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THE LINGERING DEATH OF ASSIMILATION: PROBLEMS
AND ISSUES IN INDIAN EDUCATION

by

Ellen McCoy Red Shirt

A Dissertation submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

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Approved by



Dissertation Advisor

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This study presents an overview of the history of American Indian education with particular emphasis on the role of the federal government. The first chapter is designed to introduce the reader to the ideology and intent of the earliest attempts to provide education to American Indians. Traditional research sources for the first chapter included historical accounts and governmental reports.

The second chapter contains documentation of personal experiences of survivors of this education system. The research method utilized was the interview process. This method was selected because it allowed for an approximation of the storytelling process, a traditional form for the oral transfer of information from one generation to the next. Four American Indian adults who have successfully completed a college education, three at the doctoral level, were the persons interviewed.

The third chapter examines issues that were identified by the interviewees during the course of the interviews. Issues of language, cultural differences and school achievement, and teacher training are discussed.

Special attention is focused on the needs of Indian children with fetal alcohol syndrome.

The final chapter focuses on the philosophy of self-determination relating to American Indian affairs in this country. Developments in American Indian education in the past quarter century are reviewed and implications and recommendations for the future of American Indian education are presented.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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CHAPTER I

AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF INDIAN EDUCATION

Introduction

Many years ago a young girl attended a Catholic elementary school in North Carolina. When she was in the fifth grade, the class studied American history. They came to a section of the textbook that discussed the struggle for the land that is now the state of Florida. Paragraphs accompanying the famous picture of Osceola being "captured" under a flag of truce referred to fights with the "bloodthirsty savages." The girl raised her hand to speak, as she had been taught, and when called on simply stated, "They shouldn't call them bloodthirsty savages. Those are some of my ancestors they are talking about . . . we aren't savages." As soon as she stopped talking the other students started laughing and began to make the Hollywood version of war cries. The teacher got angry and sent the girl out of the room to stand in the hall because she was considered guilty of disrupting the class. The other students continued to make fun, with the same results, for several days until that chapter of the text was covered. The girl wondered, as she stood in the

hall, why she was being punished and why the other students behaved as they did.

My research is focused in part on how this could have happened. How could we have textbooks with such erroneous, stereotypical information and teachers, in this case a nun, reinforcing this completely negative image of Native Americans. More particularly, I am interested in the integral role that education has played in the experience of the Native American in this country.

I begin with an excerpt from the statement of the Coalition of Indian Controlled Schools which was used as the Preface to the Report on Indian Education in the Final Report to the American Indian Policy Review Commission in 1976. This quotation serves to help establish the perspective from which I will endeavor to present an overview of the history of Indian education in this country.

Many hundreds of years ago, at the beginning of history, our wise men foretold of the coming of other peoples to this land. They foresaw a time of rapid change and confusion in which our youth would be growing into adulthood unprepared to cope with these new conditions. We, the Native American people, are now at that very point in our history and we must take account of our responsibility to our young. Our ancient wise men never imagined that we would not or could not respond to that responsibility. Responsibility for the welfare of the young is so much a part of Native American life that it is assumed.

Throughout most of history, Native Americans were the most free and the most responsible of peoples.

We were free to make decisions and to deal with our own destiny. It is a truism that freedom and responsibility are opposite sides of the same coin. Thus, through freedom we became responsible and through responsibility we became more free.

Unfortunately, for most of the last hundred years, we have not been free, in the ultimate sense of the word, and thus we have not been able to exercise our responsibility. However, the situation of our young demands that we attend to their educational needs. We know that the development of our children must be not only the responsibility of the school, but also of parents, relatives, and the whole community. It must be a joint responsibility, as it is among all other Americans. Such a setting can only be provided by Indian controlled schools.

We Indian adults do not need to read the mountains of scholarly studies on Indian education to know how badly the schools of the past have failed us. We know it only too well from personal experience . . . All too often schools were used as a weapon against Indians in order to destroy what we hold most dear . . . our culture and our civilization. Instead of building on what we were as a people so that we became educated in Western ways, as it is normally done, we were almost demoralized by this attack on our very being as individuals.

It is a miracle that we have survived as well as we have and it is no wonder that we have not been able to use the school in the past as a vehicle for our improvement. We feel we must now step forward to act in our own behalf and in our children's behalf. We cannot act in our behalf in the educational realm unless we have Indian controlled schools. (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976)

This dissertation is an attempt to present the reader with an overview of the history of Indian education, to address some of the major issues involved, to present conversations with "survivors" of the system

and to draw conclusions or make recommendations for the future of Indian education.

At the outset it seems both advisable and appropriate to clarify terminology. Since the Europeans arrived in the "New World" thinking they had discovered a new route to India, they mistakenly identified the inhabitants of this new land as "Indians." Even though the mistake in geography eventually became apparent, the error in identification was not corrected. In spite of the fact that hundreds of separate nations existed prior to the coming of the Europeans, in most official language, i.e., correspondence, treaties, laws, and eventually the bureaucracy established to carry out legal relationships with and obligations to the original inhabitants, the term "Indian" or "American Indian" is used. In recent years "Native American" has appeared and is now used interchangeably with "Indian" and "American Indian" in nonlegal literature.

Education is the process by which ideas, language, values, customs and skills are passed from one generation to another. It is the way that information is preserved and transmitted within a culture. The pattern or means by which information may be passed along may vary from culture to culture.

Prior to the arrival of the Europeans on this continent, many cultures and societies had coexisted.

Languages and customs, including religious beliefs, largely defined groups. The hundreds of nations, aka tribes, indigenous to this continent had all developed systems for the transmittal of information necessary for survival from generation to the next. The culture of these groups was transmitted through a system of education. Knowledge acquired from these traditional forms of education helped to sustain some of the earliest European settlers in what was for them a strange new land. Information on which plants were edible and which ones had medicinal properties was available and freely shared with the new arrivals because it had been "learned" and that knowledge had passed down to subsequent generations. Construction of garments from materials, both plant and animal, native to this land was a critical survival skill which was taught to youngsters by both participatory methods as well as by observation.

Education may be thought of as a means of solidifying and perpetuating a culture through the reinforcement and transmittal of knowledge, skills, values and belief systems from generation to generation. The members of the culture are themselves serving as teachers and role models/mentors for the young, thereby assuming the responsibility for the preservation and perpetuation of the culture. Children in native cultures were raised to respect and cherish their elders as the source of

wisdom and guidance. Intragenerational bonds were strong, with each generation having the distinct responsibilities to learn from their elders in order to be able to teach their young.

European Contact

With the establishment of the European settlements on this continent, the inevitable clash of cultures led to a series of wars designed to eradicate the native populations. France, Spain and England all formalized policies with respect to the native populations in their settlement areas. Conversion to Christianity and "civilization" of indigenous populations, known as Indians, were the ultimate goals of most of these policies. The Spanish and French settlements reflected influence by the Catholic Church. In response to Spanish theoreticians, who stated that Indian land was not subject to "Title by Discovery" since that concept applied only to land which was not already owned, Pope Paul III clarified the position of the Church regarding the rights of Indians. He stated that:

Indians and all other people who may later be discovered by Christians, are by no means to be deprived of their liberty or the possession of their property, even though they be outside the faith of Jesus Christ; and that they may and should, freely and legitimately, enjoy their liberty and the possession of their property; nor should they be in anyway enslaved; should the

contrary happen, it shall be null and of no effect.
(Tyler, 1973, pp. 19-21)

The principle of respect for possessions appears to be clearly outlined in this document. The American Indian did not view land as "property" or as a "possession." Land was held in trust by the nation or tribe for the use and well-being of all. The notion of individual ownership of land was a concept that was culturally different and without meaning for the Indian. This basic difference, as well as individuals who simply did not live up to the implementation of the Catholic doctrine, contributed to abuses of and/or total disregard for this principle.

The first school for Indians, established and operated by the Jesuits in Havana, Cuba in 1568, was designed to educate Indians from Florida (Oppelt, 1990). The Jesuits learned from a system of mission schools they developed in Paraguay and Uruguay, beginning in 1609, called "Reductions." This term can be considered to be prophetic since it reflects their role in "diminishing indigenous cultural integrity to the point of nonexistence" (Jaimes 1992, pp. 371-372).

The experience of the Jesuits was passed along to the Franciscans and Dominicans who attempted to establish the same kind of systems in North America. The Spanish presence was most widespread in the Southwest with the development of mission communities designed to teach

religion and agriculture. Emphasis was placed more on life skills--learning to become farmers and craftsmen--than strict academic subjects, while Indian language and customs were retained as an integral part of the communities (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, pp. 24-25).

The French settlements in the "New World" reflected their economic goals of hunting and trading. The Jesuits appear to have been the French missionaries of choice. They stressed religious education, removing students from their families by force at times for boarding schools, taught basic academics, while suppressing the native religion and languages (Jaimes, 1992, p. 371).

The French, through the conversion of many of the Indians to Christianity and validation of their hunting and trading economy or lifestyle, were able to gain many Indian allies in their war with British (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976).

The English settlements, since they eventually came to dominate and form the original thirteen states of this country, hold the key to many of the policies that have influenced the course of Indian education to the present day. As with the Spanish and French, missionaries took the lead in establishing the earliest attempts in the education of Indians. The primary missionary groups in the thirteen original colonies were Presbyterians,

Moravians, Lutherans, Quakers, Puritans and Anglicans. In the directives for chartering of the Virginia colony, King James I spoke to the establishment of "some churches and schools for ye education of ye children of these Barbarians in Virginia" (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, p. 26).

In retrospect, the use of religion to introduce a completely new way of life may have been to some degree understandable to Indians in those days. Native cultures were totally integrated with the religious beliefs of the respective group, nation or tribe. Indians lived in harmony with the earth around them respecting, learning from, and utilizing plant and animal life in ways that reflected the religious beliefs of the group. Natural cycles, whether planting and harvesting for agricultural groups or traveling to hunt or fish for others, were linked to ceremonial observances. Healing the sick is another example of an element of life that was closely tied to the religious beliefs of the group. So the early attempts at conversion of Indians, as bizarre as they were, may have had some obscure hint of logic or may have been endured by some as they struggled to understand the nature of the newcomers, since there seemed to be no end to the steady stream of settlers.

The Puritan Era: Massachusetts Bay

Various accounts of the education efforts in the English colonies reflect a cooperative venture between church and state, public and private. Indian youth were educated in groups or individually, in schools or private homes, often subsidized by the wealthy since it was considered fashionable to aid in the cause of converting the "savages." Formal attempts to open schools in the Virginia colony, one at Henrico and the other near Charles City, failed when the indigenous nations of the area destroyed both towns where the schools were to be located.

In the New England area, the Puritan missionaries used a slightly different approach. John Eliot, with the help of Cockenoe, a Pequot Indian who served as interpreter, was able to learn the Algonquin dialect. He eventually became able to preach in Algonquin throughout the various Indian settlements in the region. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England was organized in 1647 to support his efforts (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976). Salisbury tells us that Eliot seemed to target the native people who had already become dependent on the colonists, while avoiding the stronger, independent groups (Oppelt, 1990).

Eliot was very successful in obtaining followers. As Indians "converted" they began to desire English-style clothes, tools, schools, etc. He organized the first

"Indian Praying Town," a community of converts, at Natick in 1651. The Court of the Colony of New England authorized the purchase of land for the purpose of establishing these "praying towns" and eventually fourteen were developed. This marked the beginning of the "reserved" land system which would resurface as an integral part of later Indian policy in this country (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976).

As the fourteen praying towns progressed, grammar and preparatory schools were established. Funds were solicited and obtained from England to support the Indian school at Harvard and create an Indian library. Harvard was established in 1636 as the first institution of higher education in the colonies. The education of Indians was an intent of the founders since the charter of 1650 contains the clause "for the education of English and Indian youth of this country in knowledge" (Oppelt, 1990, p. 2). The second building to be built at Harvard was called the Indian College. Although built to accommodate thirty students, only a few ever attended. John Sassamon, a Massachusetts Indian, was one of the first Indian students at Harvard. He helped Eliot translate the Bible into the Massachusetts language. The Bible was then printed at the Indian College and became, along with some religious tracts, the "first publications in an American Indian language" (Oppelt, 1990).

English colonists continued to invade the area of the New England tribes which ultimately led to what became known as King Phillip's War. John Sassamon, the Harvard educated Massachusetts Indian, was thought to have revealed war plans to the English and was killed by the Indian chief King Phillip.

Another early institution of higher education whose stated purpose included the education and conversion of Indians was William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia. Financial support of this effort was obtained through a provision in the will of the Englishman Robert Boyle, who became known as the father of modern chemistry. He invested money and specified that the proceeds be used for Indian education. Beneficiaries of this fund included William and Mary College and Harvard College (Oppelt, 1990, p. 3).

Eleazar Wheelock, a Congregational minister, believed that the way to educate Indian youth was to remove them from the influence of family and tribe and expose them to "civilized life" in a boarding school, in his own home, or in the homes of other white families. Wheelock operated Moors Charity School and eventually became the first president of the first college established primarily for the education of American Indians--Dartmouth College. The Continental Congress contributed \$500.00 to Dartmouth to assist with the

education of Indians, thus signaling the early commitment to conversion and civilization (Oppelt, 1990, p. 5).

According to Tyler, the English decided that the best way to get along with the Indians was to be distanced from them. The Proclamation of 1763 created a boundary line separating Indian from non-Indian land. The area west of the established colonies was thus designated "Indian Country" and was considered to be off limits to settlers (Tyler, 1973, pp. 29-30).

Origins of the United States Responsibility for Indian Education

The United States Constitution specifies that the President has the authority to negotiate treaties with the Indian tribes. Frequently, education or instruction in mechanics or husbandry was offered to induce the tribes to accept and learn white ways. "By introducing the 'arts of civilized life,' the United States Government attempted to ameliorate the friction between cultures and to promote peace and harmony." The federal government officially began educational activities based on treaty agreements with the 1794 Treaty with the Oneidas, Tuscarora, and Stockbridge Indians. Between that time and 1868, one hundred and twenty treaties containing educational provisions were signed (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, pp. 29-30).

George Washington favored a boundary between Indians and non-Indians in part to "protect" Indians from the negative influences of European civilization such as gambling and alcohol. Conversion to Christianity and acquisition of manual labor skills were thought to be the means of avoidance of morally destructive influences of the Europeans. This apparently was the rationale behind federal support, in the nineteenth century, for manual labor as part of the curriculum in missionary schools (Spring, 1994, p. 133).

Treaties recognized the political independence of the tribes while clarifying the practices and responsibilities of the federal government in dealing with the tribes. In order to establish guidelines for the day to day interaction between Indians and the citizens of the United States, the government found it necessary to enact several temporary laws which dealt specifically with settlers and traders trespassing on "Indian land." As a result of these laws, the Trade and Intercourse Act of 1802 was passed by which the United States not only put into domestic law the intent of "civilizing" Indians but also "assumed responsibility for providing social and educational services to Indian tribes" (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, p. 30).

As treaties were negotiated to establish a governmental relationship, education for civilization became the accepted role for the federal government in Indian education. Since the intent of education was to prepare Indians for acceptance of the American way of life, it eventually became necessary to provide some organized means of doing this. The result was a proposal to establish schools for Indian tribes adjoining frontier settlements. Passage of various legislation to achieve this end led to the creation by the US Congress of the Civilization Fund in 1819, which committed the federal government to provide financial support to religious organizations willing to maintain and operate schools for Indians.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in 1818, reporting on the proposed bill before it became law stated:

Your committee further reports that they consider supplying the Indian tribes with such articles of merchandise as are necessary to meet their pressing wants is not only an act of humanity, but of sound national policy; and that every measure that would tend to civilize these savage tribes ought to be pursued by the United States. Your committee are induced to believe that nothing which it is in the power of Government to do would have a more direct tendency to produce this desirable object than the establishment of schools at convenient and safe places amongst those tribes friendly to us In the present of our country, one of two things seems to be necessary: either that these sons of the forest should be moralized or exterminated. Humanity would rejoice at the former, but shrink

with horror from the latter. Put into the hands of their children the primer and the hoe, and they will naturally, in time, take hold of the plough; and, as their minds become enlightened and expand, the Bible will be their book, and they will grow up in habits of morality and industry, leave the chase to those whose minds are less cultivated, and become useful members of society. (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, p. 32)

The Civilization Fund had the effect of extending the federal government's responsibility for Indian education, regardless of treaty affiliation, to all tribes. At this time negotiations with and responsibility for matters concerning the tribes fell under the auspices of the Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina. It is significant to note that the federal government persisted in its perpetration of relations with Indians as those of hostiles, needing to be overseen by the military atmosphere of the War Department.

Sheehan (1973) presents a picture of Thomas L. McKenney, superintendent of Indian trade from 1816-1822 and the person who reported to the Secretary of War on Indian Affairs, as representing the philanthropic sentiment typical of the Jeffersonian era. He quotes McKenney as saying:

Why should we enjoy all that has reference to the perfection of our nature, and our brothers . . . be left to struggle on amidst clouds and darkness, and suffering, with a dread uncertainty resting on all the future? (p. 124)

This is the same Thomas L. McKenney that Joel Spring reminds us was both the major force behind the Civilization Fund and later was instrumental in the removal of the southeastern tribes to Indian Territory (Spring, 1994).

The United States: Mission School Era

Passage of the Civilization Fund Act resulted in Reverend Jedidiah Morse, in 1820, being employed by Secretary of War John C. Calhoun to make what was to become the first federal investigation of conditions among the tribes as well as educational progress. His recommendation was that the fund should be increased to allow for expansion of efforts by the religious societies (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, pp.32-33).

The report submitted by Morse covered schools or education programs for 14 tribes in 11 states funded, at least in part, by 15 different missionary or religious organizations (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, p. 309).

Morse, at the time that he was selected for this venture, was an educator at Yale College, a geographer and minister. Since his charge was to obtain information on all the known Indian tribes in the United States, he traveled extensively collecting material from Indian

agents, missionaries and government officials. It is interesting to note that the Cherokees were able to provide information for Morse's report written by one of their own people. Charles R. Hicks, one of the Cherokee leaders, supplied a written account of socioeconomic changes as well as the education being provided by the missions. Jeddiah Morse's Report to the Secretary of War on Cherokee Indian Affairs in 1822, edited by E. Raymond Evans, appears in the Journal of Cherokee Studies and provides insight into degree of importance that education had achieved with the tribe.

One of the earliest missions among the Cherokee appears to have been started by the United Brethren (Moravian Brethren) at Spring Place in 1801. Both males and females were taught reading, writing and arithmetic, with some English grammar and geography. Spinning, sewing and knitting was also part of the instructional program for the girls, while boys were involved in agricultural work.

Several schools established by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions among the Cherokees were mentioned in this report. Brainerd, established in 1817, taught both males and females using the Lancastrian plan. This, according to Viola (Indian-White Relations p.47), was a system developed by a Quaker schoolmaster which used students as teachers, peer tutoring, to provide

a cheap way of educating the poor in England. This school is described as including a mission-house, dining hall, kitchen, several smaller buildings, a grist mill and "about 50 acres of which were under productive cultivation." Talloney was mentioned as being built in 1819 and Creek Path is mentioned as being in the process of being started. Eliot, a school in the Choctaw nation, was begun in 1818. The school in Cornwall, Connecticut which opened in 1817 was reported to be serving students from five or six different tribes (Journal of Cherokee Studies, Fall 1981).

The European concept of education and schools seems to revolve around the idea of being able to read and write a language. In the case of the schools which were established for Indians in this country, the expectation was that the students would be considered to be illiterate until they learned to read and write English. The notion of literacy is one which has any number of definitions which seem to change with the variations in the complexity of society. David Harman has proposed the general definition of literacy which follows:

Literacy as it is commonly understood is basically an extension of spoken language. It is the process by which a spoken language is reduced to a system of symbols that convey to people who speak the same language a constant rendition of a spoken letter, word or phrase. (Journal of Cherokee Studies, Fall 1984, p. 58)

Carmeleta L. Monteith gives an account of the struggle that Sequoyah, an illiterate Cherokee, experienced to develop his syllabary which is a system of written symbols representing the sounds in the Cherokee language. Beginning in 1809, the development of the syllabary took about twelve years to complete. When it was finally presented in 1821, acceptance by the people was complicated by Sequoyah's history of political involvement and his having escaped charges of witchcraft because of his strange markings.

A person who spoke Cherokee needed only to memorize the symbols that matched the sounds in order to be able to read and write. James Mooney records that

it was only necessary to learn the characters to be able to read at once . . . the whole Nation became an academy for the study of the system. . . . Once learning of the characters was accomplished, the education of the pupil is completed; he can read and he is perfect in his orthography without making it the subject of a distinct study. The boy learns in a few weeks that which occupies two years of the time of ours. (Journal of Cherokee Studies, Fall 1984, p. 62)

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions apparently had made the assumption that the non-Christian nations would welcome the opportunity to learn English. Once the syllabary was understood and accepted by the Cherokee, the missionaries found it to be

more productive to offer classes in the syllabary in the schools as a way of providing communication with the Cherokee. The American Board funded the establishment of a printing press for the Cherokees in 1826. The first American Indian newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix, printed partly in English, partly in Cherokee, was produced in 1928 (Journal of Cherokee Studies, Fall 1984, pp. 60-63).

Cyrus Kingsbury, whose ideas for mission schools convinced McKenney to propose the Civilization Fund, established a school among the Choctaws and helped support the development of a written language. Eventually a Choctaw dictionary and speller were written in Choctaw and a bilingual newspaper was also produced in Choctaw (Spring, p. 135).

Removal to Indian Territory

Dissatisfaction with the results of the attempt to civilize the Indian tribes through education eventually led to the support by McKenney of the movement to separate the tribes into a territory of their own. The Removal Act of 1830 was supposed to provide tribes in any of the states or territories with an exchange of land for their move west of the Mississippi River. This land was guaranteed to be theirs forever, to be known as Indian Territory. Allegedly this would allow the tribes to enjoy

the benefits of civilization in their own nations without the intrusion of white settlers.

The government recognized early that if education for civilization and protection was to be the rationale for removal, one of the keys to the success for this venture would be to gain the support of the missionary societies that had made substantial investments in the lands to be lost. Promises of reimbursement for losses incurred due to removal as well as assurance that the educational annuities provided in the removal treaties would be directed to the religious societies apparently were enough to gain their cooperation (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, pp. 35-36).

The tribes of the southeast were the ones immediately affected by this law. In spite of the purported reason for removal, the tribes were forced to leave their homes and had to endure indescribable suffering, hardship and generally inhumane treatment.

The question of the legal and political status of the tribes was addressed by the U.S. Supreme Court during the removal period. The case of Cherokee vs. Georgia involved the issue of state laws being imposed on the Cherokee Nation. Chief Justice John Marshall stated that Indian tribes were

"domestic dependent nations" whose relationship to the United States Government "resembles that of a

ward to its guardian." Although it asserted the rights of the Cherokees to be an independent, self-governing nation, entitled by treaty stipulations to the protection of the United States, the decision left the Cherokees defenseless against the encroachment of Georgia. (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, p.38)

The major tribes of the southeast involved in removal were the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks and Seminoles. These tribes later became known as the Five Civilized Tribes because they established governments and educational systems after removal which the federal government equated with "civilization." They are to be credited with maintaining their tribal existence by incorporation of elements of the lifestyle of white settlers into tribal customs and traditions. The Cherokee and Choctaw Nations within Indian Territory both established extensive educational systems (from elementary through higher education) and produced bilingual newspapers.

The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1838 presented the Office of Indian Affairs with a plan, designed to educate western tribes, which called for creation of boarding schools. Inherent in this plan was the idea that civilization would be more readily achieved by removal of students from families (Journal of Cherokee Studies, Fall 1985, p. 193).

Suggestions for a manual labor plan of educating Indians were surfacing at about the same time. Commissioner Harley Crawford favored establishment of large central boarding schools with an emphasis on manual labor. Conditional grants were made to schools contingent on the "manual labor courses in agriculture, homemaking and the mechanic arts." Manual labor was emphasized while academics moved to second place. Crawford felt that the students would gain more from manual labor than classroom instruction and it saved money because it decreased the operational costs of schools. Farms were part of the schools. Boys learned agricultural techniques and provided labor for the farms, while girls were taught to cook, sew, weave and knit (Journal of Cherokee Studies, Fall 1985, pp. 193-194).

The period of organization and implementation of the manual labor schools saw children of the Five Civilized attending their own schools. Beginning in 1938 and continuing until the outbreak of the Civil War, the Five Civilized Tribes built a system of schools. The majority of their teachers eventually became locally trained teachers from among their own people. Monies for the schools were provided from the educational annuities and tribal finances. The Five Civilized Tribes established and operated a complete educational system prior to the Civil War.

The Office of Indian Affairs was transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1849. The missionary societies continued to have primary responsibility for the education of Indian children, except in the school systems of the Five Civilized Tribes.

Westward Expansion: The Boarding School Era

The next two decades were filled with the rapid expansion of settlement in the western territory and the government expanded its efforts to remove and resettle Indians as a result of the western confrontations. The government policy became one of containment on reservations where the tribe could be controlled until they became civilized. The manual labor schools were an essential element of this policy and two types emerged--boarding and community day schools.

After the end of the Civil War, the federal government was able to focus its efforts on moving all remaining western Indians to reservations. Ulysses S. Grant was President and his Peace Policy included the appointment of a Board of Indian Commissioners "to cooperate as an inspecting and advisory body . . . in matters concerning Indians under federal supervision" (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, p. 40). Deloria reports that nominations were solicited from

the churches and lay churchmen were appointed who felt that the agencies should be awarded to the various Christian denominations (Lyons, Mohawk, Deloria, Hauptman, Berman, Grinde, Berkey, & Venables, 1992, p. 292).

Congress authorized an Indian Peace Commission in 1867 to deal with the warring tribes of the Great Plains. The Peace Commission emphasized the role of education in civilizing Indians. The Peace Commission report of 1868 indicated that differences in language contributed to problems between Indians and whites. The report went on to suggest that all Indian children should be educated only in the English language. This recommendation would ultimately lead to the decision to allow only the use of the English language in Indian schools (Spring, 1994, p. 143).

The end of the Civil War marked a period of change for the Five Civilized Tribes. Ownership of slaves, both Indian and black, had long been a part of the tribal societies. Both the Choctaw and the Cherokee Nations established schools for the children of freed slaves. In order to attend the schools operated by the tribal governments, one had to be a citizen of the tribe operating the school. The Choctaw and Cherokee adopted their former slaves and set up the separate schools. The tribal schools came under attack from the Dawes Commission. In its report in 1894, the Commission

expressed concern that thousands of white children in Indian Territory had no access to education. It also found that the schools provided for children of former slaves to be inferior. These two issues were added as justification to the process already under way to eliminate the tribal governments.

The Dawes Act of 1887 (The General Allotment Act) was ostensibly conceived to be an instrument of civilization. Individual ownership of property was valued by the European culture and the assumption was made that this could become an effective means of civilizing Indians. The Dawes Commission was established in 1893 to deal with the nations in Indian Territory. The allotment program was designed to divide and distribute tribal land to individuals in an attempt to transfer values of white civilization to Indians. This would happen, it was assumed, when each individual was made responsible for their own welfare.

The federal government began taking over the tribal educational systems in 1899. By 1906 the tribal governments were dissolved and Oklahoma joined the United States as a new state in 1907 (Spring, 1994, pp. 140-142).

Richard Pratt, founder of Carlisle Indian School in 1879, the first off-reservation boarding school, believed that the way to instill the work ethic in Indian children was to immerse "Indians in our civilization and when we

get them under [hold] them there until they are thoroughly soaked" (Spring, 1994, p. 144). The curriculum at Carlisle was a combination of manual labor and academic courses. Each student learned a trade although opportunities to practice these trades were limited. The "outing system" was introduced which required students to live and work in white homes during the summer.

Off-reservation boarding schools, following the pattern set by Carlisle, became the mainstay of federal Indian education. Features of these schools included removal from their homes of young Indians, manual labor and academic curriculum, military discipline, agricultural training and industrial arts for boys and homemaking for girls. Labor schools enrolled very young children taken involuntarily from their parents. Speaking their tribal language resulted in cruel punishment. Students hated the schools. The off-reservation boarding schools became concentration camps for "civilization." Parents who could bear the expense later sent their children to public or private schools.

By 1900 there were 25 off-reservation boarding schools. They figured prominently in the government's Indian education program until 1930. Carlisle Indian School closed in 1918.

Reservation-Based Schools: Relocation Era

Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan in 1889 developed a plan for compulsory attendance and standardization of the course of study, textbooks and instruction in Indian schools. Congress eventually passed laws which permitted rations and annuities to be withheld from families that did not send their children to school. Commissioner Jones, in 1901, began to criticize off-reservation boarding schools as too expensive and responsible for creating more dependence on the federal government. He advocated switching to an emphasis on a combination of day schools and on-reservation boarding schools. Commissioner Robert Valentine, in 1910 was responsible for adoption of public school curriculum in government schools and development of contracts with local school systems to encourage attendance of Indian students in public schools. President Calvin Coolidge signed the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924 thus making, at least theoretically, Indians eligible for the same services as other citizens and having the same rights and responsibilities (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1976, pp. 44-47).

Secretary of Interior Hubert Work, in 1926, requested the Institute for Government Research at Johns Hopkins University to conduct a study of "the Indian situation." The report was published in 1928 and was

officially "The Problem of Indian Administration" but is generally referred to as the Meriam Report. The report was critical of the policies of forced removal of very young children from their families and communities, requirements that involved very young students in heavy labor, deplorable health conditions, limited academic work and inadequately trained staff (Meriam, 1928).

This report changed the focus of federal Indian education to community day schools, while pointing out the need for provisions for higher and postsecondary education for Indian students. It also recommended helping Indian youth graduating from Bureau schools find employment away from the reservation. The Johnson O'Malley Act of 1934 allowed for contractual arrangements for "education, medical attention, agricultural assistance and social welfare of Indians by qualified State or Territorial agencies" (Tyler, 1973, p. 123).

World War II found Indian men and women enlisting in the Armed Services as well as seeking employment opportunities in war-related industries. After the end of the war, veterans returned to the reservations with acquired job skills to find limited opportunities for employment. The Bureau began opening Field Relocation Offices in the early fifties to assist those who wanted to locate permanent employment away from the reservations.

The Relocation Program was seen by many as closely identified with the government's efforts at termination of the federal government's trust relationship with the tribes during the 1940s and 1950s. The program was renamed the Employment Assistance Program and in the 1970s was changed to focus on development of job skills on the reservations.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis Bruce, in 1972, estimated that the "urban Indian movement of the last two decades has resulted in over 350,000 Indians living off the reservation today" (Smith & Kunsnicka, 1976, p. 245). This was the year of the passage of the Indian Education Act. Local school districts were provided supplemental funding to meet the educational needs of Indian students. In addition, the legislation created a federal Office of Indian Education.

CHAPTER II
STORIES OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCES
OF INDIAN EDUCATION

It is my understanding and experience that stories have been a way in which information has been passed from generation to generation among the different Indian nations. Oral histories often take the form of stories, which can be an effective way of holding the attention of the young. In this way it can be said that storytelling has been an important part of the traditional Indian approach to education . . . a means of transmitting important information from one generation to the next.

The American Indian has been sketched, painted and photographed in order to preserve a physical image. The written word has preserved countless images, both positive and negative, more often than not stereotypical. In an effort to paint a picture of the reality that American Indians have endured in the name of education, I have chosen to use a research method which allows individuals to give voice to their own experiences. While the official terminology for this method is the interview process, I prefer to think of this approach as conversations in which experiences and views are shared.

Seeing this as conversations instead of interviews seems to be consistent with the traditional American Indian oral approach to education called storytelling.

While the chronological history of Indian education can be obtained from a combination of sources (books, articles, government documents, etc.), an understanding of the impact of this system can only be gained through the stories of personal experience. These stories constitute a powerful statement which hold the key to any research on Indian education.

Since the intent of this research has been to focus on the role of the federal government in the education of Indian students, the interviews were limited to individuals from reservations where the federal trust relationship exists. The four persons who agreed to be interviewed are all in their middle years, have children in various stages of the educational process and have completed postsecondary programs. These people were chosen because they either attended or had the option of attending federal schools, have successfully completed educational systems and have the maturity to reflect on their experiences.

In approaching the interview process, I have attempted to retain sensitivity to cultural differences having to do with the whole meaning of asking questions within Indian culture. This may be best described by

sharing a reference to this sensitivity from the interview with Jim.

For example we practice what we call noninterference. I guess that's really a part of me. You know, my wife being a white person . . . maybe I'll be talking with you about something. We'll be talking and I'll go home and say to my wife, Ellen said this or Ellen said that, and she'll say well did you ask her this and that and I'll say, "No, if she had wanted me to know she would have said so."

Each person was told in advance about the purpose of the interview and was asked if they would mind sharing with me their experiences with the education system and any issues or concerns that they might have. In each case the conversation or "interview" which followed reflected a depth of emotion that is difficult to relay in the printed word.

Interview with John

The first interview was held with a person whom I had had an opportunity to meet during his brief tenure with a North Carolina state agency. The thing that had impressed me each time that I had seen him, at a number of cultural and educational activities, was that he seemed to be genuinely concerned about and interested in the welfare of Indian youth. This impression led me to believe that he might be willing to share his experiences in the area

of education as a way of helping others in their struggle to obtain an education.

I contacted him at his office in Washington, DC and he suggested that we meet for lunch during his next trip to Raleigh. We met at a restaurant where his daughter was working as a waitress. Having been directed to her area, she warmly greeted me and arranged for us to have the most secluded table possible under the circumstances (lunch time). John and his wife arrived shortly thereafter. Although I had never met his wife or daughter before, their warmth made me feel as if I were a guest in their home. As we ate and talked, the only thing that served as a reminder that this was not simply a casual visit and conversation was the presence of the tape recorder.

In light of the purpose of this research, I found to be particularly important the way in which he began his conversation. He introduced himself as a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee and also as a seliga une or mixed blood Indian (part Indian, part white).

In the early days of contact with non-Indians, mixed bloods were considered by some to play an important role in understanding and relating to the new culture. Later sentiment against mixed bloods grew as the more acculturated Indians were viewed as a direct threat to the existence of Indian culture. Wealth acquired as a result of knowledge of white culture (spinning wheels, copper and

iron pots, etc.) was accumulated for personal use and not shared with others of the tribe as Cherokee tradition dictated.

John's willingness, and indeed eagerness, to become a part of this research and self-identification as a seliga une seems to validate the early ideas of the importance of the role mixed bloods can play in the transition of knowledge from culture to culture, and from generation to generation.

Since his father was a Navy career man, much of John's early educational experience was with public schools away from the reservation. His family lived in Florida for several years. One thing that had apparently existed for years but that he didn't really notice until his junior year was an attitude that existed among his teachers. He says that they held the belief that if you did not come from a family with a college background, that you had little chance of success in college.

By his senior year, the family had moved back to the reservation. He had the choice of attending the Bureau of Indian Affairs school on the reservation or attending a public school. His father urged him to go to the public school because they had a precollege track. Here again he noticed that the teachers had low expectations for Indian students. Even though he had good grades, the principal and teachers urged him to go into

art or a technical field. He eventually made up his mind to go into the field of electronics. His father had his own radio and television repair business and thought that with training as an electronics technician, John would be able to get a good job with steady pay with the telephone company or some other business.

The person who made a critical difference in his life at that time was a Cherokee man named Oscar Smith. He talked with John, stressed the fact that he had good grades and test scores and encouraged him to go to college. He understood the discouragement that John felt because of teacher attitudes and shared with him the fact that he had faced the same thing. In spite of discouragement, he had gone on to college and had even completed a master's degree.

This man took the time to take John and some other Indian students to Western Carolina University and some other schools. Western Carolina impressed him so that in one trip he knew he wanted to go there. Oscar Smith had the effect of a catalyst on John's desire to go to college. He says once he talked with Oscar Smith and heard his encouragement he knew he could succeed because "he's just like me."

The chief of the tribe arranged for the tribe to pay his tuition for the first quarter. After that he was

able to work out a scholarship/loan with the Cherokee Historical Association.

He revealed an interesting incident with the Dean of Men at Western Carolina. After two years he had maintained an "A" average in the biology courses that he had taken and wanted to go into biochemistry or biological research. The dean, in noticing that he came from the reservation, noted that Indian students were successful in the arts and suggested that he take some art courses to "find out where your real talents are." He also suggested that John might want to join the minority organization on campus, but never suggested that he join the science organization or the Biology Club.

John expressed frustration with the term minority. His experience at Western Carolina revealed that the term minority was used to describe resources or groups for black students, since there were only two or three Indian students.

The scholarship/loan from the Cherokee Historical Association was primarily to encourage students to go into Business. His B.S. degree eventually carried a double major of Biology and Business Administration.

After serving in Vietnam, he met the Commissioner of the Occupational Health and Safety Act who invited him to interview with Westinghouse Corporation. He was hired as an industrial relations staff assistant and moved up to

the corporate level. For more than ten years he never told anyone that he was Indian until the last couple of years when he was going back to the reservation frequently and the industrial relations manager asked if he were Indian. The manager's response to his answer was "Good, we can put you on our minority list."

The manager had a romanticized notion of Indians and encouraged him to keep his traditions alive. John makes the point that he never lost his identity, he just kept that identity to himself. He says he's "comfortable as an Indian inside but not comfortable when it gets outside because society has these stereotypes"

This manager also convinced him that he should take advantage of his G.I. Bill benefits and go back to school in order to be able to compete with others with advanced degrees. He started taking courses at a community college and eventually went to the University of Tennessee.

When he registered at the University of Tennessee, the registrar of the Graduate School noticed that he was Indian, mentioned friends at Cherokee, and managed to watch out for him by keeping him aware of requirements, etc. He obtained a Master's in Public Health and went on to complete a Doctoral Program in Public Health Education.

He notes that in the doctoral program there were very few white students. Most of the students were from India, Zimbabwe, and other African countries. In spite of

this fact, the department chair assigned the few white students as leaders of the various groups. John spoke out and said he refused to be lead by anyone white and that he would lead his own group. A student from Zimbabwe followed suit and lead his group.

Through his whole educational experience John says he was faced with

romanticizing of the American Indian, not recognizing the problems and issues facing American Indians, or being treated as a minority, whatever that is . . . the name minority sounds like you're not good enough to be in the majority.

John remembers his grandfather saying "we have to come together, not as black, white, or Indian, but as people, respecting each other, who we are, what we are, and what we have to contribute to the circle."

He feels that although laws exist for self determination and self sufficiency for Indians, they have never been fully implemented. In his opinion, schools are not teaching the survival skills that students need to live. Indian students don't learn anything about how to balance a checkbook, or marriage or raising children. He says his grandfather said that "there was a time when we learned about life. Now we just learn about education and education doesn't teach us about life."

He says that in three generations of his family, from the boarding school to public schools to emphasis on the current tribal school, the system has not changed to meet individual or community needs. While his impression of his personal experiences with the educational system leaves much to be desired, he feels there are schools that are making a difference.

I went into a school in Buffalo, N.Y. and there were American Indians, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians and kids were excited about school! There was a certain air that you got there, and you could feel it . . . something special was going on here. When I talked to the principal he said, "This is an interracial school, there are many races here. Every group has an opportunity where it teaches about that culture. When we do math problems we relate it to the different cultures. And it's very difficult for the teachers. We went out to hire a very special kind of teacher who kept everything in a culturally relevant way and then the kids could participate . . . this school teaches life . . ." what my grandfather used to call the good medicine. You could tell when you walk into that school the kids were excited, they were speaking to each other, there was a lot of excitement in the air. At one time I was frustrated with education but now I've seen a glimmer of what can be done and be successful, so now I'm not so frustrated.

Interview with Don

The second interview was held with a member of the Oglala Sioux (Lakota) Tribe. He works in the North Carolina Community College System. We arranged to meet for the interview after a state-wide meeting that we had both attended.

Don grew up on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. He attended the Bureau of Indian Affairs day school for the elementary grades. Children in the day school were forbidden to speak their language in school, they were required to speak English. He explains that at the time that requirement didn't seem to be altogether unreasonable.

In class and on the playground we had to speak English because we were not allowed to speak Sioux. That in itself seemed to be a comfortable environment in the sense that it seemed like I was going to a different world. As soon as I left the playground and got off the bus I was back in my own world.

He went on to say that he probably didn't really understand or take seriously what went on in school because of the feeling that it was a "different place." He explained what he means by two worlds.

I would go to class in the morning and come back in the afternoon, one world and then back to my own, and there was no direct connection to continue the learning and the activities that one does at the school. It was sort of forgotten and was just something I had to do the next morning. I sort of thought like that for many years.

Difficulties with language, which began in elementary school, followed him through his graduate programs. Going back to those early years he reflected on the seeming lack of relevance to his "world."

I don't remember social studies and science or that kind of thing, I just remember going to class, but language seemed to be just something different. English . . . memorize by rote, write it . . . if you got it right fine, if you didn't you just didn't, so I forgot about it. As a result maybe that affected my other accomplishments in science and social studies. I may not have had a good understanding of the concept (English) by the time I reached high school level, but I didn't know that at the time.

The high school that he attended was a public school in a non-Indian setting. In comparison to the non-Indian students, he felt that he knew nothing about language, science and social studies. The method of survival that he used to deal with this situation was memorization, repeating material over and over until it was understood. This strategy served him well and he was able to graduate from high school third in his class in spite of having passed ninth grade provisionally.

Cultural differences played a large part in the Bureau day school experience. When Don was in school the teachers were all non-Indian (white) and did not understand the Indian language (Lakota) or customs. Communication was difficult and the teachers were not able to relate words or concepts to the equivalent in the Lakota language because they didn't understand it.

Since it was forbidden to speak Lakota in the classroom, the students learned that saying something in Lakota would result in being disciplined ("she'd come over

and whack you on the head or hand or pull your ears") and this would disrupt the class. The students welcomed the break or the "slack" time because they really didn't understand what was going on in the classroom. He reflects that "the Indian student was not learning because the teacher didn't understand that they didn't understand."

Don provides insight into the relationship between cultural differences and role perceptions.

Where I come from the home language was Lakota and all the customs Lakota and you were an Indian and never thought yourself to be anything else. But the teacher thought of you or saw you as a student and thought you should be behaving like a white student in a different setting. So there's different perceptions and I don't know how much those perceptions interfered with learning and bringing about an integrated learning environment for the Indian student to learn from the curriculum, which is not Indian based but white society based. Education values, education theory are white society based, which is fine, that is not the complaint. At least I as an individual recognize that's the way it's got to be. The U.S. is a white world and that's the way it's got to be. I think my remark is that the Indian student was not brought to transcend between two cultures, see the direct connections and get on with the learning, and that can be done.

Another area where cultural differences play an important role is in the way in which teachers handle mistakes or correction of a student in the classroom.

At that time it was a serious thing for a Lakota to be brought forward in public and be dressed down and

corrected in front of his contemporaries by an older person. That's demeaning for a Lakota, right or wrong that's part of the Lakota culture. In this situation the white teacher doesn't understand that this is a negativism in dealing with young people, even though it is a classroom setting. So that type of instructional methodology needs to be studied by white teachers when they have Indian students.

He explains that while parents at that time really valued school and encouraged the children to go to school, they really didn't understand enough of what was going on in the school to be able to help the children understand the experiences that they were facing.

The high school experience is what Don feels is what made him begin to think about going to college. He was the only Indian in his school, so any friends that he made were white. As the other students talked about or made plans for college he decided he would go to college, not because of future career goals but because "it seemed like fun and I'd enjoy it." He completed a college degree and entered the military. While in the service he earned a Master's Degree in Education and after retiring completed a doctoral program in Adult and Community College Education.

He is firmly convinced that peer modeling can make a difference, especially for Indian students. Even today,

with information available to encourage and help students make decisions about college peer modeling has a powerful influence.

Interview with Jim

The next interview took place in a classroom at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro since Jim was also a student there. He is member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe and grew up on the Yankton Reservation in South Dakota.

His grandparents raised him and he remembers having trouble with language in school. The summer before he started school is the first time he recalls his grandmother speaking English to him.

He attended a one room rural school on the reservation. This was not a Bureau of Indian Affairs school. The teacher was white and half of the students were white and half were Indian.

Experiences in the school and expectations of the teacher made him become aware of cultural differences. The teacher would want him to talk about himself but that was something that was not encouraged as part of the Indian culture. He remembers that when his grandparents talked with him they talked slowly and if they asked him a question they didn't expect an answer right away. The

teacher, on the other hand, asked a question and went on to the next student if it wasn't answered right away.

Another difference was the expectation that you must look directly at someone when they speak to you.

Another thing was that eye contact! That was a problem that followed me all the way through high school. The teacher or principal or whoever always wanted me to look them in the eye. I didn't realize it at the time but that, too, was a cultural difference. In the white culture if you can't look somebody in the eye that means you're not telling the truth, you're lying about something and also being disrespectful. . . but in the culture that I came from I was taught that one way you show respect for someone was to not look them in the eye. I really struggled with that one. It was not really until I became an adult, I guess when I was in college, that I began to realize what that was all about.

His grandmother encouraged him to stick with school by telling him that someday he would become a doctor or a minister. He later realized that these were the two examples of male role models with whom his grandmother had contact . . . ministers and the Indian Health Service Hospital doctors.

When he was growing up, all of the Episcopal priests were Indian. He remembers them as being good speakers and being able to relate well to the Indian people. Years later he was planning to go to college and the seminary but the bishop in South Dakota refused to ordain Indians.

High school brought a mix of experiences with racism and frustration over the lack of relevance of what was being taught. Jim had had two previous bouts with serious medical problems, once when he was very young and the second during the eighth grade. He was in the hospital for close to two months and not allowed to have his school books because he was in isolation. After returning to school he was unable to find teachers willing to help him catch up.

One day in study hall he was blamed for something he hadn't done and was kept after school. He was given a paper and told to write an essay. He wrote an essay on why he quit school, gave the paper to the teacher and left. No one ever followed up or tried to find out what had happened . . . "just one less Indian student to deal with."

After serving in the Air Force, Jim went to college. His major was in Sociology with a minor in Psychology. He was impressed with the fact that in many of his classes as issues or descriptions of roles were discussed, if he asked about Native Americans the professors were unable to respond.

When he finished college he entered the seminary in Evanston, Illinois. One of the classes resulted in a visit to the Native American Center in Chicago. A young man from the Rosebud Reservation spoke to the class about

the issues involved in efforts to prevent adoption of Indian children by white families. Some of the students in the class became upset by things that he said and they in turn upset him. The discussion centered around the issues which led to the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

After they returned to the classroom, several students continued to make negative comments about the young man.

So I sat there for a while and pretty soon I spoke up and I said, "Hey, you know you're talking about my people!" For the first time some of those guys became aware that I was an Indian and the others who realized that I was an Indian realized that I was taking a stand. So the rest of that summer half of that class wouldn't speak to me, wouldn't eat with me, they wouldn't associate with me.

He went back to South Dakota where he served as pastor of two small churches close to his reservation. After two years with these churches he returned to school to pursue a Master's Degree in Counseling.

In classes at the master's level he realized that some of the skills and techniques that were being taught would not work with counseling Indian people. When he attempted to explain why he felt they would not work to his professor, he simply said, "Well, I don't know, you may be right."

Coming back to school to work on a doctoral program has been even more revealing for him.

Well, what I've since discovered now that I'm in my Ph.D. program is that there is a lot of material out there that has been published about Indian people, but so much of it is not accurate. A wild guess, but I don't think I'm far from wrong, would be that probably about 98% of everything that's been written out there has been written by white people and it's from a white perspective and there's a lot of things that they really don't understand about Indian people.

The other thing that I have found that when Indian people start writing about Indian people, you have to write it in the white way. It has to fit into the white theory, white concepts, white constructs and so on and some of these rules, guidelines, really prevents the Indian person from writing in such a way that you can really describe what's going on with Indian people.

The Indians that I talk with who are doing research say they give in to that just so they can get through, can get their degree. I really think that the whole education system is really missing out as long as they impose those kind of rules and guidelines on Indian scholars. Maybe there are some white scholars out there who understand this and would write differently if they were given the freedom to write differently. Maybe it's a system that by making us write according to those rules says, "We don't understand Indian people." There's no proof of it. I don't know if that's ever going to change.

In trying to explain differences in values, he goes on to say:

I was talking with a friend of mine who works at the University of South Dakota. He's sort of like me, you know, he lives out there in the white world all the time and goes back home now and then.

He said:

I always have to be careful when I go back home because I realize that I live and function a lot in the white world. I go home and I talk to all these guys at home . . . some of them are so intelligent and I think to myself - Wow, they can really do a lot with their life! I went home one weekend and I said to my mother . . . You know mom (he said he mentioned somebody's name) is really a smart person. He could really do a lot with his life, he could really make something of himself." And he said his mother said, "Now, now he mows my lawn every week and he mows your aunt's lawn every week, then he goes over to your grandma's and he mows her lawn." And I decided that as far as my mother was concerned he was somebody, and that he was a success and he was doing something with his life.

That's an example of what that man was doing with his life wouldn't fit into the white concept of somebody who was successful, but he was successful apparently because he felt like he was making a contribution. He was seen by his extended family, the community, as doing something worthwhile, so in their eyes he was successful. Now that man will probably never get an article published in a journal, but still in his eyes and in the eyes of the community he's a success.

Interview with Rose

The last interview was held with a woman who is a member of the Oglala Lakota Tribe. She grew up on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Our conversation was held at my house over several cups of coffee. As we started talking, she told me that it's funny to hear

Indian people today talking about "Indian education" because when she was growing up everybody simply talked about the "Bureau (Bureau of Indian Affairs) schools."

Rose began to talk about her earliest memories of this "Indian education."

When I was growing up, when I was about two or three years old, I used to ride with my grandfather. He used to get in his wagon early in the morning, about four or five o'clock, he would hitch up his wagon and his team and he would go around the countryside. He would go probably about ten or fifteen miles out into the country and pick up all the kids in the neighborhood along the road and he would take them to the main highway where the school bus would be waiting.

He probably picked up about fifteen to twenty kids in his route every morning. My grandmother would fix the biscuits and stuff and we would go pick up all the kids by daybreak. We'd meet the school bus on the highway probably around eight or nine o'clock.

Then in the afternoon we would go back and pick up the kids from the school bus and just before dark in the evening we'd get back to the house. My grandmother would have supper ready for us when we got back.

I remember the kids used to sing all these songs and talk about their work and different things they did at school. I always remember the big yellow bus sitting on the road.

When her grandparents were no longer there to care for her, she returned to live with her parents. Those pleasant early memories of students going to school were replaced with the harsh realities of the Bureau school.

When I was five, almost ready to turn six, I moved back to my mother and father's house and then I had to go to the Bureau schools, or what we used to call boarding school at the time.

When I started school I didn't speak any English and it was hard because everywhere we went they would get mad at us and if we talked our language then we used to get hit. On teacher had this big long yardstick that if she even thought you were going to speak your own language then she would hit you across the head with it.

My brothers and sisters had to live at the boarding school because they were in the elementary or junior high or high schools. When I started school I was in kindergarten, so I could stay home with my parents. Half the time I didn't even see my brothers and sisters until the weekend, when my dad would go and pick them up at the boarding school.

The issue of being forbidden to use the Lakota language, as in the two previous conversations, presented a real problem.

I used to fight with my teachers because I didn't want to stop speaking my language. I learned how to speak my language from my grandmother and my grandfather and they had passed away when I went back to live with my mother and my father and it was kind of hard for me to just have to let go of everything.

I was about nine years old when I really learned how to speak English good. I could read but I couldn't speak the language that good to read out loud. I would always get into it with the teachers because they wanted me to stand up and read in front of the class and some of them were good because they learned how to speak English early and I was still learning so it was kind of hard. If I didn't do it then the teachers would get mad at us and put us on detention.

She spent her junior high years at a school on the Air Force base in Rapid City, South Dakota. When her parents told her she needed to go to school at home, she persuaded them to let her attend Red Cloud Indian School for high school. Red Cloud originally opened in 1888 as Holy Rosary Mission operated by the Jesuits. The name of the school was officially changed from Holy Rosary to Red Cloud Indian School in 1971 (Telephone conversation with Brother Simon, Red Cloud Indian School).

A Jesuit priest at Red Cloud helped her get a scholarship to Marquette University where she attended for one and a half years. She went to the University of Colorado at Boulder for one semester and returned to the reservation to work with Child Protective Services in the Department of Social Services. After the death of her husband, she joined the U.S. Marine Corps and she was eventually stationed in North Carolina where she remarried.

Having lived in North Carolina for about twelve years, she is able to make comparisons relevant to Indian Education programs both on and off the reservation since her children have attended schools in both locations.

The Bureau schools fund almost everything, they get some state and county funding but the majority is run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. . . . It's really different . . . they all help each other, they all work together . . . some of them are good teachers and some are not so good but they push

each other to where the children are actually learning something. Here in the urban areas . . . I see I'm the only one there to push them. There's no one else to push them and they end up where their grades drop. whereas when they were going to the Bureau school, there's always that push there, whether it's at home or teachers or something.

And the kids (there) help each other whereas here the kids are constantly against each other . . . there's always some kind of competition in school or some of the kids reflect the social life that their families lead. White kids don't mix with black kids and Indian kids don't mix with anyone else and so forth.

Working with the Indian Education systems here, it all depends on who you know and how much you know. . . . it's one of those things where they're only going to help those of their own. They have their little cliques and their little groups and then . . . when it comes to federally recognized Indian kids, they want your name on the list . . . they're going to come hunt you down to get your numbers on the list, but when it comes to programs they never come looking for you. You have to go looking for the programs to help (your kids).

I've been in the school systems here in North Carolina probably at least a good ten years and it's just been that way the whole time. If you fit in you get help . . . if you don't fit in then "I'll try to see what's going on and I'll give you a call." You'll never hear from them unless you call them and stay on them. It's really different.

Back home if your child has a problem the teacher calls you up and says "if you can't come, I'll come to you and we'll discuss this and get this straightened out." There's a lot of alcoholism on the reservation and a lot of drug abuse these years now but you have a lot more teachers who are caring and understanding towards the kids, whether they are white or Indian. They've got a lot more Indian teachers now than we did when I was growing up and they're willing to work with the kids under any circumstances.

The issue of students becoming frustrated and leaving school was discussed and she expressed surprise and concern over both the numbers and the ages of dropouts.

. . . look at these little children here dropping out in the third or fourth grade saying "I don't want to be here because nobody likes me." and they have that attitude. I was sitting there talking to one of the girls in the Indian Education Program that works on the Parent Committee and I told her that it's really sad that these tiny little kids are already saying "I don't want to go to school, I don't feel good about going to school." Not only do they face the problems of the future, these little kids have more problems to face than I ever thought I would have faced when I was little. In the third grade, I was thinking about having a good time playing, riding bikes and everything else and these kids are sitting here in the same grade thinking "I don't want to be here, I don't want to do this because there's nothing out there for me." I want to say . . . you're just a child, you can't be sitting here thinking like that, you're just a little kid. But there's a lot of little kids out there that have that attitude, a lot of little Indian kids.

The mention of alcoholism and drug abuse as problems for families led to the discussion of the large numbers of Indian children identified as having special needs, especially in North Carolina. She began to compare the reservation schools' approach to that of the urban schools.

They never label your children as learning disabled or having learning problems or anything like that, all the children are equal in all matters. There's no "he has a learning disability so he needs to be here" or "he's a problem child so he stays there."

All the children are put in a classroom equally. If they see that one child has a problem somewhere, then they focus on that problem and they try to teach all the kids to focus on that problem, too, so that the child doesn't feel like he is set different from the rest of the class.

But in the urban schools you have a label on your child as ADD, LD or whatever and then they are put to the side in a different group in your own classroom. Those kids that who are more advanced will make these kids feel inferior, they kind of lose their self esteem, they lose whatever they feel good about themselves. Then you have problems where they don't want to go to school, they don't want to do this or that.

Alcoholism has been a problem in some instances for two or more generations and the evidence suggests that we are seeing evidence of the horrible effects that abuse has had on the development of the unborn child. We started to talk about how long the problem has existed.

I went to the Bureau schools and we never had any learning disabled or handicapped kids until I left and I came back. Then I noticed that there were some little kids - out of a population of five thousand Indian people there were seven little kids who had something wrong with them. They had some type of disability. I had never seen kids like that before. And it's really funny to turn around and look at the population of Indian people at that time. This was in the late 60s. To turn around and look back at it after all these years, they've never had classrooms for kids like that because they never had kids like that. I'm related to probably 85% of the reservation and I never saw children that way. In growing up, I never saw any of the Indian children like that until then. And these were little kids who were nine, ten, seven years old and they had a short lifespan. By the time I was in high school, the majority of these kids did not live.

So is that part of the fetal alcohol syndrome? These kids did come from families that drank quite a bit. I remember my grandparents talking about these families drinking. Now is this part of that or where did all of this come from because they're starting to find a lot of children who have learning disabilities. If you go down to the reservation now you find a lot of very "hyper" kids. Kids that have to constantly be doing something all the time, into something going here going there and it's from sun up to sun down. You're talking about fifteen hours of the day these kids are going and we were never like that. I would go to bed when the sun went down with my grandmother and get up early in the morning.

. . . these children were taught to drink at a very early age. Working with the Department of Social Services, we would pick up one-year-old and two-year-old kids who were drunk because their parents had been drinking and they had nothing else to feed those kids so they would put beer or wine in the baby's bottle and give it to them. So they have been taught to drink this stuff at a very early age. If they have been given this stuff as infants they develop a taste for it. Most alcoholics will say they develop a craving for it, then it turns into the alcohol abuse and it keeps going and it's a cycle that keeps going around and around.

Doctors that I have talked with say that a child can be born with effects from alcohol even if it was the grandparents who were heavy drinkers. So these babies who were given alcohol, even if they never drank as adults, can have children who suffer the effects of their grandparents drinking.

They've started a new policy with the Indian teachers, I think they have to do fifteen or twenty hours on fetal alcohol syndrome and the possibility of dealing with children who have it in the classroom. If you have been teaching in the school system for less than four years, before you can get your teaching certificate you have to have the training. The requirement is that when teachers renew their certificates they must repeat this training. I know that some of the schools have this requirement, but I can't say that it is true for all schools. I know the teachers at Red Cloud, teachers in the Rosebud schools and some of the

elementary teachers in Pine Ridge have gone through it.

They are focusing on that. It may be that we are seeing centuries of the alcohol effects that have gone on over the years. It's starting to affect the children because the syndrome is actually in effect now and maybe the parents of the children who have the syndrome had the effect. There's a lot of studies going on about it and there's a lot of ifs and or buts. There's a lot of people theorizing on this or that but, like you said, way back years and years ago there's been a lot of alcoholism on the reservation and a lot of people turned their backs on it. Now it's an issue that everybody is trying to deal with but it will take a lot of research because we don't really know where it started from, whether it was the parents or went back to the great grandparents. It depends on how much alcoholism stayed in the family.

There was one time that I had a kid come up to me and he said "you can't help but drink cause you were born with the taste in your mouth." And I sometimes think of that comment because of the way the kids so easily get into drinking and stuff. Lots of kids will say beer tastes nasty or something but a lot of those kids can sit down and it is nothing for them to drink the kind of alcohol that they drink. It's like kids picking up a glass of Kool Aid and drinking it. It used to amaze me when I came back from college and I was working on the reservation to see these little kids five, six, seven years old go down there and take what they call that Thunderbird wine. The smell of it would make me gag and those little kids could just drink it like it was water. Then I sit there and I think about it. . . . these little kids, it's easy for them to drink this stuff. Then I asked this teenager - How can you stand to drink this stuff? and he said "it ain't no problem when you're born with the taste in your mouth."

And it's true. I sit there and I look back to when I worked for Department of Social Services at how many times they called me to the hospital because a woman was delivering her baby and was drunk. So how many of these kids are born with the taste in their mouth?

I asked my mom once before she passed away if when she was growing up if they had problems with retarded children, and was there a lot of it. My mom sat there and thought and thought and thought and finally she said, "I don't know." And I've asked other older people and they just sit there and look at me stunned like. And everyone I've ever talked to say there are no traces way back on the Rosebud Reservation, Pine Ridge Reservation, Eagle Butte or Standing Rock Reservations of children being retarded that were born in the fifties or before. A lot of the retarded children that were born were born in the sixties. Now is it part of all the land problems, the water problems? Could that be what it is or is it the fetal alcohol syndrome? Is it all connected?

CHAPTER III
PROBLEMS AND ISSUES IN INDIAN EDUCATION

The first chapter of this study is designed to introduce the reader to the philosophy and intent of the earliest attempts to provide education to American Indians. Traditional research sources for the first chapter included books, articles, and government reports. In the second chapter the stories of some of the survivors of this system of education are shared. This chapter will examine some of the issues that have evolved from these conversations. More than two hundred years have passed since the Treaty of 1794 with the Oneidas, Tuscarora and Stockbridge Indians which officially began the educational responsibilities of the federal government in relation to the Indian nations of this country. When a similar landmark occurred for the official founding of the United States of America, bicentennial observances celebrated significant events and achievements in the nation's history. Congress and some of the country's brightest minds committed funding and developed programs to ensure continued growth and progress in such areas as education, health and technology.

The passing of what might be considered to be the Indian Education bicentennial gives pause to review selected major issues in that field, some of which have been around for much of that history. Most of the issues that I have chosen to address were actually identified by the individuals who agreed to be interviewed.

Language Issues

The issue of the use in schools of native language versus English is one that has appeared in various forms throughout history of education of Native Americans in this country. The early missionaries and traders, long before the federal government existed, found that learning the language of a tribe not only aided basic communication but also assisted in building a certain level of trust. The missionaries who were able to translate religious tracts, portions of the Bible and hymns into native languages were more likely to be successful in the conversion of substantial numbers than were those for whom communication remained a problem.

Early mission schools, both prior to and after the contract system with the federal government, made use of native languages as an integral part of their instructional program. The success of the elaborate school systems of the tribes in the southeast and their support by the citizens of the tribes was largely due to

the incorporation of the native languages into the total educational program. The Cherokee and Choctaw school systems, after the development of a written form of the native language, evolved into a total educational continuum from elementary through higher education which included instruction for adults, a critical component in the transition to a bilingual, bicultural society.

The assimilate or annihilate mentality that was responsible for the development of the off-reservation boarding school experience permeated federal policy on Indian education for decades. The cornerstone of this policy was that English was the "official" language of this country and this was to be the only language spoken in government schools. Perhaps the most concrete example of this was the harsh reality of physical punishment that was given to students who dared to lapse into their native languages in an effort to communicate. While the intent of this policy was supposedly to force students to learn English in order for them to be able to understand and appreciate the benefits of the American "civilization," its most enduring effect is probably just the opposite.

Three of the four individuals who were involved in the interview process of this research received the majority of their elementary education in schools on the reservation. They range from the late fifties to late thirties in age. All three have shared memories of

negative experiences arising from use of their native language in the school setting instead of English. These incidents ranged from being "whacked" on the head or the hand, being hit on the head with a yardstick to being held for detention. The impact that was left by these experiences is obvious from the emotion that was displayed in relaying their story. One can only imagine the negative feelings toward education that have been passed on for generations as a result of the horror stories that have come out of the education concentration camps they called boarding schools.

One of the realities of the education of Indian students today is that the majority are attending public schools. The Indian Nations At-Risk Task Force Report (1990) states that between 85% and 90% of Indian students attend public schools. Since their number represents approximately 1% of the total public school population in this country, these figures are often missing in national statistics on achievement and progress.

While the percentage of the national student population may be small, the numbers of Indian students in some state public school enrollments and in certain school districts in others are often substantial enough to represent a presence of language differences. Migration to urban areas in search of employment opportunities has been part of the Indian experience for generations. This

has led to a concentration in certain areas which will be reflected in the public school enrollment.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights (1975) report, addressing the issue of bilingual education (comparing Native American languages as primary languages to foreign languages brought into the classrooms by children of immigrants), states:

Unlike the other groups the survival of Native American languages is primarily the result of their continued use by existing groups and geographic isolation rather than of replenishment through immigration. (p. 13)

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968, which specifies that services be provided to "children of limited English-speaking ability between the ages of three and eighteen," states in its Declaration of Policy that

in recognition of the special educational needs of the large numbers of children of limited English-speaking ability in the United States, Congress hereby declares it to be the policy of the United States to provide financial assistance to local educational agencies to develop and carry out new and imaginative elementary and secondary school programs designed to meet these special educational needs. For the purpose of this title, "children of limited English-speaking ability" means children who come from environments where the dominant language is other than English. (US Commission on Civil Rights, 1975, p. 180)

Jon Reyhner (Gilliland & Reyhner, 1988), in an attempt to explain why loss of native language is considered by many to be "one of the most critical

problems" facing Indian people today, cites four reasons for importance of bilingual education.

1. The native language is essential to the maintenance of the culture.

Although facts and information can be stated in any language, the beliefs, feelings and way of looking at the world of a culture are diluted or lost when put into another language. Language and culture develop together. The words and structure of a language express completely the feelings of a people and their culture. Supposedly parallel words in another language do not accurately portray those feelings. Therefore, changing to a different language necessarily results in a loss of part of the culture.

2. The loss of language leads to breakdown in communication between children and their grandparents and denies children their heritage.

Tribal heritage provides a sense of group membership and belonging that is badly needed in an overly individualistic and materialistic modern society. In the words of John Collier, modern society has lost the "passion and reverence for human personality and for the web of life and the earth which the American Indians have tended as a central sacred fire."

3. Repression of the native language is destructive to self-concept.

Forcing Indian children to suddenly give up their language and speak only English reinforces the idea prevalent in many schools that the native language and culture are of little or no value, thus effectively destroying the self-concept of many students.

4. Bilingual instruction results in higher academic achievement.

Research on bilingual education substantiates the conclusion that subtractive educational programs that seek to replace native language and culture with the English language and culture cause students to fail while additive educational programs which teach English language and culture in addition to the native language and culture create the conditions for students to succeed in their schoolwork.

Cultural Differences and School Achievement

The second major issue that was identified in the course of this research is that of cultural differences and their effect on educational achievement and progress. Don, one of the interviewees, explained it in this way.

Where I come from, the home language was Lakota and you were an Indian and never thought yourself to be anything else. But the teacher thought of you or saw you as a student and thought you should be behaving like a white student in a different

setting. So there's different perceptions and I don't know how much those perceptions interfered with learning and bringing about an integrated learning environment for the Indian student to learn from the curriculum, which is not Indian-based but white society based.

The idea that cultural differences existed between the original inhabitants of this land and the European settlers who founded this country was implicit in all of the early attempts to educate for the purpose of "civilization" and assimilation. While language is perhaps the most obvious manifestation of cultural differences, it is only a part of the complex which determines a culture. Among the many definitions of culture, my personal preference is the idea presented by Goodenough when he explains that "a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves" (Bennett, 1990, p. 46).

This definition is particularly relevant to the behavior of the Indian student in an educational setting whether reservation or urban. If the student has learned that behavior which is expected as part of the tribal culture and proceeds to exhibit that behavior when the teacher or school expects a different kind of behavior the result can be confusion on the part of the student and

misinterpretation on the part of the teacher. Jim, one of the interviewees gives examples of this.

For example, we were not encouraged to talk about ourselves. But when I would go to school, the teacher would want me to talk about myself. And another thing . . . when my grandparents would talk with me they talked slowly and when they asked me a question they didn't expect me to answer immediately. In the school, when the teacher asked me a question she expected me to answer right away and if I didn't answer immediately she went on to the next kid.

He goes on to mention the subject of eye contact. From his cultural perspective, and that of many Indian tribes, not looking someone in the eye is a way of showing respect for that person. In the non-Indian culture, on the other hand, not looking someone in the eye is taken to mean that the person is hiding something, not being truthful, or simply not paying attention to the conversation or (in the classroom) to what is being taught. If the teacher fails to understand the student's cultural background, this behavior may lead to the student being chastised by the teacher for inattentiveness. When this happens the teacher ignores another cultural norm which makes public correction of a child by an older person a very serious event resulting in extreme embarrassment for the student. This embarrassment may lead to avoidance of this situation by withdrawal and simply choosing not to participate in classroom exercises.

Differences in learning styles is another issue that has cultural implications. One of the interviewees points out the difference in students helping each other in the reservation schools as opposed to the competitiveness of students in the urban schools.

Swisher and Deyhle (1989) provide a review of research which supports the view that the interactional style of the home or community influences the student's ability to adjust to the interaction demands of the classroom. They present several citations from the literature on Navajo, Oglala Sioux and Yaqui socialization practices which indicate similarities in the way children learn. "They prefer to learn privately - competence precedes performance." One study of a comparison of two Cherokee classrooms (Dumont, 1972), where one was the traditional teacher dominated approach and the other allowed students the choice of when and how to participate in small group projects which were student-directed, indicated less participation in the first situation and more in the second.

They also cite a study by Brown (1980) which found that for Cherokee children cultural norms which value cooperative behavior resulted in lower school achievement. In attempting "to hold fast to group standards of achievement that all of the children are capable of meeting," Brown found that high ability students were

reluctant to display their competence (Journal of American Indian Education, August 1989, pp. 3-8).

Cooperative learning behavior may have not only the advantage of ensuring group achievement but may also play an important role in the development of self-esteem. Cultural differences in the classroom can lead to the erosion of self-esteem for the Indian student when aspects of the student's behavior or appearance are perceived negatively by the teacher.

Appearance may play more of a role in negative perceptions of the male based on cultural differences. Indian males from tribes who adhere to traditional practices, such as not cutting their hair except in time of mourning, may encounter teasing when they are young or the perception that they represent a threat as they grow up, particularly in an urban school environment. It is particularly interesting to observe that each of the males that took part in this research shared that at some point in his life he chose not to disclose the fact that he was Indian.

The fact that cultural differences give rise to such sensitive issues as those discussed above leads to two concerns--the need for more Indian teachers, particularly in reservation schools or schools which serve substantial numbers of Indian students, and the need for sensitivity training for non-Indian teachers to help them

understand the complex expectations which accompany the Indian student into the classroom. Personal experiences have made me acutely aware of both needs.

Soon after my husband and I had moved, from Washington, DC, where he had been working, to his home on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, we received visitors from the community day school. They had somehow learned that I had a college degree and wanted to know if I would be willing to serve as a substitute for one of the teachers who had to be away for a couple of weeks. My son was only a couple of months old but after I was assured that I could take him with me, I quickly agreed.

A few days after I started teaching I noticed some of the students from school sitting on the steps of our house. My classes covered sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade social studies and, at first, I thought that they had come for help with homework but they assured me that wasn't necessary. Our daughters were small and our son only an infant, so out of curiosity I mentioned it to my husband since it was obvious that they had not come to play. His response was that I had to realize that not only had these students not had an Indian teacher before but it was the first time they had any teacher who lived with them.

At that time the Bureau of Indian Affairs provided housing for teachers in the reservation schools. The

houses were almost always located very close to the schools which was probably thought to be a very practical arrangement, particularly in severe weather, but which could also be viewed as a "circle the wagons" mentality since the teachers were predominantly non-Indian.

Over the next few months I had the opportunity to substitute several times. During this time I had conversations with the principal in which he encouraged me to seriously consider becoming certified to teach. Several months later, while working at another job, I received a telephone call from the principal telling me about a new program to train Indian teachers and urging me to apply.

The program that he referred to was an effort involving Black Hills State College, the University of South Dakota at Vermillion, the National Teacher Corps Project, the South Dakota State Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Pine Ridge Reservation Education Program to train Indian teachers and to provide in-service training to local teachers. The program was officially known as the Indian Teacher Corps Project and was centered at Black Hills State College at Spearfish, South Dakota.

At the time that the Indian Teacher Corps Project began, the ratio of Indian teachers to Indian students in South Dakota was one to seven hundred. The project was

designed to provide additional role models in the Pine Ridge schools, fulfill the need for in-service training to help non-Indian teachers become more sensitive to the needs of their students and to involve the community in the strengthening of the entire reservation school system (Indian Teacher Corps Project Proposal, 1976).

Prior to the development of this project, both recruitment and retention of teachers proved to be problematical due in large part to the geographical and social isolation of the reservation as well as the instability of the political situation. The majority of the recruits were non-Indian and many were unable or unwilling to adapt to the isolation or the extreme weather conditions. The housing arrangements mentioned earlier did not lend themselves to teachers becoming a part of everyday life in the community. They were not only physically set apart from other housing areas, but the quality of the physical structures differed also. The combination of these factors may have led to the high attrition rate for non-Indian teachers mentioned in the Indian Teacher Corps Project Proposal.

My acceptance as a graduate intern in the project meant that I worked through a field-based, proposal-based training program leading to a Master of Science in Education including full teacher certification. The four graduate interns were based at a district high school,

approximately 30 miles from my home, where we assumed a variety of responsibilities as a part of our administrative training in addition to having at least one class to teach. The undergraduate interns, already employed as teacher aides, were located at several of the reservation elementary schools and were working toward a Bachelor of Science in Education and full teacher certification.

Project staff came to the reservation at regular intervals for observations, seminars, individual conferences, and the whole group on interns would go to Black Hills State College periodically for courses. The project was proposed as being client centered which, at least at the time that I was involved, proved to be adaptable not only to the individual needs of the interns but also to the needs of the schools. Although my move to North Carolina prevented my completion of the program, my experiences as part of the project simply strengthened my determination to more adequately prepare myself to be able to help Indian students succeed.

Children with Special Needs

During the course of my conversation with Rose, one of the persons who helped with this study, we explored the sensitive issue of children with special needs, both physical and emotional. She reflected that she can only

remember seeing handicapped children when she returned to the reservation to attend high school, not while she was growing up. When she raised the issue of handicapped or mentally retarded children and how they were cared for many years ago with her mother or some of the other older people, they appeared to be puzzled by the question and were unable to answer. She then addresses the question of whether most of the physical and emotional problems that are being manifested in children today are actually the result of decades of alcohol abuse.

The introduction of alcohol to American Indians, no doubt a part of the "civilization" process, has perhaps had a more devastating result than the introduction of the various European diseases such as measles and smallpox which killed untold numbers.

One can only imagine how those initial bottles changed hands. Early traders are known to have offered alcohol as a "gift" prior to the conduct of their business with American Indians in order to gain the advantage in negotiations for furs, etc. Missionaries used wine as part of their communion ceremonies. Religion played an important role in the American Indian's life, permeating every aspect of his existence. Could the association with this ceremonial use have somehow led to its acceptance and use? McCallum (in Oppelt (1990), in discussing Dartmouth College's history as an educational institution for

Indians, quotes a drinking song still sung by Dartmouth students.

O, Eliazar Wheelock was a very pious man,
He went into the wilderness to teach the Indian,
With a gradus ad parnassum, a Bible, and a Drum,
And five hundred gallons of New England rum.
(p. 5)

Over the years it began to appear as though consumption of alcohol had become an escape from the harsh realities of everyday life for many American Indians. Life on reservations has never been easy. The poverty, isolation, absence of adequate health care and lack of hope for the future has had the effect of producing generations of Indians who turned to alcohol to ease the pain of their despair. Those who turned to the urban areas with inadequate preparation to enter the job market were relegated to low-skilled, low-wage jobs with all the economic pressures of urban life, exchanging the reservation ghetto for an urban ghetto.

Alcohol took its toll on the reservations for years in the numbers of alcohol-related automobile accidents and resulting deaths. In more recent years, however, we are beginning to see the real and horrifying effects that alcohol abuse can leave for unborn generations.

Scientific studies in the early seventies confirmed earlier suspicions that alcohol consumed during pregnancy was bad for the baby. In 1973, Drs. Kenneth L. Jones and

David W. Smith published reports of children of alcoholic mothers who exhibited a "similar pattern of malformations, growth deficiency, and central nervous system abnormalities." They called this condition Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and is now recognized as "a medical diagnosis for a type of birth defect caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol." Babies having some of the characteristics of FAS, but not quite the full diagnosis, are differentiated as Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) and are considered to be at-risk for developmental handicaps (Streissguth, LaDue, & Randels, 1988).

The Indian Health Service carried out two major Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Projects. The first project assessed the prevalence of FAS on selected reservations in the southwestern United States and the second concerned dissemination of information on FAS to all Indian reservations in the United States. The prevalence of FAS in the national population is estimated at 1 in 750 live births. On the reservations included in the Indian Health Service study, the prevalence ranged between 1 in 97 and 1 in 149 live births. The prevalence of possible FAE "is thought to be about twice as high as the prevalence of FAS" (Streissguth et al., 1988).

Publication of "A Manual on Adolescents and Adults with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome with Special Reference to American Indians" was supported by the Indian Health

Service. The manual reports the findings of the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Follow-Up Study which evaluated "61 adolescents and adults who had previously FAS (70%) or had Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) (30%)." Of this sample population, 74% were American Indians with 47% living on reservations in the southwestern and northwestern United States. Major Findings included:

- Average intellectual level of the 52 patients tested was considered mildly mentally retarded.
- The average reading, spelling, and arithmetic level of these patients was 4th grade, 3rd grade, and 2nd grade, respectively. Average level of general adaptive functioning was 7 years, 5 months, although median age of those tested was 16 years, 5 months.
- There was no indication of a general improvement in IQ, achievement, or adaptive living scores as patients got older.
- Governmental services for handicapped persons are not routinely available for persons with IQ scores of 70 and above. This arbitrary cut-off could exclude 42% of these adolescents and adults with FAS/FAE from community and educational services for the handicapped.
- Risk of premature death is apparently a major problem in women whose children have FAS/FAE; 69% of the biologic mothers were known to be deceased. (Streissguth et. al., 1988)

Of all the issues that have been identified in the course of this study, none has been as truly frightening as the impact of the incidence of alcohol-related physical and mental disabilities on Indian children. Each of the other concerns identified has the potential of being

solved or at least alleviated as a result of some course of action. The scope of the implications of this disease are so broad that they may have the potential to reach some of the foundations of our tribal traditions and cultures.

CHAPTER IV
SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE FUTURE
OF INDIAN EDUCATION

The Struggle for Self-Determination

The first three chapters have examined the history and underlying philosophy of Indian education in this country which have prevailed for almost two hundred years, presented stories of some of the survivors of this cultural genocide, and addressed some of the issues that emerged from conversations with these survivors. In this final chapter the focus will be on the philosophy of self-determination regarding Native American affairs in this country.

As part of the resistance to the federal focus on termination policies in the 1940s and 1950s, the tribes began to push for self-determination during the early 1960s. The Kennedy administration condemned the earlier termination policies and was responsible for the appointment of the Task Force on Indian Affairs (Spring, 1994, pp. 86-87). Recommendations of the Task Force were mentioned in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of

Indian Affairs in 1961. These recommendations, including "equal citizenship rights and benefits, maximum self-sufficiency and full participation in American life" became the guiding principle for the Bureau of Indian Affairs during 1961 (Prucha, 1990, p. 246).

Recommendations such as more involvement of Indian parents in school planning and greater flexibility of facilities probably greatly influenced the successful development of the Rough Rock Demonstration School on a Navajo reservation in Arizona. This was a cooperative venture involving the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Navajo Tribe. The Board of Directors of the corporation (Demonstration in Navajo Education - DINE, Inc.) that was developed to operate the project and the school board, which was locally elected, were both all Navajo.

The Bureau had just completed a new three million dollar school at Rough Rock which it turned over to DINE, Inc. The Rough Rock Demonstration School began in 1966. At the time that the school was turned over, it had not yet been staffed. This meant that the Navajo people could choose all employees without having to abide by civil service regulations. Since the school provides in-service training to staff, persons who cannot speak English or who have not completed high school or have never been employed are able to complete job training, English classes and

other adult education classes, it truly can be considered a community school. Parents serve as foster parents and counselors living in the dormitories on a rotating basis. The youth are visited by community elders who tell stories and share traditions, legends and history (Deever, Abraham, Gill, Sundwall, & Gianopulos, 1974, pp. 77-87).

President Johnson, in a special message to Congress in 1968, addressed a new direction of Indian policy which stressed "a goal that ends the old debate about 'termination' of Indian programs and stresses self-determination." The new direction included "improving health and education, encouraging long-term economic growth, and strengthening community institutions" through an emphasis on identification of Indian needs from the Indian viewpoint . . . "That means partnership - not paternalism" (Prucha, 1990, pp. 248-249).

In what is apparently always the first step in the federal government's commitment to improve conditions, there was an investigation of the existing state of affairs in Indian education. A special subcommittee on Indian education of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare engaged in an intensive two-year study of Indian education. The subcommittee was originally chaired by Senator Robert Kennedy and after his death by Senator Edward Kennedy. The report of the findings of this study,

released in 1969, contained a lengthy compilation of frightening statistics which included the following:

- The average educational level for all Indians under federal supervision is five school.
- More than one out of every five Indian men have less than five years of schooling.
- Dropout rates for Indians are twice the national average.
- Only 18% of the students in federal Indian schools go on to college; the national average is 50%.
- Only 3% of Indian students who enroll in college graduate; the national average is 32%.
- Despite a presidential directive two years ago, only 1 of the 226 BIA schools is governed by an elective board. (Prucha, 1990, pp. 253-256)

The official report carried one central theme throughout all of its recommendations . . . "increased Indian participation and control of their own education programs."

The first chapter of this study, which attempts to present the reader with an overview of significant developments in policies and events in the history of the education of the American Indian, ends with the passage of the Indian Education Act in 1972, reflecting the change in the direction of self-determination. This law created an Office of Indian Education, a federal office which has existed from its creation separate and apart from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Indian Education Act provides financial assistance to local school districts to develop and supplement programs designed to help in the

education of Indian children; provides fellowship assistance for Indian students to pursue a college education; and provides funds to operate basic education programs for adults.

The Indian Education Act represents a turning point in federal involvement in Indian education because, unlike the Johnson O'Malley Act, its grants to state and local education agencies are not limited to students who are members of federally recognized tribes (tribes incorporated under the Wheeler-Howard or Indian Reorganization Act). States, such as North Carolina, Michigan, California and New York, were able to take advantage of this new source of funding in order to "improve educational opportunities" for the large numbers of children of state recognized tribes. In addition to providing much needed educational services to Indian children, the existence of this source of funding has had, in my opinion, the effect of improving communication between federally recognized and nonfederally recognized tribes, at least in the area of education.

At the time that the Indian Education Act was funded, Congress was acting in recognition of the fact that 50% of all Indians lived in urban areas and 75% lived off reservations (Reyhner, ERIC, 1989). According to the 1990 census, of the 1.9 million reported, approximately

34% (637,000) are living on reservations or Trust Lands (Hodgkinson, ERIC, 1992).

In response to the emergence of official support of self-determination, Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act in 1975. This provided that the tribes could contract with the federal government to run education and health programs themselves and provided more Indian control of schools for Indian children.

Emergence of the Tribal Colleges

During the same period of the focus on the need for self-determination in the area of education for Indian children, there was also recognition of the need to provide postsecondary education. The Navajo Tribe founded Navajo Community College in 1968. Some of the Navajo leaders who were instrumental in the planning and founding of the community college had also been involved in the development of the Rough Rock Demonstration School.

Navajo Community College, unlike some of the tribal community colleges that followed it, was not financially supported by an institution of higher education. For the first three years of its existence, it was supported by OEO grants, private grants, tribal appropriations and Title III money. When Congress passed the Navajo Community College Assistance Act in 1971 in authorizing

the expenditure of federal funds for the support of this college, it set the precedent for federal funding of tribally-controlled colleges (Oppelt, 1990, pp. 33-40).

The college has developed into a residential campus designed to honor traditional beliefs and customs. The hogan, a traditional octagonal Navajo home, is reflected in most of the eight-sided permanent buildings. The Cultural Center, in addition to having meeting rooms, offices and classrooms, also holds a museum and a repository for Navajo religious items and recordings of chants (Oppelt, 1990).

Sioux tribes in North and South Dakota had started making plans for a college about the same time that the Navajo were planning their college. The LaKota Higher Education Center (later known as Oglala Sioux Community College, then Oglala Lakota College) was founded in 1970 on the Pine Ridge Reservation and Sinte Gleska College in 1971 on the Rosebud Reservation. Unlike the residential campus plan of Navajo Community College, both of these colleges were designed to provide most of the classes and services through learning centers located in the various districts throughout the reservations (Oppelt, 1990).

The Oglala Sioux Tribe worked out an arrangement with the University of Colorado at Boulder to provide staff to serve as consultants and resource persons for the development of a community college on the Pine Ridge

Reservation. Later an agreement was reached that allowed the Oglala Sioux Community College to offer classes for credit through Black Hills State College at Spearfish. Eventually affiliations were also established with South Dakota State University at Brookings and the University of South Dakota at Vermillion. All succeeding tribally-controlled community colleges followed this pattern of establishing affiliation agreements with existing institutions of higher education (Oppelt, 1990, pp. 40-41).

Passage of the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act in 1978 established the mechanism for the provision of funds for the operation and improvement of tribally-controlled community colleges. Oppelt (1990) gives a total of 19 tribally-controlled colleges funded, at least in part, by this act. Two of the colleges, Oglala Lakota College and Sinte Gleska College, were accredited in 1983 as four-year institutions and began offering the bachelors degree.

Obligations of Tribal Colleges

Evolution of the tribal colleges holds promise for the eventual eradication of the cycle of poverty and despair on the reservations that has existed in large part due to the limited opportunities for employment and the accompanying lack of preparation. The colleges have the

potential to educate Indian students to fill the growing need for teachers and health professionals. They also have the opportunity to provide critical training in land management and economic development.

The Indian Teacher Corps that was previously mentioned fulfilled a distinct need that existed at that time to train Indian teachers. Several attempts to locate a written summative report of that project have not met with results. A recent telephone conversation, the latest of several with a staff member of the Black Hills State College Teacher Education Field Experience Office, revealed that the program had operated for about ten years. Over the course of the program approximately 300 teachers were trained, primarily through field-based experience, at eight school district locations on reservations throughout South Dakota.

The tribal colleges now have the opportunity to train, not only the teachers, counselors and administrators for the reservation and nearby public school systems, but also to begin the preparation for the next generation of instructors for the colleges themselves.

The Kennedy Subcommittee on Indian Education mentioned previously found that "one of every five Indian men have less than five years of schooling." The three men who have been such an important part of this study

come from three different reservations. They have all defied the odds and have completed postsecondary education culminating in doctoral degrees. In each case they mentioned role models, whether peer or adult, who helped them make the decision to continue their education. Tribal colleges have both the opportunity and the obligation to present positive role models for both males and females.

The numbers of Indian families who have migrated to urban areas in search of employment opportunities has resulted in children attending schools where they are often in the minority and taught by a non-Indian teacher. Tribal colleges have the obligation to conduct research and publish materials on the learning styles and cultural differences of Indian students in order to provide non-Indian teachers with assistance in understanding their students.

Health Issues and Education

The Merriam Report in 1928 officially documented health problems among Indian people. Among the areas of concern, tuberculosis, eye problems, infant welfare and maternity care were identified as problems significant enough to warrant special attention and increased appropriations. The diet of children in boarding schools also received special attention, with specific

recommendations being made as to the need for extra appropriations in order to provide milk, eggs and vegetables.

While serving as Director of an Adult Education Program at the Baltimore American Indian Center, we coordinated an arrangement with Johns Hopkins University to have interns make presentations to our students and the senior citizens group on health issues. One of the topics that generated much interest and subsequent discussions was the higher than average incidence of diabetes among American Indians, particularly the elderly. Diet was mentioned as being a major contributing factor in complications of this disease.

The Kennedy Subcommittee Report on Indian Education identified over 35,000 Indian children in boarding schools with almost 9,000 under nine years of age. One can only speculate how much the diets in those schools had improved in the 40 years since the Merriam Report and what effect these inadequate diets may have had on the long-term health care of these children.

Other health care issues addressed in the Merriam Report were infant welfare and maternity care. According to information from the Indian Health Service, infant mortality has decreased 84% from 62.7 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 1955 to 9.8 in 1986. Much of the focus of maternity care involves the repeated advice on

the avoidance of alcohol and substance abuse during pregnancy.

Alcoholism continues to be a critical problem for American Indians. Seventy percent of all treatment services provided by the Indian Health Service in 1988 were alcohol related. The death rate due to alcohol-related causes, including fetal alcohol syndrome and drug- and alcohol-related accidents, is three times higher among Indians than in the general population (Indian Health Service, 1990).

The Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988 allows for the provision of direct grants to tribes for the purpose of operating their schools. Included in the language of the law is the "reality of the special and unique educational needs of Indian peoples." Although designed to address language and cultural applications, with the alarming increase in the incidence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effects among American Indians, it is conceivable that tribes may need to consider the special educational needs of the mentally retarded.

Future Direction of Indian Education

The Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford
Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of

1988, Public Law 100-297, authorized the White House Conference on Indian Education. The White House Conference, which convened on January 22, 1992, was mandated to explore the feasibility of establishing an Independent Board of Indian Education and to develop recommendations for the improvement of educational programs to make the programs more relevant to the needs of Indians. The conference was attended by 234 delegates from across Indian county who developed and adopted 113 resolutions (White House Conference Report, 1992). This event in and of itself is historically significant since the delegates, including business leaders, educators, parents, students and elected governmental and school board officials, had an opportunity to address issues and concerns in Indian education and make recommendations about policy from their perspective instead of simply reacting to the federal policies conceived in and dictated by "Washington." For many Indian educators the White House Conference sparked a glimmer of hope that perhaps this time our voices will be heard and we will ultimately positively impact the education and, therefore, the future of our children and indeed the unborn. The authorization of the White House Conference was significant because it recognized the depth of the current crisis in Indian education and the failure of past federal policies which

were primarily based on education for assimilation into the dominant "American" culture.

Reality is that the future of the recommendations from the White House Conference and indeed the future of Indian education rests in the hands of the Congress of the United States. Previous reports, such as the one published by the American Indian Policy Review Commission, have illustrated the very tenuous thread of security which exists for all federal Indian program. The American Indian Policy Review Commission was established in 1975 for the purpose of conducting a "comprehensive review of the historical and legal developments underlying the Indians' unique relationship with the federal government." The makeup of the committee included three members of the Senate, three members of the House of Representatives and five Indian members. The Indian members were to represent federally recognized tribes (3), urban Indians (1) and nonfederally recognized tribes (1) (Prucha, 1990).

The Commission Report, issued in 1977, emphasized the status of the tribes as domestic, dependent sovereign entities and an expanded federal trust responsibility. Accompanying the report, however, were the dissenting views of Representative Lloyd Meeds from the state of Washington and Vice Chairperson of the Commission. In what might be considered to be a chilling example of the

typical non-Indian viewpoint, particularly in states with federal reservations, Representative Meeds states:

War, conquest, treaties, statutes, cases, and history have extinguished the tribe as a general governmental entity. All that remains is a policy. And, that policy is that American Indian tribes may govern their own internal relations by the grace of Congress. General governmental power exist in this country only in the United States and the States. (Prucha, 1990, p. 283)

This study has attempted to show that the history of Indian education in this country is inextricably intertwined with "official" Indian policy. The fact that all of the progress that has been made over the past few decades in terms of education and, more recently, self-determination could easily be wiped away by the stroke of a pen makes us realize the fragility of the status of American Indians. The focus of the 104th Congress, now in session, appears to be balancing the federal budget by the systematic elimination of programs deemed to be nonessential or by shifting responsibility from the federal government to the states. The issue of jurisdiction over Indian land is one that the states have tried for decades to have decided in their favor. If Congress decides to abolish the federal trust relationship with Indian tribes, the vultures will descend in the form of the fifty states.

Throughout this study the issue of traditional cultures had emerged. The fact is that traditions are not bound by program . . . they have not been destroyed by government attempts in the past and will not be destroyed in the future. The tradition of ensuring that the young are taught the lessons that they need for survival is one that cannot and will not die among Indian people. I am convinced that Indian students, parents, educators and tribal leaders are prepared to step forward at the federal, state and local levels to make sure that the education of Indian children remains as the focal point of Indian policy in this country. The policy must remain or the integrity and honor of the United States of America is at stake.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN

John: Are you interested in the B.S. or B.A. level or just the graduate experience?

E: The whole educational experience - anything you'd like to share?

John: Oh boy . . . I'll tell you. First of all I'm a member of the eastern band of Cherokee. I'm also what we call a seliga une, that's a white Indian, because I'm mixed, and that in itself presents some problems. Also my father was a career navy man. When he was state side we would go wherever he was, and when he was at sea we would go back to the reservation. So at a very early age I was back and forth until we finally settled down a little bit at a place called Fernandino Beach, Florida. And so our contacts for the most part were family, the Cherokee Reservation and Fernandino Beach, Florida. And then I spent some years there and some time on the reservation, but my last year, my senior year was spend on the reservation. Being away from the reservation I felt pretty good because I didn't face what I called discrimination, discriminatory kinds of things. Because I was a minority, I probably related better to the plight of the blacks and what the blacks were going through, but it was difficult for me to understand why some of these things were happening. I wasn't really a part of it because I was a part of my own tribe and I had my own family. Yet in my senior year, when I went to school on the reservation, I faced all kinds of problems. I faced problems because I was a seliga une on the reservation, when I went off the reservation I faced problems because I was an Indian. As a matter of fact, the term Indian was used in a very derogatory way. They'd say, "you from Cherokee, you must be one of them Indians," so it was very derogatory.

In school there was an attitude that existed all through school. I really didn't realize what was happening until my junior year. What it was was that since I was Indian, I wasn't considered to be college bound and my teachers kept trying to encourage me to go into art or some, you know, technical field . . . and I wanted to go to college. And I had good grades, too. That's the irony of it. But they felt that I wouldn't have the will, didn't have the background, that if you were not from a family that was successful by going to college, that your probability of success in college would

be very slim. So back then they didn't encourage, especially minorities, to go to college.

Then by the time I was a senior and was on the reservation, there was one guy, Oscar Welch, seems like there's always one person, one guy or one girl, that encourages you to go on. Well I had already had this mindset that well I probably wouldn't make it in college and so I had sort of planned to be an electronics tech, because my dad was in electronics, he was a radio and TV repairman and I thought well I'll be a technician. And he through I could get a good job with the telephone company or some place like that and have a good job and steady pay as opposed to being in business for myself in electronics. So Oscar Welch called me in one day and he said, "J, you know you've got excellent grades, why aren't you going to go to college?" And I said well even the principal told me I probably wouldn't be very successful in college, that I needed to find something that was more technical oriented. And he said, "Well I don't agree with that. All the scores we see you're in the upper 5% of school and you should go. And besides that with close to a "B" average why would you think that you wouldn't be successful in college?" And I tried to explain to him. And he said, well, you know I had people tell me that. We didn't have a way to go to college when we were young, now you have an opportunity to go to college. Keep in mind they didn't have scholarships and things back then either. So he was the one that encouraged me to go on. He's the one that once I met him and he encouraged me, then I knew I could make it. Because he had made it and he was sort of like me, and he showed me his grades from high school and they were lower than mine and he said you know I had people that told me I'd never make it either. He said, I made it and I got a master's degree." Well, I didn't know what a master's degree was back then. I think if it hadn't have been for him I wouldn't have gone on. He also took the time to take me to a college, which was Western Carolina College, it was close to the reservation, and he introduced me to people, and he'd take me over to the dorm and he'd say, "boy, wouldn't it be nice to live here?" And I looked at those dorms and I thought, man, these kids have got it made! They have a cafeteria and they could eat any time they wanted to . . . and there were just things that . . . you know I always wondered what it was like for kids who had money and had a chance to do things like that, you know, went to private schools. I had a good friend who went to a private school. It seemed like to me that he didn't have anything to worry about, but to him . . . he hated it. And I thought it was great. I'd have loved to have had an opportunity like that. So once I went there all it took was that one trip and I knew that

I was going to go there. He took me to Wofford College down in South Carolina. He took me to several schools, myself and several others. Back then they were real nice to us, they greeted us and were very friendly and I just thought it would be sort of like high school that they'd just call you in and tell you what you would do. They were giving me an opportunity and talking about taking courses that I wanted to take. I was interested in taking biology. Of course I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do with that but I did. So that's the way I went to school. It was through the encouragement and also back then Chief O.B. Sinook was the chief of the tribe at that time. One day I was working on my old buick, on the transmission or something, and I heard this squeak, squeak, squeak as this big old buick, he was such a big man, he was 400 plus pounds. He got out of that old buick and I could see the car move up as he got out, he was so heavy, and he come over and said, "boy, come up from underneath there" and I thought, Oh my God, I'm in trouble now, what have I done, you know I thought I was in trouble. And he said, "it's all been worked out, you're gonna go to college." And I didn't know what he meant but what they did was they provided my tuition for the first semester. The deal was that they'd provide the first quarter and then I'd have to figure out how to make it from then on. Big deal, you know, I got my tuition paid for one quarter of four years of the program. But it was that kind of encouragement that got me to go on to college. My first day at college, I'll never forget, they had on there American Indian and I hadn't thought too much about that but I remember them saying, "you need to go over to the minority office. And they sent me over to the minority office and I walked in and there were all black people and I thought well what am I doing here, these are all black people. Well back then we didn't call them black people they were something else, but anyway then I went in there and the lady said, "What are you doing in here?" And I said, "Well, they told me to come down here." And she said, "Well, this is for black people, this is the minority office." And I said, "Well, why the hell did they send me down here, I don't know what I'm doing down here. They told me to come down here." So I went back and got in the other line and waited and waited and got up to the desk and the lady said, "You need to go to the minority office." I remember that was my first day's experience at school. Well the reason that they had sent me down to the minority office was that they had minority scholarships or fellowships or something and American Indians were eligible for those fellowships but it was real obvious to me that I was discriminated against the minute I walked into the minority office because I wasn't black. So I remember facing that, well, after that

I went ahead and signed up for courses. The first two years I took biology and chemistry and loved it, I knew that was one thing I could make "As" in. So I was supposed to go back to Oscar Welch at the end of each quarter and he was going to help me get more money. Back then the Cherokee Historical Association had a fellowship or a scholarship where you'd work for them and you could pay them back. They'd loan you the money to go to school, it was a loan not a scholarship. So I started working with them and they were encouraging me to go into business administration. Here again here's where I got conflict because I was really interested in biology and chemistry and here again the advisors said, "Well you're a minority student aren't you?" And I said, "Yeah." And he said, "Well you're probably interested in the arts." And he looked down there and I knew he knew I was from the reservation. So the assumption was that I should be doing art rather than biomedical science or something like that.

E: Do something with your hands instead of your mind?

John: I know it. And I tokd him that "no, I'm really interested in biochemistry. I'd like to get into research or something. I think they just assumed . . . and then, "Well, okay go that way." They didn't really take me serious as a student until I finished two years. The first two years I made an "A" average and ended up dong very well. Because the scholarship encouraged students to study business that was the only way I could go to school. So I ended up with a double major, biology and business administration. I had to choose where there was money available. Here again it wasn't scholarships it was loans, scholarship loans back then. So that was pretty must the experience I had, and I did finish the B.S. degree at Western Carolina. It took me a few years because I had to work, as a matter of fact there were times when I'd just have to lay out a quarter and work so I'd have the money to go back. So it wasn't as though I was like the other students who could just finish in four years. I didn't get to finish with my class but I did make some friends who were mostly kids from the mountains and who had to do about the same thing.

Even at the B.S. level I faced some of those kinds of issues. In fact I even remember the dean of men called us together and he was looking over our files and that was a lot of fun. So he was looking at mine and I thought he'd look and see I was making "As" in biology and he'd say "You've really done well, looking for fuzzies . . . ah, heck no . . . he looks at the file and says, "You're from the reservation, you're Indian? You don't look Indian." That's the first thing I had to face with him.

Then he said, "Well what are you thinking about doing?" And I told him I was thinking about going into biochemistry or microbiology. And he said, "You know Indian students are really successful in the art field and you might want to consider taking some courses there and see where your real talents are." And I thought, Oh, man, how many times have I heard this. I have no talents at all in art, I can't draw anything. But that's the attitude. And he also asked me, "Oh, by the way, we have a minority committee that you might want to be a part of." And I said, Oh great, because I was thinking, boy, there'd be some other American Indians. Well there were only two or three of us from Cherokee who were going over there at the time and I went to the minority meeting and it was all blacks. So here again to me the minority organization was interpreted to mean the black organization. It wasn't a minority organization because they didn't have American Indians in there.

And the other interesting thing was the dean of men never asked me to go to anything else like the science organization or even suggest that I join the biology club, things that I was interested in. He had a mindset already of what I was supposed to be. Well as a result of that, I don't think that I ever told anybody that I was Indian. There were students who knew me four or five years who never knew I was Indian because I didn't want to face what I'd heard from the few people that I had met. And I didn't want to be considered being different either and I think that's another thing that I faced too. Those that were scholarship recipients who were treated as though they were going to get their handouts. And I remember that from growing up especially on the reservation.

Well, I went on into service, I had to go into service during Vietnam, and through the service I kept thinking I know I'm going to go back to school because I know that I'm going to have to have more education and I thought that with my GI bill that would give me a chance to do that. Then I left the service and I was married and then I had to worry about I had to start a family, those kinds of things. So it wasn't until about nine years later, after I got out of the service. I came out of the service in 1970. I was very fortunate because I had a good personality and I could meet people and I just happened to meet a fellow who was the commissioner of OSHA and he invited me to go over and interview at Westinghouse Corporation. And I went over there and I had no idea of what I was going to do at that time except that I knew that I needed a job first. Ironically enough, I was really surprised, they hired me at Westinghouse Corporation, even though I only had the business degree

from Western Carolina, they hired me as an industrial relations staff assistant. And so I actually had my first full-time job in industry and, of course, people on the reservation kept wondering why I didn't come back to the reservation. The reason I didn't come back was because I had a good job.

from Western Carolina, they hired me as an industrial relations staff assistant. And so I actually had my first full-time job in industry and, of course, people on the reservation kept wondering why I didn't come back to the reservation. The reason I didn't come back was because I had a good job.

INTERVIEW WITH DON

Don: I went through the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) day school program for grade school then went to high school at a non-Indian school, a white high school. After high school I went to South Dakota State University and when I finished I joined the military service. While I was in the service, I taught ROTC at North Carolina State University and completed a Master's in Education, majoring in Adult and Community College Education. The after I retired from the service I completed my doctoral program through N.C. State University. Through those years I probably assessed what happened to me educationally. At the time of my younger years, I certainly wasn't assessing, wasn't conscious that there might be some educational problems that Indian kids faced. I think this sort of came later as I realized what had happened.

I'm a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, so we went to school on the reservation and we went to the elementary school by bus. Where I came from we spoke Sioux at home. The only time we spoke English was when we came to town or when we went to school. In class and on the playground we had to speak English because we were not allowed to speak Sioux. That in itself seemed to be a comfortable environment in the sense that it seemed like I was going to a different world. As soon as I left the playground and got off the bus I was back in my own world.

I didn't realize it at the time, which may be because of that mentality at that time, but I may not have really understood seriously what the teachers were trying to teach me because I sort of felt like it was two different places. Maybe I was really living in two worlds. I would go to class in the morning and come back in the afternoon, one world and then back to my own, and there was no direct connection to continue the learning and the activities that one does at the school. It was sort of forgotten and was just something I had to do the next morning. I sort of thought like that for many years.

The concept of English, math wasn't too bad, but English seemed difficult to understand. I don't remember social studies and science or that kind of thing. I just remember going to class, but language seemed to be just something different. English . . . memorize by rote, write it . . . if you got it right, fine, and if you didn't you just didn't, so I forgot about it. As a result, maybe that affected my other accomplishments in

science and social studies. I may not have had a good understanding of the concept by the time I reached high school level, but I didn't know that at the time.

By the time I got to high school level, which was a non-Indian setting, a public school system, I had a very difficult time. I didn't know anything about history, English, or science. I didn't know anything compared to what the non-Indian students knew. They seemed to transcend, to flow through their grades and coursework. I really had to struggle. I got through by memorizing everything and I did well. I was passed into the ninth grade on provision (it was the teacher's judgment). The teacher thought that I would be able to pick up and go on and didn't want to hold me back. Probably, normally I wouldn't have been passed or shouldn't have been passed, however, I gained speed as I went through high school and I ended up third top student. There were two girls ahead of me but I was the top boy. But I did that by sheer memorization - I just kept repeating it over and over until I understood it.

Then when I went to the university, English, social studies, the same sort of process started over again but at a higher level. I had a very difficult time but I managed to grind it out and I managed to do it. Curriculum is curriculum in the sense that curriculum is written material. The difference is in the teacher and the student who will learn from one.

Now looking back I think about two different cultures. When I was there the teachers were all non-Indian (white) in the day school. Later, after I left, they started getting teachers of Indian descent like they do now. They did not understand this language and manners. The language was difficult to understand because English, and also Sioux, is very irregular. It didn't make sense, there was no rhyme nor reason - you just sort of accepted it because that's what the teacher said. There was a big cultural difference. There was no relationship in teaching methodology, like you know English this is the way it is. If they knew Indian they could say well this is the way you say it in Indian and in English you say this, you know, kind of a parallel correlation. At that time, it was not a way of teaching, nowadays it is sort of a recognized way to do that, so that makes a big difference.

Now about manners, for example, if you wanted to get the teacher really upset, and the rule was you were not allowed to speak Lakota in the classroom, all you had

to do was to say something in Indian and the teacher would automatically think you were talking about her saying something bad. She'd come over and whack you on the head or on the hand or pull your ears and that would disrupt the whole class. The Indian students would do that just to disrupt the class, get some slack time, that was kind of a game that went on.

Later in life, I realized that was very much a cultural misunderstanding to do that and the end result was that the Indian student was taking up time, not learning, wasting time while doing that because they didn't understand what was going on. The Indian student was not learning because the teacher didn't understand that they didn't understand.

Where I come from the home language was Lakota and all the customs Lakota and you were an Indian and never thought yourself to be anything else. But the teacher thought of you or saw you as a student and thought you should be behaving like a white student in a different setting. So there's different perceptions and I don't know how much those perceptions interfered with learning and bringing about an integrated learning environment for the Indian student to learn from the curriculum, which is not Indian based but white society based. Education values, education theory are white society based, which is fine, that is not the complaint. At least I, as an individual, recognize that's the way it's got to be. The U.S. is a white world and that's the way it's got to be. I think my remark is that the Indian student was not brought to transcend between two cultures, see the direct connections and get on with the learning, and that can be done.

It wasn't when I went to school, we sort of had to figure that out later for ourselves. We adjusted our behavior to the white's behavior. Sometimes we adjusted by causing interruptions in the classroom which was not good for learning. The other serious part was that we didn't learn anything. Well I guess we did learn something, I guess by osmosis, but the serious part is that it affected our basic skills concepts which interfered with work at the high school level and even got more difficult at the college level. By the time I, as an individual, recognized this and learned enough and got caught up, I learned pretty much what I should have learned at the grade school level. I know that I was not doing very well because I didn't have my basic skills when I got to my doctoral program. I still felt that I was not happy with preliminary basic skills from grade school

through high school. My belief is that as an Indian student, by the time you get to college, you have to deal with the real world and those things that happened to you in the past you just have to deal with them.

I notice that with black students. Oriental students, they're very attentive, respectful, they go out and do what they're told in school, so probably in an American setting that fits in pretty good. Black students they also have a different culture and lifestyles are different, so sometimes this doesn't fit with the white teacher and her expectations. This is basically true with Indians. For a Lakota to have to get up in front of a class to recite in English when you don't speak English very well, it causes the rest of the class to laugh and you get upset and almost have a turmoil with your own culture for this embarrassing situation that you have been put into. When this happens, the teacher doesn't know what's going on and will get upset with us for causing the other students to laugh or with you for telling the other student to "shut your mouth." The teacher sees this as you not learning and not cooperating. The student in that situation is faced with a teacher who thinks you're either stupid or just not trying to learn, so either way you're in trouble. This carries over to the next time you have to recite in class so you become a little leery to get up or it carries over to the streets, but I don't think the white teachers at that time realized this was happening.

The other big thing that was a cultural difference was to be brought forward and to be corrected in public that you have done something wrong. At that time, it was a serious thing for a Lakota to be brought forward in public and be dressed down and corrected in front of his contemporaries by an older person. That's demeaning for a Lakota, right or wrong that's part of Lakota culture. In this situation the white teacher doesn't understand that this is a negativism in dealing with young people, even though it is a classroom setting. So that type of instructional methodology needs to be studied by white teachers when they have Indian students. At that time, if white teachers had understood that maybe, they wouldn't have corrected the student in front of the whole class, which was constructive criticism but it was still demeaning to the student. That situation could have been handled more as a group discussion, then that would have helped all the students' attitudes and improved class participation.

Later in life, I learned that we say a good leader normally doesn't punish a student who does something wrong

in from of the entire group. That's not just my opinion, that's leadership psychology. Normally you shouldn't do that because that's not the way to handle that type of thing.

I guess that in the elementary schools back then it was part of the culture to be criticized in front of the group. For the white students I guess that was normal for them, I guess that's how they learn. I'm not arguing that a student shouldn't receive constructive criticism but that should not be done in front of the group. After an experience like that you become a little suspicious of your teacher, you don't want to participate, you hide and try not to get involved in the teaching and what that causes is that the student sort of withdraws and does not become an active participant. Those are the things that I look back and say, "Gee, it would have been much more enjoyable if"

Where I came from, Indian parents really valued school. That was seen to be the magic thing to do, for the Indian parents to send their kids to school. They were very much in favor of going to school. At least in my case, I don't think my parents really understood what those activities really were that were going on in school, so that they could talk to us and say, "Hey look, those are white teachers and you're this; that's the way they behave and we behave like this; the white people they correct you in public and we don't believe like that but look, you're young and you have to learn to deal with that and we'll help you." But our parents didn't understand that part of that next phase which was of critical importance. Had they said things like that it might have helped us in school.

Not being able to speak Lakota we tried to figure out why and we just decided that was to get us used to speaking English. I guess, as an afterthought, we should have converged the two languages. We had to just push back the Lakota and you can't do that, and maybe that's a weakness in the curriculum in that sense. There was nothing to show how to use the Indian language to transcend as a basis for the English and pick it up from there, that way the student could connect or integrate. After all, in this world we do have Spanish speaking, German, Japanese and they have the same problem and now we recognize that.

I guess another factor was as Indians we get together, we associate with each other. I was the only Indian in high school and so as a result my friends were

all non-Indian and I became pretty much accepted. I was very much accepted for my athletic ability. I learned to compete to be accepted by my non-Indian peers, so that facilitated me to learn and to do better and to start looking along the way to going to college. Had I not done that it would have been questionable whether I would have gone to college or not. Back in the Indian school there was no discussing going on to college or on to doctoral programs, being a medical doctor or judge or nothing. I guess we never thought about that so maybe that's where the curriculum should say something. I guess we just assumed the white students would go on and maybe nowadays the Indian students are exposed to this. I never dreamed I'd leave the reservation and go on to college until I got to high school and saw all the white kids doing it. So I figured I'd do it too, because it seemed like it would be fun, not because I'd learn something but because it seemed like fun and I'd enjoy it. At that time, we didn't have a counselor to say you should go on and do this or "have you looked at this or that?." The white high school didn't have that so it wasn't a disadvantage of being Indian. My parents didn't go to college. All they said was go to school. What do you mean go to school? Elementary? High school? I guess they meant just keep going to school.

I think the peers really make the difference. I see with my kids when they associate with kids that do well they seem to pattern after that and those that don't do well, they seem to pattern after that. I think that's real. As far as education, maybe peer grouping may be a good way to get Indian students to think about the future. If you associate with a group that doesn't like school and doesn't want to go to college, more than likely that student is going to be influenced not to go to college and that's not limited to Indians, that's everyone. You become like those you associate with. That's a maxim that's applied to Indians but I think it's applicable to whites, blacks, everyone. To me that affected me very much. I saw my friends go to college so I went. I wasn't going to become a professor or an engineer, I just went because they went, but by doing that I got a college degree. I guess it was maybe a role model or models. At that time I didn't identify role models that I wanted to be like them. I guess they were my white friends who were going to college so I went with them, more of peer modeling than role modeling.

INTERVIEW WITH JIM

Jim: My education started with my grandparents in that I was raised by my grandparents and lived with them for about fourteen years on the reservation in South Dakota. I can't remember my grandmother ever talking English to me until the summer before I started first grade. One of the things that I remember about starting school was having some language difficulties. I guess I never really realized it until I got to about the sixth or seventh grade as I was watching other Indian students, first or second graders, get started and saw some of the difficulties that they were having. I guess when I was in first, second, or third grade and was having those problems, I must have thought that those were difficulties that everybody experienced or could experience.

It was not until I was in about the sixth or seventh grade when I saw other kids experiencing these same things that I realized there were some cultural differences. For example, we were not encouraged to talk about ourselves. But when I would go to school the teacher would want me to talk about myself. And another thing . . . when my grandparents would talk with me they talked slowly and when they asked me a question they didn't expect me to answer immediately. In the school, when the teacher asked me a question she expected me to answer right away and if I didn't answer immediately she went on to the next kid.

Another thing was that eye contact! That was a problem that followed me all the way through high school. The teacher or principal or whoever always wanted me to look them in the eye. I didn't realize it at the time but that, too, was a cultural difference. In the white culture if you can't look somebody in the eye that means you're not telling the truth, you're lying about something and also being disrespectful . . . but in the culture that I came from I was taught that one way you show respect for someone was to not look them in the eye. I really struggled with that one. It was not really until I became an adult, I guess when I was in college, that I began to realize what that was all about.

Some of my problems started when I was in grade school. It was a one room schoolhouse on the reservation and it was an open reservation so there were white people among the Indians so our school was half white and half Indian. For the most part we got along pretty well. But

now that I look back I realize that the problem was really with the teachers. The teachers didn't understand cultural differences. There was one incident that I can remember with these kids where we were supposed to hold hands and make a circle. One girl didn't want to take the hand of this one boy, his name was Steven Red Buffalo, and she didn't want to take his hand. The teacher told her to hold his hand but she wouldn't do it and this other little white girl said, "she's afraid she'll get dark like him." This must have been in about the second or third grade. Finally she did take hold of his finger.

I remember there was a teacher in grade school who really taught me how to write and how to speak in public, at least to speak in the white culture. I later learned that you speak differently in the white culture and the Indian culture.

Always it was my grandmother who was encouraging me. My grandfather was there, too. He was always saying "You can do it. You can do it. You better bring home a good report card." But my grandmother did it in a more creative way, a more constructive way. She'd say someday you'll be a minister or a doctor and I used to wonder why she said that.

After I became an adult, I realized that those were the only male models that she ever came into contact with, the ministers in the churches and the doctors at the Indian Health Service Hospital. She never came into contact with professors (the teachers at the reservation school were all women) or attorneys so the models she knew about, ministers and doctors, were what she would say I was going to be. I think I became a minister in part because of that.

That was part of it . . . when I was growing up I always wanted to be an Episcopal priest. There's kind of a spiritual reason for that I won't go into now. When I was real small I became very ill and the doctors thought I was going to die. There was a group of Presbyterians, Indian Presbyterians, who came together and they had a prayer meeting and they prayed for my healing and part of the prayer - this old man prayed that if I was to be healed I would go into Christian service. I believe that had a part. In addition to that, when I was growing up all of our Episcopal priests were Indian. They were good speakers and they really knew how to relate to Indian people. They were my models. And so you see, if you put that old man's prayer for my healing along with the models

and the influence of my grandmother on me - they were my models.

When I was twenty-four years old and was still in the Air Force I was going to get out of the Air Force and go to college and the seminary but we had a white bishop in South Dakota who refused to ordain Indians. So that's why I never became an Episcopal priest and never went back on the reservation to work in that capacity. So the models were the Episcopal priests and my grandmother encouraged me to get an education.

Way, way back I always wanted to get a college education and I don't know where that came from either. This was even before I knew anybody that had a college education. Our teachers in that one room schoolhouse didn't have a college education. They would go to college in the summer. They had to take a couple of college courses at a Teachers' College to maintain their certification but they weren't college graduates.

E: Was this a Bureau school?

Jim: No, this was just a rural school. So I never knew anybody who graduated from college.

When I was in the eighth grade I became very ill, in March of the eighth grade, and I was very ill for three months. I went into the hospital and I stayed in the hospital for three months. I had a nerve problem - back then they called it St. Vitus Dance. I lost control of my right leg and my right arm and the right side of my face. So I went to the hospital and I was there for about three months and when I got out I went up to the country. My oldest brother took me up there. I took this test and I passed the test, so that's how I made it through the eighth grade. He left me at the court house and I took that test and I passed it and she gave me my eighth grade diploma and I went walking out of that court house. I remember that day, I still remember it. I went out the back door and there was a long flight of steps there and I was standing waiting for my brother. I sat down on the steps and I looked at that eighth grade diploma and I remember I almost cried and I said to myself someday I'm going to get a college education. I still don't know where that came from.

Then I went on to high school and just experienced a whole lot of racism in high school. I think I was able to deal with that and pretty well accept it because being an Indian and living on the reservation and going to

school right on the edge of the reservation there were always a lot of white people around and we always experienced a lot of stuff like that so we pretty much accepted that. But the problem was I couldn't see any relevance - the things they were teaching in high school, you know, there didn't seem to be any relevance.

I remember wanting a job. I had some financial problems and I remember going out looking for a job. I knew when I walked in that nobody was going to hire me because I was an Indian and yet I continued to look. There were twelve of us that started in high school. I started going through ninth grade and went into the beginning of the tenth grade. I didn't have any money and I needed clothes and so on so finally I quit school. So the second year that I started the tenth grade I got sick again and was in the hospital for about two months. When I got out I was so far behind I couldn't get any teachers to help me. I went to two teachers and all they did was kind of read me the riot act and said I had to get caught up. Because I was in isolation in the hospital they wouldn't allow my books to be brought up to me because the doctors said if they were brought into the room they would have to be burned when I left, so I laid there and couldn't do my school work. When I got out of the hospital it was almost Thanksgiving and my report card was all incompletes.

I remember sitting in study hall and nobody was studying, in that school they never studied, and someone threw something from across the room. It came from my direction and I got blamed for it. That was always real comic - somebody would do something and the Indians would get blamed for it - but that was also real comic - when they didn't know who did it they always blamed us. But I also remember sitting in school and asking questions and teachers used to get rid of us that way because I was asking questions and that was . . . I look back now and realize that was just part of their racism and probably not only their racism but part of their image of Indians in that we were supposed to just sit there and listen and not ask questions.

I got blamed for that in study hall and they kept me after school. That teacher who was in charge of the study hall gave me this paper and told me to write, I don't know, a 2-3,000 word essay on something. So I wrote an essay on why I quit school. I wrote it and I gave it to him and I walked out before the hour was up. I always wished that I had a copy of that because I left school that day and I never went back any more. I look back now

and I think - WOW - nobody even followed up on that. Nobody even came to the house - nothing - just one less Indian student to deal with. There were twelve of us in that high school and only two of us graduated. I wasn't one of them. And do you know there are only two of us that are still alive!

I mean that's the whole environment! Something happened, something very personal happened that was very, very racist related when I was sixteen years old and that was really one of the factors that got me to thinking about leaving home and joining the Air Force and so on. As soon as I turned seventeen I joined the Air Force and I really went out there and denied my Indian identity for a long time. I didn't want anybody to know I was an Indian and didn't talk about it. Then several years later I came to terms with it and decided that if being Indian was a problem, it was that man's problem and other people who believe like he does. So that's when I began to reclaim my Indian identity.

Then when I got out of the Air Force I decided to go to college. And the thing that I could never understand when I was in college, and I used to ask about it and ask about it . . . what about Indians, what about American Indian people. I took a lot of classes in Sociology and I took a class called Sociology of Minorities and it talked about everybody but Indians. In all of these classes I used to ask them "What about Native Americans, what about Native American families?" and all those professors would look at me and say they didn't know. Nobody knew. So that was one side . I was thirty-two years old so I guess I was a bit more mature than most Indian students who go to college. I majored in Sociology and minored in Psychology and as we were talking about thins in Sociology or Psychology, they'd say things and I'd say yeah that's me or no, that's not me, you know. Then they'd talk about something else and I'd say no, no, that's not me.

I sort of went through all of this and when I finished my college degree I was more Indian than I was when I started college, at least in terms of my awareness. I was able to say for me this is what it means to be an Indian, for me this is the difference, this is why I do this or this is why I say that because that's the way we Indian people are but I used to be able to go to the other side and say white people do this, do that because of this and that. One of the things I discovered is that there are a lot of white people out there who really don't know why they do things or why they say things because that's

the way they've been raised, that's all they know. They live in the dominant culture and they really don't have to know why they do what they do, or they do it just because they're "supposed to."

One of the things that I discovered . . . this all took place in Michigan. There was an Indian reservation not too far from there and I used to go out there and visit those people all the time, so I had contact with Indian people when I was going through college - Central Michigan University. There were Indian students on campus so I used to associate with Indians.

Then I finished college and started to do my seminary work. That was really interesting. When I look back now I say it was interesting, but at the time it was disappointing. This was in the middle seventies and I went to seminary in Evanston, Illinois. That was during the time when AIM (American Indian Movement) was still on the move, was still active, was getting a lot of attention from the media and having an impact on events. We took a class called the Prophets - The Old Testament Prophets and Social Action. One day we got on a bus and we went down to the Native American Center in Chicago and we visited with a young man there from Rosebud. He spoke to the whole class. One of the issues that he focused on was the effort that was being put forth to prevent Indian children from being adopted by white families. He made it very clear that they recognized that perhaps these white families could provide a lot better materially for these Indian kids, but that they saw it as a kind of cultural genocide in that eventually . . . you know, we marry the people we associate with so they'll marry white people and their kids - they'll marry white people and pretty soon they'll all be gone. Some of the students there got upset about this and I think that they rubbed him the wrong way, too, so he started saying "Well you racist . . . this . . . that . . . this is how you racist people see it - and every time he used the word racist the students were getting more and more angry. And of course partly because of the kind of efforts he was talking about the Indian Child Welfare Act was passed.

So we went back to the class and, boy, I'll tell you, after having that discussion they really came down on that guy saying things like "if he doesn't like it why doesn't he go back to the reservation" or "well if he doesn't like white people . . ." So I sat there for a while and pretty soon I spoke up and I said "Hey, you know you're talking about my people!" For the first time some of these guys became aware that I was Indian and the

others who realized that I was an Indian realized that I was taking a stand. So the rest of that summer half of that class wouldn't speak to me, wouldn't eat with me, they wouldn't associate with me.

E: And this was in the seminary?

Jim: This was in the seminary! The other half of the class kind of went overboard because they were trying to compensate for the behavior of the others, you know. So we'd be going through the cafeteria line they'd tell me to come and sit with them and we'd go over to a table and if some of those other guys were sitting there they'd get up and leave and go to another table. I look back now and it's interesting and kind of humorous, but it wasn't at the time.

So then, I think especially because I identified with him being that he was a Rosebud Sioux and I told them that I was a Yankton Sioux - and I told them that he is really one of my people - you're talking about my people when you say those things - boy, they really crawled all over me in that class. I remember we had a black professor who later became a bishop in the Methodist Church. He sat there and he listened to them and I was watching him and finally I remember his lips started to quiver and he said, "Let me say something." The room got quiet. He really had to pull himself together because I don't know if he was ready to cry or if he got angry, but he simply said, "We have a just church, but it lacks so much mercy" and nothing more was said in class about that topic that day.

So that was my experience in the seminary! From there I went back home. There was a Methodist bishop who persuaded me to return to South Dakota because he had a job for me out there. So I went for an interview for this church, West River, not close to a reservation at all. It was nice - nice parsonage, nice people - but after I had finished the interview I looked around and said "No, this is not for me." I don't know if that was a good move or not since they had already voted for me to come there, but I called the bishop and I told him that I didn't feel that was the place for me. He said, "Well I have one other appointment - two small churches, one about fifty miles from Sioux Falls and one about twelve miles from Mitchell, not far from your reservation." So without even going for an interview I told him I would take it.

So the district superintendent went to the two churches and told them they were going to get an Indian

minister and the committee voted and there were six of them on the committee and three voted in favor of my coming and three of them were against it. They just said an Indian minister will not work here, it just won't work. The district superintendent never shared that with me so I went to those two churches and was there for two years, so it worked. During those two years two of the people who had voted against me came to see me and they told me. They voted against the idea of an Indian minister coming there and they said we just did not think it would work, we thought the cultural differences would be too great, but they said that they had been wrong. So I shared that with them the last Sunday that I was there. I said some of you thought that this wouldn't work, but it did work and I hope we've all learned something from this.

Then I went on and got my Master's Degree in Counseling. One thing that I discovered, even at the Master's level, nobody knew anything about counseling Indian people. I remember sitting in class one time where they were teaching counseling skills and the instructor said "when you feel like your client is not working then what you do is you stop and you sit there and remain silent. If the silence lasts long enough then the tension will build within the client and when it gets to a certain level the client will start working again in order to eliminate or lower the tension or the stress level." He said. "It works every time!" I told him it won't work with Native Americans because Native Americans are used to sitting in silence. I said "if you try to pull that on a Native American they'll sit there for the whole fifty minutes in silence without any stress or tension or frustration, they'll just sit there. This was the first time he had ever heard this. He didn't disagree with me, he just had to say, "Well I don't know, you may be right." All through that counseling class, again, on the master's level, nobody knew anything about counseling with Indian people.

Well, what I've since discovered now that I'm in my Ph.D. program is that there is a lot of material out there that has been published about Indian people, but so much of it is not accurate. A wild guess, but I don't think I'm far from wrong, would be that probably about 98% of everything that's been written out there has been written by white people and it's from a white perspective and there's a lot of things that they really don't understand about Indian people. The other thing that I have found that when Indian people start writing about Indian people, you have to write it the white way. It has to fit into the white theory, white concepts, white constructs and so

on and some of these rules, guidelines, really prevents the Indian person from writing in such a way that you can really describe what's going on with Indian people. The Indians that I talk with who are doing research say they give in to that just so they can get through, can get their degree. I really think that the whole education system is really missing out as long as they impose those kind of rules and guidelines upon Indian scholars. Maybe there are some white scholars out there who understand this and would write differently if they were given the freedom to write differently. Maybe it's a system that by making us write according to those rules says "We don't understand Indian people." There's no proof of it. I don't know if that's ever going to change.

I have to be careful what I say because I don't want them to think I'm pushing my book, but I really think that researchers need to read my book and some of the other books like my book and Lakota Woman - some of the books that are more in the form of art than research. I think they need to read poetry written by Indian people, for example, and books written about the lives of Indian people before they start putting together instruments to use on Indian people. These books will help them see that we really are different people, we have different values and behaviors, that what success means to the white middle class isn't necessarily success for Indian people and vice versa.

I was talking with a friend of mine who works at the University of South Dakota. He's sort of like me, you know, he lives out there in the white world all the time and goes back home now and then. He said, "I always have to be careful when I go back home because I realize that I live and function a lot in the white world. I go home and I talk to all these guys at home - some of them are so intelligent and I think to myself 'Wow, they can really do a lot with their life.' I went home one weekend and I said to my mother, 'You know mom (he said he mentioned somebody's name) is really a smart person. He could really do a lot with his life, he could really make something of himself.'" And he said " My mother said, 'Now, now he mows my lawn every week and he mows your aunt's lawn every week, then he goes over to your grandma's and he mows her lawn.' And I decided that as far as my mother was concerned he was somebody, and that he was a success and he was doing something with his life."

That's an example of where what that man was doing with his life wouldn't fit into the white concept of

somebody who was successful, but he was successful apparently because he felt like he was making a contribution. He was seen by his extended family, the community, as doing something worthwhile, so in their eyes he was successful. Now that man will probably never get an article published in a journal, but still in his eyes and in the eyes of the community he's a success.

One of the things that I found, like I said earlier, white people do things and they don't know why they do them. Well I've discovered that there are some Indian people who are the same way. You go on the reservation and they've done that all their lives and their parents did it, their grandparents did it and said it and there they are - they don't really know why they've done it either, that's just the way they've been raised. For me the more aware I have become of my cultural heritage, the more my identity is rooted in my culture, I find the further up in the white society I can go without fear of surrendering my cultural identity. I guess that's why I'm here in the PhD program. I know who I am. I know where I come from. I can do all these things without the fear of losing my identity. I've done some work with some Cherokee college students here. I took them through a process that enabled them to become aware of who they are in a cultural context and we found that those students who went through this process were able to function more effectively on campus. For example we practice what we call non-interference. I guess that's really a part of me. You know, my wife being a white person . . . maybe I'll be talking with you about something. We'll be talking and I'll go home and say to my wife Ellen said this or Ellen said that, and she'll say well did you ask her this and that and I'll say, "No, if she had wanted me to know she would have said so."

INTERVIEW WITH ROSE

Rose: My first experience with what they call Indian education . . . when I was growing up, when I was about two or three years old, I used to ride with my grandfather. He used to get in his wagon early in the morning, about four or five o'clock, he would hitch up his wagon and his team and he would go around the countryside . . . he would go probably about ten or fifteen miles out into the country and pick up all the kids in the neighborhood along the road and he would take them to the main highway where the school bus would be waiting. He probably picked up about fifteen to twenty kids in his route every morning. My grandmother would fix the biscuits and stuff and we would go pick up all the kids by daybreak. We'd meet the school bus on the highway probably around eight or nine o'clock. Then in the afternoon we would go back and pick up the kids from the school bus and just before dark in the evening we'd get back to the house and my grandmother would have supper ready for us when we got back. I remember the kids used to sing all these songs and talk about their work and different things that they did at school. I always remember the big yellow school bus sitting on the road.

When I was five, almost ready to turn six, I moved back to my mother and father's house and then I had to go to the Bureau schools or what we used to call boarding school at the time. When I started school I didn't speak any English and it was hard because everywhere we went they would get mad at us and if we talked our language then we used to get hit. One teacher had this big long yardstick that if she even thought you were going to speak your own language then she would hit you across the head with it. My brothers and my sisters had to live at the boarding school because they were in the elementary or junior high schools or high schools. When I started school I was in kindergarten, so I could stay at home with my parents. Half the time, I didn't even see my brothers and sisters until the weekend when my dad would go and pick them up at the boarding school.

My sister used to wear these funny green outfits with navy blue knee high socks and brown penny loafers. All the girls dressed the same so they had to change their hairstyles to tell each other apart.

I used to fight with the teachers because I didn't want to stop speaking my language. I learned how to speak

my language from my grandmother and my grandfather and they had passed away when I went back to live with my mother and my father and it was kind of hard for me to just have to let go of everything. I was about nine years old when I really learned how to speak English good. I could read but I couldn't speak the language that good to read out loud. I would always get into it with the teachers because they wanted me to stand up and read in front of the class and some of them were good because they learned how to speak English early and I was still learning how so it was kind of hard and if I didn't do it then the teachers would get mad at us and put us on detention. The first Indian teacher that I had ever seen or that I knew that worked there was when I was in the third grade and by the time I reached high school she became the principal of the same elementary school that I had gone to. Her name was Rebecca Alberts . . . she was my third grade teacher. Then there was another Indian lady, I can't remember her first name but we called her Mrs. Ross. She was an older lady. Those were the only Indian teachers that were teaching then. The rest were all white, except for a couple of black teachers.

I had one white teacher whose daughter had been my second grade teacher and the mother tutored me a lot to help me learn how to speak English. She ended up being my daughter's teacher. Then I had a social studies teacher and he was pretty good. He was very understanding toward the Indian kids. A lot of the Indian kids came from families where there was alcoholism and he understood that and he helped a lot of the kids so that they could finish high school. There wasn't that many of the Bureau teachers that were devoted to there students like that. There were very few of them back when I was going to school. Those two have done a lot to help Indian kids. The social studies teacher started teaching fourth grade and later got moved to the high school where he taught government. He died last year. After his death, a lot of kids dropped out of school. Teachers like that . . . that's the kind of impact they have on the kids.

I didn't go to school on the reservation or have anything to do with Indian education from probably 1971-72 school year until 1974-75 school year when I started Red Cloud Indian School.

When I was in junior high I went to school in Rapid City at the school at the Air Force base. I went there for two and a half years and then my mom and my dad told me I had to move home and go to school back there. I told them that I wouldn't go back to the Bureau school because

I didn't want to go to boarding school. For me it just was a lot of bad memories and everything, growing up in that school, not really having the freedom of being around your family or anything. So I told them that the only way I would go to school there was if they would let me go to Red Cloud. They let me go home and go to school at Red Cloud Indian School so I went there and I graduated in the fall of 1976.

At Red Cloud there was a Jesuit minister who talked to me a lot and kind of helped me out a lot. When I was going to get kicked out of school by some of the teachers and the principal, he kind of stuck up for me and let me go back to school. They were going to kick me out because I spoke up about their different religions and churches and the way they believed and the way they taught. At that time I was doing a lot of research about the Catholic religion, Episcopal religion, Presbyterian religion . . . all the different churches that had come in there to the reservation. When I started speaking up about it they didn't like it, so they were going to put me out. But I talked to the superintendent and he listened to what I had to say and he read the reports that I had and he asked where I got the information. He checked the information and he let me back in school. He talked with me quite a bit about a lot of things that were happening with the education systems and the government. He told me the only way that we could actually get ahead was through education and that a lot of people are scared of people who speak out about things.

He said that he would like to help me and he got me a scholarship to Marquette University where I went to school for a year and a half. I had a two year scholarship. That school is in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Catholic church controlled it at one time but now the state of Wisconsin is responsible for part of it. I gave up after a year and a half because of trying to live off the reservation and trying to deal with the different things. Living off the reservation was just different and it was taking time to get used to it. I lived off campus because I had Leticia (her daughter) with me. We lived in student housing.

I went back and I didn't like living at home so I enrolled in the University of Colorado at Boulder. I went to school there for one semester then I went back home and went to work for the government. I worked for the Department of Social Services. After a few years I just kind of got into the routine of the drinking and partying and everything, due to the stress of my job. I worked for

Child Protective Services in the Department of Social Services and it's kind of hard when you're taking your nephews and nieces away from your cousins. It just got to be really, really stressful and I ended up starting to party and drink with all of them so I had to give up my job. My escape was the Marine Corps.

My husband had died in February of that year (1980) and in August of that year I joined the Marine Corps and I left. I was stationed in Okinawa, Japan for three years and then I was stationed in Camp Lejeune for a year and a half. Then I got out and moved to Charlotte.

I never really knew what Indian education was about until I moved to Charlotte. It was never referred to as Indian education before . . . it was always referred to as the "Bureau schools". Then I worked with my kids through the Indian Education Program in Charlotte. When I started working with the Indian Education in Charlotte, going through some of the paper work, it was the same kind of paper work that my sister had to do because she works for the Bureau schools. It wasn't really that different except that here it was called Indian Education.

In some ways it helps people . . . it has its bad parts and its good parts. Its set up to help the education of the Indian kids and in some ways it does do that - it does help them. In some ways I think its' kind of abused because some of the kids that really need the help aren't really helped.

E: Right now you're talking about programs for Indian children who live off the reservation?

Rose: Yeah, well like the way it's referred to in Indian Country it's called the Urban Indian Education. I see how the Bureau schools work and I see how the Indian Education system out here works and I see how they are just totally different.

E: Talk about that a little.

Rose: Well . . . the Bureau schools fund everything, they get some state and county funding but the majority is run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It is more, they have programs that actually go in there and help the students . . . it's the only kind of education that the Indian kids on the reservations get. . . like where I come from, the state of South Dakota, it's practically the only kind of education the Indian kids get. It's really different . . . they all help each other, they all work

together . . . some of them are good teachers and some are not so good but they push each other to where the children are actually learning something. Here in the urban areas my kids went to urban schools and they went to Bureau schools whatever my kids start lacking in, I see I,m the only one there to push them. There's no one else to push them and they end up where their grades drop. Whereas when they were going to the Bureau school, there's always that push there, whether it's at home or teachers or anything.

E: And the kids help each other . . . ?

Rose: And the kids help each other whereas here the kids are constantly against each other . . . there's always some kind of competition in school or some of the kids reflect the social life that their families lead. White kids don't mix with black kids and Indian kids don't mix with anyone else and so forth. Working with the Indian Education systems here, it all depends on who you know and how much you know. Some of these Indian kids having lived in Fayetteville and in Charlotte . . . it's one of those things where they're only going to help those of their own. They have their little cliques and their little groups and then . . . when it comes to federally recognized Indian kids, they want your name on the list . . . they're going to come hunt you down to get your numbers on the list, but when it comes to programs they never come looking for you. You have to go look for the programs to help . . . usually the kids that are in the programs are the ones that are in those little cliques.

I've been in the school systems here in North Carolina probably at least a good ten years and it's just been that way the whole time. If you fit in, you get help. . . if you don't fit in then "I'm sorry, we'll have to see what we can do," or "I'll try to see what's going on and I'll give you a call." You'll never hear from them unless you call them and stay on them. It's really different. Back home if your child has a problem the teacher calls you up and says if you can't come, I'll come to you and we'll discuss this and get this straightened out. There's a lot of alcoholism on the reservation and a lot of drug abuse these years now but you have a lot more teachers who are caring and understanding towards the kids, whether they are white or Indian. They've got a lot more Indian teachers now than we did when I was growing up and they're willing to work with the kids under any circumstances.

They never label your children as learning disabled or having learning problems or anything like that, all the children are equal in all matters. There's no "He has a learning disability so he needs to be here" or "He's a problem child so he stays there." All the children are put in a classroom equally. If they see that one child has a problem somewhere, then they focus on that problem and they try to teach all the kids to focus on that problem, too, so that the child doesn't feel like he is set different from the rest of the class.

But in the urban schools you have a label on your child as ADD, LD or whatever and then they are put to the side in a different group in your own classroom. whereas these kids who are more advanced will make these kids feel inferior, they kind of lose their self esteem, they lose whatever they feel good about themselves. Then you have problems where they don't want to go to school, they don't want to do this or that.

The Bureau schools have a lot of dropouts cause when I went to the schools there were a lot of dropouts. I started out in a class my tenth grade year with about two hundred students and by the end of the year we only had one hundred and ten. It's a big dropout rate and it's still a big dropout rate in all the classes but I have never seen so many really bright students, as I have here in Charlotte, that just totally give up. The kids that give up have learning disabilities or have a problem of some sort where they feel like no one is there to help them and so they just give up.

E: So they've been singled out or labeled . . .

Rose: Yeah, if they're singled out or labeled then they don't feel like they want to go back to school anymore . . . and it starts out at a very early age here. I'm talking at home about big dropout rates in high school but here you have kids dropping out in third or fourth grade, that are dropping out just like when I was in high school. When I was in high school it was during the time that the American Indian Movement and they were having all the civil rights protest and stuff going on and that was one reason why a lot of them dropped out. One reason was because of all of the white teachers that were teaching at the time and all the problems that they had that the whites were more superior than the Indian people and that's a lot of the reason that they dropped out. Then later a lot of them went back, and after they started Oglala Lakota College a lot of them got degrees.

But you look at these little children here dropping out in the third or fourth grade saying "I don't want to be here because nobody likes me" and they have that attitude. I was sitting there talking to one of the girls in the Indian Education Program that works on the Parent Committee and I told her that it's really sad that these tiny little kids are already saying "I don't want to go to school, I don't feel good about going to school". Not only do they face the problems of the future, these little kids have more problems to face than I ever thought I would have faced when I was little. In the third grade, I was thinking about having a good time playing, riding bikes and everything else and these kids are sitting here in the same grade thinking "I don't want to be here, I don't want to do this because there's nothing out there for me." I want to say you're just a child, you can't be sitting here thinking like that, you're just a little kid. But there's a lot of little kids out there that have that attitude, a lot of little Indian kids.

Robeson County has the biggest Indian population and it also has the biggest dropout rate. Lack of attendance - and these are children in the elementary grades . . . I used to think about the kids in the high school level, but if they have this attitude in the elementary level it's really bad.

E: In the Bureau schools now, what kind of changes do you see going on?

Rose: They just built a new high school back home because the old building had been condemned about ten years ago, so they just finally got a new one.

When I was back home last month, everybody was talking. A lot of the funding is being cut and there's going to be a lot of the teachers cut this year from the school system. The kids are kind of upset about it because the problems that they've had are always their problems . . . they have the same dropout rate, the same problems that they've always has in the school systems . . . that just never seems to change. But now you have a lot more students that are wanting to go to college, wanting to get out there and do more but with a lot of the funding being cut, you're looking at . . . The way we were talking back home it looks like 60% of their funding is going to be cut which means that they're only going to operate on 40% of what they normally run which means how many of these kids are actually going to be educated? The kids back home have more of an attitude that is positive like I want to get there, I want to do this but it seemed like

this year they were just dragging to school because they were hearing not only on the radio but in the newspapers and everywhere how much their schools are going to be cut. Even their transportation is being cut. A lot of these kids have to ride the bus fifty miles to school and some of those buses will be cut so it will take them even longer to get to school. Some of the bus drivers will be cut. My brother is a bus driver and he says that by December they will only be operating with half the number of drivers that they have had over the years. He said that his bus route was from Kyle to Sharps and Porcupine to Pine Ridge but it's going from Porcupine to Batesland to Allen and then down to Kyle and then into Sharps and back into Porcupine through Wounded Knee and into Pine Ridge.

E: Let me be sure . . . did you say Porcupine to Batesland then Allen? That makes no sense.

Rose: Not only that, there will be a minibus to bring the kids from Manderson to Wounded Knee to meet his bus. There will be only one bus to pick up both elementary and high school kids from all those districts to take them to the Bureau school in Pine Ridge. He lives in Porcupine so he will have to leave his house at four a.m. and pick up the first kids in Batesland by five a.m. That's a long bus ride and some of the kids probably won't even want to be in school by the time they get there. He said it's been hard enough to go by Sharps and get those kids into Pine Ridge by eight o'clock. The new route will be about a hundred miles to cover one way.

He said that's how bad they're cutting everything. Some of the programs that they had for the exceptional children, for the disabled kids, they won't have any more because they cut out the buses for the disabled. They cut the funding for the handicapped buses, so those students won't even be going to school this year unless some private agency comes through with some money to operate this year.

Red Cloud Indian School was funded by the state and part by Indian Education and part by donations but they said that the donations have fallen off and they're going to be cut and that this might be the last year that they operate. So that will be another six or seven hundred kids that they'll have to place in another school someplace. The schools are already crowded. Seven Bureau schools are supposed to be shut down in the state of South Dakota this year. The way everybody is talking they could be all on Pine Ridge Reservation. It sounds like they

could cut out all the district schools. So those district schools will be focusing more on Pine Ridge so that's going to put more pressure on the buses when they're already cut anyway. They have been running six buses from the eastern and middle part of the reservation and they are being cut to two. A lot of funds are being cut and it doesn't look good. Classes are going to be overcrowded if the kids even make it to school. Most of the district schools are elementary schools. Over here people complain if their kids are on a bus for fifty minutes but there we have kids who have to travel fifty to a hundred miles one way just to be able to go to school.

There's a possibility that a lot of the funds are going to be cut from Oglala Lakota College. Most of OLC is run by the grants that the kids get from the government (financial aid) so if they cut all of that it cuts a lot of the money that OLC operates on then how many of those kids are going to be able to finish or even go to college.

It looks hard but a lot of the people have positive attitudes about it. The older people are saying well we can educate our own, we can donate our time, we don't have anything but time so lets all stop and turn it around. They're having their meetings and if they can do that it'll work. But it's going to take a lot of work from a lot of people. A lot of the teachers who started working this year are working without pay. Some of the teachers don't know when they will be paid. At the beginning of the school year there were about forty-five teachers in the Bureau system that were working without pay.

Urban Indians worry about losing these Indian Education Programs but even after all those programs are gone the schools will still be there. We're talking about situations where for lots of kids on the reservation the Bureau schools are their only hope of getting an education.

My sister is assistant principal of a Bureau school on Rosebud (reservation). Because the school is small, they probably have about two hundred kids, they know they are on the list to be cut. They say they will load up the kids every morning and take them to the nearest county school. That will take a lot of people working together and it will be hard because so many programs are being cut. The tribe is going to be cut. By the first of the year the tribe is going to download it's personnel system from three hundred and eighty employees to one hundred and seventy-five. So you're talking about over two hundred employees who will be out of a job. When

the US Department of Agriculture surplus warehouses run out, the commodity program will be over. So they won't have that any more. Then with this new welfare reform . . . there are no jobs there. The jobs have been through the Bureau or the tribe. They are saying that within two to three years they are going to close down all the Bureau offices on all the reservations. If they do that look at all the people that will be affected. The police department is run by the Bureau. The schools are run by the Bureau. The hospitals are run by the Bureau. All the way around it doesn't look good. People on the reservation have become dependant on the government so now the government is trying to wean the people off. But these are treaties that the government has signed and now they are going back on their words once again.

E: Other than the budget crisis, what would you consider to be issues in Bureau education, when you were in school or in the last ten to fifteen years? For instance when we lived there the tribe was really pushing to get more Indian teachers. When they found out I had a college degree, I was urged to substitute whenever possible and eventually was recruited for the Teacher Corps Program.

Rose: That's still one of the biggest issues . . . it has been for as long as I can remember. When I was going to school they wanted Indian teachers and they fought for them. That's how eventually we got the teachers that we had like Mrs. Alberts and Mrs. Ross. Mrs. Ross's husband was a teacher so they urged her to be a teacher. She was a good teacher but because of her age she didn't teach very long. They have a lot of Indian teachers now, at least a whole lot more than what we had. When I was in high school I kind of laughed about it. Back when I started school I wasn't allowed to speak my own language, but when I was in high school they had Lakota teachers and it was a requirement that you take the language class to graduate high school. I said it's funny how you go ten years and there's a big difference.

Another one of the issues is the way stories are told, the way the history is written. Teaching the children the history the way it should have been told instead of the way it's being taught now.

Those are the issues that have always been there and will probably always be there, especially if the cuts in the programs result in a lot of Indian children not being able to get their education. It sounds like it's going to go back to where only the ones who have money will be able to get an education and that will leave out

the Indian population. They will not be able to have the education that is given to them now. So that means we will go back to having fewer and fewer educated Indian people.

It's not just that we need Indian educators but we also need Indian physicians and Indian businesses and the only way they can do that is through the education.

E: Remember the brochure that we got about a conference in Durham on Medical Aspects of Addiction that neither of us was able to attend? I plan to contact the doctor from Duke who was presenting on fetal alcohol syndrome to see if I can get some information. Something that strikes me as a problem or issue is behavior . . . I can remember when I was teaching out there feeling that there was sometimes something that was not quite right about the behavior of some of the students. For the most part I was teaching sixth, seventh, and eighth graders and I noticed that some seemed to have very short attention spans. Although this was a fairly new experience, I had spent one year as a long term substitute teacher for third grade and several months with fourth grade students in Philadelphia. Even though these were much older students, many had trouble paying attention, some had trouble sitting still. The kids came to school because they wanted to be there and seemed eager to learn but some just got so frustrated. In going through the research and looking at references to teaching styles and learning styles, the high dropout rates . . . and yes you have the poverty and the problems at home . . . something in me says, maybe because I know with certain kids there was a problem with alcoholism at home, I'm beginning to wonder if one of the issues that has really affected the education is fetal alcohol syndrome or effect.

Rose: I know what you're saying. I sit there and I look back to when I was growing up with my grandmother and my grandfather. We used to go all over the countryside and yes there was drinking. I remember my grandmother used to say "We can't go there because they're drinking." At the time I never knew what the term drinking meant because I'd never been around that stuff. When I was going to school we had handicapped kids, but when I was growing up I had never seen any handicapped or what they classified then as retarded children. I had never come across any adults who were handicapped or retarded or who had any kind of physical disabilities. My grandmother was that type of person who would go to visit and her kind of visiting was that you would stay for two days and visit everybody along the way and on the way back. I don't remember seeing kids

like that or experiencing anything like that or people talking about hyperactive kids or anything like that.

Then I went to the Bureau schools and we never had any learning disabled or handicapped kids until I left and I came back. Then I noticed that there were some little kids - out of a population of five thousand Indian people there were seven little kids who had something wrong with them. They had some type of disability. One little boy who was really hyper and curious about everything was labeled as a disabled child. I had never seen kids like that before. And it's really funny to turn around and look at the population of Indian people at that time. This was in the late 60's. To turn around and look back at it after all these years, they've never had classrooms for kids like that because they never had kids like that. I'm related to probably 85% of the reservation and I never saw children that way. In growing up, I never saw any of the Indian children like that until then. And these were little kids who were nine, ten, seven years old and they had a short lifespan. By the time I was in high school, the majority of these kids did not live.

So is that part of the fetal alcohol syndrome? These kids did come from families that drank quite a bit. I remember my grandparents talking about these families drinking. Now is that part of that or where did all of this come from because they're starting to find a lot of children who have learning disabilities. If you go down to the reservation now you find a lot of very hyper kids. Kids that have to constantly be doing something all the time, into something going here going there and it's from sun up to sun down. You're talking about fifteen hours of the day these kids are going and we were never like that. I would go to bed when the sun went down with my grandmother and get up early in the morning.

E: On reservations drinking has been a problem, it's been a way to cope, a crutch, something to numb the harsh realities of everyday existence for generations.

Rose: But also these children were taught to drink at a very early age. Working with the Department of Social Services, we would pick up one year old and two year old kids who were drunk because their parents had been drinking and they had nothing else to feed those kids so they would put beer or wine in the baby's bottle and give it to them. So they have been taught to drink this stuff at a very early age. If they have been given this stuff as infants they develop a taste for it. Most alcoholics will say they develop a craving for it, then it turns into

the alcohol abuse and it keeps going and it's a cycle that keeps going around and around.

Doctors that I have talked with say that a child can be born with effects from alcohol even if it was the grandparents who were heavy drinkers. So these babies who were given alcohol, even if they never drink as adults, can have children who suffer the effects of their grandparents' drinking.

E: I look at some of the studies of testing, learning styles, and all the reports of high dropout rates and I just wonder if there is an inordinate amount of frustration with education for some Indian kids for reasons that these kids have no control over.

Rose: They've started a new policy with the Indian teachers, I think they have to do fifteen or twenty hours on fetal alcohol syndrome and the possibility of dealing with children who have it in the classroom. If you have been teaching in the school system for less than four years, before you can get your teaching certificate you have to have this training. The requirement is that when teachers renew their certificates they must repeat this training. I know that some of the schools have this requirement, but I can't say that it is true for all schools. I know the teachers at Red Cloud, teachers in the Rosebud schools, and some of the elementary teachers in Pine Ridge have gone through it.

They are focusing on that. It may be that we are seeing centuries of the alcohol effects that have gone on over the years. It's starting to affect the children because the syndrome is actually in effect now and maybe the parents of the children who have the syndrome had the effect. There's a lot of studies going on about it and there's a lot of ifs, ands, or buts. There's a lot of people theorizing on this or that but, like you said, way back years and years ago there's been a lot of alcoholism on the reservation and a lot of people turned their backs on it. Now it's an issue that everybody is trying to deal with but it will take a lot of research because we don't really know where it started from, whether it was the parents or went back to the great grandparents. It depends on how much alcoholism stayed in the family.

There was one time that I had a kid come up to me and he said "you can't help but drink cause you were born with the taste in your mouth". And I sometimes think of that comment because of the way the kids so easily get into drinking and stuff. Lots of kids will say beer

tastes nasty or something but a lot of those kids can sit down and it is nothing for them to drink the kind of alcohol that they drink. It's just like kids picking up a glass of Kool Aid and drinking it. It used to amaze me when I came back from college and I was working on the reservation to see these little tiny kids five, six, seven years old go down there and take what they call that Thunderbird Wine. The smell of it would gag me and those little kids could just drink it like it was water. Then I sit there and I think about it . . . these little kids, it's easy for them to drink this stuff. Then I asked this teenager "How can you stand to drink this stuff?" and he said, "It ain't no problem when you're born with the taste in your mouth."

And it's true. I sit there and I look back to when I worked for DSS at how many times they called me to the hospital because a woman was delivering her baby and was drunk. So how many of these kids are born with the taste in their mouth? . . . I asked my mom once before she passed away if when she was growing up if they had problems with retarded children, and was there a lot of it. My mom sat there and thought and thought and finally she said, "I don't know." And I've asked other older people and they just sit there and look at me stunned like. And everyone I've ever talked to there are no traces way back on the Rosebud Reservation, Pine Ridge Reservation, Eagle Butte or Standing Rock of children being retarded that were say born in the fifties or before. A lot of the retarded children that were born were born in the sixties. Now is it part of all the land problems, the water problems? Could that be what it is or is it the fetal alcohol syndrome? Is it all connected?