of their summer camps out of old hockey arenas (Sargent Park arena and Old Exhibition Arena). The City of Winnipeg also provides WASAC camps with free access to nearby recreation facilities (e.g., Cindy Klassen Recreation Complex, North End Centennial Recreation and Leisure Centre) for children to swim.

\textsuperscript{114} The two recreation facilities include the Old Exhibition Arena, plus the new North End Centennial Recreation and Leisure Centre (opened July 2010).
(upstairs) and a small inkjet printer (downstairs). There is no kitchen, no janitorial staff, and insufficient storage space. There are no real offices, only office-like areas. For example, on the lower level, two small spaces have been converted into office space, whereas the third office is in the hockey equipment storage room. One of the small spaces is a former janitorial storage closet (Pino and Kim’s office), the other room can only fit a small table and chair (Rob’s office), and the third office is nestled amid a room overflowing with gently used hockey equipment. The upper level, where most senior leaders work, is a large open space with plastic tables serving as “desks” along the perimeter of the room, functioning as computer workspaces. In the center, four tables are placed together and function as a team meeting area and workspace.

In terms of infrastructure and resources for programs, all WASAC programs are hosted off-site at partner schools or city-owned facilities. Specialized programs like the Lil Moose program is run out of nearby hockey arenas (paid for by corporate sponsors). WASAC provides food, transportation, sports equipment, and sport leaders. WASAC leaders either make bag lunches at their main office or hire a local restaurant to cater (mainly fall/winter programs); they also have a contract with a local bus company to provide transportation (bus and driver, or they rent a bus), and for programs that require sports equipment (e.g., Lil Moose), equipment is either stored on-site or packed/unpacked as necessary (and transported via bus or in the leaders’ vehicles).

The chaotic and fast-paced nature of their programs means that random clutter is an inevitable reality, particularly since leaders must often pack and unpack supplies on a

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115 WASAC stores all of their sports equipment and program supplies in their office building.
daily/weekly basis to take to programs. Cleaning sprees are sporadic and often, increasing in frequency with the waxing and waning of summer camps. During the fall/winter, senior leaders are responsible for keeping the office clean, though these duties seem to fall to younger or administrative leaders. Cleaning days are often spontaneous, during programming lulls or downtime. Equipment is reviewed for cleanliness and usability, and rooms are cleaned and re-organized.

**Innovative Practice #6: Resilience and Spirit**

WASAC’s organizational priority is youth programming. As a financially healthy organization, WASAC could certainly spend money on upgrading office furniture and equipment however, in reality, very little money is spent internally. This approach reveals WASAC’s sense of pride in what they do versus what they have. Often, Pino would remind me that his office used to be a janitorial closet and pointed out its relatively poor condition. Pino believes that, as an organization, WASAC needs to be modest, humble and resourceful. Common idioms like *practice what you preach* or *walk your talk* reflect a certain logic and ethos that underscore WASAC’s organizational values such as humility, service and resilience.

**e) Planning and Development Capacity**

An organization’s ability to create a viable and user-friendly vision and plan for all facets of operations determines its planning and development capacity. Examples include the organization’s strategic plan, funding proposals, and program plans and policies. According to Hall et al. (2003), most non-profits face considerable challenges securing sustainable core funding.
The prolific and sustained growth of WASAC highlights the strength of its senior leadership team although responsibility for long-term planning resides with WASAC’s directors. Kevin and Pino started WASAC with a vision of how sport programming needed to change and what a sport program for Aboriginal youth would look like. Working closely with senior administrative leaders, their vision has become part of the organizational culture of WASAC. This vision filters down from an organizational level to program level as senior program leaders develop programs based on successful practices, feedback from organizational leaders, and their understanding of what WASAC means.

Like the previous capacity dimension, WASAC’s planning and development capacity is somewhat diminished in comparison to its other dimensions. This is not an immediate issue but there may be considerable challenges in the next few years due to an imminent and substantial turnover of senior leaders. Senior leaders are leaving for a variety of reasons, some choosing to assist Kevin’s move into provincial politics, while others are departing for career-related reasons, or to pursue post-secondary education.

The turnover among senior leaders is endemic of human resource problems faced by the entire non-profit sector; long work hours, low pay and fewer benefits relative to other sectors, pension plan, and job security are major factors. Initially, non-profit organizations tend to attract younger staff, as lower salaries are offset by personal satisfaction in the delivery of community service. However, as WASAC senior leaders begin to build families, buy homes, or incur new health and education costs, they are forced to re-assess their work-related commitments against the increasing financial pressures in their personal lives. As a result, few senior leaders own homes, have child-
care responsibilities, or face life situations that normally (or eventually) ‘force’ workers
to reconsider employment with small, public benefit non-profit organizations.

Many of WASAC’s senior leaders have grown with the organization and its
current success is inevitably a reflection of their team chemistry and commitment to
collective values, ideas, and skills. A large changeover in senior leaders, particularly
those who know and understand the organizational culture and programs, will be a huge
loss. While Kevin and Pino are aware of the impending staff turnover, they are currently
challenged to develop a plan to mitigate the loss of a team of unique individuals. In the
long term, Pino will be responsible for finding a new team of senior leaders and his own
replacement as Program Director.116 While it is inevitable that senior leaders will change
careers, most have a sense of membership and ownership in WASAC and want to remain
connected to the organization after they leave.

Conclusion

WASAC possesses many of the characteristics of a great non-profit organization.
It has charismatic, hard-working and dedicated leaders, and a clear, meaningful vision
which guides and motivates sport leaders. WASAC has pioneered innovative practices
that set it apart from other CSOs and has excelled in three of the five capacity
dimensions: human resources, finance and relationship and network capacity. The
diminished state of the other two dimensions - infrastructure and process, and planning
and development capacity - reflect some of the financial and human resource issues that
are endemic to the non-profit and voluntary sector.

116 Pino was seconded from the City of Winnipeg to help develop WASAC. He wants to
continue working with WASAC for another five to six years until his retirement.
WASAC is greater than the sum of its parts. At an organizational level, WASAC is committed to the cultural empowerment of Aboriginal peoples and youth and uses sport as a vehicle to drive their social change goals. As a *sport plus* SID organization, WASAC programming incorporates sport and physical activity but focuses on the relationship between cultural, individual, physical, and social benefits of sport for Aboriginal youth (see Lavallée, 2007) as opposed to a strict focus on physical literacy skills or physical activity levels. Research informs us that the processes and mechanisms attributed to successful SID programs - particularly as they relate to program planning and sport leadership practices – require greater attention. And, outside of existing research about barriers to sport participation and problems with existing race and class-based sport programs, little is known about SID programming for ethnocultural youth.

SID organizations must be evaluated by their programming and, in turn, these programs must be viewed in relation to the organization capacity and ideological values. If the synergistic relationship between a SID organization and its programs are not fully recognized, researchers may fail to identify how problems impacting one domain influence the other. Without understanding the relationship between macro-societal issues, mid-level organizational issues, and micro-level interactions between sport leaders and youth participants, it ultimately becomes difficult (if not impossible) to understand how SID programs produce their effects, especially if their outcomes are inconsistent or contradict their stated goals (see Coalter, 2007 for discussion, as well as Clegg, 2005).
CHAPTER 6: CULTURAL LANDSCAPE AND IDENTITY OF URBAN ABORIGINAL YOUTH

Stories go in circles. They don’t go in straight lines. It helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside and between stories, and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. Part of finding is getting lost, and when you are lost you start to open up and listen. (Tafoya, 1995, p. 12).

Wilson (2008) opens his book Research as Ceremony with Tafoya’s (1995) advice to people who read or listen to stories. Story-telling is an educational device used by many Aboriginal peoples (Archibald, 2008) and unlike the linear communicative style of Euro-Western knowledge systems, Aboriginal epistemology and worldviews are circular. Teachers do not lead their students to the answer but instead view the journey to knowledge, as much as knowledge itself, to be the purpose of education (Hampton, 1995). This chapter begins with a story of one young Aboriginal, then shifts to a discussion of the photovoice research results, and finally ends with personal reflections about the complexity of urban Aboriginal identity. The flow between sections appears disjointed at times, perhaps even irrelevant. As each section jumps between the personal and the political, one glimpses the destructive capacity of colonization on the cultural identity and landscape of urban Aboriginal youth and can witness their resilience as they weave together a space of belonging, acceptance and understanding in Winnipeg’s north end.

Chapter Outline

To evaluate the cultural relevance of WASAC programs and leadership practices for urban Aboriginal youth, it was necessary to include the voices of WASAC
participants. Through my friendship with Stephinie (see below) and the photo-stories by SMART participants about the meaning of sport and culture in their lives (via the photovoice project), I examined how community sport for urban Aboriginal youth is shaped by a complex interplay of cultural identity and identifying processes (Restoule, 2000), geographic and socio-economic marginalization (e.g., Winnipeg’s north end community, see Silver, 2006, 2011), and the unequal power relationships that continue to exist between Aboriginal and settler peoples in Canada.

The first section describes my friendship with Stephinie, an amazing and inspiring young Aboriginal woman who began working at WASAC in September 2010 as a senior program leader. As a participant in over three sport programs (summer camp, SMART and YAP), Stephinie understood the value of WASAC programs and developed valuable leadership skills. When paired with her positive attitude and resilient nature, she was an ideal fit for the WASAC senior leadership team.

The second section explores findings from the photovoice project which was conducted with urban Aboriginal youth in WASAC’s SMART program. The photovoice project revealed important details about the cultural landscape of youth participants and their reflections about the meaning of sport and culture in their daily lives.

The third section explores the dialectical relationship between the cultural landscape and cultural identity of urban Aboriginal youth. Here, I highlight the contrast between the comfort that photovoice participants showed when talking about the culture of the North End in comparison to their silence, hesitancy and uncertainty about Aboriginal culture and its meaning to them. As mentioned above, the issue of cultural identity emerged from the silences within my research study and I foreshadow some of
the issues raised by photovoice participants that were also evident during evaluation workshops and in conversations with WASAC leaders.

Stephinie’s story

Stephinie was hired by WASAC in September 2010 at the start of Phase Two of my research project. She had recently graduated high school, and having been involved with numerous WASAC leadership programs, was hired as a replacement for Wendy, a senior program leader on a temporary leave of absence. My first memories of Stephinie involve her small size, extremely youthful appearance (most WASAC participants thought she was a participant, not a leader), and effervescent personality.

Stephinie and I became friends very quickly and our friendship was encouraged by WASAC senior leaders. As we spent time together, she shared a number of stories with me that were a testimony to the influence of WASAC’s senior leaders and programs. As a child, WASAC Kids Camp provided a fun and safe place for her to play with friends during summer vacation. Later, as a high school student, she credits the tutoring support of the SMART program for helping her complete grade 12 and the leadership training in the Youth Achievement Program (YAP) for developing the necessary leadership skills for employment. At the most fundamental level, the food provided by the SMART program to participants was often her first meal of the day and WASAC leaders encouraged her to take leftovers that would feed her for the remainder of the week.

Stephinie is an amazing young woman and it is difficult to meet someone like her and remain disinterested in her life or well-being. The stark contrast between her life

117 This story was provided to Stephinie for her review and approval. A few minor changes were made to the story based on her feedback.
circumstances and my own became increasingly evident as she continued to share her history. Stephinie grew up in a low-income family. Her mother passed away when she was very young and her father was ill-equipped to care for her so she was raised by her extended family including her grandma, aunts and uncle. Her living situation was unstable and she was shuttled between family members, sometimes living with friends if she experienced problems at home. Stephinie exemplifies the definition of resilience; not just surviving but thriving in an environment where neither outcome was nurtured. It is not necessary to recount the adversities that she has overcome to validate her resilience but this brief background illustrates the benefits of WASAC’s strength-based programming.

A strength-based perspective requires that sport leaders acknowledge and respect the resilience of youth. From our very first meeting, I was impressed by Stephinie’s positive attitude, strong work ethic, and joyful nature. When Stephinie starts laughing she usually does not stop until she has run out of breath. Thanks to her seemingly boundless, youthful energy, younger children find comfort in her company and are immediately attracted to her presence. She may be almost half my age, but I admire and am inspired by her strength of character and ability to find joy in life. Perhaps this is because Stephinie takes nothing for granted and is sincerely grateful for all that she has. I am certain that others mistake her sweet nature for naiveté but she has not led an insular life and is far more knowledgeable about the realities of the world than people many years her senior.

In light of all these amazing attributes, I was surprised to discover that Stephinie does not see herself as I do; she seems unaware of her gifts and inner strength. I distinctly
remember Stephinie’s reaction when I told her that I thought she was amazing; she was shocked and unable to grasp that a university-educated person such as myself would think she was intelligent and inspiring. Her reaction became more clear after she told me that no one ever told her she was amazing or listened to her stories. Regrettably, Stephinie did not normally receive compliments and did not think her stories or experiences were particularly interesting or inspiring.

Now, realizing the impact of my compliment, I wanted Stephinie to know why I thought she was amazing so I used examples from her life story to illustrate her strength and resilience with the hope that she might see herself as I do. It was at this point that Stephinie told me about a decision she made at a young age: she decided to remain positive despite the adversity she encountered, to be a good person, to act in ways that were respectful, caring, and thoughtful.

WASAC did not make Stephinie the amazing person she is today; that accomplishment belongs to her alone. In the story of Stephinie’s life, WASAC has been a positive force that has nurtured her and given her a sense of belonging, confidence, and hope. After high school, it was WASAC leaders that took her to the bank to open an account, taught her how to drive and took her for her driving test and helped her develop a resume.

This fall, Stephinie is going to fulfill her dream of attending college and, like so many of the important events in her life, WASAC’s presence is critical. For instance, Stephinie strongly believes that the tutoring support she received through the SMART program helped improve her grade point average which was critical to her successful attainment of a post-secondary scholarship grant. Later, while working at WASAC,
senior leaders encouraged Stephinie’s education goals and when it was time for her to register for class, someone drove her to the college and helped her navigate the institutional bureaucracy. Without all of this support, particularly the tutoring assistance and scholarship, Stephinie acknowledges that it may have taken her much longer to realize her post-secondary goals.

Stephinie is amazing because she has accomplished so much with so little. She graduated from high school, started working and enrolled in college without the family supports that lift so many young adults to success. And, throughout her life, WASAC has been a social support for Stephinie by connecting her to many of the valuable social networks commonly available to privileged populations (see Morrow, 1999). Regrettably, not all Aboriginal youth who pass through WASAC’s doors will have Stephinie’s resiliency and strength but they, like her, will have the support of an organization that sees their strength, value and place in the world.
The following chapter explores the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth in WASAC’s SMART program as revealed by the photovoice project. The photovoice project served two purposes. First, it facilitated the collection of information about the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth, paying special attention to the perceived meaning and importance of sport and culture in their daily lives. Secondly, it ensured the meaningful participation and inclusion of Aboriginal youth in research. The photovoice activity empowered youth, helped them think critically about their lives, and provided tangible benefits to participants (e.g., digital cameras, healthy meals, Exhibit celebration).

Perhaps more so than other research methods, photovoice illuminates the educational nature of research and the responsibilities of researchers to adopt caring, respectful, and reflexive teaching practices. Good community-based researchers realize

118 This is the title and description (and font) I created for the photovoice binders given to youth participants.
that research involves teaching; we will not always have good teaching days but, if we care about our participants, we will keep trying to find ways to connect our research to their lives (see Palmer, 2007). In the same manner, the research presented below connects my observations as a community based educator and researcher to the discussions I held with photovoice participants. And, where possible, I connect this information to participants’ photographic displays presented at the photovoice Exhibit in May 2011.

It is important to note that the photographs and descriptions provided in this section were taken and created by photovoice participants and arranged into seven themes. The photographic displays are presented immediately following the title of the theme, followed by a description of various issues that emerged during group discussions. As much as possible, I have tried to provide direct quotes from youth participants. Occasionally, as a result of informal conversations with participants or when audio-taped group discussions were interrupted, direct quotes were not available and I have paraphrased or edited statements accordingly.

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119 I edited participants’ descriptions for basic grammar but did not add any words that participants did not write on their photograph description sheet (for more information, see the description of photovoice sessions in Chapter 4).
Neglect of North End community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 8. Abandoned House. By Larissa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image of abandoned house" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are lots of houses in the North End that are abandoned and need repair. No one wants to rent these houses because they’re so run down. This needs to be changed because these houses make the North End look dirty and not worth coming to. People judge our area because of places like this.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 9. Graffiti. By Tyler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image of graffiti" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This graffiti has been on the side of the building for a long time. The city and business owner haven’t painted over it. This image is related to youth culture because a lot of youth “rep” or throw up their “sides” (e.g., Northside, Westside) with graffiti. This image is important to me because it shows that people pick sides and stuff when we all live in the same city.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Throughout the photovoice project, youth participants spoke passionately about the neglect of the North End. They felt that the provincial and municipal governments did not care about graffiti-covered buildings, garbage strewn about in back alleys, or the many abandoned and deteriorating houses and buildings in their neighborhood. Youth felt the abandoned buildings in their community were “gross”, “ugly”, and “unsafe” and made them feel that the North End was dirtier than other urban areas. These feelings were further exacerbated by the perception that no one seemed to care how this neglect made community members feel.

The most popular images among photovoice participants were photographs of garbage in their community. Most participants felt that the image of garbage and general ‘dirtiness’ of buildings and structures within their community (see Figure 10. *The Dirty*) captured the neglect of the North End. There was a general feeling among participants that government officials failed, either deliberately or through ignorance, to understand that few North End residents have the resources necessary to dispose of large furniture such as mattresses and furniture.
Stephinie asked participants where they could throw out a bed in the North End, and wondered aloud whether there were appropriate places to dispose of large furniture. Chantelle and Danielle stated that city garbage trucks would not remove large furniture like mattresses and since there were no nearby garbage facilities and few residents had trucks to dispose of them, back alleys were often littered with discarded furniture. This dialogue led to conversations about an emerging problem of bedbugs in the City of Winnipeg and participants’ concerns that little kids or homeless people might play or sleep on infected mattresses dumped in back alleys.

When I asked the participants what they could do about the perceived garbage problem in their community, they responded that nothing could be done because nobody listens to them and adults view them as troublemakers. To encourage further discussion, I changed the wording of my question and asked: in an ideal world, one where they are respected and listened to, what might they be able to in their everyday lives to address this issue?

This simple, semantic restructuring of the question reframed the issue and stimulated further discussion. Danielle and Torie stated they have ‘blue boxes’ in their homes for recycling and other participants also mentioned recycling bins in their back lanes. In another example, Carley spoke of her efforts to educate people about littering. The participants around the table laughed and likened Carley to the ‘garbage police’ and,

| Stephanie: | It’s something you see [discarded mattresses] throughout your life. Like I’m pretty sure that everybody’s seen mattresses in their back lanes. |
| Danielle: | You see that a lot in poverty places…. Like people that can’t deal with it, they just throw it out. If they can’t fix the problem, they get rid of it. |
in response, she proceeded to share approaching strangers who had littered and asking them to pick up their garbage. Other youth discussed the Province of Manitoba’s Green Team youth employment program and how they liked it because it provided local youth with jobs to clean and repair areas in their neighborhood.

Participants also believed that outsiders who visited their community blamed residents for this neglect. They did acknowledge that North End residents were partially responsible for the condition of their community but also felt that the government should take more responsibility for alleviating the disparate conditions between urban neighborhoods (see next theme for discussion). For example, participants spent a lot of time talking about the condition of back lanes in the North End. Many participants were upset about the amount of garbage and poor condition of the back lanes. A common response to the question, “Who do you think is responsible for this problem?” often resulted in participants identifying the City of Winnipeg. I often teased participants about ‘blaming the City’ and asked for them to examine the issue more deeply (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heather:</th>
<th>So who you think is responsible for the neglect of the back alleys?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nathan:</td>
<td>The City [of Winnipeg]!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather (teasing tone):</td>
<td>Are we going to blame the City for everything?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler:</td>
<td>The police.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carley:</td>
<td>People in the neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stephinie and Lindsay helped facilitate the group discussions and often posed probing questions to the group, asking them to explain their statements. Their assistance was invaluable as they often asked key questions that I did not think to ask. And, as Stephinie was also good friends with many participants and only a year or two older, her probing questions were well received by participants.
Both Stephinie and Carley’s questions clarified unspoken assumptions that shaped the nature of our group conversation. Stephinie’s question forced participants to provide concrete examples to support their claims that the City was responsible, whereas Carley’s question demonstrated that the City’s responsibility included not only concrete structural examples but also touched on the fact that the behaviors and actions of North End community members reflected a larger relational inequity. When asked why they felt that North End community members either caused the poor condition of back alleys or did nothing about the problem, participants identified issues related to addiction as the cause of poor behaviours and apathy among community members.

I understood Carley’s frustration about “that big Why?” to not only relate to the photovoice sessions and question-based structure of group dialogue, but also larger questions about the nature of marginalization and oppression. As Carley and other youth participants were engaged in group discussions, I interpreted this question as both a
desire to change discussion topics but also an underlying desire that many urban Aboriginal youth feel when seeking to make sense of the complex issues that constitute their daily lives. Whenever such issues arose, I took to the time to re-assure youth participants that I was not judging them or people in their community. And, based on our pre-existing relationships (e.g., four months that I volunteered with the SMART program) and critical discussions of research and society, I was confident that participants understood the nature of my questions. For example, during this particular conversation, when I re-stated my nonjudgmental position on addictions, participants nodded to indicate their understanding and then began to discussion their feelings of perceived judgment from strangers who live outside their community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heather:</th>
<th>Why do you think people are drinking in your neighborhood?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tyler:</td>
<td>Well, a lot of them are Aboriginal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather:</td>
<td>And why might Aboriginal people drink?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathan:</td>
<td>Cause, we’re like, dirty? Just joking [this comment was stated softly].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler:</td>
<td>People call them dirty and they put us down a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathan:</td>
<td>We get put down a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torie:</td>
<td>They’re labeling. All Aboriginal people are the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[youth nod or voice general agreement]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carley:</td>
<td>Someone looks at one Aboriginal person, that’s the way they look at all Aboriginal people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather:</td>
<td>And they look at them in mainly a negative way? Is that what you’re saying?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carley:</td>
<td>Clearly not but like some people, I don’t know how to say it. Like not everyone thinks of Aboriginal people in a negative way but the majority of people do [emphasizes this point].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[youth nod or voice general agreement]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Youth participants felt that outsiders and all levels of government judged the youth harshly because of living conditions in the North End and their Aboriginal heritage. As is evident above, conversations about the neglect of their communities elicited
passionate responses from the youth with feelings of anger and frustration interspersed with sarcastic humour. However, the above exchange underscored the deeply harmful nature of cultural violence and how racist discourse creates a pathologizing discourse about Aboriginal peoples and cultural identity that saturate the lives of urban Aboriginal youth. Initially, I was surprised that participants immediate response to the question, “why are people drinking in your neighborhood?” was “well, a lot of them are Aboriginal”. Yet my follow-up question “why might Aboriginal people drink?” elicited one of the most poignant moments during the photovoice project when Nathan answered my question with the softly-stated query, “cause, we’re like dirty?”

Participants understood that ‘being’ Aboriginal and living in urban areas dominated by Euro-Canadian culture and traditions, automatically positioned them in a marginalized position vis-à-vis Euro-Canadian youth. The complexity of colonization’s impacts on contemporary Aboriginal cultures and youth through intergenerational trauma has only recently been acknowledged (i.e., Truth and Reconciliation of Canada) and until sport researchers, policy makers and practitioners recognize the devastating impact of cultural violence on the mind, body, and spirit of Aboriginal children and youth, they will be responsible for perpetuating this violence through deficit-based language, policies and programs.
Figure 11. *The abandoned, modern day back lane. By Danielle*

During the day, this back lane is okay. But at night, it seems dangerous to walk here because there are a lot of abandoned cars and no one can see what’s going on. It’s hard for community members to fix this problem because many of them have very little money. We think that the city needs to fix these back lanes and community members need to take some responsibility to improve things.

Figure 12. *Scary back alley. By Nathan*

This empty back alley is really dirty and no one takes care of it. Back alleys are scary and dangerous places because no one can see what is going on. This image is about the culture of the North End which is sometimes a dangerous place to live. We worry that kids walking down this back alley could get jacked because gangs hang out around here.
The topic of safety elicited a wide range of responses from participants. Some characterized the issue of personal safety in the North End as a source of pride (“we’re tough”), a point of exasperation or ridicule about outsiders (“why are they scared?”), an everyday reality (“I never really noticed any problems”), or a serious concern for the safety of their younger siblings, nieces or nephews (Figure 13. Death Block 1 and 2 captured this concern). Participants were particularly concerned about the safety of young children and families and believed that community safety could be improved if greater resources were allocated towards community policing efforts and social programming.
I was somewhat surprised that community safety was a major concern for photovoice participants since they had previously dismissed this issue at the start of the photovoice project. During those sessions, youth chose to re-frame safety issues as the catalyst for their enhanced mental and physical fortitude and tenacity (“we’re tough”, “outsiders are scared of us”, etc). To them, the real and perceived dangers of their neighborhood became a means of emotional and physical conditioning. This concept of strength through adversity was reflected by the fact that many participants wanted to be seen by outsiders as tough, strong and intimidating. Participants often challenged media stereotypes of their community as dangerous, full of gang violence and drug dealers, by ridiculing outsiders of the North End for being sheltered and weak. They felt that the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heather:</th>
<th>So why do you guys think this problem exists? (scary back alley photo discussion). That back alleys are dangerous and that they’re not well taken care of?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carley:</td>
<td>Cause the City (of Winnipeg) doesn’t care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie:</td>
<td>Technically, they (back alleys) are not meant to be a high traffic area, like you use the back lane for driving and going to the back door. Its not like you play, well, I guess you could play soccer…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carley:</td>
<td>But little kids still do go in the back lane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler:</td>
<td>Especially by a day care [Figure 12. Scary Back Alley depicts a back lane near a day care]...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather:</td>
<td>So what are the problems with back allies in the North End?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carley:</td>
<td>It’s a closed space so anything can happen. People can get stabbed or something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather:</td>
<td>Is that a fear that you guys have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler:</td>
<td>Some of us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie:</td>
<td>Anything can happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather:</td>
<td>If you don’t want to share, that’s fine but…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larissa:</td>
<td>I do but I don’t want it to be on there [points to the recorder and I shut it off for the remainder of this conversation].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
media and public perception exaggerated the inherent danger of the North End.\textsuperscript{120} The youth had reclaimed their North End identity as a source of strength and invulnerability.

Inner city neighborhoods have their own culture, a culture of social survival or ‘code of the street’ that is linked to an individual’s reputation for physical and mental toughness (Jones, 2008). A reputation that Jones (2008) argues is as important for girls as for boys. And, as a female who has always sought to portray a façade of mental and physical ‘toughness’, I was not surprised when numerous female participants joked about being from the ‘hood’ and proudly asserted their physical strength and abilities.

As with my conversations with friends, participants rarely spoke about their toughness vis-à-vis outsiders during photovoice meetings, rather such discussions seemed confined to peer group conversations. Consequently, I have few direct quotes or examples that illustrate this ‘persona of toughness’ that participants would obliquely reference, yet, having worked with inner city youth for over fifteen years and observed participants over the course of nine months, I noticed subtle changes in their body language, word choices, conversation topics, and worldview when they wished to assert their toughness via challenges to the perceived unjust use of authority or power (e.g., teachers) or feelings of judgments by larger whitestream society.

One example occurred during a photography session when the instructor warned youth to be careful with their digital cameras because they could be robbed while taking photographs. This well-intended warning elicited an immediate reaction; one youth

\textsuperscript{120} Youth participants knew the North End could be dangerous but they also felt the crime, drugs, and gang violence were exaggerated by the media and by outsiders. There were a few streets that they identified as problematic but they were more concerned with the neglect and garbage than safety concerns.
participant responded that she had lived in the North End her entire life and had never been mugged. I intended to directly address the photographer’s comment (who was my cousin) however Lindsay (WASAC/SMART coordinator) spoke up immediately and used this opportunity as a teachable moment for both the photographer and youth. She reminded youth participants that no community is perfectly safe and that comments delivered without direct knowledge or experience of living or working in the North End ultimately reinforce negative stereotypes about Aboriginal youth living in the North End.

*Poor conditions for sport*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 14. <em>Puddles. By Carley</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I took this picture of two little girls playing in a puddle and having an awesome time. But this huge puddle is actually part of a parking lot. We worried that the girls might get hurt because they weren’t wearing boots and parking lots aren’t good places to play (e.g., dirty and often have sharp objects like nails, etc). This picture is about sport because kids find ways to stay active. We want the parking lot to be repaired so it doesn’t fill up with water.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Image of puddles with two girls playing](image-url)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 15. <em>Naked Tetherball. By Torie</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image of broken tetherball poles" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is a picture of broken / unused tetherball poles. This image is related to sport because kids like to play tetherball and there aren’t any tetherballs outside for children in the community to use after “recess hours”. This image is important because there is no equipment out in the neighborhood to keep kids off the street and out of trouble.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 16. <em>Come and shoot. By Nathan</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image of broken basketball hoop" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody really seems to use this basketball hoop because it has a broken net and it's ugly. This image is about sport because it’s important to keep sport equipment in good repair if we want kids to be active and athletic and avoid hanging out on the streets or joining gangs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth participants captured images that depicted the poor conditions of sports equipment and venues in the North End. As participants tried to brainstorm the types of images they might capture, the following conversation took place.

**Tyler:** Can we take a picture of the sidewalks cause they don’t plow the snow?
**Torie:** And you have to make your own tracks?
**Tyler:** Exactly.
**Larissa:** Exactly. That’s so rude. Just because they don’t want to walk here, doesn’t mean nothing….. They don’t even do anything in this area, no one likes it.

A similar discussion occurred about a well-maintained baseball diamond that once existed in their community:

**Tyler:** They never let us play there. It’s too good for us.
**Heather:** Where did you get the impression that it’s too good for you?
**Tyler:** They put up a fence and wouldn’t let anyone use it (good baseball diamond) and then they took it down because no one was using it.

Photovoice participants were especially critical of the City of Winnipeg and felt civic officials showed more care and respect to those from other urban neighborhoods. They asserted that since so few politicians and policy-makers live, work or visit the North End, that it had become easy to ignore the needs of their community members and to perpetuate stereotypes about Aboriginal youth. They continued by suggesting that had local politicians and policy makers knew of these inequities, they would not care enough to do anything or, even worse, would think the youth did not deserve nice sport equipment and fields because they would ruin them.
Unlike Sara and Joan, not all youth felt municipal recreation staff disliked Aboriginal youth living in the North End. However, all agreed that their sports equipment and venues were in poor condition. Two examples reveal the disparity between the condition of sport in the North End and more affluent neighborhoods:

- **Example 1:** Towards the end of the photovoice Exhibit, a participant’s mother approached me to express her appreciation of the Exhibit and the types of issues it raised. She told me that the North End has few competitive sport programs or facilities and in order to provide these opportunities for her two sons, she had to drive them outside the community to access the appropriate resources. Unfortunately, few parents have the time or resources to transport their children outside the North End to access competitive sport programs and facilities.

- **Example 2:** This incident occurred during the research period but was not related to my research. According to a community sport advocate working in the North End (the person requested anonymity), a local high school hockey team in the North End was disbanded due to a Manitoba High School Athletics Association (MHSAA) policy barring schools from ‘borrowing’ students from other schools to

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121 In defending my position to allow participants to identify their names and images in the photovoice project to the Education / Nursing Research Ethics Board, I stated that I would render anonymous any photographs or comments that participants may later view as potentially embarrassing. Sara and Joan are pseudonyms for two female participants.
play on their team. The policy’s intent was to balance skill levels among schools in order to prevent the issue of *stacking* in which a school recruits elite level players from other schools. Now, if a North End high school borrows hockey players from other schools *to provide opportunities for youth to play hockey* – which is a pressing issue due to the high costs of the sport - shouldn’t the intent of the policy be taken into consideration? In this case, the school loses its hockey program because the MHSAA adhered to the specifics of a policy, not its intent. This hockey program was initiated by a local teacher who had worked hard to develop an extensive network of contacts to provide equipment, nourishment and transportation to ensure local Aboriginal youth could participate in hockey. Statistically, the team had a high loss record, but, at the very least, youth were provided with the opportunity to experience the sport, refine their physical literacy skills, and stay active.¹²²

These examples reflect issues related to competitive sport but if youth do not develop positive connections to physical activity and sports at a young age, it will become more difficult to engage youth as they get older if they lack the necessary skills, confidence, and knowledge of physical activity that helps foster positive connections to sport. If so few safe places exist for children to play and develop, what message are we sending to North End families about the value of sport, health and physical activity?

¹²² Interestingly enough, the MHSAA does list an exception to this rule for some, not all, North End schools. See the website, http://www.mhsaa.mb.ca/pages/constitution/constitution.php under the heading, Rules and Regulations.
**Resistance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Figure 17. Sports condition and beauty. By Danielle</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a picture of a popular community field. This field is near a busy street with lots of houses and a nearby school. The image is about sport. It shows that when fields are used, they look used. The field is beautiful because everyone in the community uses it (e.g., people, sport teams, etc).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Figure 18. A sad basketball court. By Chantal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a basketball court at a local park. The court is ugly and the broken pavement is uneven but people still play here.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 19. *Not enough good places. By Carley*

This community centre is a safe place where kids like to go and play and they don’t have to worry about being harassed. This picture is related to sport and culture because many sport and cultural events are held here year round. This centre is important because it helps kids play sports and to experience sport like other children do. There are not enough places like this in our community.

Figure 20. *Hockey anyone? By Danielle*

This photograph was not used in the Exhibit. Title provided by the researcher.

To paraphrase a comment I overheard at the Exhibit, “a crappy field is better than no field”. This statement reflects the resilience of many North End youth who must simply make do with the limited resources available to them. Their description of community sport resources was sobering; they spoke of people playing on pothole-ridden football fields and hockey rinks with uneven ice, broken boards, and hockey nets full of holes. Youth participants were frustrated by the poor conditions of sports equipment and facilities in the North End. Photovoice helps people articulate their experiences and, in
this context, the photovoice project provided youth with an opportunity and forum to express their frustration regarding inequity in sport.

There was recognition by participants that politicians and policy-makers may interpret the use of deteriorating sport equipment and fields by community members as a passive acceptance of the inequities present in Canadian society. Some youth previously identified by teachers or adults as presenting problem behaviours (e.g., anger, poor concentration, etc), explained that when they felt attacked or disrespected, they responded in kind. Their behaviors were a form of internalized defense; it was more important that they respect themselves and suffer potential negative consequences than tolerate being disrespected. They felt that their silence and adaptation to the status quo would be interpreted as their acceptance of oppressive power relations (see Schwalbe, Godwin, Holden et al., 2000 for a discussion of how adaptation and coping strategies can undermine long-term social change).

It is difficult to challenge inequitable inclusion. On one hand, youth participants recognize that things have been and could be worse. Conversely, they also know that things have not significantly improved since racism and poverty continue to shape their lives. Urban Aboriginal youth living in the North End make do with what they have because there are few alternatives. Put simply, a little bit is indeed better than nothing. But, when youth notice the inequitable distribution and conditions of sports resources and facilities between the North End and more affluent, white communities, they feel the connection between structural and cultural violence. When politicians ignore the deteriorating conditions of sport in the North End, they ignore the needs of Aboriginal
youth and their ignorance, whether deliberate or unintentional, is perceived by Aboriginal youth as symptomatic of the racist society in which they live.

Social inequity is a relational process; the centre exists in relation to the margins. Youth participants know they exist within these margins because they compare their life experiences and the conditions of their community with those they consider outsiders, namely white, middle class individuals from affluent urban neighborhoods. In the end, however, a little bit is not enough; a little bit simply does not represent transformative social change.

Importance of Family, Friends and Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 21. Tiger Pride! By Carley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a picture of me and my friend’s geeking out, jumping around in front of my school. This image is about youth culture because friends are an important part of our lives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 22. *My brothers. By Tyler*

My brothers are practicing for baseball in the outfield. This image is related to sport and culture because baseball is a part of my family’s culture. My older brother is standing next to my little brother, giving him advice and teaching him more about how to play. Baseball is important to me because it’s been a part of my life for a long time. And, even though I don’t play, I’m proud of my family for how much effort they put into it.

An important aspect of the photovoice project was the counter-story: the process of taking photographs of people, places or things that youth are proud of in their community. I continually encouraged youth participants to capture positive images in their photographs; images which the mainstream media and government often ignore or devalue. In the end, the overwhelming majority of the images that youth wanted to promote reflected the importance of family and friends.

I was raised in an isolated rural community that limited my ability to socialize with friends unless it involved organized sports. So, while I was not surprised by the high value that youth participants placed on peer networks, I did not realize the large amount of time they spent with friends inside and outside of school (i.e., participants often spoke of staying with friends for days or weeks). I quickly recognized that if I did not provide sufficient time for youth participants to eat and hang out together before the meeting, group discussions would inevitably turn into personal conversations among friends. It took me awhile to recognize the significance of this fact since I was very focused on the
act of facilitating discussions and failed to notice the impact of the social network within the participant group.

Before, during and after meetings, youth participants were with friends – many of whom were participants in the photovoice project. I immediately noticed that participants’ peer networks were generally culturally homogenous, reflected by the fact that Aboriginal youth seemed to gravitate towards each other. Despite this observation, it is difficult to say whether urban Aboriginal youth chose their friends based on cultural connection or spatial proximity (many North End residents and St. John’s High School Students are Aboriginal) but it is likely that one or both factors influenced their socialization choices.

Throughout my research, participants routinely missed photovoice sessions because of friends and family. Participants were not required to tell me about their absences but many volunteered to share their reasons. In one example, a participant arrived late and explained that she had been visiting with her father who lived in a different province. Despite my encouragement that she spend time with her father, she remained at the session because her friends were there. In another example, a participant apologized for missing sessions because his mother was very ill and he was responsible for her care (see van Ingen & Halas, 2006).

Waneek Horn-Miller (2006) asserts that Aboriginal peoples are deeply connected to the social networks within their communities with family and friends playing an important role in affirming Aboriginal identity. Unlike northern or Aboriginal reserves, urban Aboriginal youth tend to live in ethnically diverse neighborhoods. Although the
cultural composition of their communities is more heterogeneous, the importance placed on interpersonal relationships remains central to their cultural identity.

While this statement can certainly apply to most youth (i.e., peer groups are extremely important and most youth develop culturally homogenous peer groups), the collective cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth peer groups will create a collective worldview that will likely differ from other culturally homogenous groups of youth (e.g., Filipino, Italian, etc). And, depending upon various socio-cultural and political dimensions (e.g., race, class, religion, geographic location, gender, sexual orientation, etc), differences and conflicts between these collective worldviews or cultural landscapes may be radically different. Consequently, while it is important to understand the high priority placed on community, family and peer groups among urban aboriginal youth, it is perhaps more important to recognize how these relationships inform their sense of cultural identity and how to tap into, include and, build upon these valuable social networks.

*Parallels between Sport and Culture*

| Figure 23. *St. John’s Trophy Case #2. By Chantal*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many of these trophies belong to Aboriginal athletes at our school. This image is important because it’s a source of pride for my school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There isn’t much art in the North End. We like this picture because it shows Aboriginal dancing. We wish there was more street art like this in our neighborhood because it make us proud of our culture and it shows that Aboriginal people haven’t forgot about their culture.

This photograph was taken during the SMART program. An Aboriginal dancer facilitated a 90-minute dance workshop for youth. Youth were slow to get involved but when the instructor brought out the hoops to teach hoop dancing, almost everyone joined in. It was a special evening. Left to right: Nathan, Danielle, Dylan

Youth participants regularly spoke about sport as a source of pride for friends, family members and schools. This is not surprising given sport’s mythopoeic status and its communicative role regarding the public image of schools and universities; team banners, trophies, and photos of athletes and teams are prominently displayed in schools as a sign of pride. On one occasion, Chantal photographed the trophy case at St. John’s High School because it was a source of pride for students and teachers (see Figure 23).
Similarly, Tyler spoke about her brothers’ involvement with an Aboriginal baseball league and how her entire family was involved with the league as either athletes or fans.

Sport can also play an important cultural role in strengthening Aboriginal communities and cultural revitalization. Events like the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) and the Arctic Games help foster a source of cultural and collective pride that transcends the actual events and athletes (Forsyth & Paraschak, 2006). WASAC recognized the importance of providing youth with meaningful examples of cultural pride. For example, Lindsay arranged for an Aboriginal dancer to teach an evening workshop on cultural dance for photovoice / SMART participants. The dancer began the evening by talking about her cultural background and life lessons and followed this with an intense dance warm up and routine. Youth participants really enjoyed her discussion and the cultural dance session (see below).

In another example, Kevin (WASAC’s Executive Director) is a member of the Norman Chief Memorial Dancers and when he first developed the group, recruited a number of youth from WASAC programs to dance with the group. North End community members, particularly Aboriginal peoples, are very proud of their jigging group and its mandate of Métis culture and heritage. In fact, when the dancers travel outside of the city they are usually accompanied by a large group of local supporters.
The Exhibit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 26. Exhibit photos #1 &amp; #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photo Outing to the Forks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left to right: Danielle, Dylan, Nathan (acting silly), Larissa, Tyler, Torie, Carley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 27. Exhibit photos #3 &amp; #4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for the Exhibit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me (orange WASAC shirt) talking to Nathan</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Originally, I intended to collect research data from the Exhibit but time constraints leading up to and during the Exhibit prevented such activities. Although this
omission did not have a significant impact on the research results, my original intention was to document the entire photovoice experience, including photographs and comments from informal interviews with participants and their parents. Consequently, my description of the Exhibit is limited and lacks the rich description illustrated throughout the previous themes.

Overview of the Exhibit

Approximately forty people attended the photovoice Exhibit, including six of the seven youth who attended the Exhibit meetings and successfully completed an Exhibit display. Participants who attended included Carley, Chantal, Danielle, Larissa, Nathan, Torie and Tyler with one participant, Danielle, unable to attend due to illness. All participants invited guests, most bringing between three to four family members or friends. In addition to participants and their guests, ten WASAC leaders attended, my advisor and youth guest, as well as three members of my family.

Youth participants and WASAC leaders (who volunteered to help) arrived at 5:00 pm to set up the Exhibit and at 6:00 pm, guests began to arrive. As the Exhibit organizer, I had little time to observe and interact with guests and most of the evening passed by in a flurry of activity, ensuring the Exhibit was running smoothly and checking in on the food being cooked for the feast. At 6:25 pm, various dishes were brought to the buffet table and youth participants served their family and friends. Dessert was served at 6:45 pm followed by speeches from Lindsay and myself and concluded with the presentation of the certificates to each participant. Exhibit participants received certificates confirming the length of their involvement and the training they completed (e.g., photography and research).
At a young age, my mother ensured my sister and I volunteered at community feasts and I drew upon her planning and food preparation experience to ensure the Exhibit feast was a success. I borrowed slow cookers and cooking utensils from friends and family, and asked youth participants to help oversee the food preparation at the event in addition to serving the food to guests. As with the photovoice meetings, food played a central role in both attracting people to the Exhibit, ensuring people’s enjoyment and celebrating / thanking participants for their hard work.

Immediately after the Exhibit, Pino asked WASAC’s photographer/videographer, Rom, to create professional photo albums for each Exhibit participant as a keepsake and reward for their work. Shortly thereafter, WASAC organized a thank-you celebration for me to recognize my research contributions and for months after, WASAC leaders often approached me to talk about what the Exhibit meant to them. Wendy and Lindsay spoke about the importance of celebrating the achievements of WASAC participants in front of family and friends and how such celebrations reinforce a sense of community. Trevor and Brittany saw the photovoice Exhibit as an opportunity to provide concrete examples of the impact of WASAC programs on the lives of urban Aboriginal youth.123

Research Limitations and Reflections

I spent considerable time with participants through my involvement with the SMART program and photovoice project and I quickly realized that the youth participants attributed much of their present life circumstances and experiences to the disparate social conditions and processes that shaped their cultural landscape. Racism

123 I was recently asked to help WASAC submit a funding proposal with a photovoice project for Aboriginal youth (ages 15-18) in a new culture-based program.
shaped their lives in such indelible ways that it was difficult for youth participants to see outsiders as allies. It was extremely important to both male and female participants to portray themselves as tough and invulnerable and they projected this defensive façade by actions and words. Looking back, I see how difficult it must have been for youth participants to share feelings of vulnerability. I’m grateful for this trust, evident in the stories they shared, as it was crucial to their full participation in the photovoice sessions.

Aboriginal research principles are not a simple theory or approach to ethical action but a cultural way of being. They stress the need to build respectful, reciprocal and relevant research relationships with participants. The strength of our research relationships shapes the stories or information that participants will reveal.

Facilitating politically ambiguous conversations

As the tone of conversations with youth about community safety shifted over the course of the photovoice project, participants who initially dismissed their concerns became more engaged. The strength of my relationship with youth determined the depth of their engagement and willingness to share. If someone who is unknown to Aboriginal youth participants initiates a politically ambiguous or potentially volatile conversation, youth will carefully evaluate the possible consequences of their response because they have no way of determining the spirit of the outsider’s comment. In the absence of this relationship, youth may attach a racist meaning to politically ambiguous statements given the pervasive influence of racism in their lives. Conversely, if the youth in question are familiar with the outsider, both the youth and outsider will be better able to assess how to respectfully discuss pressing social issues.
An important factor that influenced the success of our discussion about community safety was the fact that the youth participants initiated the conversation. It was the youth who independently chose the photographs they captured and highlighted the issue of community safety. Although photovoice sessions provided examples of images they could take and discuss, community safety was one of many issues that I addressed.

Community safety was a politically sensitive and ambiguous issue for the youth. The depth of the participants’ responses to community safety demonstrated a complicated analytic process: they assessed who (insider – outsider) initiated the discussion, the intent or purpose in which the issue is raised, and the social context of the discussion. For instance, my relationship with youth participants slowly shifted over the course of the photovoice project. Although not all participants may have granted me ‘insider’ status, many clearly trusted my integrity as a researcher to keep my promises (e.g., I asked participants to save their photographs into two computers files – a personal and a photovoice folder. I promised I would not look at their personal photos and that I would copy these photos to a photo CD for them). In addition, many participants began to include me in their peer group conversations and shared personal stories which required knowledge of the culture of the North End to fully understand.

When we are unfamiliar with the person initiating a conversation, we cannot anticipate how our responses will be interpreted. Similarly, when outsiders make politically ambiguous statements that appear to reinforce negative stereotypes about

124 I asked participants to download all of the photographs to the research laptop to clear up space on their memory cards.
urban Aboriginal youth, it is likely that Aboriginal youth will perceive this as the most salient aspect of any resulting discussion. To paraphrase the psychologist Lyubansky (2010), who studied racially ambiguous jokes, when we do not know the identity or intentions of the commentator, our perceptions of their comments will be determined almost entirely by the context.\textsuperscript{125}

Just as no ‘one size fits all’ sport program exists, no research method can fully capture the ideas, perceptions, needs and strengths of urban Aboriginal youth. Perhaps the biggest obstacle that qualitative researchers encounter are the pervasive patterns of silence that emerge when participants do not yet have the words, confidence or readiness to share their feelings or fears. All forms of qualitative and quantitative research are rooted in language and description, the more opaque or intangible the social phenomena under study becomes, the more difficult it becomes to precisely or confidently assert what we think our research methods uncover.

Many educators and scholars understand the power of language and literacy to change people’s lives (Freire, 2008; Kozol, 1985). Once marginalized peoples begin to both challenge and reclaim language, they can identify the instruments and processes by which they are exploited. The relationship between language, oppression and

\textsuperscript{125} Lyubansky is a psychologist who writes a blog called “Between the Lines: Perspectives on race, culture, and community”. When I noticed that youth participants spoke differently about community safety in different contexts, I tried to think of analogous situations that might provide some insight. I thought of Don Burnstick, the Aboriginal comedian who often tells racial jokes that would be considered offensive if told by non-Aboriginal comedian. I came across Lyubansky’s article when conducting an internet search. I borrowed the three levels of analysis from his blog, www.pyschologytolday.com/blog/between-the-lines/201002/is-joke-racist
empowerment is powerful. But what happens if this process does not occur or has only just begun?

_Cultural revitalization in Aboriginal communities_

By ‘cultural violence’ we mean those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science… that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence. (Galtung, 1990, p. 291)

Violence is commonly perceived within the physical realm, easily identifiable by its overt destructive capacity, such as the loss of human life. Yet, peace scholars like Johann Galtung (1990) understand that direct violence is only one of three ‘super types’ of violence – direct violence (an event), structure violence (relational processes which ebb and flow) and cultural violence (how we think and rationalize our actions) - each form of violence relies upon the others to give it shape and legitimacy. It is the overt armed conflict of early colonization (direct violence) which eventually gave way to the structural violence that is now embedded in the Canadian legal system as demonstrated, in two examples, by the Indian Act and residential school system. Galtung (1990) states that all forms of violence begin and return to cultural violence which is “an invariant… a permanence” (p. 294). Cultural violence can also be found within language, easily identified by oppressive words and ideas and concepts (e.g., bitch, Indian, faggot, savage, etc), by the languages that are killed or fade away (e.g., Aboriginal children were punished for speaking their language in residential schools), and the words that have yet to be articulated, re-claimed, or rest comfortably on our tongues and in our minds.
Canada’s history of colonization spans over four centuries (see Table 8). The last residential school in Canada closed its doors only 16 years ago in 1996, and the process of cultural reclamation and revitalization, secretly nurtured among Elders and cultural leaders, has just begun to touch the lives of younger generations of Aboriginal youth to strengthen the process of intergenerational healing that is integral to internal and intercultural healing.

Table 8: *Historical examples from Canada’s colonial history*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event / Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1608</td>
<td>First permanent settlement in Quebec City (Samuel de Champlain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Enactment of Indian Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Religious-Affiliated Residential Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880s</td>
<td>Residential Schools (with Canadian government involvement)(^{126})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>Process of closing residential schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Last residential school closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada website, n.d.)

*Cultural violence and silence*

In the cause of silence, each of us draws the face of her own fear – fear of contempt, of censure, or some judgment, or recognition, of challenge, of annihilation. But most of all, I think, we fear the visibility without which we cannot truly live. (Lorde, 2007, p. 42)

I learned of my Métis heritage when I was 15 years old, in the midst of a Manitoba Métis Federation membership drive in my community which catalyzed vitriolic

\(^{126}\) According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada website, there were 139 residential schools that were supported by the federal government. This number does not include day schools, or residential schools run by religious organizations or provincial governments. See [http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=12](http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=12)
racist ideologies amid confusing dialogues of Canada’s settler history. Most of the time, I am silent about my cultural heritage because I feel like an impostor. My attempts to claim my cultural heritage are slow, clumsy, filled with tense silence and inner anguish but I never stop trying, even when I relapse into silence. All researchers are biased in some way, and perhaps, my desire to explore and understand culturally relevant sport education drew me to work with urban Aboriginal youth whom I knew, through personal experiences and academic research (e.g., RCAP, 1996), were filled with and affected by similar silences. I had hoped that my research would help me understand and define what culture means for urban Aboriginal youth but, in the end, I realized that my journey to understand culture is still unfolding.

*What about culture?*

A cultural identity is more than a name or designation; it is the blending of one’s self-concept with one’s socialized cultural identity (Berry, 1999). And, in the case of Aboriginal peoples, particularly those living in urban areas, it is exceedingly complex and fraught with issues of cultural confusion, that feeling of *being of two cultures but not completely accepted by either* often identified by people of mixed ethnicity (Richardson, 2006).

In my research study, the notion of culture created significant confusion among WASAC leaders, youth participants, and myself. Each time I asked youth participants to describe or take photographs of images that they felt captured some aspect of what culture meant to them, they either denied they had a cultural identity or asked me what I meant by the term culture. Regrettably, these conversations occurred outside of the audio-taped Exhibit meetings so it is difficult to capture the small nuances in language and
shifting conversation that occurred while we collectively danced around the question of culture. It was a frustrating exercise for everyone involved and I eventually felt it necessary to create a definition of culture to which youth participants could connect. It was at this point that the phrase “culture of the North End” emerged. I mentioned this idea during our conversations and youth participants immediately gravitated towards the phrase, repeating it during Exhibit discussions.

Cultural Identity and Confusion

Aboriginal cultural identity is… an internal (symbolic) state (made up of cognitive, affective and motivational components) and external (behavioural) expression of being an Aboriginal person (individual emphasis), and a member of an Aboriginal community (social emphasis). A positive Aboriginal cultural identity is comprised of a number of interrelated features, including the perception of oneself as Aboriginal, considering this to be important, having positive feelings about being Aboriginal, wanting to remain an Aboriginal person, and expressing these in one’s daily behaviors. (Berry, 1999)

In examining the differences in experiences and approach to sport between northern and urban Aboriginal peoples, Paraschak (1997) identified the role that race, space, and place play in shaping the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal peoples. Aboriginal peoples living in multiethnic urban areas face constant exposure to acculturation processes of the dominant Euro-Canadian ways of life. Despite the fact that the Aboriginal population is becoming increasingly urban (Statistics Canada, 2006), it does not change their minority status within the multicultural urban areas. In many respects, the majority status of Aboriginal peoples living on reserve or in Northern
Manitoba protects diverse tribal identities and traditions (see Paraschak, 1997). Since urban Aboriginal peoples do not have the same numerical strength, tribal connections (e.g., Dene, Inuit, First Nation band) and political strength of their northern counterparts (Paraschak, 1997), the erosion and revitalization of Aboriginal culture and cultural identity is arguably different in an urban environment such as Winnipeg. Discussions among photovoice participants revealed conflicting feelings about their identity as an urban Aboriginal person. To participate in cultural revitalization efforts, urban Aboriginal youth need to feel a sense of cultural belonging or confidence to move from passive observer to engaged participant. Unfortunately, many youth participants felt disconnected from their cultural heritage. Some associated Aboriginal culture with specific practices (e.g., pow wows), others hinted at the erosion of Aboriginal culture (e.g., old cultural practices), while others stated that “there’s no Aboriginal cultural things” in their community (see photovoice excerpt, next page).

*Cultural identity: A comparative and complex landscape*

[Excerpt from photovoice session]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bianca</th>
<th>Is culture like tradition, like stuff you….?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Its tradition but its also… (interruption)… Culture also changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca</td>
<td>What I mean by tradition, I mean like, I don’t know, like there’s something that my family and I do every Halloween or something?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Yeah…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca</td>
<td>Like that? Like that would be my culture? Cause I don’t really do like the old culture stuff. I just have things that my family and I do together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larissa</td>
<td>There’s no Aboriginal cultural things in our area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carley</td>
<td>Like the traditional… like you said, like, I don’t know. Its hard to describe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca</td>
<td>Like we don’t have any, really things where you can just go and do things like pow wows or anything like that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Urban Aboriginal youth participants described their cultural landscape in relational or comparative terms and understood that the intercultural urban environment of Winnipeg’s North End shaped their cultural identity. However, they also associated Aboriginal culture with the more traditional and monocultural environmental characteristics of northern Aboriginal communities. As a result, the majority of participants indicated a perceived conflict between their urban and cultural identity at some point during the research project.

Youth were more comfortable talking about the specific urban culture of the North End as opposed to Aboriginal culture in general. Racism was referenced indirectly through discussions about the neglect of, and economic disparity between, North End residents and individuals living in more affluent urban neighborhoods. Youth participants often discussed a feeling of perceived judgment (“dirty”, “drunks”); they stood between two worlds (Aboriginal and urban identity), fit into neither and found both lacking. Most actively resisted racist stereotypes and paternalistic attitudes that undermined their sense of self-worth and belonging by adopting the hybrid cultural identity of the ‘North End’.

A few participants also shared stories about teachers and adults who they felt had treated them unfairly. In those cases, the perceived mistreatment or disrespect warranted a response in kind. Upon hearing this I was concerned that they might be expelled from school (a few students were expelled from school at the beginning of the photovoice project) and we talked about this issue at length. We tried to brainstorm ways that they could stand up for themselves that might change how teachers and adults interacted with them; we explored some kinds of positive response that could create small ripples of
change and leave them feeling that they had effectively, yet respectfully, defended
themselves.

Summary

Despite their Aboriginal heritage, most participants did not feel connected to their
culture. Unfortunately, other than the discussion between Bianca, Larissa and Carley, I
have few direct quotes which capture this feeling of disconnect that participants often
shared during informal conversations. These feelings ranged from a limited disconnect to
a complete disconnection from their culture – at least as compared to what they imagined
their Aboriginal counterparts living in northern Manitoba or reserves might feel. As a
result, youth participants felt ill-equipped to express their contradictory feelings about
their cultural identity in group discussions and their Exhibit displays. Instead, participants
chose to discuss and photograph what I described (and which they later claimed) as the
culture of the North End. To them, this urban culture was more immediate and
meaningful because they understood their cultural identity in relation to the intercultural
dynamics of their urban environment. By claiming a cultural identity shaped by their
intercultural experiences as a North End resident, urban Aboriginal participants claimed
an identity that was uniquely their own, a place and space that they understood, felt they
belonged, and where they had power.
CHAPTER 7: FROM PLANNING TO PRACTICE: CULTURALLY RELEVANT SPORT EDUCATION

Our lives are circumscribed by webs of power that limit, advance and shape our experiences. Our skin colour, body shape, physical ability, gender, geographic and economic location matters – not only in terms of the privilege and power such social markers signify, but in terms of who we feel will intuitively understand our experiences.

As an Aboriginal sport organization, the majority of WASAC’s summer camp staff and senior leaders are Aboriginal. The presence of Aboriginal sport leaders is important to Aboriginal youth because it creates a sense of cultural connection, shared experiences, and understanding. For instance, WASAC’s financial leader, Trevor, is an Aboriginal man with lightly coloured skin. Although he is not a program leader, Trevor regularly helps out with the Lil’ Moose program and attends WASAC community events. During a workshop discussion about Aboriginal role models, he shared that most of the Aboriginal youth at WASAC assume he is white because of his light skin colour. However, once he reveals his Aboriginal heritage to the youth, he feels a change in the way they interact. Being Aboriginal creates an immediate sense of connection between him and the youth.

An insider perspective can be inferred from visible characteristics, such as skin colour or through shared experiences, the connection between people who live in Winnipeg’s North End. Insiders can share a direct, immediate knowledge of the geographic, cultural, economic or political issues impacting a community, that, in turn, helps foster a sense of connection and mutual understanding between community members. When an outsider without this knowledge or connection enters the community
(independently or by invitation), a community’s members may view their perspective and motives with suspicion. This insider-outsider tension figures prominently amongst the fields of ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Robben & Sluka, 2007) and indigenous research (Bishop, 2008; Schnarch, 2004; Smith, 2001, 2008).

I had the opportunity to observe this insider-outsider tension when guest speakers or visitors would attend WASAC’s fall/winter programming. Their arrival would cause Aboriginal youth participants to inquire about who they were and where they were from (see Hampton, 1995). Often, youth would ask if the visitor was a North End resident and, if not, the youth would comment, joke or gesture in a subtle or direct manner that indicated that they questioned the relevance, but not necessarily the validity, of the visitor’s knowledge or intended teachings.

I interpreted the response of youth to outsiders to imply “if you do not understand our lives, then how can you know what we need?” Aboriginal youth participants think critically, weigh the purpose and motivations of outsiders, and are keenly aware of the political nature of education and social interventions. Although there are many reasons why Aboriginal youth assess and judge the motivations of outsiders, I interpreted their behaviours to mean:

• *Your information is not relevant to our lives because it was not created for us.* (e.g., one-size-fits-all programming or information)

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127 I once asked urban Aboriginal youth (from another community recreation program) to help me fill out a funding application. When I asked youth what I should say in the application, they told me to describe them as at-risk Aboriginal youth living in the North End of Winnipeg.
• *Your information perceives or labels us in a way that we do not like* (e.g., race- and class-based ideologies that prop up programming intended to ‘control’ potential youth delinquents. (see Coakley, 2002; Coakley & Donnelly, 2004; Donnelly, 2007; Forsyth et al., 2007)

Of course, shared experiences do not guarantee that someone with similar cultural, geographic or experiential characteristics will become a better sport leader, but there is a greater likelihood that these characteristics will create a real (or perceived) sense of understanding and connection between sport leaders and marginalized ethnocultural youth.

**Chapter Outline**

This chapter explores the relationship between WASAC senior leaders and urban Aboriginal youth during the fall and winter programming session. In the first section, I reflect upon my observations and interactions with WASAC leaders and highlight successful sport practices that can benefit those who work with urban Aboriginal youth. These observations are illustrated using quotes from an informal interview with Pino, WASAC’s Program Director who chose not to participate in the evaluation workshops but was willing to share his perspective as one of WASAC’s founders.

The second section focuses on the research findings of five evaluation workshops I conducted with WASAC senior leaders using an adapted version of Trochim’s (1999) concept-mapping technique. The purpose of the workshops was to explain the relationship between intent and action and, more specifically, the difference between the intended goals of leaders, as evidenced in their planning and facilitation of programming, how their programming ultimately unfolded and the degree to which it was successful.
Understanding the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth

Either you get it or you don’t. He/she/they just didn’t get it! Do you get it?

Pino, WASAC Program Director

The cultural focus of WASAC is apparent on many levels from the organization’s name, which identified its Aboriginal focus, to the incorporation of the Seven Grandfather Teachings and Circle of Courage into its strategic plan. Equally, this focus is reflected by the organization’s staff as more than half of WASAC’s summer camp and senior leaders are of Aboriginal ancestry. WASAC leaders were not asked about their experiential and cultural connections with participants. However, as I observed leaders over the past year, I discovered that most either understood or had direct experience with the impacts of poverty and racism.

According to Pino, WASAC tries to hire sport leaders and planners who, by his definition, ‘get it’. Pino never offered further explanation about this definition because he stated that I, too, ‘got it’. Instead, he provided several examples of sport leaders and organizations that didn’t ‘get it’ and elaborated on the specific characteristics of WASAC leaders who did. As a result of these conversations, I was able to develop the following definition of what it means to ‘get it’.

‘Getting it’ refers to an intrinsic combination of personal characteristics and qualities that a WASAC sport leader (or, for that fact, any leader working with marginalized youth populations) should possess. During the evaluation workshops (see Chapter 7), WASAC’s senior leaders devoted considerable attention to these qualities.

128 As noted in previous chapters, of WASAC’s 16 senior leaders, 10 identified as Aboriginal, 3 as Filipino, 1 as Italian, and 2 as Euro-Canadian.
Pino and Kim made a point of focusing on two crucial qualities that they believed were the starting point from which all others emerged and which I call *critical self-reflexivity* and *self-other awareness*. Both Pino and Kim felt that these qualities were essential to understanding and respecting the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth.

*Critical self-reflexivity*

Critical self-reflexivity and self-other awareness are similar concepts: the former acting as a primer and catalyst for the latter. Critical self-reflexivity refers to the ability of sport leaders to recognize and assess the dialectical relationship between their inner landscape and external socio-political location. It is this reflective activity that allows sport leaders to theorize their experiences. It is also important to note that critical self-reflexivity is a constantly evolving internal process, not an external finished product.

During my research interactions with senior leaders, I noticed that their interpretation of the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth emerged, in part, through a process of comparison and contrast with their cultural landscape. Senior leaders appeared to shift or negotiate two perspectives: their inner landscape composed of metaphysical (e.g., worldview) and axiological beliefs (e.g., personal values and philosophies), and their external socio-political location, the social significance and political implication of their particular combination of identity markers such as race, class, religion, geography, etc.

*Self-other awareness*

Once a sport leader is able to theorize his or her own experiences, they begin to develop the tools necessary to theorize the experiences of others and compare them with their own experiences. The purpose of this comparative theoretical process is to help
leaders understand their mutual interdependence (Wilson, 2001; Wilson, 2008), not to reify their separations or otherness. This is the essence of self-other awareness.

Self-other awareness also has an inherent dialectical relationship between the inner landscape and external power relationships (see also Piquemal, 1999). For example, the connection between comparative theorizing to understand interdependence and our interpretation of others (and their interpretations of us) as it relates to our identity markers and the political implications of our identity demonstrates this dialectical relationship.

Similarly, most senior leaders are aware that their bodies, experiences, and actions are closely read and interpreted by urban Aboriginal youth. They know that WASAC youth look for visible clues from leaders that they ‘get’ them. These clues reveal if leaders understand where they come from, who they are, what they need, and how they want to be seen. Self-other awareness also helps WASAC leaders build relationships through the process of identifying the aspects of their identity that are most likely to foster a sense of connection with youth.

WASAC leaders ‘get it’ when they realize that urban Aboriginal youth want sport leaders who will look beyond the surface. Youth want leaders that respect their resilience and seek to understand, rather than judge, their behaviours and actions. As noted by Jones (2008), inner city neighborhoods have their own culture and survival often depends upon learning to perform the ‘code of the street’. Consequently, it is important for sport leaders to adapt their programming and facilitation practices in ways that lessen potential conflicts between cultural ways of knowing in the inner city and within formal institutional settings (e.g., work, school) and build upon the resilience and strength of
youth. When sport leaders ‘get it’, they understand the complexity and depth of a simple statement like ‘you have to love kids’.

“You have to love kids”

Pino, WASAC Program Director

When I asked Pino what he thought was the most important quality a WASAC leader should possess, his response was simple: “they have to love kids”. Initially, this requirement may seem obvious but Pino’s comment must be interpreted within the context of WASAC’s philosophical foundation (the vision, mission and mandate of WASAC’s Strategic Plan, 2006-2009). For Pino, the term ‘kids’ encompasses both children and youth, is general and relative, and refers to all of WASAC’s participants. Since WASAC serves elementary to high school children and youth, we can assume the definition of ‘kids’ refers to those between the age of 5 and 18. This definition also encompasses a wide range of social-demographic groups including Aboriginal and ethnocultural youth from the inner city, Winnipeg’s North End community, poor or low-income families, and northern Manitoba residents.

Pino understands kids on a relational level, noting that not all children and youth will have the same experiences, backgrounds, or needs. This is similar to Vandenbroeck and de Bie’s (2006) observation that marginalized children and youth may have more in common with similarly located adults than children and youth of more privileged backgrounds. Returning to Pino’s comment that WASAC leaders need to love kids, he notes that love should not undermine the personal growth and agency of a child or youth.
Pino: You put yourself in the perspective of a child… and understand what their barriers would be and their restrictions, what their learning capabilities would be, you can be a way better [recreation] programmer. And a prime example of that would be, if you believe that… a child from Tuxedo [an affluent Winnipeg neighbourhood] would have more supports in regards to coming to program, probably have nutrition prior to the program, probably come with a backpack full of sports equipment and gear to participate, knowing that that equipment is going to be washed and cleaned later on after the program, that the program is going to be paid for from their parents. Well, how can you imagine that that would be the same delivery program that you would do for an inner city child? [But]… you have to go even further than that… the delivery of the program has to come with someone that cares about that person, that really, truly understands them. And it doesn’t mean you have to be a person from the inner city that gets it to be an instructor for an inner city kid because… someone like Martin (pseudonym) from St. James or Kim from River Heights, they have it and they deliver programs in the inner city. But they get the gist of it. What I mean by that, that they get the gist of it, is that I never want my staff to ever feel sorry an inner city kid. Never in my life.

Pino searches for sport leaders who are there “for the right reason”. He wants sport leaders who love, not pity, kids. In his opinion, charity-driven programs and leaders are dangerous to marginalized youth whose self-esteem is fragile. For example, one cannot be an effective sport leader or empower youth if they ignore the emotional or behavioural difficulties they present (Halas, 2003a). But, if you understand the socio-historical factors that contribute to these behaviours, you will be able to reflect on and adapt your leadership practices more effectively. When sport leaders begin to see the resilience of marginalized youth and focus their efforts on nurturing the strengths, skills and abilities of youth, they begin the journey of a culturally relevant sport educator.
Playfulness and Vulnerability

Fieldnote Vignette #2

[I’ve been invited by Wendy and Lindsay to visit them at STARS, a WASAC program for northern Aboriginal youth who live in Winnipeg to attend high school (which is not available near their communities). Today, they have invited a university soccer coach to teach a skills clinic for youth. As I’m sitting on the bench watching youth dribbling the ball between their feet, I hear Wendy before I see her. She is in the middle of the group, laughing and chasing her run-away soccer ball. She doesn’t care that many of the youth are more skilled than she is. In fact, she often loses track of her ball because she’s more interested in their enjoyment.]

Our interdependence makes us vulnerable beings. Each day, we are exposed to situations and realities which threaten to expose our imperfections and fears. Sport can be an intimidating social space, particularly for those who have limited opportunities to develop the requisite physical literacy skills (Halas, McRae & Carpenter, in press). Pino believes that a sport leaders’ playful nature is more important than their sport background in helping to offset the vulnerability of marginalized youth. In fact, non-athletic leaders may be better able to reduce feelings of insecurity or intimidation among Aboriginal youth who have had little exposure to organized sport.

Pino recognizes this and acknowledges that Aboriginal youth encounter diverse and more severe barriers to sport participation than white, middle class youth. As a result, Aboriginal youth have fewer opportunities to play and develop the requisite physical skills required to fully participate in community sport. When this occurs, Aboriginal
youth may become reluctant, nervous or withdrawn from participating in sport due to a fear of failure or looking silly in front of other more skilled athletes. He illustrated the relationship between playfulness and vulnerability when referring to the success of Wendy as a WASAC leader. Wendy loves kids, not sports. She did not participate in high school sports, and because of this, shares the same learning experiences (and vulnerabilities) as her youth participants. When WASAC leaders hire coaches to deliver skill-based workshops (most WASAC leaders are not accredited coaches), Wendy participates with youth participants as a novice learner, not supervising leader.

I enjoy sports because it is typically an area in which I excel. My success in sport is a two-edged sword for unlike Wendy, my self-confidence is linked to how well I perform. In many ways, I wish I were more like Wendy since her approach to sport is carefree and lighthearted and these qualities make her a better sport leader and role model.

Pino: Wendy will be one of the best leaders I’ll ever see in my history of recreation. Why? Because at the end of the day, she got engaged with them [WASAC youth]… and they got engaged with her and they loved that contagious smile. So what I said to you, I could always make someone a recreation leader, but I could never teach someone, ever, to love kids. You have it or you don’t, and that’s where I judge it.
Active Recruitment: Schools and Students

It’s not them coming to us, it’s us coming to them.

Pino, Program Director

WASAC’s philosophy of “us coming to them” is a multi-layered approach designed to ensure that Aboriginal youth have the tools necessary to participate in sport. This approach includes providing direct client supports (transportation, food, equipment) and developing strategic relationships with local schools, teachers and students. WASACs focus on nurturing relationships allows them to serve youth more effectively by:

- Accessing existing infrastructure for their programs (e.g., classrooms, gymnasiums) to decrease program-related costs,
- Developing a broad social network of allies who support urban Aboriginal youth (e.g., teacher champions) and can provide a continuum of supervisory care (e.g., teacher champions remind participants to attend program and social opportunities available through the program (e.g., job at summer kids camp)),
- Stream-lining recruitment efforts by directly connecting to Aboriginal youth in schools, and
- Removing/reducing transitional issues between the end of the school day and the start of WASAC program. Transitional issues that can negatively impact attendance levels include youth who return home, watch television, or hang out with friends.

As a result of WASAC’s recruitment methods, the organization creates a community-based programming which generates interest by local schools and teachers in the extra-
curricular activities of WASAC participants. During our discussions, Pino explained that the structural and procedural components implicit within the “us coming to them” philosophy are integral to the success of WASAC programs:

Pino: I can’t imagine participating in anything… whether it was a classroom setting or recreational hockey program on an empty stomach. I just always believed that if you provided a full nutritious lunch, that would be a fruit, a sandwich, a juice drink, plus a little snack… if they get chips and a chocolate bar, you know… at the end of the day, [they get] a 90% great lunch with a 10% bad lunch. But you know what, it gives them reason to eat it. Number 2: Transportation. That’s a huge thing that I always want to convey with our staff. It’s not them coming to us, it’s us coming to them [my emphasis]. A prime example is that we’re working with a [program partner] and he wasn’t getting it and I don’t think you can get it until you live it. He always said, “bring the kids to us, bring the kids to our programs”, and I said “no, let’s go to the kids”. We go to their school, their setting and we put the [sport equipment] right in their own back yard.

Summary

Social exclusion is a relational process whereby the experiences and interests of less powerful groups are pushed to the margins of society. WASAC organizational and senior leaders understand that social inclusion is a dynamic, multi-dimensional process that must address the social-psychological as well as structural barriers. Pino and Kevin understand that it is necessary to shift this power dynamic at the program level (as evidenced by their “us coming to them” philosophy) and in the micro-level interactions between leaders and youth through critical self-reflexivity, self-other awareness, etc.

It should also be noted that Pino and Kevin place equal emphasis on the quality of their sport leaders. After all, WASAC leaders must be equally skilled as planners and facilitators, and their success requires proficiency in both areas. Consequently, WASAC
strives to recruit culturally relevant leaders who, as Pino would remark, ‘get’ the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth. Simply put, WASAC recognizes that the successful delivery of culturally relevant sport programming requires uniquely talented sport leaders.

Workshop Evaluation Results

The evaluation workshops with WASAC leaders was designed to meet three objectives: (1) to identify and describe the program components that have a significant impact on the cultural relevance and strength-based nature of WASAC programs, (2) to generate pertinent information that could enhance existing programs and provide data for funding reports, and, (3) to construct a user-friendly conceptual model of the program theory for future program planning and evaluations.

Rossi et al (2004) describe two inter-related parts of program theory: the program impact theory (what and why) and the program process theory (how) that evaluations should address (p. 139 - 141). WASAC programs are based on certain implicit assumptions about what a culturally relevant recreation program looks like and the types of leaders best suited to bringing out and building upon the strengths of the Aboriginal youth participants (program impact theory). These assumptions or ideas are planned and delivered through WASAC programs and by WASAC leaders. Consequently, it is important to understand the processes and mechanisms considered important to the successful delivery of the program as well as the types of leadership practices necessary to successfully engage WASAC participants (program process theory). As such, the aim of theory-driven evaluation is to improve “social practice by discovering gaps between espoused theories and theories-in-use and by bringing this information to the attention of
stakeholders” (Friedman, 2001, p. 162). I was both an evaluator and facilitator and helped the WASAC leaders understand and clarify the distinction between the types of programs they wanted to provide and those they were offering.

Theory of Change and Practice

The workshop sessions were structured around three thematic questions that guided the entire evaluation process and helped frame the relationship between the goals, individual components, and specific activities of WASAC programs. The questions guided the evaluation process and guided leaders through a chronological assessment of WASAC programs: program planning, leadership practices and intended program outcomes or benefits. The three thematic questions were as follows:

- Program planning: What strategies, actions, and processes are important to the successful planning and implementation of a sport program for urban Aboriginal youth? (Note: WASAC leaders divided this question into two components: organizational and program-related issues).
- Sport Leadership: What type of experiences, knowledge and personal characteristics do you think sport leaders who work with urban Aboriginal youth should possess?
- Benefits of WASAC programs: What are the sport and non-sport benefits (e.g., social, personal, cultural, etc.) of WASAC programs for urban Aboriginal youth?

Integrating data: concept-mapping procedure plus storytelling activity

This section combines two types of evaluation activities that occurred during the evaluation workshops with WASAC senior leaders. As noted in Chapter 4, during Sessions 1 – 4, WASAC leaders created, sorted, and ranked sentences for each thematic
question. In Session 5, WASAC leaders were asked to choose from a set of top-ranked statements to tell a story that illustrated the nature of their work. Due to the large numbers of sentences generated, I chose to present the data from Sessions 1 – 4 in a table format, similar to the reporting structure used in academic articles (for example, see Yampolskaya, Nesman, Hernandez & Koch, 2004; Mercier, Piat, Peladeau & Dagenais, 2000). While this information is invaluable, it provides few concrete examples of WASAC’s actual work or leader’s reflections on their programs and practices.

The data is presented in the following manner: following a brief description explaining the concept-mapping procedures and a summary table of the sentences generated, I provide stories from WASAC leaders that illustrate how WASAC programs are delivered. The stories are further sub-divided into two evaluation areas: stories that illustrate areas requiring improvement or attention and stories that illustrate areas where WASAC excels. These stories help enliven the research results by providing a glimpse of WASAC through the eyes of the leaders who develop and deliver the programs.

*Reading the tables*

Concept-mapping articles often provide a large volume of data in the form of sentences which are organized into themes and ranked according to the importance that participants ascribe to each theme. The tables presented in this section describe what WASAC senior leaders intended or believed their programs and practices would accomplish. Since the findings related to this section were highly detailed, I have summarized the results using a table. I have organized the results by each of the four program components: organizational support and services, program services and activities, leadership qualities and practices, and WASAC program benefits. Each
component was derived from the three thematic questions that guided the evaluation workshop sessions (see above). Tables list the top three essential tools, processes and mechanisms associated with each component (for a complete list of items, see Appendix G, H, I & J).

The three thematic questions generated over 250 statements across four components: organizational supports and services, program services and delivery, sport leadership qualities and practices, and program benefits. Due to the large quantity of data produced by the concept-mapping technique procedure, I have only included the leaders’ top-ranked statements for each component (the full results of the workshops are included in Appendix H to K). I have chosen to present the results in a table format, a format similar to that used in theory-driven evaluation research. Each table provides a brief overview of the tools, processes and mechanisms that WASAC leaders’ considered essential to their program planning and facilitation practices. Since leaders analyzed, ranked and edited their statements during the workshops, these tables represent a finalized, stand-alone data set. The complete list of statements generated during the evaluation activity can be found in Appendices H to K.

Explanation of the Story Selections and Organization

Evaluators generally consider the complexity of social programs as the greatest challenge facing the field of evaluation (Pawson, 2003; Patton, 2011). Pawson (2003)

129 My review of theory-driven evaluation research revealed that researchers prefer to include the complete list of statements generated in the body of their article, generally followed by a hierarchical cluster analysis. Although the workshops were inspired by theory-driven evaluation, they did not follow the same procedures and steps. Thus, I chose to format my results according to those aspects of theory-driven evaluation that are relevant to the workshops.
describes the goal of theory-based evaluation as one of enlightenment or illumination in which the research process and results are more important to how we think about program planning and implementation than the actual act of planning and implementing the program.

What the theory-driven approach initiates is a process of thinking through the tortuous pathways along which a successful programme has to travel. What it produces and what you, dear evaluators, should be advising is: ‘remember A, ‘beware of B’, ‘take care of C’, ‘D can result in both E and F’, ‘if you try G make sure that H is in place’. (Pawson, 2003, p. 488)

The concept-mapping procedure produced a large volume of data as evidenced by the data in Tables 9 through 12 (see also Appendices H through K). While leaders found the concept-mapping procedure extremely helpful, they often wanted to add caveats to this data (sentences) because they found it difficult to reduce the complexity of their programs to the statements and categories they generated. This is largely the result of the fact that so few programs are implemented exactly as intended due to the complexity of WASAC programs and the mercurial nature of the non-profit environment. For example, many leaders asked me, “should we include this statement even though we don’t do this activity anymore?” or “we want to rank this statement as very important but we haven’t done this activity lately”. Ultimately, leaders were never completely satisfied with their final statements because they felt that each needed to be understood in relation to a number of contingencies and the immediate program context.

As noted above, I have organized stories from leaders according to two evaluation questions that I posed to WASAC leaders during the workshops; what statements
represent areas that require improvement (areas requiring improvement or attention); what statements identify areas where WASAC excels (areas of excellence), particularly in relation to other community sport organizations? I compared statements selected from the evaluation questions with those selected by leaders during the storytelling activity. Using this analytic process to identify overlapping statements, I could link examples from the evaluation activity to stories about the strengths and weaknesses of their programs and practices. This comparison or layering of research results helps illustrate the complexity of WASAC’s programs and how leaders manage and negotiate the ambiguity and uncertainty of their work.

Organization Support and Activities

This program component is part of the program planning thematic question. WASAC leaders identified four areas where the success and sustainability of WASAC’s programs is dependent upon organizational support activities. Although there is considerable overlap in job roles and responsibilities between senior administrative and program leaders, these four areas depict the primary responsibilities of senior administrative leaders.
Table 9. *Sample of organizational categories and top-ranked activities*

### ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT & SERVICES

**Organizational Logistics**
- Purchase liability insurance for staff & participants and review it when planning program activities.
- Senior leadership team ensures an adequate number of staff and staff hours for program preparation & implementation.
- Produce a printed and on-line annual report that showcases WASAC activities.

**Staff Support and Development**
- Appreciation nights for staff.
- Develop formal review and promotion strategy framework for staff.
- Provide flexibility and supports for staff to pursue further education or training.

**Funding**
- Ensure funding for core programs.
- Meet with funders for reporting and program update purposes.
- Approach Winnipeg’s corporate community for financial and promotional support.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**
- Create and conduct program evaluation at the beginning and end of each program.
- Review on-going programs annually against funders’ criteria.
- Review on-going programs annually against WASAC’s aims and objectives.

**Areas requiring improvement or attention**

Workshop sessions provided senior leaders with an opportunity to discuss work-related concerns in a setting conducive to constructive feedback. As a result, senior
leaders learned that others shared many of their concerns. For example, many leaders spoke informally within their groups about the need for regular team meetings as a means to enhancing communication among leaders and reducing the perceived distance between senior administration and program leaders. Leaders also identified additional organizational support areas that needed improvement during Session 5.

During these discussions, there was considerable discussion about organizational supports, particularly statements related to the staff support and development category. Many senior leaders, particularly program leaders, argued that WASAC needed to host appreciation nights for staff (statement #44) as these types of activities are extremely important for team morale.

Senior leaders also felt that WASAC needed to develop a formal performance review and staff promotion processes (statement #12) to ensure that they received performance-related feedback. Because WASAC’s organizational operations tend to be informal, very little documentation or information exists regarding work roles and responsibilities. A formal review and promotion strategy would improve organizational stability and consistency by helping new staff assuming work roles that are characterized by a high degree of creativity and autonomy. In addition, this issue is extremely timely considering the imminent turnover among WASAC’s senior leaders in the next few years (see Chapter 5).

In expressing her desire for scheduled team meetings for senior leaders, Lindsay provided examples of different ways to enhance communication among WASAC leaders.
Later, Joel asked Lindsay about the professional development workshops that she attended while working at WASAC, Joel was not aware such opportunities existed and wondered how other WASAC leaders could participate in such workshops. Lindsay and Brittany replied that WASAC doesn’t require senior leaders to participate in these types of workshops but if leaders are interested, they can approach Trevor or Pino for permission and financial support.

Lindsay: In a few places that I’ve worked, we used to have scheduled professional development and team building activities. In the morning we would do a training somewhere or … learn about other resources in the community that could help our organization. And in the afternoon we’d do a team building activity … something fun for the staff. I think that’s really important to keep up staff morale and for everyone to debrief sometimes... Like scheduled team meetings… every Thursday at the end of the month. I think it’s really important for supervising staff to show to junior staff that they appreciate them.

Joel: Maybe we can have… I know that for many staff, [they need] first aid, CPR, so maybe making that part of orientation week…. Yah, definitely the opportunity is there, just maybe making it more mandatory or… and more formal too and…

Brittany: I’ve gone to workshops myself over the past year, like four or five. So the opportunity is there, I don’t think its, like its not advertised… I mean nobody really thinks about it unless you ask. You know what I mean?

Lindsay: Maybe with some options?

Joel: Where I work during the summer… they would do orientation and … [where] the senior people … would choose something to present on. …So saying to the senior staff saying, ‘Hey, know what? I want you to talk about this with the new staff.’ Not just encouraging but you know, mentoring I guess.


Areas of Excellence

It is important that researchers understand that constructive feedback involves balancing areas of improvement with areas of strength. Programs and personal practices are not simply enhanced by removing or adapting underperforming factors but by continuing to invest in what works. The following quotes examine the unique strengths and qualities specific to WASAC and the sense of pride among leaders which inspired them to continue their efforts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rob:</th>
<th>Some participants like [WASAC] hoodies or shirts and they’re very proud to wear their orange. A lot of us take it for granted but I remember we were going to Shamattawa and people were wearing WASAC orange and they were proud that we were there and …some people in the community, some activists …you see them wearing WASAC shirts, they’re on the news reporting about their own issues and their being interviewed and they’re wearing the WASAC outfit.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay:</td>
<td>I took shirts for volunteers and the youth leaders who helped with the pancake breakfast and our entertainment night [in two northern reserves]. And everybody was so proud to wear them. I ran out of shirts and people were like “Oh, I like those shirts. Where can I buy those? Can I get one? I’ll buy one off you”. And I was …so surprised. Yah, we take it for granted because we wear it everyday and you know, it’s just a WASAC shirt but it does mean a lot. It symbolizes a lot to people (agreement from others) and this one woman I gave her a shirt and the next time I went out there, I gave her a hoodie and … she was so appreciative. Now she just loves me (leaders teasing Lindsay about bribing people). She loved her hoodie. She was like “oh my god, I love this” and everyone loves the colour orange.</td>
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In the organizational support area, most of the top-ranked statement relates to WASAC’s innovative funding strategies. This result is not entirely surprising given the significant emphasis WASAC places on funding acquisition, monitoring and relationship building with funders and supporters. In fact, WASAC’s strong emphasis on marketing
their programs and reporting on outcomes to potential and existing funders led them to embrace the power of visual technology and images.

Rob: This is something that like you guys don’t see too often, it’s something that Kevin does. When he speaks to people like he always mentions WASAC or Eco-U and he always has a video like A tap on the shoulder so he … can describe WASAC but its something different to see the actual programs and the different stories that come out of the programs.

Brittany: [At] the north meeting, how much did that one like short little clip [WASAC video] help with the funders? You give them an idea of what we’re doing. Like I think its one thing to have an activity report and have somebody talking about the program but to see it… Like Lindsay in that photo, you’re laughing with that little girl and you can see (her emphasis) the connection, right?

Figure 28. *An instant connection*

Brittany (above quote) was referencing this photograph of Lindsay, the WASAC North coordinator. WASAC leaders liked it because it demonstrated the feeling of connection that program leaders foster with youth participants. This photograph appears in a WASAC promotional video currently in production.

Photo provided by WASAC
Program Services and Activities

The program services and activity component forms part of the program planning thematic question. Leaders were asked to identify four program areas that are key to WASAC’s success with urban Aboriginal youth. While senior administrative and senior program leaders are involved with organizational services and activities, the level of involvement of each varies and depends on the stage of program development (i.e., planning or implementation). The planning stage is indeed a collaborative process, but the final decision-making power (e.g., veto power) ultimately resides with senior administrative leaders. Senior program leaders are free to make suggestions and forward their position, but when disagreements arise, the decision of senior administrative leaders is final.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Pino is responsible for managing internal organizational operations and his decisions regarding program activities are considered final.
Table 10. *Sample of program categories and top-ranked activities*

**PROGRAM SERVICES & ACTIVITIES**

*Strength-based programming*
- Develop programs that foster future youth leaders (mentoring).
- Take photos and video of youth to give to youth (e.g., magazine cover, team pictures, etc.).
- Host a celebration or recognition event at the end of programs.

*Barrier-Free Programming*
- Programs and staff go to the youth. “Us coming to them” (e.g., go to their school, neighbourhood).
- No program registration costs.
- Develop programs that understand the barriers, perspectives & strengths of target youth.

*Community Outreach & Partnerships*
- Create promotional materials (e.g., videos, pamphlets, presentations, banners, website).
- Partner with organizations for resources (staff, funding, equipment).
- Create partnerships with schools, especially those in the inner city of Winnipeg.

*Program Logistics*
- Create registration forms for youth to participate in programs.
- Create rules (e.g., behavior contracts) for youth participants in program.
- Choose a school where we have a connection with teachers or administration.

*Areas requiring improvement or attention*

Another area that WASAC leaders felt required more attention was the celebration of participant achievements, particularly those in leadership programs such as STARS, SMART and YAP. In the past, program leaders had sufficient funding for celebration events but, over time, events of this nature were gradually reduced or
eliminated due to funding and time constraints. During the storytelling session, many leaders recounted stories about these events and the sense of pride and closure they provide for participants. For example, Stephinie described how much she enjoyed it when WASAC leaders planned a barbeque celebration for Aboriginal youth who successfully completed the YAP program.

**Stephinie:** I remember working all summer with YAP and… at the end having that barbeque and just sitting down and relaxing, talking with everybody, toss around the football for awhile. Its enjoyable and it’s just fun.

Lindsay explained that, during the past year, she felt WASAC was hosting fewer celebrations at the end of youth leadership programs and was concerned that they might stop hosting them altogether.

**Lindsay:** [celebrations] give people that sense of accomplishment, like a mini graduation, you know just celebrate their accomplishments and the completion of the program… One thing… I’ve wanted to do for the SMART and STARS program is to have like a graduation. To have guest speakers come, like to have Pino come and speak to the [participants]… so they really understand what WASAC is about and you know, because they only see us, they don’t get to see our other role models or other staff.

**Areas of excellence**

WASAC leaders tagged statements as “excellent’ in all four categories of this program component (strength-based programming, barrier-free programming, community outreach and partnerships and program logistics). The strength-based programming and barrier free programming categories elicited numerous stories and discussions during Session 5. Even those among WASAC senior leaders whose administrative work limited
the amount of time they had to interact with youth believed in the importance of building relationships with WASAC participants. Since the workload for Brittany and Trevor is more manageable during the fall/winter season, both staff are less involved with the financial and administrative work that would usually keep them at the main office. As a result, this provides a rare opportunity for Brittany and Trevor to participate alongside senior program leaders during the delivery of the Lil Moose program. During the storytelling session, Brittany spoke to the importance of statement #14: *staff should make it a priority to get to know each participant.*

**Brittany:** I think this is important on so many different levels. First off… (as) a coordinator or program supervisor, you have to know what each participant’s situation is like… (their) family, if they need rides, stuff like that. Also, it’s important to know each participant because, for example, Stephnie was a SMART participant and now she’s one of us… And, it’s nice … if you have a personal connection with the participants then it’s kind of like family feeling. For example… I didn’t know Terry [pseudonym for a 12-year old Lil Moose participant] was my neighbor and … and now I see him at home all the time with his family and now we know each other.

WASAC leaders recognize that food plays an integral role in attracting, retaining and engaging urban Aboriginal youth to their programs. Many leaders spoke of the importance of food in terms of both celebration and social justice, highlighting the fact that youth from low-income families often face issues of hunger and poor or improper nutrition. And, although such stories were the most common story related by all leaders (program and administrative), when Stephnie shared her experience as a former SMART participant, the seeming simplicity of statement #30: *provide nutritious and tasty meals*
contrasted starkly against the fundamental importance of food to WASAC’s barrier-free programming efforts.

**Stephinie:** Me and my uncle live in an apartment and sometimes can’t make ends meet so there were times when I was in school where we had no food in our fridge. So I would be going and not eating for days and then WASAC comes and they have food and then I have food and they always have extra food so I was always taking food home too… I think that’s really important cause it helps not only within the group but cause they …let kids take home food, I thought that was pretty good and important.

Stephinie’s statement that “they (WASAC) have food and then I have food” is powerful. She understands the intentionality behind WASAC’s generous provision of food: senior program leaders often brought extra food to allow youth participants to take food home to their family or nourish themselves between program sessions. When I first noticed the amount of food provided for SMART participants, I asked Lindsay about the potential issue of wasting food. On occasion, she explained, some food might remain but participants were usually eager to take the extra food to their family. Realizing the importance of this food to the youth and their families, I, too, made sure to bring extra food and storage containers (e.g., plastic storage bags, empty margarine containers) to the photovoice sessions.

*C) Leadership Qualities and Practices*

WASAC senior leaders created three categories related to leadership qualities and practices (skills, leader characteristics, and training), which they considered essential to WASAC’s administrative and program leaders. *General leadership qualities* and *working with WASAC team* (first and third category) is applicable to groups of senior leaders.
whereas working with urban Aboriginal youth (second category) primarily relates to program leaders (see Table 11).

Table 11. *Sample of leader categories and top-ranked leadership practices*

**LEADERSHIP QUALITIES & PRACTICES**

*General Leadership Qualities*

- Leaders need to adapt to challenging situations (emergencies, emotional breakdowns, change of plans).
- Leaders need to understand the personal experiences and background of youth.
- Leaders need to be humble; they need to do what is needed to make the program successful.

*Working with Urban Aboriginal youth*

- Leaders need to empower, not ‘enable’ youth.
- Leaders need to understand youth, not feel sorry for them.
- Leaders need to find kid’s individual greatness.

*Working with WASAC Team*

- Leaders need good communication skills.
- WASAC needs Aboriginal leaders as role models for Aboriginal youth.
- WASAC needs leaders who do not believe they are better than anybody else, yet do not undervalue themselves.

**Areas requiring improvement or attention**

Participants identified a number of areas where they could improve individually and collectively, and in terms of their relationship with participants. To my surprise, the leaders identified areas for improvement that I considered areas of excellence. However, after listening to their stories, I came to realize that the leaders placed high expectations upon themselves and the organization. Furthermore, I noticed that comments about needed improvements reflected the personal dedication and drive of staff rather than
pressing organizational issues. For example, leaders felt that they had a personal responsibility to improve their ability to tap into the individual greatness of the youth participants (statement #67, Appendix J).

Another statement that generated a heated discussion among senior leaders related to the discrimination faced by Aboriginal youth living in the North End. It began when Lindsay shared a brief story of her experiences as a summer camp leader at WASAC Kids camp. That summer, there was an outbreak of head lice among some of the children and one of the camp leaders was so uncomfortable around the children that she did not want to work with them. Lindsay was extremely frustrated by the ignorance of many camp leaders (particularly university students who lived outside of the North End) and the decision of some leaders to send affected children home.

Lindsay: [Lice] always been an issue with kids, no matter where you live but I guess some people just assume that you’re poor and Aboriginal, that …everyone’s going to have lice…. Whether you’re a teacher, social worker, counselor, doctor… you’re going to come into contact with kids who have lice and you still have to do your job so that’s the point that I brought to everyone [camp leaders] cause they were trying to say that if a kid has lice, send them home. But, I didn’t agree with it because the kids are only here for one week and like you can’t just send a kid home because they have lice. It’s not their fault…. people act like head lice is a disease, it’s not a disease. Like, if a kid has lice, a kid has lice.

Lindsay’s impassioned comments about the camp incident sparked a widespread discussion by the group. Stephinie followed Lindsay by sharing a similar story about a cousin who was ostracized at a summer camp because he had contracted head lice.
Lindsay’s frustration with the manner in which the camp addressed potential lice infections, combined with her concern of how racism promotes the view that Aboriginal youth are considered more prone to infection, clearly illustrated the complexity of their work. Similarly, Stephnie’s story about the hasty and insensitive treatment her cousin received from camp staff was a powerful example of the impact that sport leaders can have on the self-esteem, socialization and well-being of children under their care. For a child attending a summer camp, being sent home from camp or publicly targeted for treatment can have a potentially devastating impact on a child’s well-being.

WASAC ensures that children impacted by head lice have an opportunity to experience a full week of camp (either children can return to camp immediately following treatment or return for a different week of camp). The purpose of Lindsay’s story was not for summer camp leaders to ignore health issues that might negatively impact other children but that sport leaders and programs need to learn how to respond to such issues in a manner that is respectful, sensitive and discrete.
Areas of Excellence

During the story telling session, many leaders spoke about the qualities they admired in each other and the collective strength of the senior leadership team: leaders felt that they could rely on each other during stressful periods in their lives. Equally, interpersonal skills such as communication and approachability were considered valuable to those working with youth and colleagues. Leaders also used these sessions to honour the work of front-line staff like Lindsay and Wendy whose commitment to youth transcended work-related responsibilities, obligations, and hours (statement #19: leaders should demonstrate commitment). The non-profit environment owes much of its positive image to individuals like Lindsay and Wendy who dedicate their spare time to activities like baking cookies and doing homework with youth and acting as positive role models by visiting with incarcerated young offenders.¹³¹

Darren: This is another area which WASAC excels and a perfect example is Wendy. Any time we call her, she’d be there for an event even if it’s not a scheduled event. Sometimes things come up and we need people and we need people quick. Another example is Lindsay, working on weekends when she goes to Duck Bay, working a full week and the commitment that some of our staff have when running the North programs in the summer when they have to work with (youth participants) for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. That’s a huge responsibility and [it takes] a huge toll on our youth role models as well (youth leaders who are hired from programs like SMART). I think that just shows how role modeling by the leaders at WASAC have a ripple effect to our youth as well.

¹³¹ These are just two of the many examples of the dedication and commitment that Lindsay and Wendy have shown to WASAC participants outside of program hours.
Many senior leaders also spoke of the support they receive from each other. To them, WASAC was more than a community sport organization; it was a family-like environment where leaders were supported by each other. If someone needed work flexibility to accommodate a return to school, required assistance during traumatic events like the passing of a family member, or was pursuing a significant life goal like Kevin’s political ambitions, WASAC leaders would rally around the individual (statement #9: *leaders should support each other*).

**Joel:** It’s very important that we support each other. I think we’ve all enjoyed quite a bit of flexibility since we’ve been employed here so, people supporting us whether its volunteering with Kevin’s campaign or me going to school the last couple years and you know… having people there to get you through those difficult times. WASAC been really good…. With most jobs, it’s hard to get that kind of support.

**Program Benefits**

As opposed to asking leaders to identify the desired outcomes for their programs, I asked that they highlight the sport and non-sport benefits of the programs they deliver. Although there is no tangible difference between the two terms ‘outcomes’ and ‘benefits’, there is an important semantic distinction. I felt that the term ‘benefits’ was a more accurate reflection of WASAC’s philosophical values and would elicit a greater range of responses from leaders. I, like WASAC, associate the term ‘outcomes’ with external stakeholders such as researchers, policy makers and funders who are more interested in concrete, quantitative results as opposed to those informal program benefits that cannot be easily documented.

There are seven categories related to the sport and non-sport benefits of WASAC’s programming (see Table 12). A summary review of the categories reveals the
relatively low priority that WASAC places on traditional sport program outcomes such as physical literacy skills, the promotion of healthy lifestyles, and cardiovascular fitness.

Table 12. Sample of top-ranked program benefits

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SPORT &amp; NON-SPORT BENEFITS</th>
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**Employment & Training Opportunities**
- Employment and leadership opportunities within WASAC summer camps are provided.
- New job skills and employment preparation skills are learned.
- Knowledge about youth and Aboriginal employment agencies and resources is increased.

**Personal Development**
- Positive peer relationships and friendships are fostered among youth.
- Sense of responsibility, accomplishment and self-worth is increased.
- Decreased feelings of isolation and boredom.

**Cultural Awareness & Opportunities**
- Increased exposure to cultural activities.
- Increased opportunity to develop relationships with positive Aboriginal role models and leaders.
- Negative cultural stereotypes about Aboriginal people are addressed and challenged.

**Life Skills**
- Life skills, such as social insurance card, passport & license applications, and medical cards, are learned informally and formally.
- Life/cultural skills are learned (e.g., applying for a Status or Métis card).
- Life skills, such as getting a bank account and money management skills, are increased.
Table 12 continued… SPORT AND NON-SPORT BENEFITS

**Education**
- Youth connection to partner schools and teachers involved with program is strengthened
- School attendance and performance is improved
- Likelihood of graduating high school is improved

**Community Connections**
- Leadership and resource capacity in northern Aboriginal communities is increased
- Parental involvement is supported
- Knowledge and connection to community resources is improved

**Sport Training & Opportunities**
- Access to sports or sport equipment is increased (e.g., hockey)
- Increased opportunities to act as a leader / role model in community
- Access to non-school or outdoor sports is increased (e.g., camping, canoeing, swimming)

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**Areas requiring improvement or attention**

The distribution of statements revealed that the program benefits component contained the greatest number of statements about the need for improvement. Of all categories, more than half of the issues identified as requiring improvement were located in three categories: cultural awareness and opportunities; education; and community. Interestingly, leaders indicated that all of the issues in the cultural awareness and opportunities category required improvement.

Unfortunately, there was not sufficient time to discuss the various program benefit statements but I managed to address these issues with WASAC leaders during informal conversations and other workshop sessions. Like the photovoice participants, WASAC
leaders did not openly discuss the cultural nature of their programming or Aboriginal culture. At first, their discomfort talking about culture seemed odd in light of WASAC’s organizational mission and the high number of Aboriginal staff and participants which, it should be noted, includes an Aboriginal elder. However, returning to the issue of Aboriginal culture during the workshops eventually revealed the basis for their hesitation.

Despite the cultural roots of WASAC’s programs and organizational philosophy, leaders do not consider their programs to be *cultural programs*, instead, viewing them as leadership development programs for *Aboriginal youth*. Thus, culture figured prominently into their programming and leadership practices, just not in the manner I expected.

There is a significant difference between Aboriginal culture and the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth. The workshops functioned as a form of personal and collective journey for WASAC leaders and through group discussions, many leaders reflected on the need to improve the cultural content of their programming. The need for improvement, however, was not the result of programming that inaccurately reflected the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth. Instead, this recognition reflected the understanding by WASAC that the urban landscape is shaped by the relative absence of, and hostility towards, traditional Aboriginal culture, knowledge and identity.

*Areas of Excellence*

Leaders ranked statements in all but two of the seven program benefit categories as “excellent” (*the cultural awareness and opportunities* and *community* categories did not have any statements tagged as “excellent”). Three categories had approximately half of their statements tagged as “excellent” and included *life skills, education,* and *sport*
training and opportunities. The remaining categories of employment and training opportunities and personal development contained a very high number of positive assessments which reflected the high priority WASAC places on these program benefits.

During the storytelling session, Stephinie discussed how the SMART program helped her.

Stephinie: The SMART program got me a bunch of certifications which are good and that will get me somewhere. And, also has the tutoring helped get me through school and school’s important to have. Also, it gives you… ways to do stuff like while you’re sitting there doing your homework, you can go through it and then you learn how to review your work and learn how to organize your work and yah… pretty much gives you stuff to do which helps you in the future.

Summary

I designed the evaluation workshops for the purpose of developing a comprehensive understanding of WASAC’s approach to program planning and implementation. In particular, I paid close attention to the tools, mechanisms and processes WASAC considered essential to successful program planning and leadership practices.

The concept-mapping technique was a useful process that generated a detailed description of WASAC’s programs, leadership practices and program benefits. However, because the complexity of community sport programs means they are rarely implemented as planned, it was important to add evaluation and storytelling activities to the workshops. These activities encouraged leaders to critically reflect on the information they produced, the gaps and inconsistencies in their work, and areas where they excelled.
The storytelling activity helped contextualize their work by providing real-life examples that answered the questions: Why did this work? Why didn’t this work?

Effective program processes and mechanisms are critical to service delivery and require the support of the organization and individual members. In our discussions, leaders identified four essential program processes and mechanisms: strength-based programming, barrier-free programming, community outreach and partnerships, and program logistics.

At the organizational level, WASAC’s programs are supported at four levels: organizational logistics, staff support and development, funding, and monitoring and evaluation. At the individual level, WASAC’s programs require sport leaders with general leadership skills and team-building skills as well as skills specific to working with urban Aboriginal youth. When all three program components align, WASAC’s programs deliver the following seven sport and non-sport program benefits: employment and training opportunities, personal development, cultural awareness and opportunities, life skills, education, community connections and sport training and opportunities.

In an ideal world, WASAC’s programs would unfold exactly as designed and no further investigation would be necessary. In reality, however, programming is rarely delivered as intended due to the instability of the non-profit environment and the complexity of lived experience. In Section Two, WASAC leaders reflected upon the gaps and inconsistencies that prevented their program plan from unfolding as they intended. Upon reflection, leaders felt greater organizational support and individual recognition would improve their work. They felt that communication among senior leaders required improvement because their day-to-day work responsibilities prevented them from
keeping abreast of organizational developments in other program areas. In the context of WASAC’s continued growth, program leaders worried that the priorities of the organization were shifting away from the little things that made its programs special (i.e., celebratory events).

WASAC leaders have a lot to celebrate. In the storytelling activity, they spoke about the privilege of wearing ‘WASAC orange’, their distinct bright orange t-shirts that were coveted by youth participants and WASAC North community partners. Leaders were proud of each other and celebrated each other’s unique gifts and talents. Many people spoke about Rom’s efforts to develop inspirational videos and photographs about WASAC programs for funders and participants. Others highlighted the inspirational leadership, charismatic personality and unwavering commitment to WASAC by its Executive Director, Kevin. And, when Stepfinie shared her experiences as a WASAC participant and senior leader, her stories demonstrated the positive social impact of WASAC programs.

The abovementioned workshop results were not intended to provide a paint-by-numbers guide for replicating WASAC’s programs and leadership practices. Rather, the results illuminate the complex relationship between knowledge, intent and action, and the theory of action and practice. If there is one certainty, however, it is that the complexity of lived experience and social programming remains the greatest challenge to program evaluation, challenges that will continue to test those who seek to respect these complexities.
CHAPTER 8: THEORIZING COMPLEXITY.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT SPORT FOR URBAN ABORIGINAL YOUTH

Introduction

The purpose of my research was to investigate and analyze how senior leaders at the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC) used sport to address issues of social exclusion by developing and enhancing the social, cultural, physical and life skills of urban Aboriginal youth. As a result of the scarcity of information regarding relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth (Forsyth et al., 2007), and the complexity of WASAC’s programming, my research study explored the notion of culturally relevant sport education using three strands of inquiry.

- What is the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth and senior leaders involved with WASAC programs?
  - How do similarities and differences in the cultural landscapes between youth participants and senior leaders impact their interactions and relationships?
- What societal conditions and structures shape the landscape of community sport and how does this impact WASAC’s work?
- What theories of change and practice do WASAC leaders reference and use in their sport programs?
  - What tools, processes and mechanisms do WASAC leaders use to promote success for Aboriginal youth?
  - What are the sport and non-sport benefits of WASAC programs for urban Aboriginal youth?
These three questions informed all aspects of my research methodology and practice during both phases of my research study, beginning with my initial role as a participant observer and continuing into the cooperative phase which included the evaluation workshops with WASAC senior leaders and the photovoice project with youth (ages 15 to 18 years) in the SMART program.

**Chapter Overview**

The first section of this chapter describes how the research results from Chapter 5, 6, and 7 will be analyzed and synthesized. This section contains numerous visual diagrams and representations, including summary tables for research findings and theoretical figures and models to illustrate how the research findings align and contrast with early theoretical assumptions and ideas.

The second section returns to the cyclical model of inquiry developed in Chapter 3 (Figure 2) and describes the research synthesis and knowledge translation process. I reiterate the theoretical assumptions of culturally relevant sport education (CRSE) that guided my research project and my use of this framework to structure the analysis, synthesis and communication of my research findings. Where relevant, I provide recommendations for sport researchers, policy makers and practitioners which may assist them in the future development, delivery and facilitation of culturally relevant sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth.
Organization of Research Data and Presentation of Findings

In research, the written word serves as an analytic tool that can illuminate (or further mystify) dynamic relationships between researchers and participants, writers and readers, subjectivity and objectivity, intentionality and rhetoric, and language and knowledge. Yet, our attempts to theorize the complexity of concrete worlds of experience does not grant us academic license to write in ways that confuse or marginalize people. A common critique of critical theory and pedagogy is that the theoretical language used by scholars can itself create new forms of oppression (Darder et al., 2003). Admittedly, this dissertation could be similarly critiqued for utilizing inaccessible language. In an effort to address this, I have endeavoured to structure and write my conclusion in an accessible format given it contains recommendations for practitioners and policy makers.

The wealth and diversity of research data generated through ethnographic observations of WASAC’s organizational operations, the photovoice project, and program evaluation workshops makes it difficult to easily synthesize the results in a clear, uncomplicated manner. The difficulty of this task is further compounded by my theoretical framework of culturally relevant sport education which examines research findings through the four dimensions in which social exclusion manifests itself in sport and society. Due to the copious amount of data produced and the theoretical and methodological complexity of my study, I decided to present my research findings in both visual and written formats. In most cases, the visual presentation of research findings precedes and sets the context for later text-based discussions.
Synthesis of Research Findings

As I state in Chapter 1, culturally relevant sport education must be examined as a system of webbed relationships that spans four dimensions including macro-level structures, mid-level organizational conditions, sub-level program processes, and micro-level interpersonal relationships. Aspects of each dimension were addressed in my research project and are outlined in Chapter 1 (see Table 1) and Chapter 3 (Figure 3). These dimensions infuse each strand of inquiry and the selection and adaptation of particular research methods (see Chapter 3, Table 2). The dimensions of culturally relevant sport education (CRSE) reflect my sociological imagination; my ability to see the relationship between the personal and the political, changing historical conditions, and the webs of power that crisscross dimensions. Figure 29 is a wholistic rendition of the levels of analysis required to challenge paternalistic, culturally inappropriate and deficit-based research studies with marginalized ethno-cultural groups such as Aboriginal peoples in Canada. This figure depicts the relationship between the dimensions of inquiry and findings from individual methods / chapters and foreshadows how these findings will subsequently ‘fit’ into the theoretical framework of CRSE.

Following Figure 29, I summarize the key themes and findings from Chapter 5, 6 and 7 (see Tables 12, 13A, 13B, 14). And, in the left-most column, I identify the sociological dimension that is most relevant to interpreting and understanding these research results. A second row, under the Chapter heading, identifies and describes the strand of inquiry that shaped my interpretation of the research results.
Figure 29: Dimensions of CRSE

- Chapter 1-4
  Literature review

- Chapter 5
  Ethnography

- Chapter 7
  Program evaluation

- Chapter 6
  Interviews & photovoice

Macro-level societal
Mid-level organization
Sub-level programming
Micro-level relationships
Table 13: *Overview of key themes from literature review in Chapter 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Social exclusion in sport and society**  | **Summary:**
|                                            | • Examining the differential processes and practices of unequal power        |
|                                            |   relationships that shape intercultural spaces in sport, education, and society. |
| Inequitable inclusion and cultural violence | • Deficit-based sport policies and programs                                  |
|                                            | • Race and class-based ideologies underpinning control models for community sport |
| Variations in race relations               | • The relationship between race and space:                                   |
|                                            |   o Geographic experiences of exclusion                                     |
|                                            |   o Geography and the connection to one’s cultural community               |
| Sport education                            | • The relationship between non-formal education and community sport         |
|                                            | • The marginalization of physically-based ways of knowing                   |
| Culturally relevant sport education        | • The relationship and influence of transdisciplinary and indigenous theoretical principles |
|                                            | • Indigenous story-telling and the counter-story                             |
Table 14: *Overview of key research themes in Chapter 5*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MID-LEVEL ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>WASAC: The Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second strand of inquiry:</strong></td>
<td>• What societal conditions and structures impact the landscape of community sport and how does this impact WASAC’s work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Values</td>
<td><em>Circle of Courage</em>: Belonging, Mastery, Generosity, Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Model</td>
<td><em>Seven Grandfather Teachings</em>: Love, Honesty, Respect, Courage, Wisdom, Humility, Truth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Innovative Program Practices | • Relationships with partner schools  
• Fostering resilience and spirit  
• Employment incubator for youth |
| Innovative Organizational Practices | • Educational support and flexibility  
• Employee benefit program  
• Visual images in promotions and marketing  
• Multi-layered funding strategy |
Table 15A: Overview of key research themes in Chapter 6 (sport leaders)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Interpersonal Relationships</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First strand of inquiry (discussions with WASAC senior leaders):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is the cultural landscape of senior leaders involved with WASAC programs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o How do similarities and differences in the cultural landscapes between youth participants and senior leaders impact their interactions and relationships?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Do you get it?”</td>
<td>• Direct knowledge (experiential, work or volunteer) of the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Critical self-reflexivity &amp; self-other awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You have to love kids”</td>
<td>• Understanding kids’ struggles, strengths and needs (e.g., strength-based programming is not culture or colour-blind)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The importance of being playful and vulnerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Us coming to them”</td>
<td>• School partnerships and teacher champions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The complexity and depth of barrier-free programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It’s all about relationships”</td>
<td>• The importance of mentoring and role models for urban Aboriginal youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Finding and nurturing a strong team of WASAC leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15B: Overview of key research themes in Chapter 6 (photovoice)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MICRO-LEVEL RELATIONSHIPS</th>
<th>Interpersonal Relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Second strand of inquiry (themes and reflections from the photovoice project):**
- What is the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth involved with WASAC programs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neglect of the North End</td>
<td>1. Graffiti, garbage and abandoned buildings 2. Perceptions of judgment by “outsiders”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of Children &amp; Families</td>
<td>3. The importance of a ‘tough’ persona 4. Looking out for younger siblings, family members and friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor conditions for sport</td>
<td>5. Neglect of sport facilities and spaces 6. Easy to ignore needs of youth in North End 7. Have to leave the community to access better quality sport programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance</td>
<td>8. Making do with what’s available is not the same as accepting inequitable inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of family, friends and community</td>
<td>9. Couch surfing and taking care of family members 10. Culturally homogenous peer groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallels between sport and culture</td>
<td>11. Sport as source of cultural pride and bonding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The complexity of urban Aboriginal identity</td>
<td>12. “Cultural silence” or the silence that pervades discussions of cultural identity 13. Concerns of cultural authenticity in urban environs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16: Overview of key research themes in Chapter 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is a Culturally Relevant Sport Program?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Third Strand of Inquiry:**
- What theories of change and practice do WASAC leaders reference and use in their sport programs?
  - What tools, processes and mechanisms do WASAC leaders use to promote successful for Aboriginal youth?
  - What are the sport and non-sport benefits of WASAC programs for urban Aboriginal youth?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Supports</td>
<td>• Organizational logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Staff support and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitoring and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td>• Strength-based programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Barrier-free programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Community outreach and partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Program logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Practices</td>
<td>• General leadership skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Working with urban Aboriginal youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Working with WASAC team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport &amp; Non-Sport Benefits</td>
<td>1. Employment and training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Personal development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Cultural awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Life skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Community connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Sport training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion of Findings and Conclusions**

Knowledge translation processes often occur during research activities but are commonly associated with the completion of a study, during the data analysis and synthesis stage when researchers begin formulating and refining research
recommends to share with various stakeholders (CIHR, 2009). Knowledge translation fits well within the iterative cycle of inquiry characteristics of community-based traditions (e.g., action research), and in particular, the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR, 2009) definition of knowledge translation that emphasizes the ethically sound application of knowledge. In Chapter 3 (Figure 2), I used a similar analogy to describe my research methodology and the cyclical nature of knowledge generation and translation.

The fifth cycle of inquiry entitled *analysis and communication* does not exist in isolation of the previous four cycles. Rather, it is part of multi-dimensional spiral and the cycle of analysis and communication reconnects with the philosophical foundation that grounded the research process. This iterative spiral of inquiry shifted key theoretical assumptions throughout the research study and, expressly, during the layering of research methods (e.g., ethnographic observations, then photovoice project and later, program evaluation workshops with senior leaders). The knowledge translation process, when turned inward, helps researchers revisit previous theoretical assumptions in order to evaluate shifts in understanding and knowledge and to account for potential theoretical or methodological gaps (see Figure 30).
While the visual depiction of research results condenses key research themes from Chapter 5 through 7, a deeper exploration of the strands of inquiry and examination of the insights contained in each chapter is needed to fully answer the overarching question: what is a culturally relevant sport program for urban Aboriginal youth? To synthesize and make sense of the entire set of data produced in my research study, I return to my theoretical framework of CRSE (see Table 16 and 17) to evaluate and situate research findings within the research context.
Research Synthesis and Recommendations

As my theory of CRSE helped structure my research project, it is not surprising that my research results reflect the ideas contained within it. After all, the primary objective of scientific inquiry, even in the social sciences, involves building upon previous academic achievements, not calling into question the professional paradigms in which we were trained and locate our work (Kuhn, 1996). And, although the interdisciplinary scope of my understanding of CRSE allows considerable flexibility for interpreting research results, its academic and practical value is not lost within vague generalities.

To determine how the research process and findings shifted or confirmed my ideas of culturally relevant sport education, I analyzed and synthesized the results according to six key theoretical assumptions addressed in the theory (see Table 16 and 17). In returning to my earlier definition of culturally relevant sport education, I argue that knowledge translation processes require a dialectical process of research synthesis and theory (re)evaluation. As illustrated in Figure 30, my relationships with WASAC leaders and youth shifted and deepened my understanding of theoretical assumptions, and helped identify a major shortcoming in my research methods and findings. Following the analysis of revised theoretical assumptions, I provide recommendations to policy makers and practitioners to enhance the relevance and meaning of community sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth.
Table 17: Politics of CRSE, original and revised theoretical assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Theoretical Assumptions</th>
<th>Revised Theoretical Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Politics of CRSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRSE examines the structures and processes of social exclusion in sport and education that underscore and give meaning to unequal power relations among marginalized ethnocultural groups [no changes].</td>
<td>Unequal power relations are addressed within a wholistic peace-building pedagogy that recognizes and addresses the emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical violence of colonization and racism [changes in italicized font].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These unequal power relations are addressed within a peace-building perspective based on principles of respect and compassion.</td>
<td>CRSE emphasizes an asset-based approach to intercultural relationship building and research in community sport contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRSE promotes strength-based community research partnerships that enhance the organizational knowledge and research capacity of community partners and communicates results in an ethically sound manner [changes in italicized font].</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The non-profit landscape of community sport

Research Findings:
- Culturally relevant sport programming and leadership practices are directly linked to the organizational capacity of community sport organizations (CSO). The organizational capacity of public-benefit CSOs is heavily dependent upon the landscape of public sector funding.
- Culturally relevant sport programming is enhanced by the quality of social networks and relationships of a CSO.

Recommendations:
- Politicians, policy makers and philanthropic organizations need to provide long-term sustainable core funding, in addition to funding that acknowledges fundamental barriers to sport participation such as transportation and food.
- CSOs should develop and tap into key social and cultural networks within the immediate geographic and ethnocultural community and foster strong interpersonal relationships with people who can champion their programs (e.g., teachers in partner schools).

The reality of operating a community sport organization like WASAC is that its very existence depends on substantial, sustainable, and long-term core funding combined with easily accessible project-based funding. “Sport and recreation organizations have fewer financial resources than many other types of nonprofit organizations” (Gumulka et al., 2005) and small, public benefit organizations like WASAC, are heavily dependent on public sector funding which is vulnerable to changes of government, shifting political priorities, and cutbacks (Scott, 2003). When core organizational funding is limited or reduced, community sport organizations are forced to rely on more sporadic, short-term and project-based funding. The combined impact of such funding challenges makes the delivery of sustainable programming for urban Aboriginal youth more difficult and the survival of youth-serving agencies unclear.
Fortunately, WASAC benefits from the political acumen of its executive management and a group of young, talented financial and administrative employees that have been very successful in securing flexible and substantial project-based funding. Together, they have developed an innovative multi-layered funding and marketing strategy (see Chapter 5) that promotes their programs to both potential, and existing, funders. However, WASAC does not have stable, long-term core organizational funding. Further, as the financial health of an organization is strongly influenced by its human resources capacity, there is some concern that WASAC’s impending changeover among senior leaders in the next two years could significantly impact its programming.

The programming WASAC provides is expensive to develop, deliver, and maintain. For example, when senior leaders described the tools and conditions needed to provide barrier-free programming, they emphasized the importance of cost-free and accessible programming (see Appendices H through K). While WASAC’s planning activities occur at its Sinclair Avenue office, all program materials, supplies and food are transported to the classrooms or gymnasiums of partner schools so participants are not required to travel to program sites. Everything is free and, in many programs, youth are provided with free bus transportation to special activities (e.g., bowling, pottery, hockey lessons, etc). The cost of special events, sport equipment, full meals (e.g., lasagna) and transportation is borne solely by WASAC to ensure accessibility.

It would be remiss not to mention the importance of community partnerships to the successful planning, implementation and delivery of WASAC programs. As noted in Chapter 5, nurturing strong relationships with local schools and identifying teacher champions within partner schools provide WASAC with essential resources and
assistance such as program facilities, recruitment activities, educational and leadership development (e.g., course credit for participation), and ensuring a continuum of care from adults who actively ensure that youth are attending school and are doing well. By fostering partnerships with local schools and connecting youth to cultural resources and potential employers, WASAC diversifies and strengthens potential linkages to important social resources. These social networks or social capital lessen the impact of social exclusion and make key contributions to the individual and collective health of urban Aboriginal youth and communities (see Reading et al., 2007).
Processes and dimensions of social exclusion and inclusion

Research Findings:

• CRSE addresses the processes of differential forms of exclusion and inclusion underlying sport policies and practices that promote social opportunities for white, middle class youth and social control strategies for marginalized ethnocultural youth.

• Culturally appropriate and positive youth engagement models and teachings like the Seven Grandfather Teachings and Circle of Courage enhance and help frame the organizational and program planning practices of sport practitioners.

• CRSE sport programs provide wholistic programming that develop the mental, physical, psychological and spiritual resilience of youth and provide tangible skill development opportunities that will expand the opportunities of youth.

Recommendations:

• Politicians, policy makers and funders need to provide core funding and prioritize funding for community sport organizations that seek to provide social opportunities for urban Aboriginal youth.

• The development of relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth begins with the values and youth engagement models of community sport organizations. The organizational vision, mission and mandate of community sport organizations need to be grounded in culturally relevant educational models and values.

• Community sport organizations should expand social opportunities for youth by providing employment and training, personal development, life skills, and cultural awareness programming.

There is a distinct difference between sport research and policies that address the needs of urban Aboriginal youth and deficit-based research and policy models that ignore power relations and portray Aboriginal youth as potential delinquents. When creating the conditions that support Aboriginal peoples’ participation in sport, policy makers must recognize two critical factors: first, that both structural and cultural violence shape the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth and, secondly, that government funding / spending priorities and general political discourse condone differential treatment and
social control ideologies in sport and society. It is inappropriate and ineffectual to restrict sport programming to the simple goals of ‘keeping Aboriginal youth off the street’ when, by contrast, the social opportunities available in mainstream sport expose white middle class youth to valuable social networks that enhance their physical, educational and employment opportunities (SDP IWG, 2007). Nor is it appropriate to transplant white middle class values and sport models into community sport programs that target marginalized ethnocultural youth.

Instead, it must be understood that the complexity inherent in developing relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth mirrors the complexity of their cultural landscape; no simple model exists that can address the complex life experiences of Aboriginal youth. The conditions and processes that encourage one group of people to participate in sport programming rarely holds true for another, particularly when unequal power relations are clearly present. And, even when a one-size-fits-all approach to sport programming is used, the instability and fast-paced nature of the non-profit world rarely provides sufficient time to critique and adapt its usefulness which allows ineffective program models for marginalized youth to continue circulating.

In outlining its organizational philosophy, WASAC recognized that many “Aboriginal children face significant barriers both socially and economically on a daily basis and such realities must be acknowledged if future generations are to enjoy healthier and more productive lives” (Strategic Plan, 2006-2009, p. 2). In support of this statement, WASAC’s strategic plan references the fundamental inequities that gave rise to the social

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132 For example, Spence, Holt, Dutove and Carson (2010) found that the Children’s Fitness Tax Credit in Canada primarily benefitted wealthier families.
justice ideals articulated within the Maskwachees Declaration, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry (AJI) and Article Three of the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples.

Although few senior leaders acknowledged having read the Strategic Plan, it was evident during workshops and conversations that each senior leader understood WASAC’s organizational values, mission and mandate because of their shared education about, and experiences with, marginalized groups. Senior leaders understood the sport participation rates of Aboriginal peoples should not be examined as an issue of personal interest or athletic inclination/ability; rather, it is the inequitable power relationships and cultural differences that shape the disparate opportunities and cultural irrelevance of mainstream sport. Consequently, when research assumes that a simple relationship exists between structural barriers and sport participation rates, it ignores the pervasive forms of cultural violence and cultural irrelevance that negatively impact the experiences of urban Aboriginal youth in community sport.

Barrier-free programming is an attempt to ameliorate the conditions of structural and cultural violence whereas strength-based programming addresses the processes by which these forms of violence become internalized and resisted by urban Aboriginal youth. By tapping into youth’s strategies of resilience, WASAC programs address the individual and collective strengths of urban Aboriginal youth through such cultural teachings and models such as the Circle of Courage and the Seven Grandfather Teachings (see Chapter 5). By building on the resilience and spirit of resistance of youth participants, WASAC leaders seek to empower youth and ignite their current and future potential as social change agents.
The development and delivery of relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth requires an advanced level of awareness among policy makers, researchers and practitioners. In Winnipeg, WASAC is a star example of a culturally relevant sport organization, offering thousands of Aboriginal children and youth opportunities to build positive peer networks in a fun-filled environment. However, WASAC is not the only community sport organization offering culturally relevant programming (see also Carpenter, 2009; Carpenter et al., 2008; Carpenter-Johnson & Halas, 2011), and the educational principles and models offered by these types of organizations can be adapted to work with other ethnocultural populations. Sport policy makers, researchers and practitioners must begin the reflective work necessary to develop and support culturally relevant sport programs and leaders. For example, Lavallée (2007) recommends that urban Aboriginal people would benefit from physical activity programs that are offered in Aboriginal cultural centers. Without this awareness, CSOs are unlikely to reach their goal of providing opportunities for diverse groups that encourage participation in physical activity (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Naturally, an advanced level of awareness about culturally relevant programming itself does not guarantee success since many organizational-level issues impact sport programming but it cannot happen without it.
Nurturing educational spaces in community sport and research

Research Finding:
• WASAC senior leaders recognize the personal and professional importance of educational training and staff development. WASAC leaders indicated interest in instituting professional learning days and regular staff meetings to enhance personal practices, team communication and relationship building.
• Community-based research methods demystify the relationship between knowledge and practice, and can enhance the organizational knowledge of research partners.

Recommendation:
• Sport policy makers need to support the educational development of community sport leaders through financial and educational support (e.g., free or low-cost training). Community sport organizations need to support staff by providing routine staff meetings to allow staff to share their ideas, debrief about incidents or concerns, and foster team cohesion.
• Community-based research methods should be fun and educational, utilize participatory research methods, build the research capacity of participants, enhance organizational knowledge, and communicate results in an ethically sound manner.

From studying tracks in the snow to learning to navigate the culture of the North End to sharing one’s knowledge through storytelling practices, traditional and contemporary Aboriginal survival is a process of engaged research and knowledge translation. Yet, in the Euro-Western academic context, researchers have typically excluded Aboriginal peoples from the ownership, collection, access, and possession of research in their communities and created significant barriers to Aboriginal peoples access to, and participation in, post-secondary education (e.g., poor quality schooling, high tuition costs, culturally irrelevant and hostile learning environments, etc).

My research approach was based upon the principles of OCAP – ownership, control, access and possession – which are designed to empower, engage and build the research capacity within Aboriginal communities and organizations. I do not believe that
Euro-Western (trained) researchers are experts and Aboriginal peoples are passive participants. My belief is that research, when carried out respectfully and correctly, allows researchers and participants to act as co-constructors of knowledge. And, like Schnarch (2004), I am critical of academic research that uses the “lack of capacity as an argument to quash or take control of Aboriginal initiatives” (p. 20). Community relevance and usefulness, not scientific validity measures, should be the defining measure of the validity and worth of research (Schnarch, 2004).

During the storytelling session with WASAC senior leaders, a recurring theme was the importance of staff professional development and regular team meetings where senior leaders could reflect upon their work, talk about their concerns, and learn more about each other’s work responsibilities, pressures and needs. WASAC senior leaders make do with very little and are often too busy to update other team members about their work responsibilities and workload. WASAC senior leaders are a close-knit team who care deeply about one another but, unfortunately, work responsibilities and relationship-building activities occur outside of regular working hours which means that leaders volunteer during non-paid work hours (see Handy, Mook & Quarter, 2008) and have less time to socialize as a team.

The assessment of working conditions by WASAC leaders appears endemic within small public-benefit non-profit organizations where funding volatility; lower-pay and long hours often result in high rates of staff burnout and turnover (Scott, 2003). In light of this, I was impressed to learn that Trevor, WASAC’s financial leader, was able to develop a health care package for senior leaders. Staff health supports are a good example of the ways that CSOs can assist staff and affirm their value within the
organization. In addition, as WASAC employs a large number of people from the North End or low-income areas, these benefits help address some of the inequitable conditions that shape their lives.

WASAC leaders enjoyed the workshop evaluation sessions. It provided them with a rare opportunity to reflect upon their experiences, think collectively as a team about the roles of individual leaders, and to celebrate their successes and problem solve areas where improvement was necessary. As with photovoice participants, I wanted to use/adapt research methods that were relevant and meaningful to participants and they had to be fun, educational and support critical reflection and organizational learning.

Table 18: CRSE as Praxis, original and revised theoretical assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Theoretical Assumptions</th>
<th>Revised Theoretical Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRSE as Praxis</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRSE is a context-driven approach to the development, delivery, and facilitation of community sport programs.</td>
<td>Shaped by the cultural landscape of sport learners and leaders, CRSE explores the relationship between teaching and learning in sport programs in order to plan, develop, deliver and evaluate their impact on youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaped by the cultural landscape of sport learners and leaders, CRSE explores the relationship between teaching and learning in sport programs in order to plan, develop, deliver and evaluate their impact on youth.</td>
<td>Shaped by the cultural landscape of sport learners and leaders, CRSE <em>emphasizes positive interpersonal relationship building between sport leaders and participants as a key pathway to teaching and learning in community sport</em> [changes in italicized font].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRSE is a wholistic educational theory committed to the individual and collective empowerment of marginalized ethnocultural youth [no changes].</td>
<td>Sport organizations and leaders must validate and balance the current cultural landscape of marginalized ethnocultural youth with traditional cultural practices that foster an integrated and positive sense of cultural identity and collective belonging [new addition].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth

Research Findings:

- To build caring respectful relationships, sport leaders need to understand the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth and the socialization processes that shape their interpersonal interactions and behaviours.
- The most important characteristics of culturally relevant sport leaders are those that foster the growth of positive interpersonal relationships with youth. Characteristics such as being playful, non-judgmental or positive acceptance, empathy, warmth and understanding and a positive attitude make it easier for marginalized youth to remove their emotional armour and be vulnerable, which is essential if leaders wish to tap into youth’s positive potential.

Recommendations:

- Community sport organizations need to hire or educate sport leaders who know or are willing to learn about the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth. This knowledge will help leaders begin to develop the critical self-reflexivity and self-other awareness that is essential to the relationship building process.
- Training for sport leaders should include cultural awareness, interpersonal communication skills, or applied skill development in caring professions such as counseling.

A peacekeeping pedagogy… is one where the integration [of anti-racism and multicultural] is complete. It has an emotional realm where racism’s harm is felt intuitively or as a fully kinaesthetic experience, and the facts of racism are not denied. It has a physical realm where actions to celebrate the multicultural / multiethnic nature of humanity are evident. It has a cognitive realm with reasoned arguments to deconstruct the flimsiness of separation justified by racist ideology. A peace-making pedagogy invites each of us to become peacemakers in our own hearts, in our communities, and in our shared world. (Calliou, 1995, p. 70)
To develop caring relations with Aboriginal youth while planning and facilitating relevant and meaningful physical education, Halas (2006) posits that teachers must familiarize themselves with the “cultural landscape of students’ day-to-day lives” (p. 155). Anti-racism educators and scholars have previously noted that the ethnocultural diversity of teachers is not keeping pace with its increasingly heterogeneous student population (see Howard, 2003; King, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2001). The demographic divide between a homogenous workforce of primarily white, middle class teachers and culturally heterogeneous student populations means that the cultural landscape of teachers is vastly different than their students.

Education is, and by extension, educators, powerful agents of intercultural contact. Therefore, non-Aboriginal sport educators like physical education teachers and sport leaders can either exacerbate conflict or foster intercultural learning by the type of content and methods they integrate in their educational programs (Stairs, 1995). WASAC has a culturally diverse workforce that includes Euro-Canadian sport leaders. The majority of senior administrative and program leaders are Aboriginal or Filipino who have, or currently, reside in the North End. Although there are a few non-Aboriginal senior leaders who did not grow up in the North End of Winnipeg, they, too, possess a wealth of knowledge from their previous work with marginalized ethnocultural youth.

The collective ethnocultural diversity, education and experiences of WASAC staff ensures that all sport leaders and administrative staff understand the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth. That core component of culturally relevant physical education – knowledge and understanding of the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth – already exists among WASAC leaders. As the primary person responsible for hiring
WASAC leaders, Pino’s human resource philosophy of finding people “who get it” begins with this fundamental understanding that sport leaders must connect with youth and that, in turn, this relationship will flourish when leaders come to understand the daily life experiences of youth. Sport educators need this basic level of knowledge in order to build relevant and meaningful sport programs and caring, respectful and long-term relationships with urban Aboriginal youth. If we discard deficit-based analyses of Aboriginal youth, we must ask ourselves: if Aboriginal learners do not attend, participate or learn within our sport education programs, then what are we, as educators, accomplishing?

The reason that WASAC attracts, sustains and works with close to 2,200 Aboriginal youth each year is a result of their efforts to integrate sport programming and the cultural landscape of Aboriginal participants. The meaning of culture in relation to the concept of cultural landscape denotes the socio-political realities that shape the day-to-day lives of urban Aboriginal youth, not necessarily Aboriginal cultural values (see the next theme about the cultural identity and landscape of urban Aboriginal youth). WASAC leaders negotiate potential conflicts between ‘the culture of the North End’ and mainstream sport to provide relevant and meaningful sport programming that understands the complexity of participants’ daily lives. By acknowledging the conflicting spectrum of negative and positive social influences that shape the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth such as poverty – racism – resilience – friendship / family, WASAC can

133 This number represents the total number of registered youth participants in WASAC programs in 2011.
adapt programs and facilitation practices to start from where youth are, where their learning will begin…

When I do education work with a group of people, I try to see them with one eye where those people are as they perceive themselves to be… [and] that’s where I start. You have to start where people are, because their growth is going to be from there, not from some abstraction or where you are or where someone else is. Now my other eye is not such a problem, because I already have in mind a philosophy of where I’d like to see people moving. It’s not a clear blueprint for the future but movement towards goals they don’t conceive of at that time. I know they’re capable of perceiving and moving towards those humane goals because I’ve seen other people like them starting where they are. I know the potential is there. (Horton, 1990, p. 131).

Although Horton is speaking about the adult education environment, his ideas eloquently reflect the approach of WASAC leaders. WASAC’s strategic plan begins by acknowledging the unequal power relationships and negative influences that shape the lives of urban Aboriginal youth and incorporating this into a barrier-free approach to programing (e.g., transportation, nutrition). This approach continues with WASAC’s strength-based efforts to build and enhance the resilience and life skills of youth participants via employment training, personal development, life skills, and educational support such as tutoring and encouragement to pursue post-secondary study (see Appendix K).

At WASAC, sport is the hook. It is the social medium that fosters relationship building between its leaders and youth. Leaders construct the activities within a safe, fun
space in which youth can be silly and carefree while building positive social peer networks and memories. These sport leadership activities also provide opportunities for participants to develop or enhance sport skills, training (e.g., CPR, referee) and leadership abilities transferrable to later employment as coaches and recreation leaders.

*The culture of the North End*

Photovoice participants spoke about the culture of the North End and how racism shaped their perceptions of outsiders and interactions with adults. Youth felt discriminated against by politicians/policy makers and outsiders; participants described both groups as middle or upper class non-Aboriginal people that did not live in the North End of Winnipeg. They spoke at length about the stereotypes attached to North End community members and Aboriginal peoples that labelled them as ‘dirty’ and ‘drunks’ (see p. 207-208). They rationalized that these stereotypes provided easy excuses for people to dismiss the deteriorating conditions of housing, sport and community facilities and the quality of life in the North End. The pervasive nature of racism and classism was difficult for youth to absorb. Their heightened level of awareness increased their sensitivity to potential conflicts and perceived slights from adults, particularly teachers. Youth did not feel it was important to act respectfully towards adults if they were not treated in a similar manner.

My discussions with youth during the photovoice project revealed that many urban Aboriginal youth perform ‘problem’ behaviours as a form of resistance or emotional armour against the inequitable and differential treatment that impacted their individual and collective cultural identity as an Aboriginal person. Consequently, it is important that sport educators assess whether the ‘problem’ behaviour that youth perform
requires external intervention (e.g., Elder, guidance counsellor, etc.) or alternative processes of engagement since marginalized youth are often “experts at isolating themselves from adults” (Halas, 2003a, p. 286). Pino discussed the negative behaviours that many newly hired youth perform when he spoke about urban Aboriginal youth summer camp leaders who often sought to get shown the door or fired from their job. Understanding that these negative behaviours were often performed as a test, WASAC developed a philosophy that refused to show the door until youth had the necessary skills to be successful outside the organization (see p. 171-172).

If sport educators have not lived the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth, it is essential that they suspend judgement during their learning process. As sport educators become more knowledgeable about the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth, they will undoubtedly begin to develop the critical self-reflexivity and self-other awareness (p. 245-246) that is integral to CRSE. For example, self-other awareness is essential during the relationship building process with urban Aboriginal youth, particularly if they attempt to isolate themselves from sport educators by exhibiting emotions or behaviour that are intended to test or isolate themselves from the care of others.

The factors that impact the participation of Aboriginal youth in sport are much more complex than the structural barriers that commonly limit access or participation levels in sport. Senior leaders understand that the culture of the North End includes both positive and negative survival strategies and that urban Aboriginal youth will likely be exposed to and try both types of strategies. Leaders do not ignore negative survival strategies but try to encourage youth, through their programming and interpersonal
relationships, to build the personal, social, life and employment skills and networks that will aid them in their immediate environment as well as the larger societal institutions that shape their lives. These skills and community networks are necessary to provide youth with hope and support as they pursue achievable positive goals that will transcend their experience in the program. Finally, leaders understand that mistakes are a normal experience of growth and learning. This does not mean that WASAC leaders ignore negative or potentially dangerous behaviours or activities but, rather, that they can differentiate between the person and their behaviours.

The cultural identity and cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth

Research Findings:
- Many urban Aboriginal youth want to learn about their cultural history and participate in traditional and contemporary cultural revitalization activities but concerns about their authenticity as “Aboriginal” peoples often create complex internal barriers to participation.

Recommendations:
- Relevant and meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth need to integrate cultural content and methods to foster a positive sense of cultural and collective identity.
- Community sport organizations and leaders that work with urban Aboriginal youth should integrate cultural activities and practices throughout their programming efforts and, if possible, introduce and develop a network of cultural contacts that can foster relationships with youth.

There is a strong, sometimes racist, perception that being Aboriginal and being urban are mutually exclusive. (Native Council of Canada, 1992, p. 10)

Culture, particularly for Aboriginal peoples today, can be an elusive, confusing and sometimes painful concept. The racist discourse that accompanied the discovery of my Métis identity (see Chapter 1) demonstrates the contradictory and painful feelings
regarding cultural authenticity and legitimacy that emerges when Aboriginal peoples feel disconnected from their cultural community. My decision to investigate culturally relevant sport for urban Aboriginal youth in my doctoral research project was, in part, due to a shared sense of cultural disconnection that many urban Aboriginal peoples experience, foremost youth (RCAP, Vol. 4, 1996).

Peace scholars state that socialization processes are often disrupted or lost situations of extreme or prolonged conflict. Randolph Carter and Shipler (2005) state that conflict, especially direct violence, “destroys family structures, eliminates access to education, and destabilizes the entire ecology of young people” (p. 148). In Canada, Aboriginal peoples have highlighted similar issues stemming from the direct, structural and cultural violence of colonization processes such as the Indian Act, residential schools, and reserves. The intergenerational trauma caused by colonial and racist processes continues to inflict a high and painful cost on the spiritual, emotional, and physical health of Aboriginal peoples and communities today. Most notably, these processes have significantly impacted traditional socialization processes in Aboriginal communities that govern cultural behaviours, activities, practices and cultural identity (RCAP, 1996).

Aboriginal people, particularly youth, struggle to maintain a sense of cultural identity and connectedness in urban settings where Euro-Canadian traditions and racism is more pervasive (RCAP, 1996). And, although the urban context is crucial to understanding the present situation of Aboriginal youth, we know very little about their experiences and perceptions about culture (Silver, 2006), beyond a basic understanding of the barriers they face such as poverty, racism, etc. The fragile cultural identity of urban
Aboriginal youth stems from the intense pressure (conscious and unconscious) to assimilate into the dominant white pan-Canadian culture, their relative isolation from traditional cultural activities and general lack of awareness of, or confidence to access, available cultural resources. In addition, if their parents or extended family network is disconnected from cultural resources and activities in urban areas, it is likely that their children will be disconnected as well (RCAP, 1996).

CRSE advocates that sport programs should enhance the individual and collective cultural empowerment of marginalized ethnocultural youth. However, the individual and collective cultural empowerment of urban Aboriginal youth also needs to be understood within the context of their immediate environment as it shapes the expression of cultural identity (RCAP, 1996). As a result, sport policy makers, researchers and practitioners need to be aware of the diversity of both Aboriginal peoples and their unique geographic experiences when proposing social change goals based on the notion of individual and collective cultural empowerment.

*Putting “culture” back into the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth?*

A story is told as much by silence as by speech.

* Susan Griffin, Feminist Poet

Culture is generally understood as a complex set of learned behavior patterns and perceptions that shapes how members of a cultural group act, think, and feel. It creates a shared sense of meaning that enables individual members to understand each other and the larger world while also fostering a sense of community and belonging. Culture is similar to breathing: it is absolutely vital to human survival yet so little immediate thought is given to the role it plays in our past, present and future existence.
Central to my investigation of culturally relevant sport programs (education) for urban Aboriginal youth is the notion of cultural landscape – the racialized relations, practices, and processes that exist within a specific context or place and how these relations of inequity shape the experiences and perspectives of urban Aboriginal youth. As an analytic tool, the term cultural landscape connects the day-to-day experiences and lives of urban Aboriginal youth to large macro-societal issues, particularly the impact of racism and colonialization on urban Aboriginal youth. It also facilitates intra-group comparisons related to issues of space and place, such as variations in race relations between northern and southern Aboriginal peoples (see Paraschak, 1997).

In many ways, the term cultural landscape is a useful and appropriate concept when trying to understand and describe the impact of macro-societal forces on the daily lives of urban Aboriginal youth. Yet, there is nothing inherently ‘cultural’ about the term cultural landscape, or at least, not where structural, direct or cultural violence has disrupted traditional modes of cultural transmission leading to a sense of cultural anomie.

There is a delicate balance and inevitable tension that all educators and leaders must face when they want to honour the voice and experiences of youth while guiding them towards where they ought to be (Horton, 1990). In the case of cultural revitalization practices, how do non-Aboriginal sport leaders or even urban Aboriginal leaders (with similar issues of cultural confusion) know of the cultural needs of urban Aboriginal youth? How do sport leaders guide them on this path? This was a major blind spot or gap in my research methodology. I did not ask these questions because I assumed that

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134 The term cultural landscape has its roots in cultural geography, a sub-field of human geography, and critically examines how race, space and place are implicated in relations of inequity (see Mitchell, 2003).
WASAC’s leaders and participants would understand these issues, and certainly better than my own emerging and fragile understanding of contemporary Métis cultural identity.

It is one thing to recognize that cultures change and evolve, and another to witness and experience the complexity and deeply conflicting internal processes underlying cultural revitalization and rediscovery that occur when urban Aboriginal youth struggle to assert a positive cultural identity yet feel so disconnected from what they imagine their cultural traditions might be. Aboriginal peoples share a collective history of colonization and oppression but are neither a homogenous group nor do they share of the same cultural traditions. Further cultural and geographic differences exist between urban First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people. The challenge for organizations like WASAC is attempting to balance two fundamental goals: developing programs and leaders who understand and respect the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth while building programs that enrich their experiences within the culture of the North End and their cultural identity as Aboriginal peoples. WASAC is very good at the former but leaders acknowledge further work is needed for the latter.\footnote{135 WASAC leaders also evaluated their programs in terms of where they excel. The majority of these positive assessments were located in the social, life skills and employment benefits of WASAC programs.}

It may seem strange that a prominent Aboriginal sport organization could be considered almost acultural by staff, despite the cultural teachings, activities and Elder that enhance their programming efforts. Reflecting on my work with senior leaders, my observations of their programs, and my relationships with photovoice participants, I have come to see that the discomfort and silence about the cultural nature of their work mirrors the tension and cultural confusion discussed in RCAP’s (1996) section about urban
Aboriginal peoples. The seeming paradox of an Aboriginal sport organization dedicated to the social empowerment of urban Aboriginal youth yet providing little cultural or sport programming reflects the complexity and challenges of providing culturally relevant sport programming that all sport organizations must address, including Aboriginal ones. My findings illustrate the real need for theoretical and practical information regarding the development, design and facilitation of culturally relevant sport programs for urban Aboriginal peoples. Cultural revitalization efforts are markedly different in multicultural urban areas as opposed to culturally homogenous communities such as northern Aboriginal reserves. The challenges facing CSOs are exacerbated by their financial dependence on the public sector and public perceptions that sport is an acultural and hedonistic pursuit.

Aboriginal peoples and organizations tackle the challenge of providing relevant and meaningful programs in a variety of ways. WASAC, like many Aboriginal organizations, have developed strong community partnerships and embraced the spirit of mentorship where sport leaders learn through the observation of others and themselves. The key, it seems, is that successful organizations must make a point of continually assessing their work within the context of cultural revitalization and develop community partnerships and mentoring processes that ensure the knowledge of Elders and cultural teachers become integrated within their program planning and leadership practices.

Concluding Remarks

The Politics of Culturally Relevant Sport Education

CRSE examines the structures and processes of social exclusion in sport and education that underscore and give meaning to unequal power relations among
marginalized ethnocultural groups. Unequal power relations are addressed within a wholistic peace-building pedagogy that recognizes and addresses the emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical violence of colonization and racism. CRSE promotes strength-based community research partnerships that enhance the organizational knowledge and research capacity of community partners and communicates results in an ethically sound manner.

Culturally Relevant Sport Education as Praxis

CRSE is a context-driven approach to the development, delivery, and facilitation of community sport programs. Shaped by the cultural landscape of sport leaders and learners, CRSE emphasizes positive interpersonal relationship building between sport leaders and participants as a key pathway to teaching and learning in community sport. In addition, CRSE is a wholistic educational theory committed to the individual and collective empowerment of marginalized ethnocultural youth. Consequently, sport organizations and leaders must validate and balance the current cultural landscape of marginalized ethnocultural youth with traditional cultural practices that foster an integrated and positive sense of cultural identity and collective belonging.

Community sport organizations and leaders operate in a complex and shifting environment. Effective sport organizations recognize that their work must continually adapt to the macro-societal forces that shape the relationship between sport and society. To explore this reality, my research examines the dialectical contradictions that shape the landscape of public-benefit CSO’s by observing the relationship between WASAC’s organizational capacity and its efforts to deliver culturally sensitive sport programming to
urban Aboriginal youth in ways that positively impact the development of Winnipeg’s Aboriginal community (Strategic Plan, 2006-2009). As a result of my research, I discovered that WASAC benefited from a number of unique organizational practices: the use of a multi-layered funding strategy, a focus on visual imagery as a means of promoting the organization to funders and community partners, and the incorporation of cultural values to develop strength-based programming that enhance social opportunities for urban Aboriginal youth.

Throughout the course of my research, I sought to articulate the ideas, theories and worldviews that underpinned the stories of research participants. For example, youth participant’s stories about the meaning of sport and culture in their lives revealed a disrupted, yet emergent, Aboriginal cultural identity that was shaped by the ‘culture of the North End’. Urban Aboriginal youth were intimately aware of their inequitable inclusion within community sport and the larger Canadian society; they incisively critiqued the spatialized nature of racism and oppression in urban areas in comparison to the preferential treatment of white, middle / upper class youth. And, although my study did not seek to explore youth participant’s perception of their cultural identity, this issue shaped the entire photovoice project as youth struggled to capture and discuss photographs of their cultural identity; an identity they did not know how to confidently claim except in relation to the racism they experienced.

In evaluation workshops and informal conversations, WASAC leaders referenced both tacit and explicit theories related to program planning, delivery, facilitation and relationship building. To understand the complexity of their work, it is important to recognize WASAC leaders as educators who utilize non-formal educational processes
such as mentorship, experiential learning, and reflexive practice to enhance and complement their leadership practices. By investigating community sport programs as educational spaces, my study addressed an important gap in existing sport research (see Coalter, 2007; Forsyth et al., 2007) and provided insight into the tools, mechanisms, and processes that are vital to the successful delivery and facilitation of sport programs. Beyond this, Pino described how WASAC’s programming theories and leadership practices were guided by four philosophical principles:

_Do you get it?_

- The need for Aboriginal sport leaders who have experience working with marginalized ethnocultural youth.
- The need for sport leaders who utilize critical self-reflexivity and self-other awareness.

_You have to love kids._

- The need for sport leaders who understand the struggles, strengths and needs of urban Aboriginal youth.
- Strength-based programming is unlikely to develop if sport leaders adopt colour and culture blind programming and facilitation approaches.

_It’s about us coming to them._

- Barrier-free programming involves adapting programming and leadership practices to complement the cultural landscape of urban Aboriginal youth and blend traditional and contemporary cultural methods of teaching and learning.
It’s all about relationships.

- Teaching and learning in non-formal educational spaces such as community sport are based on the quality and integrity of sport leaders relationships with youth participants. Mentorship-based relationships work well with marginalized ethnocultural youth and are well suited to Aboriginal educational models.

- Building sustainable relationships with youth participants is enhanced by strong relationships among sport leaders. These relationships, in turn, are enhanced by shared values, trust, respect and communication.

These philosophical principles capture the complexity of WASAC leader’s efforts to negotiate the conflicting interests and power relationships that shape their work from politics to praxis. While statements such as “It’s about us coming to them”, may appear simple or vague, they are, in fact, complex philosophical and theoretical concepts that require exceptionally talented sport leaders who understand their value.

Despite living in an era of unprecedented globalizing influences and networks, we often fail to see the true interconnectedness of the world. Around us and at all times, invisible webs of sacred and oppressive power relations connect people across time, space, and geographic location. CRSE acknowledges the creative and destructive webs of power that shape the politics and praxis of community sport; the positive, culturally-sensitive agents of change which co-exist alongside damaging deficit-based sport policies that seek to control troubled ethno-cultural youth. CRSE is not a top-down or grassroots approach to developing meaningful sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth. Rather, like Calliou’s (1997) model of an indigenous peacekeeping pedagogy, CRSE pursues transformative change through sport by developing culturally relevant educational
models, teachings, philosophies and materials that advance the spirit of reconciliation, cultural healing, and compassionate engagement across differences.
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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CHALLENGES POSED BY INDIGENOUS AND VISUAL RESEARCH METHODS

From August 16 to October 5, 2010, I corresponded with the Education / Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) regarding the photovoice project. In ENREB’s final letter of October 5, 2010, I was advised to make the requested changes to the photovoice project (see Appendix B for a description) in order for my project to be approved. If the recommended changes were not made, the board informed me that I had the right to appeal their decision “to the Ethics Policy Implementation Committee (EPIC)” through the human ethics secretariat.

After consulting with my advisor, thesis committee, WASAC leaders, and Ph.D. Studies for Aboriginal Scholars (PSAS) students and allies, I decided to appeal ENREB’s decision. With the support of my thesis advisor, I also consulted with various faculty members at the University of Manitoba who used similar visual research methods such as photovoice. Given the crucial importance of this issue to the study, my advisor and I consulted with the Interagency Secretariat on Research Ethics of the TCPS regarding ENREB’s interpretation of the TCPS related to visual research.

This process resulted in over 80 pages of correspondence with ENREB and, for the sake of conciseness, I have only included the most significant documents; my October 12, 2010 appeal letter to the EPIC committee (see Appendix B) and my second letter of response to the EPIC committee of November 8, 2010 (see Appendix C).

As a result of my efforts, I received ENREB approval to proceed with Phase Two of my study on November 12, 2010. The photovoice project remained as originally proposed with the exception of data collection during the phovoice Exhibit. I excluded the data collection process as a result of time constraints created by the delay in ethics approval.

I was prepared to quit my doctoral program had I been forced to conform to research standards that I felt were not only unethical but outdated. As naïve as this may sound, I returned to graduate studies to make a difference in my community. However, in fighting this battle, I quickly realized the need for institutional allies. I am extremely grateful to my thesis advisor and PSAS coordinator for their unwavering support and assistance negotiating the labyrinth of bureaucratic structures necessary to successfully pursue my appeal.

136 The Ethics Proposal Submission Form for Phase Two was over 60 pages.
APPENDIX B: LETTER OF APPEAL TO EPIC

October 13, 2010

To: Ethics Policy Implementation Committee (EPIC)

Senate Committee on the Ethics of Research Involving Human Subjects

(SCERIHS)

I am writing to inform you that the Education / Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) has rejected my doctoral research project. With the support of my research partners, I have decided to appeal ENREB’s decision. As the committee(s) responsible for reviewing appeals, I wish to inform you of the reasons for my appeal. I believe this issue warrants your attention as it impacts the quality and integrity of research conducted by graduate students at the University of Manitoba, as well as their time to completion.

Brief description of my research and the concerns of ENREB:

My research is a result of a collaborative partnership with an Aboriginal sport organization. In keeping with the foundational principles of indigenous research methods (i.e., respect, responsibility, and reciprocity), my research partners and I decided that a photovoice137 project would be a relevant and meaningful method of engaging Aboriginal youth in one of their sport leadership programs. Aboriginal youth will act as co-researchers by taking photographs which reveal the meaning of sport and culture in their lives. In order to prepare the youth to act as co-researchers, all participants will receive specialized training sessions in photography and research ethics. As family, friends and community are integral to the lives of Aboriginal youth, it was decided that the youth researchers should be able to approach individuals and request permission to take their photographs for the photovoice project. Individuals participating in the photovoice project will be provided with the option of waiving their confidentiality and anonymity should they wish for their image, name and/or experiences to be acknowledged in the

137 Photovoice is a form of participatory action research with a social action component that involves the public display of photographs. The public display of photographs is intended to empower participant researchers, facilitate community awareness, provide tangible evidence to funders, inform social policy and educate sport leaders (for examples, see Strack, Magill & McDonagh, 2004; Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang & Minkler, 2007).
following spaces: a public photography exhibit, the Aboriginal sport organization’s funding and promotional materials (e.g., funding reports or program information registration pamphlets), or my research (e.g., dissertation, conferences, publications).\(^{138}\)

ENREB has rejected my research study on the following grounds:

1. Even with the consent of participants, the public display of visual research materials with identifiable personal information breaks the confidentiality and anonymity of research participants.

2. Research participants are unaware of the permanent nature of academic publications and, therefore, cannot provide informed consent (see letters, September 2 & October 5, 2010).

In response, it is my position that the Tri-Council Policy Statements (1998, with 2000, 2002 & 2005 amendments & revised second draft, 2009)\(^{139}\) clearly permit the authorized use of personal information. This is supported by the fact that the public display of photographs (via photovoice) has been previously approved by research ethics boards at the University of Manitoba (for example, see Dr. Masudo, Department of Environment and Geography, photovoice project), University of Alberta (personal communication, Dr. Rodgers, Acting Director-Human Research Protections Program), and other universities in North America (see Strack, Magill & McDonagh, 2004; Wang & Burris, 1997; and Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang & Minkler, 2007).

In preparing my appeal, I realize the importance of providing evidence from the Tri-Council Policy Statements (1998 & 2009). The Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics recognizes that the TCPS should remain a living or evolving policy document in order to respond to new research developments, as well as identified gaps and ambiguities that exist in the policy (see http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/tcps-epct/interpretations/request-demande/). It is my contention that, in rendering a negative decision regarding my research project, ENREB did not investigate the authorized use of personal information,\(^{140}\) nor consider indigenous research principles such as ownership, access, possession, and control (see TCPS, 2009). For example, the most recent version of TCPS (2009) discusses the issue that privacy and confidentiality may run counter to

\(^{138}\) In the informed consent form, participants are given the opportunity to consent to their photograph appearing in one, two or all spaces (e.g., exhibit, organization, research).

\(^{139}\) To clarify distinctions between the TCPS (1998) and the revised draft second edition (2009) in my letter, I will reference the revised second draft edition as the TCPS (2009).

\(^{140}\) The TCPS (2005) only discusses the unauthorized use of personal information, whereas the TCPS (2009) permits and discusses the authorized use of personal information where participants provide consent.
the interests and needs of research participants and groups, thus if participants request identification, researchers should accommodate their requests. Please see Table 1 in the Appendix.

**Ethical principles in transformative research methodologies:**

Visual methods lend themselves to participatory and emancipatory approaches. In such contexts, participants explicitly and voluntarily waive their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, contravening one of the cornerstones of normative ethical practice in social science research. We can envisage cases arising where visual projects will be invited to change important components of research design, in order to avoid breaking with number and word-based conventions… Visual researchers cannot afford to sit on the sidelines when ethics are debated, but should think through and argue their ethical position (Prosser, Clark & Wiles, 2008, p. 11).

I understand that visual research methods, as well as action-oriented and indigenous research methodologies, challenge conventional notions of research ethics and thus pose considerable difficulties for REBs. While I appreciate the thoughtful consideration given by ENREB for approval of my doctoral research, I do not believe ENREB members considered the strength-based nature of my research study, nor the action-oriented and indigenous research principles guiding my partnership with the Aboriginal sport organization. If ENREB had considered this, I believe their characterization of photography would have been more positive. I also believe that their recommendations to protect participants would not require removing many of the individual and collective benefits of the photovoice project for the Aboriginal sport organization and Aboriginal youth, nor acting against the wishes of my research partners.

In the course of my correspondence with ENREB, I have tried to clearly communicate my understanding of visual research ethics and informed consent, as well as indigenous research principles such as reciprocity in research. I have studied visual research methods (Pink, 2007; Prosser, Clark & Wiles, 2008), as well as ethical research with indigenous people (Wilson, 2008) and youth (Bruzzese & Fisher, 2003; Christensen & Prout, 2002; Mishna, Antle & Regehr, 2004). In relation to my research project, I want to assure members of EPIC and SCHERIS that:

- I am aware of my power vis-à-vis my research participants, particularly given my strong relationship with staff and youth at the Aboriginal sport organization.

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141 To demonstrate my understanding and commitment to ethical research, my original ENREB submission and subsequent responses letters were 61 pages and 16 pages, respectively.
142 In the ENREB letter dated September 2, 2010, Dr. Straw characterized photography as an invasive research procedure.
• I understand the potential harms of visual research materials, even when using action-oriented and indigenous research methods.
• I am committed to ensuring an ongoing informed consent process, particularly via plain language personal discussions with research participants (oral consent), which clearly indicate the potential risks of visual research methods as well as the long-term nature of academic publications.

I am willing and interested in suggestions to improve, not remove, integral components of my research project and collaborative research partnership (e.g., public display of photographs and sharing photographs with research partners). I remain convinced that the benefits of my research project and methods far outweigh the risks and I am confident that my research project not only meets the principles of ethical research dictated by the TCPS, but that it also meets the principles of ethical research with indigenous peoples (Schnarch, 2004; Smith, 2001; Wilson, 2008). My research partners have stated that they welcome the opportunity to discuss our research partnership and ENREB’s concerns with the appeal board, should any members of EPIC or SCERIHS wish to hear their feedback.

In conclusion, I respectfully request ethics approval for my doctoral research as quickly as possible. The time and effort required to gain ENREB approval and appeal ENREB’s decision have prevented my research project from moving forward. In pursuing a formal appeal, I also hope to support other graduate students, including Ph.D. Studies for Aboriginal Scholars (PSAS) cohort members, who undertake indigenous research methods in their pursuit of transformative research projects and partnerships.

Sincerely,

Heather McRae

Please note:
I included a table of relevant sections from the TCPS (before the recent revisions of the TCPS2 (December, 2010) with my letter. I have included this information on the next page.
### Summary of Relevant Sections from Tri-Council Policy Statement Sections

*pre TCPS 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue #1: “The exhibit, regardless of the reasons of displaying confidential information in public, break confidentiality and anonymity of both the photographers and the people represented in the photographs” (ENREB, September 2, 2010).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TCPS (1998) Section 3: Privacy and Confidentiality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals should be protected from harm caused by the <em>unauthorized</em> use of personal information in which they believed they had an expectation of privacy and the benefit of confidentiality (p. 3.2, my italics).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TCPS (2009) Chapter 5: Privacy and Confidentiality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy is respected if an individual has an opportunity to exercise control over personal information by <em>consenting to</em>, or <em>withholding consent to</em>, use and/or disclosure of information (p. 46, lines 1646-1648, my italics).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection and use of anonymous data in research is the <em>easiest</em> way to protect participants, although this is not always <em>possible or desirable</em> (p. 47, lines 1700-1701, my italics).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants <em>may waive confidentiality</em>, for example, if they wish to be identified for their contributions to the research (p. 48, lines 1757-1758, my italics).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My response</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The TCPS (1998) states that ethical principles are interdependent and that “good ethical reasoning requires thought, insight and sensitivity to context” (p. i.9). The principle of confidentiality and anonymity should not outweigh the principle of inclusion in research, and ENREB should consider the cultural relevance of my research methodology as well as the numerous safeguards and research processes that I described in my original submission (61 pages) and subsequent response letters (16 pages).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More importantly, removing research processes requested by participants and enforcing anonymity and confidentiality on participants who may wish to have their image and experiences attributed to them, preemptively excludes meaningful participation in my research by denying them ownership, control,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
access and possession of research findings they helped produce (i.e., principles that are inherent to research with Aboriginal peoples).

**Issue 2: “If the organization wishes to take its own picture and films for publicity/public relations, they have a right to do so. This right, however, does not extend to using your data and the data your subjects collect as exhibition material. Your data cannot be turned over to the organization or left with them to carry out their non-research activities” (ENREB, October 5, 2010).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TCPS (2009)</th>
<th>Chapter 9: Research with Aboriginal Peoples (p. 93)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many First Nations communities across Canada have adopted an ethics code originally developed to govern practice in the First Nations Regional Health Survey. It asserts ownership, control, access and possession of research processes and is generally referred to as OCAP (p. 104, lines 3845-3848).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

…Researchers should consider applying a collaborative or participatory approach as appropriate to the nature of the research and the level of engagement desired by the community (p. 108, lines 4007-4010).

Collaborative research should be relevant to community needs and priorities and should *benefit* the participating community as well as extend the boundaries of societal knowledge (p. 109, lines 4039-4041, my italics).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My response</th>
<th>The photovoice project was developed in conjunction with my research partners. I adopted the principles of OCAP to create a more equitable research partnership with the Aboriginal sport organization and to ensure that they receive tangible benefits from participating in my doctoral research project.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further, ENREB’s suggestion that the sport organization restage and retake photographs of their youth and their programs ignores the realities of the non-profit organization’s capacity, time, and resources; does not respect reciprocity in research; and runs counter to the current research protocol of ownership, control, access, and possession with Aboriginal research participants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Issue #3: “…most of your subjects may not understand how a conference presentation works and how their pictures might be used in that setting, or how permanent such things as academic journals are” (ENREB, October 5, 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TCPS (2009)</th>
<th>Chapter 4: Fairness and Equity in Research Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over-protectionist attitudes or practices of researchers or REBs, whether intentional or inadvertent, exclude some members of society or communities from participating in research, any may therefore fail to treat those individuals or communities justly (p. 37, lines 1366-1368).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 10: Qualitative Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some types of qualitative research… respect for participant’s contribution is shown by identifying the individual in research publications or other means of dissemination of the results (p. 125, lines 4659-4663) …. If failing to identify participants would be unethical because of the disrespect it would involve, or if informed participants assert their desire to be named, then researchers should do so, according to the practices of their discipline (p. 125, lines 465-4668, my italics).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REBs need to be sensitive to whether anonymity, confidentiality or identification is operative in any given research context, and acknowledge that individuals may want to be credited for their contribution (p. 126, lines 4691-4693).

### My response

ENREB’s concern that participants will not understand the permanent nature of academic publications is understandable but in my original submission and subsequent response letters, I highlighted the processes I will use to ensure informed consent and demonstrated my commitment to the principle of informed consent. For example, to ensure participants understand my research, I use plain language to explain how the research materials will be used and where they will appear. I also consider informed consent to be a continual process which extends beyond a preliminary information session and a signed consent form (see Piquemal, 2001).

I am confident that participants have the capacity to understand the permanent nature of print and internet-based publications as alternative examples exist such as billboards, books, Facebook, magazines, etc. In addition, my thesis advisor, Dr. Joannie Halas, often invites Aboriginal youth to co-present at
academic conferences and these youth have understood and contributed to the presentation process (e.g., both in the writing of academic papers and the planning and delivery of conference presentations). I believe youth are capable of understanding both the nature and permanence of academic work. Thus requesting and respecting their consent is warranted.

In addition, Dr. Jeff Masuda, a University of Manitoba researcher from the Department of Environment and Geography received ethics approval for a photovoice project where he requested permission from participants to use their photographs in his academic work which included conferences and publications.

### Issue #4: "It seems odd that you verbally inform participants (but not in writing and not their parents in writing) the possible negative consequences of having photos in research documents…. Regardless of how wide-spread the technologies have become, this is a research project and subjects need to be informed of what the risk of invasion procedures, such as photography, is in their participation in the study” (ENREB, September 2, 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TCPS (1998)</th>
<th>Section 1: Ethics Review (p. 1.1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The concept of proportionate review gives practical expression to the general principle that, especially in the context of limited resources, the more potentially invasive or harmful is the proposed and ongoing research, the greater should be the care in its review. While all research must be reviewed adequately, proportionate review is intended to reserve most intensive scrutiny, and correspondingly more protection, for the most ethically challenging research (p. 1.7).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A proportionate approach to ethics review thus starts with an assessment, <em>primarily from the viewpoint of the potential subjects</em>, of the character, magnitude and probability of potential harms inherent in the research (p. 1.7, my italics).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal risk is “defined as research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research is no greater than those encountered by the research participant in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research (p. 19, lines 628-631).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Chapter 3: Informed Consent (p. 21)**

In some types of research, and for some groups or individuals, written consent may be perceived by some research participants as an attempt to legalize or formalize the consent process and thus may be interpreted as a violation of trust. In these cases, oral consent, a verbal agreement or a handshake may be required, rather than signing a consent form (p. 36, lines 1311-1315).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| In my oral consent procedures, I outline the potential harms of photography for research participants. Youth researchers in the photovoice project will also follow a similar script when requesting photographs. My information letter and informed consent letter are approximately six pages in length and do not include ENREB’s description of potential harms.  

I did not include ENREB’s recommendation that I list potential harms such as ridicule, embarrassment, and misunderstandings because these warnings exaggerate the risk of the photovoice project and create unnecessary anxiety for participants. In my response to ENREB’s list of potential harms, I stated that the informed consent forms provide sufficient information about the purpose of my research study, how and where the photographs may be used and viewed, and clearly indicate the voluntary nature of all research requests.  

Given the ethic of responsibility that is the foundation of indigenous research methods, I expect and trust the Aboriginal youth acting as co-researchers to engage in the research process in an ethical and responsible manner. And, should any research material -- photographs or interview transcripts -- embarrass potential participants, I will approach participants with my concern and delete and/or mask personal identifying information. |
APPENDIX C: SECOND LETTER TO ETHICS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Please note: I do not include a copy of EPIC’s correspondence as my letter directly addresses their concerns. Although the correspondence from ENREB and EPIC are included on institutional letterhead, I did not want to reproduce their letters without the consent of committee members.

November 8, 2010

RE: Human Ethics Protocol E2010:097

Thank you for your letter regarding my “appeal” of the ENREB decision concerning my original ethics protocol submission, as well as the recommended changes that will allow my research study to proceed. I have included a brief response to each of EPIC’s four recommended steps. In addition, I have highlighted the revisions in yellow (see attached appendices).

Step 1: Revise parental consent forms
In order to apprise parents fully of any possible risks/consequences associated with pictures or video appearing in persistent forums, I have added two bullets to the parental informed consent forms: one bullet indicates the permanent and persistent nature of academic research (e.g., permanent exhibitions, my dissertation, academic journals), the second bullet notes potential negative consequences of photographs and the steps that I will take to minimize this harm. This information is also included in the parental information letter (see Appendix K, p. 14; Appendix L, p. 20; Appendix P, p. 23).

Step 2: Photographs of non-program participants
As indicated in my original submission, youth researchers in the photovoice project will not take photographs of youth under the age of 18 without parental permission (original submission, Appendix E, p. 23). My submission also indicates that I will blur or delete any images of people who appear in research-related photographs and have not provided consent (e.g., those who may have been photographed in a public space, see original submission, Appendix E, p. 21).

---

143 A non-program participant refers to youth who are not regular participants in the sport organization’s programs.
Step 3: Research photographs
Regarding the duplication and distribution of photos that may be collected as a result of my research, I have added two lines in the information letter to the organization (see Appendix H, p. 5) stating that the organization may not duplicate or distribute any photos collected as a result of my research.

Step 4: Revision to youth researchers informed consent form
The parental consent form for the photovoice project will be revised to indicate youth researchers will not duplicate, in any way, photographs they may take before the cameras are returned to me (Appendix L, p. 20).

Additional changes:
Due to the late start of my research study and how this delay has impacted program timelines, I have changed the start and end date of my research study (November 2010 to May 2011). I have indicated this change in my informed consent forms.

Thank you,

Heather McRae
APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR YOUTH RESEARCHERS

This is a sample of the informed consent letter that youth researchers in the photovoice project would provide to potential subjects in their photographs.

U of M Letterhead

Date: 
Project title: Photo-Voice Project: Culturally Relevant Sport for Urban Aboriginal Youth

| Youth Researcher: Name of youth participant (organization name) phone number | Doctoral Student / Researcher: Heather McRae Faculty of Education University of Manitoba, Wpg, MB Phone: (204) ---------- | Thesis Advisor for H. McRae: Dr. Joannie Halas Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management University of Manitoba, Wpg, MB Phone: (204) ------ |

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you a basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, please feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Summary of Research and Methods

I, (Youth name), am doing a photo-voice project on the potential of sport to improve the health, well-being and life skills of urban Aboriginal youth. If you consent to participate in my photo-voice project, I will ask to take your photograph and ask you a few questions related to my project which I will record in a notebook. Your photograph and comments may appear in photography Exhibit in March 2011 when I display some of the photographs I have taken. Sponsorship of this study has been provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

My photo-voice project is part of Heather McRae’s doctoral study at (organization name) on culturally relevant sport programs for urban Aboriginal youth. You are also being invited to participate in Heather’s study because of the inclusion of your photograph and comments in my photo-voice project. If you agree to participate in Heather’s study, your photograph and comments may also appear in Heather’s dissertation and related academic research as well as (organization name)’s work.
This study has been approved by the University of Manitoba Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board. If you have any complaints about how this study has been conducted, please contact the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122.

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ANY AND ALL RESEARCH REQUESTS.**

If you understand all that has been described about the study, and agree to participate, please read the following and sign your name:

*(Youth name) photo-voice project:*

- I understand that my participation in appearing in photographs for (youth name)’s photo-voice project is voluntary.
- I understand that my name will not be used in (youth name)’s photo-voice project or Exhibit unless I give permission to (youth name).
- I understand that if I do not want my name used in (youth name)’s photo-voice project, a pseudonym (i.e., fake name) will be used in place of my name and any identifiable characteristics will be masked.
- I understand that my photograph and comments may appear in (youth name)’s photo-voice project and in a photography Exhibit in March 2011.
- I understand that my photographs and comments will be stored in (youth name)’s house or a locked filing cabinet at (organization name).
- I understand that two years after (youth name)’s photo-voice project, (youth name) will destroy or blur my image in any photograph where I appear, unless I give permission to (youth name) to keep my photographs.
- I understand that the possible risk factors from participating in (youth name)’s photo-voice project are no greater than in normal daily activity.
- I understand that I will receive an invitation to the Exhibit, upon request.

*Heather McRae’s doctoral research and related academic research:*

- I understand that my participation in appearing in photographs for Heather McRae’s doctoral study, and related academic research is voluntary.
- I understand that my image and comments may appear in Heather McRae’s doctoral study, related academic research.
- I understand the permanent and persistent nature of academic research (e.g., Heather’s doctoral study, presentations and publications).
- I understand that my name will not be used in Heather McRae’s doctoral study.
- I understand that a pseudonym (i.e., fake name) will be used in place of my name and any identifiable characteristics will be masked.
- I understand that if I agree to appear in photographs in Heather McRae’s doctoral study and related academic research, that some people may be able to identify me, even if I am given a pseudonym and identifiable characteristics are masked.
• **I understand** that my photographs and comments will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at Heather’s residence or a locked filing cabinet at (organization name).

• **I understand** that two years after Heather McRae’s dissertation is complete, Heather will destroy or blur my image in any photograph where I appear, unless I give permission to (youth name) to keep my photographs.

• **I understand** that the risks of this study are minimal as Heather McRae will not use any photograph without my permission, and she will not use any photographs that might be embarrassing to me in the future.

**PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS:**

1. Please indicate whether you wish for your IMAGE and COMMENTS to appear in (youth name)’s photo-voice project and Exhibit (please circle ONE response):
   
   YES  
   NO

2. Please indicate whether you wish for your NAME to appear in (youth name)’s photo-voice project and Exhibit (please circle ONE response):

   YES  
   NO

3. Please indicate whether you wish for your IMAGE and COMMENTS to appear in Heather McRae’s doctoral study (please circle ONE response):

   YES  
   NO

**I understand all of the above, and I agree to participate in the selected activities or to let my child ___________________ participate in the selected research activities.**

__________________________________________  ____________________________
(Name, printed)  (Signature of researcher)

__________________________________________  ____________________________
(Signature)  (Date)

**If person is under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian MUST sign the informed consent letter.**

I would like a copy of the photograph(s):  (_____) YES  (_____) NO

I would like an invitation to the Exhibit  (_____) YES  (_____) NO

Please mail my photograph(s) and/or invitation to:
Name: __________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________
Postal Code: _____________________________________
APPENDIX E: PHOTO BINGO ACTIVITY

The actual photo bingo activity sheet included graphics and colour to enhance its visual appeal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Something cultural in your home</th>
<th>People who depend on you</th>
<th>Your favourite outdoor activity</th>
<th>A cultural activity you want to try</th>
<th>Favourite game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your idea…</td>
<td>Foods that you normally eat</td>
<td>Favourite thing you own</td>
<td>Someone you admire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your idea…</td>
<td>Coolest person you know</td>
<td>FREE SPACE</td>
<td>Something that is important to you</td>
<td>An Aboriginal food that you like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A family tradition</td>
<td>Cool place that few people know about</td>
<td>Something you made</td>
<td>Someone who looks up to you</td>
<td>Your idea…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place where you exercise</td>
<td>Your idea…</td>
<td>Nearby park or play area</td>
<td>A sport that you like to watch (on tv, gym, field)</td>
<td>Sport equipment or clothes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F: OVERVIEW OF WASAC PROGRAMS

Timeline and Overview of WASAC programs (research period)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Programs / Key Activities</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Staff resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May - June</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Spring hiring for summer camps</td>
<td>University &amp; High school students hired</td>
<td>~4 senior staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>WASAC North trips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July - August</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 hr/day 5 day/wk</td>
<td>WASAC Kids Camp</td>
<td>Partner schools: ~50-60</td>
<td>1-2 senior staff to oversee; 2-3 school teachers (coordinate); 17 university leaders; 18 youth leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 hr/day 5 day/wk</td>
<td>University of Winnipeg Eco-U Kids Camp</td>
<td>Partner schools: ~10 Secondary role</td>
<td>1-2 senior staff; 19 university leaders; 8 youth leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 hr/day 5 day/wk</td>
<td>Youth Achievement Program</td>
<td>40 of youth training work</td>
<td>1-2 senior staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 hr/day for 7 days</td>
<td>WASAC North Camp</td>
<td>Partner communities: Duck Bay, Shamnatawa, Paunigassi</td>
<td>2 senior staff (coordinates), 4 YAP leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St. John’s Summer Football Camp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September - May</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 hrs/wk</td>
<td>HONOURS program</td>
<td>Partner with South East Collegiate ~ # of students</td>
<td>2-3 senior staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 hrs/wk</td>
<td>SMART program</td>
<td>Partner with St. John’s High School ~29 of students</td>
<td>2-3 senior staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 hrs/wk</td>
<td>Lil Moose Hockey Program</td>
<td>~6 school partners</td>
<td>4-5 senior staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3hrs/wk</td>
<td>University of Winnipeg Eco-Kids</td>
<td>University of Winnipeg *Secondary role</td>
<td>2-3 senior staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WASAC North trips</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 senior staff (coordinates), 3-4 senior staff (assist)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Secondary role: WASAC acts as support partner, supplying food and staff, to the University of Winnipeg who plans and delivers the program.
## APPENDIX G: WASAC LEADER ROLES AND INVOLVEMENT

### Overview of Senior Leaders

#### Organizational Leaders (2 people)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Education / Training</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>Executive Director &amp; past Board member</td>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>B.A., M.A. (current)</td>
<td>Co-founder 11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pino</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>All programs, bus driver</td>
<td>Recreation courses**</td>
<td>Co-founder 11 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Senior Administrative Leaders (7 people)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Program Responsibilities</th>
<th>Education / Training</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helen*</td>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>Did not ask</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>Program Supervisor</td>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>MSW</td>
<td>11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>Program Supervisor</td>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>Did not ask</td>
<td>~9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John*</td>
<td>Photographer</td>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>B.Sc.</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>Finance Director</td>
<td>All programs, Employee benefits</td>
<td>Did not ask</td>
<td>6 yrs (contract), 2 yrs (full-time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittany</td>
<td>Finance Supervisor</td>
<td>All programs, Employee wages &amp; reimbursement</td>
<td>Did not ask</td>
<td>2 yrs (part-time), 1 yr (full-time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darren</td>
<td>Manager of Organizational Operations</td>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>Management (current)</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*pseudonym

Note: The organizational leaders and senior administrative leaders compose the administrative team of WASAC.
### Senior Program Leaders (6 people)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Education / Training</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>YAP (summer)</td>
<td>Did not ask</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>WASAC North, SMART, HONOURS, Lil Moose, YAP (summer)</td>
<td>BSW</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin*</td>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>Lil Moose</td>
<td>MSW</td>
<td>unknown, seasonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel</td>
<td>Program assistant &amp; bus driver</td>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>unknown, seasonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephinie</td>
<td>Program Assistant</td>
<td>Lil Moose, WASAC North, SMART, HONOURS, YAP (summer)</td>
<td>Hospitality (current)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lance*</td>
<td>Youth leader</td>
<td>Lil Moose, WASAC North</td>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*pseudonym

---

144 Wendy was on-leave during the Fall/Winter programs but returned in May, 2011. Prior to her leave, she worked with Lindsay as Program Coordinator with WASAC North, HONOURS, SMART, and YAP.

145 WASAC has a contract with a private business who supplies buses and drivers for the Lil Moose program. Joel acts as bus driver for the majority of fall/winter programs and Pino also assists with bus driving duties when necessary.
## Organizational Issues: Summary Table

### Category #1: Organizational Logistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Purchase liability insurance for staff &amp; participants and review it when planning program activities</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Senior leadership team ensures an adequate number of staff and staff hours for program preparation &amp; implementation</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Produce an annual report - printed and internet - that showcases WASAC activities.</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85. Hire IT person to perform backups and to ensure computers are working properly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Senior leadership team allocates responsibilities for program to full-time &amp; experienced staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80. Communicate the success of WASAC to the stakeholders and community-at-large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Create computer renewal strategy (e.g., reliable &amp; up to date computers &amp; software)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Senior leadership team develops programs that fit the expertise of WASAC staff (e.g., Lil Moose, WASAC North)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Needs to improve: 3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Appreciation nights for staff</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Develop formal review &amp; promotion strategy framework for staff</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Provide professional development &amp; educational training opportunities for staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Provide flexibility and supports for staff to pursue further education or training (session 3, combo #52 &amp; 53)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Hire youth from WASAC programs by developing a feeder system from kids camps, to youth camps, to summer jobs (session 3, #42)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provide qualified coaching for staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87. Create framework for staff roles &amp; responsibilities</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Needs to improve: 3
## Category #3: Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extremely Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Apply for multiple sources of funding</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Stick to funding guidelines</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Proposal writer to seek input of other key staff (financial staff, senior staff)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Ensure funding for core programs</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Meet with funders for reporting &amp; program update purposes</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Meet with funders to secure funding</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Try to locate general funding source to support programs in between funding</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Maintain relationships with funders</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84. Approach Winnipeg’s corporate community for financial and promotional support</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Develop funding proposals with a certain degree of flexibility (e.g., if rely on third parties to deliver certain aspects of program)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. Take photos and video of programs for funders</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Somewhat Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Attend funders information sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. Arrange funders to visit programs</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Needs to improve: 1; Excellent: 9
## Category #4: Monitoring and Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extremely Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Create &amp; conduct program evaluation at the beginning and end of each program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Review on-going programs annually against funders criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Assess proposed programs against both WASAC and funders goals and objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Keep attendance record for youth participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Review on-going programs annually against WASAC’s aims and objectives</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. Create a database of program participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Somewhat Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68. Track the progress of program participants in terms of life achievement / further education, job placement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. Create timeline to monitor program improvements or changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76. Survey youth leader needs when they come in and out of the program</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78. Ensure that adequate facilities exist to provide for the current and future programming requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79. Take an inventory of the current facilities used and future (needed) facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Needs to improve: 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX I: WORKSHOP RESULTS FOR PROGRAM TABLE

Category 5: Strength-based Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Develop programs that foster future youth leaders (mentoring)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Take photos and video of youth to give to youth (e.g., magazine cover, team pictures, etc)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Host a celebration / recognition event at the end of programs</td>
<td>Needs to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Leaders should make it a priority to get to know each participant</td>
<td>Needs to improve, Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Staff act as role models for youth participants &amp; new youth staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Provide activities that kids like and complement the program</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. Ensure that youth have opportunities to develop their skills in a way that will enhance their own personal development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. Staff work with youth leaders to discover what additional skills or learning opportunities they view as beneficial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81. Ensure that Aboriginal youth have access to opportunities beyond WASAC programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82. Create development opportunities for WASAC youth leaders to become WASAC staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83. Provide youth leaders with enhanced skills that will lead to further employment opportunities</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86. Provide coaching certification workshops for youth participants to provide leadership building opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Create portfolio / yearbook on achievements &amp; relationships (youth &amp; staff)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need to improve: 2; Excellent: 5; mixed result: 1 (both improve and excellent)
### Category #6: Barrier-Free Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extremely Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Programs &amp; staff go to the youth (“Us coming to them”, e.g., go to their school, neighborhood)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. No program registration costs</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Develop programs that understand the barriers, perspectives &amp; strengths of target youth</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Proactive recruitment of youth for programs</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Understanding our clients and their situation</td>
<td>Needs to Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Understand steps and supports necessary to ensure youth can participate in a program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. Identify services/programs that are needed in the community but not offered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Somewhat Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Make programs a part of the school day (e.g., during school day or part of curriculum)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Need to improve: 1; Excellent: 5</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Category #7: Community Outreach and Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extremely Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Consult with key informants / stakeholders in community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Create promotional materials (e.g., videos, pamphlets, presentations, banners, website)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Know resource centres, schools and other programs operating in the community</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Partner with organizations for resources (staff, funding, equipment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Create partnerships with schools, especially those in the inner city of Winnipeg</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Develop partnerships with organizations that can lend, subsidize or donate equipment</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72. Develop and promote WASAC within the Aboriginal community in order to more effectively coordinate services to WASAC’s core “clients”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Somewhat Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. Provide other groups and organizations with advice and information relating to WASAC programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent: 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Category #8: Program Logistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Pick up and drop off kids at program site</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Staff fill out facility contract forms before starting program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Find and book space for program &amp; events in advance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Create registration forms for youth to participate in programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Ensure all youth fill out allergy / medication forms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Balance recreational and educational activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Create rules (e.g., behavior contracts) for youth participants in program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Choose a school where we have a connection with teachers or administration.</td>
<td>Needs to improve, Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Main staff person determines budget with financial staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. Thank you cards and tokens of appreciate to schools, funders, helpers, etc</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. Create Facebook page for program so youth can keep up-to-date on program activities, etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Create program reminders (e.g., magnets) for youth to take home</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Provide nutritious, tasty meals (sandwich, fruit, drink &amp; treat)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Identify special speakers &amp; instructors for programs and book in advance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need to improve: 1; Excellent: 4; Mixed result: 1
APPENDIX J: WORKSHOP RESULTS FOR LEADER TABLE

Category #1: General Leadership Qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Leaders need to be organized &amp; disciplined</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Leaders need to adapt to challenging situations (emergencies, emotional breakdowns, change of plans)</td>
<td>Training &amp; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Leaders need to be aware of surroundings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Leaders need to be able to plan activities, outings, games for programs</td>
<td>Sport, recreation, play; Training &amp; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Leaders need to be able to deal with conflict</td>
<td>Training &amp; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Leaders need to be easy going (i.e., things don’t always go as planned)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Leaders need to make independent decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Leaders need to understand sensitive and confidential information</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. Leaders need to be flexible &amp; able to work in ‘organized chaos’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. Leaders need to take initiative &amp; be creative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Leaders need to take pride in their job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Leaders need to be enthusiastic about sport and have a basic knowledge of it</td>
<td>Sport, recreation, play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Leaders need to work without supervision and directions to plan and implement programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Leaders need to have knowledge of FASD</td>
<td>Training &amp; education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
47. Leaders need to be able to do public speaking, presentations (e.g., recruitment, funding, presentations, etc)  
Training & education; Improve

58. Leaders need to understand the personal experiences & background of youth

66. Leaders need to be humble; they need to do what is needed to make the program successful

68. Leaders should believe that no task is beneath them

Somewhat Important

45. Leaders need to be able to evaluate staff, programs, and proposals  Improve

Need to improve: 3; Excellent: 0

Category #2: Working with Urban Aboriginal youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Leaders need to be trustworthy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Leaders need to empower, not ‘enable’ youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Leaders need to understand youth; not feel sorry for them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Leaders need to be enthusiastic and enjoy working with youth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. Leaders need to be positive, friendly and welcoming with youth (e.g., smile, laugh, etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Leaders need to find kid’s individual greatness</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. Leaders need to put kids first</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. Leaders should not be judgmental or critical about inner city or Aboriginal people / kids</td>
<td>Aboriginal people or cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79. Leaders need to have high, yet realistic expectations of youth &amp; continue to hold these expectations even if youth test them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Staff need to develop a personal relationship with all youth (from session 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Training &amp; Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leaders need to know how to properly discipline children &amp; youth</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Leaders need to be patient with youth problems and attitudes</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Leaders need to use humor to help and motivate kids</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72. Leaders need to be understanding &amp; compassionate</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78. Leaders need to get kids onside because kids respect and like them.</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders should not rely on their authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Leaders need to have prior leadership experience working with youth</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Leaders need to understand the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Manitoba</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Leaders need to love kids</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. Leaders need to understand the lasting effects of residential schools</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in Canada</td>
<td>people or cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to improve: 3; Excellent: 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Category #3: Organizational Needs and Team Qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leaders need good communication skills</td>
<td>Training &amp; education; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Leaders need to motivate each other to make the best experience for youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Leaders need to support each other (e.g., Kevin’s campaign)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Leaders should know each other’s strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. WASAC needs Aboriginal leaders as role models for Aboriginal youth</td>
<td>Aboriginal peoples or culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. WASAC needs leaders who do not believe they are better than anybody else, yet do not undervalue themselves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. WASAC needs leaders who know how to be part of a team</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Leaders should be punctual and have good attendance</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. WASAC needs senior staff with appropriate education &amp; experience (e.g., education, social work)</td>
<td>Training &amp; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. WASAC needs staff who live in the inner city of Winnipeg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX K: WORKSHOP RESULTS FOR BENEFIT TABLE

Category #1: Employment and Training Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. employment and leadership opportunities within WASAC summer camps are provided</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Funding; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. opportunities to get jobs are increased</td>
<td>Leaders; Evaluation; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. new job skills and employment preparation skills are learned</td>
<td>Planning; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. more opportunities to develop employable skills (e.g., First Aid, CPR)</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Funding; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. resume writing and interview skills are improved</td>
<td>Planning; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. knowledge about youth &amp; Aboriginal employment agencies and resources is increased (e.g., CAHRD)</td>
<td>Planning; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. increased number of young Aboriginal leaders (sport) in community</td>
<td>Planning; Evaluation; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. sport leadership skills / certifications, such as coaching and program planning, are increased</td>
<td>Planning; Funding; Improve; Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Needs to Improve: 2; Excellent: 6
Category #2: Personal Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. positive peer relationships and friendships are fostered among youth</td>
<td>Evaluation; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. feeling of purpose is fostered</td>
<td>Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. youth stay busy and out of trouble</td>
<td>Planning; Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. something positive for youth to look forward to</td>
<td>Evaluation; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. positive personal decision-making are learned or enhanced</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. self-confidence is increased</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. feelings of being respected and relationships of trust are fostered</td>
<td>Leaders; Evaluation; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. sense of responsibility, accomplishment and self-worth is increased</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. decreased feelings of isolation and boredom</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. a sense of belonging and family is fostered among youth and staff</td>
<td>Leaders; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. respect is learned</td>
<td>Leader; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. increased opportunities for travel (Northern / Southern Manitoba or out-of-province)</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to improve: 1; Excellent: 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Category #3: Cultural Awareness and Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. increased exposure to cultural activities</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. increased opportunity to develop relationships with positive Aboriginal role models and leaders</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. positive image of Aboriginal youth is fostered</td>
<td>Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. negative cultural stereotypes about Aboriginal people are addressed and challenged</td>
<td>Leaders; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. awareness and connection to Aboriginal culture and communities is developed or deepened</td>
<td>Leaders; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. awareness of the vibrancy and depth of Aboriginal culture is increased</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. exposure to Aboriginal sport events (e.g., NAIG) is increased</td>
<td>Planning; Improve; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. increased exposure &amp; opportunity to participate in contemporary &amp; traditional Aboriginal cultural traditions and activities</td>
<td>Planning; Improve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need to improve: 7; Excellent: 2; Mixed Result: 1
Category #4: Life Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. life skills, such as SIN card, passport &amp; license applications, and medical cards, are learned Informally &amp; formally (YAP)</td>
<td>Planning; Funding; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. increased awareness about banking industry &amp; how it impacts low-income communities &amp; youth</td>
<td>Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. life/cultural skills, such as getting a Status or MMF card, are learned</td>
<td>Planning; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. increased opportunities to develop and practice leadership skills</td>
<td>Planning; Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. life skills, such as getting a bank account and money management skills, are increased</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. exposure to new and different life skills are increased</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. feelings of fear or intimidation of banking (e.g., getting an account) is decreased</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need to improve: 0; Excellent: 3
### Category #5: Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Likert Ranking</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evaluation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extremely Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. youth connection to partner schools and teachers involved with program is strengthened</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. school attendance and performance is improved</td>
<td>Planning; Improve; Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. likelihood of graduating high school is improved</td>
<td>Improve; Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. interest and confidence about pursuing post-secondary education or training is increased</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Improve; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. increased opportunities to apply for and be nominated for awards / scholarships</td>
<td>Leaders; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. increased exposure to educational &amp; life skills activities</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. greater likelihood that schools and community will recognize the strength of youth and their achievements</td>
<td>Excels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need to improve: 4; Excellent: 4; Mixed results: 3
### Category #6: Community

#### Likert Ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30. leadership and resource capacity in northern Aboriginal communities is increased</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Funding; Improve; Excels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29. parental involvement is supported</td>
<td>Planning; Improve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. knowledge and connection to community resources is improved</td>
<td>Planning; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. WASAC supports partner community organizations &amp; schools to run sport programs</td>
<td>Planning; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. economic support for local businesses</td>
<td>Improve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need to improve: 5; Excellent: 1; Mixed results: 1
### Category #7: Sport Training and Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Ranking</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extremely Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Access to sports or sport equipment is increased (e.g., hockey)</td>
<td>Leaders; Funding; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Increased opportunities to act as a leader / role model in community</td>
<td>Leaders; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Ideas such as fair play and team work are learned or enhanced</td>
<td>Leaders; Excels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Access to non-school or outdoor sports is increased (e.g., camping, canoeing, swimming)</td>
<td>Planning; Leaders; Funding; Improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Somewhat Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Access to professional sport events is increased (e.g., Bomber games)</td>
<td>Funding; Excels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need to improve: 1; Excellent: 4

### Category #8: Physical Health

Only two statements, both ranked neutral