

Running head: CRITICAL REFLECTION IN THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM:
ANTI-OPPRESSION EDUCATION

**Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression
Education**

By

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Abstract

This thesis argues that schools are sites where an ideology of colonialism is reproduced through the roles of the institution, the educators (and their education), the students and the absence of an integrated community. The researcher uses an anti-oppressive pedagogical approach in a secondary school classroom in Northwest Ontario to incorporate Indigenous rights education into existing curriculum. This research was modeled after a participatory action research framework to allow flexibility and input from participants. A curriculum unit based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was developed and implemented in a secondary school classroom; data was collected during the unit, through a questionnaire, a post-unit focus group, and an interview with a Native Studies teacher. The research findings support the need for the integration of Indigenous content in the Ontario public school system at the ministry, board, teacher education, and school levels.

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Chapter One

Introduction:

My Position Piece

This thesis charts a portion of my journey to understanding the extent to which a colonial ideology shapes and is reinforced through and by the public education system in Canada. I began with a desire to have indigenous content more completely incorporated into mainstream education; to increase student awareness of institutionalized discrimination and to foster student engagement in society in order to reduce the levels of individual and systemic racism. I end with the same desire but a deeper understanding of the barriers to this goal at the structural and ideological levels.

Location.

As a human being I occupy a cultural-sociopolitical position. Engaging in anti-oppressive practice; it is important to make my position clear, to expose my biases and the influences that affected how I planned, conducted and interpreted this research. Mullings (1999) states that a “researcher’s knowledge is [...] always partial” because their perspective is shaped by their position within the intersections of oppression in the unique “location in time and space” they are working in (p. 338). My thesis is temporally and geographically located in relation to specific government policies, social relations, and systems of power and oppression. Likewise, my questions and interpretations are being created through a process within this location.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) wrote about the relationship between “knowledge, research and imperialism” and how it has “come to structure our own [Indigenous] ways of knowing, through the development of academic disciplines and through the education of colonial elites” and how western knowledge and science have been the “beneficiaries’

of the colonization of indigenous peoples” (p. 59). My position as a white researcher educated within the Western academic tradition engaging in a thesis focused on decolonization makes this thesis and me a site of contradiction. Negotiating decolonization within a colonial setting from a place of privilege requires reflexivity. I chose participatory action research for this very reason; that is to create space for shifts in my perspectives guided by the participants and re-understandings of the literature - of which there have been many.

It has been argued that living within a system of oppression, everyone is located by their class, racial designation, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, citizenship status, age, education etc. and their location affects how they are able to interact with the world (Bishop, 2002). In *Becoming an Ally*, Bishop (2002) provides a detailed argument in favour of collaboration and solidarity between and among people separated by class, gender, sex, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, colonial status and racial designation within the Canadian system of oppression. Identifying as a White woman she locates herself as being both in a place of privilege (white) and in some situations being oppressed (as a woman). Identifying mainly in a place of privilege, Bishop considers herself an *ally* to other groups of people who are seeking liberation from oppression. In conducting this research, I am working towards allying myself with those who are engaged in the decolonization project. While I am outside of the experience of being Indigenous, as a white European Canadian I am yet located within the colonial system of Indigenizing (where indigenizing refers to the systemic creation of an essentialised Indigenous identity or indigenous identity defined through a colonial lens (see Francis, 1993)). I believe it is important to acknowledge the paradoxical condition of being a benefactor of colonialism

and someone who engages in decolonization. FitzMaurice (2010), a White professor in a Native studies department, points out that his “very presence in Canada as a voter, taxpayer, and overall contributing citizen is premised upon a primary usurpation of Aboriginal authority” (2010, p. 360). Therefore this thesis and my position as a white academic, occupy the uneasy location of both maintaining and seeking to interrupt colonization.

Choice of thesis topic.

I am a first generation Canadian woman of English and Dutch descent. I was born in Toronto, Ontario and at the age of 6 moved with my family to Madoc, Ontario, a small town of 1300 people in between Alderville First Nation and Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. Despite this proximity, I have no recollection, in the nine years that I lived there, of learning about the Ojibwe or Mohawk peoples, their culture or their history before contact with colonists or in the time since.

During my undergraduate years I took courses that engaged with anti-oppressive discourses. In studying the history of Indigenous minorities and human rights, and women’s studies I encountered histories and realities that were both unfamiliar and intertwined with the socio-political space I occupy.

One of the defining moments of my post secondary education was the realization of the question “why haven’t I learned this until now?” This question arose for me during many of my courses throughout my H.B.A. at York University and my H.B.S.W. at Lakehead University and was posed in reference to the education I received in elementary

and secondary school in Southern Ontario. This question is the impetus behind choosing to do this research at the graduate level.

The process of completing this thesis has brought me in many directions and in some ways full circle. When I began I focused on the work of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian writer and activist for liberatory education. As I delved further into reviewing the literature about implementing education for the purpose of liberation; I found an author who I have great respect for but whom I had only read in the context of feminism and white privilege. I rediscovered bell hooks (bell hooks does not capitalize her pen name) through her work as an educator. hooks, in many ways, follows in the footsteps of the work of Freire, something she explicitly states in her writing (2010). She provides a much needed feminist connection to and analysis of Freire's work.

As a queer white single mother with degrees in the liberal arts and social work I, as most people, occupy multiple locations on the oppression/privilege landscape. Acknowledging my position and participation within the system of oppression is an intentional sociopolitical recognition. My aforementioned multiple statuses position me as both a recipient of privilege at the expense of others' oppression and as someone who experiences oppression for the sake of someone else's privilege. Within the context of this thesis I am in a position of privilege. According to Bishop (2002) the ally understands themselves as "part of the people or various peoples" (p. 110). As an ally, I position myself in solidarity with other people engaged in decolonization. A systemic analysis of oppression states that in an oppressive society all people are linked to and take part in oppression. From this perspective, everyone has a stake in and is responsible for engaging in anti-oppressive work because true freedom cannot exist within oppression

(Freire, 1970). **So when people say this work is about that infamous ‘other’, I disagree. Everyone benefits from disrupting oppression; anti-oppressive work is about the liberation of everyone.**

This thesis engages with the topic of Indigenous rights because when I moved from Toronto to a small city in North-western Ontario, I was completely taken aback by the amount of mis-information, ignorance and blatant racism toward the Indigenous population in that community to which I had re-located. Many Canadians are largely ignorant of Canada’s shameful history of perpetuating racist policies, laws and attitudes the remnants of which still contribute to the ongoing oppression of the Indigenous population (Assembly of First Nations, “Our Story,” 2001). The issue of colonialism and the undervaluation of indigenous contributions to Canada is addressed in books such as *The Imaginary Indian* (Francis, 1992) and *A Fair country: Telling Truths About Canada* (Saul, 2008).

According to the 2006 Canadian Census (Government of Canada); 23% of people between the ages of 25 and 64 surveyed had received a University degree (p. 10), out of those only a fraction have done a liberal arts degree and a fraction of those have taken a course about human rights, Indigenous issues, women’s studies, or some other field engaged in anti-oppressive dialogue. It follows then that to effect a widespread change in thought towards a socially just society students need to be engaged in anti-oppressive education before they leave high school. Such education is not a complete solution to facilitating the elimination of oppressive elements in society (i.e. clearly not all those educated for acceptance of diversity implement such an approach) but rather a vital component.

Political discourses.

It is not my intention in undertaking the present research to propose any argument for a new theory of Indigenous/non-Indigenous Canadian relations since the dichotomous relationship that perpetuates the myth of ‘the other’ in the system of oppression has been well addressed by others (See Bishop, 2002). However, I do necessarily need to state my position regarding how dialogue about Indigenous peoples in Canada is framed. I agree with Cornthassel (2008) when he states that the use of “Indigenous issues” separates and ‘others’ the effects of colonialism so that it is removed from Canadian Identity. It is for this reason that I use the term “colonial issues” instead of the term “indigenous issues”. Further, I agree that the use of “Indigenous rights” is both representative of self-determination and a discourse that has been co-opted by individual nation states (Cornthassel, 2008). Furthermore, the United Nations as an arena for legitimizing Indigenous rights, by virtue of its purpose and structure, necessarily diminishes Indigenous control over the scope and the form of the dialogue regarding colonial issues. Regardless of the extensive inclusion of Indigenous voice in the creation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), the final document had to meet with the approval of the member states. As one of the prime purposes of the United Nations is maintaining peace and stability between sovereign states, conventions, treaties and declarations created by the United Nations seek to promote that purpose (Daes, 2008). This inevitably leads to certain compromises not fully consistent with meeting human rights ideals. However, as the main international body held responsible for establishing and promoting human rights, the United Nations is currently the only

location for negotiating and setting an international standard for Indigenous rights within and among states.

Although I recognize the contradictions inherent in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the process of drafting and adopting the Declaration is well documented and provides a basis for debate at the international, national and local levels concerning indigenous rights and oppression. This intersection of history and current events is an excellent space to engage students in a critical discussion that addresses the nature of oppression and the complexity of the system that maintains it.

A systems view of oppression holds all people accountable. Thus, if students are actively engaged in discussing oppression in the classroom there is the potential for some students to be emotionally affected and/or put in position where they feel dissonance. Emotional engagement and experiences of dissonance have been discussed (Iseke-Barnes, 2008; White, 2009) as necessary steps to developing critical consciousness. As I will discuss later, students in this study demonstrated an abstract engagement with the content during the instructional phase addressing the topics of indigenous rights and oppression. Respecting the path to critical consciousness, anti-oppressive education needs to be taught in a way that allows students to develop a community where they feel respected and able to express multiple perspectives. Framed as educating allies, Bishop (2002) states that the purpose is “to equip ordinary people to make change by acting together” (p. 125).

Throughout my education, work and volunteer experiences I have maintained positions and rooted my practice in collaborative, community oriented and anti-

oppressive frameworks. This has been the case whether it was in creating workshops on gendered violence and creating queer positive spaces, practicing harm reduction for the treatment of mental health and addictions, delivering strengths based anti-bullying programming to elementary students, or facilitating social justice programming and public speaking training for people who experience economic marginalization. I begin from the position that we are all linked in a system of oppression, and only through education and solidarity across the intersections of oppression is it possible to create lasting positive change.

This thesis is about learning how to teach youth to critically reflect on the social and political world they live in and on its indefensible oppressive elements. It concerns more specifically how to allow youth a safe space where they are encouraged to engage with socially and politically charged information in a way that is meaningful to themselves and respectful to others. Although I will readily admit that I am and will likely always be on my journey to understanding and deconstructing oppression, I believe I am far enough along given my formal and applied educational and personal experiences to be able to foster the environment necessary to allow others the space to begin their journey.

I based the construction of my research process on *participatory action research* (PAR), a methodology with its roots in anti-oppression action. According to Borda (2001) PAR values the knowledge of the people and follows in the tradition of education as liberatory practice citing influences such as Myles Horton in Appalachia, Paulo Freire in Brazil and Camilo Torres in Colombia. As a white educator and as an educator invested in anti-oppressive action I have a political and ethical responsibility to my

participants, other educators, and to the content that I propose to teach to be respectful, aware and reflexive. My choice of research methodology was directed by the research question and my positionality to such an extent that it is nearly impossible to disconnect the two.

Research Question

Can the development of critical reflection through integration of a human rights framework and issues into a secondary school grade 10 curriculum change student's perception of colonialism from one of "Indigenous issues" to one that recognizes and examines the relationship non-Indigenous Canadians also have to these issues of human rights? This research study examined the hypothesis that a critical reflection approach to the study of indigenous rights in a universal human rights context would foster greater engagement of a small sample of Canadian grade ten students with the issue of Indigenous rights, increase the students' knowledge of some key concepts surrounding Indigenous rights as a global issue and facilitate a perspective that views Indigenous rights as a matter affecting all Canadians. This critical reflection approach was used in the context of a grade 10 'Civics' course and was compared with and contrasted to the approach of segregating Indigenous content in a 'Native Studies' course.

Critical Reflection

Critical consciousness is a term developed by Freire (1973) to "represent[s] the capacity to critically reflect and act upon one's sociopolitical environment" (Diemer, Kauffman, Koenig, Trahan, Hsieh, 2006, p. 445). Critical consciousness as a concept is broken down into two necessary components, action and reflection (Diemer et al. 2006).

This thesis was developed around the reflection component of critical consciousness.

Critical reflection, as stated by Hopper, in Diemer et al. (2006), is a process of “learning to think critically about accepted ways of thinking and feeling, discerning the hidden interests in underlying assumptions and framing notions...It means learning to see, in the mundane particulars of ordinary lives, how history works, how received ways of thinking and feeling serve to perpetuate existing structures of inequality” (p. 445). This critical reflection approach was implemented through the use of dialogical instruction and an anti-oppressive framework to teach students their relationship to the social, political and historical world in which they live in respect to issues of human rights and more specifically: colonialism, oppression and privilege; to inspire hope and give students the tools they need to create change.

A study by Diemer et. al. (2006) presupposes that “peers, family, and community members are key social actors in the lives of adolescents” (p. 445). In their discussion of their research findings the point is also made that the school context may “play a larger role in influencing adolescents’ perceived capacity for action than support from peers, family, and community” (Diemer et al., 2006, p. 455). Diemer et al. (2006) found that support for challenging racism, sexism and social injustice is associated with developing the reflection component but not the action component of critical consciousness. Their participants perceived the most support for challenging racism, then social injustice and lastly, sexism. Diemer et al. (2006) hold that schools can be a site where students perceive the greatest “capacity to act upon their sociopolitical environment” (p 455). The current study uses the school context as a space for dialogue intended to promote a greater appreciation for social justice and the barriers to it in Canadian society. Further,

the critical reflection approach in the current study focused on reflecting on Canadian Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons; how and why they are each situated in contemporary Canadian society and to each other as they are and what can and should be changed to promote greater equity.

Incorporating Indigenous Content

There are currently two methods of incorporating Indigenous content in the secondary school curriculum in Ontario, Canada; these are: a) specific separate courses on 'Native Studies' and b) the integration of "Indigenous" content into pre-existing non-Indigenous specific courses such as the grade 10 'Civics' course. The former approach treats Indigenous culture and history as a distinct area of study and the latter treats it as a part of the Canadian tapestry. This difference in approach may produce important differences in the relationships for students to the same issues and this thesis set out to investigate that possibility.

The unique situation of Indigenous rights in the human rights framework: Of importance is a distinction between the very specific human rights issues Indigenous peoples face and the human rights issues other socio-political minorities face. It has been argued (Bishop, 2002, p. 80) that Indigenous issues should not be grouped in with other minority issues, such as racism and homophobia, due to the relationship 'Indigenous issues' have to land ownership, displacement and sovereignty. Using a human rights framework for this research did not seek to hide this important distinction; rather it was being used to help build connections to issues that affect all Canadians, not just Indigenous peoples. This research is being viewed as one step in a positive direction to developing education which builds student critical consciousness

about human rights, Indigenous land claims and other colonial issues, and conceptualizing Canadian identities.

A Note On Oppression

The language and framework that has been developed to approach issues facing political minorities in Canada and around the world does a tremendous job –intentional or not-of shifting the focus from where oppression originates over to where it is expressed. This has created division between those who benefit from oppression and those who are oppressed. Programs and services that are developed to improve the social and political status of oppressed minorities often fail to acknowledge that the situation for those who benefit from oppression must also be addressed. A step in this direction is exposing and reflecting on institutionalized racism as this curriculum unit provides students an opportunity to do.

A Note On Terminology

Throughout this thesis a number of terms are used to refer to Indigenous populations. In respect to Canada, common language includes *Aboriginal*, *First Nations*, *Anishinaabe* (with variations on spelling) and *Native*. In my own writing I am using the term Indigenous, as this is the terminology used by the international community and by the United Nations Declaration on The Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), which formed the human rights framework for this research. When referring to others' work I will use the terminology they chose while here acknowledging that Canadian Indigenous peoples are a diverse group of nations with varying customs and languages.

A second issue arising in the current research is the distinction between issues commonly referred to as “Indigenous issues” or “Aboriginal issues”. Originally my aim

was to develop educational frameworks for repositioning “Indigenous issues” as human rights issues, however, as my understanding of individual and group rights has developed I no longer wish to do what I now understand as diluting Indigenous rights into general issues of human rights. Indigenous rights are distinct from basic human rights *of individuals* because of issues of nationhood, political boundaries and exercising self-determination as peoples. Indigenous rights challenges the states authority to govern for the people within its boundaries, as Escárcega (2010) states, “The main problem that Indigenous intellectuals and activists see in Daes’s argument is that she only recognizes self-determination as a right that can be realistically exercised within the confines of the nation state and its laws, thus limiting all other rights, including that of being culturally distinct” (p. 19).

A third distinction is necessary to ground and orient this thesis, that is colonization is understood as an ongoing political process used by the Canadian state and enacted through the erasure of Indigenous history; imposition of Eurocentric laws, systems of governance, and institutions; and the denial of meaningful participation in politics for the purpose of dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their lands, rights, and identities as distinct nations and peoples. Following this definition, decolonization necessarily goes beyond acquiring ‘equity’ and material conditions within the settler government (Alfred, 1999). According to Alfred (1999), decolonization is only possible when Indigenous leadership and political organization is based in Indigenous political philosophy, not the settler imposed governance structures or philosophies. As a White academic, I believe my role in decolonization goes as far as naming, challenging and deconstructing colonialism and then it is my role to move aside and support Indigenous

leaders as they create political and philosophical frameworks for Indigenous self-determination.

Summary

This study sought to develop an effective method of teaching a sample of Canadian grade ten students critical consciousness through encouraging them to critically reflect on the political relationship between indigenous/non-indigenous peoples in Canada and globally by focusing on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). The two aforementioned diverse methods of incorporating indigenous content (specific separate courses on ‘Native Studies’ versus the integration of “Indigenous” content into pre-existing non-Indigenous specific courses) are part of the Ontario Ministry of Education’s effort to address equity and inclusion. However, both methods stop short of actually committing to repositioning “Indigenous issues” as issues of colonialism, oppression and human rights. The focus of this research is on examining student outcomes (namely extent of reflective awareness and understanding of indigenous rights and colonial issues in Canada and globally) for a sample of grade ten Ontario students as a function of: a) specific mode of curriculum delivery (separate course on indigenous rights and colonial issues versus integration of the topic into a grade ten civics course) and b) exposure to an experimental curriculum unit on Indigenous rights and to a dialogic teaching method intended to stimulate critical reflection on the historical and contemporary political and sociological issues raised by that experimental curriculum unit.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

The research proposed here aims to go beyond the goal of including Indigenous content through the banking method of education to using the contemporary history of colonialism to encourage and nurture critical reflection about the sociopolitical world in which we live. (According to Freire (1970) the banking concept of education is a process of teaching wherein the educator feeds predetermined information to the students without any consideration for the students feedback.) There are programs in place designed to incorporate Indigenous culture into the school system. The addition of culture into education does not in itself however, “remedy complex and deep-seated social problems” (Hermes, 2005, p.10). The ethnographic analysis by Hermes (2005) illustrates the discontinuity between teaching that is sensitive to traditional Indigenous culture versus teaching that addresses the culture of oppression as identified by the participants as the main issue facing Indigenous students. Hermes (2005) goes on to expound on the issue of teacher awareness and the importance of “considering the historical circumstances that have resulted in low socioeconomic status and a myriad of related issues” (p.16) affecting Indigenous minority populations globally.

There is a growing body of research (Lopez, 2008; Infinito, 2003; Giroux, 1978; Kelly & Brooks, 2009) which supports the need for reevaluating and changing the education system to more accurately reflect changes in social awareness of implicit and explicit institutionalized systems of oppression. According to Eisenberg (2006) “given that oppression is structural and group-based, the ways to address social inequality entail restructuring social institutions and processes so that they reflect, recognize and value the

differences amongst social groups” (p.11). The education system is one of the main institutions responsible for transmitting social expectations, values and culture to each generation. Expanding on Young’s theory of politics of difference to include necessary standards of education (Young, 1990), Eisenberg believes that a minimum requirement of an education that addresses social inequalities is to include “programmes that raise awareness of how racism, sexism and homophobia manifest themselves” (p.21). Current research in the area of education and social change indicates further research is needed in order to build theoretical frameworks for educational practice that support the ongoing development of an education system responsive to oppressive social conditions. In Iseke-Barnes *Pedagogies for Decolonizing* (2008) she argues that the process for teaching about oppression and social change needs to emphasize “taking personal responsibility for one’s own actions and engaging opportunities for change in educational settings and society in general, and how oppression can be disrupted” (p. 134). Iseke-Barnes (2008) is discussing the balance that must be kept between teaching about oppression, which can be overwhelming and result in feelings of helplessness and teaching methods for disrupting oppression.

According to Young (1990), marginalization is a tool of oppression. It has been well established that historically, formal education has been biased in favour of Eurocentric content and forms of knowledge and excluded Indigenous content and forms of knowledge (Lakehead District School Board, 2010; Faries, 2004; Briley, 1997; Mason, 2008; Baskin, Koleszar-Green, Hendry, Lavallee & Murrin, 2008). It follows then, that one method of disrupting oppression is to begin to include and value Indigenous content and perspectives as legitimate. Merely including Indigenous content does not go far

enough. As Rachel Mason explains in *Conflicts and lessons in First Nations secondary education: an analysis of First Nations Studies* (2008) “BC First Nations Studies was often seen as an inferior course intended only for First Nations students who were considered not smart enough to take other social studies courses” (p. 135). What is also crucial in understanding the effect that incorporating Indigenous issues into the curriculum has on student perceptions of information is appreciating how the delivery of content can affect its impact. It has been noted further, “schools have a vital role in promoting awareness by providing the students with accurate knowledge about Indigenous peoples. Teaching children about First Nations people will have a profound impact on building bridges between First Nations and Canadian society” (Faries, 2004, p. 11).

The thesis research discussed here involves design of a unit using Freire’s (1970) dialogic method of education to promote critical reflection by students (and teachers) on colonialism, effectively incorporating “Indigenous” content (the history of colonialism) and teaching a method of critical thinking needed to remove content from the abstract form to the practical relevant to everyday relationships. The unit provides an opportunity for students to critically examine how their connections to political issues which have been historically marginalized as concerning only the “other” can be re-positioned as mainstream political issues that affect all Canadians.

Marginalization has been the main route of oppression in education. The practice of exclusion of serious discussion in schools regarding Indigenous contributions to Canadian society has had a key role in shaping poor educational outcomes for Indigenous students in Canada and contributes to poor levels of societal awareness of ongoing issues

regarding the oppression of Indigenous peoples. The Ontario Ministry of Education has been working on implementing policies on antiracism and ethnocultural equity for more than 15 years. The Ontario Ministry of Education and Training document *Antiracism and ethnocultural equity in school boards: Guidelines for policy development and implementation* (1993) states,

Antiracism and ethnocultural equity school board policies reflect a commitment to the elimination of racism within schools and in society at large. Such policies are based on the recognition that some existing policies, procedures, and practices in the school system are racist in their impact, if not their intent, and that they limit the opportunity of students and staff belonging to Aboriginal and racial and ethnocultural minority groups. (p. 5)

This sentiment is echoed by Hampton (1995) who states, “It must be straightforwardly realized that education, as currently practiced, is *cultural* genocide. It seeks to brainwash the Native child, substituting non-Native for Native knowledge, values, and identity” (p. 35, emphasis added). It is apparent that the Ontario Ministry of Education wishes to ensure a move away from all policies and practices that help sustain racism.

This recognition of systemic racism in the Canadian education system, and by the education system is relatively new considering the long history of the residential school system and assimilationist policies in Canada. This recognition is also somewhat historically contradictory considering the Ontario Ministry’s publication came before the closure of the last residential school in Saskatchewan in 1996 (Assembly of First Nations Indian Residential Schools Unit, 2010). Further, there is a demonstrated lack of uniformity from province to province in educational policy on the issue of racism. The

journey from development of awareness to development of policy to effective practical implementation is long.

According to Faries (2004) even though the Ontario Ministry of Education has developed Native Studies courses at the secondary level, these courses are not mandatory and consequently are not offered at the majority of secondary schools in Ontario. Giving individual schools/school boards the option to exclude certain material allows for further marginalization of Indigenous peoples. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) argues that education based on dominant discourse indoctrinates students into “the world of oppression” (p. 65). Recognizing the inherently non-neutral role education plays in shaping society, education, according to Rachel Mason (2008), “can and should play a liberatory role in society” and she argues, “challenging the marginalization of oppressed peoples in history education is necessary (p. 131).”

The education system was built on a colonial ideology that privileges a Eurocentric system and view of society. This ideology is being challenged as inherently oppressive in nature. In order to justify its continued status in society as a necessary process to ensure future success, education must be willing to progress in its approach to the topic of colonialism alongside the rest of society. Transformational education is a vehicle for “shifting from an ineffectual paradigm to a more appropriate one (Ptak, 2006, p 2).” Although much of the literature on developing inclusive education does not specifically name transformational education as the vehicle for expression, it is, by definition, the praxis necessary for anti-oppressive education. According to O’Sullivan (2002), the process of transformative learning takes place where there is a:

cognitive crisis... Creativity occurs within a cognitive system when old habitual

modes of interpretation become dysfunctional, demanding a shifting of ground or viewpoint. The breakdown, or crisis, motivates the system to self-organize in more inclusive ways of knowing, embracing, and integrating data of which it had been previously unconscious. (O'Sullivan, 2002, p. 4)

The development of this thesis began with the concepts of anti-oppressive education and of Freire's *critical consciousness*, specifically focusing on the reflection aspect of critical consciousness (both action and reflection are necessary, however, the development of one can lead to the development of the other). Central to this discussion is an analysis of the role of institutionalized forms of education in the creation of socio-politically active citizens.

Looking at multiple sites of education as liberatory practice; certain commonalities in methods and experiences emerge to best guide further work aimed at creating class rooms where students are active participants in their education and are encouraged to engage with the socio-political worlds they inhabit. Research in this area has influenced the development of the experimental curriculum unit used in this study based in the concepts of dialogical education, systemic oppression, and critical analysis. The use of international Indigenous rights discourses provides students with examples that are removed enough from their personal experience to allow them to critically engage while being connected enough to their experience to allow for critical reflection.

Anti-oppression Education and Critical Consciousness

As an institution the education system needs to take a progressive and overarching approach to oppression and provide positive representations of all students within the curriculum. Bishop (2002) argues that one of the ways oppression is maintained is

through the ideological separation of children from their parents, families, and cultures of origin. Through a lack of accurate representation,

The children of oppressed people are subject to constant messages, in school and the media, that their parents are not to be respected or emulated. Children of oppressed people are encouraged to despise their parents and scorn their parent's ancestry, history, dignity, and struggles, in the interests of teaching them to identify only with their oppressors. (p. 88)

Living in colonial Brazil, Freire (1974) became concerned with the inability of the colonized to engage in democracy. Freire discusses the way in which a lack of opportunity to engage in the democratic process (due to the colonization of the bodies and minds of the population) has perpetuated subordination and inhibited the creation of dialogue and critical thought. In *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Freire (1974) describes a process for how to teach critical consciousness within the context of literacy education in colonial Brazil. Freire discusses the specific positions people play in relation to liberation and oppression. Following this, he outlines the process of becoming *conscientizção* (critically conscious) through a transformation from object to subject.

The proper climate for dialogue is found in open areas, where men can develop a sense of participation in a common life. Dialogue requires social and political responsibility; it requires at least a minimum of transitive consciousness, which cannot develop under the closed conditions of the large estate. Herein lie the roots of Brazilian "mutism"; societies which are denied dialogue in favor of decrees become predominantly 'silent.' (It should be noted that silence does not signify an absence of response, but rather a response which lacks a critical quality.) (p. 21)

Democracy and citizenship

Traditional critical pedagogues have been criticized for their assumption that participation in democracy is a necessary goal of decolonization. Grande (2004) contends that a settler imposed system of democracy, as a tool of decolonization should be approached cautiously. Critical discourses of decolonization question the imposition of and participation in a foreign political system as end goals of decolonization as it is based on the assumption that Western liberalism is a superior philosophical foundation on which to build (Grande, 2004). Decolonization is different from other forms of anti-oppressive work in that the goal is not necessarily ‘inclusion’ in democratic process, as democracy is seen as an imposed structure that has been used to divide Indigenous peoples. Grande (2004) makes the necessary connection between Western concepts of democracy and citizenship and “the numerous expurgatory campaigns exacted against indigenous peoples” citing “the Civilization Act of 1819, the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968,” all products of democracy and all used in the further colonization of Indigenous peoples (p. 94). Although these are significant elements of critical pedagogical theory that deserve further analysis, Grande asserts that critical pedagogy is not intended to be dogmatic, as the underlying purpose of critical pedagogy is to discern social and political meaning. Critical pedagogy is therefore useful for - and not in opposition to - the creation of an Indigenous pedagogy (2004, p. 82).

Critical reflection.

For bell hooks (2010), in *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*, critical thinking is in itself an action. It is an active engagement with ideas and is discouraged in

society because it is dangerous. “Sadly, children’s passion for thinking often ends when they encounter a world that seeks to educate them for conformity and obedience only” (p. 8). hooks does not end the action of thought at thought itself though, what she goes on to discuss is the potential for independent and critical thought to turn to outward action. That without the action of engaging in critical thinking there would be no action outside of the mind and that is why critical thinking is considered dangerous.

Freire (1970) argues that education based on dominant discourse indoctrinates students into “the world of oppression” (p. 65). Freire understands the dominant discourse to be oppressive; this is a necessary foundation for his work in teaching for liberation and a perspective of the dominant Canadian discourse in Canadian education, which makes Freire’s model especially useful for the current work. Freire’s (1970) concept of critical consciousness was employed to design a unit intended to promote critical reflection. Although the concept and framework are from Brazil circa 1970, critical reflection; the capacity to engage in ones socio-political environment are relevant in any situation where oppression is to be challenged.

Freire (1974) discusses the development of a colonized consciousness which “housed oppression” in contradistinction to a “free and creative consciousness” necessary for authentic democracy (p. 22). Freire believed that the colonization of the Brazilian people destroyed their ability to create the community participation needed to solve common problems but rather created “an extremely individualistic outlook” (p. 22). An important distinction to be made between the work of Freire with adults in Brazil and hooks with university students in the U.S. is that hooks was working in a privileged academic setting. As has been discussed by Valaitis (2002); youth can experience

feelings of disempowerment in their relationships with adults and the community. This was reflected in the focus group discussion in the current thesis research by Sally (a student) when she said, “I think since you’re talking to people who are too young to do anything about it, it’s just going to make them, like they can’t do anything to stop it right now so they’re probably not going to hold onto that knowledge.”

Freire (1974) discusses the *radical* as someone who has “increased commitment to the position” (p. 9) they have chosen. The radical’s stance is positive and does not require that others agree, although they will try to convert because they believe they are correct. The radical will not accept imposed silence and will react when excessive power in the hands of a few “leads to the dehumanization of all” (p. 9). The radical is “predominantly critical, loving, humble, and communicative” (p. 9). On the opposite end of the spectrum is the *sectarian* who is “predominantly emotional and uncritical” (p. 9). The sectarian is arrogant and antialogical and thus requires that others share his stance. The sectarian is taken to sloganizing, taking action without reflection whereas the radical “submits his actions to reflection.” (p. 9)

Freire’s (1970) concept of critical consciousness was here employed to design a curriculum intended to promote critical reflection in the context of a secondary school classroom in North-western Ontario, Canada. However, possible future actions of people who begin to critically reflect on the socio-political world in which they live will come from their own experiences and not from transplanting movements for liberation from other contexts. As Freire (1974) has stated, solutions need to come from within the people and this can only happen when these solutions are generated by a critical analysis

of the *particular* context itself. Solutions that are adapted and transplanted often prove to be “inoperative and unfruitful” (p. 11).

As the masses begin to expand their awareness of the system of oppression in which they are situated; those who have the most power born of their privileged societal position begin to react. At first this happens spontaneously then later as the movement continues to grow, those in power create a more organized response to quell the masses (Freire, 1974). Freire has also stated that this awakening is often labeled a ‘crisis’ and “they create social assistance institutions and armies of social workers; and – in the name of a supposedly threatened freedom – they repel the participation of the people” (p. 11). Freire explained “[...] the elite have no alternative. As the dominant social class, they must preserve at all costs the social ‘order’ in which they are dominant” (p. 11).

In 1974 Freire (1974) wrote that it is necessary to understand how people interact with social history and contemporary reality in order to be able to work with them to realize the value of being critically reflective. In this model, people’s levels of interaction were placed along a continuum based on how active they were in manipulating their social world. According to Freire, the person who has *semi-intransitivity of consciousness* cannot interact at a level beyond meeting their biological needs. These people become pre-occupied with survival and do not perceive themselves as situated within a socio-political system rooted in a specific history of oppression. The *transitive* person is engaged with their world and other people in it; they are dialogical. The *naïve-transitive* person is engaged but holds the belief that the “common man” is incapable of purposeful engagement. For the naïve-transitive person, explanations of the world are fanciful and unsubstantiated; very emotionally expressive, but unable to truly dialogue.

The person who has a *critically transitive consciousness* is able to actively dialogue, is concerned with being socially and politically responsible and is willing to avoid over-generalization. Finally, Freire describes the *fanaticized consciousness* which is a state of confusion where the person's "fear freedom, though they believe themselves to be free" (p. 15-16); they are dehumanized and display distortions of reason and irrational conclusions.

A similar process is described by Walton (2009) "In a Hobbesian sense, schools rely on discipline, defined and legitimized through policy, to foster order in classrooms as insurance that children will grow to become 'good' citizens of society" (p. 137). Where good citizens are understood in the context of social control and hierarchical state controlled power.

Watts, Griffith, and Abdul-Adil (1999) provide conceptual frameworks for understanding oppression and the process of developing critical consciousness rooted in a community-psychology perspective. Oppression, according to Watts *et al.* is both a state and a process defined by the asymmetrical distribution of resources. "As a state or outcome, it is the circumstances that result from long-term, consistent resource asymmetry. Oppression is easiest to sustain when the disenfranchised internalize their oppression and support rather than resist it." (p. 257)

Similar to Freire's (1974) states of transitivity, Watts et al. have distinguished between five stages or dimensions of personal sociopolitical development. In stage one, the individual is unaware of the concept of social inequity or recognizes it as the result of the alleged "inferiority of the oppressed" (p. 268). In the second stage, inequity is recognized but the individual is limited to a concern for personal gain and does not

challenge the system of oppression. In this model, the third and fourth stages are marked by a change in thinking from an ego-centric orientation to an awareness of “oppression and the historical, cultural, and political processes that maintain inequity” (p. 268). In the final stage, “liberation”, the individual is moved/motivated to actively change their environment” (p. 268) to enhance social justice and equity.

Fine (1991) highlights the contradictions youth face which influence their decision of whether or not to complete their secondary education. During conversations with women who were primarily of African and Latino descent and living in ghettoized neighbourhoods in the U.S., Fine discovered that many of these women left school because within their community having a diploma was not an indicator of obtaining gainful employment in the future. Similar to Fine’s (1991) work on the experiences of high school dropouts, Diemer and Blustein (2005) also connect critical consciousness with future career development. In their work, Diemer and Blustein highlight the negative relationship between sociopolitical barriers and career success suggesting that critical consciousness (an understanding of the sociopolitical world) may increase individual agency in navigating the “opportunity structure” (p. 220).

A central aspect of dialogical education is the co-construction of learning based in valuing the experiences and perspectives of the student. Effective engagement with youth must take into account their experiences of agency or lack of agency within their communities. Through interviews with predominantly female inner city youth in the U.S., Valaitis (2002) found that youth felt disempowered in their relationships with adults and the community. Often these youth were not given the opportunity for participation or validation of their insight and suggestions.

Education for democratic citizenship needs to provide opportunities for student engagement where students are validated in terms of recognition of the contributions they can make to their communities and society at large. Osborne (1995) argues that it also must situate students within a socio-political history. Osborne's book entitled *In Defence of History: Teaching the Past and the Meaning of Democratic Citizenship* discusses history as politics within the school system. In this work, Osborne considers the act of teaching history indispensable in the process of educating students for active citizenship. In Osborne's view, historical analysis allows "the kinds of issues and problems that run throughout the attempts of human beings to gain control over their lives, individually and collectively" to be illuminated (p. 28). According to Osborne, full democratic citizenship is exercised only when all citizens are able to "exercise their citizenship rights and obligations effectively" (p. 15). Osborne refers to Freire's (1970) concept of liberatory pedagogy that builds democratic citizenship as it employs practices and models that emphasize, "the skills and values of critical awareness, participation, involvement and community which are central to its practice" (p. 42). Two illustrative examples of education based in critical awareness, participation, involvement and community are cited in Howe and Covell (2005) in *Empowering Children: Children's Rights Education as a Pathway to Citizenship*. The first involved a student-initiated project aimed at reducing vandalism at school; the grade five students researched the problem, and involved the community in the school revitalization. The second example arose out of a school field trip; grade eight students recognized "gaps in information in the gravestones ... and noted the deplorable state of the area reserved for African Americans" (p. 103).

These students researched the history; fundraised, petitioned the state, and their efforts became the basis for a curriculum unit at the grade three level.

As history classrooms are sites where students understanding of contemporary reality are grounded in socio-political histories, Grover (2011) contends that civics classrooms have a key role in shaping student engagement in democratic processes. Grover (2011) argues that they are ill equipped to teach students for active citizenship, as they do not allow room for how students are arbitrarily excluded from participating in democracy based on age. Osborne (1995) also argues that history and compulsory education have been taught and used in part to maintain hegemonic power structures and reinforce racist and ethnocentric ideas. He states that history has most often been taught to the exclusion of women, working class, and Indigenous people. Further, Osborne asserts that compulsory education is a “creation of the nation state”, in part because in order to create and maintain “national spirit”, “nationalism had to be instilled” through authoritative accounts of history, language, literature, the assimilation of minorities and the invention of traditions (p. 16-17). Grover (2011) would add that excluding discussion on voting age and children’s rights does not allow for the possibility of youth engagement and contributes to the maintenance of a hegemonic power structure. Both Osborne and Grover are illustrating the mechanisms that create a dominant ideology of the State that is uncontested.

Akin to Osborne’s (1995) argument for acknowledgement of the politicization of history, Brownlie (2009) argues that the construction of history in racial discourses continues to shape social and government relations with Indigenous populations in Canada. Constructing a brief account of influential Indigenous writers from the 1800’s on

who have endeavored to provide a critical analysis of history from decidedly Indigenous perspectives, Brownlie illustrates the manner in which accounts of history are shaped through complex interactions. Using the work of various Indigenous writers Brownlie narrates a history of refusing the attempts of colonial writers to essentialize the experiences and influences of Indigenous peoples in the construction of Canada (essentialising, in this instance, is a process of exclusion - to create a singular experience and history to the exclusion of contradictory or problematic experiences and histories). Escárcega (2010) discusses the process of developing an essentialised Indigenous identity for the purpose of cohesion and advancing the rights of Indigenous peoples at the international level. As she points out, this too is not without its own issues. "Indigeneity is a contentious issue because it exacerbates problems around authenticity, legitimacy, and representation that are at the core of culture-based social movements, especially those that claim collective rights. Defining indigeneity is also a problem for States because the identification of Indigenous Peoples' special (collective) rights in international law, would afford them a high degree of autonomous development and sovereignty." (p. 21-22)

Engaging in anti-oppression education requires a shift from an individualist ideology to an ideology focused on social responsibility. Like Bishop (2002), Langston (1995) provides a powerful systems analysis of oppression that argues solidarity within and between classes is the solution including the intersections of class, race and gender on the level of personal accountability. Langston reframes individualist based definitions of success that emphasize luck to definitions that highlight the structural nature of oppression such as systemic opportunity and barriers to opportunity, the existence of

tokenism and the myth of meritocracy. According to Langston (1995), widespread and meaningful change requires dismantling the individualist based assumptions that perpetuate class inequality making connections with the larger community while demanding that societal members become personally responsible for removing racist and sexist barriers to inclusion. Included in her discussion addressing the historical lack of solidarity between social justice movements resulting in further oppression of some groups in order to gain rights for others is an important feminist analysis. The history of feminist movements has been largely criticized for promoting the interests of white middle class women while ignoring the needs of women of colour and other marginalized populations (see hooks, b., 1981; Maracle, L., 1996; Zinn, M. & Dill, B., 1996). Solidarity relies on a willingness to learn from each other and to begin to value multiple forms of intelligence and ways of knowing in the world.

The Work of Freire and hooks

The work of hooks (1994, 2010) has been largely influenced by the career of Freire; she had the opportunity to study and dialogue with him, offering critique of his sexist analysis of the effects of colonialism. Although criticizing his sexist analysis, hooks affirms Freire's work in critical pedagogy and his theory of critical consciousness. Guided by Freire's body of work, hooks continues to engage in transforming education from a passive process of knowledge consumption to the practice of freedom. In *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*, hooks (2010) begins her argument for teaching critical thinking with the assumption that at some point students were critical thinkers. She asserts that the purpose of an engaged pedagogy is to restore the student's willingness to think and to be self-actualized (to push themselves to reach their full

potential). Throughout her body of publications, hooks refers to North American society as having “imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchal values” (2010, p. 15). When referring to North American society, hooks is speaking of the socio-economic, political history and infrastructure that shapes resource distribution, opportunities, experiences and realities of North American people generally and not of specific ethno-cultural or political groups. She firmly lays the foundation for her interpretation of education and the authentic purpose of teaching as the practice of freedom. Like Freire (1974), hooks (2010) addresses the biases inherent in education and emphasizes the importance of a “decolonizing mentality” for the successful education of students from “disenfranchised backgrounds” (p. 26).

When engaging in critical pedagogy and asserting that as a human being and an educator you are not in actuality neutral, there is a risk of being accused of disseminating political propaganda (hooks, 2010). hooks (2010) states that “in all the classes I teach I make it clear from the start that my intent is not to create clones of myself” (p. 27). She affirms that her “primary intent as a teacher is to create an open learning community where students are able to learn how to be critical thinkers”(p. 27). hooks (2010) also maintains that it is “the democratic nature of conversational learning” (p. 47) through which critical pedagogy facilitates students becoming responsible citizens; able and anxious to engage with society as active participants shaping their community. hooks contends that “democracy thrives in an environment where learning is valued, where the ability to think is the mark of responsible citizenship, where free speech and the will to dissent is accepted and encouraged.” (p. 17)

Freire (1974) stressed the importance of emotional learning when he included the ability to love as necessary for true dialogue. Similarly, hooks (2010) addressed the necessity for meaningful, mutually respectful teacher-student relationships operating “beyond a surface level” in creating an optimal learning environment that includes understanding the “level of emotional awareness and emotional intelligence in the classroom” (p. 19). This can only be done within a supportive classroom community built by valuing the time spent to get to know each other, starting with basic steps including introductions, spontaneous paragraphs about themselves or an object they bring into class (hooks, 2010). This simple process “acknowledges the power of each student’s voice and creates the space for everyone to speak when they have meaningful comments to make” (p. 20).

Taking time to know students on an interpersonal level sets the foundation for an engaged pedagogy which “highlights the importance of independent thinking and each student finding his or her unique voice, this recognition is usually empowering for students. This is especially important for students who otherwise may not have felt that they were ‘worthy,’ that they had anything of value to contribute (hooks, 2010, p. 20).

hooks (2010) touches on a wide variety of concerns related to teaching for critical thinking in *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*, a collection of responses to questions she has been asked over the years about her purpose and method of ‘engaged pedagogy’. Throughout this work, hooks emphasizes the importance of collaboration, imagination and humour in teaching for social justice.

Democratic Citizenship and Institutional Education

Critical Pedagogy's primary concern is full participation in a truly democratic system through encouraging and promoting the skills needed to engage and understand political processes. Freire (1974) argues against teaching democracy through a verbal transfer of knowledge about the process of democracy as he believed that unless democracy is experienced through popular *participation*, it creates a false understanding of democratic process.

“Democracy and democratic education are founded on faith in men, on the belief that they not only can but should discuss the problems of their country, of their continent, their world, their work, the problems of democracy itself. Education is an act of love, and thus an act of courage. It cannot fear the analysis of reality or, under pain of revealing itself as a farce, avoid creative discussion.” (p. 33)

Freire (1974) also wrote that education for *conscientização* must be based in a dialogical method constructed through a relationship “between persons” which is non-hierarchical. According to Freire the “program content” of education must engage an active and “criticism-stimulating method” in order to move to education and away from propaganda (p. 40-49). **This method moves away from finite Truths to be transferred, one person to another toward a reality that is interactive and historically situated, and, therefore open.**

The institution of public education is largely based on the positivist concept that there are absolute Truths and the teacher's role is to simply transmit these Truths to students as neutral messengers of neutral information. This model ignores the Eurocentric origin of these “Truths” and how they are used to maintain current levels of

disengagement from society and politics resulting in citizen-consumers rather than citizen-participants. In a study by Brandes and Kelly (2001), perceptions of the teacher's role in social justice education are examined through interviews with new teachers. The authors outline three *differing* views held by the teacher participants: 1) teachers should not engage students with social justice issues because it is their job to *transmit* social values and norms to prepare them to be productive members of society; 2) teachers should present all sides equally, not taking any position; or 3) schools are sites where social inequalities are played out and thus should be sites where youth learn to question and discuss.

Brandes and Kelly (2001) suggest there are three themes resulting from their research related to teaching for social justice. These themes are: critical analysis of inequity, a commitment to social action, and self-reflection and openness to different perspectives. One of the barriers experienced by these new teachers was the fear of being accused of having/transmitting bias. Teacher neutrality was seen as a safer position, although one participant politicized the role of neutrality. "The role of the teacher is always political, because what is emphasized and what isn't [in the curriculum] is very deliberate." (Brandes & Kelly, 2001, p. 448 brackets in original) Citing Bigelow (2001), Brandes and Kelly (2001) suggest that teacher asserted alleged neutrality breeds authoritarianism because teachers are in a position to assert their authority as teachers and transmit information in a hierarchical manner. Teachers act upon their students and deny the students the opportunity to critique or act upon their teachers when the teacher maintains an alleged neutral position on social issues.

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education

In *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (1994), hooks provides a discourse on her connection to education as an institution, her relationship with Freire's educational philosophy and practice, and how she negotiates her position as a teacher for education as the practice of freedom. hooks uses this discursive form to critically analyze her experiences in academia along with prescriptions for future cooperation across disciplines and across the lines of gender, race, and class. Speaking from the position of education in post-secondary institutions, she highlights the need for dialogue, solidarity and constructive dissent between students, students and educators, and among educators.

In a paper by Macready (2009), this collaborative relationship is linked to increased social responsibility. According to Macready, an individualist-based education teaches students to look out for themselves whereas in a relationship-based education, students "learn connection, inclusion and social responsibility" (Vygotsky, 1986; Gergen, 1999 cited in Macready, 2009, p. 215). Macready makes an argument for using restorative practice, relying on dialogue, respect for the 'other' and social collaboration in schools as a means for teaching social responsibility to students. Part of this theory is based in the idea that collaborative relationships help people to see the world differently. It is considered impossible for an individual to accomplish this on their own because we are situated in our own perspectives but completely possible for two people working together as collaboration allows us to gain the perspectives of others. Macready states that the learning environment is a key aspect in education for social justice and as such should involve teaching conflict resolution, mutual respect, acceptance of difference and a "commitment to fairness and equitable process" (p. 215).

Similar to the study by Lopez (2008), work by Diemer, Kauffman, Koenig, Trahan and Hsieh (2006) found that support for challenging social inequality may be conducive to developing critical consciousness and particularly the ability for critical reflection. In their study of the relationship between perceived social support and the development of critical consciousness in adolescents, Diemer et al. found that critical consciousness is not an individual process, it is a social process. Diemer et al. (2006) also suggest that future studies intended to measure support for critical consciousness development could use ethnographic field methods to examine the effect of the school climate on the development of critical consciousness. According to Diemer et al. (2006), future interventions to facilitate critical consciousness may be enhanced by “1) incorporating the informal support that urban adolescents receive, 2) tailoring intervention goals and methods with the social contexts of urban adolescents in mind, and 3) consistently attending to the component parts of critical consciousness” (p. 456).

In a conversation with educator and critical pedagogue Ron Scapp, bell hooks (1994) engaged in a process of collaboration. hooks used the dialogue to emphasize and illustrate the ability to and importance of communication across ethnicity and gender through a commitment to education as the practice of freedom. In this dialogue specific attention is paid to the tension experienced when working within an institutional framework that does not espouse or support critical pedagogy thereby creating added strain on students and educators alike to resist invisible boundaries. Importantly, this dialogue highlights the necessity and comfort found in creating and maintaining long lasting relationships with other educators who have demonstrated commitment to pushing the boundaries of education.

Building Blocks

This thesis engages in dialogic education, in a PAR based methodology, using the contemporary history of colonialism, to encourage and nurture critical reflection about the socio-political world in which we live. Critical pedagogy goes further than simply inserting Indigenous content into an education system which is Eurocentric in design and supports the passive participation of students. Instead, critical pedagogy invites students to creatively and critically interact with curriculum that is specifically chosen because it is approachable and relevant to lived realities.

There have been documented examples of the impact that support for critical awareness can have on the experiences of students and the school environment, which could lead to action for change both in the school and the larger community. In a case study by Lopez (2008), a teacher (Ms. Rivera) committed to anti-racist pedagogy created a classroom environment that is empowering even though the larger school community is not. Through Ms. Rivera, a bilingual ninth-grade teacher in a Southwest high school in the U.S., the contradictions between what is promoted through written school expectations and what are actually performed are illustrated through a discussion of *racial projects* (Lopez, 2008). Lopez (2008) also discusses informal racial projects enacted on the macro level as the political/legal legitimization of the ‘colourblind’ approach that continues segmentation along racial lines; on the micro level as negative consequences in American schools for speaking Spanish (p. 44). While the school in this example outwardly embraces multiculturalism and diversity, policies within the school create racial segregation.

Lopez (2008) identifies three key ways Ms. Rivera implemented an anti-racist pedagogy in a classroom with predominantly Latino youth: 1) she created a safe space where the students backgrounds were represented and felt “a sense of belonging and ownership”, 2) she “professed an explicit and unapologetic antiracist discourse, and 3) “she employed an antiracist pedagogy that was premised on high academic standards, collaborative learning, and mutual respect” (p. 48-49). Consequently, although the school in general engages in racist practices, Ms. Rivera is able to create a classroom where her students feel respected and are encouraged to resist racist policies.

It has been argued that in order to promote true critical reflection, students need to be engaged on both an emotional level and an intellectual level (White, 2009). Simply teaching about social justice issues without emotional engagement is more likely to result in students paying ‘lip-service’ in order to achieve a good grade, without ever fully engaging with the topic.

In an auto-ethnography by White (2009), collaborative learning and emotional engagement are emphasized as being necessary in the process of encouraging critical engagement with issues of diversity among pre-service teachers. The class in this study primarily consisted of white, female, middle class students presenting a different dynamic and relationship to oppression than described by Lopez (2008). White needed to create a curriculum that actively engaged issues that most of her students didn’t identify with. In this study, White (2009) identifies emotional engagement as a necessary element for critical engagement and speaks of the need for students to feel dissonance. White (2009) created dissonance by providing information that contradicted experiences; her curriculum included theory as well as hands-on activities in her own classroom and on

field trips to other classrooms to observe and interact with students. The dissonance created used “emotional engagement as a bridge to rational analysis” (White, 2009, p. 15).

Two aspects previously discussed in teaching for critical consciousness/reflection are the fostering of classroom relationships, and the importance of emotional engagement. In her practice teaching Indigenous education to university students, Iseke-Barnes (2008) emphasizes the use of group work and discussion to promote peer learning, self-reflection, ownership of learning, encouraging empathy and the development of community. Iseke-Barnes also identifies the emotional aspect of learning when students interact with the realities of oppression. She stresses the importance of students having people they can talk to, but also acknowledges that friends and family members may not be open to the ideas that they are expressing. In part, because of this emotional aspect, there needs to be a balance when teaching about colonization which includes information on movements that are working toward decolonization; giving students information on how to be constructive as well as deconstructive (Iseke-Barnes, 2008).

International Indigenous Rights

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as introduction to international Indigenous politics.

Critical pedagogy is a consciously politically motivated educational paradigm aimed at increasing students’ capacity for social and political participation. The international Indigenous discourse is an arena that demonstrates the political power oppressed minorities can wield on an international level. The U.N. Declaration on the

Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIPs) is a current, accessible and relevant political process that ties the practice of critical pedagogy with the lived experiences of students. Human rights discourses provide a framework for discussion and interaction about social justice.

According to Fahoum (2002), the inclusion of human rights based content in the classroom is fundamental to the development of youth who “value diversity, understand differences, and are constantly concerned with change” (p. 11). Most importantly, it is the educators’ ability to inspire children to “become active self-life-learners” (p. 11), and human rights education that will promote critical thinking and foster new possibilities.

The process of creating the UNDRIPs provides a contextual example of the difference between individual and collective human rights. The global Indigenous movement to gain specific rights recognized by the United Nations distinguishes between human rights on an individual level and collective human rights that are tied to a history of colonization. Importantly, Bishop (2002) discussed the tension in Canada between Aboriginal human rights connected to land rights and various other human rights movements. Indigenous claims to collective rights have emphasized how they differ from individual rights due to the history of colonization and subsequent dispossession and assimilation policies aimed at destroying the Indigenous collective. According to Benjamin, Preston, and Léger (2010), the rights outlined in the UNDRIP reaffirm the application of previously defined international human rights systematically denied to Indigenous peoples. Importantly, the UNDRIP affirms Indigenous peoples as *peoples* and as such, entitled to self-determination in international law, as well as reflecting the many

colonial mechanisms used to strip Indigenous peoples of their land, culture, languages, traditions, and practices (Benjamin, Preston & Léger, 2010).

The curriculum unit on the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for this thesis was designed based on Freire's (1970) dialogic method of education to promote critical reflection by students (and teachers) on the topic of colonialism, effectively combining "Indigenous" content (the history of colonialism) and teaching a method of critical thinking needed to remove content from the abstract form to the practical relevant to everyday relationships between those who benefit from oppression and those who are oppressed.

An important aspect of the ongoing colonial project is the framing of colonially rooted issues as "Aboriginal issues" making the government of Canada invisible in the ongoing marginalization of the Indigenous population. As Bishop (2002) argues, the Canadian system is an example of "invisible oppression" as the government presents itself on the global stage as "innocent" and good willed while continuing to systematically oppress and marginalize those with less power (p. 55). To illustrate this point, the following are two current examples of the issues faced by First Nations communities because of the Canadian government's failure to fulfill its responsibilities. Currently there is a human rights complaint against the Canadian government filed jointly by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations due to inequity in child welfare for First Nations children and communities. According to the briefing (Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Briefing Note 1, 2011, August) First Nations children are over represented in the child welfare system due to structural inequalities such as poverty and inadequate housing.

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The second example concerns access to education in First Nations communities. After 11 years without a proper school because it was contaminated by a major diesel oil leak, the First Nations community of Attawapiskat has been promised a new school by 2013 (Wawatay News Online, 2011). The children of Attawapiskat will have been attending school for 13 years in overcrowded portables that were originally meant as a temporary solution before a proper school will be rebuilt.

To begin to challenge this dominant discourse, colonialism needs to be made visible. One of the people advocating for education and is also actively engaged in decolonization is Iseke-Barnes, a Métis woman currently teaching Indigenous education at Lakehead University. In her paper *Pedagogies for Decolonizing* (2008), Iseke-Barnes advocates for teaching students the complexity of the system of colonization as a key aspect of decolonization because students can then begin to understand how interconnected and systematic colonization are. This helps students understand why decolonization and the struggle for Indigenous rights has been an ongoing process. She states that allowing students the opportunity to become aware affords them the opportunity to challenge dominant histories, images and portrayals of Indigenous peoples that are based in colonizing ideologies.

Included in the unit for this thesis was a brief history of Indigenous leaders who have previously approached international forums as a mechanism to address colonial oppression and were denied access because international forums, such as the League of Nations, considered colonization a domestic issue. Also included was Canada's initial vote and statement against the UNDRIP before endorsing it three years later. The history

of Indigenous struggle for recognition in international forums was provided to contextualize the UNDRIP within an ongoing system of colonizing.

The history of Indigenous rights discourse is complex and convoluted, however, this should not deter educators from presenting this history to students. The intent of covering such a complicated process does not hold the expectation that students will emerge from the process fully able to express the entire history of developing the Declaration from all the possible vantage points. The intent is to illustrate the complexity of issues being addressed by governments, Indigenous peoples and other interested parties, in order to show that there are no simple answers and therefore no glib statement about any group of people can possibly represent the whole situation. The antidote to ignorance is not complete knowledge but the knowledge that what we know is incomplete and to suspend judgment until you have made a fair assessment of the situation. Daes (2008) was the “founding Chairperson and Special Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Persons from 1984-2001 as well as the principle drafter of the Declaration, including the last draft as agreed upon by the members of the Working Group at it’s 11 session” (p. 7). Daes provided succinct illustrations of the complex nature of developing international consensus on Indigenous rights including difficulty in coming to agreement on terminology such as ‘peoples’ and its consequent ramifications to the states involved. Although the Declaration is the product of the international Indigenous community’s push for recognition of their special legal status as peoples, it could not be adopted by the UN without the support and will of member states to move forward on Indigenous rights.

States have a vested interest in limiting Indigenous rights as they can have consequences for borders, resource extraction and land use, past agreements, and future

expectations governing relations. Daes (2008) discusses the tension between recognition of the unique position of Indigenous peoples and the fear of political instability expressed by states through intense debate over definitions and the designation of Indigenous people as ‘peoples’ and their right to self-determination. An analysis of the history of the international protection of minority rights by Vijapur (2006) supports this analysis of the tension between State interests and Indigenous rights. As of the date of publication of Daes’ (2008) article, Canada was one of three member states that had not adopted the Declaration along with the U.S. and Australia. Since then, Australia and Canada have adopted the Declaration, (Canada being the most recent in November 2010).

Daes discussed Canada’s objection to the right to self-determination as it was seen as opening a door for Indigenous communities to secede from the state, however, Daes argues that the declaration does not “carry with it a right to secession” and that the purpose of the declaration is to work within existing nation states as the UN is an international body and works in the interest of promoting and maintaining peace and stability between *existing sovereign states*. This initial objection to the right of self-determination is political and could result in the ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples for fear of destabilization. The debate at an international forum illustrates how the political struggle for power shapes and seeks to limit local Indigenous claims to land and resources which are based on living treaties (agreements entered into by nations) which assert the sovereignty of First Nations communities.

...paradoxical as it may seem, both the production of a text and the interpretation of a text have an interpretative character. The producer of the text constructs the text as an interpretation of the world, or of the facets of the world which are then in

focus; formal features of the text are *traces* of that interpretation. (Fairclough, 2001, p. 67)

– the production of U.N documents are interpretations of the current dominant paradigms or politico social climates balancing what is being pushed for with what is acceptable to the dominant class – it is a negotiation between competing ideologies. Fairclough (2001) asserts that ideologies are most effective when they are expressed as background assumptions, not explicitly brought forward in the text where they could be challenged (p. 71).

According to Fairclough (1995), hegemony is a process where economic, political, and ideologically subordinate classes are systematically integrated into the dominant structure. This process allows for difference to exist as it is consumed and appropriated within the dominant structure for the purpose of control. Similarly, Jeff Comtassel (2008) argues that the United Nations does not truly represent the interests of Indigenous communities as it has appropriated Indigenous rights to self-determination and social justice movements to serve the interests of the state-centric system. Indigenous rights discourse has been constructed through a process involving a global Indigenous community, the United Nations and its member states. Daes (2008), supports Comtassel's claim as she addresses the concerns that nation states voiced regarding the extent of Indigenous rights and their possible ramifications to the power of nation states; their ability to control resources and borders. Without the support of member states, the Declaration could not have been adopted. Daes argues against claims that indigenous rights to self-determination would undermine the sovereignty of nation states. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008) article 46 states:

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, people, group or person any rights to engage in any activity or to perform any act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations or construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States. (p. 14)

The structure of the United Nations with its emphasis on stability and peace limits the extent to which Indigenous rights discourse works in the interests of the international Indigenous community and supports the maintenance of hegemonic government structures.

Conclusion

As demonstrated above, critical pedagogy or teaching for the practice of freedom (hooks, 1994; 2010) relies on a method of dialogical education based firmly in valuing student input and experience in the learning process. In order to develop a dialogic relationship, educators need to create safe environments where both the whole teacher and student are invited to participate emotionally, intellectually and physically. As a primarily political stance on education's role in shaping active citizens, critical pedagogy needs to incorporate content that allows history to interact with contemporary socio-political processes in a manner accessible to students for debate. The following chapters aim to answer these questions 1. Does the development of critical reflection affect a student's relationship with 'indigenous issues'? 2. Is a human rights framework appropriate for this function? 3. Does Indigenous rights discourse fit within universal human rights discourse? 4. Does developing critical reflection result in greater engagement, increased knowledge and a perspective that indigenous rights affect all

people? 5. What are the pro's and con's of incorporating indigenous content within other courses versus having exclusive Native Studies courses?

Literature Review Pertaining to Discourse Analysis

Introduction

Beginning with an anti-oppressive framework and a methodology modeled after PAR principles, discourse analysis is the next logical step to understanding the role education can play in shaping students socio-political outlook and is the necessary critical lens through which we are able to view how a colonial ideology is reproduced through the institutions and practices of education.

As I as researcher navigated through the group discussions and relevant texts, I was seeking to be hyper-aware of how language shapes and is shaped through our interactions and the reflexive relationship language has with our discourse models. This research thesis is a summary of my journey into a socio-political analysis of critical reflection, human rights and anti-oppressive practice in the classroom. I weeded through discussions and utterances of the student and teacher study participants to develop hopefully an empirically well-grounded (yet open and situated within a specific period in time) discourse on the process of developing critical reflection through a human rights curriculum.

Gee (1999) suggests that, “everyday” people develop and utilize theories based on their relative sociocultural position, through which meaning is created (p. 60). This example also demonstrates in what way language is alive and being constantly renegotiated. According to Gee, the process of analyzing the situated meaning of discourse is called *language-context discourse analysis* (1999, p. 57). Lemke (1995), uses

the term *social semiotics* (which is akin to Gee's language-context discourse analysis) to describe a similar phenomenon that is specifically located within a community while being connected to "the social, historical, cultural and political dimensions" allowing for a study of meaning that gives light to the power structures in society (p. 9).

Discourse analysis considers the ongoing process of acquiring meaning for language stressing the fluidity and constant renegotiation of current situated meanings. As people develop and expand their vocabularies, meanings are situated not only within their various discourse models, but also their specific location in space and time and cultural context. In any interaction between an author and an audience, there is the possibility that the interaction of multiple discourse models may result in imperfect translation skewing audiences' interpretation of the author's intent.

The term *situated meaning* refers to the meaning of any given utterance as it is enacted within a specific context, This set of words can also be spoken by two different authors at different times and in different situations, conveying two completely different meanings, Likewise, the same author and the same utterance at two different instances may also convey and hold different meanings. As defined by Gee (1999), situated meanings are reflexive; they are both an active and social process since they are constructed on-the-spot and influenced by the context (p. 53).

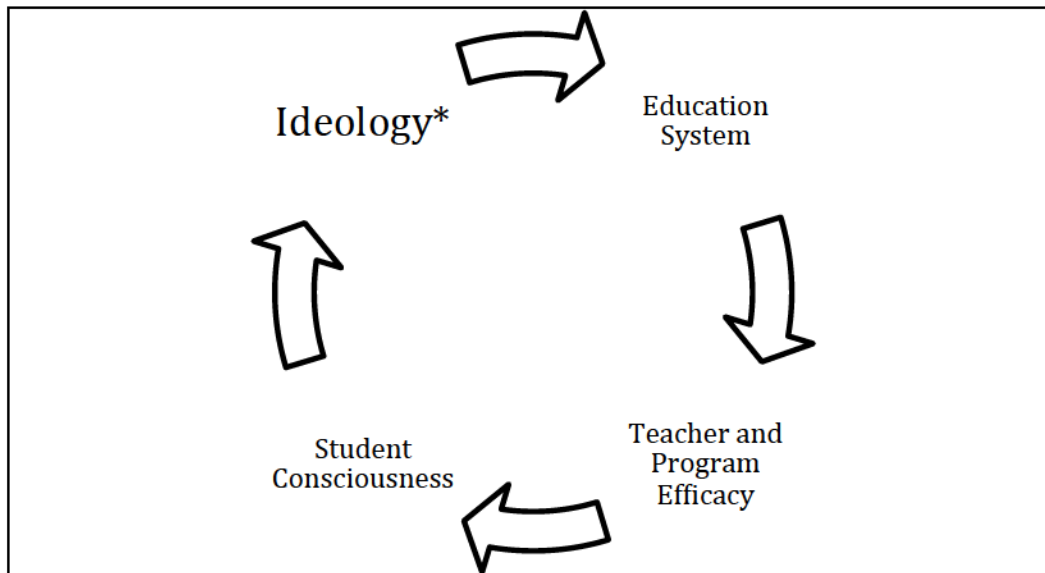
Ideology

The perspective adopted in this research is that ideology feeds institutions, sustains them and they in turn sustain the ideology (see figure 1). Fairclough asserts that "...the view that conventions routinely drawn upon in discourse embody ideological assumptions which come to be taken as mere 'common sense', and which contribute to

sustaining existing power relations.” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 64) Canada’s sovereignty is built on a history of colonialism and is maintained in contemporary times by the validation of the colonial ideology, as it is necessary for the continuation of the state. Programs, such as the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, are developed by the Canadian government to be implemented at the community level in order to address the needs (as defined by the federal government) of Indigenous students living in an urban setting. The stated goal is based on a deficit model, as the stated priorities of the program are “improving life skills, promoting job training, skills and entrepreneurship and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families” (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Urban Aboriginal Strategy, 2010). The premise is that Indigenous students are lacking the skills necessary to succeed in Canada’s social and economic climate. Adding a program focused on Indigenous students instead of changing schooling for all students, is effectively communicating the message that it is the Indigenous students who are lacking and not the structure of the education system itself.

The recognition of this continuing tacit operation of a colonial ideology underlies in part the analysis in this thesis. This section will begin with the relationship between discourse and ideology and its socio-political implications. It will form the basis for the analysis of the education system, the teacher’s position and students’ ability for critical reflection.

Figure 1 - Ideology and systemic reproduction in the school system



Iseke-Barnes (2008) argues that colonialism is maintained through the control of language (p. 124). Discourse analysis is the study of the situated meaning of language-in-use (Gee, 1999, p. 57). Gee distinguishes between two discourses, little d discourse and big D discourse. Little d discourse analysis examines how grammar is used to convey specific meaning and position. Whereas big D discourse analysis is concerned with the context of meanings and discourse models. What Gee calls “discourse models” are theories or frameworks that provide a point of reference used to make sense of the world; discourse models define what is largely considered appropriate (p. 59-63). I am primarily concerned with discourse as it encompasses social locations, political motivations, situated histories, and the reflexive construction of institutions within specific discursive models. This is similar to the definition of ideology espoused by Fairclough (1995) who includes an imbalanced power structure as a necessary component of ideology which is not a necessary criterion in Gee’s Discourse models.

Fairclough (2001) positions power and control as key aspects of ideology (p. 25). The dominant ideology of a society at a given time is maintained through discourses at the social level, at the institutional level and then at the interpersonal level (Fairclough, 2001, p. 25). In this manner, the dominant ideology is reproduced in a self-fulfilling cycle. According to Gee (1999), an institution cannot exist “unless it is enacted and reenacted moment-by-moment in activities, and the identities connected to them” (p. 1). In this way, colonization is created and recreated by education through performance. As an institution formed within a colonial ideology and working to maintain a colonial ideology, schools are a microcosm of society.

According to Tompkins (2002), North American schools currently are most often embedded in a colonial discourse that privileges some students, some knowledge, and some ways of being at the expense of other students, knowledge and other ways of being (p. 408). Tompkins (2002) affirms that schools have the possibility of being places of hope rather than of marginalization (p. 408). One method of illuminating how some students are privileged over others within the school system is through discourse analysis. Lemke (1995) states that, “this postmodern critique of the fundamental assumptions of a dominant subculture, our ruling ideology, will help us to redress further the imbalance of power between different cultures and different social groups in our world” (p. 4). Further, Lemke addresses how some discourses are used to direct our thinking along a particular route of ‘common sense’ which are less likely to lead to subversive conclusions and that these ‘common sense’ routes often negotiate around areas where doubt or dissent could easily enter. Fairclough (2001) speaks of ideologies in action that go largely

unrecognized and considered ‘universal’ or ‘commonsensical’ but have their origins in the dominant class and have become ‘naturalized’ (thought of as natural):

Institutional practices which people draw upon without thinking often embody assumptions which directly or indirectly legitimize existing power relations...

Where types of practice, and in many cases types of discourse, function in this way to sustain unequal power relations, I shall say they are functioning *ideologically*. (Fairclough, 1995, p. 27)

Fairclough (1995) discusses the opportunity for reflexivity and awareness when dealing with the interaction of contradictory positions. He states, “a critically oriented discourse analysis can systematize awareness and critique of ideology” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 82). Sites of contradiction are possible sites for change. As discussed above, the institution of public schooling is a site where colonialism and cultural imperialism are enacted and re-enacted to maintain the current dominant ideology (described by bell hooks as propagating “imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchal values” (2010, p.15)). In this situation, hooks is referring to the United States, however, similar sentiments have also been used to describe Canadian society (see Razack, Smith & Thobani, 2010). While Canada outwardly espouses multi-culturalism; there is good empirical evidence that minority students yet are marginalized in Canadian schools due to various systemic educational factors. For example, according to the Toronto District School Board (n.d.), 40% of Black students do not graduate from secondary compared to an average dropout rate of 23%; the situation is comparable for students who speak Portuguese, Spanish and Somali (Schugurensky, 2007). In the face of much resistance, the Africentric school was approved and then opened in 2009 a proposal put forward to

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remedy the marginalization and exclusion experienced in Toronto's Eurocentric public schools.

Chapter Three: Method

Introduction

Participatory Action Research.

This thesis examines the possibility, implications and barriers to teaching for critical reflection regarding Indigenous rights and colonial issues. Participatory action research (hereafter PAR) arose out of a shift away from conducting research for the needs of academia and academics and toward the needs of socio-political transformation premised on the assertion that we live in a largely oppressive society (Borda, 2001). PAR values “ordinary people’s knowledge” and is reflected in education in the social-justice work of Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, among others (Borda, 2001, p. 28-29).

Our *praxis-inspired commitment* found bases in the iconoclastic presence and actions of Third World leaders like the sociologist-priest Camilo Torres in Colombia, an example of the ‘moral subversive’; educator Paulo Freire’s and his ‘dialogical concientisation’ model in Brazil; Mahatma Gandhi and his practice of non-violent resistance in India; and Julius Nyerere, as the champion of ‘Ujamaa’ policies for communities in need of justice and progress in Tanzania. (Borda, 2001, p. 29)

PAR developed by valuing plural ways of knowing, foreshadowing post-modernism’s deconstruction of the existence of singular objective truths (Borda, 2001). According to Lewis (2001), Myles Horton influenced the development of PAR as “Highlander’s pedagogy, based on the experiential knowledge of participants, included democratic, participatory, educational methods similar to what is now called participatory action research” (p. 356).

As a researcher engaged with education for social justice, the development, history and application of participatory action research is the ideal fit for the implementation of research engaged for the purpose of promoting critical reflection in an anti-oppressive education framework. As Borda (2001) states “We have seen that PAR can reveal well the imageries and representations underlying the logic of conflictual, violent and repressive acts. We know that we can provide keys to preventing or diluting such acts as no other methodology” (p. 33).

Ethics

This study was approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board and by the research office of the North-western Ontario school board overseeing the two schools in which the study was to be conducted. All Tri-Council ethics guidelines were observed. The researcher completed the Tri-Council Ethics tutorial on-line; the certificate of completion was valid for the period this research was conducted. Informed written consent was obtained from the principals of the two participating schools, the teachers participating, the student participants and their parents.

Prior to commencing data collection, after consent was received from the principal at Northern Secondary School, I visited the civics class to give a description of the research and the extent of involvement and at this time I distributed cover letters (see Appendix A) and consent forms (see Appendix B) to all students who wished to participate. During the instructional unit students who did not originally express interest in participating asked for new consent forms, which they were given. It was explained to participants that they would have the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences in any respect and would be given the opportunity to

retract anything from the transcribed interviews or group discussions or have their questionnaire(s) excluded from the data entirely if they wished without any adverse consequence. Pseudonyms have been used to keep the names and identifying information of all participants confidential. Student participants chose their own aliases. Data resulting from this research will be held confidential and secure at Lakehead University in a locked facility for five years as per Lakehead University ethics guidelines.

Dialogical Instruction

Dialogical instruction can fully engage principles of anti-oppressive practice within an education that gives space to understanding oppression and colonization. Through dialogue the content of instruction can be reflective of the community and make permeable the boundaries of the education system, allowing for fuller engagement instead of alienation of marginalized student groups.

The purpose of anti-oppressive education is to provide space for critical thinking about topics that are often taken for granted. The original research plan involved a pre-unit focus group and individual interviews in order to involve students in the process of designing and evaluating the content and method of instruction. However, unavoidable restrictions in accessing students limited student participation during initial design of the curriculum unit and for a brief period after. Nevertheless, soliciting student input during implementation of the curriculum unit allowed this researcher the opportunity to adjust the level and content of instruction to better match the level, knowledge and interest of the students on a day-to-day basis.

United Nations Curriculum Unit on Indigenous Rights

The Ontario Ministry of Education developed a teacher's toolkit to inform teachers how to include Aboriginal perspectives, history and culture into the curriculum by course (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). Recommendations for grade 11 courses "Canadian History and Politics Since 1945" include teaching the "Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People" (UNDRIP) as part of the section on Canada in the World Community (p. 6). It was during the process of this thesis that Canada endorsed the UNDRIP in November 2010.

The first phase of this research was the development of a curriculum unit on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). The original unit was ten instructional days and was included with the ethics package at the university and school board levels. This unit was formatted as a mini United Nations (UN) forum in order to encourage and facilitate open discussion and to model the UN process. The instructional unit went through many adjustments throughout the process of implementing this research. Initially the unit on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) included an introduction to the United Nations as a governing body for international cooperation and human rights. However, Mr. Patterson, the teacher of the civics class had already prepared a unit on the United Nations which was to be taught the week before. Therefore this introductory segment of the experimental curriculum unit was omitted as students had already covered the UN structure and mandate in class.

Colonial issues from Canada, Guatemala and Australia were the focal points of the discussion on colonialism and Indigenous rights in the current study curriculum unit

(see Appendix C). The inclusion of Indigenous contexts from countries other than Canada highlights the commonalities of the history of colonization, oppression and resistance as well as the values of the international community of Indigenous peoples that has flourished over recent years and influenced and supported addressing local issues stemming from colonialism and concerns about Indigenous rights.

On the first day of the unit I went over the stated “Guiding Principles” of the United Nations International School (2008) intended to foster what the UN describes as a “caring community” where students are taught through example to:

- *Share, cooperate, and contribute responsibly to a global society*
- *Develop sensitivity to appropriate work and social relationships consistent with the principle of equal rights, including gender equality*
- *Display sound decision-making skills by reflecting on choices and consequences*
- *Think and act critically, creatively, and independently*
- *Lead a positive, healthy life*
- *Care for others, as they would have others care for them*
- *Share resources*
- *Build understanding and trust.*

The primary onus on maintaining these aforementioned components of a “caring community” fell on this researcher as the facilitator of the curriculum unit and of the group discussions. These principles for a caring community were made clear at the beginning of the unit to help set the stage for respectful and thoughtful discussions of what can be very sensitive and personally affecting issues.

Through the curriculum on Indigenous rights, the students in the Civics class

interacted with concepts related to discrimination and social hierarchies through specific case histories of colonialism, instead of focusing on definitions or concepts being fed to them lecture style. Using the process of discovery allows the students ownership of the human rights dialogue giving credit to and thus fostering their ability for critical reflection.

Researcher's Role

A critical look at the history of colonization and its direct effects on Indigenous peoples today is contrary to any colonialist racist world-views that the participants may have encountered through their socialization with family, peers and community. As adolescents, these world-views are beginning to develop into personal statements about how they believe the world is run. It was expected that some of the information being presented would conflict at times with messages some students may have received at home and from their peers regarding Indigenous peoples. Although, this can cause some friction, it was not expected to be a deterrent to building a school classroom environment that fostered equity and inclusion, which is not possible unless oppression is addressed. Students were fully informed before consenting to be participants of all options open to them if they were experiencing distress including withdrawal at any time from the study without adverse consequences and with full debriefing. Further, the researcher is trained as a social worker and would have been able to address issues relating to an individual participant's distress should they have arisen and/or make appropriate community referrals if necessary. The focus of the project was to encourage and allow space for students to critically think about and discuss social issues relating to colonialism in Canada, it was not to indoctrinate or persuade. All thoughtful and respectful opinions

were valued and given weight in discussion. At the beginning of the project, group expectations and the limitations of the study were openly discussed and outlined. As it was, no student or teacher participant required or expressed a need for social work or other support and no untoward levels of distress appeared to be experienced by participants.

Participants

The first school approached was very receptive to this research. The principal was supportive and flexible with student and teacher participation, providing valuable insight and encouragement.

“Highlander’s philosophy insists that for institutional change to be effective solutions must come from the people who will be directly affected by the action taken.” (Lewis, 2001, p. 357). Anti-oppressive education needs to break down the barriers that have previously prevented community participation in the development of the education system and curriculum content. Therefore an attempt was made to include the larger community of the school. An invitation was sent out with the 1200 students at Northern Secondary School inviting parents and other interested community members to attend an information and optional focus group discussion prior to implementing the instructional unit in the Civics class (see Appendix A). In order to facilitate this community involvement the researcher obtained a room at local community center. Unfortunately no community members were in attendance. It is a shortcoming of this research that there was no participation from the greater school community. The input of the community could have provided a wider analysis of the school system, colonization and Indigenous content, however, there was a sincere attempt to have this level of participation.

Grade 11 students were initially chosen for the study given the relevant curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009) on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIPs) suggested by the Aboriginal Teachers Toolkit (Ontario Ministry of Education 2009) for Inclusion in the class “Canadian History and Politics Since 1945”. Due to course availability at the participant schools (Canadian History and Politics Since 1945 is not offered at any of the schools in the participating board), grade 10 classes were used instead. There were two schools participating in this study, the civics class was from Northern Secondary and a Native studies course: “The History of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada” was from Western Public High School Indigenous student participation was decided by course enrollment as both high schools have Indigenous populations representative of the larger community. However, none of the seven grade 10 student study participants identified as Indigenous. In total there were fourteen students in the Civics class all of whom participated in the instructional unit though only seven were formally enrolled as study participants. There were unfortunately no student participants from Western Public High School; that is from the Native Studies course though the teacher of that course was a participant and was interviewed.

During the process of the week of instruction, seven students returned completed consent forms. All students in the civics class participated in the curriculum unit however data was collected only from the seven consenting students who also wished to participate in the study. This created limitations on the data collection and multiple audio-recordings were deleted to respect the privacy of the non-participant students. Audio data was initially recorded including all students as consent forms rolled in during the week of instruction. Because the unit was limited to one week; the intent was to gather as much

data as possible and to get greater student participation. However, when having the students work in smaller groups, the attempt was to keep study participants separate from non-participants in order to have useable audio data. Of note here is that although there were seven study participant students out of a total of fourteen potential participants, most students in the classes actively participated in the experimental curriculum unit and attendance was consistent throughout the week.

Since the researcher does not hold a teaching certificate, the classroom teacher was necessarily present during the instructional unit. The classroom teachers' input based on his observation of the class discussions was solicited outside of class time.

Diverse Data Collection Methods

Student data was collected through a questionnaire, in-class participation and a post-unit focus group. Teacher data was obtained through individual interviews and in-class observation. Interviews and focus groups were guided and documented using an interview protocol (see Appendix D) and based on experiences during the instructional unit. The researcher facilitated the unit (see Appendix C) in the "Civics" class only, in order to facilitate discussions and gather data.

Individual interviews were conducted with the teachers from both schools, a focus group discussion was conducted with three students from Northern Secondary and a post curriculum questionnaire was conducted with all seven student-participants. Initially group two was to be composed of a Native Studies course at the same school as the Civics class, unfortunately there were complications that prevented this and a second school was approached. A Native Studies teacher was recruited at the second school. Coincidentally the Native Studies class was held during the same period as the Civics

class so the researcher was unable to personally explain the research project and distribute the request for participation to students. The Native Studies teacher, Mr. Marshall distributed the information sheet and informed consent forms. Unfortunately there were no student participant volunteers from this latter group. Mr. Marshall provided a valuable interview discussing his role as a white educator teaching a Native Studies course in a Eurocentric school system.

Questionnaire

Diemer, Kauffman, Koenig, Trahan and Hsieh (2006) findings also emphasize the importance of participatory and collaborative discussion in teaching for critical consciousness. For this project, data was in part collected through written questionnaires containing Likert-type questions followed by open ended questions “that invited participants to write about their perceptions of support from their peers, family and community for thinking about and discussing ... injustice” (p. 448-449).

Questions on the post-curriculum questionnaire were geared toward critical reflection and related to student perceptions of the negative effects colonization has had on Indigenous populations, and student identification with colonialism. The questions also addressed students’ level of awareness of colonization and of the ramifications of colonialism in the present day, how important they feel these issues are to their life, their level of perceived control over human rights issues and their perception of society’s response to human rights issues. Originally it was intended that pre and post curriculum written questionnaires would be administered to each of the two classes in the two schools in order to measure student perceptions, attitudes, and knowledge of human rights and Indigenous peoples prior to and following the unit. These questionnaires were

however administered only post curriculum. This was due to the instructional unit being reduced from a planned two-week unit to one-week period given classroom scheduling exigencies such that only a post-unit questionnaire was feasible given the time constraints. The pre-unit questionnaire was used instead to guide the introduction to the unit.

Student Participants

Research with students took place in the civics class during regular school hours with the presence of the classroom teacher. A focus group was conducted during the lunch hour in the week following the instructional unit. With the consent of the school principal, the researcher provided lunch for the participating students and Mr. Patterson who was also present. The focus group discussion material was used to clarify student input during the instructional week for a more accurate discourse analysis. I was able as a researcher to adapt to the needs of the students as active participants in their education by exploring any additional issues pertaining to racism and colonialism that were raised in discussion. Analysis of data took place during and immediately after work with the student study participants was completed.

Civics class.

It was the intent with the original design of this research to include more student participation than was attained. The ethics process along with limited access to students prior to and during the instructional unit and limited communication from the participant teacher given various time pressures limited the data gathered and the ability for student input. Ideally with *dialogical education*, as Myles Horton explains, “The only thing you

have to do is to start with people where they are...And try to always be imaginative and creative as you think of the resources” (Jacobs ed., 2003 p. 147). However, the unit was able to be adapted and delivered with the active participation of the students.

Group discussion during the unit was an integral part of the dialogical delivery of the curriculum and provided areas for analysis of the curriculum and a perspective on the participants’ views due to interaction with the material. These discussions generated qualitative information on how the participants processed the information. During the course of the instructional week, the following questions were addressed at various times during the unit:

1. Who are Indigenous peoples/how do they identify (are identified)?
2. What is a Canadian identity?
3. Why include Indigenous rights in a Canadian civics class?
4. What are some social issues you are aware of in North-western Ontario?*
5. How is your identity tied to Indigenous identities?
6. What is education’s role in teaching Indigenous rights?
7. Have you ever been involved in social activism?

*When talking with the students the actual place name was used.

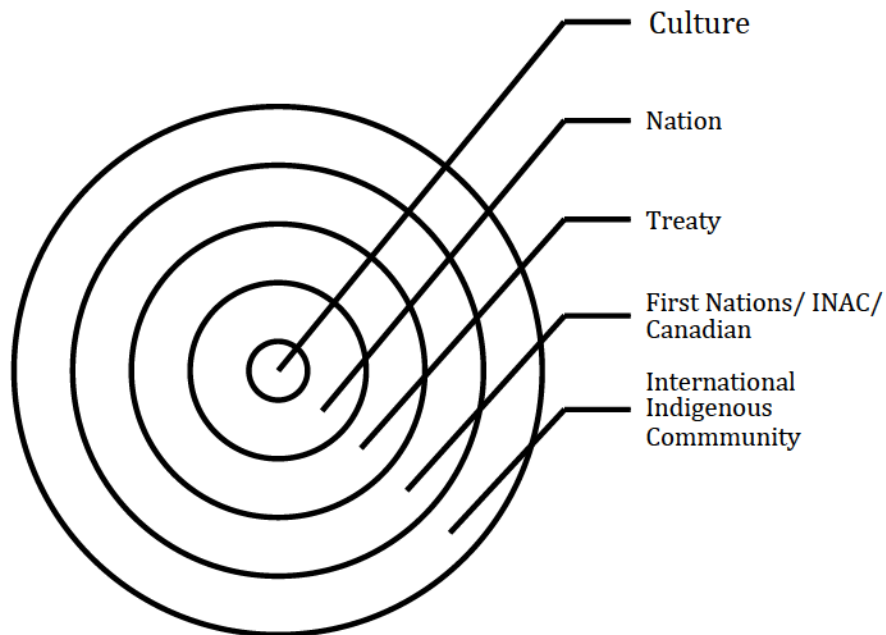
Discussing and solidifying the complexity of individual and collective identities was an interesting process. The term ‘Indigenous’ was not familiar to most of the students in the class and the abstract concept of a simultaneously individual and collective identity was initially confusing to students. In order to solidify overlapping identities I used a visual representation on large paper (please see Figure 2) In order to demonstrate the

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stickiness of the term Indigenous within the United Nations framework I put the students into small groups and had them work towards finding a common identifier.

Figure 2. Constructing Interconnected Individual/Collective Identities

(Local place names and communities were used when working with students, they have been removed to protect the identity of the community)



Native Studies class.

As previously discussed, there are currently two ways Indigenous content is included in the secondary school curriculum in Ontario, Canada, The Civics course is part of the integrated method and The History of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada course is part of the segregated method (where Indigenous studies are taught in a separate Native Studies course). As previously mentioned, there were no student participants from this Native Studies class though their participation in this study had been solicited. Of note, however, in understanding how Indigenous content is incorporated and taught to all secondary students, Mr. Marshall's current Native Studies class was 100% Indigenous. This has been an observation of other programs where Native Studies courses are taught,

Rachel Mason (2008) identifies this as a shortcoming of Native Studies courses as they inevitably end up being segregated because they are viewed as being only for First Nations students, less relevant and rigorous than other courses.

Community Participants

Twelve hundred invitations were sent home through the student population of the first school inviting parents/guardians and interested community members to attend an information session and voluntary focus group discussion (see Appendix A). Community members were invited to attend an information and discussion session in order to find out about the unit to be taught in the grade 10 civics class, the research being conducted at the school and to give input on the unit and process. Although a draft of the unit was already developed, it was completely open to change based on input from the community and available resources. Community members were invited to attend the information session at the local community centre to provide a neutral space where education could be discussed. Two weeks before the instructional unit, as instructed by the principal, the 1200 copies were divided into bunches of 20 and left with the administration. On follow up, the invitations were sent out a week later (the week prior to the unit). Unfortunately, no school community members attended the information and focus group session.

During the instructional week a second, simplified, invitation (see appendix A) was sent home with the participant students only, offering an information session and the opportunity to parents and other community members to provide feedback/ ask questions about the planned study and experimental curriculum unit. No adults from the community responded to the invitation to themselves participate.

Teacher and Student Participant Interviews

Teacher participation was ongoing throughout the delivery of the unit, and as the teacher (of the civics course) was required to be present; he had the opportunity to comment and discuss all aspects of the experimental curriculum unit.

Rachel Mason's (2008) research on British Columbia's secondary school Native study courses looked through structured interviews with teachers and students at the tensions of teaching indigenous history and culture. Mason's questions address content, method and the perceived effects of inclusion on students. Potential questions for this study address the same areas and in addition compatibility with the current teacher's method of instruction and content. One conversation with Mr. Patterson took place outside of class time and was not audio taped as it transpired in a semi-public space shared with other teachers in the department. An interview with Mr. Marshall took place in his home and was audio-taped and later transcribed. This transcript was sent to Mr. Marshall and was given his approval.

Teacher feedback questions:

1. Are you familiar with the Aboriginal Perspectives: *The Teacher's Toolkit*?
2. Are you familiar with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?
3. How flexible is your curriculum?
4. Would you consider adding this study curriculum unit to your regular classroom experience?
5. Do you have any thoughts on the information provided in the study curriculum unit?

6. What were your thoughts on the method of instruction used to deliver the study curriculum unit?
7. What were your impressions of the students' learning experience in engaging with the study curriculum unit?

Qualitative Data Collected Through Questionnaires and Focus Groups

Qualitative data gathered from questionnaires, and focus group discussion with participating students are here used to assess the impact and relevance of the experimental curriculum unit implemented in this study. The data could not provide information for an analysis of the two methods of including Indigenous content (the integrated method versus segregated method (separate Native Studies course) of delivering Indigenous content), as there were no student participants from the Native Studies course. Themes that emerge from these data sources were identified, summarized and are discussed in relation to an anti-oppressive approach to education such as the unit developed and implemented in this research.

The researcher transcribed audio data as the process and outcome of transcription is directly influenced by the person doing the transcribing as it is more than just a matter of recording verbatim what participants say, especially when recording group discussions (Tilley, 2003). Transcripts and questionnaires were coded based on the research question. Specific attention was paid to the relationship students had to issues of colonialism, education and Indigenous rights.

Critical reflection is analyzed using *critical discourse analysis* to identify student participant meta-narratives of colonialism and the framing of issues that affect Indigenous peoples. Critical discourse analysis is being used as it

Draw[s] on critical social theory... to examine the ways in which macro-structures play out in the interactions, rituals, and traditions of the classroom...Critical Discourse Analysis was an attempt to bring social theory and discourse analysis together to describe, interpret, and explain the ways in which discourse constructs, becomes constructed by, represents, and becomes represented by the social world.

(Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui& Joseph, 2005, p. 366)

The Participant Action Research framework allowed for initial coding to take place simultaneously with data collection as the researcher was present during the creation of dialogue. This position gives the researcher the advantage of being able to clarify meaning before data collection is over and allows her to firmly place the spoken and written data within its social and spatial context. Coding categories originally came from the research questions but evolved during data collection and again during transcribing, as participants' own frameworks emerged more clearly in the dialogue.

Conclusion

The design of this research is intended to respect the principles of anti-oppressive education that is inclusive and responsive. Multiple methods for data collection, multiple voices and a curriculum unit that is flexible based on input from the students and educators allows the barriers of research and of education to be as permeable as possible within the current constraints of research conducted within a university and a public school board. Data analysis began as soon as the research with participants began and employed multiple levels to respect the complexity of the research questions.

The final product of this research, aside from the completion of a Master's thesis, will include a report submitted to the participating board of education outlining the results

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of the research as well as recommendations for implementing their policy on equity and inclusion in schools. Attached to this report will be a copy of the final unit including recommendations gathered from the participants. That report will also be made available to interested students and teachers at the participating schools who can access it through their school libraries.

Chapter Four: Results

Implementation of the Experimental Curriculum Unit and Administration of Student Questionnaire

Originally data collection was going to span over a three to four week period including gathering pre instructional input from students in focus groups and via individual interviews; a community focus group; a two week instructional unit; pre and post test questionnaires and two groups of student participants. Multiple concessions were made to accommodate the school system and the researcher's schedule as well as unforeseen circumstance and in some respects poor participant buy-in (absence of community participants as well as of student participants from the Native Studies course). The unit was initially designed to fill 10 hours of class time which would have allowed for more relationship building. This researcher found the single week in the classroom to be a whirlwind as she did not know the routines of students or teachers and felt, to a degree, like an outsider and likely was perceived as such to some extent.

Participants

All student participants in Group One (the Civics Course Group) completed a questionnaire at the end of the instructional week. Section A of the questionnaire asked for demographic information including age, gender and whether or not they identified as Indigenous. As previously stated, there were 7 student participants from a pool of 14. Six students were 15 years of age and one was 16. Five identified as male and two as female. No student-participants self-identified as Indigenous. Two teachers participated in this research: Mr. Patterson is a white male teacher with 5 years experience teaching, all at one school; Mr. Marshall is also a white male teacher and had 10 years teaching

experience at the secondary level, with 5 years experience teaching various Native studies courses.

Audio Data

Student audio data was collected for a student group discussion during the instructional unit and for the focus group the week following the unit. This data has been transcribed and analyzed using discourse analysis to look at the underlying ideologies of the students and Mr. Patterson.

Audio data was transcribed for the interview with Mr. Marshall; and at his request, he approved the transcript before analysis. This interview focuses on the role of the educator, the limitations in working within the school system and the available resources for teachers teaching indigenous content.

Questionnaire Data

All 7-student participants completed the written post experimental curriculum unit questionnaire. Their responses were aggregated and analyzed for trends (see appendix E) Students and teachers were given the opportunity to redact any portion or all of their transcribed material and/or interview responses. None of the student participants requested to review or redact any portion of their responses, nor did Mr. Patterson.

After all audio data was transcribed and questionnaire data aggregated the researcher went through the transcripts line-by-line looking for phrases or words related to the structure and implementation of Indigenous education.

Following this the researcher stepped back from the data to look at the relationships at the macro level, to understand the education system as it interacts with teachers and students and the role education has in society.

The Researcher's Instructional Style

This researcher has an informal but structured style. I wore jeans and t-shirts/sweaters with running shoes. I used my first name in interactions with students. I directed discussion but paused regularly to allow for student input and questions at any point without formalities such as raising hands and waiting to be called upon. I tended to use an informal speech style in working with these youth as is my normal practice in working with this age population.

The Curriculum Unit

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: from international forum to local realities.

Due to the time constraints the researcher was operating under, the original unit was reduced from 10 sessions to 5 and content was carefully edited to maintain, as best as possible, the overall message of the unit. This compressed unit was expected to change depending on the class interaction with the material. Initially, the structure of the week was: day one – discuss oppression and colonialism; day two – discuss Indigenous and international involvement; day three – discuss UNDRIP's; day four – give three examples of the effects of colonization on Indigenous populations; day five – screening of the film by Andrée Cazabon (2010) *Third World Canada* (exposing the Third World conditions on some Canadian reserves) and administration of the questionnaire. This schedule was modified to have the questionnaire and discussion of *Third World Canada* on day five by

moving the three examples with UNDRIP's and screening *Third World Canada* on day four. I was actually pleasantly surprised as the week progressed and we moved through the content smoothly.

Day one.

Introduced myself to the class and opened the floor with an ice-breaker. I had the class break off into small groups to decide on a total of three questions they could ask me to get to know me better and then asked that each student share one thing, of their choice, about themselves with the class. They were given the option of passing if they did not feel comfortable sharing. As identified by Lopez (2008) an important aspect of creating a safe space for anti-racist pedagogy was to profess “an explicit and unapologetic antiracist discourse”. During the ice-breaker I shared with students the reason why I chose this topic for my thesis, namely that I was deeply disturbed by the level of overt racism I witnessed in North-western Ontario.

Following this exercise I introduced the guiding principles from the United Nations school in New York. This was followed with how I would like students to engage in the class i.e. allowing them time to think critically rather than racing to put their hand up first or attempting to think of the ‘right answer’. The questionnaire was used to guide a discussion on the students’ understanding of human rights and issues facing Indigenous communities. The researcher gave a brief explanation of the term ‘indigenous’, ‘colonization’ and ‘treaty’. Next, I discussed the content we would be covering that week including the UNDRIP's, Australia, Guatemala and Alberta examples. Finally I closed the class reiterating the students’ rights as participants and potential participants.

Day two.

For the introductory exercise on day two I had the students, both participants and non-participants, pick a pseudonym and name their community. I stressed that for those who were research participants that they would not be held to these choices if they wanted to change them later on. Participant pseudonyms were Alejandro, Corn Cobb, Crème Puff, Wilfred and Jamal.

I began the days content with a discussion and activity on identity formation and construction. I used concentric circles to illustrate how we all consist of multiple, layered and fluid identities. This fed into a further elaboration on the construction of an international Indigenous identity for the purpose of political cooperation. Students were then put into groups to develop a cohesive group identity through consensus decision-making. This activity set up the discussion on the United Nations as a forum for the development of Indigenous rights and the subsequent issue of identity politics.

The last piece of this session was providing students with background on Indigenous peoples and previous world forums on Indigenous issues. I divided students into three groups and had them pick Australia, Guatemala or Alberta for the next day's activity.

Day three.

At the beginning of this class students went straight into their groups. Each group was given a series of flip chart sheets, each with a different piece of information about their chosen location (Guatemala, Australia, Alberta). The information for these sheets was chosen to reflect different perspectives or interests in Indigenous rights discourse at each location (see Appendix H for list of supporting documents used; the documents

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supplied to the students contained the names of the many Indigenous peoples of Guatemala, Australia, and Alberta). I chose a central topic for each location to focus student discussion. The issue in Guatemala centered on foreign mining practices; in Australia the focus was on the historical removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities; in Alberta the existence and location of the tar sands.

The first statement on the first page for Guatemala discussed the communal management of the land that Indigenous peoples lived on before Hispanic colonization. The second statement was on the process of colonization. The second page had information from the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) (2007) and an article by Indian Country Today (Kearns, 2010) concerning the effect of mining and the presence of foreign workers on Indigenous peoples including rape, assault, contamination and disease. The third page contained three articles from the UNDRIP's, article 22, 29, and 32 which relate to the topic of mining and land rights.

The first page for Australia again provided information on pre-colonial and colonial processes. The second page had an excerpt from a publication by IWGIA and a statement from the Australian Human Rights Commission on the adoption of UNDRIP's. The third page contained an excerpt from an article published by BBC News (2007) titled "Stolen Generations", followed by article 7 of the UNDRIP's. I chose Australia specifically because of the parallel to Canada in the process of colonization through the intentional removal of Indigenous children from their families and placement in a Eurocentric familial or government care context.

The process for the students working on Alberta was modified to reflect that we had already spent a couple of days talking about colonialism in Canada and therefore the

preambles were not necessary. This group received articles 1, 29, 30 34, 36, 37, 45, and 46, of the UNDRIP's (see Appendix F for UNDRIPs articles).

Students in all groups were instructed to read on each page the information provided pertaining to their chosen location/community (Guatemala, Australia, or Alberta) and before moving to the next they were to write down, on the flip chart paper, any questions, thoughts or comments about what they were reading. They were told that the purpose of the assignment was to encourage critical thinking, therefore there were no right answers or assumptions about what students should be writing. While students were working, the teacher and I circulated the classroom offering clarification on the assignment, the meaning of statements and words in the excerpts and highlighting some of the key ideas if they were struggling. At the end of the class students gave brief presentations on what the issue impacting Indigenous peoples was in their selected location/community and some of the thoughts they had on the issue (if they wanted to share).

Day Four.

As stated earlier, emotional engagement is important for the development of critical reflection (White, 2009; Iseke-Barnes, 2008) as well as for engaging students with issues that they likely do not identify with (Lopez, 2008). Screening the film *Third World Canada* was a way to present both intellectually and emotionally the connection between the UNDRIP's and people's lived experiences. At the beginning of this class I handed out a package I had put together for the students about the film *Third World Canada* directed by Andree Cazabon (2010). The package included a print off of the *Third World Canada* Youth Action Group, an article from the Globe and Mail, One from the Hill Times, one

from Maclean's Magazine, and one from The Star (see Appendix G). *Third World Canada* is a documentary following the suicide of three parents in Kitchenuhmaykoosib Innuwug located on Big Trout Lake and highlights the conditions that First Nations people in many remote communities live in. It is a decidedly political film that links government policies and actions to Third World conditions on some Canadian reserves and the direct effects on individuals, families and communities.

Before showing the film I explained the emotional nature of the content and expressed that if students did not want to watch it or found that it was upsetting them, they would be allowed to sit in the hallway quietly outside the classroom. They were also encouraged to talk to me if they were experiencing distress related to the film or the unit in general. As mentioned previously, this researcher is a social worker and I would have intervened as necessary if a student were distressed by the film and/or the curriculum unit and arranged for further follow-up if required in consultation with the classroom teacher. As it turned out, however, no student expressed to the researcher or classroom teacher that he or she was distressed, or asked to leave the room during the screening of the film *Third World Canada* or appeared in need of social work support or follow-up.

Day five.

This day was used to debrief about the film and the unit with the entire class. Discussion was opened for student comments, questions and overall impression of the film. Following this I had the 'participant' students fill out the post-test questionnaire while the 'non-participants' did a group activity linking specific articles from the UNDRIP's to the film *Third World Canada* (Cazabon, 2010). At the conclusion of the

class I thanked the students and the teacher for welcoming me into their class and for their participation in the unit.

Classroom Setting

The environment and structure of the school system mediates student behaviours and expectations. Lemke (1990), discusses “preparing contexts” which refers to the manner in which the physical setting of an interaction gives cues and sets a scene which allows for meaning making of the discourse or interaction. By the time most students are in grade 10 they have participated in up to 12 years of formal schooling. Among other things, these youth have learned how to interact with teachers and with one another within the classroom setting. In this case, the classroom is a space where students are given visual cues which instruct them how to act. In the civics classroom, the desks are in neat rows all facing the front of the room where there is a teacher’s desk and a blackboard. This cues students to direct their attention to the front of the room which discourages peer-to-peer discussion and indicates the hierarchy within the classroom. Upon entering the classroom to begin the unit the first thing I did was to have the class move their desks into a circle allowing for face-to- face interactions and discussions between students and facilitator(s) (I use parentheses around the ‘s’ because although I was facilitating the class, the primary teacher was present but mostly engaged in classroom management). This was the main way I engaged in disrupting the typical classroom dynamic through the use of space. I also used an informal interactive teaching style including some humor as illustrated in the data sample below:

Table 1

Student Data Sample

Date	Teacher Comment	Context
Monday March 28 th (first day of instruction)	<p>“So you guys are all experts on the United Nations right?”</p> <p>“Totally, so I can just use United Nations language and you’ll know exactly what I’m talking about right?”</p>	<p>These two statements were made after the group had put their desks in a circle formation.</p> <p>The teacher had stated that the students were instructed on the United Nations in the previous week. I made this light-hearted comment with sarcasm, to acknowledge that although they had some instruction on the United Nations, they were not expected to be experts.</p>
Tuesday March 29 th (second day of instruction)	<p>“my bad, I made a mistake”</p> <p>“I learn, I reflect”</p>	<p>The previous day I used the wrong treaty name for the area.</p> <p>Showed that I am not an ‘expert’ and I would rather correct mistakes than present myself as such.</p> <p>Watching student’s body language as I monologue about the history of Indigenous participation in international forums. At this point I promised the students I would talk less the next day.</p>
Wednesday March 30 th (third day of instruction)	<p>“yeah, they’ve got lots of run-ons, so if you’re good at writing run on sentences then you should probably become a lawyer or...”</p>	<p>In response to a student saying that the U.N. has really long sentences in their documents.</p>

Teacher Interviews

Mr. Marshall, teacher of the Native Studies course was interviewed individually for a period of one hour at his convenience. The interview with Mr. Marshall was audiotaped and transcribed and then analyzed for themes. Unfortunately it was not possible to audiotape and transcribe the interview with Mr. Patterson and therefore that material is omitted from the analysis.

Chapter Five: Findings and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter provides a representative selection of the data collected during the research phase of this thesis. Teacher data and student data were analyzed separately; the teacher data provides insight into the issues that affect implementation of Indigenous content into the school system. Student data provide a snapshot of the range of student engagement and ability to critically reflect on socio-political issues.

These samples support the following findings: a) some students feel disconnected from any real influence in their community/society; b) students need spaces where they are allowed to participate in their education; and c) solutions to issues of equity and inclusion in schools cannot be solved through short term initiatives.

Codes

While I did my initial coding I was looking at the nature of interaction, how informal/formal the focus group discussion was, how students worded their statements, and for the ideas they were trying to convey. I was especially focused in my coding in part on matters such as how students situated their statements, specifically removing them selves from what they considered mainstream opinion, for example, “I guess, yeah, it’s thought to be more advanced” [referring to Euro and American cultural communities] (Sally) or where they did not. Sally distanced herself from the dominant discourse of ‘civilization’ through the use of “it’s thought to be”. This statement also demonstrates how she recognizes what the dominant discourse is and uses language to distance her from it. Similarly, in the statement “I guess that you often think yourselves as more civilized than other people or you think of it

as like yourself and not those people over there...” Sally consciously removes herself from ownership of that view of civilization. Whereas the other two students in the group simply list off characteristics they attribute to civilization, such as “technology,” (Wilfred) and “some sort of government,” (Alejandro). The following table captures a key bit of the discourse during the focus group on the concept of “a just world” and how it relates to the student’s beliefs about human nature and systems of power.

Table 2

Student Focus Group (Grade Ten Civics Class)

Researcher	Students
<i>So, a just world, in terms of “the world is fair and just”</i>	Alejandro (A): Um equality Sally (S): No crime Wilfred (W): Our world is not just
<i>Why not?</i>	W: Because there’s no equality, well there is but not really, and there’s crime A: And violence, and diseases, scary animals that will eat you ...
<i>Ok, what does equality mean then?</i>	S: Equality means that everybody has an equal opportunity, everyone has the same amount of stuff.
<i>Has the same?</i>	S: Just the same, they just have the same everything. W: Rights, people look at them the same, male and female.
<i>So you’re referring to gender equality?</i>	W: In mine, yes.
<i>So how would we make a just world or a just society or a just Canada?</i>	S: I guess you would have to have a just government to start with. W: Everything would have to be the same.
<i>What’s that?</i>	W: Everything would have to be the same; everyone

would have to own all the same stuff, which would probably get rid of crime.

What do you mean changing jobs?

S: That would mean changing jobs and stuff.

S: Changing jobs because some people have better jobs that earn more money and other people don't have jobs at all so you'd have to.

...

So, do you think grades are a measure of how hard you work?

A: Somewhat

Are grades a measure of how hard you work?

S: They can be but they can also be a reflection of the teacher, a reflection of your background, a reflection of how smart you are, there's like so many factors in there.

You hear that? Your student's grades, it's partly to do with you.

Mr. Patterson: Oh I know that.

W: We've talked more [today] than the whole week that she was here, it's amazing. [Researcher note: bracketed word added for clarification]

...

Well, do you think that, you know where we are in the world, do you think that we can get there?

W: Do we have anything else to say about a just world?

How about anyone else?

W: **No, never, not happening**

S: I think no because **people in power don't want a just world because they have the better end than other people** and they want to keep it that way because they like it.

W: **Humans are selfish.**

...

So why is civics a mandatory course?

W: So you'll learn about the government.

S: **The thought is that it will make you better citizens, but I don't [think so] , yeah.** [Researcher note: bracketed word added for clarification]

Ah.

W: I know people that kind of forgot about their civics class and don't know how the government works or the reasoning for it, don't worry, they didn't go here.

And in what context do you mean that?

S: And **you can't force people to learn about something that they're not interested in** and they just don't care about it.

...

S: **People don't understand cause and effect.**

A: what don't they understand?

S: Cause and effect.

A: Okay, yeah.

Ah, so choices actually do something, so do you think that people think that their actions only have consequences within, you know, their small group?

S: Okay.

S: I don't think they understand that if they do something that's affecting something else, like their choices are actually doing something, they're not just; I don't know I don't know how to explain it.

A: Like those games, you do an action and it changes the outcome, you know, not like physics though, for every action there's an equal and opposite reaction.

W: Hmm, you kinda sound like that certain Newton.

S: I don't know, I just think **they choose not to think about, like they just chose not to think about or care** if it will affect someone else like they just keep to their own world.

Questionnaire data.

After aggregating the questionnaires I noticed that some questions that were similar in intent garnered very different responses from the students. I decided to code the questionnaire's likert-type questions as being focused on *individual* responsibility or *social* responsibility. I tallied up the responses that were either 'strongly agree' or 'strongly disagree' within each category and divided these into the total possible strong responses to

generate a percentage. Fourteen percent of answers were a strong response for individual responsibility and 48% were a strong response for social responsibility (see appendix E)

The open-ended questions in the questionnaire were used to generate the discussion questions in the focus group to build a fuller picture of the students discourse models.

Teacher participant sample.

Mr. Marshall has been involved in implementing Native Studies courses at the secondary level for the past five years, having taught a variety of Native Studies courses including the arts, English and most recently *The History of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*.

When coding for themes based on the interview with Mr. Marshall I was looking for statements about the school structure and how Indigenous content is incorporated in the curriculum. The most frequent codes (themes) derived from the Marshall interview were *board*, *resources*, *disconnect* (between board processes and First Nations communities), and *other institutions* (including formal and informal structures outside of education). During coding the concept of *teacher comfort* with delivering particular curricular content arose as a possible additional theme. Another code that developed was for content relating to board recognition of diversity in Indigenous peoples. The themes that are reflected in the codes that best fit the data collected from the Marshall interview were *stability*, *system integration*, and *teacher/program efficacy*.

Table 3

Interview with Mr. Marshall (for full interview see Appendix I)

Researcher	Mr. Marshall ['Native Studies' teacher; teaching a grade ten course titled 'The History of Aboriginal Peoples in Car
[On teaching about colonization, First Nations, Metis and Inuit history, racism, etc.] <i>It's a what?</i>	It's a clouded picture It's a clouded picture
<i>What do you mean?</i>	Too broad, from coast to coast in terms of groups and dealing with different things.
<i>Oh, yeah</i>	And there's the whole spectrum in there for opinion. Inside and outside the community right,
<i>Yep. Yeah it's not clear, like this, and then this, and then this, at all</i>	[Researcher's note: Mr. Marshall is referring to the lack of adequate resources and support for teachers]. Well I find that the board treats it like that, that and treats a lot of the education that they first wanted to throw forward that way, like "oh, here you can do this", no we can't; we don't know anything about that, we can't teach that.
<i>Do you mean stuff that has been developed other places?</i> <i>So they were like here's a book on Native people?</i>	Like materials, and just, just, you know assuming that all Native culture in Canada is the same. Yeah, well that speaks to one person in the class or none.
<i>Yeah. Have they, have you found resources on your own then?</i>	I have done that because I need to research for myself, I have to learn the material that I'm teaching so I have to go out and find stuff.
<i>Mhmm</i>	I don't know, I haven't been happy with a lot of the resourcing, so just go, and I just did it for the last couple of years because I didn't find that they had all those things in place right away.
<i>Mhmm</i>	So that people were giving me resources, trying to be helpful but they don't have everything in place, 'cuz

they haven't been given anything or they haven't investigated enough.

Yeah

So now we're starting to get like a lot of personal resources but in terms of like literature and stuff like that, it's just what's modern we haven't grabbed a hold of stuff that's out there and we don't have enough access to, I don't know, I wanna say elders, but that's not the purpose of the elder.

That's the problem there too, because the board operates under their own functions and then we expect community members to come in and work under those things and there's conflict there.

'Cuz it's different, you're dealing with culture rather than the structure within the school. That's what I see as the biggest problem, ok - we've got to do this and everybody's got to come here and everybody's got to have permission forms, well that's not how it works within the culture so you've got to make accommodations for that but then you can't satisfy both sides.

So what do you cover in it?

So It's exploring Aboriginal culture through history and looking at The History of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, that's the official title of the course.

Ah, so for my, to make myself comfortable with the requirements I really try to stick with the curriculum layout. So we're dealing with a lot of sovereign issues, so the relations between the government of Canada and groups within Ontario and the rest of Canada and just ah so like ah leadership how traditional societies functioned and how some of the expectations that Europeans had when they came here and tried to first colonize and make Canada.

Um, general information, some statistics about Aboriginal people, so where are they, where do we see the populations, are they going up; are they going down; who's maintained their culture the best, stuff like that.

Then one of the main units that I get into later on is the Aboriginal and the media, so how we see ah Aboriginal

people through our different forms of media and where we see stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination used on a regular basis that has painted the picture of the Aboriginal person we see today.

And then the last section is actually a research section and that's another curriculum, that's ah now once we have this information and we can try and push forward some pride and some history and some knowledge, now who would they go to as a historical figure and attempt to research and find out more about.

...

We haven't geared ourselves for the variety of people that we're getting, it's like we've pegged them, one way and then 'oh everyone can do this' no everyone can't you know, even like we've got in, I've done drum making in my class too, um not everybody can do that, depending on who it is, we might have the girls that can't touch the drum, you know because of the moon time right. So you might have that type of scenario where you just go, you just watch but it's the experience right, that's the overall point is that we were lacking those things because if you can't see yourself in the material why would you want to learn it? So that's the big thing so making sure that you can expose people and get people involved, but it's rough when you don't come from that culture and you try and teach that culture.

Have you had any sort of backlash from that?

I don't think I have, um I have more positive criticism like "oh we don't do it this way" well then show me how you guys do it, you know like that's how it has to go. Like I'm comfortable with that because I think that's how I see teaching right, it's a two way street, I'm going to learn from you guys if you guys have done this and then it's gonna be more impactful if you have that in a Native studies class because I guarantee you I'm gonna learn from the kids if they're willing to show what they know right, so

How do you create that sort of classroom where they feel that they can give you, you know positive criticism or

I think you just have to tell them, you know. My understanding of a lot of students, especially from the Native background is that they want to function that way in the classroom right, they want to listen and they

have input in the class?

don't say much but then they'd much rather be tactile and show you and use their hands and stuff like that, but some of them you know if you're not coming from a community that does that some of them have completely bought into the you know the typical way of life. 'I go to class, I hang out, go home, that's all I do' right so it's hit and miss.

...

[Mr. Marshall has been teaching Native Studies courses for about 5 years]
That's a long time; do you feel like each year your comfort level is growing? Because you've mentioned comfort level a few times.

I think so, but I'm comfortable with the stuff that I know and to tell you the truth a lot of the stuff that I've done is just through my own research, that's how I'm growing right I don't find that I have a student every year that's just like this is what we do or this is how we share. I've probably learned my style in that class from my own research plus elder guidance because I find elders, that a really strong elder goes a long way.

Where do you do your research, that's pretty broad?

It is, it's mostly, when I started was through reading, so I was going out there seeing what's out there, not overly pleased with what we have to offer. I actually went to ah, ...

Like in the curriculum guidelines?

Yeah, I've actually gone to Alberta to get that curriculum, when we were really looking at what we had for resources at the start of all this, that was the collection that really stood out because it had a set a number of things that you could really discuss and if you're, the biggest thing is you want the material there...you still have to fall in your role as the teacher so like as an Ontario teacher this is what I'm doing, we need to follow curriculum so I want to make sure that we have that structured thing, it's not about sitting in that circle all day, it's about getting product, and having those kids understand the basics and then we can do stuff like that ...

Um it's just weird and so my research has really been based off a lot of the texts that have been put out by different Aboriginal groups because that's where you have to start right.

Who else is going to do it? That's going to be the next question right and one of the concerns I've always

	expressed at school is why haven't we expanded if we really want to incorporate these things into all of our courses, we need more of our body, our staff body involved.
<i>Like First Nations content?</i>	Yeah...
<i>How many First Nations or Aboriginal teachers do you have at your school?</i>	Ah, that I am aware of, at my school right now, one.
<i>Because there aren't many that work for the board.</i>	I have ...at our school for language right now but then that language position is something that's shared between all four schools so that when you teach the language you teach two schools during the first semester and you teach the other two during the next semester

Community Member Data

As discussed earlier, I was unsuccessful at engaging the community in the development and review of the experimental curriculum unit. Participant Action Research (PAR) depends on the participation of those affected by the research in order to ensure it is relevant, purposeful and what is in the interest of the community such that it is built from the ground up. "Where parents are incorporated into the education of their children on terms they can understand and approve of, then children do better at school (McNaughton & Glynn, 1998)" (p.120). This research was conceptualized from a perspective that values the participation of the people [parents, elders, students from diverse backgrounds] in the construction of our public institutions. However, the research agenda and schedule was unavoidably heavily impacted by funding deadlines and university program requirements such that the participation of the people in the study curriculum unit development was

unfortunately not a realized goal. This research arose out of my desire to change how aspects of education are taught and presented and it was built based on the philosophies and anti-oppression teaching frameworks I deemed important. These were the foundation but factors impacted the research over which I had little or no control. One such factor is the disconnect between the larger community and the development of educational curriculum. Curriculum development generally is viewed as an enterprise to be left entirely to the expert curriculum designers who are part of the educational bureaucracy. Another factor is that I had set the research agenda and boundaries: “[...] The more the tasks are centralized, the more the challenge to any nominal facilitator/s’ capacity to democratize the effort and assure the collective construction which constitutes an important source of trustworthiness and ‘objectivity’” (Wadsworth, 2001, p. 420). What Wadsworth is saying in part is that the larger the role of the facilitator, the more control they have the less trustworthy or objective the outcome because the process loses input/control from the community. In effect, to be truly representative, the research needs to be somewhat independent of an owner. An important aspect of my analysis is recognizing that the construction of my research precluded to a degree any meaningful participation by the community by setting the agenda prior to soliciting their input. I also recognize that there is a difference between being hired to work for an existing community movement and creating a movement for the community.

Themes

School system.

Three interconnected themes were identified in the interview with Mr. Marshall as relating to the ability of educators, schools and school boards to adequately address equity

and inclusion; these are *stability*, *teacher/program efficacy* and *system integration*. These areas overlap and feed into each other (see figure 1).

The Ontario Ministry of Education has been actively re-evaluating its understanding of the role it has in perpetuating inequality through the education system's blindness to its own unintended cultural imperialism expressed through the structure of education, the selected curriculum content, and the demographic of its educators. The topic of this thesis is consistent with the Ontario Ministry of Education's commitment to equity and inclusive education. The policy guidelines from the Ontario Ministry of Education include a focus on the causes and patterns of racism in Canada and the world and information about "Aboriginal people and diverse racial and ethnocultural groups" (The Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1993, p. 25). According to Mr. Marshall, he teaches his course on Native Studies according to the curriculum layout. It covers a wide range of topics including sovereignty, Indigenous/European relations at time of colonization, current demographic information, cultural trends and media portrayals of Indigenous people including the media's influence on the creation and maintenance of stereotypes and discrimination.

The first theme that emerges from the interview with Mr. Marshall is stability; this theme arose out of the sum of the parts of the interview with Mr. Marshall. Stability refers to the integration of a program that supports educators to teach indigenous content that is informed and consistent over time. A stable program consists of courses and content which are parts of the core programming (not subject to enrollment or at the discretion of individual teachers), and taught by educators who are fully equipped (through teacher training and cumulative years of experience teaching the same topic) to teach the content from an informed and respectful position. Stability allows for consistency, resources and support to

build experience at the educator, school and board levels. Stability also reflects a commitment by the ministry, board and schools to change the environment of their schools so that all students are reflected and represented in the curriculum, as Mr. Marshall stated “If you can’t see yourself in the material why would you want to learn it?”

Teacher/program efficacy includes teacher experience, available relevant resources and the support offered by the school board. Successful program implementation depends on having the proper resources in place, including the teacher. Mr. Marshall raised concerns about a lack of teacher training, “the education [curriculum] that they first wanted to throw forward that way, like ‘oh, here you can do this’, no we can’t; we don’t know anything about that, we can’t teach that.” This statement also suggests that Indigenous content was considered an uncontested ‘Truth’ that could be transferred from one person to another, regardless of local context and the position of the teacher. The availability of locally relevant resources was another issue raised, Mr. Marshall stated, “you know, assuming that all Native culture in Canada is the same” in reference to the resources provided by the board. Over the years he has found a lot of resources on his own “I need to research for myself, I have to learn the material that I’m teaching so I have to go out and find stuff. I haven’t been happy with a lot of the resourcing, so just go, and I just did it for the last couple of years because I didn’t find that they had all those things in place right away.” Efficacy, as a principle encourages and demands the development of resources to support teachers to successfully implement programs. Efficacy in this instance refers to how well the program meets the stated goals of the policy.

Mr. Marshall repeatedly referred to “comfort” in his interview, referring to knowledge of the content of the Native studies courses, and his ability to teach cultural

content as an outsider to classrooms largely comprised of Indigenous students. The majority of teachers in his school board are white, this current composition means that the majority of Native Studies courses will be taught by non-Indigenous teachers, “it’s rough when you don’t come from that culture and you try and teach that culture” (Mr. Marshall). Teacher education programs need to prepare non-Indigenous teachers to teach Indigenous content in a knowledgeable and respectful way.

System integration refers to how well the different levels (ministry, board, and schools) reinforce each other through the process of constructing policies through to their implementation in the classroom. As discussed earlier, the Ontario Ministry of Education has made specific policy statements regarding equity and inclusion that need to be implemented at the board and school level. In regards to the incorporation of Indigenous education (and other specific programs), integration also refers to the level of commitment to the policies and supporting programs, i.e. whether proper funding, resources and planning are allocated. Mr. Marshall articulated a lack of properly resourced teachers, “who else is going to do it? That’s going to be the next question right, and one of the concerns that I’ve always expressed at school is why haven’t we expanded if we really want to incorporate these things into all of our courses, we need more of our body, our staff body involved.”

Integrating Indigenous content into the school system should also take into account the local community as a valuable resource. As Mr. Marshall points out, teachers and schools do rely on the community and Elders to enhance the resources they can provide. However, these community members are treated as adjuncts to the system, “the board operates under their own functions and then we expect community members to come in and work under those things, and there’s conflict there” (Mr. Marshall).

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education

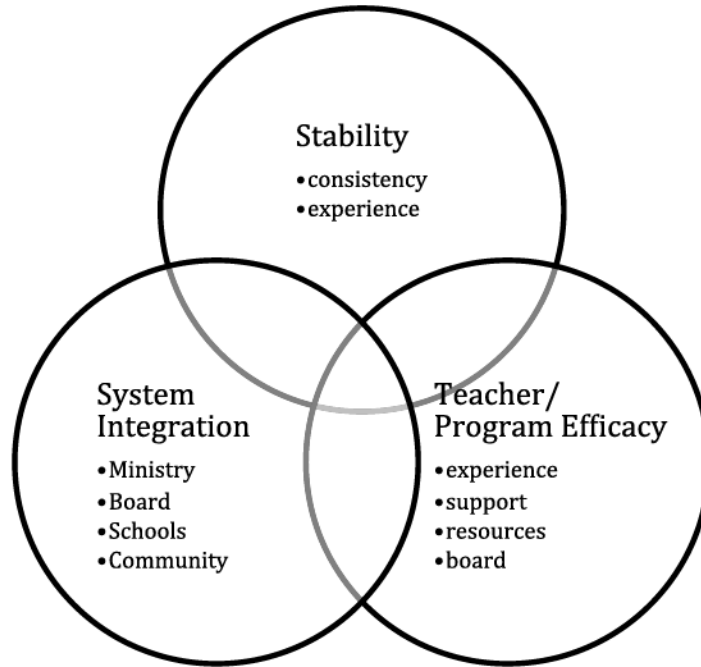
As stated earlier, Mr. Marshall's curriculum satisfies the content requirement set out by The Ministry, the issues identified by Mr. Marshall closely mirror the statements by The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada in *The development of education reports for Canada* (2008) and suggest that simply including content on Indigenous peoples does not remedy complex issues of marginalization:

Among the actions that facilitate inclusive education in Canada are: education reforms that address the entire system in applying the principles of inclusive education; teacher support and training; inclusive environments in schools and classrooms; policy and practice that are based in research of the phenomenon of exclusion and the populations most likely to experience it; collection and analysis of data relevant to inclusive education and student achievement and success; curriculum that respects and reflects a diversity of experience; culture and values...(p. 49)

In order to support the goal of inclusive education as described by The Council of Ministers of Education in Canada (2008), fundamental changes to the education system are needed. These changes require a shift in the dominant ideology that is being reproduced in the school system. As identified earlier, the addition of programming to incorporate Indigenous content has been implemented through the hierarchy of the education system and has consequently reflected the dominant narrative about indigenous peoples. Mr. Marshall commented on a lack of resources, the belief that all Indigenous cultures are the same, that Indigenous histories are a subject that is uncontested, and the imbalance of power between the board and the community.

Figure 3

Three Interconnected Themes: stability, teacher/program efficacy and system integration



The performance of colonization in the education system.

During the focus group one of the students criticized the previous day's lesson:

Ah what do you think would make people more interested in what happens in class, or taking outside of the classroom?

...

Wilfred: "...do interesting stuff instead of copy stuff out of the book"

Mr. Patterson: "yeah, that was fun yesterday"

What did you guys do yesterday?

Mr. Patterson: "Well, copied stuff"

Wilfred: "our looks were like, I'm gonna kill you"

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education

Mr. Patterson: "They were having fun yesterday"

Sally: "We got a handout and we were supposed to copy stuff from the text-book"

So you had to like answer specific questions from the text?

Sally: "no, you just had to read it and copy it"

Wilfred: "There was like three pages of crap"

Oh

Mr. Patterson: "No, there was a good for it"

Sally: "I guess so"

Mr. Patterson: "Yeah, there's thinking"

Sally: "The first page you had to just copy"

Wilfred: "I don't know, it wasn't really good for anyone"

Mr. Patterson: "well I liked it"

Wilfred: "I didn't"

Mr. Patterson: "Loved it"

Wilfred: "you can tell I didn't, did you see the look on my face?"

Mr. Patterson: "I did, you'll be happy, we'll do the same thing today"

Wilfred: "I think I'm done"

According to Fairclough (2001) "Institutional practices which people draw upon without thinking often embody assumptions which directly or indirectly legitimize existing power relations" (p. 27). Marshall, Smagorinsky, and Smith (1995) suggest that, "classroom discourse can be considered an institutionalized speech genre" which refers to the unequal relationship between the teacher and their students as well as the implicit and explicit

expectations set forth by classroom rules of discourse (cited in Hollingworth, 2009, p. 37). Hollingworth notes one of the manners in which this dynamic plays out as being how the teacher gains and maintains control over their classroom discourse by not allowing room for “analysis that might be contested”.

During the exchange, it is very clear that although Mr. Patterson jokes with students; had he instead explored their criticism of the lesson with them; he may have learned much from their views as to how the students may have been better engaged in that particular lesson. Hollingsworth points out that teachers effectively silence students who try to open up discourse that runs counter to the teacher’s particular Discourse model (p. 46). It should be noted that the immediately aforementioned data sample happens to be one drawn from Mr. Patterson’s class but most teachers unconsciously reenact certain aspects of colonization within the classroom at least at some points in their teaching and in selected aspects of their classroom style.

As ideologies are performed and reproduced through systems and institutions they are also reborn through subjects. Fairclough (2001) states “the power to *create* the ‘patient’ in the image, so to speak, of the ideological ideal – for ‘patients’ are made what they are through the subject positions in which ‘patienthood’ is enacted” (p. 85). There are no institutions without subjects and according to Althusser, in Fairclough “all ideology is in one way or another to do with positioning subjects” (p. 87). Likewise, the student is a creation of the formal education system, how ‘studenthood’ is mediated through the structure of the classroom, assigning of grades and through modes of discipline. The average Canadian student spends 14 years practicing their role – waiting in lines, raising their hands, being assigned value, producing “work”, judging their value on their ability to listen and follow

directions. Students' behaviour is conditioned through reward and punishment (at the upper grades reward and punishment in terms of grades and teacher verbal approval while at the elementary school level some schools also still use punishment in the form of isolation or 'time outs') and is directly related to the way their teachers are trained to teach.

During the instructional week I had a brief discussion with Mr. Patterson during his class prep-time. This conversation was not audio recorded because the setting was shared with other teachers. During this discussion Mr. Patterson talked about trying to remain politically neutral in his class, taking on a supportive role and being responsible for presenting different sides to the debate. He stated that he does not share his political position with the class but encourages students to be involved in the community. However, as discussed earlier, and as Brandes and Kelly (2001) point out, teacher 'neutrality' can intentionally or unintentionally stifle debate and consideration of alternative perspectives in the classroom by reducing student engagement with teacher, other class members and the material. In *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks (1994) states that classrooms should be sites where dissent is encouraged in order to allow for multiple voices modelling a participatory democracy. Mr. Marshall, who I did not have the opportunity to observe, stated in his interview that he learns from his students and welcomes their feedback, "I think that's how I see teaching right, it's a two way street".

Freire (1974) discusses the development of a colonized consciousness which "housed oppression" in contradistinction to a "free and creative consciousness" necessary for authentic democracy (p. 22). Freire believed that the colonization of the Brazilian people destroyed their ability to create the community participation needed to solve common problems but rather created "an extremely individualistic outlook" (p. 22).

It is important to acknowledge that Freire's model was developed through his work with adults. hooks is in a university setting where her students are coming from a formal education system and are now engaged in academic study. I, in contrast, was working with youth who largely lack autonomy and political power in the context of a compulsory high school course. As has been discussed by Valaitis (2002) youth can experience feelings of disempowerment in their relationships with adults and the community. This was reflected in the focus group discussion by Sally when she said, "I think since you're talking to people who are too young to do anything about it, it's just going to make them, like they can't do anything to stop it right now so they're probably not going to hold onto that knowledge." As stated earlier, Diemer et al. (2006) believe that schools can be a site where students perceive the greatest "capacity to act upon their sociopolitical environment" (p. 455). Sally's quote suggests that her experience is just the opposite, and this opportunity is not being taken advantage of. This resonates with the study by Fine (1991) where critical awareness was only as effective as the resources available to follow through with change.

One of the main forums where the current researcher found this divide between student ideals and their attachment to actively pursuing them was in the analysis of the questionnaire data for this study. Part B of the questionnaire scored questions on a likert-type scale measuring from 1 - strongly disagree; 2 – somewhat disagree; 3 – neutral; 4 – somewhat agree; 5 – strongly agree. **Questions that were focused on the individual's active engagement with issues or what was happening in their own education classes and what should be changed were less likely to elicit a strong response (14%) whereas questions that were focused on broad societal changes were more likely to elicit a strong response (48%).** For example,

students were more likely to agree that Canadian society should be more just than to agree that they had a role in making that happen (see appendix E). For example, #6 states “I would like to see Indigenous issues discussed more in my classes” 5 students were ‘neutral’ and the other 2 were ‘somewhat’ on either side. #7 states, “The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons should be adopted by Canada”, 4 students strongly agreed, 1 somewhat, 1 neutral and 1 somewhat disagreed. In Part D the question: “What I would like to know on the topic of human rights and Indigenous issues globally or domestically”, solicited little response, one student’s response was “not really anything else”. The positive interest in Indigenous rights at a global level compared to the more neutral response for their individual engagement seems to suggest that students are likely to be interested in individual engagement with the implementation of programming that would allow them to be engaged at a local level.

Students feel disconnected from their community.

Effective engagement with youth must take into account their experiences of agency within their communities. During the focus group discussion with three participants, one student in response to a question about how to teach politics and world issues to students better stated, “Ok, on that point, since you’re talking to people who are too young to do anything about it it’s just going to, like they can’t do anything to stop it right now so they’re probably not gonna hold on to that knowledge.” Sally’s comment about student’s lack of agency may suggest that reflection without action decreases future reflection and supports disengagement. Similarly, through interviews with predominantly female inner city youth, Valaitis (2002) found that youth felt disempowered in their relationships with adults and the

community. Youth often did not experience opportunity for participation or validation of their insight and suggestions (Valaitis, 2002).

More important than Freire's specific positions on the spectrum of consciousness, is the way in which people are taught to or fall into roles which reinforce the structures and ideology that prevent their conscientização. I wanted to use the positions on Freire's spectrum to analyze the development of critical consciousness in students, however, spectrums and models can be misleading in their essentialization of roles. In most cases individuals probably exist in multiple positions on his model.

Freire (1974) considers it necessary for education for *conscientização* to involve the student and teacher's active engagement and a "criticism-stimulating [teaching] method" (p. 40-49). The dialogue between the students during the focus group demonstrates such an active engagement; a willingness to present and consider differing opinions on the topics covered.

Colonial ideology.

In order to frame a situated meaning within discourse analysis, Gee (1999) asks four questions referring to meaning. One participant used the word 'civilization' on their questionnaire. In order to determine the possible meaning the student was postulating I posed the word to the students in the focus group. To demonstrate the depth of meaning and ideological assumptions built into the term 'civilization' I found a sample of authors from the academic literature who speak on civilization.

According to Freud (1988, p. 355), to be civilized is to be cut off from and dominate nature, to control our "crude and primary instinctual impulses". Fagan, an archeologist, in his book *People of the Earth: An Introduction to World Prehistory* (2004), defines the advent of

civilizations as a “major event in human adaptation” although he rejects the discourse of Eurocentric notions of “civility” (p. 335). However, in direct contradiction, he then defines civilization as societies based on cities with “centralized accumulation of capital,” written documents, permanent architecture and state sanctioned religion (p. 336). In an analysis of colonial discourses of the “Image of the Indian in Canadian culture” Francis (1992) highlights how Canadian culture has repeatedly posed the Indigenous population as ‘primitive’ in comparison to the colonizers who are viewed to be ‘civilized’. Francis points out the use of language to create fictional and one-dimensional portrayals of Indigenous peoples as ‘noble savages’ who are vanishing either physically or culturally in the face of progress. Much like the previous examples from the literature, the students also expressed different meanings regarding the term ‘civilization’

When the question “what does ‘civilization’ mean?” was posed to the focus group, various meanings were expressed within the group. Three themes emerged that related to civilization. The first was civilization as progress with complex structures such as government. The second was civilization as being any large group of people. The third was an analysis of how we position ourselves within a civilization and in opposition to “those people over there” who are not civilized. Civilization was understood as both a form of human organization and interaction as well as a discourse of othering.

In the context of a discussion on colonialism; the concept of civilization has specific implications including a hierarchical view of social organization and colonial justifications in the name of progress. However, depending on the socio-political identity of the speaker(s) and the setting, ‘civilization’ can take on a wider meaning to include all societies.

Table 4

Student Discourse on Civilization

Wilfred	Alejandro	Sally
moving forward	some sort of government	I guess that you often think yourselves as more civilized
technology	I guess different ethnicities could be, could have like,	I guess, yeah, it's thought to be more advanced
money	ah, say before Europeans came to North America	
trading	there was like the Indigenous civilization	different types of people in it, ...different professions...
	war	I guess they make a new kind of, like a hybrid

Limitations of the Current Study

The intent of this researcher in the current study was to test whether greater engagement of students with issue of Indigenous rights, increased knowledge of some key concepts surrounding Indigenous rights as a global issue and a perspective that views Indigenous rights as a matter affecting all Canadians would be the outcomes of a critical reflection anti-oppression teaching approach and the previously described experimental curriculum unit. Given the fact that no students from the Native Studies course participated and only a post-test questionnaire was administered due to tight time constraints relating to the school/class scheduling exigencies only suggestive trends in the data can be noted.

I had hoped, as previously stated “to teach students their relationship to the social, political and historical world in which they live in respect to issues of human rights and more specifically: colonialism, oppression and privilege; to inspire hope and give them the tools

they need to create change” – however, this study became more an exploration of students’ current relationship to the issues of colonialism and indigenous/human rights rather than evidence for major shifts in their thinking in this regard.

This study set out to look at the possible difference between incorporating Indigenous content into pre-existing non-Indigenous specific courses and separate courses on ‘Native studies’ for the relationships students have to the same issues. As I was unable to recruit student participants from the Native Studies course, I am unable to comment on contrasting student relationships to indigenous /human rights issues and colonialism as a function of variations in delivering course content (indigenous specific course content versus the same material integrated into a non-indigenous specific course)

This thesis is merely a snapshot of students and educators and is limited in its generalizability because of the small size. However, the conclusions drawn are supported by the data and the literature and likely will resonate with Canadian students and teachers elsewhere in Canada.

Conclusion

I began with a desire to have indigenous content more completely incorporated into mainstream education, to increase student awareness of institutionalized discrimination and to foster student engagement in society in order to reduce the levels of individual and systemic racism. I end with the same desire but a deeper understanding of the barriers to this goal at the structural and ideological levels.

I have taken the original research question and broken it down into the elements as they relate to the data collected. First, does the development of critical reflection affect a

student's relationship with 'indigenous issues'? As I have stated earlier, the placement of the issues affecting Indigenous peoples are issues of colonialism not of being Indigenous. This reframing is necessary to effectively teach students to 'study up', meaning to look at the overarching structures, ideology and essentially those in power, that have all worked in some form or other to the situation we have today, rather than looking 'down' at the symptoms or expressions of what I argue is the colonial ideology. From the data I was able to generate, I can't make a statement about the development of critical reflection, I believe though, that the student data shows a trend toward increasing critical reflection and understanding of colonial issues.

Second, is a human rights framework appropriate to teach for critical reflection? If the reasons why an issue became a human rights issue in the first place, i.e. why it appeared on the human rights agenda, are discussed critically then the United Nations framework is appropriate for teaching critical reflection. For example, in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child article 30 states:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language. (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1990)

The inclusion of an article specifying a child's right to their ethnic, religious, linguistic or indigenous heritage is based in multiple histories throughout time and the world of denying children their heritage as a method of forced assimilation and colonization. This article

relating to the rights of the indigenous child would hold no weight or meaning and therefore not be included in the convention had the context not existed. Without teaching the context the articles become meaningless and arbitrary.

Does developing critical reflection result in greater engagement, and a perspective that indigenous rights affect all people? Although I cannot speak to whether there were significant shifts in level of critical reflection on the issues of colonialism and indigenous rights in my student sample, the student data does show evidence of critical reflection and supports the basic premise that such reflection increases the interest in greater engagement. For instance, during the research with the students I brought information about a local social justice workshop for youth to the class, Sally, and one of her friends attended the conference. Further, the student questionnaire responses showed strong support for Indigenous rights in Canada and at the International level. At the individual level, however, responses to questions about awareness and connection to 'Indigenous issues' garnered more neutral responses. The disconnect between societal responsibility and individual responsibility may reflect student perceptions of their own sense of lack of personal agency. However, the positive interest in Indigenous rights at international level compared to the more neutral response for their individual engagement seems to suggest that students would benefit from programming that would allow for engagement at the local level.

This thesis argues that schools are sites where an ideology of colonialism is reproduced through the roles of the institution, the educators (and their education), the students and the absence of an integrated community. The Ontario Ministry of Education and the school boards within it have stated goals of addressing equity and inclusion within their institutions. The research data presented in this thesis suggests that this cannot be done

simply through short-term projects or by somewhat adjusting the curricular content. In order to successfully and completely address equity and inclusion, the ideology of colonialism needs to be acknowledged, confronted and replaced within schools at all levels through critical reflection facilitated by the teacher and with the support of the school boards.

After viewing the film *Third World Canada* I led a discussion with the class about the film and how we can connect it to the discussions and information covered that week. At the end of the class one of the student participants, Sally, passed me a hand written note. On the front of the note it said “not sure if this helps or is relevant” and in the inside it said:

regarding the video.

I was just thinking about how the video talked about defense mechanisms after they showed the little boy imitating his father hanging. This might be kind of what is happening in class. People are trying to not pay attention as much.

That is part of the problem stuff like this still exists because we try to ignore it.

Sometimes people don't think it is totally true either

Sometimes people get offended if they are “analyzed” or “criticized” and that is why this is a note.”

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Appendix A

Cover Letters

Cover Letter/ Introductory Information (community member)

Dear Community Member,

My name is Rhonda Stock and I am a Masters of Education Student at Lakehead University. I am conducting a study on teaching students how to critically think about social issues affecting them and those around them directly and indirectly. This research titled: *Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education* involves the teaching of a curriculum unit based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Information on this document can be found at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>. This unit will be taught in the format of a mock United Nations and will include information on different countries', including Canada, history and present situation in respect to Indigenous issues.

As part of this study, you are being invited to attend an information session on the curriculum unit in order to answer any questions you may have about this research and to allow you the opportunity to provide your insight into this topic. If you would like your participation to be included in this study you will be asked to sign a consent to participation form. All participation is voluntary, if you participate in the study you are free to refuse to answer any questions asked of you as well as to have things you have previously said taken out of the research. You can refuse to participate in any or all parts of this study and can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequence.

Your contribution to this study will be anonymous, discussions will be audio taped and later transcribed. All participants taking part in the group discussions will be asked to keep confidentiality, however I cannot guarantee compliance with this request. Pseudonyms and reference to your role in the study (i.e. "community member") will be used in all transcripts and later findings. Raw data will only be accessible to myself, Rhonda Stock, and to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sonja Grover. While there are no anticipated negative outcomes from this study, there is a minimal risk that a participant may become distressed due to a discussion regarding intolerance. Should that occur, the researcher, who is also an experienced teacher and is a social worker as well, will be there to address the situation and arrange for any follow up if required. Community participants and students are expected to benefit from participation in this study. Through their active participation students and community members will have the opportunity to have their thoughts and perspectives included in the design and analysis of education that seeks to increase equity and inclusion.

The information from this study will be used for a Masters of Education Thesis. Reports of the findings may also be published in professional academic journals or at professional conferences, where your child's identity, school and school board information will be kept strictly confidential. All data that you provide will be kept confidential and securely

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education

stored for five years. After the five-year period, all raw data (electronic, notes, or tape) will be destroyed. If you are interested in the findings or analysis of this study please contact myself, Rhonda Stock, either through email or through the faculty of Education at Lakehead University (contact information below).

So I can anticipate participation numbers, if you would like to attend this information session please return the second page of this form to your child's school. If you would like to be included in the research please indicate this on the form. When you attend the information session you will be given a consent form to complete. If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact, me or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sonja Grover. Thank you for considering your participation in this study.

This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at 343-8283.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Stock

Rhonda Stock
MEd Student

Thunder Bay, Ontario

E-mail: rstock1@lakeheadu.ca

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***It is best to contact Dr.
Grover via email for a prompt
response

Office of Research

Lakehead University
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Phone: (807) 343-8283

I am interested in attending the information session: YES NO

I would like to take part in the research: YES NO

Signature _____

Date _____

Simplified Community Invitation

Information Session and Focus Group Discussion

Dear Parent/ Guardian:

Your child is participating in the research *Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education* during their Civics class this week. As part of this research I would like to invite you to come to a short presentation on the unit being taught and the purpose of this research. I would also like to invite you to participate in a focus group discussion after the presentation. Your participation in the focus group would be voluntary and you are welcome to come hear the presentation only.

Depending on interest, I would like to hold the presentation/focus group discussion next Thursday April 7th at [REDACTED] in the evening. If you are interested please fill out the bottom of the form and return to your child's teacher as soon as possible

I _____ would like to attend the presentation/discussion.

I can be reached at _____ (e-mail or phone)

Cover Letter/ Introductory Information

Dear Parent/ Guardian & Potential Participant,

Your child is being invited to take part in a research study through Lakehead University. Your child's participation would take place during their *Grade 10 Civics* class. This research titled: *Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education* involves the teaching of a curriculum unit based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Information on this document can be found at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>, if you would like a paper copy of this document you can contact me at the email listed below. This unit will be taught in the format of a mock United Nations and will include information on different countries', including Canada, history and present situation in respect to Indigenous issues. The purpose of this research is to teach students how to critically think about social issues that affect them and the people around them.

If you and your child agree to the child's participation in the study they will be asked to complete two written questionnaires and take part in group discussions. Some students will be asked to take part in individual interviews to give them the opportunity to explain their ideas further. All participation is voluntary, if your child participates in the study they are free to refuse to answer any questions asked of them as well as to have things they have previously said taken out of the research write-up. You and your child can refuse to participate in any or all parts of this study and can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequence. If your child does not participate in the research he or she will still be able to participate in the unit, including class discussions and their contribution will not be included in the study. Students will not be marked or graded on any aspect of the unit as part of the research.

Your child's confidentiality and anonymity is assured: student questionnaires will be anonymous, discussions will be audio taped and later transcribed. Students taking part in the group discussions will be asked to keep student statements confidential, however I can not guarantee students will comply with this request. Pseudonyms and reference to their role in the study (i.e. "student") will be used in all transcripts and later write-up of findings. Raw data will only be accessible to myself, Rhonda Stock, and to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sonja Grover. While there are no anticipated negative outcomes from this study, there is a minimal risk that a student may become distressed due to a discussion regarding intolerance. Should that occur, the classroom teacher and the researcher, who is also an experienced teacher and is a social worker as well, will be there to address the situation and arrange for any follow up if required.

Students are expected to benefit from participation in this study at minimum through having the opportunity to learn about the role of the United Nations and about Indigenous history and politics internationally. Through their active participation students will have the opportunity to have their thoughts and perspectives include in the design and analysis of education that seeks to increase equity and inclusion.

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education

The information from this study will be used for a Masters of Education Thesis. Reports of the findings may also be published in professional academic journals or at professional conferences, where your child's identity, school and school board information will be kept strictly confidential.

All data that you provide will be kept confidential and securely stored for five years. After the five-year period, all raw data (electronic, notes, or tape) will be destroyed. If you are interested in the findings or analysis of this study please contact myself, Rhonda Stock, either through email or through the faculty of Education at Lakehead University (contact information below)

If you and your child agree that the child may participate in this study please sign and complete the attached form. If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sonja Grover. Thank you for considering your child's participation in this study.

This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at 343-8283

Sincerely,

Rhonda Stock

Rhonda Stock
MEd Student

Thunder Bay, Ontario

E-mail: rstock1@lakeheadu.ca

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Cover Letter/ Introductory Information Principal

Dear Principal,

My name is Rhonda Stock and I am a Masters of Education Student at Lakehead University. I am conducting a study on teaching students how to critically think about social issues affecting them and those around them directly and indirectly. This research titled: *Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education* involves the teaching of a curriculum unit based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Information on this document can be found at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>. This unit will be taught in the format of a mock United Nations and will include information on different countries', including Canada, history and present situation in respect to Indigenous issues.

In order to conduct this study, two groups of up to 15 participants each will be drawn from the student populations of two grade ten courses: *Civics* (group one) and *Native Studies* (group two). Students will be recruited during the beginning of their respective course on a volunteer basis. Teachers from the two involved classes will be invited to provide their insight and feedback during and after the implementation of the unit. Community members involved with the school will be invited to provide their perspective on inclusion of Indigenous content and education that promotes equity and inclusion.

Qualitative data will be collected through the use of questionnaires, group discussions, individual interviews and student participation in the unit on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Student participation will take place during the initial introduction to the upcoming unit where students will be invited to participate and given informed consent forms; during the pre-test questionnaire approximately two weeks before the unit; during class time for the length of the unit; during the post-test questionnaire immediately following completion of the unit.

I will be developing and facilitating the unit on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the *Civics* class only, in order to facilitate discussions and gather data. Pre and post written questionnaires will be administered to both classes in order to measure student perceptions, attitudes, and knowledge of human rights and Indigenous peoples prior to and following their courses (i.e. knowledge of key human rights concepts affecting Indigenous peoples, and exclusionary versus more inclusive attitudes towards Indigenous peoples as Canadians).

All participants, school and school board identities will be protected. The data from this study will be used to prepare a Masters of Education thesis. Reports of the findings may also be published in professional academic journals or at professional conferences, where your identity, school and school board information will be kept strictly confidential.

Please note that the Lakehead University Ethics Board and the [REDACTED] School Board have approved this study. The school board and the school will not be identified in any write-up of the research and pseudonyms will be used to refer to participants. While

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education

there are no anticipated negative outcomes from this study, there is a minimal risk that a student may become distressed due to a discussion regarding intolerance. Should that occur, the classroom teacher and the researcher, who is also an experienced teacher and is a social worker as well, will be there to address the situation and arrange for any follow up if required. Student's are expected to benefit from participation in this study. Through their active participation students will have the opportunity to have their thoughts and perspectives included in the design and analysis of education that seeks to increase equity and inclusion.

Data will be securely stored at Lakehead University for five years and then destroyed as per Lakehead University regulations.

A summary of the findings will be available through Lakehead University libraries. If you have any further questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sonja Grover or myself.

This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at 343-8283.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Stock

Rhonda Stock
MEd Student

Thunder Bay, Ontario

E-mail: rstock1@lakeheadu.ca

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Cover Letter/ Introductory Information Teacher

Dear Prospective Participant,

You are being invited to take part in a research study through Lakehead University. Your participation would take place during your grade ten *Civics* class. This research titled: *Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education* involves the teaching of a curriculum unit based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Information on this document can be found at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>. This unit will be taught in the format of a mock United Nations and will include information on different countries', including Canada, history and present situation in respect to Indigenous issues. The purpose of this research is to teach students how to critically think about social issues that affect them and people around them.

If you agree to participation in the study you will be asked to be present during the mock UN unit and to give feedback on the unit and participate in a written questionnaire as well as spontaneous discussions. All participation is voluntary, if you participate in the study you are free to refuse to answer any question asked of you as well as to have things you have previously said taken out of the research. You can refuse to participate in any or all parts of this study and can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequence. You can have any of your comments during discussion or responses on the questionnaire withdrawn from the study without penalty.

Your confidentiality and anonymity: Pseudonyms and identifiers (i.e. "teacher") will be used, discussions will be audio taped and later transcribed. Pseudonyms and reference to your role in the study will be used in all transcripts and later findings. Raw data will only be accessible to myself, Rhonda Stock, and to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sonja Grover. While there are no anticipated negative outcomes from this study, there is a minimal risk that a student may become distressed due to a discussion regarding intolerance. Should that occur, the classroom teacher and the researcher, who is also an experienced teacher and is a social worker as well, will be there to address the situation and arrange for any follow up if required. Through their active participation, participants (i.e. students, and teachers) will have the opportunity to have their thoughts and perspectives included in the design and analysis of education that seeks to increase equity and inclusion.

The information from this study will be used for a Masters of Education Thesis. Reports of the findings may also be published in professional academic journals or at professional conferences, where your child's identity, school and school board information will be kept strictly confidential.

All data that you provide will be kept confidential and securely stored for five years. After the five-year period, all raw data (electronic, notes, or tape) will be destroyed. If you are interested in the findings or analysis of this research they will be made available to you at your request upon completion of the study.

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom: Anti-Oppression Education

If you agree to participate in this study please sign and complete the attached form. If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact, me or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sonja Grover. Thank you for considering your participation in this study.

This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at 343-8283.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Stock

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Thunder Bay, Ontario

E-mail: rstock1@lakeheadu.ca

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Appendix B

Consent Forms

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Community Focus Group Consent Form

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom:

Anti-Oppression Education

I _____ understand that the information discussed in this focus group is confidential. By signing below, I agree that I will not disclose any of the information discussed in this focus group with any other individuals.

I understand that I may refuse to answer any questions asked during the focus group discussions and this will not negatively affect me in anyway. In signing below, I also agree to give my permission for the focus group to be audio taped. Furthermore, I understand that anything I say during the focus group discussion that is used in a write up will not use my real name. I am aware that I may have any of my comments during the focus group removed from any write-up without any adverse consequences. I am aware that the audiotapes and transcripts are confidential and will be locked in storage for five years.

Do you agree to participate in this study? YES _____ NO _____

Do you agree to have this discussion audiotaped? YES _____ NO _____

Name of participant

Signature

Date

I would like a summary of the research findings YES _____ NO _____

Name

Email or Mailing Address (for research summary)

Thank you for your participation in this study

Principal Consent Form

Critical Reflection in the Secondary Classroom:

Anti-Oppression Education

I, _____ have read the cover letter and understand that:

1. The child participants, school and school board identities will be protected.
2. All data collected is confidential.
3. The group discussions and interviews will be audio taped and only with permission of participants.
4. All data collected will be presented with the use of pseudonyms.
5. The child or parent may request redaction of any of their responses without adverse consequence and will be given an opportunity to do so.
6. Should a participant choose not to participate, or withdraw from the study there will be no adverse consequence, academic or otherwise.
7. Participant may choose not to answer any question as part of the research without adverse consequence.
8. The participants may withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequence.
9. While there are no anticipated negative outcomes from this study, there is a minimal risk that a student may become distressed due to a discussion regarding intolerance. Should that occur, the classroom teacher and the researcher, who is also an experienced teacher and is a social worker as well, will be there to address the situation and arrange for any follow up if required.
10. Child participants are expected to benefit from participation in the study by learning about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Canadian and international issues.
11. Child participants are expected to benefit from participation in the study by having the opportunity to take part in the development of curriculum based on equity and inclusion.
12. The participants and their parent/guardian may request a summary of the study.
13. All raw data from the study (audio tapes, written notes and transcriptions, questionnaires) will be held at Lakehead University in a locked cabinet for five years and then destroyed as per Lakehead University Regulations.
14. The data collected will be used to prepare a Masters of Education thesis and may also be used to publish articles in academic journals or for presentation at academic conferences with all participant identities as well as the identity of the school board concealed.

Name of Principal

Signature

Date

Appendix C

Curriculum Unit

Unit Outline:

1. Title: “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: From International Forum to Local Realities”
 - a. Topic: Indigenous rights locally and globally
 - b. Grade/Subject: 10, Civics
2. An Abstract:
 - a. Rationale:
 - i. To learn about the function of the United Nations as it applies to Indigenous rights
 - ii. To develop an understanding of the relationship between Indigenous peoples in Canada and internationally
 - iii. To develop an understanding of human rights discourse
 - iv. To learn how Indigenous peoples current social location is related to histories of colonialism
 - b. Sources:
 - i. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
 - ii. Journal articles
 - iii. News reports
 - iv. Internet sites
 - v. Video: Third World Canada
 - c. Duration: 5 75 minute lessons, 1 week learning period
 - d. Instructional expectations:
 - i. Oral communication
 - ii. Group presentations
 - iii. Document analysis
 - e. Instructional objectives:
 - i. Convey and demonstrate the necessary tools needed for the students to be able to comprehend and begin to work within a human rights based framework

Unit Agenda

*Each day begins with an ice-breaker

Day 1 (76 min): Oppression and colonialism

- Introduction to unit
- Caring Community
- Oppression
 - Bishop, A. (2002) p. 88
 - Eisenberg, (2006) p.

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- Wats et al. (date) p. 257

Day 2 (76 min): Indigenous and International involvement (see Appendix F)

- Indigenous history with international forums (two examples)
- Indigenous peoples today
- International involvement
- International Decade of the Worlds Indigenous Peoples

Day 3 (76 min): UNDRIPs, three examples (Australia, Guatemala, Canada)

- Australia's "stolen generation"
- Guatemalan genocide
- Canada's Tar Sands

Day 4 (76 min): Third World Canada

- Handouts (see Appendix E)
- Screen Third World Canada

Day 5 (76 min): Debrief and group activity

Appendix D

Interview Protocol – Native Studies Teacher

Date:

Interviewee:

Guiding questions

The interview followed the flow of the teacher; the following questions were a checklist for the researcher to ensure specific information was covered.

1. How many semesters have you taught this course?
2. How many students do you have right now?
3. How is this course listed? (electives etc.)
4. Since you started teaching this course, how many non-Native kids have taken it?
5. What do you cover in the course?
6. What resources do you use?
7. How do you teach the course (pedagogy)
8. Do student's ever request specific things be taught?
9. Do you have a mechanism for student input?
10. Are any parents engaged with the teaching of the course
11. Do you ever bring in community members
12. Do you tie the course into things going on in the community
13. How would you teach the course if you could do it ideally?
14. What is the general perception of the course/class/students in the school?
15. Do you feel qualified to teach the course?
16. How could you be supported better? What do you think you need
17. Do you think non-Native kids should be encouraged to take the course?

18. Do you see racism at your school?

Appendix E

Aggregate Questionnaire Responses

For the Likert-type questions, the numbers under each position on the scale represent how many students chose that answer.

Course: **Civics**
2011

Date: **March 31-April 1,**

Part A: Demographic (pre and post test)

You may leave any or all of the questions in Part A blank if you wish, even if you choose to fill out some or all of the rest of the questionnaire.

1. Do you identify as an Indigenous person or a non-Indigenous person?
 6 Students identified as “non-indigenous” and 1 was left blank
2. Age: 5 were 15; 2 were 16
3. Gender: 5 identified as “male” and 2 as “female”

Part B: Connections (pre and post test)

Definition:

The following questions are to be rated on a 5-point scale

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

1. Indigenous issues are relevant to me as a student

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	4	0

1. We live in a just, fair and impartial country

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
2	2	2	1	0

2. I am interested in Indigenous issues

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	3	3	0

3. All people are able to exercise their human rights to their full capacity

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
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2 5 0 0 0

12. Colonialism is an issue that is relevant to me today

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neutral Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

0 0 6 1 0

13. History is not relevant to issues of today

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neutral Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

3 3 0 0 1

14. I am interested in promoting the rights of persons who have been unfairly treated by society

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neutral Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

0 0 3 1 3

15. My family discusses social issues

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neutral Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

2 1 0 3 1

16. Everyone is given an equal start in life

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neutral Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

3 3 1 0 0

Part C: Working Definitions (pick three concepts and give your definition of what it means, you can use hypothetical situations, examples, stories, traditional definitions, etc.)

(pre and post test)

1. Oppression

2. Hierarchy

- “The order of power, people high on the hierarchy have more power”

3. Discrimination

- “Hating on someone because of their race”;

- “racism, stereotypes, etc...”
-

4. Colonization

- “Building of a community”;
- “Civilization moving into a different region potentially assimilating the native population”;
- “to colonize an area=group of people moving into a location and taking it over”

5. Human rights

- “what all humans should have”;
- “The freedom that people receive”;
- “Privileges, rights and/or abilities humans have such as voting, driving, and education.”

6. Privilege

- “Privileged – us”;
- “a right given to people”

7. Indigenous

- “people who lived in a place before colonization”;
- “original people in a country”;
- “native to a certain country”;
- “Native peoples untouched by connected civilization”;
- “Indigenous people, natives, people who were the first settlers of an area”

Part D: Open ended questions (pre test)

What I would like to know on the topic of **human rights** and **Indigenous issues globally** or **domestically**:
“not really anything else”

Part D: Open ended questions (post test)

1. What I learned that had the most significance to me?
2. What I would like to learn more about?
3. Suggestions for teaching high school students Indigenous issues and human rights:

Appendix F

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Adopted at the 107th plenary meeting 13 September 2007

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and good faith in the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States in accordance with the Charter,

Affirming that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such,

Affirming also that all peoples contribute to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures, which constitute the common heritage of humankind,

Affirming further that all doctrines, policies and practices based on or advocating superiority of peoples or individuals on the basis of national origin or racial, religious, ethnic or cultural differences are racist, scientifically false, legally invalid, morally condemnable, and socially unjust,

Reaffirming that indigenous peoples, in the exercise of their rights, should be free from discrimination of any kind,

Concerned that indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests,

Recognizing the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous peoples which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources,

Recognizing also the urgent need to respect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples affirmed in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements with States,

Welcoming the fact that indigenous peoples are organizing themselves for political, economic, social and cultural enhancement and in order to bring to an end all forms of discrimination and oppression wherever they occur,

Convinced that control by indigenous people over developments affecting them and their lands, territories and resources will enable them to maintain and strengthen their

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institutions, cultures and traditions, and to promote their development in accordance with their aspirations and needs,

Recognizing that respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment,

Emphasizing the contribution of the demilitarization of the lands and territories of indigenous peoples to peace, economic and social progress and development, understanding and friendly relations among nations and peoples of the world,

Recognizing in particular the right of indigenous families and communities to retain shared responsibility for the upbringing, training, education and well-being of their children, consistent with the rights of the child,

Considering also that treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements, and the relationship they represent, are the basis for the strengthened partnership between indigenous peoples and states,

Acknowledging that the Charter of the United Nations, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, affirm the fundamental importance of the right to self-determination of all peoples, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development,

Bearing in mind that nothing in this Declaration may be used to deny any peoples their right to self-determination, exercised in conformity with international law,

Convinced that the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples in this Declaration will enhance harmonious and cooperative relations between the State and indigenous peoples, based on principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination and good faith,

Encouraging States to comply with and effectively implement all their obligations as they apply to indigenous peoples under international instruments, in particular those related to human rights, in consultation and cooperation with the peoples concerned,

Emphasizing that the United Nations has an important and continuing role to play in promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples,

Believing that this Declaration is a further important step forward for the recognition, promotion and protection of the rights and freedoms of indigenous peoples and in the development of relevant activities of the United Nations system in this field,

Recognizing and reaffirming that indigenous individuals are entitled without discrimination to all human rights recognized in international law, and that indigenous

peoples possess collective rights which are indispensable for their existence, well-being and integral development as peoples,

Recognizing that the situation of indigenous peoples varies from region to region and from country to country and that the significance of nation and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration,

Solemnly proclaims the following United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a standard of achievement to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect:

Article 1

Indigenous peoples have the right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law.

Article 2

Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity.

Article 3

Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Article 4

Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right of autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.

Article 5

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the state.

Article 6

Every indigenous individual has the right to a nationality.

Article 7

1. Indigenous individuals have the rights to life, physical and mental integrity, liberty and security of person.

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2. Indigenous peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other act of violence, including forcibly removing children of the group to another group.

Article 8

1. Indigenous people and individual have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.
2. States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for:
 - a. Any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities;
 - b. Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources;
 - c. Any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights;
 - d. Any form of forced assimilation or integration;
 - e. Any form of propaganda designed to promote or incite racial or ethnic discrimination directed against them.

Article 9

Indigenous peoples and individual have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. No discrimination or any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right.

Article 10

Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return.

Article 11

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalise their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.
2. States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.

Article 12

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.
2. States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned.

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Article 13

1. Indigenous people have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.

Article 14

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the state without discrimination.
3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

Article 15

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.
2. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.

Article 16

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudice to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect indigenous cultural diversity.

Article 17

1. Indigenous individual and peoples have the right to enjoy fully all rights established under applicable international and domestic labour law.
2. States shall in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples take specific measures to protect indigenous children from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development, taking into account their special vulnerability and the importance of education for their empowerment.

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3. Indigenous individuals have the right not to be subjected to any discriminatory conditions of labour and, inter alia, employment or salary.

Article 18

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

Article 19

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

Article 20

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions, to be secure in the enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities.
2. Indigenous peoples deprived of their means of subsistence and development are entitled to just and fair redress.

Article 21

1. Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.

Article 22

1. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this Declaration.
2. States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

Article 23

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

Article 24

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1. Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.
2. Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.

Article 25

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

Article 27

States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process, giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. Indigenous peoples shall have the right to participate in this process.

Article 28

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.
2. Unless otherwise freely agreed upon by the peoples concerned, compensation shall take the form of lands, territories and resources equal in quality, size and legal status or of monetary compensation or other appropriate redress.

Article 29

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and

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implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.
3. States shall also take effective measures to ensure, as needed, that programmes for monitoring, maintaining and restoring the health of indigenous peoples, as developed and implemented by the peoples affected by such materials, are duly implemented.

Article 30

1. Military activities shall not take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples, unless justified by a relevant public interest or otherwise freely agreed with or requested by the indigenous peoples concerned.
2. States shall undertake effective consultations with the indigenous peoples concerned, through appropriate procedures and in particular through their representative institutions, prior to using their lands or territories for military activities.

Article 31

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expression.
2. In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.

Article 32

1. Indigenous people have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development of use of their lands or territories and other resources.
2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of miner, water or other resources.
3. States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.

Article 33

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions. This does not impair the right of indigenous individuals to obtain citizenship of the States in which they live.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine the structures and to select the membership of their institutions in accordance with their own procedures.

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Article 34

Indigenous peoples have the right to promote, develop and maintain their institutional structures and their distinctive customs, spirituality, traditions, procedures, practices and, in the cases where they exist, juridical systems or customs in accordance with international human rights standards.

Article 35

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine the responsibilities of individuals to their communities.

Article 36

1. Indigenous peoples, in particular those divided by international borders, have the right to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with their own members as well as other peoples across borders.
2. States, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, shall take effective measures to facilitate the exercise and ensure the implementation of this right.

Article 37

1. Indigenous people have the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements concluded with States or their successors and to have States honour and respect such treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.
2. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as diminishing or eliminating the rights of indigenous peoples contained in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.

Article 38

States, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, shall take the appropriate measures, including legislative measures, to achieve the ends of this Declaration.

Article 39

Indigenous peoples have the right to have access to financial and technical assistance from States and through international cooperation, for the enjoyment of the rights contained in this Declaration.

Article 40

Indigenous peoples have the right to access to and prompt decision through just and fair procedures for the resolution of conflicts and disputes with States or other parties, as well as to effective remedies for all infringements of their individual and collective rights. Such a decision shall give due consideration to the customs, traditions, rules and legal systems of the indigenous peoples concerned and international human rights.

Article 41

The organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations shall contribute to the full realization of the provisions of this Declaration through

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the mobilization, inter alia, of financial cooperation and technical assistance. Ways and means of ensuring participation of indigenous peoples on issues affecting them shall be established.

Article 42

The United Nations, its bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and specialized agencies, including at the country level, and States shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration.

Article 43

The rights recognized herein constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.

Article 44

All the rights and freedoms recognized herein are equally guaranteed to male and female indigenous individuals.

Article 45

Nothing in this Declaration may be construed as diminishing or extinguishing rights indigenous peoples have now or may acquire in the future.

Article 46

1. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, people, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform and act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations or construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent states.
2. In the exercise of the rights enunciated in the present Declaration, human rights and fundamental freedoms of all shall be respected. The exercise of the rights set forth in this Declaration shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law and in accordance with the international human rights obligations. Any such limitations shall be non-discriminatory and strictly necessary solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for meeting the just and most compelling requirements of a democratic society.
3. The provisions set forth in this Declaration shall be interpreted in accordance with the principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, equality, non-discrimination, good governance and good faith.

Appendix G

Third World Canada Articles

This package was distributed to all students immediately preceding screening Third World Canada.

Cazabon, A. (2011, March 31). 3rd World Canada – Youth Action Group [screen capture]. www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=103522106358215&v=info

Hampton, S. (2010, December 8). Andree Cazabon: A street kid turned filmmaker on a mission. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/relationships/news-and-views/sarah-hampson/andre-cazabon-a-street-kid-turned-filmmaker-on-a-mission/article1830492/>

Ashton, N. (2010, December). Remarkably, amidst the tragedy, documentary on plight of aboriginal children in remote reserves shows a way forward. *The Hill Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.hilltimes.com/opinion-piece/opinion/2010/12/13/remarkably-amidst-the-tragedy-documentary-on-plight-of-aboriginal/25166>

Cazabon, A. (2010, September). Your movie's finally here, Tyler. *Macleans Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/09/30/your-movies-finally-here-tyler/>

Monsebraaten, L. (2010, September 28). Film shines light on Canada's 'Third World'. *Thestar.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/article/867666--film-shines-light-on-canada-s-third-world>

Appendix H

Teacher Supplemental Information Booklet References

N.B. All following documents were reprinted in whole or in-part for the supplemental information booklet in a manner intended to retain the original intent of the authors. An attempt was made to present multiple perspectives.

Caring Community

United Nations International School (2008). *Mission and Guiding Principles*, “UNIS students must be part of a *caring community* which encourages them by example to:” Retrieved from http://www.unis.org/about_unis/mission__guiding_principles/index.aspx.

Indigenous Peoples History and International Forums: Two Examples

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2006). *About UNPFII and a brief history of Indigenous Peoples and the International System*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/history.html>

IWGIA

International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (2007). *The Indigenous World 2007*. Copenhagen. Retrieved from www.iwgia.org/iwgia_files_publications_files/IW_2007.pdf

Canada – pp. 70-78; Guatemala – pp. 104-113; Australia – pp. 246-253

Canada and UNDRIPs:

Statement prior to adoption of UNDRIP

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (2006). *Canada's Position: United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Retrieved from www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/ia/pubs/ddr/ddr-eng.asp

Statement after adoption of UNDRIP

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (2010). *Canada's Statement of Support on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Retrieved from <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1309374239861>

INAC Statement on the Position of Other States

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (2006). *Canada's Position: United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Retrieved from <http://ainc-inac.gc.ca/eng/1100100014078>

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Guatemala and UNDRIPs

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See Appendix H

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Appendix I

Interview with Mr. Marshall, Native Studies Teacher

April 14, 2011 – 5:00pm – 6:30pm

Teacher Group Two Interview at their house.

Pseudonym: Mr. Marshall

Researcher	Mr. Marshall
<i>Do you have your consent form?</i>	Do I have mine? No I have it at school
<i>I have to get it from your teacher, or your principal - you're the teacher</i>	Yes, so, did you give [The Principal] one?
<i>Yes</i>	Okay, and so, she signed off on that and then so this is just my permission coming from the school
<i>Yeah</i>	Okay
<i>Yeah that whole hierarchy thing</i>	When do you need that back?
<i>Ah, whenever</i>	It's just cuz we're out of town for, till Sunday
<i>Oh, that's fine, I don't need it tomorrow or anything, like ah [The Principal] said it was fine, I dropped off the consent form, I haven't gone back yet just because there were no kids</i>	Yeah
<i>So I'll come in next week</i>	So is this along the lines of other things you've seen being done at Lakehead, because I've participated in something like this.
<i>Mhmm</i>	Like last year we had several students come in.
<i>That whole thing</i>	And do like a video thing with multiple teachers

Mhmm, yep that thing, this is a little bit different, because I know that one of the other grad students [removed name] did some work with that project, I can't think of who the other people were.

I don't know

And that was a big thing with the board and everything as well, I believe, do you know who it was, 'cuz we're always in the

It was like five different people and the only other person that I've participated with as a masters student was a [name of student], but it wasn't for, it was just for general like literacy and stuff like that.

Yeah I'm trying to think of what their, 'cuz I've read over a little of what htat other project is, this is different though and there's only [number of high schools in area] so we

Public ones

Yes right, those other ones, whatever

Yes, but they're still publicly funded

I know, yeah, so this one, this is like for my thesis so I'm gonna write my thesis an then I'm going to do up a report to give to the board as well, so give them, you know, a thing that says this is what I did.

Mhmm

This is what I found, and these are my thoughts on it, do whatever you want. Do you have any questions or anything?

Yeah

Is that ok?

Okay, does that answer your question? Yep, I wasn't overly concerned.

No? No.

Like, basically, not last week, but the week before I was in a civics class and I did the unit on the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Mhmm

An did it as like small group work and very interactive, like we always sat in a circle and had discussions and stuff. We watched Third World Canada and debriefed that a little bit. So we took it from ah, sort of international to more local. We talked about stuff that has happened in Australia, ah because the same sorts of things happened in here because we were colonized by the same people and we talked about Guatemala a bit because that's a bit of a different situation there Mhmm

Very different situation, but still because of that whole colonization thing um and because they're part of, like they're one of the people, the countries that signed on to the Mhmm

Declaration

And we talked about ah the Tar Sands situation in Alberta because there's contamination because of the ah, what's that river called? Atikokan or Athabaskan?

Probably Athabaskan

Yeah, river runs north to a First Nations Reserve, ah Fort ... Something...First Nation. So we didn't do anything specifically in [local community] just because um, some of the teachers at that school said that the kids are really, get a lot of, they have like a lot of strong opinions about First Nations kids/Aboriginal kids in [local community] getting a lot of special stuff, so they want them to get, ah to be far enough removed so they could look at it a little more objectively

Mhmm

Than talking about the classroom over, or the kids down the street or anything like that

So, and then I had a focus group with some of the kids from that class the following week during like their lunchtime to clear up some things, because

Mhmm

they brought up words like "civilization", which I don't use. So I needed them to like tell me what they mean by that and there was like three very different views on what civilization means which was kind of cool,

But it's basically seeing how kids are thinking about things like colonization and Aboriginal issues and all that sort of stuff, to figure out how we can work with them better, or if there's, to see how they're you know, to try and get at the racism that's in [local community], basically, does that make sense?

Overall, in general? Overall It's a clouded picture

It's a what? It's a clouded picture

What do you mean? Too broad, from coast to coast in terms of groups and dealing with different things

Mhmm And there's the whole spectrum in there for opinion

Oh yeah Inside of and outside the community right

Yep. Yeah, it's not a clear, like this, and then this, and then this, at all Well I find that the board treats it like that, that and treats a lot of the education that they first wanted to throw forward that way, like "oh, here you can do this", no we can't we don't know anything about that, we can't teach that.

Do you mean stuff that has been developed other places? Like materials, and just, just you know assuming that all Native culture in Canada is the same

<i>So they were like 'here's a book on Native people?</i>	Yeah, well that speaks to one person in the class or none
<i>Yeah. Have they, have you found resources on your own then?</i>	I have done that because I need to research for myself, I have to learn the material that I'm teaching so I have to go out and find stuff. I don't know, I haven't been happy with a lot of the resourcing, so just go, and I just did it for the last couple of years because I didn't find that they had all those things in place, right away
<i>Mhmm</i>	so that people were giving me resources, trying to be helpful but they don't have everything in place, 'cuz they haven't been given anything or they haven't investigated enough. So now we're starting to get like a lot of personal resources but in terms of like literature and stuff like that. It's just what's modern we haven't grabbed a hold of stuff that's out there and we don't have enough access to. I don't know I wanna say elders, but that's not the purpose of the elder.
<i>Mhmm</i>	That's the problem there too, because the board operates under their own functions and then we expect community members to come in and work under those things and there's a conflict there
<i>Yeah</i>	'cuz it's different, you're dealing with culture rather than the structure within the school. That's what I see as the biggest problem, ok - we've got to do this and everybody's got to come here and everybody's got to have permission forms, well that's not how it works within the culture so you've got to make accommodations for that but then you can't satisfy both sides
<i>So, and there is like the ah um the protocol for inviting elders right</i>	We have, the board has it's own protocol, and then we have our own protocol per person we invite in because some people live a traditional lifestyle and some people are elders and some people are just community members right,
<i>Yep</i>	And so we can go from volunteer to someone who wants a particular item

mhmm

offering, and wants things done a certain way, right to someone who's happy to come in for whatever you can give them.

Yeah. So it's like the two structures, or whatever, like the requirements of the board and then the cultural, um

Yeah, 'cuz then when I function as an instructor I am under the rules of the board, so like I need permission, I need different things I we've had to make accommodations for all those different things so like though, it's getting interesting because now you're starting to run into some of the dilemmas, so administration worries about certain things and teachers worry about certain things and we've had recent things happen in the city outside of Aboriginal issues that really prevent us from doing a lot of stuff like permission slips and we have some stuff like um the ah little girl getting killed out at Fort William right so that, that becomes an issue because we're dealing with a bunch of people who may not be in contact, like if you need permission you might not be in contact with like parents and stuff like that so can you expect someone to bring a permission slip back if they don't have like a steady guardian in town where they should.

Now that's another whole issue 'cuz we need someone to govern all that stuff going on too. So like you might have a company like Dilico or something, doing something and then they can only do so much. Are they keeping track of everyone effectively, do they have good parents or guardians here in town, is there a direct family influence {00:10:33} or are the kids staying with somebody who is just willing to take in as many people as they can because they need income so there's it's way beyond how we think it is so

Do you guys have spillover for [another local high school] or from them?

No, because [other local high school] is a particular funded school, its, it's a high school that's set up for particular bands and students that meet requirements within those areas

But they can leave

They can decide to leave right, um and so I think it's just in and out it depends if you want to ah come because it looks like some of the a some of the requirements that we once had in terms of having schools of excellence and having particular people go to particular schools for

	particular things that's kind'a out, so we can have students go anywhere they want for education, right.
<i>Yeah, so how long have you been teaching this class?</i>	Um I want to say three years for this one because this is Native Studies – History
<i>Okay</i>	So it's exploring Aboriginal culture through history and looking at The History of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, that's the official title of the course
<i>So, what do you cover in it?</i>	<p>Ah so for my, to make myself comfortable with the requirements I really try to stick with the curriculum layout. So we're dealing with a lot of sovereign issues, so the relations between the government of Canada and groups within Ontario and the rest of Canada and just ah so like ah leadership how traditional societies functioned and how some of the expectations that Europeans had when they came here and tried to first colonize and make Canada.</p> <p>Um, general information some statistics about Aboriginal people, so where are they, where do we see the populations, are they going up are they going down who's maintained their culture the best, stuff like that.</p> <p>Then one of the main unit that I get into later on is the Aboriginal and the media, so how we see ah aboriginal people through our different forms of media and where we see stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination used on a regular basis that has painted the picture of the Aboriginal person that we see today,</p> <p>and then the last section is actually a research section and that's another curriculum, that's ah now once we have this information and we can try and push forward some pride and some history and some knowledge, now who would they go to as a historical figure and attempt to research and find out more about</p>
<i>Mmm, K</i>	And that's the course, it's very slow moving but there's a lot of good stuff that you can do in it
<i>Do you find that the kids are, they're not good at returning permission forms, do they generally</i>	Ah that's hit and miss because it's a number of things, so normally I find lower attendance levels, ah but we have lower population in the class and some of it's due to people who just decide not to come to school, but other

come to class though? conditions that stand out are people having to leave town, so going back for funerals going back for celebrations, going back for a period of time, 'cuz that's the time they can go back home, so it's a number of reasons and stuff like that and it's just you might not have a kid for a month and then they're there and then they're gone again. It's tough.

So their lives are a little more flexible than the schedule allows for, sort of? Yeah and well, it's a tough call I'd say the one thing that stands out as being the most scary is the number of deaths that these kids are going home for

How many like kids do you have going home for deaths? Um well and then there's certain things that the board has put some concerns on in terms of information being released, but we've had situations where we've had, you know incidents in town that affect that and it's just here's the immediate impact on families but then family members are related and stuff like that, there's things like incarceration there's things like death where you actually just have an older family member dying but that makes a scenario where that student goes away for a couple weeks because they need to go and be part of the community, but the other part of that is the suicide rates and um depending on where you're getting your kids from, um the biggest thing that I've seen right now is the substance abuse, not necessarily alcohol and drugs but inhalants seem to be the big killer right now, and so family members are dying, numbers are not good.

No, And also 'cuz their families are like further away, they're not all in town so having to leave for

Yeah and so my knowledge is furthered with that whenever I talk to my friend ██████ whose a native lawyer in town working on certain things.

██████

██████

That seems familiar Yeah and he might be actually an interesting person to talk to in terms of

Where does he work? Ah he works at um, now I'm trying to think of ██████ partners within his law firm um, it's I think it's something, something ██████, I always forget what the ah

'cuz Mr. [REDACTED] is actually retired so he works at the, I could get you that information too. But, ah with his job he's dealing with ah a lot of crime and stuff that happens on the reserve so you just ah you just get to know that he's leaving town all the time 'cuz he needs to physically fly up, talk to people, come back, do work and then there's a whole bunch of stuff that gets done for testimonial and stuff and people dealing with things with residential schooling, 'cuz that stuffs all still going on.

Yep

So like there's tons of that stuff going on and it all depends on when a lot of reserves and areas get the right to do those things right, so if they're not recognized yet, then they haven't made land claims, then if they have made a land claim it depends on when it gets honoured then are all the moneys that are going to those certain areas getting distributed properly, there's a lot of just messed up stuff.

So, it's a native studies course and I know at the other school there were no white kids in the native studies course, do you have any white, or sorry not just white kids but any non-native students in your native studies course?

At the outset yes, so I've had more in past years, now it seems I have a full 100% aboriginal population in my class but definitely within the first couple of years people were interested in the courses, but it's not the first time they were offered but its another option so some people are interested in that and I know that there was a lot of literature ah students that were really strong academically in a areas like history and English that wanted to take the course because they were interested in going into women's studies, maybe a combination with women's studies and aboriginal studies at the next level so they took all the aboriginal courses that they could so they took language, they took the standard history course and they also took the ah the ah literature courses that are attached to the English department.

Yep

But not enough take the visual arts one, 'cuz we have NEC 1 is actually arts based so it's looking at all the things that have come out of the culture, visually.

Do they cover new stuff as well?

Yeah, and so I've taught that course and I was the teacher at [REDACTED] that developed that course for our school um and so it's, it's what you're comfortable with right, so there's a wide range of stuff I directed my knowledge into the academic areas, so not just the functional art pieces 'cuz like a lot of kids are exposed to moccasin making and making beads and a lot of

stereotyped stuff.

Yep

But I went into looking at some of the changes that we had maybe forty or fifty years ago when we had like woodland style and now we have in Canada one of the most important artworks that we, that stands out is anything coming from the west coast, so all that is examined because it's very important, we begin to see where are we when we look at Native art, well when you look at your money you've got some west coast stuff on there, one of the most well known artists in Canada is Bill Reid and it's unfortunate that he's dead now but uh it's important to know about him, it's important to know about Norval Morriseau and how he brings the culture to European culture and starts to merge some of those things, so we do a lot of that stuff

and then we try to do what we can with the budget, that's the next step, that's always the problem right, you want to do carving and soap stoning and totem pole making, are we cutting down trees?, no we've got to use plaster and then look at technique over material, so there's lots of little things so whatever you can do for an affordable price, we do. But get the kids exposed to painting, get them exposed to touching and dealing with materials that are natural and stuff like that

Do you ever do any of the, I guess you're not teaching it now, but the local stuff that shows up, like Christian Chapman, are you familiar with him?

No, ah I, with my extent of the knowledge base of aboriginal art in this surrounding area a lot of my stuff ends at the death of Roy Thomas, so and I know that my mom has had a connection with him and now I speak to elders who have actually worked with Roy Thomas on a regular basis but that's my knowledge base

Yep

Because it's difficult to start something where you don't have a person who really is doing those things right, Like I could sew if you want to sew I could quilt if you wanted me to quilt

Really?

Yep, and I've done quilting and stuff like that and that's always an interesting thing but it's just getting people to work with their hands, and here are some materials and we've made ah, scale models and stuff that's visual so I can make a wigwam, here's how you would do it on a smaller scale but if you wanted to decorate something

maybe you would actually go out and get moss but a lot of the cultural stuff is time based, so if we want to take birch bark off trees we can only go in the spring time right, so if you need something in September where are you getting it? You shouldn't do it.

So there's lots of stuff that doesn't fit into the scheme of schooling and that's what a lot of, a lot of the education um has missed, just awareness of that part and that's what I think a lot of teachers have been screaming for right, we need someone to tell us these things

because now we're stepping on everyone's toes when you start to do these things because you don't know so you have to bring in more people, but then bringing in people is a two way thing, a double edge sword, so like my experience just as a regular art teacher with the art community I'm just like who are these guys coming in, right and you always want to be wary of what you bring in because you never know if there's going to be benefit to what you have there so some of the kids you know are not living in a traditional setting so they're 'what's this, I'd rather do this' and then some people really appreciate it 'I did that with my kokum,' 'I've done this before, so I'm familiar with it,' then let's do it, it's hit and miss.

We haven't geared ourselves for the variety of people that we're getting, it's like we've pegged them, one way and then 'oh everyone can do this' no everyone can't you know, even like we've got in, I've done drum making in my class too, um not everybody can do that, depending on who it is, we might have the girls that can't touch the drum, you know because of the moon time right, so you might have that type of scenario where you just go, you just watch but it's the experience right, that's, the overall point is that we were lacking those things because if you can't see yourself in the material why would you want to learn it? So that's the big thing so making sure that you can expose people and get people involved, but it's rough when you don't come from that culture and you try and teach that culture.

Have you had any sort of backlash from that?

I don't think I have, um I have more positive criticism like "oh we don't do it this way" well then show me how you guys do it, you know like that's how it has to go. Like I'm comfortable with that because I think that's how I see

teaching right, it's a two way street, I'm going to learn from you guys if you guys have done this and then it's gonna be more impactful if you have that in a native studies class because I guarantee you I'm gonna learn from the kids if they're willing to show what they know right so

How do you create that sort of classroom where they feel that they can give you, you know positive criticism or have input in the class?

I think you just have to tell them, you know. My understanding of a lot of students, especially from the native background is that they want to function that way in the classroom right, they want to listen and they don't say much but then they'd much rather be tactile and show you and use their hands and stuff like that, but some of them you know if you're not coming from a community that does that some of them have completely bought into the you know the typical way of life, 'I go to class, I hang out, go home, that's all I do' right so it's hit and miss and

I think I'm actually more successful with people who come from out of town and this is maybe their first visit or they're new to the area because they're more willing to try and fit in and they're bringing more traditional style, if I have a student of Aboriginal decent that's been in town for a while sometimes when you get them they're not in that frame of mind to really down the culture, they'd much rather work on writing and reading and making sure that they're fitting in that way. That's what I think.

So do you think that because you've been teaching it for like three years in various forms

Well Native studies I think from maybe about 5 years now in total with combination of the visual arts course

That's a long time; do you feel like each year your comfort level is growing? Because you've mentioned comfort level a few times

I think so, but I'm comfortable with the stuff that I know and to tell you the truth a lot of the stuff that I've done is just through my own research, that's how I'm growing right I don't find that I have a student every year that's just like this is what we do or this is how we share. I've probably learned my style in that class from my own research plus elder guidance because I find elders, that a really strong elder goes a long way

Where do you do your

It is, it's mostly, when I started was through reading, so I

<i>research? that's pretty broad</i>	was going out there seeing what's out there, not overly pleased with what we have to offer. I actually went to ah
<i>Like in the curriculum guidelines</i>	Yeah, I've actually gone...
<i>Ah, I forgot your book!</i>	<p>Gone to Alberta to get that curriculum, when we were really looking at what we had for resources at the start of a lot of this, that was the collection that really stood out because it had a set number of things that you could really discuss and if you're, the biggest thing is you want the material there but you have to still and that's where you fall into some of the guidelines, you still have to fall in your role as the teacher so like as an Ontario teacher this is what I'm doing, we need to follow curriculum so I want to make sure that we have that structured thing, it's not about sitting in that circle all day, it's about getting product, and having those kids understand the basics and then we can do stuff like that and we can extend it, once we know the stuff then we can talk about it more effectively right, so we've got to go to the, it's reading and writing we have to learn that stuff right.</p> <p>So that text book is actually from Alberta and it's the Dene culture, they've got their act together so I really find that Alberta is very strong, what they want to do with education, they have a lot more control and seemingly they have a lot more money that they've really thrown and invested into developing some of that stuff</p>
<i>Just for the Alberta...</i>	Yeah, still one of the best collections I've found was the idea of the Aboriginal perspectives as a grade ten collection just for that high school student or that student of that particular age, you know, what has been going on for a history course, that's, it's all there. Here's what we have now and we're taking the eyes of the Aboriginal of the past, you know, when that stereotype comes up it's because everybody looks at Aboriginals like they were in you know 1776
<i>Have you read the book The Imaginary Indian?</i>	No
<i>Have you heard about it?</i>	No

It talks about the idea of the vanishing Indian and how we have created the image of this ah stoic sort of stuck in time Indian Yep, and that's the image there and so that's what we get into so like look at my ah black hawks jersey and that's the idea right

Yeah

Um it's just weird and so my research has really been based off a lot of the texts that have been put out by different aboriginal groups because that's where you have to start right, so if you're looking at the high end people that are saying ok, we're in control we want to put out stuff for education why would you go to the people who are doing that, there's a lot of storytelling involved and you can go to that but I found a lot of that is primary and so we really need to get our stories all that stuff out to the younger kids right so when they get to the high school level they're ready to go to some sophisticated stuff but then they bring that knowledge with them and it's surprising how much don't have just like standard stories but there's a wide range of stuff so you've just got to read everything and see what goes together, so reading first, a little bit of stuff from the board, just turning me on to more names and stuff 'cuz that's how we function in the English department, like if we're looking at particular movements and stuff like that we just have to be, we have to know who's who and who's doing work right so

So this is part of the English department, the Native Studies?

No, that's just how we kind of function because a lot of the people who are involved in some of the literature stuff and the history stuff they're actually in the English department at our school. I'm part of the English department and my chair right now is responsible for the literature courses. One of the concerns that I have is I function in a different way when I teach English and now and I'm asked to be a kind of historian and that's not my interest right, and so my formatting for that is something else that I've had to learn it's pretty cut and dry stuff and I don't think that I'm necessarily that type of person suited for the course so I've struggled with that a little bit but I have fun with the material, you have to anyways

It is like, I don't know how history courses are

I think it is but once again, but having been taught in that way beforehand right, so I've taken all my studies and

<i>designed, like are they very specific for...?</i>	<p>I've been shown a particular way to suit what I do so I am very aware of my style when I'm in an art room, I'm very aware of my style when I'm in an English room, history I've developed my own because of merging all those things together and saying this is how I have to do it because I've got to show my own understanding and deal with the content I'm comfortable with but I don't know sometimes I feel I'm not as effective as I could be in that area because of the history background right, it all depends,</p> <p>who else is going to do it? That's going to be the next question right and one of the concerns I've always expressed at school is why haven't we expanded if we really want to incorporate these things into all of our courses, we need more of our body our staff body involved</p>
<i>Like First Nations content?</i>	<p>Yeah, so we slowly see it because one of the things that has happened actually is the decline of role has helped move to other people so um visual arts for example at our school because we didn't have a full slate for two visual arts teachers I was pushed out of the visual arts to accommodate one of the other teachers to grab the Native studies art based one, so she's picked up that now she's had to learn that she has to come from the other people in the school and say hey, what are you guys doing here and stuff and then now the next one that's on slate there's a concern for gym</p>
<i>What do you mean by slate?</i>	<p>So next on the board</p>
<i>Oh okay, I wasn't sure if I was missing some lingo</i>	<p>No, it's just an expression, so next on the table is the ah, apparently the new native ah physical education course, because that has been identified as one of the concerns because why has that course become, especially for the 9's and 10's why has that course become the number one unsuccessful credits achieved for native students? and so it's been centered and they've done a number of studies to just figure out why they weren't getting the credits achieved at that level</p>
<i>In regular gym classes</i>	<p>And so yeah, those, they're not necessarily mandatory but if kids are signing up for them and then not participating, what are some of the issues there so it</p>

looks like there's body issue image as well as participation right, so not a slough of activities that have been done before so that becomes a problem for a lot of the students coming in. So now apparently there's going to be something like that for us next year so one of our senior physical education people is slated to do that

How many First Nations or Aboriginal teachers do you have at your school?

Ah, that I'm aware of, at my school right now, one

Because there aren't many that work for the board

I have [REDACTED] at our school for language right now but then that language position is something that's shared between all four schools so that when you teach the language you teach two schools during the first semester and you teach the other two during the next semester, um however, one of our other language teachers is [REDACTED] uh and from my understanding he has a little bit of that background and there was some confusion about that but apparently he has been identified as a, not just a Metis man but the idea of a Mohawk man

Okay

Um, don't quote me on that yet

Okay

But he is someone of importance, and he is someone that is doing a good job understanding the culture within the school scenario, he's doing a really good job in the language areas, so younger gentleman, newer teacher

Kids are taking to him?

Oh yeah, very positive, does football, is you know is in the public eye, so very proud of the work that he's doing, ah and then we've had some people from that past that were very important but didn't find that this was their role for them

so ah, now to add onto where I get some more information from, I go to elders, right and I deal exclusively with elder [REDACTED] and ah I've had the pleasure of being in contact with him for a couple of years and every time I see him, he demonstrates a knowledge base that validates what I do in the classroom, so I'm every time I see him I'm going 'I'm doing the right stuff'

<i>Yeah, that's helpful</i>	It is right, and then but that's the next, the next step is the board wanted or has proposed that they would like some more of that influence in the school but the role of the elder is not that right so they acknowledge that they're never going to have someone in residence because that's not the function of the elder
<i>Yep</i>	Right, there for everyone. It's tough because that would be ideal if you had that presence in the school especially if your population is climbing
<i>Yeah, to have somebody there. Do you ever, there's um AQ courses,</i>	Ah yes, so ah... I don't know what you want me to tell you about that. I have my teacher of native studies and I didn't find it overly beneficial it was too, I don't even want to say it was basic, it wasn't beneficial because it dealt with the stuff that I should be accountable for if I was teaching that course, it's stuff that I should have went out and found out about myself and I didn't because it was online I didn't find it ah very ah beneficial. Its something that needed to be done in person and that's I think a lot of people are screaming about that, we need people to literally come in and say 'this is how we need to do it' and then I'm not even sure when we go back to our practice teaching years that we really get that instruction on our regular level anyways, I didn't feel, besides one experience in university that I was prepared for any part of this job, let alone teaching a particular group
<i>How long ago did you do your...</i>	I graduated in 2000
<i>Okay, that's a long time ago</i>	Yeah, um and I was pretty fortunate because I did a pilot project when I was in my third year so I went into the high school and I see that as a problem, I have my student teacher now and I see that as a problem where the third year they go into the elementary school because they have that senior/intermediate position right and they don't get the experience of the high school in the first place and I see that as a problem and I don't think they're in the school long enough too, because they're moving from usually a 7 or 8 class and what happens when they're thrown into a grade 12 university English class?
<i>Yep</i>	It's two different worlds and the subject matter changes completely, so I don't know, so I'm comfortable with my

So if you could go back in time to 1998'ish, what would have been better?

level and so I think some of my successful results with the Aboriginal population at the school is because I'm very familiar with the high school student, the age level is, I'm comfortable working with the age level now it's what do we take out of that right, because it all comes down to literacy and stuff like that too.

We were seeing the starts of those things when I was there, because the year before I graduated was accreditation year at Lakehead for the education area and so they were starting to promote that stuff because they had already acknowledged that that population is in this area and we have to begin to make sure that we can educate them on their own content.

So readiness was there and they were doing promotional stuff and saying that this is what we have to do and a lot of our materials in say like the teachers college at the time there was to cater to understand that a lot of people are actually going away and working on reserves first and then coming back right so we had the awareness of those things but the technique and stuff

like that was just here's how to teach English and go and do that and just try and get exposure, and now on a cultural level it doesn't work right like it's I don't think that was in place very well because it was something that wasn't considered fully by the new curriculum because all that stuff was coming at the time too so they had revamped all that now that's why we have a lot of revisions and we have um Aboriginal peoples, Metis and Inuit government documents coming out and saying this is what we need to provide our Aboriginal people, that stuff wasn't in place.

Because you wouldn't have it, are you going to have a person of another culture having that stuff you know dictated for them in a regular document you know, it wasn't there so now that all this new stuff is, people don't have the training for it and I don't think we've sat down enough to let those things go and it's because we haven't committed to the stuff we have here yet because it's already been done multiple times and it's phased out slowly and that's a question of this and if you don't have people in the seats the successful credit becomes a factor

	too.
<i>So like courses would get weeded out if they're not</i>	Yeah like there the, and I remember my mom talking to me about this about you know 'oh yeah this was a course that you could take and then it just kind of petered out' and it all depended on who wanted to take that course right
<i>So like if something sort of falls by the wayside and ends up not part of the regular course offerings and stuff does it ever get reassessed?</i>	Um I think it has always been like that, I think we've already experienced that multiple courses, we're starting things like philosophy again because people are starting to get interested in it again but the one year where there's ten kids signed up for the course that's the year where it might disappear again, right and I can see that happening with some of the Aboriginal courses and the declining population right now because we're in a lull
<i>Are we?</i>	Yep, yep, um next year is supposed to be the worst, it's the part of the valley that's the deepest right now and it's a big dip in population and it goes back up but we're
<i>For like the entire school population?</i>	Yep so [REDACTED] when I went to [REDACTED] um there were 1600 kids there and when I started at [REDACTED] as a teacher there was probably about fourteen or so, 13/14 and now we're just over a thousand and when you look at it thirty kids during a day is actually one persons job as they travel through the school, but that thirty kids has to go into different classes so it looks like we've got some pretty low numbers, but then that factors in we don't know what we're getting in from outside areas and new school and closing of schools but then I often think that they've miscalculated first when the lull was going to come because they were actually talking about this stuff when I started teaching and I said no way we're going to be fine for years before we have the lull and then I think they've ah hastily closed a lot of the schools and lost some of those things lost some of the benefit, especially for the public board
<i>How many schools did they close in that time period?</i>	Sigh I am not totally sure on the elementary numbers but the um the ah high schools we've closed three
<i>Really</i>	Well and technically four because it's kind of merged into one, so the first one that we lost was I always forget about [REDACTED] er um [REDACTED], so [REDACTED] was the

	farthest one but that was like a strangle hold on that side of town, so the board's given it up and it has become a catholic school board, that's the farthest high school that way where do you think all the kids are going to go? They're going to go to that one, because that's the extent right, and we lost [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but my I actually taught at [REDACTED], great experience for a small school like it was great having six hundred kids in the school
<i>Yep</i>	because the family was much more closely knit and then ah once we lost [REDACTED] and everyone went up the hill to [REDACTED] and now that [REDACTED] is closed it's just become [REDACTED] but you've lost the two real big schools because of the other great high school was ah [REDACTED] and now that's [REDACTED]
<i>Oh, ok, see I don't know any of that history of stuff</i>	Yeah, as far as I'm concerned I was very impressed with that building
<i>Yeah, cool...you're so smart</i>	Sometimes
<i>Ah, you've covered a lot of the stuff that I wanted to add in here, I'm trying to get a well rounded picture of what's going on and</i>	And I think that's what's tough, right, so like it's difficult for me because I'm a grunt right, I'm front line you know and it's tough to speak as a professional that's attached to a board right, do I have the right to speak out against some stuff? You know.
<i>Hey, yeah, well you'll be anonymous, well confidential, I know who you are but I won't tell anyone else</i>	But that's the thing, out of the stuff that the board does, it's pretty good but then I feel a lot of times it's something that, I'm doing some stuff to make other people look good
<i>Yep, because of politics</i>	Yeah
<i>So one of the questions I wanted to ask, um do you have like an education philosophy or a specific famous pedagogue?</i>	Yeah well in terms of pedagogy I'm, I think I fall under Socratic method
<i>Yeah?</i>	Yeah, ah that's how I function within the classroom and so I move a lot, if I could wear a toga I would probably

wear one, but ah, it's the give and take but there's a lot of logic and procedure with the delivery of the lessons right. And I'm a big connection guy, so when I plan my stuff, it's all, it's looking at the big picture but all the little nuances that are in between different things that we can look at so if we look at one it's not we're looking at this and then the big picture, we're looking at this and this and then we're looking at this and then we're looking at this and then lets put it all together, because it's got to be more than the literal right, so

And you're not trying to oversimplify it?

No, and so maybe that's where I would go away from a little bit the Socratic right, because I'm not breaking it down into formula but I'm trying to make it formulaic with connections that's how I see myself in the classroom and that's a tough sell some times because I've got to get them on that same path but that's with me dealing with my grade 12 and grade 11 students at the academic and university levels.

If we're starting to see that trickle down from colleges and universities where they go "hey why are you guys sending us people that cant' read?" we've got to go to that next level so why do you think that it always goes down, from the workforce to the college and university, we're really starting to hear it from the college over the last five years has really tried to get us involved and say we need these guys doing these formats, we're getting feedback from our employers, "stuff isn't happening, these guys aren't coming to us with the skills they need", so once that happens what do you think the secondary people do? Well what's been happening in the last eight years when you really learn how to read in elementary school so it all goes downhill but there needs to be more communication in between the different areas, because I like being a gatekeeper for university where I'm saying 'if you guys are going to do this and not do formatting and not do all the stuff that you need to do with grade twelve English you guys are going to get murdered next year, why waste your money? Don't pay \$5000 to fail your courses.

And the highschool student has one less year because of the loss of OAC and I really like and it's almost like it's getting to comedians now and a lot of people ah authors

and people who are humorous are beginning to say Canada at one point had everyone in the world looking at it for education, why have we changed, especially in Ontario, why have we changed our format? We're starting to look like the United States and we don't want to do that, it's bad you know

and we've actually lost one of my colleagues that I used to work with and actually our former chair moved down to New York and ah she moved there because of New York and New York's New York and I've got to go there right, that's fine but once you get into the system you realize how crazy it is down there in terms of funding, clientele, it's just, it's a nightmare if you're not at a good school and ah even my experiences with [REDACTED] being down in Arizona, you just shake your head, you're in an underappreciated job right and it's him and his fiancé down there working for a no money, they were making as much together or even less than me just by myself here and they're like we shouldn't be doing that, so you're not getting the education and you're not working in a good structure and I'm seeing Ontario getting more and more like that

Yep, going in that direction

Yeah, we have good things in place, because our curriculum allows us to be pretty expansive with what we do in the classroom but you still have to have proper technique and I don't know if we get that and when we get into ah the curriculum and what the kids are leaving high school with, the universities and colleges and workplaces are telling us that we're not doing a good job

That's sad

So what do you think it's going to be for an Aboriginal student that struggles with language, they're caught between two languages it's tough right, but one of the functions that I think we can really get to is the support system right, so if we have a lot of people coming from out of town, they might not be living with people that are living with them, they could be and that's a good thing, usually a good thing but we become the next support system so we have to promote that we have support but I'm not sure

Do you have support?

I think so, but there could be more, and there definitely would be if their attendance was better too

<i>Would there be ore funding if there was better attendance?</i>	Ah, there always is right because we're still in that per student , yeah,
<i>Well so that's the issue with the lull</i>	Yeah, 'cuz when funding goes away and classroom opportunities go away, people are worried about that stuff yeah, I don't know is there anything else that you would like me to try and push out?
<i>Umm, ... you actually like covered I think pretty much everything, I think the only thing that I had on here that ah, as a possible question was about racism in the school, do you see it? Sort of thing</i>	Ah, yeah, um but like as they've shown on TV yesterday, because [my partner] was involved in the Pink Day and stuff like that, it's just something that we're trying to get away from, I think it's slowly becoming more of an issue that's being dealt with before it gets out of hand, like we've had in the past few years a situation where people were participating in fights, like large scale fights um and uh, there was a racial separation in those fights so there was a clear race issue, and people were dealing with it in that way and I'm not sure that's where we want to go. With any of that right, you never want to turn it into a racial issue, and I don't think it should get there, but that's what happens when you deal with uneducated people on both sides, 'why aren't you in school? Well we're fighting each other, well you're both dumb' what are you doing, ya know, so it's ah I think they ah, I and you mentioned some of the backlash that maybe some of the non-Aboriginal kids have seen with the attention to Aboriginal courses and stuff like that but then that's awareness too, they have to realize that this is trying to really help a people who have not been catered to for a long time right,
<i>Do you think the non-Aboriginal kids understand that history?</i>	Um
<i>Like is there stuff in the other curriculum?</i>	They're trying to get to that right, it's very important to discuss some of that stuff and I think that's where we have to make sure that that standard teacher like in the regular Canadian history course for example has to be aware of that stuff and that's how they have to participate when they teach that curriculum, they have to include, they have to include the Aboriginal person, because that all goes back to where do I see this person, if I read my textbook and don't see an Aboriginal person

in it, I'm not doing my job because that group is there now, there's two, over two million Aboriginal people in Canada so, they have to be represented by what we teach because if they are not seen, they don't exist in a persons mind and so if you want to engage those kids, you have to show them in the literature you have to show them in the textbook because they have to be able to see themselves in it

But even for like non Aboriginal kids too

Ah well with non-Aboriginal kids, it's just important to make them aware, so even if you don't see yourself in there, be aware that other people are around here right, they should have just that idea of French and English in the standard class there's another group involved, right and if we want to get to discussing those tougher issues of race you have to be able to talk about that stuff because the kids have to be educated about it before they can actually accurately discuss it

Do you think teachers in general are prepared to do that?

Ah, it's coming but I still like I still get a lot of that issue just because I'm involved in that stuff I get approached on a regular basis right and oh how do we do this? I'm not really sure, this is what I do, you know it can get to that, so ah

Are there resources you can access outside the school that helps with that sort of stuff?

We do, we have our Aboriginal resource teacher and we also have access through the community through them, so like if you needed to really get that information you can get it, like we do have a pretty good link there and we had some people who were working tough at it, but they themselves were new at one point and so when we were really starting this we didn't have the expertise there that we wanted to have at that point when we started but now those people are getting more and more comfortable with their job and we're seeing growth but as I said I still want to see it expanded into more of the staff population "cuz I think a lot of people don't take on those things and just go about their daily business and don't consider that into their classroom

*Cool,
thanks Mr.
Marshall,
that's
awesome*

So hopefully that helps you

