NATIVE STUDIES IN ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOLS

Revitalizing Indigenous Cultures in Ontario

by

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Abstract

I hypothesize that specific aspects of education are central to the revitalization of culture amongst Aboriginal peoples in Ontario, and that this revitalization is integral to cultural continuity. I will show the relationship between key aspects of education and cultural revitalization as I track and assess the impacts of Ontario's high school Native Studies suite of courses. The key aspects are: the ability to generate and control content, the content itself (who it targets and serves and how it is applied) and how innovative ideas are implemented, through what processes and with whose help.

Recent trends emerging from the analysis of Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) data on the implementation of its suite of ten Native Studies high school courses suggest that the consistent efforts of several generations of First Nations, Métis and Inuit educators working behind the scenes since the late 1960s have resulted in significant and meaningful increases in the number of Native Studies courses offered, the number of schools and school boards offering them, and the number of students enrolling.

Considering the context of Aboriginal education in Ontario since the 1960s these general results may certainly be interpreted as progressive. I discuss seven catalysts that have had an indisputable influence over the ability of Indigenous educators to exercise an increasing degree of control over the Ontario Ministry of Education Native Studies curricula. While acknowledging the perspectives of scholars such as Taiaiake Albert, Maria Battiste, Pamela Palmater and Marie Brant-Castellano
who argue for “Indian control of Indian education” based on the inherent right of Indigenous peoples to self-government - enshrined in Canada’s “Constitution Act” (1982) - my findings indicate that, given the resources and opportunity to lead the creation of Native Studies courses in Ontario, many Indigenous educators, leaders and communities have opted to take proactive roles in the process, all the while participating in the struggle for the Indigenous constitutionally-inherent right to control all aspects of their education. I argue that we are seeing a resurgence of Indigenous cultures in Canada, and more particularly in Ontario.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Senator Robert F. Kennedy, 6 June 1966

In 1999 and 2000 the Ontario Government’s Ministry of Education (OME) fostered the creation of a set of ten Native Studies courses for grades 9 through 12. The non-compulsory, segregated Native Studies curriculum, a revision of the People of Native Ancestry (PONA) resource guides, was developed by Aboriginal educators and offered for use to all high schools in Ontario ostensibly to increase the awareness of Aboriginal histories and issues. Despite this innovative initiative the courses have been offered in only 39 high schools and in significant number in only four of Ontario’s high schools between 1999 and 2006 (Godlewska, Moore, and Bednasek 2010, 13).

In response to the growing demand for better education of Aboriginal people, in 2007 the OME adopted the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, which argued the importance of including Native Studies content in schools across Ontario. This policy promised the delivery of quality Native Studies education, to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students so that their goal of raising the awareness of all Ontarians concerning Aboriginal issues, histories and cultures will be reached by some unspecified date (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b). In this
thesis I assess related data generated by the OME, and through interviews, to determine the extent to which policy implementation has succeeded.

The concept of government-controlled, institutionalized compulsory public education is highly contested among Ontario’s Indigenous populations. Although education itself is a core value of Indigenous civilization, the federal government’s use of residential schools as the central pillar of its disastrous strategy to assimilate Indigenous peoples, remains a problematic deterrent. When compared to the long-standing, proven, Indigenous approaches to education in Canada (Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Battiste 2004; Brant Castellano 2000; Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996), the relatively new concept of compulsory public education has yet to prove itself in the long-term. Yet, because federal and provincial governments have the power to do so, it is the unproven approach that is being imposed upon First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, and this despite the 1982 constitutional amendments recognizing Indigenous peoples’ right to self-government, including control over education. As I will argue in this paper, more than cultural continuity, more than education itself, it is the power to exercise control over education that is at the heart of healthy communities.

First, I will contextualize education as the third most important cultural continuity factor of eight identified by Chandler and Lalonde (1998). Secondly, I will show that control over key cultural continuity factors, including education, is arguably more causal than the presence of these factors in a community where external non-Indigenous interests control those factors. Thirdly, I will analyze the history of Native studies curricula in Ontario’s public high schools from inception in the early 1970s to
the present as an example of increased Indigenous control over Indigenous content and implementation of Native Studies courses in Ontario High Schools.

The literature review, and my research, will show that the government of Ontario is at times more an ally than an opponent of Aboriginal cultural continuity as evidenced by the creation and implementation of Native Studies high school curricula from the early 1970s to the present. Whether by deliberate policy, political correctness, or a combination of these, the Ontario government, with the sometimes “inadvertent collaboration” of the federal government, has created opportunities for some Indigenous individuals and communities to leverage this “collaboration” in favour of re-establishing the cultural foundations of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. The legal obligation of the Crown to consult with Aboriginal peoples has been instrumental in this process.

After over a century of minimal dialogue, the duty of the Crown to consult with Aboriginal peoples in Canada (Canada 1982, Section 35(1), Constitution Act, 1982) obliges both federal and provincial governments to consult with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities regarding all aspects of resource-based activities on contested lands. The extraction of resources including forestry, hydro development, mining, traditional hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering activities, access to sacred sites, protection of burial grounds and archaeological materials have precipitated numerous collaborative, culturally-supportive co-management agreements. The Constitution Act 1982 also recognizes a distinct self-governing right for Aboriginal peoples. Control over certain aspects of self-government has been devolved to First nations, Métis and
Inuit governing structures. Labour-market training, police and ambulance services, health programs and education have required the participation of Ontario in this on-going devolutionary process and thereby, its contribution to what amounts to an Aboriginal renaissance. And so we see the positive impact of the Ontario government upon important aspects of Aboriginal culture and self-reliance.

Of these culturally-significant activities, I shall focus on education, the control over which is considered central to preserving and advancing the culture(s) of Aboriginal peoples (Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996; Cherubini and Hodson 2008). Over the last four decades Ontario’s Ministry of Education has invested a considerable amount of time and energy on the evolution of a suite of high school Native Studies courses. These courses offered by the Ministry of Education were created in collaboration and consultation with First Nation, Métis and Inuit educators, politicians and communities. Although the Ministry had veto power over content, key Aboriginal participants such as Mr. Keith Lickers, Mr. Peter Hill, Mr. Al Bigwin, and Ms. Gloria Thomas have, over a span of four decades, incrementally made substantial contributions to the Native Studies curricula offered in Ontario. These educators have been instrumental in the creation of the Ministry’s suite of Native Studies courses; the establishment of the Aboriginal Education Office; and the development of policies such as the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework; and the Aboriginal Self-Identification Policy. For these activists and educators, the cumulative effect of their accomplishments represents tangible progress towards the goal of a “stand-alone” suite of Native Studies courses.
On the negative side, one need look no further than the experience of the Residential Schools to know that education has a considerable impact on culture (Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996) – whether for good or for ill. Many First Nations and Métis leaders consider that a policy of assimilation through education is still effectively in place, despite some of the progress in the area of Native Studies curricula and policies designed to reduce the performance gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Such a perception is hardly surprising given the historical policy of assimilation, and given the devastating impact that assimilationist policies have had on the culture(s) of Indigenous peoples in Ontario (Hallett, Chandler, and Lalonde 2007; Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996a; National Indian Brotherhood 1972; Bear-Nicholas 2011). On the positive side, First Nations understood early on in the treaty process the cardinal importance of ensuring that education for their children was an integral part of their agreements.

In this thesis, and in particular in the Literature Review, I am building on but diverging from the work of Godlewska et al. I am interested in the implementation of the Native Studies curriculum, as it is in implementation that we see the strength of commitment to education. However, with the benefit of a few more years of data and further efforts on the part of the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) (2006-2011) and based on my discussions with Aboriginal educators, I take a more positive view of the implementation process.

I hypothesize that specific aspects of education are central to the revitalization of culture amongst Aboriginal peoples in Ontario and that this revitalization is integral
to cultural continuity. I will show the relationship between key aspects of education and cultural revitalization as I track and assess the impacts of Ontario's high school Native Studies suite of courses. The key aspects are: the ability to generate and control content, the content itself (who it targets and serves and how it is applied) and how innovative ideas are implemented, through what processes and with whose help. For this reason my thesis is presented in two parts:

Chapter 3 - Creation will look at the historical socio-political context in which the Native Studies suite of courses was forged. The history is a fascinating mix of serendipity and sustained effort by both Native and Non-Native advocates working within complex social and governmental structures across more than 35 years of shifting political winds. I will look at the development of Native Studies curricula from the PONA documents through to the Native Studies suite of courses. By this means, I will show how there has been increasing involvement by Indigenous educators in the creation, content and revision of Native Studies courses.

Chapter 4 - Implementation will analyse the most recent Ministry of Education data on Native Studies courses collected over the last decade to determine where and to what degree Native Studies courses have been implemented in Ontario since 1999. This will include the graphical representation – graphs and maps – of Ministry data for both Northern and Southern Ontario.
I have chosen a mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative techniques including interviews, textual analysis, and statistical analysis:

- Interviews to determine the conditions under which the Native Studies courses were created and the current state of Native Studies in high schools.
- Statistical analysis of the Ontario Ministry of Education data about the implementation of the Native Studies program.

My intention in exploring the literature, history of creation and implementation of the Native Studies courses is to uncover data that supports my hypothesis, all the while allowing for data that may not. As a result, I hope to be able to congratulate authorities for their positive contributions, and to be able to outline areas for future work.
Chapter 2 - Literature Review

*Indian control of Indian education continues to be the ultimate goal in the provision of education for First Nations children in Canada. To improve the quality of our education, we need control over it. Because currently there is Indian education by non-Indians, and that's extremely problematic.*

(Petten 2000, 18)

This chapter is organized around three key developments in the literature: i) the literature on the cultural continuity of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia and internationally and its relevance to arguments favouring Indigenous control over Indigenous education which has provided the central concept in my work; ii) the literature on the impact of neo-liberalism on education and its consequences for Native control over education, particularly on vernacular language of instruction demonstrates the context within which *Indian Control over Indian Education* must function; and iii) the small but important body of literature on the political evolution of Aboriginal education in Ontario showing how key players have been effective in deploying redirection strategies and interventions fostering an evolutionary shift from subjugation to renaissance – from the government-controlled curricular content of the residential schools to the increasing control of Indigenous educators over curricular content such as the People of Native Ancestry (PONA) documents, and the current Native Studies Curricula. This literature provides some insight into the difficulty and depth of
investment in education made by Indigenous peoples in Canada and guides the respect with which I approach their efforts.

**Introduction to Cultural Continuity**

The main focus of my research is on the nature of the Native Studies curriculum in Ontario high schools and its theoretical impact on the cultural continuity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals and communities. Fundamental to my research is the concept of cultural continuity. The best definition of cultural continuity is to be found in the work of Chandler and Lalonde (discussed below): engagement in activities that link individuals or a community to a past, the present and an imaginable future. Cultural continuity is also a concept of growing importance in the field of Indigenous studies particularly as it concerns the role of education. In this section I will look at six major approaches to the issue of cultural continuity: i) what I will call an instrumentalist, almost appropriative approach; ii) a focus on the mechanisms of cultural continuity; iii) concern with cultural continuity as change management; iv) a linking of cultural continuity with place or place-based cultural continuity; v) dispute over the very definition of culture and continuity and vi) a measurement-based focus on cultural continuity. Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses but I take something particular from each and my research will advance thinking about cultural continuity in ways that I will discuss.

The instrumentalist approach is demonstrated in the work of Alan Bloom and the response to that work, by Mary Catherine Downing. In *The Closing of the American*
Mind (Bloom 1987) Allan Bloom argues that the growing cynicism and apathy of students in American higher education is due to a disconnection from the values embedded in the great books of ancient Western philosophers, further aggravated by the promotion of value relativism through the vehicles of anthropology and inter-cultural studies. As a solution to what he sees as a crisis of American cultural continuity, he proposes compulsory courses on the great books – Western philosophy – and the elimination of inter-cultural studies. In her critique of Bloom’s approach, Mary Katherine Downing (1992) argues that the great books and inter-cultural studies are not mutually exclusive. She counter-proposes that courses in Western philosophy be optional and that courses in inter-cultural studies could inspire students “by producing thorough interpretations of Indigenous solutions to the Great Questions of humankind” (1992, 91). For example, Downing suggests a university-level discourse that compares and contrasts the values embedded in the ‘great books’ with those embedded in the stories of contemporary Yaqui individuals in Mexico. Downing observes that by adhering to their core values under inhumane, soul-crushing conditions, Yaqui role models not only garner respect from their communities but more importantly, they enhance cultural continuity by inspiring others to adhere to Yaqui core values (Downing 1992, 94). For Downing, re-establishing cultural continuity has to do with the transmission of deeply held values from one generation to another.

The limitations of Bloom’s approach to ‘fixing’ American cultural continuity are rooted in several assumptions: that the great books have a collective coherence and that there is an untroubled consensus about their constitution; that American university
students are a homogenous cultural unit; that simply taking a Western philosophy course would accomplish the ambitious goal of transcending their apathy; and that the transformed students would be a sufficient force to address the underlying causes of apathy. Downing’s approach, although more open to exploration, has similar expectations of inter-cultural studies. In any case both concur that the apathy and disengagement are problems related to cultural continuity and that education is the most effective way of dealing with them.

Valaskakis, Stout and Guimond (2009) provide insight into one of the little-addressed functions of Aboriginal education, the mechanisms by which cultural continuity is maintained and the central role of women in their transmission. They focus on the role of Indigenous women in maintaining, promoting and reacquiring aspects of cultural continuity (Valaskakis, Stout, and Guimond 2009, 20). The authors highlight the work of Joanne Archibald of the Sto:lo Nation in British Columbia that champions the accomplishments of Indigenous female academics in the promotion of cultural continuity (2009, 25). Although non-traditional, the use of academics by Indigenous women is consistent with their traditional role as educators and as principal actors in the process of cultural transmission. The incorporation of an academic approach might seem discrepant with Valaskakis’ framing of cultural continuity as the transmission of traditional activities – including language instruction, the arts, singing, hunting, and drumming, amongst others – but the traditional value of adaptation has been, and continues to be, germane to the survival of Indigenous peoples in the face of colonization. Once it was recognized as strategic under the circumstances facing
contemporary Indigenous cultures, the women quickly integrated academics in service to their goal of cultural revitalization. But the use of academics is only strategic to the extent that Indigenous control over curricular content, especially local control, given the profusion of Indigenous communities, is maintained.

Local control over the transmission of local and Indigenous knowledge remains at the heart of education and cultural revitalization (Ohmagari and Berkes 1997). The authors see education as successful only when cultural continuity is a principal concern of education. Ohmagari and Berkes describe the challenges faced by the Northern Mushkego Cree in their efforts to successfully transmit bush skills traditionally mastered by women. They identify three key factors as determinative of learning success for the Indigenous students i) control of curriculum by local Indigenous people ii) use of native language(s) in instruction, and iii) use of traditional andragogy/pedagogy approaches (1997, 217). The Indigenous way is learning through observation and practice. In the case of the Mushkego Cree, values of “self-reliance, independence, and competence, and also of sharing and cooperation” are thereby transmitted (Sindell 1987, as cited by Ohmagari & Berkes 1997, 206). Cultural changes were shown to have a mixed impact on the learning, and in a positive vein led both teachers and students to be more adaptable. My research examines the growing importance of education in the transmission of these values and the impact of local control of education on cultural continuity.

Cultural continuity as change management is the third of six major approaches to the issue of cultural continuity in the literature. Whereas “control” tends to be used
in categorical terms - you have it or you do not - the experience of control is almost always limited. According to Levinson, Sutton and Winstead (2009), “[t]he very process of education is one in which cultural knowledge is constantly transmitted, acquired, and produced” (2009, 1). Their efforts to address the complexities of cultural continuity in an era of globalization draw upon the disciplines of anthropology, psychology and sociology. They characterize cultural continuity as an oscillating emphasis between continuity and change where education is the principle vehicle through which the tension between them is managed in order to achieve “biological and social continuity” (2009, 6). One cannot control cultural continuity; one can manage it. It is the “balancing act between group concerns and individual interests” (2009, 3).

They highlight the role of education in managing constant adaptation. My research will suggest that contrary to the stereotype of universal Indigenous apathy created by the media, the Indigenous will to invest in their cultural continuity is vigorous, particularly when opportunity, funding, government policies and other necessary resources intersect.

McMurchy-Pilkington, Pikiao and Rongomai (2008) argue that the “emancipatory possibilities for Maori” of New Zealand are directly tied to government polices legislating their collective agency/control over resources and services including curriculum writing (2008, 614). Consequently, they choose to focus on the term “management” (2008, 621-622). In fact, a growing recognition of the importance of cultural continuity has informed recent ecological management agreements between governments/corporations and Indigenous people because “indigenous knowledge is
important not only for its own sake but also for its potential to help design more effective management for various ecological systems” (Ohmagari and Berkes 1997, 198). The 1992 Earth Summit took a strong stand in support of Indigenous control over local resources (1997, 198). Arguably then, the growing legal framework, both nationally and internationally which compels governments and developers alike to consult with Indigenous peoples where their traditional lands and cultures are affected reflects a sense of the importance of cultural continuity not just to Indigenous peoples but to their environment.

In Canada, cultural continuity is now an important element of culturally appropriate resource development policies (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2010, 18). According to the Supreme Court of Canada (2004) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations General Assembly 2007), Canada has a duty to consult in cases where resource extraction could affect the traditional lifestyles of Indigenous populations. In the Arctic, for example, resource extraction agreements must now take into consideration cultural continuity along with economic diversification of renewable resources (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2010, 21). It is through attention to and respect for cultural continuity that policy formation can become powerful (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 771). Levinson Sutton and Winstead see cultural continuity as necessarily democratic in that it is accepted and supported by the majority of members and yet is not openly politicized. The authors therefore write of “discovering a cultural logic” of locally embedded power that can render “policy a force for democratization” (2009, 769).
According to Nicholas Gill (2005), the Alyawarra and Warumungu in Australia face cultural continuity issues similar to those of dispossessed Indigenous peoples in Canada and New Zealand. Some of the Alyawarra and Warumungu people have taken advantage of government economic policies supporting the funding of land purchases for ranching, or pastoralism thus linking their cultural continuity with place; the fourth major approach to cultural continuity. The ranching enables them to cultivate a sense of place-based cultural continuity akin to that of their ancestral concept "of ‘country’ as a part of a matrix of people, society, land, their interrelationships, reciprocities, and moral order” (Gill 2005, 707). As they go about their daily routines of caring for their cattle, they also fulfill their traditional duties to ‘country’ by transferring knowledge of the land and the profession to the next generation (2005, 711). According to Gill, “pastoralism can be seen as socially embedded in Aboriginal life, related to localized concerns and based in cultural traditions that long predate the arrival of pastoralism” (2005, 712). Thus we see the importance of place, self-determination, analysis and adaptation to changes in circumstance. Although the activities may not be ‘traditional’, the culture continues through activities that reinforce attachment to place. The history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada has been more one of displacement.

To add to the complexity of the topic there is an ongoing dispute over the very definition of culture and continuity in the literature that follows and this is the fifth major approach to the issue of cultural continuity. Not a few authors discuss the significant challenge to cultural continuity in the non-Aboriginal context in which most Aboriginal people live. Rosemary Henze’s and Lauren Vanett’s study of the Alaskan
Yup’ik peoples entitled; To Walk in Two Worlds: Or More? Challenging a Common Metaphor of Native Education (1993) raises the problem of “walking in two worlds,” or in Ontario parlance ‘living with one foot in each canoe’. They speak of “an inherent conflict in asking students to embrace two worlds whose value systems may be contradictory” (1993, 130). As Henze and Vanett point out, someone with two feet in different canoes is very likely to land in the water. They identify some major problems with taking “walking in Two Worlds” as a model for Aboriginal education: As cultures do not exhibit internal uniformity and as making sense of one culture is a lifelong task, seeking to make sense of the complexity of two, neither of which is internally uniform or necessarily coherent, may be entirely overwhelming. Certainly not everyone means the same thing by ‘walking in two worlds.’ What are the expectations of walking in two worlds and how and from whom are children to learn those? Public schools can try to help students mediate between traditional Yup’ik and Western culture, “however, a school system that is strongly based in one culture cannot really help students mediate” effectively (1993, 119-130). This speaks to the situation of Indigenous students in Ontario high schools.

While there may be dispute over the definition of culture and cultural continuity, most authors agree that they are fundamental to individual and community well-being. Matsumoto and Juang (2008), in their book on culture and psychology, define culture as “a unique meaning- and information-system shared by a group and transmitted across generations, that allows the group to meet basic needs of survival, pursue happiness and well-being, and derive meaning from life.” Arguably, then,
culture by this definition is indistinguishable from its continuity. Kumar and Janz (2010), in their report exploring the cultural activities of the Métis, reject this definition because in their view, for Indigenous peoples, culture is not a separate entity but is “life itself.” They further conclude that arising from this ‘fact,’ “culture may have an impact on the health and well-being of Aboriginal individuals” (2010). Kumar and Janz attribute their conclusion to the findings of Michael Chandler and Christopher Lalonde – two British Columbia psychologists who link cultural continuity with survival in British Columbia’s Indigenous communities (Chandler et al. 2003).

With their measurement-based focus, which for the purpose of this paper is the sixth major approach to the issue of cultural continuity, Chandler and Lalonde establish a clear correlation between the undermining of cultural continuity and Aboriginal youth suicide based on results consistent over three waves of research during a span of fifteen years (Chandler and Lalonde 1998). Their first paper Cultural Continuity as a Hedge Against Suicide in Canada's First Nations (1998) addressed the relationship between the presence of cultural continuity factors and the number of youth suicides in each of 200 Indigenous communities in British Columbia. Chandler and Lalonde identify nine cultural continuity markers: Native language retention, some measure of self-government, completion of, or involvement in land claims processes, control over all or some facets of education, health programs and facilities in the community, cultural facilities, police/ambulance and fire services, women in government and child protection programs. Each marker plays a role in diminishing the likelihood of self-injurious behaviours such as drug abuse, suicide and early school dropout rates. In their
study, the larger the number of cultural continuity factors present, the lower the number of suicides. When all of their cultural continuity factors are present, the suicide rate is invariably zero. The corollary of their findings is that Indigeneity is not a causal factor in suicide rates among British Columbia’s Indigenous communities. “There is no monolithic indigene … and no such thing as the suicidal Aboriginal” (Chandler and Lalonde 2004, 6). Although at the aggregate level this may appear to be the case, on a community-by-community basis one finds that over half of the British Columbia Indigenous communities had zero suicides over fifteen years; this is a rate that is lower than that of Canada. My research suggests that, theoretically, similar dynamics (the presence of cultural continuity factors in educational institutions) are likely to enhance graduation and retention rates for Indigenous high school students.

Chandler and Lalonde rank control by Native communities over education as the third most significant factor supporting cultural continuity. My thesis seeks to establish the link between their research and the revitalization of Indigenous cultures via control – by Indigenous educators and communities – over Native Studies courses in Ontario’s publicly-funded high schools. In particular, I argue that the growth of Native Studies courses in Ontario’s high schools since the early 1970s correlates highly with long-term thinking by Indigenous educators - thinking which is integral both to cultural continuity and community resilience. If, as Chandler and Lalonde argue, indicators such as control over education can be used as a predictor of community health, then high implementation of Native Studies courses should theoretically have a positive impact on cultural revitalization of these communities. This is most likely to be
the case: i) where control of curricular content and delivery is by Indigenous educators and ii) where the courses are held in or near identifiable Indigenous communities:

Chapter 4 - Implementation.

Laurence Kirmayer and Gail Valaskakis (2009), in commenting on Chandler and Lalonde’s continuity factors, are concerned that: “Labelling these factors as ‘cultural continuity’ is…questionable, since the involvement of Aboriginal people in contemporary institutions such as municipal governments or formal school systems cannot be viewed as cultural traditionalism. ‘Local control’ seems a more accurate term” (Kirmayer and Valaskakis 2009, 19). Local control, in the sense of self-determination, may be the foundation upon which all the cultural walls, composed of various cultural continuity factors, ultimately rest. Without control or self-determination, would cultural continuity even be possible? Kirmayer’s and Valaskakis’s view that the term cultural continuity is inappropriate in cases where non-traditional factors like ambulance service are used as benchmarks. However, this implies that a culture cannot adapt or change over time. But Chandler and Lalonde are not interested in cultural continuity in any conservative or traditional sense. Rather, they make a strong case for the success of local solutions over those that are “parachuted” in (Chandler and Lalonde 2004, 7). In principle they concur with Kirmayer and Valaskakis that often, “the health of the community appears to be linked to the sense of local control and cultural continuity” (2009, 28). “Knowledge invented elsewhere and rudely transplanted root and branch in someone else’s back yard is often
and rightly understood to be a weapon wielded by those who have it against those who must suffer it” (Chandler and Lalonde 2004, 7).

**The Impact of Neo-Liberalism on Education**

This section addresses the impact of neo-liberalism on education world-wide, including the “commodification” of education, and reductions in educational funding. My focus is on the consequences for Aboriginal education, and some responsive strategies adopted by Aboriginal peoples in Ontario and abroad. My argument is that neo-liberal government policies undermine Indigenous self-governments, languages and cultures while favouring self-serving individualism resulting in “accumulation by dispossession” (Harvey 2007). This shift is of particular importance to Indigenous peoples who traditionally have favoured the “collective” over the individual (Apple 2006, 23).

Neo-liberalism has a relatively short history but has come to the world stage with considerable force. As a result, it has been described as “the most successful ideology in world history” that argues that societies should be structured around self-regulating markets, and as free as possible from social and political intervention (Anderson 2000, 17; The Dictionary of Human Geography 2009). Its roots are attributed to Milton Friedman and his students, known as the Chicago Boys, circa the early 1970s. The term came into common usage in the 1980s, especially in Latin America, to describe the agendas of leaders such as Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet (2009, 497). Backed by Freidman-trained economists, Pinochet imposed neo-liberal free market principles:
government deregulation, entrepreneurialism, individual freedom, self-reliance, privatization, and general opposition to public policy solutions based on government spending, taxes, deficits, and regulation. Yet, as Peck has argued, “Neo-Liberalism cannot be reduced to any one of its constituent elements” (Peck 2004, 403). It is the malleability of these components and their adaptability to local applications that, in part, account for its rapid global acceptance.

Noam Chomsky, internationally-recognized critic of American foreign policy, views neo-liberalism as a form of “class warfare waged from above against the needs and interests of the great majority” (Chomsky 2003, 22). Although neo-liberalism espouses freedom and democracy, the implementation of neo-liberal measures such as free-markets and privatization not only “undermine democracy; they essentially make it impossible” (2004, 22). Geographers Peck (2004) and Harvey (2007) highlight the advantages that neo-liberalism affords those seeking the accumulation of wealth and power: free markets, privatization and regressive tax reforms. For those in the growing ranks of the dispossessed, the disadvantages are most felt especially at the local level where neo-liberal politics, “create significant inequality” (Peck 2004, 378). The gap between the rich and the poor, is most markedly exemplified by the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal standards of living. However, the gap between the working class and the wealthy is noticeably wider; the middle class is being absorbed into the ranks of the dispossessed. The inequality is reflected in the growing gulf between those who can afford increasingly privatized social services and those who cannot. At the same time, the neo-liberal emphasis on individual rights continues to be
used to justify the undermining of government/collective control over local resources in the name of democracy and economic expediency. But, the democracy of the individual does not necessarily serve the good of the community or nation.

This is well illustrated in Canada in the reforms proposed by Helin and Snow in *Free to Learn: Giving Aboriginal Youth Control Over Their Post-Secondary Education* (2009c). These experts, writing for the Macdonald-Laurier Institute (MLI), an Ottawa-based neo-liberal think tank, focus on the neo-liberal restructuring of education through a “market-anchored perspective” (Dinning 2010). In effect the MLI is furthering the government’s long-standing goal of assimilating Indigenous peoples by promoting individual-focused, self-serving, neo-liberal ideologies. Using proven propaganda technologies including new media, digital media, newspapers, radio, television, internet, publishing, influence by association, they are undermining traditional collective decision-making and reducing First Peoples to economic work units (Giroux 2006). Atomizing the Indigenous population in this way devalues their heritage, languages, histories and cultures and in particular their self-governing aspirations. As Chomsky points out, rhetoric notwithstanding, the power remains in the hands of the ruling class (2004, 22).

Not all theorists subscribe to such an extreme view of social disempowerment. Touraine argues that in spite of powerful neo-liberal measures, society still has the capacity to reassert its power without resorting to either violent revolution or apathetic compliance. It is significant that his third option is to “demand rights, and cultural rights in particular, and therefore put forward an innovative (and not merely critical)
conception of society…” one based on “equality and solidarity” (Touraine 2001, 2). The current reality of Indigenous governments in Canada with regard to equally exercising their constitutionally-enshrined self-governing rights and “profoundly uneven outcomes” seems to better conform to the situation as described by Peck, Harvey and Chomsky (2004, 395). So frustrated are their efforts that many Indigenous governments have resorted to such extremes as road blocks and other acts of peaceful resistance in the hopes of bringing national and international attention to the injustices linked to their causes. Yet, if the hope of all society resides in cultural rights, then Indigenous peoples may be very well placed to navigate the third option, should it prove to be viable.

Touraine’s approach waxes idealistic and presupposes a level playing field with unbiased arbitration for those demanding their rights. The significant resistance experienced by Indigenous leaders regarding government-to-government negotiations speaks to the notable power imbalance favouring the Canadian government. Standing back, it appears that Chomsky, Peck and Hardy are more in touch than Touraine with the realities faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada. However, as will be shown in the following Chapter 3 – Creation, some Indigenous educators in Ontario appear to be walking a middle path determinedly creating stand-alone Native Studies curricula as a step towards their greater vision of “Indian control of Indian education.”
Neo-Liberalism versus “Indian Control of Indian Education”

Before the release of the National Indian Brotherhood’s education policy paper *Indian Control of Indian Education* (1972), Indigenous education in Canada “remained firmly under the control of governments and religious institutions” (Mendelson 2008, 2). The *Indian Control of Indian Education* document was the first national Indigenous policy paper on education and was unanimously approved by members of the National Indian Brotherhood, the predecessor organization of the Assembly of First Nations. “Indian control of Indian education” has since been adopted as a unifying slogan among Canada’s Indigenous peoples. If one agrees with Chomsky that neo-liberalism is a class war strategy that undermines the “needs and interests of the great majority”, then arguably, it is an even more devastating strategy for Indigenous minorities ‘outside’ the defined ‘majority’ and technically outside the state notwithstanding their constitutional right to self-government (Chomsky 2003, 22). Whereas neo-liberal pundits argue that the good of the majority can only be served through the success of the individual, *Indian Control of Indian Education* champions the right of the collective - Indigenous governance - over that of the individual.

It is clear from an Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) internal memorandum leading up to the ratification of the 2007 *Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* that “[o]ne of the Ministry’s three key goals in its Strategic Direction is to close the gap in [Aboriginal] student achievement” (Giroux 2006). Closing this gap is more linked to the Ontario government’s prime objective – adding Indigenous youth to a dwindling labour pool – than with supporting the cultural
aspirations of Indigenous peoples (Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs 2010). From a policy perspective, the cultural well being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, the preservation of their languages, and the inclusion of Native Studies curricular electives does not appear to be as important as the economic success of Indigenous individuals and their contribution to the labour pool and regional and national productivity. That is to say, in a forced choice between the two options created by funding limitations, the Ministry of Education would opt to further the provincial economic prime directive of “promoting jobs and investment across the province” (Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs 2010, 4). In alignment with this directive, the Ministry has set as its benchmark for success not the degree of fluency that Ontario students attain with regard to Indigenous culture, language and issues but the number of Indigenous students who graduate and enter the workforce or enroll in post-secondary institutions. If one accepts the contention that graduation is dependent upon conformity to the values and culture of mainstream institutions, then success might reasonably be expected to negatively correlate with retention of culture.

**Partnerships in Education in Neo-Liberal Times**

In neo-liberal times we are seeing increased collaboration between industry and governments as both a way of funding educational institutions and of directing them; education is undergoing a transformation from education for responsible citizenship and cultural enrichment to training to serve the needs of industry. Eyre (2002) argues
that the “language of partnerships and proclamations such as ‘no strings attached’ have little meaning when the boundaries between university, government, and industry are blurred” (Eyre 2002, 73). Viewed through a critical feminist lens, partnerships in education, within a neo-liberal context, may seem to support student benefits in publicly-funded schools as their ultimate goal, but, Eyre’s analysis of such partnerships in New Brunswick points to overwhelming economic, social, and political benefit to the project partners (2002, 72). Curricular form and content focused on creating the qualifications sought by industry partners will inevitably tend to diminish culturally-appropriate Indigenous content, language of instruction and pedagogical approaches, thereby undermining efforts to maintain key components of cultural continuity. The growing trend towards the marketization or commodification of post-secondary education is problematic, particularly for Indigenous peoples (Eyre 2002, 61; Fisher et al. 2009, 558; Ranson 1993, 338; Apple 2006). Ranson’s UK perspective is that the commodification of education at any level will undermine social democracy and promote the neo-liberal agenda (1993, 338). He argues that market-driven education undermines opportunity by promoting a ‘vote-with-your-feet’ approach that politicizes the scholastic environment. Less popular subjects are ‘voted’ off the menu leaving a smaller selection thereby eroding “local democracy” and reinforcing “a segmented social structure” (1993, 334). “It is likely in an education market, therefore, that the intention of increasing choice results not only in the product being altered but choice itself being reduced or eliminated” (1993, 336). This is similar to what proponents of the Native Studies curricula in Ontario’s high schools have faced: Chapter 3 - Creation.
There is a significant philosophical divide between Indigenous educators and leaders and proponents of the neo-liberal approach to education. Saunders and Hill, in their efforts to describe the difference introduce the concept of authentic education. They write: “Authenticity allows students a place within the curriculum where they may be Native, yet not societal tokens; where they are true designers of their curriculum…and where they are active players, not just recipients of information” (Saunders and Hill 2007, 1017). Neo-liberalism will only compound external impacts on Indigenous education by adding corporate labour market criteria to the constraints of federal funding, and the complexities of provincial and federal ministerial relationships. “In turn these influences propagate ongoing political struggles against oppression and second-class citizenship instead of towards self-determination, autonomy, and sovereignty” (2007, 1016).

The democratic principle of academic autonomy has been usurped by a neo-liberal audit culture which, rather than improving the educational process, has “merely created a 'culture of compliance' and a climate of fear” (Shore and Wright 1999, 568). To illustrate, Shore and Wright argue that the ‘audit culture’ promoted by the United Kingdom government in universities, veils its dehumanizing impact through the use of neo-liberal terms such as 'quality', 'accountability' and 'empowerment'. These terms have increasingly infiltrated the vocabulary of government policies on education, Canada included (Ungerleider 2006, 72). According to Ungerleider, government and the media undermine education in Canada, in that they package relevant information to serve their own agenda; tend to avoid difficult, though important issues, in part because
of their commitment to short timeframes; and adhere to “the predominant neo-liberal value matrix … of individualism, choice, competition, productive efficiency, and private enterprise” (2006, 88).

**Opportunities for Cultural Continuity Strategies within a Neo-Liberal Context**

Despite the negative effects of the neo-liberal juggernaut, can there be strategic opportunities for Indigenous peoples even within the rigid frame of neo-liberalism? How can Indigenous peoples ensure that cultural continuity is respected, settle their land claims, maintain control over their educational system, and maintain the option of accessing mainstream educational choices when it suits their needs and on their terms? Accomplishing this would allow them to develop tools for quality decision-making and help them to achieve high-level employment in their preferred work and culture. Over time, and assuming a growing role for Indigenous people in the Ontario labour pool, and assuming they receive education in both cultures, Indigenous people would *ipso facto* be better positioned for success on their own terms. Can leverage be found in these outwardly adverse neo-liberal circumstances to both close the as-yet ‘uncloseable’ gap and retain Indigenous cultures, values and rights?

*Closing the Gap* is a long-lived Canadian policy objective directed at addressing the discrepancies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, particularly as it applies to housing, health, income and education. To the frustration and mystification of all levels of government the gap remains unaffected by the
application of a plethora of ‘top-down’ Eurocentric solutions. Australian researcher, J.C. Altman (2009), argues that by problematizing Indigenous peoples, the colonial relationship is perpetuated. To the degree that colonialism is perhaps part of the ‘problem’ it is likely that the status quo will continue. Writes Altman, “there is an over-emphasis on the Closing the Gap approach to equality between Indigenous and other Australians, and too little emphasis on diversity and difference” (Altman 2009, 1). As indicated earlier by Kirmayer, Valaskakis, Chandler and Lalonde, imposition of any solution from the outside is rarely a factor for positive motivation. Conversely, an intervention that is collaborative, peer-based, and founded upon “diversity and difference” opens the door to autonomy, involvement and ownership. An excellent example of such a collaborative and peer-based initiative, founded upon “diversity and difference” is the Native Studies curricula for high schools in Ontario.

An intersection of neo-liberalism and cultural continuity that favours both the state and the Indigenous population is exemplified in the collaboration between the Maori “corporate tribe”, and the University of Otago and the University of Auckland in New Zealand (Rata 2010, 2). Elizabeth Rata argues that the collaboration amongst these incorporated entities has produced a partnership in the production and reproduction of Indigenous knowledge for world markets. The Maori gain by controlling a marketable resource, and the universities gain by increasing their market share through enriched offerings to the global knowledge market (2010, 3). Similar win-win scenarios are reflected in the growing number of Canadian Universities and Colleges that are developing Indigenous recruitment and retention strategies in
partnership with certain universities and colleges (e.g. Nishnawbe Northern Education Council; Queen’s University Faculty of Education: *Aboriginal Teacher Education Program* and *Aboriginal and World Indigenous Educational Studies*). Recruitment and retention can similarly be enhanced in Ontario’s publicly-funded school sector. If Indigenous students can be inspired to complete their secondary education by the offering of the culturally familiar curricular content such as is found in Native Studies courses, both the students and their communities will benefit from enhanced cultural continuity, the OME will benefit from increased tuition payments and Ontario will replenish part of its dwindling labour pool (Henhawk-Bomberry 2010).

Unfortunately, the necessity of Indigenous students to attend off-reserve schools where their culture is minimally represented and their language is rarely used, erodes Indigenous cultural continuity, languages, pedagogies and epistemologies. Attending off-reserve schools however, strategically supports DIAND’s goal of assimilating Indigenous students. The potentially winning counterbalance to these influences may be to consider offering well-funded education both on- and off-reserve to support Indigenous cultural continuity and thus achieve labour market objectives as well.

**History of Native Education**

**Unnatural Disasters across Time – A Unique Indigenous Issue**

There is a growing literature on the disaster of Indigenous education in Canada, from the assimilative efforts of the federal government, to underfunding by the federal
government, to explanations of the lack of conscience concerning institutions like residential schools, to exploring the thought worlds that made cultural annihilation seem desirable. Sometimes an absence of a literature, for example, the relative lack of writing about the various Native Studies curricula, is suggestive. The silences are many, but there is growing attention to the Indigenous-led reforms that are beginning to reshape Indigenous education.

It is widely recognized that from its inception until recently - and some commentators would say still - Canada has sought to assimilate Indigenous peoples perceived as within its territory. In her work on the educational experiences of Aboriginal students in Sir John Franklin Territorial High School (Northwest Territories), Susan Chisholm (1994) argues that assimilation is a core part of education in modern residential schools in Canada through estrangement of Indigenous students from their communities and cultures; language immersion; curricula unreflective of Indigenous world views, through the enforcement of middle class values; and through the use of culturally inappropriate styles of teaching. She is not alone in making this argument. Erica Neegan (2005), an Afro-Canadian scholar, writing through the lens of Black feminism, compares Aboriginal experience of assimilation in Canada to her own experiences in Ontario high schools where she was similarly marginalized and discouraged from excelling to higher education. Adams (1988) evocatively describes the seemingly irreconcilable cultural chasm between Indigenous and Eurocentric approaches to education. Andrew Armitage (1995) has written about the assimilative policies of the Canadian government in a comparative vein with New Zealand and
Australia, as embedded in its social services and child care policies which, often underfunded, always worked to the detriment of Indigenous cultures. According to Battiste (1998), by imposing provincial curricula on Indigenous peoples, Canada’s government furthers its assimilative agenda by maintaining control over Indigenous education and undermining Indigenous languages and cultures. Marlene Brant Castellano, Lynne Davis and Louise Lahache (2001) eloquently describe the damage done by Canadian assimilative education but also describe the culture-affirming work of Aboriginal educators. My work is strongly in keeping with the efforts of Castellano, Davis and Lahache, in that I see the Native Studies curriculum as a sustained effort toward cultural revitalization.

Kirmayer suggests that over time, assimilative educational strategies have equated to a disaster as disruptive as a volcanic eruption, a flood, or an earthquake, but the negative impacts have been exacerbated by a factor that few researchers have recognized. That factor is the 'un-natural' ('man-made') aspect of the disaster with which Indigenous communities have had to contend (Kirmayer 2009, 62). Whereas typically there is an outpouring of sympathy and aid for victims of natural disasters, no such response is extended to offset the disastrous ongoing ‘man-made’ impacts of the Indian Act and related policies (Library and Archives Canada 2010). Arguably, more significant is the difference in duration between these two types of disasters. While natural disasters strike and move on, the 'un-naturalness' of the Indian Act stems from the fact that its disastrous impacts have continued, and at times escalated, from the day of its enactment.
Underfunding of Indigenous peoples is a widely recognized problem in Canada: from the underfunding of the justice system, to health care, to housing, to self-government and education. The Indigenous goal of controlling education is inextricably tied to self-government, the main argument against which is predicated on costs. A recent report prepared for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), *The True Cost of First Nation Government*, (Fiscal Realities Economists 2011) sheds light on stereotypic misconceptions concerning the operating costs of First Nations governments, the principles of which also generally apply to Métis and Inuit governance. Some critics of Indigenous self-government, like Tom Flanagan, hold that the complexity of jurisdictional disputes among different levels of government will compound implementation costs (2011, 4). Yet, the report found that most of the current cost of band council administration represents three percent of government expenditures on First Nations with the bulk of the funding going to health, housing, education, social services, and municipal services such as fire protection and garbage collection (2011, 10). The authors conclude that the remoteness of many Indigenous communities, and most significantly, their extreme levels of poverty account for the higher cost of servicing Indigenous individuals e.g. the per capita cost for Indigenous education is 111 percent higher than for the average Canadian. The fact that the Indigenous child poverty rate is twice as high as the rest of Canada increases the likelihood that they will “require expensive special needs programs” but this is the case for any poor child “regardless of whether they are Aboriginal or not” (2011, 15). It is ironic that despite Canada’s claim that it is spending too much on Indigenous peoples,
they remain the poorest. More distressing to Indigenous parents is the fact that poverty predisposes them to living standards which are the basis upon which social agencies justify the removal of children from their families, homes and communities perpetuating culturally traumatizing losses identical to those incurred in the ‘underfunded’ residential school era (Blackstock, Trocmé, and Bennett 2004, 904).

By the standards of attention to Aboriginal issues in Canada, the attention of scholars to the damage wrought by residential schools is considerable (Milloy 1999; Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996a; Kirmayer 2009; Miller 1996; Neegan 2005; Jung 2009). The federal government tried to solve the "Indian problem" by using residential schools and ‘education’ as political weapons to accomplish their goal of “cultural genocide” (Chrisjohn, Young, and Maraun 1997). Chrisjohn, Young and Maraun creatively demonstrate how, by deploying the pseudo scientific construct of “methodological individualism,” church and state manage to deflect the focus on their responsibility for external factors such as "genocide," "economic oppression," and "institutional racism," to internal individual flaws thereby exonerating church and state (1997, 62). While individual victims and perpetrators face a barrage of civil and criminal litigation in the pursuit of justice, the same assimilative processes continue to wound Indigenous residential school victims as indicated by unprecedentedly high rates of suicide, multigenerational sexual abuse, incarceration, poverty, unemployment, and school drop out rates that prevail up to the present (McKegney 2007, 9). In Indigenous communities where the determinants of economic, physical and social well-being are disturbingly substandard, and where the absence of culturally based prevention services
are inadequate, the out-of-home placement of Aboriginal children is increasing (Blackstock, Trocmé, and Bennett 2004, 5). Kelm (2005), cites the 1904 findings of Dr. Bryce, Chief Medical Officer for the Department of Indian Affairs overseen by Duncan Campbell. In some western schools Bryce found that 69 percent of the Indigenous children who entered died while attending or immediately after leaving (2005, 375-376). His recommendations to address these deplorable conditions fell on deaf ears. In 1921 after being dismissed by Campbell, Bryce published his findings but to no avail. The disproportionate number of Indigenous men and women incarcerated in the Canadian penal system has been linked to the residential abuses. The most successful therapeutic approaches used thus far among this population are holistic traditional medicines and rituals. Non-Indigenous psychologists Waldram, Herring and Young (2006) collaborate with Indigenous shamans to assist prisoners in addressing the impact of formalized traditional medicine and the establishment of collaboration between Indigenous and “biomedicine”. The authors wholeheartedly endorse the movement toward Indigenous self-determination as a pre-requisite for healing.

An instance of this healing is seen in Silencing of Voice: An Act of Structural Violence (Kurtz et al. 2008), in which urban Indigenous women break the silence by speaking out about the challenges they face in dealing with the public health system. In an earlier instance, in October of 2004, Amnesty International Canada released a report, Stolen Sisters: Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada, that publicized the long-silenced plight of young Indigenous women who are five times more likely to die as the result of violence. The report highlights the lack of
government and police accountability and their tacit support of the ongoing silence. In particular, it is the experiences of marginalization and racism linked to these incidents that render such silences so damaging. Nevertheless, there is a spotlight on the problem now, and a possibility for self-determination, which is healing (Waldram, Herring and Young 2006). But, further to this, there is the ongoing problem of ‘silences’ in education: these silences in elementary, secondary and post-secondary curricular content are long-standing silences that have contributed significantly to the assimilative impacts of education in Canada. However these are now being addressed in the wake of a long history of stereotypes and myths.

According to Berry (1960) whether Europeans viewed the “Indian” as “diabolical creatures” or “paragons of virtue,” they generally concurred that ‘the Indian’ was “doomed” to “disappear,” become “extinct” and that ‘his’ only hope was in embracing ‘civilization’ (Berry 1960, 51-52). Otherwise, “he and his forest must perish together” (1960, 53). The unshakable faith in the superiority of ‘civilized’ European culture easily led to the unquestioned presumption that the salvation of the “Indian” inevitably lay in his embracing of Eurocentric civilization. The violence endemic to residential schools was justified by the presumed incivility of the “Indians”. The myth of the vanishing Indian was inextricably bound to the myth of the frontier where stereotypical throwbacks to extinct peoples stalked the liminal spaces assigned to them in the same fashion as relics mutely adorn their allocated place in the continuum of settler history in ‘modern’ museums (Weaver 1994, 24). Without these myths, the ultimate myth of “terra nullius,” an empty land ready for the taking, would have
rendered the justification of “stolen continents” morally untenable (Richardson 1993; Wright 2005). Because residential schools served in the realization of an empty land by decimating the Indigenous population, they were seen as desirable to colonizers (1993).

The history of Indigenous education is inextricably bound up with the history of the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the British and the French. Central to that relationship is the European’s view of themselves as ‘civilized’ and of the Indigenous peoples as barbaric or savage (Adams 1988; Healy 1958; Goddard 1998). Non-Indigenous writers have predominantly controlled the depiction of that relationship in both public schools and in the media. Ethnocentrism is the lamentable barrier to the openness, which is fundamental to the appreciation and understanding of this history. True understanding “requires the historian to reconstruct as much as possible the entire thoughtworld [sic] of the tribal universe, and in the case of educational historians, to give special attention to the multitude of ways in which tribal elders transmitted valued cultural knowledge across generations” (Adams 1988, 103-104). Adams tells us that the root of the Europeans' simplistic view of Indigenous culture was based on "a dichotomous distinction between Christian 'civilization' on the one hand and 'savagism' on the other. If they were not civilized, they must ipso facto be savages who, for the most part, had to be cured of their disease" (1998, 96). This is the underlying philosophy to which education in Canada has been harnessed in a relentless drive to assimilate Indigenous peoples.

It should not be surprising then, that there has been a paucity of primary and secondary literature on the history of Indigenous education. The body of literature on
the creation of primary documents such as People of Native Ancestry (PONA) and the Native Studies curricula is slowly growing, as is the literature on the impact of policies such as the *Education Policy Framework* and the *Aboriginal Self-Identification Policy*. Although not considered academic literature, policy documents form a data base upon which critical literature is being constructed (Cherubini 2010; Long 2006; Cherubini and Hodson 2008; Cherubini 2009). Similar government documents also serve as important benchmarks in the history of the development of Native Studies in Ontario’s publicly-funded schools from the late 1960s to the present. The connection to my thesis is that the manipulation of educational policy remains one of the most successful tools in the arsenal of any colonial governance strategy (Cherubini 2010; Cherubini and Hodson 2008; Long 2006). In the case of Ontario, this manipulation has been consistently reflected in the "white-washed" historical menu served up in provincially-controlled curricula, as evidenced by the glaring omission of the 120-year history of residential schools across Canada and the role played by the provinces in the residential school venture (Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996).

Since 1867, remarkably little has been done to ensure an accurate portrayal of the history of Canada’s Indigenous peoples in Ontario’s secondary school curricula (Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996; Cherubini and Hodson 2008). Indeed in the 1970s, the Ontario government, under the aegis of the “multi-cultural mosaic,” attempted to classify Aboriginal peoples as one amongst a growing number of ethnic groups. During Bill Davis’ tenure as Premier of Ontario (1971-85) and as Minister of Education and Minister of University Affairs, he initiated major educational reforms,
including the creation of Trent and Brock Universities and numerous colleges, but brought no change to Indigenous education at any level. Indigenous educators perceived Ontario as distancing itself from its legal obligations to Indigenous peoples by ignoring the “special relationship” that was promised in Crown treaties (Canadian Race Relations Foundation and Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies 2002). While the Ministry of Education has gradually begun including culturally appropriate curricular content starting in the late 1960s to the present, it has been 'gradual' indeed (Long 2006; Cherubini and Hodson 2008; Cherubini 2009; Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996). Given the continued assimilation of Indigenous peoples into mainstream education and the silence on residential schools during this period, Indigenous peoples could not be faulted for some skepticism about government initiatives targeting Indigenous peoples, especially in education (Lovelace 2009, 13; Hare 2005, 243).

In addition to the closing of the residential schools starting in the 1960s, there has been recognition of and writing about tangible milestones in a movement away from overt assimilation practices towards Indigenous cultural revitalization, more specifically a gradual shifting of control over education and curricular content. The Hawthorn Report (Part I, 1966 Part II, 1967), A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: A Report on Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies, Volumes I and II is a two-year survey which sought to understand the underlying causes of the political and economic challenges faced by Indigenous peoples. More than 40 scholars were engaged in the implementation of a mixed methodology of interviews, personal
observations and questionnaires. The report is couched in language reflecting the bias of the Indian Affairs Branch that commissioned the survey. The “research” – conducted through the lens of “the Indian” having a problem – concluded that "personal disorganization" was the “explanation for the Indian's failure to develop economically, which resulted in his failure to adjust to the dominant culture” (Cairns, Jamieson, and Lysyk 1966, Abstract).

Apparently turning away from assimilation as a failed policy, the authors of the *Hawthorn Report* proposed that the Indian Affairs Branch focus on “specific middle range objectives such as increasing the educational attainments of the Indian peoples, increasing their real income and adding to their life expectancy” (1966, 13). The fact that the “gap” has not closed for any of the three objectives since 1966, raises many questions. Did Indigenous peoples view the ‘middle range objectives’ as thinly-disguised versions of the same assimilative policies used by governments of the past to institutionalize several generations of their children? Has funding of Indigenous education been adequate? Can the Canadian government direct the education of Indigenous peoples?

The *Hawthorn Report* which continued the trend of paternalistic education had little positive impact. The “gap” between Native and non-Native was widening even as the *Hawthorn Report* was launched to address its causes (1966, 21). The Trudeau government’s 1969 *White Paper*, while touting a “just society” and a “cultural mosaic”, sought to dissolve Indigenous treaty entitlements. This shocking proposal stimulated Indigenous groups to work together to counter the new ‘assimilationism’. The umbrella
organization of First Nations in Canada, the National Indian Brotherhood, adamantly opposed the White Paper, and countered with an education policy paper entitled *Indian Control of Indian Education*, which was unanimously ratified by the National Indian Brotherhood in 1972.

Arguably, the federal endorsement of the *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy paper in 1973 was a major contributing factor to the Ontario Ministry of Education’s decision to collaborate with Indigenous educators in the creation and implementation of the People of Native Ancestry (PONA): Native Studies curriculum resource guides and the Native Language curricula in Ontario’s publicly-funded schools (Ontario Ministry of Education 1975a, 1975b, 1977, 1981; Gidney 1999; Ontario Ministry of Education 1976). The *Preamble* of the PONA Resource Guide for *Primary and Junior Divisions* proposes an approach to education that would be the envy of any enlightened society. The OME clearly expresses the notion that the curriculum could be more easily adapted in on-reserve schools and in schools where significant numbers of native students were in attendance. Such a policy would permit teachers to create a curriculum tailored to the experience of the children - one that would build positive self-images by "familiarizing him [sic] with the history and culture of the native people and their contribution to Canadian society" (1975a, Preamble).

Notably there is no mention of familiarizing Indigenous students with the dire impacts of unfulfilled government contractual obligations. In addition, the government of the day recognized that "[i]n order to realize the aims and aspirations of native people with regard to the education and development of their children, the larger Ontario
Community must become more cognizant of them as peoples” (1975a, Preamble). But little effort was made to achieve this goal.

Government documents addressing Indigenous education in Ontario are notably sparse during the period spanning 1976 to 1983 (Brant Castellano, Davis, and Lahache 2001, 11) but they are sufficient to give us some idea of developments and trends. The 1975, *Ontario Task Force on the Educational Needs of Native People* (1976) summarizing recommendations from consultations with Indigenous educators and leaders, unanimously supported the goals of training for Indigenous teachers, Indigenous language and cultural programs, and increased funding to facilitate Native control of education (Gidney 1999; Long 2006, 7; Ontario Ministry of Education 1976). The launching of the PONA documents in 1975 represents an historic shift towards Indigenous control over the content and implementation of culturally relevant curricula in Ontario’s publically-funded high schools. The PONA documents are, arguably, a direct outcrop of the Indigenous cultural revival that swept Canada after the closure of the residential schools. As cultural point-men for First Nations, Métis and Inuit, Indigenous educators and leaders began to assume responsibility for their own education and culture, and thus assure a more positive future for themselves and their peoples. Twenty years later, in collaboration with OME-selected Indigenous educators, a significant revision of the PONA curricula yielded a suite of ten Native Studies courses offered to high schools in the fall of 1999 (Godlewska, Moore, and Bednasek 2010; Ontario Ministry of Education 1999a, 2000a). Once again, Indigenous educators
and leaders took a major step toward their goal of control over education and the continuation of their culture.

It was often a matter of one step forward and two steps back. In 1979, INAC sponsored a report on Indigenous language education for schools in Northern Ontario, which resulted in the tabling of the Northern Native Language Project (NNLP) in 1980. The NNLP Final Report reflected a notable shift in emphasis in favour of Indigenous language and culture. The authors suggested that, especially in the higher grades, the curricula be bilingual: 50 per cent in English and 50 per cent in the relevant Native language. “[T]he rationale for this type of program is that if the school is to recognize the child’s Native language and culture, it…must give it equal weight in the curriculum” (Burnaby, Nichols, and Toohey 1980, 17). Here we have evidence of culturally-supportive recommendations in contradiction of INAC’s national policy as discussed in the next chapter. Several years later, the Ontario Ministry of Education’s proposal on vernacular language of instruction, based largely on the NNLP’s recommendation, was flatly turned down by INAC (Long 2006, 8). As logical as Ontario’s recommendations may have been, they were clearly not in harmony with INAC’s long-term goal of assimilation.

Although policy advocates like Helin and Snow would like to separate education from community, there is evidence that the challenges of education must necessarily lie in community. In 1988, The Assembly of First Nations published a report entitled Tradition and Education, Towards a Vision of Our Future. The three-volume report assessed the progress of implementation of the Indian Control of Indian
Education (1972) policy paper. The authors found “that many of the educational shortcomings identified in 1972 were still in existence” (Kirkness and Bowman 1992, 20). Why did this gap stubbornly refuse to be closed? Did cultural continuity somehow enter into the equation? Recommendation 22 emphasizes that “community development should play a distinctly secondary role, for most northern and isolated, small communities” (Cairns, Jamieson, and Lysyk 1966, 15). Suggestions that Indigenous peoples migrate from their reservations to urban locations to avail themselves of labour market training and job opportunities were repeated in a number of recommendations. Thus, the Hawthorn Report’s conclusion, distilled from the work of over 40 scholars researching for two years to ‘get them trained and get them jobs’ set the wrong course, a course to which many continue to deviate (1966, 15). In their separate research on Indigenous health and communities Chandler and Lalonde point to the vital role of cultural continuity for healthy communities.

Education is not just a matter of government policies. A matter as important as education to the well-being of peoples, falls under the influence of higher authorities though sometimes only indirectly. In 2004 the Supreme Court’s Haida Gwaii decision recognized the peer-based nature of treaty relationships and asserted that Indigenous peoples have control over the preservation of Indigenous languages and cultures. The Supreme Court of Canada ordered the federal and provincial governments to behave in a manner commensurate with the “honour of the Crown”. The federal and provincial government’s duty to consult with Indigenous peoples and accommodate their interests is grounded in the principle of the honour
of the Crown, which must be understood generously…[and] is part of a process of fair dealing and reconciliation that begins with the assertion of sovereignty and continues beyond formal claims resolution (Supreme Court of Canada 2004).

In this way, arguably, INAC’s assimilationist policies are countered by the Supreme Court.

*Indian Control of Indian Education* is the most important Indigenous educational principle to emerge from the 20th century but arguably, given the social context in which most Indigenous people in Canada live, it is vitally important, but not sufficient. The government of Ontario’s first major recognition of the importance of *Indian Control of Indian Education* was expressed in the 2007 *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b). It expressed the government’s commitment to a deeper collaboration with Indigenous peoples and their education. It was framed as a major shift in policy away from assimilation and towards peer-negotiated integration of Indigenous curricular content with non-Indigenous curricular content (2007b). While the document proposes Ministry support for the education of all Ontarians concerning Indigenous cultures and issues, a careful reading reveals only a vague aspiration that “[a]ll students in Ontario” should somehow acquire “knowledge and appreciation of contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis, and Inuit traditions, cultures, and perspectives” (2007b, 7). Rhetoric aside, few implementation strategies and tools have since been put in place. The Ministry of Education provides neither timeframes, measures, nor benchmarks associated with this commendable objective of educating all students in the
appreciation of contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis, and Inuit traditions, cultures, and perspectives. This reinforces for Indigenous educators and leaders the importance of taking control of their own education in support of cultural continuity and of constantly negotiating to influence mainstream curricula.

Even in this relatively enlightened document, enhancing the performance of Indigenous students is a higher priority than the retention and reclamation of Indigenous languages and cultures. So, in sharp contrast to the nebulous aspiration of educating all Ontarians, the Ministry established one concrete priority: by 2016 it promised to “improve achievement among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in the areas of literacy and numeracy, retention of students in school, graduation rates, and advancement to postsecondary studies” (2007b, 5). The feasibility of this sudden transformation seems doubtful but at least there is some movement toward recognition of the importance of cultural continuity.

Conclusion

The central concepts informing my thesis in this literature review are cultural continuity, the impact of neo-liberalism on education, the assimilative impact of residential schools, and the resurgence of Indigenous peoples in their bid to reestablish Indian Control of Indian Education. Chandler and Lalonde have shown us that control at the local level is foundational to the maintenance of cultural continuity. Attacks on
cultural continuity have wrought devastating damage on Indigenous peoples in Canada. The principal weapon used to assimilate Indigenous peoples is education as evidenced in the residential school system. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development’s tactical underfunding of essential services for Indigenous peoples, not only segregates Indigenous communities but also perpetuates conditions of poverty. Educational facilities and programs are inadequate and culturally inappropriate. As substantiated in the literature on neo-liberalism, when economic ideals are prioritized above cultural ideals the result undermines cultural continuity and favours assimilation. In spite of this, over the past forty years, and against overwhelming odds, a resilient group of Ontario’s Indigenous educators have strategically deployed their resources in collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Education to create an impressive Native Studies suite of courses described in Chapter 3 - Creation.
Chapter 3 - Creation

Smokescapes, blackened landscapes;
Smoldering - stings the eyes.
Sky tears water warm seeds
Of future forest beneath burning feet.
Charred trunks and branches,
“standing people” lean upon,
lie upon each other
in final embraces,
feed future fruit.
Embers, kissed by cooling winds,
wink at solar rays
probing fading smoke
of the residential school conflagration.
Genocide and ecocide –
there is no side to speak of.
Creation’s voice calls,
fleet footed nations dance
the seeds to life.
The Mother’s heart beat
guides their feet;
life springs forth from land so bleak.
Unbowed and proud
the spirit of the Real people
Thirty thousand years
keepers of the Earth.
Original instructions
Bred-in-the-bone
collective wisdom
hard-wired stories
Forest fire knowledge embodied
known nature.
Survival, resilience, resistance kick in –
raising up the people
Phoenix “forest”
post “inferno” greens
Pierce charcoal scenes.

(Voice Poem by Paul Chaput, 2011)
The recent rise in the number of students taking Native Studies courses in Ontario is the result of significant and persistent effort from dedicated First Nations educators who have been working behind the scenes. The history of the creation of the Native Studies courses is the subject of *Chapter 3*.

I begin by describing my cultural connection to this research, and then laying out my methodology. Next, I document factors that have set the stage for the development of the People of Native Ancestry (PONA) documents and the Native Studies program. Of particular importance are the following events: the decision by the Department of Indian and Northern Development (DIAND) to start closing Indian Residential Schools in the late 1960s; tuition fee agreements emanating from Treaty rights; the *Hawthorn Report* (1967), the Trudeau Government’s *White Paper* (1969), the response to the *White Paper*, “*Citizens Plus*” or the *Red Paper* (1970); the disintegration of The National Indian Council in 1968 and its replacement by the National Indian Brotherhood (predecessor to the Assembly of First Nations created in 1982) and the formation of the Native Council of Canada in 1971 by Métis and Non-Status Indians; the composition and publication of the National Indian Brotherhood’s policy paper: *Indian Control of Indian Education* (1972); and last but not least, the *Calder Decision* of 1973. These events have gradually transformed the environment for Indigenous educators. Notwithstanding the importance of these events, the success of Native Studies in Ontario in recent years is also largely due to the work of Indigenous
educators whose fostering of cultural continuity has positioned Native Studies for success.

This chapter is informed by secondary research and interviews. My secondary research has focused on the seven factors or catalysts leading to increased Indigenous autonomy - not to be confused with Steinar Kvale’s “seven stages in methodology” described below. There has been a growing parallel realization, amongst some Canadian decision makers and social leaders, of the responsibility that Canadians bear for the country’s history of continuing oppression. As the Native Studies courses are a relatively recent phenomenon and as innovations in Indigenous education have received relatively little attention from academics, information on how the Native Studies courses were created must be gleaned from those involved in the process. There is no strictly academic record of the formative events. As a result, this chapter is based on secondary research and interviews.

My Position/My Research

I am Métis, from the village of St. Adolphe, a Red River settlement just a half-hour drive south of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Selecting a research methodology has brought me face to face with the now-familiar sense of inner plurality, and its attendant schisms, characteristic of my life since I first consciously understood that my ancestors were not French Canadian but Cree, French, Ojibway, English, Chippewa, Irish, German - indeed a host of ambassadors from many nations. A methodology must transcend the
divisive history that I embody. It must kindle that which is highest in the human spirit and revere the divine in each genetic strand in order to weave a story wherein the uprooted are uplifted, ravaged tear-soaked landscapes are re-Indigenized and the seeds of the Indigenous peoples bloom once more among those of the newly arrived. As a result, I have chosen to use a research methodology that guides each step of the “walking in beauty” that comes from honouring each other and the land: a decolonizing methodology (Linda Smith, 2000, 2005) as it emphasizes the role of control by Indigenous people in the decolonization process.

From the perspective of embodying both colonizer and colonized, it is challenging for me to contemplate research from a ‘colonized’ point of view as Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes in Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples and in Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision (Smith 2000, 2005). For Smith, the word ‘research’ has negative connotations linked to the appropriative orientation of the colonizers; tones of outrage and humiliation colour her Introduction (2005, 1). I yearn to reach that place of deep understanding that is fundamental to every culture of “Real People,” an English term widely used for Indigenous self-designations among peoples from the four directions: the Métis, the “Inuit…Innu (Naskapi), Anishinabe (Ojibwa), in Alaska, Yup’ik or Inupiaq,” and among the Cashinahua of Eastern Peru (Brown 1993, 24; Kensinger 1995). If colonization is the uprooting of all that is Indigenous (Smith 2005; Battiste 1998), then decolonization must address the replanting of all that is Indigenous. Co-operation from both ancestral streams feeding my being is an important underpinning of my approach to an appropriate methodology.
Methodology

In keeping with a decolonizing research methodology I am using a “mixed methods” approach including a literature review addressing cultural continuity, neoliberalsim and the history of Indigenous education in Ontario; analyzing relevant Ontario government-generated literature concerning Native Studies in secondary schools, with an emphasis on curricular documents through the development of and since the inception of the 1999 Native Studies secondary school curriculum; and interviewing of key players in the development of the Native Studies and PONA curricula (for General Research Ethics Board approval see Appendix ‘A’). With this background information, I developed questionnaires that have guided me through semi-structured qualitative interviews (Dufault 2003) of key Indigenous educational leaders, primarily to assess their aims and the degree to which those aims have been realized in the Native Studies curricula (Kvale 1996, 2006; Robson 2002; Merriam 2002).

Interviews with Ontario Ministry of Education OME officials have provided insight into the process by which the Native Studies program was created, the political context of that creation, as well as the intentions behind the program. Interviews with Indigenous education experts and advocates reveal how these largely Aboriginal experts approached the creation of the curricular documents, the constraints within which these experts functioned, their political contexts (Canada 1982, Aboriginal inherent right to self-government is recognized), their expectations and their appreciation of the long-term results of their efforts. Interviews with administrators, teachers and community members reveal how the Native Studies courses are currently
perceived in schools, why they were offered and the resulting impact as well as some of the on-the-ground constraints experienced by educators (Zurzola 2006, 30; Battiste 2000, xxi).

In the course of these interviews, I endeavoured to ask all the questions on my list. The questions were optional so that if a participant was uncomfortable with any given question, I was prepared to move on to the next. The questions I asked are in Appendix B.

In order to augment the relative lack of peer-reviewed literature on the topic of Native Studies courses in Ontario high schools, I interviewed three Six Nations educational leaders who have been deeply involved in the creation and implementation of Native Studies courses with the Ministry of Education in different ways and at different levels: Keith Lickers, Peter Hill and Gloria Thomas. The central roles of these interviewees reveal the commitment of Six Nations in the struggle of Indigenous educators to regain meaningful control over the creation and content of OME Native Studies curricula. Although there are diverging views on how to work with the OME, and though they were all officially employees of the Ministry, these interviewees did not consider themselves “Ministry” people. Theirs was a struggle for control over the curriculum to enhance the education available to Indigenous students and their communities. The control, however, remained predominantly with DIAND who paid tuition fees directly to the boards. Gloria Thomas, who was appointed by Six Nations to ensure that the school board honoured the federal tuition fee agreements explains, “We always had to negotiate our position between the province and the Feds. It was always a
source of frustration because we always had to negotiate our way…we would give our input not connected to either [the provincial or federal governments] because we believe that we are a nation” (Thomas Interview 2011). Of course, these are the views of three Six Nations leaders, each of whom had established a different relationship with the OME. There are those who would argue that any collaboration with any level of government, any relinquishing of total control over all aspects of education, amounts to support of a version of colonialism or assimilation (Alfred 2005; Alfred 2009; Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Battiste 1998; Turner 2006). But as the three interviewees were so important in the establishment of the Native Studies program (Keith Lickers jointly coordinated the Development Committee for People of Native Ancestry documents with Al Bigwin, and Peter Hill was a committee member) these interviews are critical to understanding the formation of Native Studies courses. I conducted the interviews according to the standards established in the discipline of geography and consistent with Indigenous methodologies. Cohen et al (2007) provide an excellent introduction to understanding the validity and reliability in interviews.

Steinar Kvale, whose approach is compatible with Indigenous oral tradition and concepts of collaborative co-construction of knowledge proposes seven stages in methodology, of which I have used five: thematizing, interview situation, transcription, analysis, verification and reporting (Kvale 1996, 111; 2006). In his paper Dominance Through Interviews and Dialogue, Kvale suggests a “Socratic approach” to interviews in which both parties freely express conflicting views approximating an “egalitarian power distribution” (Kvale 2006, 486). In keeping with Kvale’s approach, I used a
format similar to that used by Dr. Anne Godlewska in her audio-taped interview with Peter Hill, Jackie Moore and Gloria Thomas in which the interviewees dialogue openly on themes introduced by Godlewska (Godlewska 2008).

Interviewees

I met Gloria Thomas in 2009 and, through her, was introduced to Keith Lickers. My half-hour telephone interview with Peter Hill was supplemented by an interview conducted by my advisor, Dr. Anne Godlewska, who in 2008 had interviewed Peter Hill, Gloria Thomas and Jackie Moore. Dr. Godlewska allowed me to use the interview conditional upon Mr. Hill’s consent, which he graciously offered. Further points of view came from Kevin Reed, my fourth interviewee, and the Aboriginal Education Consultant for the Limestone District School Board. Reed was my only face-to-face interview, supplemented by a telephone follow-up conversation. My fifth interview was with Grace Lloyd, a non-Indigenous high school teacher of Native Studies courses at the Rideau District High school in Port Elgin. My final interview was with Dr. John Roberts, a retired Métis Professor from Mohawk College and author of textbooks on the topic of Native Studies. Kevin Reed, who is also a native author, added important insights about Native Studies textbooks. Each of my interviewees contributed important and personal elements to my story of the creation of Native Studies courses.

My first telephone interview was with Keith Lickers, who was involved from the early 1970s as an employee working within the Curriculum Branch of the Ontario
Ministry of Education (OME). He jointly coordinated the creation of the People of Native Ancestry (PONA) documents with Al Bigwin and later played a central role in the development of the suite of ten Native Studies curricula in the late 1990s, as well as strategic Ministry of Education policies affecting the inclusion of Indigenous content, including pre-and post-contact histories in the Ontario high school curricula (Hill, Thomas, and Moore Interview 2009; Lickers Interview 2011; Thomas Interview 2011). I then interviewed Peter Hill and Gloria Thomas who were both influential in the development of the Native Studies and Native Languages curricula. Hill was a teacher and Thomas was Native Advisor to the Grand Erie Board and was tasked with overseeing implementation of services in the tuition agreement with the Board, on behalf of Six Nations’ 600 secondary school students that attend Grand Erie schools off reserve (Thomas Interview 2011, Lickers Interview 2011).

Transcription took place as soon as possible after the interviews. In addition to their Indigenous backgrounds, each of the interviewees have in common a lifelong involvement with education – as teachers, mentors, writers, consultants, developers of Native Studies curricula, school board members and employees of the Ministry of Education. Each was involved with and had witnessed many changes in Indigenous education throughout their careers.

To help me understand why no textbooks had been produced for the first ten years of the existence of the Native Studies and Native Languages courses, I interviewed Métis author Dr. John Roberts and First Nations author, Kevin Reed. Roberts, a former Métis political leader, has recently retired from his long-standing
position as a tenured English Professor at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ontario. In addition to authoring many English textbooks, Dr. Roberts was commissioned to create a textbook on Indigenous history for Canada’s western provinces. Kevin Reed, whose teaching career in Kingston, Ontario was crowned with the prestigious Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence in 2008, is an author of an introductory-level textbook on Indigenous cultures. Although Dr. Roberts’ and Kevin Reed’s textbooks were not officially designated for use in Native Studies courses in Ontario, they were nonetheless unofficially used as teaching resources for some Native Studies courses in Ontario during the periods leading up to the offering of a OME-approved set of Native Studies textbooks which became available September 2011.

According to the Ontario Ministry of Education, constant revision and improvement of the Native Studies curriculum is important. On average, most courses are reviewed at least every five to seven years (Ontario Ministry of Education 2009c). I therefore sought to understand if, and to what extent, these protocols were applied to the Native Studies courses and further to that, who was deciding when the revisions for the Native Studies curricula would take place, who would make the revision, and what was the process? Accordingly, the questionnaires were designed, in part, to answer three questions:

1. Who decides which revisions are appropriate, on what basis and at which level - School Board/Teachers or Ministry/Aboriginal Office?
2. Was the role of Aboriginal educators in creating the Native Studies courses circumscribed or did they lead the effort?
3. What was the Ministry’s motivation for the creation of the PONA curricula, the 1999 Native Studies revisions and the 2007 Educational Policy Framework?

The questions I asked varied slightly from one interview to another as a means of cross-checking key information. I used a *semi-structured interview* as opposed to fully structured or unstructured (Kvale 1996; Merriam 2002; Robson 2002). With this semi-structured style in mind, I created a list of questions prior to the interviews and then changed them as necessary as the interview or interviews evolved. Further questions for the interview were designed to shed light on the following issues of importance:

1. What are the differences between the PONA documents and the Native Studies courses?

2. Why did Native Studies courses have so much less support than the Ministry of Education courses in terms of teachers’ guides and textbooks?

3. Did the Ministry veto curricular content proposed by Aboriginal educators?

4. Who was consulted in the development of these materials? Were Métis and Inuit representatives consulted?

5. Who decided that Native Studies courses would be integrated with established mainstream Ministry courses such as English, Art, etc. rather than being presented as “stand-alone” courses? In this instance, I am using “stand-alone” to mean, “they are recognized as a credit for a secondary school diploma” (Lickers Interview 2011).
Since Keith Lickers uses a very particular reading of “stand-alone”, I will expand upon his definition of that terminology. When asked what it would take to make Native Studies a discipline, Lickers elaborated that for courses to be “stand-alone” a “much more visible strengthening” is necessary, and that “stand-alone” Native Studies courses would have to be recognized as a credit for a secondary school diploma – the courses would be academically-oriented so that students would be in a position to carry on at the university level. The Oxford English Dictionary broadly describes discipline as a “branch of learning or scholarly instruction, typically one studied in higher education” (English Oxford Dictionary 2011).

Janice Beyer and Thomas Lodahl [who] have described disciplinary fields as providing the structure of knowledge in which faculty members are trained and socialized: carry out tasks of teaching, research, and administration; and produce research and educational output. Disciplinary worlds are considered separate and distinct cultures that exert varying influence in scholarly behaviors as well as on the structure of higher education (Del Favero 2011).

The notion of separation or segregation expressed by Beyer and Lodahl is fundamental to the heterogeneous ontology of Western Academia as opposed to that of the homogenous/integrative Indigenous ontology. The chasm between the approaches can be bridged only by the meeting of Native and Non-Native scholars on the terrain of mutual respect and the recognition that each approach has its own structure of knowledge or conceptual framework. Analysis of OME curricular documents suggests that whereas OME disciplines such as English, Mathematics and History are solidly anchored on the platform of western academia, the Native Studies curricula are not similarly resting upon their traditional framework but upon that of the OME.
Lickers describes the current Native Studies arrangement in Ontario - integration with Arts, English and History - as transitional. In the next round of revisions to the Native Studies curricula, there will ideally be much clearer support for a stand-alone Native Studies program - such that a student could start his/her Native Studies involvement in primary and follow through to secondary and post secondary. It has to begin in primary school (Lickers Interview 2011). “What has been done to date is an interim step towards making Native Studies a stand-alone discipline - a stand alone subject area.” Nevertheless, “by demonstrating how Native Studies can be integrated with existing stand-alone disciplines, we are widening the field in which Native Studies can be taught” (Lickers Interview 2011).

The federal and provincial governments have played inconsistent roles leading up to the launching of the Native Studies curricula in 1999. Since the early 1970s Canada’s federal and provincial governments have, at times, served more as unwilling “allies” than outright opponents of Indigenous control over education (Mendelson 2008; Mendelson and Caledon Institute of Social Policy 2006; Cherubini et al. 2010a; Cherubini, Kitchen, and Hodson 2008b). For the Native Studies curricula this support is reflected in the role played by both levels of government during its creation, content development, and implementation in Ontario. As uncertain as the future of such collaborative alliances may be, they nonetheless represent an historical evolution from an externally-driven, assimilative, coercive education to an approach which offers a more explicitly Indigenous control of Indigenous education.
Over the past four decades the OME has increasingly invested time and resources into the creation and implementation of Native Studies courses in Ontario’s elementary, junior and secondary public schools in collaboration with Indigenous educators. These courses were developed to offer both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of Indigenous culture, issues and history. The very modest People of Native Ancestry (PONA) resource documents created in the 1970s served as resource guides to interested teachers who had a passion for Native Studies. But it took 25 years for that passion to flower into the next iteration – the current Native Studies curricula launched in 1999. Now in the throes of its belated first revision, a data-collecting procedure has been incorporated which will permit government and scholars to begin meaningful analysis of the implementation of Native Studies in Ontario public schools.

As Alan Cairns (2000) so eloquently expresses in his book *Citizens Plus: Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian State*, self-government is a recognized, inherent right, symbolic of equality, which contributes to self-reliance and responsibility. Cherubini is in accord:

> Education, in all its forms, is a First Nation right that has never been extinguished, surrendered or passed on to any other government, jurisdiction or authority. It is an inherent First Nation and Treaty right and part of a right to self-determination that is recognized by international and human Rights documents and conventions. (Cherubini 2010, 15)

From these inspiring and eloquent words we turn our attention to a review of educational reforms which placed Indigenous peoples in an empowered position
regarding their culture and its continuity – and their inherent right to an education developed and implemented by Indigenous educators and other experts.

Seven Catalysts Paving the Way for PONA

Although the federal policy continues to be infused with dreams of cultural assimilation, as will be shown later, the combination of the following seven events intersected in a short period from the late 1960s through the early 1970s to catalyze the federal government into relinquishing their tight control over Indigenous education. It is a moot point as to whether this was motivated by political pragmatism or the result of a true shift in policy. Whether by design or not, Indigenous educators had gained a voice in the creation of culturally-appropriate curricular content at the provincial level. There is a great deal of relevant activity in Canada’s Eastern provinces as well but that will be discussed in a later paper. The inclusion of Native Studies in Canadian Schools, beginning with the PONA documents in 1975, and the unprecedented incorporation of Indigenous experts in the process of curriculum development can in great measure be attributed to the intersection of seven catalysts presented here in rough chronological order:

- The decision by DIAND to start closing Indian Residential Schools in the late 1960s,
- Tuition Fee Agreements Emanating from Treaty Rights,
- The Hawthorn Report (1967),
The Trudeau Government’s *White Paper* (1969),

*Citizens Plus or The Red Paper* (1970),

The split up of The National Indian Council in 1968 which spawned the creation of the National Indian Brotherhood (Assembly of First Nations) and The Native Council of Canada (comprised of Métis and Non-Status Indians); The National Indian Brotherhood’s policy paper: *Indian Control of Indian Education* (1972) (1968 – 1973) and


The closing of the residential schools opened the door to Indigenous autonomy. The Mohawk Institute, known also as the Mush Hole, was where many Indigenous children had been subjected to unconscionable abuses. They were mistreated emotionally and physically; they suffered anxiety, loneliness, hunger, and sexual abuse perpetrated by those who were ‘teaching and caring for them’ and those who had been abused before them. Of all the residential schools this one in Brantford may have been the worst by some accounts (Claes, Clifton, and Canada 1998, 28-29; Graham 1998). After more than a century of forcible removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities, to be ‘educated’ in abusive, disease-ridden, church- and government-run residential schools, the federal government had finally heeded the voices of Inuit, Métis and First Nations peoples. The nightmare was over but the consequences were not: one-hundred-twenty years of children who never came home, or who returned broken-spirited and unable to communicate with their equally broken communities; the grief of parents and elders over lost generations of children;
and the legacy of storytellers who had helplessly watched the loss of traditional stories, languages, ceremonies and ways of being (Battiste 2002, 2000; Cherubini 2010; James 1998). The residential schools began to close their doors in the 1960s. It was too late for thousands of Indigenous children, but for the survivors, the first rays of sunshine had broken through the nightmarish clouds (McKegney 2007; Grant 1996, Foreword by Basil Johnston; Jung 2009; Robertson 2006).

As the federal residential schools began closing their doors, several issues immediately came into prominence. The federal government, which remained legally responsible for the education of First Nations and Inuit children (the Métis were not recognized until 1982, although many were also placed in residential schools), now had to manage a massive, system-wide crisis. The communities from which many of the residential school students originated had no school buildings, no administrative capacity, no teachers and no curricula. It was a dire situation. DIAND decreed that Indigenous students would have to attend schools where the provincial curriculum was taught.

As many Indigenous communities are both small and remote, many students were forced to leave their communities to attend provincial schools. As lamentable as this was, it was an improvement for Native communities over the church/government run residential schools. In the provincial systems they could build at least a small measure of control. In the aftermath of the residential school era, Indigenous peoples began rebuilding the infrastructure of their various cultures, communities and families. Optimism trumped the turmoil. Questions about how to move forward into unfamiliar
territory with a form of combined Indigenous and non-Indigenous control over education came to the forefront. Strong leadership was needed; that leadership was found, in part, in Indigenous communities – such as Six Nations - with trained educators and with like-minded allies in the Ontario Ministry of Education. In the landscape of Indigenous education in Ontario there were many who stepped forward to answer questions and seek solutions.

Keith Lickers, a member of Six Nations near Brantford, Ontario who began his teaching career in 1964, at the senior elementary school on Six Nations, has been part of facilitating advances in Indigenous control over education in Ontario throughout his career (Lickers Interview 2011; Thomas 2011; Hill 2011). In June 1970, the federally-funded, Anglican-run, Mohawk Institute - rebuilt in 1904 after students burnt it down, was the second of Canada’s residential schools to be closed (Anglican Church of Canada 2011). DIAND, then owner of the structure, transferred ownership of the Mohawk Institute to the Six Nations Band Council to do with as they saw fit. This was a watershed event. Since 1894, when the Indian Act of 1876 was amended to make education compulsory for Indigenous children, the control of, not only the children, but also the content of their education was removed from Indigenous hands (Canada 1894). Gaining control over the facility that had been instrumental in the oppression of several generations of Indigenous students was symbolic. It was a turning point in the struggle to regain control over education.

Uncertain of what to do with the building, the band council convinced Lickers to step down from his role as a teacher to conduct a study for what the decommissioned
Mohawk Institute might be used. He accepted. His final report was well received and laid out the master plan for the transformation of The Mohawk Institute into the Woodland Cultural Centre (www.woodland-centre.on.ca). Shortly thereafter, Six Nations joined the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians (AIAI), which included First Nations from southern Ontario. In keeping with the collaborative spirit of the alliance, administrative control over the centre was transferred to the AIAI. The Board of the AIAI appointed Lickers as the first administrator of the Woodland Cultural Centre (Lickers Interview 2011; Thomas 2011).

Lickers’ successful administration of the Woodland Cultural Centre significantly contributed to the regeneration of his Haudenosaunee culture and that of other Indigenous cultures through their representation in the centre proper and the museum that was eventually built adjacent to it. The Woodland Centre opened in 1972, and adhering to Lickers’ ideals, fulfilled its mission to “protect, promote, interpret, and present the history, language, intellect and cultural heritage of the Anishinaabe and Onkwehon:we” (Woodland Cultural Centre 2009). Lickers’ singular vision of cultural preservation through education is facilitated, in part, through its acquisition of over thirty-five thousand artifacts on display. “This museum is one of the largest in Canada that is managed and administered by First Nations. Included are archeological specimens, ethnological materials, historical material, documents, furniture, contemporary paintings, drawings, graphics, sculptures, photographs, fine crafts and contemporary installations” (Woodland Cultural Centre 2009). In addition to the contributions to Indigenous cultures, Lickers’ short-lived career at the Centre (1972-
1974) provided a stepping stone to his 34 year career at the OME; a career which would call upon him to manage the complex impacts of federal/provincial jurisdictions on post residential school Indigenous education.

In the wake of the closing of the residential schools, DIAND had to provide alternative delivery agents to replace the old church-run system. DIAND entered into agreements (capital and tuition)¹ with the provincial education departments to permit Indian students to attend regular provincial schools. The expenses for First Nations high school students, who had no choice but to attend off-reserve provincial schools, were covered by tuition agreements between DIAND and the respective provincial Ministry of Education (Carr-Stewart 2001). Treaties signed between First Nations and Canada, or the British Crown in the case of pre-Confederation treaties, included a promise by Canada and/or the Crown to provide for the education of Indigenous students including “maintaining schools on reserves [and] providing teachers” (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2010; Powless 2004, 3; Carr-Stewart 2001, 125-143).

On-reserve education, basically covered Grades 1 to 8. However, due to poorly trained teachers and substandard facilities, on-reserve high school education was deemed inadequate (Lickers Interview 2012). The policy of ‘hiring’ the provinces as delivery agents, rather than building schools on reserves was unilaterally created by DIAND, purportedly acting in the best interest of their Indigenous wards (Indian and

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¹ “A capital agreement is one where a school board agrees to build an addition to an existing school to accommodate the Indian students, or build a new school. Sometimes individual First Nation bands negotiate bilaterally with a provincial school board to achieve the same type of agreement” (Lickers Interview 2012).
Northern Affairs Canada 2007). Unfortunately, this meant that most Indigenous students had to commute to publicly-funded high schools in nearby communities – if they were accessible – or had to move away from their communities to attend residential schools in communities that were too distant for daily commuting. Fortunately, in the process of negotiating agreements with the provincial school boards, First Nations gained some leverage to influence curricular content. For the first time since public education had been established in Ontario, Indigenous parents, educators, band councils and communities increasingly participated in the development of curricular content and policy (Powless 2004, 10). Tuition agreements became the veritable "thin edge of the wedge" opening into a long-term Indigenous educational strategy. Like a white pine sapling bursting through a tiny crack in the sidewalk, the vision of introducing Indigenous content for Indigenous students (but also available to others) took root in the Ministry’s curricular foundations.

As clients of the Ontario Ministry of Education’s publicly-funded school boards, First Nations Band Councils had for the first time gained the ability to negotiate the creation of culturally-appropriate curricular content. This represents an extremely important step in rebuilding the severely disrupted cultural continuity of Indigenous peoples. Tuition agreements embodied an opportunity that was taken up - an opportunity to express autonomy in the wake of a multi-generational disaster, which has given rise, in this case, to vibrant new growth (Thomas Interview 2011). Thomas clarifies though, that “as a writer, I never viewed the curriculum as reflecting the continuity of my culture. It was more or less a sharing, a negotiation between myself as
a writer and the Ministry and in no way did I ever put my own cultural continuity in their hands. It was more or less, let’s share this” (Thomas Interview 2011).

Not all Indigenous leaders embrace the notion of sharing control over education – control over education is a central tenet of self-government. But the spirit of sharing and collaboration over forty years has yielded significant control of the curricular content of Native Studies, in addition to the ratification of policies such as the Ontario First Nations Métis and Inuit Policy Framework. In his book, *This is Not a Peace Pipe: Towards a Critical Indigenous Philosophy* Dale Turner (2006) unmask a new form of assimilative aggression that relies on the market, human rights and a focus on the individual, to dismantle Indigenous self-government. Prime Minister Trudeau’s *White Paper*, a unilateral federal document, created without consulting First Nations, Métis or Inuit leaders, relied on a narrow view of Indigenous rights, and sought to strip Indigenous people of their treaty rights by rendering them “equal” Canadian citizens (2006, 29). In Turner’s view, as well as those of Taiaiake Alfred (2009) and Marie Battiste (1998), the federal and provincial governments have shown no substantive indication of their sincere support of Indigenous control over education. However, educators close to Native Studies consider that the ground gained in Ontario is movement in the right direction. They believe that with continued funding, good leadership and excellent training of teachers, the situation is likely to continue improving (Roberts Interview 2011; Thomas Interview 2011; Lickers Interview 2011).

In the early 1970s, fiduciary and treaty-based tuition fee agreements opened the doors for First Nations’ educators in Ontario to contribute to Native Studies curricula.
However, formal input by Métis and Inuit educators would come only 40 years later (Lickers Interview 2011). Although

the Inuit Tapirisat organization was contacted because of the significant Inuit population in Sudbury and Ottawa…[it] chose not to participate. As for the Métis organizations, The Ontario Métis and Non Status Indian Association (OMNSIA) did not respond to requests to participate and the Métis Nation of Ontario organization was not in existence in the 1970s. (Lickers Interview 2012)

According to Keith Lickers that is why the Inuit and Métis did not contribute to the content of the PONA documents. Métis and Inuit educators and communities have only recently been able or willing to contribute the most recent revision to the OME’s Native Studies curricular content.

The Métis have had a different experience with the OME than that of their First Nations and Inuit counterparts. The cultural revitalization of the Métis in Ontario has steadily grown since the creation of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) in 1993. Relationships with both levels of government have evolved on many fronts, notably in the realm of education (Métis Nation of Ontario 2010). On November 17, 2008 the Ontario government and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) signed an historic framework agreement in which the partners agreed to collaborate in the promotion of Métis history and culture on several fronts. Building on the principles of the Métis Nation of Ontario Framework Agreement (2008), in 2010, the Ministry of Education was the first Ontario ministry to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Métis Nation of Ontario. The MNO has placed a high priority upon the creation and implementation of “a work plan to address the unique educational needs of Métis
students, raise awareness of the history, language and culture of Métis people in Ontario among all students and educators” (2010). For the Métis in Ontario, whose self-governing aspirations had been ignored by all levels of government prior to the mid-1990s, increasing their control over education was seen as essential to the revitalization of the Métis culture. Acts of recognition such as the Framework Agreement, formalizing the incremental steps taken by both parties, were foundational to such cultural revitalization.

For all cultures, vernacular language is the medium of instruction and the transmission of culture from one generation to another. Recent research by Hallett, Chandler and Lalonde (2007) found that vernacular language, defined as the language “spoken as one's mother tongue; not learned or imposed as a second language” to be the highest predictor of cultural continuity in their research among British Columbia’s Indigenous communities (English Oxford Dictionary 2011). It stands to reason, that any efforts to enhance vernacular language retention should have an equally positive effect on all other aspects of cultural revitalization including education. However, it is worth noting that the Hallett, Chandler and Lalonde study is specific to British Columbia; its findings may not apply to communities in all parts of Canada. Other scholars cited in Chapter 2 – Literature Review concur with the British Columbia scholars that control over education is the key factor in the transmission of culture (Ohmagari and Berkes 1997; Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009). Yet the federal residential school

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2 “Vernacular transition programs, whereby the Native language is the initial language of formal instruction, were already in place in neighbouring Manitoba, Quebec, and the Northwest Territories, as well as Saskatchewan, but none existed in Ontario” (Long 2006, 2).
assimilation strategy designed to eradicate First Nations cultures and inversely
predicated on that very principle, failed after over a century of relentless effort. When it
comes to the key driver for cultural continuity, it remains unclear whether language or
control over education is more causal.

Notwithstanding these concerted efforts, some communities are still divided on
issues concerning the relevance of mainstream education and Indigenous cultural
revitalization goals such as language preservation. “I want them [western educators] to
know what’s in our language, why it has our Spirit in it, and what it means to us”
(Thomas Interview 2011). Cultural compartmentalization has become second nature to
her as she negotiates between two often-clashing worldviews. “We always negotiate
between two worlds, that’s our history, and to me that’s what [education] can be”
(2011). Thomas wants all Six Nations students to be Ontario Scholars, but within her
community, some who are skeptical of anything to do with state-run schools or
government control, prefer Indigenous cultural and language pedagogies over any
degree of mainstream strategies. She “gets into trouble for it because not everybody on
reserve believes [they] should be ‘A’ students” in a state-run school (2011).

I and II was a two-year survey which sought to understand the underlying causes of the
political and economic challenges faced by Indigenous peoples. Over 40 scholars
combined their talents in this study using a mixed methodology of interviews, personal
observations and questionnaires. The report was couched in condescending language,
reflecting the bias of the Indian Affairs Branch, which had commissioned the survey. The research was conducted through the lens of “the Indian” having a problem. The authors suggested that Indians were disorganized as an explanation for their poor economic development and their inability to adjust to “the dominant culture” (Cairns, Jamieson, and Lysyk 1966, Abstract).

The first recommendation of the authors of Volume I was that the long-range goal of assimilation was not a reasonable objective for “the Indian” (1966, 13). Furthermore, the authors suggested that two years of research had made it abundantly clear that the government’s 80-year assimilation campaign had failed. Instead, they proposed that the Indian Affairs Branch focus on such objectives as improving the levels of educational achievement, income and, as a result of the foregoing, life expectancy (1966, 13). The fact that the “gap” has never significantly closed for any of the three objectives mentioned since the launching of the report, raises the question as to how their objectives were seen by the Indigenous peoples – perhaps as thinly-disguised versions of the same assimilative policies that the government had used to institutionalize several generations of their children? The socio-economic “gap” between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people was widening even as the Hawthorn Report was launched to address this issue (1966, 21).

There were 91 recommendations in the Hawthorn Report and of these, a few were especially abhorrent to the Indigenous community. One of these, number 22, emphasized that “community development should play a distinctly secondary role, for most northern and isolated, small communities” (Cairns, Jamieson, and Lysyk 1966,
The dominant culture’s default orientation towards economic development is generally not favourable to the independence of Indigenous peoples, or to their maintenance of traditional land-related cultural activities (Alfred 2009; Battiste 2000a; Cairns 2000). Suggestions that Indigenous peoples migrate from their reservations to urban locations to avail themselves of labour market training and job opportunities were repeated in numerous recommendations. Thus, the exhaustive efforts of more than 40 scholars researching for two years (80 years of research) can be distilled down to: ‘get them trained and get them jobs’, the only proviso being that the jobs not be farm-related (Cairns, Jamieson, and Lysyk 1966, 15). Other recommendations assured some measure of control for the Indigenous community. Recommendation 37 maintained that any change in agreements between government and Indians should be “sanctioned by Indian consent” (1966, 16). The implications of this recommendation are far-reaching in that the right of Indigenous leaders to be present at government meetings and negotiations was finally being recognized after a century of being denied a voice at the decision-making table (Battiste 2000; Alfred and Corntassel 2005). “The past, it argued, could not be ignored. The historic presence of Indian peoples prior to the arrival of Europeans and their subsequent negative treatment – in spite of the treaties – justified, according to Hawthorn, a permanent positive recognition, labelled “citizens plus” (Cairns 2000, 52).

The Hawthorn Report created a “hue and cry” in Indigenous circles and arguably set in motion the first wave of an Indigenous resurgence. The recommendations in the Hawthorn Report catalyzed movement toward the goal of
Indigenous control over curricular content in PONA, starting in 1975, which paved the way for Native Studies courses in 1999. Indications are seen in *The Hawthorn Report* (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1967) of the assimilative mind-set of the federal government that had begun with colonialism and continued for decades and throughout the process of replacing the residential school system. This comprehensive, two-volume report examined and commented on every facet of Indigenous life. The first volume addressed broad domains of Indigenous life including the political and economic management of band councils, access to resources, employment and labour market issues. The second volume tackled the challenges of educating Indigenous students at all levels through mainstream public schools as well as facets of on-reserve governance (1967). Most disturbing to Indigenous educators and leaders was the lens of Eurocentric acculturation through which the report appeared to be viewing education of Indigenous students. The wave of Indigenous reaction, which crested in response to the *Hawthorn Report* was amplified by the release of the Trudeau government’s blatantly assimilative *White Paper* which proposed dissolving Indian reserves and reallocating their lands to individuals (Turner 2006, 29).

**The Trudeau government’s 1969 White Paper** is arguably the most significant of all the catalysts. Officially entitled, *The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy* (Canada 1969), it was presented to the House of Commons by then Minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chrétien. The *White Paper* proposed that all rights enshrined in historical pre-and post Confederation treaties and agreements be extinguished, including the Indian Act (Brant Castellano, Davis, and Lahache 2001,
10). Furthermore, its authors recommended that all references to Indians be deleted from the Canadian Constitution. Notably, tuition fee agreements obliging the government to cover the costs of education for “treaty” Indians would have been rendered void. Needless to say, Indigenous people did not receive this happily.

Two assumptions, attributed to Prime Minister Trudeau, guided the philosophy of the White Paper: all citizens are equal and the past is just that. “We will be just in our day. This is all we can do.” There are three additional noteworthy aspects of the White Paper: (i) after “extensive consultation with Indian leaders,” their comments were ignored – that aroused a strong sense of betrayal; (ii) it was “a major initiative” on which Trudeau spent an inordinate amount of time in his first year of office; (iii) it ignored the Hawthorn Report – “indeed it repudiated – the major policy thrust of the Hawthorn Report. That report rejected assimilation and the disappearance of separate Indian status as a goal. The past…could not be ignored” (Cairns 2000, 52).

The creation of several Indigenous associations and alliances in the early 1970s can be directly attributed to the reaction of the Minister of Indian Affairs to the flood of Indigenous responses to the White Paper. The innumerable complaints caused Chrétien to issue a statement that “his Department would only entertain Indian reactions to the White Paper through clusters of bands or Indian organizations as opposed to individual bands” (Lickers Interview 2012). This led to the creation of the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians organization (AIAI) and the Assembly of First Nations.
The most remembered 1970 Indigenous response to the White Paper, was appropriately named *The Red Paper* or “*Citizens Plus*”\(^3\) (borrowing from the *Hawthorn Report*) and garnered support from Indigenous people across Canada, in opposition to any form of integration into Canadian society. *Citizens Plus* was used by Indigenous leaders to create a case against the *White Paper*, and challenged Trudeau’s philosophy in two ways. “Contrary to Trudeau, history mattered and justified special entitlements. Further, again in contrast to Trudeau, the *Hawthorn Report* supported asymmetrical citizen status. Indians were to be a bit more equal than other Canadians” (Cairns 2000, 52).

The *Red Paper*, presented by the Indian Association of Alberta, endorsed the historic status of ‘Indians’ as defined by the treaties. The consensus around the *Red Paper* created strong “First Nations alliances” as evidenced by the *Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians* in southern Ontario (Powless 2004). Notably, many Indigenous leaders from Ontario were involved in formulating and ratifying The *Red Paper* under the leadership of Harold Cardinal\(^4\) (Cairns 2000): “The...document was drafted by the Indian Association of Alberta... and it had the support of the National Indian Brotherhood” (Cairns 2000, 67; Powless 2004). The late Omer Peters, of the Delaware Nation, was able, as a veteran of Indigenous struggles in Ontario, to

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\(^3\) *The Red Paper* was the first of the reactionary papers and of course received the most press. There were, however, a number of additional significant ‘Papers’ beside the *Red Paper*. There was the Brown Paper from the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood as well as a Paper from the AIAI (Lickers Interview 2012).

contribute significantly to the development of the Red Paper and the establishment of the National Indian Brotherhood. “Mr. Peters was also one of the founders of the Union of Ontario Indians from 1970 to 1974” where he served as “vice president of the National Indian Brotherhood. Other Ontario First Nations leaders included Lorenzo Big Canoe, Georgina Island; Burton Jacobs, Walpole Island; Telford Adams, Sarnia: Wilmer Nadjiwon, Chippewas of Nawash, and Flora Tabobondung of Wauksauksing” (Powless 2004, 9 As recounted by Gordon Peters son of Omer Peters and former Grand Chief of Ontario.).

These were memorable times that witnessed the forging of a new vanguard of Indigenous leadership. On June 3, 1970, in a memorable scene staged in the railway committee room, The Red Paper was presented to the federal Cabinet. It was a moment “that deserves to be preserved in oil paints on a giant canvas, Indian leaders stood majestically in feathered headdresses and white deerskin garb and presented the cabinet with an alternative (Citizens Plus).” It was a show of faith in their ancestry. “After a century of being engulfed by a white tidal wave, they were still here, they were still different, and they were not about to let themselves be pushed into oblivion.” They had successfully opposed a policy that “will harm our people” (Cairns 2000, 67).

The compounding of the closing of the residential schools, The Hawthorn Report, The White Paper and The Red Paper, reached a critical momentum for change. From 1968 to 1974 significant political organization took place with the dissolution of the National Indian Council in 1968; the creation of The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians (AIAI), whose members included the Oneida, the Mohawk, the
Delaware, the Potawatomi and the Ojibway; the creation of the Native Council of Canada (Métis and Non-Status Indians); and the National Indian Brotherhood - which changed its name to the Assembly of First Nations in the time period 1968 to 1974 - all of which joined ranks to protect the Indigenous rights of their members, with education consistently a high priority (Powless 2004; Alfred 2009).

The seventh and final catalyst, the Calder Case (1967), is far from the least. In terms of the overarching goal of Indigenous self-governance and the requisite control of sovereign territory, the Calder Case exemplifies the kind of leadership that any Indigenous youth can proudly aspire to: tolerant, imperturbable, patient and respectful. It was also characterized by a reverence for place and space and respect for the land. Although control over language and education is important, control over land is arguably more so. Having grown up hearing the stories of the unsuccessful efforts of several generations of Nisga’a in their attempts to secure the title to their traditional lands, Frank Calder departed from the approach of his predecessors who had struggled with both levels of government since 1913 (Foster and Raven 2007, 218). He became the first Nisga’a elected to the British Columbia legislature where he brought his influence to bear upon the unresolved situation. In 1967, Calder and the members of the Nisga’a Tribal Council sued British Columbia “seeking a declaration that the Aboriginal title of the Nisga’a peoples had never been extinguished” (2007, 218). The implacable Thomas Berger presented the Nisga’a case. The Nisga’a lost in the Supreme Court decision of 1973 as the judges could not agree on whether the title had been extinguished or not. The province of British Columbia refused to acknowledge
Indigenous title until 1990, when the British Columbia Claims Task Force was established. The establishment of the Claims Task force would then lead to the British Columbia Treaty Process and the settling of the first modern land claim in British Columbia history: the Nisga’a Final Agreement in 1998. While British Columbia rejected Indigenous title, the Supreme Court ruled that “Aboriginal title had indeed existed at the time of the Royal Proclamation of 1763” (2007, 217). The Nisga’a efforts moved Indigenous rights and title onto Canada’s agenda thereby paving the way for the federal government’s comprehensive land claims process and inspiring Indigenous peoples in Canada and beyond, to do the same (Foster and Raven 2007, 216). The confirmation of Indigenous title by the Supreme Court, paved the way for Delgamuukw v. British Columbia (1997) and other Indigenous rights’ cases, which further defined Indigenous title (Asch 1999; Foster and Raven 2007). The Calder case continues to be cited in Indigenous land claims nationally and internationally (Foster and Raven 2007). Through the Calder case, the Trudeau government was once again placed in a position where Indigenous policy became a matter for discussion and treaties were re-examined. This reopened negotiation of Indigenous rights to unceded land, and stimulated discussion of jurisdiction over culture and education. Increasingly, Indigenous leaders were arguing that, “Reclaiming and sustaining Aboriginal socio-linguistic and cultural traditions could best be achieved through control of their education” (Cherubini 2010).

Despite individual assimilation in residential schools and broader government assimilative measures, the seven events described above have sparked the creation of positive innovations in Indigenous education. In just over five years, the cumulative
effect of these events culminated in the launching of the first of three embryonic Native Studies curricular guidelines for Ontario public schools, called *People of Native Ancestry* documents (PONA). Contributions by innovative Indigenous educators such as Keith Lickers, Peter Hill and Al Bigwin, in addition to those of Indigenous communities, other individuals, and governing bodies, had arguably contributed to the revitalization of Indigenous education and the rekindling of interest and participation throughout Indigenous communities in Ontario. The PONA documents were the precursors to Native Studies curricular development (Lickers, Thomas, Hill Interviews 2011).

**People of Native Ancestry documents (PONA)**

The *People of Native Ancestry* documents are well named as it was written by people of Native ancestry. In the early 1970s, DIAND regional officials worked closely with Ontario Ministry of Education personnel and First Nations educators to develop a curriculum resource guide aimed at supporting “a native child’s self-image” and familiarizing non-Indigenous students with the cultures and issues of Ontario’s Indigenous peoples (Ontario Ministry of Education 1975a, 8). DIAND provided most of the funding for the program; the Ministry managed the process; and First Nations educators provided the expertise and credibility for the program. Lickers arrived at the Ministry just in time to oversee the creation of the *People of Native Ancestry* documents, the first of which was completed in 1975: *A Resource Guide for the*

Not a few scholars have talked about the PONA documents; but very few have explained the richness of this resource. The first publication, a guide, was to be used in both reserve and provincially funded schools. The forty pages of print material authorized by the Hon. Thomas L. Wells, Minister of Education for Ontario, included: (i) a Confederation Lament by Chief Dan George of the Burrard Indian Reserve, read in 1967 at the Confederation Birthday Party In Empire Stadium, Vancouver. The lament had been translated into Mohawk, Ojibway, and Cree; (ii) a Preamble – Why Have a Separate Resource Guide for and about People of Native Ancestry? (iii) Learning and the Learner of Native Ancestry (iv) The Native Child and His Family, Community, Image; Economics and Native People (v) The Curriculum About Native Peoples; The Curriculum for Native Children; (vi) Teacher’s Checklist: Questions to ask when Planning a Curricular Activity; The Range of the Curriculum (vii) Environmental Studies; Communications; The Arts; (viii) Appendix A: A Brief History of Native Education in Ontario; Appendix B: Clarification of Terms. Amongst the text are coloured photographs of Native people at work, at home and at school. The publication that accompanied the resource guide was: People of Native Ancestry Resource List for the Primary and Junior Divisions, a twenty-eight page booklet which included: (i) Books, Films, Videotape, Audiotape and Discs, Materials in Other Media (ii) Sites,
Newspapers, Periodicals (iii) Native Organizations; Publishers/Media Producers. This relatively short document elegantly bound in Indigenous art work, provided a rich array of condensed material for prospective teachers.

The PONA documents are still controversial: for some they were a waste of time, cover for continued non-grappling with real Indigenous issues; for others they were vital; certainly, they made a difference. Peter Hill says that the initial PONA documents, intended primarily for Indigenous students, were “only for elementary school. They were beautiful books but romanticized Indigenous peoples as happy little savages” (Hill Interview 2009). There are at least two perspectives on the creation of the PONA documents, often shared by the same people. On the one hand, it represented an opening through which resource guides were created for teachers that contributed to the recognition and appreciation of Native Peoples in Ontario; on the other hand, it also represented a continuation of manipulation and control. On October 2, 1974, George Waldrum, then a non-Native Deputy Minister of Education, stated in a policy memorandum: "It is essential … that an awareness of the changes of our society should be reflected in the total school program” (Storey 1979, 16). This included society’s awareness of Indigenous history and culture. Within a year of his memo, the PONA I document had been released. Despite potential cynicism regarding the purpose of the PONA documents, one indisputable result of their publication is that reference material relating to Indigenous history and culture was available for interested teachers in Ontario schools. In this sense, the guidebooks also gave Native Studies some momentum.

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It is important not to underestimate or hide the challenges involved in creating the PONA documents. According to Hill, despite Waldrum’s assertions, there was considerable resistance to facing the realities of Indigenous histories during the curriculum-making process. Perhaps Waldrum’s focus on “the changes of our society” alludes more to the desire for setting aside a past that was more than a little difficult. Hill explains that he had “a hell of a time getting the word ‘Nation’ into the guideline documents. According to Hill, during his time in the Ministry, “When we wrote these documents, how we were directed was very subtle. We knew what we weren’t to touch - and the thing that was held over our head was that - if we went ahead and wrote something contentious, it simply wouldn’t be published. It would just be thrown out” (Hill Interview 2009). The Ministry was much more prepared to hear from experts, linked to institutions of higher learning, than from First Nations experts, representative of the long-standing oral tradition” (Hill Interview 2011). In fact, First Nations experts were carefully, and often subtly directed. Peter Hill who was Head of the English Department and the Head of the History Department at Caledonia High School at the eastern edge of the Six Nations Reserve recounts that a principal advised him to “take the history guideline and add as many feathers and drums as you like” (Hill Interview 2011). At different levels of the educational system there was significant resistance to making the PONA documents Indigenous and socially influential.

In fact, even the PONAs greatest proponent, Keith Lickers, was unhappy with its fate. Lickers credits Waldrum, together with Al Bigwin, who had joined the Ministry in 1972, two years before Lickers, for initiating the PONA documents. Waldrum was
convinced of the need for stand-alone courses addressing Native issues, culture and history for enrollment of both Native and non-Native students (Lickers Interview 2011). Lickers’ vision, at the time was to establish a foundation upon which Native Studies could evolve to become a “stand-alone” discipline (Lickers Interview 2011). Although these early documents did provide a well-used guideline for teachers in primary and junior grades (Hill Interview 2011), they were not curricula. They were not stand-alone courses. Lickers knew that teachers were asking for more. According to Hill, there was a lot of interest in the early documents published in 1975 (Hill Interview 2011). Lickers wanted to see a focus on the education of Indigenous peoples through a course that would grant a credit for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma and create a foundation for further study (Lickers Interview 2011).

In 1977, two years after the first PONA publication, a second, more sophisticated 64 page soft-back guide was published for use in Grades 7 through 10, dealing with more challenging material. The contents included Native Values in a Traditional and Contemporary Setting; Aboriginal Rights, Claims and Treaties; Native Communities, Economics, Literature, Women; Organizations; Religions; Stereotypes of Native People: Origins and Perpetuation; the Impact of European Cultures on Native People; and The Indian Act. In addition, DIAND provided the funding for beautiful and colourful photographs and illustrations to enhance the text. Further, many well-known
Indigenous leaders were involved in its creation. Already by 1977, momentum was beginning to build.

It was no small feat attracting and coordinating such a stellar group of educators and cultural experts to create a useful resource guide. Although the guide was thoughtfully and beautifully organized, it was apparently not used as much as had been hoped - possibly because of “curriculum overload” in Ontario high schools. Class times and expectations are more rigid in high schools. Furthermore, teachers were not instructed on the use and usefulness of the resource guide – which was a waste of an excellent resource. As the course of study proposed was not yet a “mandatory” aspect of the high school curriculum, despite the enormous creative effort, few students benefitted from Native Studies education at the high school level.

By 1981, a more substantial high school level PONA document was produced under the auspices of the Minister of Education, Bette Stephenson, M.D., and Deputy Minister Harry K. Fisher, precisely because there was a growing number of experienced Indigenous educators. The cover alone suggests that a great deal of

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5 Including Al Bigwin, coordinator, Education Officer, OME, headed this effort with Keith Lickers as “Assistant coordinator, Curriculum Branch, OME”. They were supported by a team of OME Officers including Clyde Armstrong, Robert Goddard, Gerry MacMartin; Teachers, Principals, Professors including Don Bogle, Jim Crawford, Lloyd King, Marvin Longboat, Harvey McCue, Wilma Skinner; and experts representing Aboriginal organizations such as Grand Treaty No. 9, Gilbert Faries; President of Grand Treaty No. 3, John Kelly and Mary Lou Radlovich, Director, Ojibway Cultural Foundation. Validators included Jeanne Beck, Trustee Wentworth County Board of Education, Bill Blackbird, Coordinator, Indian Teacher Education Program, University of Western Ontario; Mac Hall, DIAND, London; Basil Johnson, Teacher, Department of Ethnology, Royal Ontario Museum (ROM); Dale Stringer, Teacher, Franklin Street Public School, York County Board of Education (PONA A Resource Guide for the Intermediate Division 1977, 62).

6 The Development Committee was “jointly co-ordinated” by Al Bigwin, Policy Liaison and Legislation Branch, OME and Keith Lickers, Education Officer, Elementary Education Branch, OME. Other OME personnel included: Clyde Armstrong, Harry Creighton, Ray Houghton, Earl Knickerbocker, Donald
thought, collaborative work, and cross-cultural sharing had gone into this edition and well-known and accomplished Indigenous artists were prepared to lend a hand. This 100-page guide had an attractive graphic presentation featuring the image of a First Nations chief coloured in dark green tones, a ‘frontis piece’ with turquoise inlay by Bill Reid, photos of Sandra Lovelace (deprived of Indian status when she married a non-Indian) and her two children, as well as Tyendinaga Reserve police on the front cover. On the back cover, there is an Inuit male, photographs of an artist carving soapstone with an ax, an inukshuk, and families in decorated parkas with their fur-clad toddlers.

New in the 1981 edition of the PONA was: Archaeology and Technology of Native Peoples; A Survey of the Political History of the Native Peoples of Canada; The Inuit; The Métis and Non-Status Indians of Canada; Prejudice and Discrimination; Urbanization: The Native Person in an Urban Environment; Native Peoples in Canadian Literature; and The Fourth World: A Case Study of Indigenous Peoples. In this edition, the PONA document indicates its potential usefulness in the classroom: the guide “can be used as the basis for the development of a course for credit at the Secondary School Honour Graduation level or a course for credit at the Secondary School Graduation Diploma.”

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McGugan, Dorothy McPhedran. Board representatives, teachers, and professors included: Donald Bogle, Brenda Dolling, Bruce Hill, Peter Hill, Harvey McCue, Dolores Wawia. Representing DIAND was Gordon Mullin. Additional material was provided by: (i) educators from school boards, schools, universities and the following organizations; (ii) OME; (iii) DIAND; (iv) ROM; and (v) Union of Ontario Indians: Judith A. Brown, Sherrill Cheda, Sister Anna Cosgrove, Marianna Couchie, Stewart Dicks, Robin C. Freeman, John A Gillett, Leone Hamilton, Dr. Elizabeth O. Jarvis, James D. McNabb, Paul Mennill, Marlene Miller, E. Joan Morse, Daniel H. Page, Trevor S. Raymond, Dr. E. S. Rogers, J. F. Rouble, Jean-Paul Scott, J. Marion Seabrook, Dr. James E.P. Smithers, Ernest Van Every, and Dr. Sally M. Weaver.

The 1981 edition of the PONA series outlined 17 units of study, four of which constituted a Grade 12 course towards the Secondary School Graduation Diploma and a minimum of four units constituted a one-credit course in Grade 13 towards the Secondary School Honour Graduation Diploma (Lickers Interview 2012)
School Honour Graduation level.” Herewith, Keith Lickers’ vision of a stand-alone discipline was beginning to take form.

Important work was also taking place in an area of Native Studies fundamental to the efforts of the PONA documents and its supporters: the protection, development and support of Native languages. In March 1980, a policy-oriented report was released, *Northern Native Language Program’s (NNLP) Final Report* appeared just prior to publication of the final PONA document, *Curriculum Guideline for the Senior Division*. Although the language report was not directly related to Native Studies as such, it was integrally bound with the cultural continuity aims of the Native Studies program. The NNLP report recommended (i) English as a Second Language; (ii) Native languages as subjects of instruction; (iii) vernacular language education; and (iv) training and certification of Native-language teachers. It proposed that Indigenous communities should be permitted to determine their educational goals concerning the use of their language, including its use as a vernacular language of instruction. It also found that “early school achievement was higher, the second language was learned more easily, and students developed better reading skills with the vernacular transition model” (Long 2006, 2). The NNLP report was well supported: several representatives from each of the Ontario Ministry of Education, DIAND and three Indigenous governing organizations - Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (NNEC), Wawatay Native Communications Society, and the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre – retained a “core team” of academic experts in the persons of educators Barbara Burnaby and Kelleen Toohey, as well as linguist John D. Nichols, to collaborate in authoring the
report. Keith Lickers was present here too as one of the co-Chairs, in his case, representing the Ontario Ministry of Education\(^8\) (Burnaby, Nichols, and Toohey 1980, 7). Publication of the final PONA document, *Curriculum Guideline for the Senior Division*, was timely. It added fuel to the already nicely burning fire of curriculum building for Native issues. However, fulfilling all the recommendations of NNLP was not to be an easy undertaking, in part because of the variety of dialects and languages throughout Indigenous communities and within Ontario.

Keith Lickers continued to be the key player in the development and implementation of programs. He was assigned the task of familiarizing Ministry of Education departments with relevant recommendations from the *Final Report*. While attending one of Lickers’ information sessions, Dr. Bette Stephenson, then Minister of Education, was so inspired that she committed the Ministry to thoroughly analyzing the implications of the *Final Report* concerning the merits of using Native languages as subjects of instruction and as languages of instruction (Long 2006, 6). Two years later, in 1982, Lickers was directed by Minister Stephenson to draft an Ontario Cabinet Submission advocating “support of Native languages as subjects of instruction and as languages of instruction, as well as the certification for Native-language teachers” (2006, 7). Lickers grasped the long-term advantage of getting DIAND and the OME to accept these recommendations from the NNLP *Final Report* specifically “support of Native languages as subjects of instruction and as languages of instruction, as well as the certification for Native-language teachers” (Lickers Interview 2011).

\(^8\) Marianna Couchie was the DIAND co-Chair.
Jurisdictional issues unfortunately limited the full implementation of the NNLP Final Report. Perhaps because Minister Stephenson realized that she would be crossing a jurisdictional line - the education of Aboriginal peoples is DIAND’s domain - or perhaps because she realized a unilateral decision by Ontario to go ahead with the recommendation of the Cabinet Submission would mean assuming all the expenses, she called Lickers into her office at the “11th hour” (Lickers Interview 2011). According to Lickers, the Minister asked him to review the draft Cabinet submission with DIAND officials. After several meetings with his DIAND counterparts (led by John Donnelley, DIAND Director of Education for Ontario) Lickers presented Dr. Stephenson with what must have been a disappointing scenario. DIAND was unwilling to approve funding for Native vernacular language instruction, but would support languages as subjects of instruction, as well as a program for the certification of Native-language teachers. Donnelley offered “dwindling funding” as justification for his decision. In fact, program cuts in the 1980s had made Native vernacular-language instruction next to impossible under the neo-liberal Mulroney government from 1984-1993 (Long 2006, 9). In Lickers’ view, the federal government’s assimilative agenda was once again coming to the fore. Strengthening the culture of Indigenous peoples by supporting their languages was contrary to DIAND’s policy of assimilation (2006, 8). “Never, in all my experience in dealing with the federal government, were they ever in

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9 “Mr. Donnelly couldn’t believe that a Minister of Education of Ontario would actually push and support Native languages as languages of instruction” (Lickers Interview 2012).

10 The revised Cabinet Submission, which was finally approved in 1985 made no reference to Native vernacular language of instruction, a great disappointment to Lickers but not a surprise.
the game. Their agenda has always been assimilation and they have never supported Aboriginal culture and language issues” (Lickers cited by Long 2006, 8).

Notwithstanding the closing of the residential schools, which did not automatically translate into federal government support for the cultural continuity of Indigenous peoples, DIAND’s larger federal agenda of assimilation (Lickers Interview 2011; Chisholm 1994; Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996a) quickly encountered a rising appreciation amongst a growing body of Indigenous scholars that cultural integrity was worth a fight. The assimilative aims of the federal government are corroborated by Long (2006), who says that the OME deferred to DIAND and allowed them to stop the vernacular language education component proposed by the OME. In this case, the OME was an ally for language and DIAND an opponent (Long 2006, 7). Lickers’ view - shared by Hill (2011) - that DIAND was acting in alignment with its long-time assimilative agenda and that it had never demonstrated tangible support for Native languages is borne out in this instance. Cherubini concurs adding, Indigenous scholars wanted “to reclaim their epistemic identities and empower Aboriginal knowledge to rise” (Cherubini 2010, 21). Maria Battiste (2004) contends that Indigenous knowledge must be established as a system that has status and social value. If culturally responsive schools are now beginning to emerge, this has much to do with the battles waged by communities and word warriors concerned with cultural continuity, perhaps most clearly expressed around the issue of language instruction (Cherubini, 2010, 21). “For Aboriginal peoples in Ontario, Canada, and beyond, culturally-responsive schools represent the potential to become empowered as nations
and to underscore their epistemic, cultural, and linguistic identities as sovereign political entities” (2010, 21).

Self-government is neither a gift, nor a delegation, but an inherent right. Although important differences of interpretation remain, this is now recognized by RCAP, by the leading Aboriginal organizations, by the federal government, and by legal scholars. Policy discussion, accordingly, is no longer about whether it should be a goal, but about how it should be achieved. Self-government has the potential to give dignity to those who live it and practice it. It is a powerful symbolic indication of equality. It contributes to self-reliance by supporting the thesis that responsibility begins at home. Presumably it will erode the powerful tendency of dependent peoples to blame others for their misfortunes and to expect others to be their salvation. (Cairns 2000, 111)

So, here we see the importance in Ontario of the two foundations of cultural continuity identified by Chandler and Lalonde in British Columbia: language retention and self-government.

**Suite of Native Studies Courses – 1999 and beyond**

By the 1990s there was much more awareness of Indigenous issues in the general public, in the schools, and in the government, specifically regarding misinformation in history books:

Many textbooks and resource materials used by Native Studies teachers in the past and to a lesser extent in the present, characteristically contain inaccurate Indigenous stereotypes, misinterpretations/distortions and omissions concerning Indigenous history in the Ontario curriculum whose cumulative effect is the continued dispossession of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. The Royal Proclamation of 1763, co-signed by France, England and 24 First Nations and the controversial Indian Act of 1876, unilaterally imposed on Indigenous peoples, await much-needed revision if the Ontario curriculum is to serve as a vehicle for the enlightenment of Ontario students and as a means of preventing
the perpetuation of misinformation. (Godlewska, Moore, and Bednasek 2010, 5-6)

By 1997, more than two decades after the initial launching, revisions to the PONA documents were finally initiated. For Keith Lickers, “They definitely needed revision” (Lickers Interview 2011). This awareness made the job of creating the new Native Studies curricula easier, given the acknowledgement that change was needed. What in particular needed to change? The PONA documents created in the early 1970s had not been designed as curricula but as “resource guides” (Hill, Thomas, Lickers Interviews 2011). Despite the zealous cost-cutting agenda of the newly elected provincial conservative government under Premier Mike Harris, John Snobolen, Minister of Education, agreed that the PONA documents should be revised and a new Native Studies program be developed. 11 Keith Lickers was assigned to administer the process (Thomas Interview 2011; Hill Interview 2011).

This time the experience of teachers who had used the PONA guides was brought to bear on the collaboration between Indigenous educators and representatives of the OME. First Nations educators were the leading contributors to the content of

11 The Ontario curriculum Grades 9 and 10: Native Studies, 1999 will be implemented in Ontario secondary schools starting in 1999 for Grade 9 and in September 2000 for Grade 10. This document replaces the sections in the common curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1-9, 1995 that relate to Native Studies in Grade 9 and the parts of the curriculum guideline Native Studies, Intermediate Division 1991 that relate to Grade 10 (Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10, Native Studies, OME 1999).

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11 and 12: Native Studies, 2000 will be implemented in Ontario secondary schools starting in September 2001 for students in Grade 11 and in September 2002 for students in Grade 12. This document replaces People of Native Ancestry, Senior Division, 1981. This document is designed for use in conjunction with The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: Program Planning and Assessment, 2000, which contains information relevant to all disciplines represented in the curriculum. The planning and assessment document is available both in print and on the ministry’s website at http://www.edu.gov.on.ca.
both the PONA documents and the first version of the suite of ten Native Studies courses implemented in 1999 (Hill, Thomas, and Moore Interview 2009; Ontario Ministry of Education 1975a, 1975b, 1977, 1981; Lickers Interview 2011). A new set of revisions to the Native Studies curricula initiated in 2010 has included consultation with Métis and Inuit educators as well (Paci 2011). While the Ministry did exercise a degree of veto power over the use of terms such as ‘self-government’ during the creation of the 1999 version (Hill, Thomas, and Moore Interview 2009), key Indigenous educators very close to the process (Lickers, Hill and Thomas Interviews 2011) are agreed that First Nations educators had unprecedented latitude in contributing to the content of the courses. According to Lickers, curriculum writers on the main writing team were given “free rein” over the content of the proposed new Native Studies curricula (2011). “Looking back I find it kind of scary to realize how much leeway we had creating that second set of documents” (Lickers Interview 2011). Gloria Thomas corroborates Lickers’ view of the situation:

As a writer, I…coordinated the writing team and in the beginning, both Native Studies and Native Language…once we did the first course in Native Studies, I let that go and I don’t know who coordinated the others. Although I did have contact with that same group, it was a different writing team. In the beginning, as a writer, I did start off bringing all those people together for both Native Studies and Native Languages and then we branched off. At the time I was working in the Grand Erie District Board…and meeting the needs of Six Nations in our Tuition Agreement. That was our framework that we worked with so that was my position. I did a lot of work with the Board itself and with the Director and I also worked with the other consultants like the curriculum person, the finance person…the structure was Board of Director, Superintendents and then Consultants in specific areas…the Board pretty much left it up to me to represent them.” (Thomas Interview 2011).

As Gloria commented, the freedom was exhilarating but also daunting.
In spite of considerable momentum, the Native Studies curriculum was still subject to the winds of political change. The writing of the Native Studies curricula was moving along well with leadership from Keith Lickers, Gloria Thomas and their team. They took charge of the situation, and represented their boards and communities. “It was only when the Conservatives got in under Mike Harris in 1995 that things got messy” (Lickers Interview 2011). Under previous governments, the final approval for curricula had been stamped in the Minister of Education’s office. The director of the Curriculum Branch along with the Assistant Deputy Minister and the Deputy Minister of Education normally gave the approval (2011). That made good sense since this was the team that was most knowledgeable about curriculum, content, and needs of students, teachers and boards. Despite this, and in a dramatic step backwards, the Conservative Minister of Education reversed the Curriculum Branch’s proposal to offer students the option of taking Grade 10 Native Studies as a stand-alone credit in lieu of the Grade 10 History credit. Instead, the Minister made it compulsory for students to take Grade 10 History to qualify for the compulsory history credit (2011). The Grade 9 Native Studies course, however, could replace the Arts credit. Similarly, the Grade 11 Native Studies course could replace the compulsory Grade 11 English as a credit towards the secondary school diploma. It did not add up. Why not History in Grade 10 and why English in Grade 11? Why these decisions were made remains a point of conjecture. Peter Hill, however, is convinced that decisions taken regarding curricula were all related to politics (2011).
Politics introduces an unpredictable variable into the Native Studies creative process, which, through its influence on policies and funding, has the power to impede or propel progress towards the goal of a Native Studies stand-alone curriculum. To this point, sufficient common ground between the OME and Indigenous proponents has existed to permit Native Studies to weather any adverse political winds. Going forward, a common vision for stand-alone Native Studies curricula must have enough clarity and support to inspire sustained action. For Indigenous proponents, that inspiration springs from the dream/goal of revitalizing their cultures, witnessing their children making progress, and acknowledgement of their way of being – their culture, language, laws, epistemic system. Individuals such as Keith Lickers, Gloria Thomas and Peter Hill of Six Nations, exemplify how the members of one Indigenous community can contribute to a goal in service of all Indigenous communities – in this case the creation of a stand-alone Native Studies curriculum. But for all this to happen, the Ministry of Education must also honour the treaties and agreements that are currently and globally accepted. In that event, the result will be a changed face of education for Indigenous peoples.

The long-term commitment and sustained effort of Hill, Lickers, Thomas and others represent planted seeds now growing in a once-hostile environment. It has taken time but many of their educational aspirations are on the verge of becoming reality - such as control over curricular content, including historical accuracy. It has been a slow and demanding process. Much of Peter Hill’s career from 1970-2005 was spent teaching History and Native Studies in secondary schools of the Grand Erie District School Board where Six Nations students attend. For three years in the late 1990s, he
was employed by the Ministry of Education in order to contribute to Native Studies courses. During that time, he participated in "think tanks", worked with committees of Native educators, who along with government employees and representatives of educational groups, made recommendations to Keith Lickers for the new Native Studies curriculum. Lickers, who led the team, passed those recommendations on to the “A” team –of which Peter Hill and Gloria Thomas were members. The “A” team of knowledgeable professionals who were advocates for Native education wove the “think tank” recommendations into the Native Studies curriculum that was launched in 1999.

Although Hill agrees that the team had considerable latitude when it came to devising content for the Native Studies curricula, he stops short of calling it a *carte blanche*. He refers to incidents where the government effectively vetoed the use of ‘problematic’ terms such as “self-government” and “Nation” in the context of the history of Indigenous governance structures (Hill, Thomas, and Moore Interview 2009). Hill’s view is complementary to that of Cherubini, Kitchen and Hodson (2008b), *Ontario Ministry of Education Policy and Aboriginal Learners’ Epistemologies: A Fundamental Disconnect*. A form of control was exercised over content via the Ministry’s unilateral policy of restricting input to academic experts, and disqualifying input from Elders with long-standing oral knowledge and cultural traditions (2008b). The transmission of traditional knowledge and culture by Elders in Indigenous communities has, by definition, always been seen as vital to oral cultures. Many community members play a role in traditional pedagogies - in sharp contrast to public school landscapes dominated by “educational experts who set the agenda and determine
whose knowledge is important; where power and control remains firmly in the hands of principals and teachers” (Cherubini and Hodson 2008).

For Indigenous communities focused on reestablishing self-governance, being cut out of the decision-making loop only serves to marginalize them and engender disengagement. A study conducted by Pushor & Ruitenber (2005) at Princess Alexandra Community School, an urban elementary school in Saskatoon whose students are mostly Cree, analyzed the factors that “enabled school practices to move along the continuum from parent involvement to parent engagement and leadership” and why some parents did not engage (2005, 11). They found that parent involvement was considered to be “doing the things that educators ask or expect them to do…while knowledge, voice and decision-making continue to rest with the educators” (2005, 12). Whether in government, in Ministry activities, in school boards or in schools, it is too easy to cut Indigenous peoples out of the process but processes without them do not work for their communities.

Not all Indigenous critics agree with Lickers, Thomas and Hill that the PONA documents opened the door to a new era marked by Indigenous ‘control’ over education. Although the creation of the suite of Native Studies courses suggests that Indian control of Indian education is on the rise, others argue that Ontario’s support is driven by their economic agenda. Whereas the Ministry includes culturally-appropriate content - Indigenous language, customs, culture, and oral history - others firmly hold that every step in the education of Indigenous peoples should be in the hands of the community and judge Ministry contributions as superficial (Alfred 2005; Alfred 2009;
Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Battiste 1998, 2004, 2002, 2000). In fact, there are Native parents and families who believe that if they honour the wishes of the schools, they are playing into the hands of the colonial occupiers. Haig-Brown, 1998, suggests that resistance by Indigenous families to engagement with schools can be viewed as a form of “personal integrity.” They resist engaging with an environment that stereotypes, judges, and dismisses Indigenous parents and communities (Cherubini and Hodson 2008).

Despite the ostensibly supportive and inclusive language and content of the PONA documents, Peter Hill felt that he had been working in a “foreign school system” (Hill Interview 2009). When teaching Grade 10 history at Caledonia to a class of predominantly non-Native students, he broached the topic of land ownership along the Grand River and discussed the historical agreement between the Crown and the Six Nations - with the Mohawk’s listed specifically - 12 which had originally granted all the land six miles on either side of the Grand River to the Six Nations. Uproar ensued; for his honest telling of history, Hill was called to the school office; his principal was fielding calls from parents displeased that ownership of their property was being questioned. The principal told him to “back off” and never mention this in class again. Hill felt judged, “dismissed” and dishonoured. He felt conflicted because had told the truth and yet he had to respect the wishes of his principal.

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12 This is a contentious issue at Six Nations because the Mohawks were the only nation listed on agreement, yet there are six nations in the Confederacy (Thomas Interview 2011).
Inspired by Dr. Godlewska’s recent paper, Hill has commented that omission is a type of misinformation - the kind of omissions that are still all too common in Ontario curricula (Godlewska, Moore, and Bednasek 2010). In his discussion with his class, Hill probably knew that he was on ‘thin ice’ but this small act of resistance was irresistible. Although ‘his foot went through the ice’, Hill would eventually find more solid footing during the three years he served on the curriculum-writing team for the suite of Native Studies curricula launched in 1999. In these curricula, the Six Nations version of history was finally told. The truth was finally spoken "without reservation.” This incremental progress exemplifies the manner in which cultural revitalization occurs. It is a byproduct of the right circumstances and the will to identify and push against the boundaries set by colonial powers. Decolonization from within the system cannot be accomplished without allies on the “inside.” In the larger social context, there were many events that created opportunity for this change, for which there are many explanations that include the following: Repatriation of the Canadian Constitution in 1982 that mentions Aboriginal rights; the cumulative effect of court action since the 1970s; and the politicization of Aboriginal peoples - “Aboriginal people have a different political and legal status in the Constitution Act of 1982” (Friesen, 2000).

In 1970, in the early days of Hill’s work prior to the above events, this forward movement in Native content and curriculum would not have been possible. Along with Lickers and Thomas, among others, Hill chose to implement an inherent right to education by working within the provincial system - a legislative setting, especially in the beginning, in which Indigenous people had limited legal grounding to implement
that right. They knew their work was not constitutionally based, but it was an effort to implement Indigenous control of Indigenous education in systems where Indigenous people had none (Thomas Interview 2011). Needless to say, these events have dramatically levelled the playing field for those working for Native education in the late sixties, early seventies, and into the eighties and nineties. By 1999, there was room for bargaining, negotiation, and fiduciary support. As with all projects, a supportive political climate, a knowledgeable citizenry and excellent funding can pave the path to success when there is good leadership and a committed team. This was the case in Ontario.

Views on the Native Studies curriculum are still divided. Despite all this, Hill has made it clear that he was disappointed with aspects of both the content and the implementation of Native Studies curriculum. As a teacher of Native History and issues, he considers that the curriculum was fundamentally undermined by the omission of key concepts such as 'sovereignty’. For Hill, what was at issue was, "by whom and how" the process of creating the Native Studies curricula was controlled. He was also disappointed with the sparse implementation of the Native Studies curriculum in the decade following its launch in 1999. On the other hand, Keith Lickers thinks that progress is being made and that “what has been done up to the present is an interim step towards making Native Studies a stand-alone discipline. By demonstrating how it could be integrated with existing stand-alone disciplines, we are widening the field in which Native Studies can be taught” (Lickers Interview 2011). As Native Studies gains in substance with each revision, the courses are gradually evolving towards the status of a
"stand-alone discipline" (Lickers Interview 2011). In some cases, it is the blending of Native Studies with established disciplines that is the key to its current viability. It has to “fit in” is what Lickers believes. For Lickers, if the Native Studies courses are to gain the same level of recognition as other non-Native Studies courses, they must be “recognized as credits for a Secondary School Diploma” (Lickers Interview 2011). In order to achieve this goal of ‘recognition of credits’ for Native Studies courses there must be a collaborative venture between Indigenous educators and the Ontario Ministry of Education. 13

Many Indigenous educators reject the need for government ‘recognition’ or approval of Indigenous curricular content. Taiaiake Alfred, (2005; 2009), Marie Battiste (2002, 2000) and Dale Turner (2006) are very reluctant to relinquish any degree of control over rights entrenched in long-standing treaties. Dale Turner (2006), in his book, *This is not a peace pipe*; rejects “White Paper Liberalism” or apparent care and support with the immediate goal of lowered costs and the ultimate goal of assimilation and Marie Battiste refers to the hegemonic imposition of intellectual concepts onto Indigenous peoples as “cognitive imperialism” or “cultural racism” which denies colonized peoples their cultural integrity by imposing the legitimacy of the dominant culture, language and worldview based on a false notion of cultural superiority (Battiste 2000, 198). What most people on the front lines of the Indigenous

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13 In off-the-cuff conversation many students have expressed the preference of taking Native Studies courses if they were offered through the Drama Department of their high schools. It is far more interesting to them to see things in action, to play the roles and to see the outcomes through playing the parts. Just as small children learn through play so too do adults. As Richard Courtney (1990) explains in his book, *Drama and Intelligence – A Cognitive Theory*, the studies of the transformations created by dramatic action “are personal, social, educational, therapeutic, aesthetic, artistic and cultural” (Courtney 1990, ix).
struggle for cultural survival agree upon, is that a pivotal strategy for Indigenous success rests on developing the ability to “walk in two worlds.”

While our attention might be most immediately drawn to the battle in which Indigenous educators have had to engage with officialdom, the personal challenges faced and stresses endured by educators such as Thomas, in championing the benefits of education within culturally complex communities, are also considerable. If the principles of “parental responsibility and local control” (National Indian Brotherhood 1972) are to guide movement toward the goal of Indian Control of Indian Education, then the generations closest to the traumas generated during the residential school era must bear a double burden of healing themselves and inspiring others. Despite the dialectic between tradition and modernity, and its effects, Thomas is convinced that there is a resurgence of the traditional Iroquoian culture and that part of its success is directly attributable to the presence of Native Studies curricula in high schools (Thomas Interview 2011).

According to Gloria Thomas (2011), a parallel and respectful co-existence between Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies is critical to Indigenous cultural survival. This view is metaphorically and poetically summarized in the oft-quoted description of the peace and friendship treaty, the Guswenta or The Two Row Wampum, between the Iroquois Confederacy and Colonial powers in the late 17th century. The two rows symbolize two vessels travelling down the same river together:

"One, a birch bark canoe, will be for the Indian people, their laws, their customs, their ways. The other, a ship will be for the white people, their laws, their customs,
their ways. We shall each travel the river together, side by side, but in our own boat. Neither will try to steer the other’s vessel.

The principle of the Two Row Wampum became the basis for all treaties and agreements that were made with the Europeans. (Grand Chief Michael Mitchell of Akwasasne, from Turner 2006, 48)

Alfred makes an appreciable distinction between the independent canoeist and the sailors on the ship as described above in the collaborative Two Row Wampum, and that of an assimilative One Row Wampum where the canoeists grow to depend on the ship (Alfred February 14, 2012, Queen’s lecture at Kingston Hall). Short-term gains culled from the co-management of natural resources, for instance, can, in the long run, lead to outcomes antithetical to the principles enshrined in the Two Row Wampum, cautions Alfred. His paper for the National Aboriginal Healing Organization (NAHO), Colonialism and State Dependency warns against “colonially generated cultural disruption…that compounds the effects of dispossession to create near total psychological, physical and financial dependency on the state” (Alfred 2009, 42). Turning a blind eye to the cumulative impacts of such possibilities favours the long-term degeneration of Indigenous self-sufficiency and autonomy thus favouring the assimilationist agenda (2009, 42). “The agenda is heavily promoted by largely pro-assimilationist media and mainstream non-Indigenous scholars with integration into the market economy and cultural assimilation advanced as the only viable pathways to a better life for First Nations people and communities” (Alfred 2009, 5). Kirmayer and Valaskakis (2009) concur that over a century of brutal assimilative tactics have thwarted the ability of Indigenous peoples to maintain traditional lifestyles. Viewing
Indigenous cultures, as antiquated, successive governments have made no appropriate policy provisions for their continuance. Reluctance to submit to the ‘civilized’ way guarantees marginalization. “That is the essence of life in the colony: assimilate and be like us or suffer the consequences” (Kirmayer & Valaskakis 2009, xi). No two canoes here.

Although not supported by either the assimilationists or those arguing for a much more complete autonomy, Indigenous educators in Ontario schools and the Ministry are working to increase the number of Native Studies courses, the caliber of the Indigenous cultural content and the number of courses taught in the vernacular language of instruction. The fact that Indigenous control of education is being exercised – the trees are again taking root in the forest - offers a basis for realistic hope of cultural revitalization of Indigenous civilization.

**Growing Control Over Education**

**Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework 2007**

Like the incremental greening of a forest after the flames - at first barely detectable - the gradual reestablishment of Indigenous cultural continuity, following the devastation of the Canadian government’s assimilative strategies, first occurs where the conditions are most conducive to growth. As established by the Indian Brotherhood’s 1972 policy paper, *Indian Control of Indian Education*, one of those conditions is: control. In this case, control of Native Studies by Indigenous educators and parents at
the community level was identified as a fundamental prerequisite for success.

Reviewing the milestones of Keith Lickers’ career from 1964 through 2007 brings the essential principle of control into focus. From the early 1970s to the present, incremental increases in control by Indigenous educators over aspects of the Native Studies curricula in publicly-funded schools has marked each step of Lickers’ career. Indeed, each step seems to have incrementally contributed to the vision of Native Studies as a stand-alone discipline. In short, it is not just a matter of having the control. It is the act of exercising it and if necessary, overcoming those forces which would prevent its expression. It is working for control of education based on an understanding that control of education is not only a legal right, but also a choice - linked to both the collective and individual.

Keith Lickers sought to increase Indigenous control over education in Ontario public schools in a number of ways. In addition to his work on PONA and the Native Studies suite of courses he contributed to several key OME policies. In particular he was sole author of two very important and influential documents: i) the Aboriginal Student Self-Identification policy whose supplementary document, Building Bridges to

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14 Although Keith Lickers was the sole author of both the Aboriginal Student Self-Identification policy and the Ontario, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, two successive Assistant Deputy Ministers helped guide the development of the documents over a period of three years. Lickers was also assisted for six months by a Native civil servant seconded from the Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs, as it was known in 2005-2006. Dominic Giroux, the second Assistant Deputy Minister, ensured that the Framework was approved, first by the Deputy Minister, and eventually by the Minister of Education, Kathleen Wynne. Lickers did not consult with Aboriginal organizations during the drafting of the Framework document; that came later. When the reader of the Framework looks closely at the content, it is basically a driver for the Ministry of Education: the Framework principles begin with "Ontario believes," "Ontario creates and nurtures," "Ontario creates and supports," "Ontario respects Aboriginal and Treaty rights" (Lickers Interview 2012).
Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students served as its implementation (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007) and ii) the Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b). The Framework reiterates the importance of Indian Control of Indian Education (National Indian Brotherhood 1972): “the need for control of First Nation education by First Nation people” (2007b, p.25; Cherubini, 2010, 17). One could argue that this policy framework represented a specific kind of “educational manifesto” which at once was setting the philosophy, and pointing the way to the future of education for Indigenous peoples. The focus was properly on Indigenous control of Indigenous education.

In addition, perhaps for the first time in an Ontario education policy document, we see broached, the significant problem imposed upon Indigenous peoples in Canada by the prevailing ignorance concerning Indigenous peoples. The document promised to develop strategies to ensure that “all students in Ontario will have knowledge and appreciation of contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis and Inuit traditions, cultures and perspectives” (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b, 7). The promise, though encouraging in nature, remains unrealistic, as it is not validated by proposed standards, or any kind of public strategies for implementation. The recognition of the problem in a public Ministry document, however, and the hope that it might be resolved, is in itself remarkable.

The Aboriginal Self-Identification Policy was designed for gathering data on Indigenous students in order to enhance polices related to the delivery of Indigenous programs and support services. The policy, which operated on a voluntary basis, was
authored and championed by Lickers during his last year at the Ministry in 2006.

Concerns over how the data would be collected through the *Self-Identification Policy* were legitimate. According to Gloria Thomas, her people at Six Nations do not fill in the census nor do most feel comfortable with self-identification (Thomas Interview 2011). Given that self-identification is voluntary, the accuracy of the data cannot be guaranteed. Cherubini adds, “The framework cites the importance of providing Aboriginal students with culturally-relevant learning environments that better reflect their epistemic traditions and values” (Cherubini, 2010). However, Indigenous people are fearful that if those decisions are left in the hands of the Ministry and school boards, that they will find themselves being taught using colonial paradigms (Hill Interview 2009; Womack 1999), which will result in assimilation and acculturation to European ideals. “It is clear…that the exclusive use of Eurocentric knowledge in education has failed First Nations children” (Battiste, 2002, 9). This “education deficit” results in a poor showing in terms of attendance, achievement and graduation. This in turn creates a vicious circle in which Indigenous people drop out, receive inadequate education and contribute to the negative stereotypes of Indigenous peoples held by so many Canadians (Cherubini, 2010, 14). Initially, many Indigenous parents were convinced that the policy was not in the best interest of their children, fearing that the data might be used in a prejudicial manner. As Cherubini saw it, “If [students] accept the policy initiatives and self-identify, they indirectly consent to a solution that is defined, determined and ultimately managed by main stream educators who measure student success by standardized and culturally-unfamiliar practices” (Cherubini, 2010).
Rumours emanating from the Ministry of Education and the school boards suggest that in the end, many Indigenous people did self-identify.

Lickers was more immediately concerned to get the resources to Indigenous students than he was with standardized and culturally-unfamiliar assessment practices. Determining strategically how to adjust the currently unsuccessful approaches to Indigenous education was one of the highest hurdles facing both governments and educators. As a means of addressing the inadequate data on Indigenous students, which were required to make and justify funding adjustments, The OME released *Building Bridges to Success* (Office 2007). This document provided a template for public school boards and their Indigenous constituents to co-develop policies permitting the gathering of “accurate and reliable data in order to assess progress towards the goal of improving Aboriginal student achievement” (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007, 7). The adoption and implementation of the *Self-Identification Policy* was intended to be completely voluntary for Indigenous families and students - the privacy of participating Indigenous students being of utmost concern to parents, and to the participating boards, to establish an environment of trust conducive to increasing the participation level of Indigenous students. As to the ultimate impact of the self-identification strategy, the jury is still out. As of March 2012, the self-identification data is not yet available to the public and nor is it yet clear how the data will be used.

The Importance of Extended Family Structures in Determining Long-Term Strategies Leading to Cultural Continuity
Leaning toward a model of Indigenous institutions contributive to negotiating educational matters by communities, extended families, defined in Cayuga language as gahwajiya’geho (Froman et al. 2002, 114) has been one way of maintaining a consistency of focus and approach over the long periods of time necessary for dealing with predictable changes in external governments. The concept of extended family systems, some matrilineal, others patrilineal, is an historically familiar way of organizing Indigenous societies world-wide. In matters of the survival of integral cultures within larger and dominant cultural groupings and when that passage is tied to the perpetuation of a vision for the future of one’s civilization, there are strong positive elements in the concept of extended systems that family continuity can create (Thomas Interview 2011).

In education in Ontario, the Bigwin and Thomas families have strongly supported the cause of Indigenous education over two generations. This kind of extended family system is more about cultural continuity and commitment to process than to family advantage. Indigenous scholars want to reclaim their epistemic identities and empower Indigenous knowledge to rise “in social value [and] status as a system of knowledge, while Indigenous scholars generate the necessary intellectual space to create a conceptual and analytical framework for its development” (Battiste, 2002, p.6; Cherubini, 2010). This is arguably the case for the Bigwin/Thomas model, but there is always the potential of marginalization of these scholars, including those from the Aboriginal Education Office, to be considered products of mainstream education, disconnected from their communities and worldviews, while these researchers may
view the opposite is true. As a frustrating result, they “find themselves alienated from the very people they have educated themselves to help” (Thompson Cooper & Stacey Moore, 2009, p.179; Cherubini, 2010).

Gloria Thomas is a remarkable example of this kind of engaged ‘walking in two worlds’ scholar/teacher. She has faced the challenges of an Indigenous academic and scholar in Western academia. At the same time, she works to maintain and enhance her presence in her community. She is determined to continue her education over her lifetime. Her actions in this regard, amongst others, have made her an excellent role model for her Six Nations community. In keeping with her vision for educating her people, she has worked to promote Native Language and Native Studies courses while completing her doctoral dissertation Finding Tadodaho. Her dissertation for the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, focuses on the warlike Onandaga leader who was swayed by the persuasive Deganawidah to embrace the Great Law of Peace, the central tenet of the Haudenosaunee Confederation. As Gloria Thomas is on the verge of receiving her doctorate, her granddaughter, Hailey, is beginning her academic career at Western University, studying to become a secondary school teacher in Native Studies. See Appendix C for details of Hailey’s important contribution to the cultural continuity of her family and community. This is one example of the impact that Gloria has had on her family and a direct illustration of the impact her dedication to education.

Members of the Bigwin family have been employees of the Ontario Ministry of Education for generations; this might lead one to imagine a nepotistic conspiracy but nepotism is clearly not what is at play here. Al Bigwin worked at the Curriculum
Branch with Keith Lickers in the 1970s. Since his retirement, his daughter, Alayne Bigwin\textsuperscript{15} successfully competed for the position as the first Director of Aboriginal Education Office (AEO) within the Ministry of Education in August 2006. Working alongside Alayne Bigwin is her sister Elizabeth Bigwin. One of Elizabeth’s successes is the publication of a 2008 report to the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association (OPSBA). In partnership with school boards and parents, the AEO has been striving to raise the levels of Indigenous student academic attendance and achievement. In September 2007, the Aboriginal Education Office’s efforts were extended to the secondary level, with dedicated funding of thirteen million dollars in support of the goal of preparing Indigenous students for post-secondary education. The AEO’s specific goals were to increase the educational system’s ability to meet the cultural and learning needs of Indigenous students by: providing quality services and appropriate curriculum; assisting Indigenous students in meeting provincial standards; increasing the numbers of Indigenous teaching staff; increasing the graduation rate; increasing overall achievement levels; increasing self-esteem; and increasing collaboration with Indigenous educators, the federal government, the College of Teachers, and western provinces. The office recognizes the enormous scope of its undertaking, but aims to build "the will and skill, one Board, one school, one teacher, one student at a time" (Ministry of Education, 2007). By arming Indigenous students with the necessary knowledge and skills, they hope to better position students to succeed in the

\textsuperscript{15} “Alayne Bigwin joined the AEO on August 8, 2006 serving as its founding Director. Alayne holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from York University, a Bachelor of Education from the University of Toronto and a Master of Education from the University of Ottawa” (Giroux 2006).
mainstream labour market environment. The AEO’s vision assumes a parallel learning curve on the part of the general population regarding traditional Indigenous cultures and the modern challenges they face. What the Bigwins, Thomases and Keith Lickers have in common is the conviction that they can work from the inside to change education in Ontario for the betterment of Indigenous peoples.

The struggle of Indigenous peoples to regain control over their education has evidently not been a priority of either the federal or provincial levels of government as suggested by the relative scarcity of landmark documents during the past 40 years (Cherubini 2010, 12). Since the repatriation of the Constitution in 1982 clarified some of the outstanding jurisdictional issues between federal and provincial governments, we have begun to see the development of provincial strategies and initiatives (Cherubini 2010). The improvement in number and quality of Native Studies courses in high schools in Ontario serves as an excellent example of gradual evolution beginning to culminate in legislated polices such as the *Ontario First nations, M étis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b). During the past four decades, leaders in Indigenous education such as Gloria Thomas, Keith Lickers, Al Bigwin and Peter Hill amongst others, have “consistently campaigned for entitlements from mainstream governing parties, yet policy-makers and authorities have refused to relinquish such control” (Cherubini 2010, 11). These Indigenous educators are fully aware that reestablishing and prolonging their cultural continuity can best be accomplished through control over their education with resultant positive impacts on
the self-concept of Indigenous students (Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996; Cherubini 2010; National Indian Brotherhood 1972).

The assessment of programs and strategies is an on-going process, which requires generational dedication, direction and determination. Understanding the process, gathering and analyzing the data, and then putting programs in place within monetary, cultural and training constraints is a challenge. In 1988, The Assembly of First Nations published a report entitled *Tradition and Education, Towards a Vision of Our Future*. The three-volume report assessed the progress of implementation of the *Indian Control of Indian Education Policy* (1972) authored by the National Indian Brotherhood and adopted by the federal government in 1973. The authors found “that many of the educational shortcomings identified in 1972 were still in existence” (Kirkness and Bowman 1992, 20). Why does the gap stubbornly refuse to be closed? Does cultural continuity enter into the equation? Arguably, there is a great deal of healing needed in order to reclaim and sustain Indigenous socio-linguistic and cultural traditions that are the foundation for self-identity. Having initiatives in place is a major step forward but all concerned must learn to navigate the terrain. The initiatives to which Cherubini refers are: “unique needs of Aboriginal learners, the importance of… [introducing]…culturally-sensitive pedagogy into teachers’ practice, and the need to create inviting school environments for Aboriginal students and their communities” (Cherubini 2010). Ideally, communication in both communities and schools should be in the relevant Indigenous language.
Unfortunately, as Gloria Thomas explains, although the languages of instruction in the on-reserve high school at Six Nations are Mohawk and Cayuga, most of the children attend off-reserve high schools operated by the Grand Erie Board where the language of instruction is English. Gloria adds that any policy supporting a Native language of instruction or Native Studies programs for off-reserve schools would be more than welcome (Thomas Interview 2011). She feels such pro-Indigenous policies would shed a light on her people, her Nation, their way of being - and send a strong message to Indigenous communities that they and their cultures are important (2011). Moreover, offering Native Language instruction and Native Studies courses in provincial high schools opens the door for non-Native students to become informed and engaged, promoting the legacy of influential, forward thinking non-Natives like Deputy Minister Waldrum and Minister Bette Stephenson. There is a new and important wave on which the hopes of Indigenous peoples are riding, specifically the fact that the OME is playing the role of the “benevolent and conciliatory provider of educational services.” On the other hand, some perceive this role as the wolf in sheep’s clothing as it is “complicated by Eurocentric and capitalist rhetoric and paradigms” which are more concerned with enlisting Indigenous graduates into the labour pool than having them return to their communities to champion the rejuvenation of their respective cultures (Cherubini 2010, 15).

There are very hopeful signs for the future. As demonstrated in the following chapter, Implementation, the number of Ontario high schools offering Native Studies courses has been increasing rapidly in the last few years. Native Studies courses are
being offered in increasing numbers across Ontario. There is a parallel movement afoot in Canada with an increasing number of Indigenous educators leading major innovations in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Nunavut, and New Brunswick. It is evident that the vanguard of expert teachers, writers and educators in general is rapidly enhancing Native Studies programs across Canada. These programs are helping to create a resilient population of students who continue to fuel a revitalization of Indigenous culture. With their persistence, long-sightedness, and passion – their cultural resiliency - men and women in Ontario, like Keith Lickers, Peter Hill, Kevin Reed, Dr. John Roberts, Gloria Thomas, Al Bigwin and Alayne Bigwin, amongst others, have created a legacy of resilience and activism that continues to benefit Indigenous students today. This resilience has been an unexpectedly important element in the educational landscape. It has empowered Indigenous individuals to change the *status quo* by breaking through the limitations and challenges of externally-imposed circumstances. In Ontario, these visionary educators have created a model of attitude and action, which is informing today’s and tomorrow’s Indigenous education.

**Conclusion**

*Chapter 3 – Creation* provides the cultural and psychological background against which *Chapter 4 - Implementation* may be better understood.

There has been an interesting progression of seven catalytic events since the 1960s, which has led to increased Indigenous autonomy and has galvanized the
development of Indigenous-centered curricula. I assess the impact of those seven events, beginning with the closing of the residential schools, as the backdrop to explain the rise in the number of students taking Native Studies courses in Ontario.

As residential schools were closing down, First Nations tuition fee agreements became a powerful bargaining tool for creating curricular content, and led to an unprecedented participation of Indigenous experts in the design and content of curricula. Control over education being a central tenet of self-government, it was no surprise that not all Indigenous leaders were embracing the notion of sharing control over education.

The dedication of particular Indigenous educators is emphasized in this chapter, with passing glances at the issues of language retention and self-government.
Chapter 4 - Implementation

While the creation of Native Studies courses has been vitally important and has opened up possibilities for change and growth, it is in the implementation, the actual delivery of the courses, that we can begin to gauge the impact of the Native Studies initiative. The data available from the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) strongly suggests that there has been significant growth in the number of students taking Native Studies courses, in the number of schools and school boards offering Native Studies courses, and in the frequency of offerings. Growth in the implementation of Native Studies courses coincides with attendant funding associated with their offering, which suggests that the school boards and schools are critical components in this equation: *if the courses are offered the students will come.* In consequence of the encouraging uptake of enrollments since the 2007-08 funding incentives (Figure 1), the OME, effective the 2011-2012 academic year, has reduced support for Native Studies courses by increasing the minimum number of students required for enrollment from six to twelve students for 2011-2012. As OME data is not yet available for 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, we cannot yet assess the consequences of this change. What is clear is the following: Native Studies courses are critical to supporting the cultural renaissance taking place in Indigenous communities; students will take such courses under propitious circumstances; and though government funding is critical to maintaining growth, Indigenous leaders will persist in building the cultural momentum, whether or not government continues to fund these educational initiatives.
Whereas the OME data reveals growth and recent dramatic growth in the implementation of Native Studies courses (Figure 2), it neither reveals the percentage of Indigenous students enrolled, nor the mechanics of the decision-making process leading to the selection of the courses offered, nor the motivation of students enrolled in the courses. The annually-updated data base, Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) (See Appendix D for details), reports the names of the school boards, the name and address of each school that is offering courses, the names of each course offered, the frequency of course offerings, and the number of students enrolled in each course. The OnSIS data does not, however, report the percentage of enrollees who are Indigenous or the process for selecting courses, that is, the extent to which the choice of course offerings is driven by the school board or school administration (principals and teachers), Indigenous parents, or other parents. The OnSIS data cannot directly inform us about the impact of implementing the Self-Identification policy – in operation since 2009-2010 - on the number of courses offered. Furthermore, the OnSIS data neither sheds light on why some courses are more popular than others, nor how all ten courses (particularly those which have low rates of implementation) have managed to consistently attract enrollees.
Figure 1. Source: Compiled from the 2006-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Palone and Chaput 2012.

Characterizing the Growth

As Native Studies courses are not compulsory, the increasing enrollments – although representing a small percentage of Ontario’s high school student population - suggest a genuine interest on the part of the students choosing to take them and on the part of those choosing to offer them. Unlike students who are enrolled in the *Grade 10 Civics Course*, for example, which is mandatory for all secondary school students, enrollees in Native Studies courses attend by choice. In the absence of a follow-up study to determine whether there are other relevant decision-making factors at play for administrators and students, it is reasonable to conclude that student interest is the most relevant factor in Native Studies course enrollment.

Recent increases in enrollments in these courses have doubled every year since 2006-2007, most significantly jumping from +4,540 in 2008-2009 to +8,162 in 2009-
Let us place these results in a full provincial context in terms of numbers, need for trained teachers, relevant policy, and challenges:

1. **Numbers.** In 2007-2008 the number of students enrolled in Native Studies courses was 2,216 or 0.31% of the total Ontario high school student population of 716,103 (OnSIS 2007-2008). In 2008-2009 Native Studies enrollees increased to 0.6% and in 2009-2010 to 1.14% of Ontario’s total high school student population (OnSIS 2008-2009, 2009-2010). These apparently minor increases are rendered more meaningful when we consider that Indigenous peoples constitute only two per cent of the Ontario population (Statistics Canada 2006).

2. **Teachers.** These increases do illuminate the need for trained teachers who understand that the education process must integrate home and community involvement and include consideration of different cultures, learning patterns and worldviews.

3. **Policy.** In fundamental ways, the policy adopted by the OME is culturally insensitive and as a result impractical. The OME’s 2007 *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* identifies “Lack of awareness among teachers” regarding Indigenous approaches to learning as the main barrier to success of Indigenous students in combination with “lack of understanding within schools and school boards” of Indigenous perspectives. Yet, the key priority of the OME’s 2007 *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* is to “close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the areas of literacy and numeracy, retention of students in school, graduation rates, and
advancement to postsecondary studies” by the year 2016 (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b, 4). While relevant to student’s aspirations for advancement within the mainstream system, literacy, numeracy, retention, graduation rates, and educational advancement are not directly nurturing of the revitalization of Indigenous cultures. So, while cultural sensitivity is a clear aim of the Education Policy Framework, it is not achieved even within this policy document. In this policy document, the OME recognizes that prevailing ‘lack of awareness’ of Indigenous peoples in the general population is a problem, yet addressing that issue is not given priority with date-specific expectations (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b, 6). As of early 2012, there are no benchmarks in place to measure progress towards enhancing general knowledge of Indigenous people in Ontario. Arguably, the most strategic and culturally-relevant goals in the Vision of the Framework have not been reified. If culturally sensitive teachers are not being formed (they emerge from the general population and reflect the education system as it is), how can schooling attractive to Indigenous students be possible?

4. Challenges. The issue of trained teachers is of critical importance. A lack of trained teachers will affect the offerings and enrollments of Native Studies courses and trained teachers will enhance the offerings and enrollments in Native Studies courses. Thomas, Lickers and Lloyd all agree that training of teachers is critical (2011) to the uptake of Native Studies courses across Ontario.

As we will see when we discuss OME funding policies, the number of schools and school boards offering Native Studies courses mirrors the development of OME
funding policies, showing a rapid response in the uptake of course offerings from 2007 (Figures 2, 3 and 4). OnSIS data shows the numbers for the offerings of Native Studies courses each school year for grade levels, the number of schools in which they are taught and the school boards they are part of. The upward swing is evident. Between 2006-2007 and 2009-2010 the number of schools offering Native Studies courses increased from 51 to 267. In the same period, the offering of Native Studies courses jumped from 75 to 478 (Table 1) and the number of school boards offering courses has increased similarly (Figure 5).

**Figure 2.** Source: Compiled from the 1999-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Cummings-Bentley and Chaput 2011, Chaput 2012.
Figure 3. Source: Compiled from the 1999-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Cummings-Bentley and Chaput 2011, Chaput 2012.

Figure 4. Source: Compiled from the 1999-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Cummings-Bentley and Chaput 2011, Chaput 2012.
Table 1: Number of School Boards Offering Native Studies Courses, and Number of Courses Offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of School Boards Offering Courses</th>
<th>Number of Courses Offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 5. Source: Compiled from the 1999-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Cummings-Bentley and Chaput 2011, Chaput 2012.
The consistent increase in number of schools and school boards offering courses lends credence to a statement by Kevin Reed, Aboriginal Education Consultant to the Limestone District School Board, that the Ministry’s current level of commitment to Native Studies courses has attained “critical momentum” (Reed Interview 2012). “The province is having more and more dialogues and making more and more agreements with Indigenous peoples…it is ratcheting up and up…it cannot go backwards…we have reached critical momentum, the ‘tipping point’” (Reed 2012). In 2007-2008, Native Studies courses were offered by 105 out of 897 high schools, or 11.7 % of all the high schools in Ontario. In 2008-2009, 172 high schools, or 19% of 901 schools offered Native Studies courses. This change in one year - from 11.7% to 19% - represents a 62% increase. In 2009-2010 the number of schools offering courses increased to 267 or 29.6% of the total number of high schools in Ontario (Table 2, and Figures 4, 5, and 6).

A small percentage of the total student body in Ontario high schools (1.14%) is enrolled in Native Studies courses but, encouragingly, a large percentage of the institutions (29.9%) and an even larger percentage of boards (55 out of 72 which is 76%) are offering Native Studies courses. This uptake corroborates Reed’s view that Native Studies courses are here to stay. Reed adds a cautionary note that “we are not out of the woods yet. Some teachers do not get it but it is coming sooner than later” (Reed Interview 2012).
Table 2: Grade, Name, Type, and Code of Each Native Studies Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Expressing Aboriginal Cultures</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>NAC1O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Aboriginal Peoples in Canada</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>NAC2O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>English: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>NBE3U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Current Aboriginal Issues in Canada</td>
<td>University/College</td>
<td>NDA3M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Aboriginal Beliefs, Values and Aspirations in Contemporary Society</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>NBV3C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>English: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>NBE3C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Aboriginal Beliefs, Values and Aspirations in Contemporary Society</td>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>NBV3E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>English: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices</td>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>NBE3E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Aboriginal Governance: Emerging Directions</td>
<td>University/College</td>
<td>NDG4M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Issues of Indigenous Peoples in a Global Context</td>
<td>University/College</td>
<td>NDW4M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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16 Note: For the five-alpha numeral course codes used by the Ministry, Grades are represented by numerals: for example ‘1’ represents Grade 9 (NAC1O), ‘2’ Grade 10 (NAC2O), ‘3’ Grade 11 (NBE3C) and ‘4’ Grade 12 (NDW4M).
There are many teachers who do “get it” thanks to powerful leadership, continuing direction and focus on the task at hand, including organization of regular central meetings to share information and disseminate classroom support material and references to Indigenous Elders and artists who support Native Studies programming. One of these teachers is Grace Lloyd, a seasoned high school teacher who began teaching Native Studies in January of 2011 at the Rideau District high school in Elgin.

Lloyd is heartened by the great support system presently in place for the Native Studies program. She attributes much of this support to the efforts of Romaine Mitchell, Aboriginal Education Consultant for the Upper Canada District School Board. Lloyd explains:
Romaine, a Mohawk from Akwasasne, has lots of resources in place at our resource centre including many of his own. All Native Studies teachers have access to them. Romaine also organizes workshops for Elders to speak to us and teach us many Native ways including beading, soapstone carving and basket making. (Lloyd Interview 2011)

In addition, the Aboriginal Education Office funds field trips which are relevant to the Native Studies curricula; amongst these are recent trips to a powwow and The Museum of Civilization. Lloyd joins other Native Studies teachers several times a year at Professional Learning Community meetings in Belleville, Ontario. These informative sessions dedicated to the discussion of current issues and best practices is funded by the Aboriginal Education Office. Lloyd notes that her colleagues are very interested in what goes on in the classroom and beyond (Lloyd Interview 2011). Her new-found interest in teaching Native Studies courses and has led her to request her Principal, Sharon Halladay, to apply for more courses for the next school year. “The depth and breadth of the program is teaching everyone involved a great deal about Indigenous worldviews and encouraging all participants and onlookers to broaden their understanding of issues” (Lloyd Interview 2011).

The past decade stands as proof that if adequate seed funding is provided, the quality and content of the Native Studies courses increases in consequence, and enrollments will expand rapidly favouring the cultural continuity of participating Indigenous communities. In the fall of 1999, the Grade 9 Native Studies course, Expressing Aboriginal Cultures (NAC10) was launched; only five courses were offered in the province. The following academic year Grade 10 Aboriginal Peoples in
Canada (NAC2O) was launched. The combined course offerings for Grades 9 and 10 totalled 27. In 2001-2002, with the addition of six Grade 11 courses and two Grade 12 courses, only a modest total of 38 courses was offered. However, a significant increase occurred the following year when the number of courses increased by more than 100 per cent (from 38 to 90). The following four years averaged 60 courses per year until 2007-2008 when the number of courses offered essentially tripled to 175. The course offerings continued to increase in this pattern over the next two years to reach a total of 478 in 2009-2010 (See Figures 2 and 7). One could argue that the results relative to the pool of over 1,000 high schools in Ontario may not be significant. However, the absolute numbers within the context of the Indigenous community have great significance, particularly as they may influence individual teachers and students, individual schools, and ultimately, cultural continuity.

Change takes time, but there is evidence that the Native Studies programs are growing and that there is interest from Indigenous communities in sending teacher candidates to Indigenous education courses (Thomas Interview 2011). The low implementation rates for Native Studies courses in the first three years (1999-2002) are attributable to the staggered starts for the various courses and, in part, to the fact that they were new and unfamiliar to the boards, principals, students and teachers involved. It was difficult to find Indigenous teachers who were trained to teach Native Studies courses but that situation is improving with time and the addition of pertinent teacher training courses. As courses have been added to universities such as the Aboriginal Teachers’ Education Program (ATEP) at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario
(Queen's University 2012; Thomas 2011), the Indigenous Education Network (IEN) at OISE (University of Toronto 2012; Reed 2011) and Brock University’s Tecumseh Centre for Aboriginal Research and Education (Northern Nishnawbe Education Council 2010c), a pool of qualified teachers is growing in both size and competence. These teachers are, however, teaching students who choose to be there, so the milieu is conducive to learning. As a result, the students and teachers are very enthusiastic about their Native Studies courses (Lloyd Interview 2011, Reed Interview 2012).

Recently published and the most up-to-date data from OME for the school year 2009-2010, reflects the greatest increase in number of Native Studies courses offered since the inception of the suite of ten courses, and suggests a successful collaboration among Ministry, school boards and Indigenous stakeholders. Success or failure of non-mandatory courses such as Native Studies, is in the hands of the enrollees whose criteria for selecting one course over another – whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous - are beyond the ability of the OnSIS data to assess. Given that the students ‘vote with their feet’, it is remarkable that enrollments have increased for every Native Studies course between 1999 and 2010. Assuming continued funding and current levels of enrollments, the prospects for Native Studies courses are heartening. However, not all courses are as successful in attracting enrollees. Figure 7 shows that the growth in offerings of Grade 11 English: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices and Grade 12 Aboriginal Governance: Emerging Directions has been minimal. The factors contributing to their comparatively low levels of offerings: eight for Grade 11 Aboriginal Governance and eleven for Grade 11 English versus 92 for Aboriginal
Beliefs, Values and Aspirations in Contemporary Society (2009-2010 data) – cannot be determined from the OnSIS data.

Figure 7. Source: Compiled from the 1999-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Cummings-Bentley and Chaput 2011, Palone and Chaput 2012.

Another limiting aspect of the OnSIS data is that the information is two years old by the time it becomes available which creates problems for researchers and analysts attempting to draw current conclusions from the data. The OME has been working to improve data collection through OnSIS by developing the data collection
component of the Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) initiative of the Ontario government. MISA is a provincial capacity-building initiative designed to increase both provincial and local capacity to use data and information for “evidence-informed decision-making to improve student achievement” (Ontario Ministry of Education 2012). OnSIS has collected data on high school Native Studies courses since the launching of the Grade 9 course (NAC1O) in the fall of 1999. I received the most recent year’s data from OnSIS in March 2012 and I have updated Excel charts to include this 2009-2010 data, but have not updated the GIS-based maps given restricted time and resources (A list of all the Figures and Tables generated in preparation for this thesis can be found in Appendix E).

**Interesting North/South Dynamics within North/South Geography**

The rapidly increasing number of Native Studies courses and the number of schools offering them could be interpreted as a sign of cultural renewal, especially if it can be shown that the students taking the courses were mostly Indigenous. However, Indigenous-specific data is not yet available from the Ministry of Education. Nonetheless, I will argue the case for cultural renewal, based on data from the Statistics Canada *Aboriginal Peoples Survey* (Statistics Canada 2006). In the north, the percentage of Aboriginal people in one census division is as high as 40.23% (Figures 8 and 9). Bear in mind that not all Native people respond to census forms. They consider themselves to be self-governing Nations (Thomas Interview 2011). Although it is not possible to determine how many Indigenous high school students are represented by
these aggregate percentages, the percentage of Indigenous individuals by census
division can be used to estimate percentages of Indigenous students likely to be
represented among the students enrolled in Native Studies courses. The ratio of
Indigenous to non-Indigenous individuals rises the further north one goes in Ontario (as
indicated in Figures 8, 9, 10, and 11). However, this does not necessarily always result
in enhanced curriculum control by Indigenous communities, nor does it necessarily
enhance the chance of keeping Indigenous youth close to home.

In the south, the Indigenous population sometimes represents less than 1% of
the total population in census divisions encompassing densely populated urban areas;
whereas in the north, Indigenous populations sometimes represent up to 42.3% of the
total population in certain census divisions. The maps in Figures 8 and 9, based on
Statistics Canada (2006) show 40 Census Divisions in Southern Ontario and eleven in
Northern Ontario. Only one census division in the south has an Indigenous population
estimated at between six to 13.99 per cent of the population; the other 39 census
divisions range from .38 to 5.99 per cent (Figures 8 and 9).
Proximity to Reserves

The geography of reserves plays an important though somewhat obscure part in the offering of Native Studies courses. As we contemplate that geography, it is well to remember that reserves are political phenomena, bound up in the territorial aspirations of the Canadian government. Reserves are arguably the consequence of government policies that atomized Indigenous peoples into small communities through the reserve system (reserves are shown in red on the maps in figures 8, 9, 10, and 11). There is no way to know how many Native Studies courses are offered on reserves, though we know that many reserves adapt the provincial curriculum to their own uses. There are only six reserves in Ontario that have their own secondary school (First Nations Education 2012). Most Indigenous students living on reserves who seek a high school education are forced to leave their communities (Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1996a). Those students either attend Ontario high schools close enough to permit daily commutes, or they live away from their communities in residential institutions. According to government officials, the population base of most reserves is too small to justify the building, staffing and maintaining of high schools on reserves.

When looking at the Ontario map for incidence of Native Studies courses, it is clear that fewer Native Studies courses are offered in the northernmost areas of Ontario because many northern communities, particularly tiny remote fly-in reserves, cannot support a local high school and must send their children away. This is twinned with a long-established pattern of minimal funding for Indigenous education that forces
students out of their communities to receive education away from their homes (1996a). The census division farthest north, in which the Aboriginal population averages between 30 per cent and 40.3 per cent, has only eight schools for an area that takes up 25% of Ontario’s land mass. Most reserves are "fly-in" communities so Indigenous students who wish to attend high school must generally relocate to the south. Common destinations are North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Sioux Lookout, and Thunder Bay. The Northern Nishnawbe Education Council operates Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School, catering to students from Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Most of the 50 tiny remote communities cannot justify the building and operation of their own schools; as a result, approximately 250 of these students end up in foster homes in the Thunder Bay area.

There is a tragic note on the fate of some of those students in Thunder Bay. Five young students have died under suspicious circumstances between 2000 and 2008. The findings of the coroner’s office have not been satisfactory to the leaders of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN). The five youths were students from remote reserves studying at Denis Franklin Cromarty High School. "Homesickness, cultural discontinuity, and cognitive dissonance marked their existences," according to Mr. Julian Falconer, the lawyer representing NAN at the Coroner’s Inquest (Blatchford 2008). The removal of the five youth from their home environments during the crucial teenage years – an undertaking counter-indicated by the findings of Chandler and Lalonde in British Columbia (2008) – had arguably already jeopardized their welfare, and more so if the level of cultural continuity was also undermined in their communities of origin. “The
elephant in the room,” writes Blatchford of the ‘Globe and Mail’ “… is suicide: Among aboriginal youth, it is no secret that suicide rates are five to six times higher” (Blatchford 2008). I would counter Ms. Blatchford's metaphor in this fashion: suicide is merely the tail of the elephant, because the real elephant is cultural continuity. Had the findings of Chandler and Lalonde (1998) been applied to Blatchford’s metaphor, the elephant would indeed have been ‘cultural discontinuity’ and her statement reflecting the aggregate findings of Aboriginal suicide rates would now read: Suicide rates are five to six times higher than among their non-native peers in [some] communities, and lower than that of their peers in more than half the communities, specifically in those where cultural continuity has not been undermined.

The pattern is different in the south as seen in the example of Six Nations, the largest reserve in Ontario with its own high school. But even at Six Nations, most secondary level students attend off-reserve schools because the high school, specializing in Cayuga and Mohawk languages as the languages of instruction, is not designed to handle the demand for English language instruction. The good news here is that these off-reserve schools are close-by for reserves in the south (Thomas Interview 2011). As a result, we see in the south relatively high enrollments near some of the larger reserves such as Six Nations, Tyendinaga, Kettle and Stony Point. But in both southern and northern Ontario, the availability of Native Studies courses is restricted to southern and more urbanized areas.
Keewatin-Patricia District School Board

Although OnSIS data will not allow us to get at motivations and the type of day to day decisions about course offerings at the school level or decisions about funding at the board level, we can drill down beneath the aggregate data to some extent. The percentage of the total high school student population taking Native Studies courses is 1.14% at the aggregate level, however at the board level this can vary dramatically as evidenced by the case of the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board. Keewatin-Patricia is one of the most prolific of the 55 boards offering courses. Since 1999, Keewatin-Patricia has shown a steady increase in offerings of Native Studies courses averaging five new offerings per year up to 2007-2008 at which point the average jumped to 22.5 offerings and held at that level in both 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 (Figure 12). However, it is when we consider the number of students enrolled in Native Studies courses in Keewatin-Patricia that we can appreciate the significance of northern Indigenous demographics. Of the approximately 2,500 students served by Keewatin-Patricia from 2007-2010, an average of 13.4% were enrolled in Native Studies courses. There is a dramatic difference between the 1.14% of students taking Native Studies courses on the aggregate level for all Ontario high school students and the 13.4% for Keewatin-Patricia high school students. This can be reasonably attributed to the geography of atomized Indigenous communities: Keewatin-Patricia is located in northwestern Ontario (Figure 11) and covers a considerable land mass dotted with lakes and
remote First Nations communities, many of which are “fly-in” communities. The schools in the board are equally dispersed forcing Indigenous students to migrate to larger centres in order to attend high school. In addition, 30-43% of the population in this area are Indigenous (Figure 11); arguably, the larger the number of Indigenous students, the more enrollees in Native Studies courses.

![Courses Offered in Keewatin-Patricia DSB, By Year](image)

**Figure 12. Source:** Compiled from the 1999-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Cummings-Bentley and Chaput 2011, Chaput 2012.

17 To better grasp the scale of this dispersion, consider that the most central location of the Keewatin-Patricia District High School is Sioux Lookout where Queen Elizabeth District High School is located; Sioux Lookout is more than 235 kilometres south of Red Lake District High School in Red Lake, and 240 kilometres to the east of Beaver Brae Secondary School in Kenora, while Ignace Secondary School in Ignace, and Dryden High School in Dryden are each a short hop of 75 kilometers away. Crolancia Secondary School in Pickle Lake (263 kilometers north east of Sioux Lookout) is the only high school within the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board that has yet to offer a Native Studies course as of 2008-2009. Most likely, this is due to the fact that Crolancia High School had an enrollment of fewer than six students, whereas Beaver Brae and Dryden have approximately 850 students each, and Queen Elizabeth, Red Lake and Ignace together have a total of 902 students.
Northern Nishnawbe Education Council

Not all schools come under the jurisdiction of the OME, so collection of data once again becomes problematic. It is difficult to ascertain which course offerings are available and whether course offerings are taught by teachers trained in Indigenous worldviews and languages. In spite of the progress being made in the arena of Native Studies course implementation in the north, and with that, in the arena of teacher training for Two Worlds pedagogy, there is no hard data from the OME for at least one school in the north – Pelican Falls First Nations High School in Sioux Falls which is only 1.5 kilometres from Queen Elizabeth District High School. This is the case because this off-reserve school does not come under the umbrella of the OME; the OME is not alone in servicing the educational needs of this remote population. The Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (NNEC) provides financial, social and academic assistance to students from 24 First Nations in the Sioux Lookout Area (Northern Nishnawbe Education Council 2010). In addition to operating the Pelican Falls First Nations High School, the NNEC also administers the Post Secondary Student Support Program. In a strategic move to preserve the language and culture of the Anishnawbek, NNEC now offers teacher education to its 24-member First Nations in partnership with Brock University's Tecumseh Centre for Aboriginal Research and Education (Brock University 2012). The Bachelor of Education Program, accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers “incorporates Indigenous knowledge and land-based curriculum, and embraces a "Two Worlds" pedagogy that reflects both Aboriginal and mainstream ways of knowing” (Northern Nishnawbe Education Council 2010c).
However, information regarding this program and uptake of courses offered is not included in OnSIS databases – one more problem to add to the list of data collection challenges. Consequently, there is no data available on how many Native Studies courses have been offered there. However, in support of my thesis for a cultural renaissance, the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council’s e-Learning website lists 62 teachers for several Ministry-approved Native Studies courses and one Native Language course (Northern Nishnawbe Education Council 2010b). This website provides an excellent view of the situation in Pelican Falls First Nations High School. Although it is not OnSIS data, it complements the OnSIS data and substantiates the argument that Native Studies implementation is increasing in the north along with the possibility of hiring teachers in more remote areas who speak Cree or Oji-Cree.

**Funding**

The correlation between timing of increases in uptake of Native Studies courses (Figure 2) with the timing of two pivotal OME budgetary policies, reveals the Native Studies program’s potential Achilles heel – funding. For example, the 2002–03 spike in Native Studies implementation can be attributed to the OME’s addition of a socio-economic *Demographic Component* to ‘per student allotments’ for qualifying school boards (Ontario Ministry of Education 2008a, 54). The OME established two funding pools: one of $15 million and one of $95 million. The OME assessed the percentages of the population within each school board that corresponded to the socio-economic indicators from the 1996 census: Low Income Cut-Off; Low Education; Recent
Immigrants; Lone Parents; and Aboriginal Origin. Allocations for the $95 million pool were based on the first four criteria, all of which arguably favour Indigenous populations. The additional criteria of *Aboriginal Origin* for the $15 million pool is of particular importance as it was weighted at 12.5% of the ‘per student allotments’, an increase of 11.8% over 1998-99 levels (2008a, 55).

In 2007-08, the Ministry continued its reform of the funding formula so that boards would have the resources they needed to advance the goal of improved student achievement. This included the introduction of three new grants/allocations: *Program Enhancement Grant; First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement; Supported Schools Allocation of the Geographic Circumstances Grant* (Naylor 2007). Ontario has undertaken to enhance the success of Native Studies curricula. For example, in a 2008 memorandum, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nancy Taylor, informed boards that their *per-pupil amount allocations* for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students had been upwardly amended based on 2006 census data, from $5 million to $10.5 million for 2007-2008 and 2008-09 (Naylor 2008). The grant had three components: Native Languages – $3.6 million; Native Studies Programs – $1.4 million; and Per-Pupil Funding – $5.5 million. Introduction of the above components corresponded with a jump in enrollments and course offerings – again the correlation between financial support and increased uptake.

The question remains whether this pattern of financial support will continue. *The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement* was introduced in 2007-08 to support programs designed for Indigenous students. To allow boards to offer these
programs despite limited enrollment, the funding benchmarks for Native Studies and Native Languages were originally based on an average class size of eight. But the Ministry’s most recent funding amendment, taking effect in September 2011, now requires school boards to meet a minimum of twelve (12) enrollments before a Native Studies course qualifies for funding (Sekaly 2011). On the positive side, the reason the OME is raising the minimum is because the uptake on the courses has been unexpectedly high. Arguably the OME is now assuming that the momentum gained over the past decade is sufficient to maintain or increase the current level of courses. Anuik & Bellehumeur-Kearns’ (2012) limited findings on decline in uptake, can neither be linked to OME funding policies nor ratified by OnSIS data since the OME funding policy was only just changed in September 2011. Furthermore, Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns’ findings were based on a survey dated April 2011. Without OnSIS data from 2010-2011 it is not possible to make a meaningful comparison with the Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns 2011 findings. The OnSIS data does not tell us how many students are enrolled in classes with fewer than six students. If we assume an average of three students for each class with ‘<6’ students, that would represent only 282 enrollments which is .29 % of Native Studies enrollees (Figure 13). Were these small classes to disappear it would be most unfortunate for the students, their teachers, families and communities but statistically, but it would make little difference to the

18 Regarding Figure 13, the OnSIS data uses ‘<6’ to indicate classes where there are fewer than six students enrolled. This does not lend itself to statistical treatment, so I assigned a value of ‘3’ where OnSIS assigned ‘<6’ (OnSIS 2010) in order to arrive at a more useable aggregate total. How does this pertain to what I have done with my research data? For example, I generated a separate graph (Figure 14) showing the number and names of courses where enrollments were fewer than six (<6). In 1999-2010, the number of courses <6 is 94 which, when multiplied by 3 results in 282 additional enrolments for a total of 8162.
growth momentum we have been witnessing.

![Courses With Fewer Than Six Students](image)

**Figure 13.** Source: Compiled from the 1999-2010 OnSIS Collection. Graphics compiled by Cummings-Bentley and Chaput 2011, Chaput 2012.

**Self-Identification Data**

**Impact of the Aboriginal Student Self-Identification Policy**

The goal of establishing baseline data on the graduation and retention rates of Indigenous students was a stated priority in the implementation of the *Framework* (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b, 11). Something that has plagued Indigenous education policy-makers for the last 40 years is the complaint that there are no reliable means of determining either the total number of Indigenous students attending publicly-funded high schools in Ontario, or the total number of Indigenous students enrolled in Native Studies or PONA courses. A compromise that satisfied both the Indigenous communities and the OME Boards of Education was finally crafted in 2007 by Keith
Lickers: the voluntary *Confidential Aboriginal Self-Identification Policy (Self-Identification)* was implemented through its sister document, the *Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students: Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards* (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007). Participating school boards were encouraged to collaborate with their Indigenous constituents in the development of policies for the gathering of voluntary, confidential Indigenous student self-identification data using a step-by-step resource guide provided by the Ministry.

*The Aboriginal Self-Identification Policy*, in effect since 2007, provides a template for negotiation of a tailored agreement between the representatives of the Indigenous communities within each school board – including parents whose involvement is a predictor of higher retention and attendance rates – and representatives of the school board itself. The OME does not as yet provide Indigenous-specific data on high school student dropout rates. That will likely change once the data becomes available from Indigenous students who volunteer to self-identify. Despite the initial reluctance of many Indigenous leaders, the idea of gathering data to inform policy-making has been implemented. By now, most boards have negotiated an agreement with the Indigenous constituents in their jurisdiction. Without Indigenous-specific data it is too early to determine correlations, although data from Anuiik and Bellehumeur-Kearns *Self-Identification* research could provide some help, albeit limited – see the discussion below. Of prime importance is whether an increase in Indigenous student retention and attendance rates correlates both with increases in the number of school
boards and schools offering courses, and with the number of enrollments in Native Studies courses. Certainly, as offerings of Native Studies courses increase in the high school environment, there should be both direct and indirect positive impacts on Indigenous life - following the logic of Chandler and Lalonde’s factors in support of cultural continuity. The findings of Chandler and Lalonde strongly suggest that dropout rates should decrease where Indigenous control over education increases at the community level (Chandler and Lalonde 2008).

**Data from Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns Self-Identification Data**

OnSIS collected the first wave of data from boards participating in the collection of *Self-Identification* data for the academic year, 2009-10 (Mollo 2012; Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns 2012, 38). The OME typically makes its data available to the public two years after whatever event it is tracking; for example, data for the 2010-2011 school year will be available in 2012-2013. My request for the *Self-Identification* 2009-10 data was submitted by email in July of 2011. On July 18, I was informed that my request would be reviewed and a response provided in the near future. When I did not hear back from them by the end of 2011, I sent another request. On 1 March 2012, an email from the *Education and Statistics Analysis Branch – dissemination and reporting unit OnSIS* - informed me that the *Self-Identification* data was “not currently reported” (Mollo 2012). A recent paper by Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns (2012) relies on data they collected directly from District School Boards. They surveyed 76 boards and collected data from 33 boards (response rate of 30%). Their
data extends to April 2011 (Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns 2012, 12). Based on their table: *Self-Identification Data (April 2011)*, of the 33 boards that responded, only one did not intend to develop a *Self-Identification* policy and six were “In-progress”. The remaining 26 boards reported a total of 8,305 self-identified First Nations and Inuit students. Because this research was focused primarily on Métis students, respondents were asked to separate the Métis from First Nations and Inuit students who self-identified. The results, summarized in *Table 3*, show that of the 10,328 self-identified Indigenous students, 2023 were Métis.

**Table 3 - Summary of Statistics from Indigenous Self-Identification**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of School Boards</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Métis Students</td>
<td>2,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total First Nations and Inuit</td>
<td>8,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Indigenous Students</td>
<td>10,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ratio</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Aboriginal Students per Métis Student</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Source:* Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns 2012, 38.
Graphics compiled by Palone and Chaput 2012.
Some Inconsistencies in Self-Identification Data

With adequate data, more strategic and specific Indigenous educational policies can be developed. However, there will be an inherent limitation in the accuracy of some of that data, given that the Self-Identification policy operates on a voluntary basis. Analysts are therefore constrained to devise other means of understanding Native Studies trends. All references to numbers of students enrolled in Native Studies courses, unless otherwise indicated, are based on aggregate totals reported in the OnSIS database for students attending publicly-funded high schools in Ontario. For the moment, it seems reasonable to assume - for schools close to Indigenous populations, and reflecting high enrollments in Native Studies courses - that Indigenous students account for a high percentage of those enrollments. According to the Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns April 2011 survey results shown in Table 4, the 33 boards that responded, reported a combined total of 277 secondary schools offering a total of 139 Native Studies courses (2012, 41). By comparison, the OnSIS data for the previous scholastic year, 2009-2010, reports a total of 55 school boards with 267 secondary schools offering 478 Native Studies courses (Figures 2, 3, and 8). Since the information is for two different years and there has been a significant increase each of the past two years, a comparison would be premature. The OnSIS data for 2010-2011, once published, will provide a basis for comparison.

Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns’ findings on self-identification data demonstrate a high level of engagement at the local level. Although Anuik and
Bellehumeur–Kearns’ report goes no further than the school year September 2010 to April 2011 it provides an idea of how Self-Identification is beginning to “take hold” and clearly shows the involvement of Métis peoples. Their Self-Identification Data (Table 4) shows a strengthening of the collaborative relationship between Indigenous people and the OME, (school boards and schools) which is enhancing Indigenous leadership capacity. With this leadership the incidence of Native Studies courses is likely to increase – furthering the creation of a culturally-appropriate environment and worldview for Indigenous peoples. The OME does not yet provide Indigenous-specific data on high school student dropout rates.

Table 4: Self-identification data (April 30, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Board</th>
<th>Métis Students</th>
<th>Aboriginal Students</th>
<th>Total Indigenous Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algoma District School Board (DSB)</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>1252</td>
<td>1550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algonquin &amp; Lakeshore DSB</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon Maitland DSB</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conseil scolaire de district catholique de l’est Ontarien</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conseil scolaire de district catholique de l’est Ontarien</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conseil scolaire public du Grand Nord de l’Ontario</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conseil scolaire Viamonde</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSB Ontario North East</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham Catholic DSB</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham DSB</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Board</td>
<td>Métis Students</td>
<td>Aboriginal Students</td>
<td>Total Indigenous Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Erie DSB</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton Catholic DSB</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton DSB</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huron-Superior Catholic DSB</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limestone DSB</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Catholic District School Board</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moose Factory Island District School Board</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niagara Catholic District School Board</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic DSB</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow DSB</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>8 percent</td>
<td>8 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainy River DSB</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>1169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simcoe County DSB</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>1102</td>
<td>1476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudbury Catholic DSB</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior North Catholic DSB</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trillium Lakelands DSB</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo Catholic DSB</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor-Essex Catholic DSB</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total15</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,023</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,305</strong></td>
<td><strong>10328</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4. Source: (Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns 2012, 38).*
Cultural Impacts of Targeted Support

Wherever an Indigenous *Self-Identification* policy has been developed, it indicates that the people in that community have been engaged and the door has been opened to parents and other members of the community – which is a lot to ask of communities that have been marginalized and abused for the last 100 years. Now Indigenous peoples are being called upon to step up as leaders and to reactivate those skill sets that apply to leadership at all levels. Even if Native Studies courses were to be shut down tomorrow, that growth, that experience, will have served Indigenous participants well and will have increased the awareness of their particular issues on the part of school boards, OME and its subordinate department, the Aboriginal Education Office (Reed Interview 2012). This is not to mention the positive impact on non-Indigenous students and teachers who have participated in the process (Lloyd Interview 2011).

The OME has recently provided funding for the participation of Indigenous experts in curriculum development (Reed Interview 2011). In addition, *The Framework’s* guidelines for the creation of Aboriginal Education Advisory Councils (AEACs) - as a step leading toward creation of *Self-Identification* policies - supports the development of Indigenous leadership at the local level. Growing Indigenous community involvement is evidenced by relationships that have been formalized through the establishment of AEACs. According to Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns some of the AEACs have changed their name to *Aboriginal Education Advisory Circles* (AEACs), which is more in keeping with Indigenous worldviews (2012, 14). The
Framework proposes ways for AEACs to work hand-in-hand with school boards in the development of Self-Identification policies and promotional materials (Ontario Ministry of Education 2007b). AEACs can also contribute to the infusion of local Indigenous history in the curricular content. Overall “there is a consensus from boards throughout the province that improving school-home relationships is foundational to the achievement of the Framework’s goals” (2012, 13).

The historical pattern of inadequate and “on-again, off-again” funding for Indigenous educational initiatives may raise questions about future funding possibilities, but the overall trend for support is fairly evident. Nonetheless, it may be prudent to wonder aloud: “Is this recent influx of money only a temporary upward fluctuation?” and “What could happen to Native Studies courses in the event funding is removed?” In general, the OME data suggests a steadily-growing implementation of Native Studies courses in Ontario high schools. As in the metaphor of the new growth following a forest fire, the tiniest shoot can herald a transformative renewal. In the case of the University of Victoria, B.C. and the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto, the establishment of an Aboriginal Department has resulted in unprecedented numbers of Indigenous student enrollments with increased retention and graduation rates (Gelleman 2012; Lalonde 2011). The introduction of Native Studies courses in Ontario high schools appears to be following a pattern similar to that of the university departments. Although drop-out rates for Aboriginal students have actually risen in the recent past, the rise in implementation of Native Studies courses is even more recent. Increases in the number of school boards and schools offering courses have been
paralleled by a rise in the number of enrollments in Native Studies courses. There is a much higher visibility for Native Studies courses. The rise in the number of enrollments represents less than 1% of the student population (Ministry of Education 2008-2009 data). In 2008-2009, Native Studies enrollees (4,540) increased to 0.6% of the Ontario high school student population of +715,000 and in 2009-2010 Native Studies enrollees (8,162) to 1.14% of Ontario’s total high school student population (718,087) (Ministry of Education OnSIS 2008-2009, 2009-2010). Because Aboriginal peoples constitute only two per cent of the Ontario population, the overall impact of the Native Studies courses seems minor, but the increase in uptake of Native Studies courses in the last few years since Godlewska, Moore and Bednasek’s publication is significant. We have seen a rise in both course numbers and in funding. What is more important about the rise is something that does not appear on the accountant’s ledger – specifically the degree of involvement by Indigenous parents, and community leaders, in their efforts to support appropriate education for their children and thereby, strengthen cultural continuity. Will the Self-Identification policy bring the kind of data that will support more effective decision-making by all involved? Will that data be honoured and protected according to terms entered into by Indigenous communities?

It seems clear that the Native Studies courses are critical to supporting the cultural renaissance, which is taking place in Indigenous communities. For some students, conditions prevail that do not provide the opportunity for students to take Native Studies courses. Here are some of those conditions: courses are not offered; in a small school a large number of students must enroll; the courses are not pushed by
school board and school administrators; and principals have to apply for funding for the courses. Some principals apply for more courses in hopes of achieving the optimal number of courses for their school (Lloyd Interview 2011). Government funding is critical to maintaining growth; it appears to be linked to growth. However, the Renaissance has begun in earnest and through thick and thin there is a determination on the part of administrators, teachers, students and families to continue building the program. Positive results are reflected in the level of contentment among students and their parents as well as the interest and curiosity of principals, teachers and students where Native Studies courses are offered (Lloyd Interview 2011). As the rate of enrollments increases, proponents are becoming more determined to continue the programs. Whether government continues to fund these initiatives or not, Indigenous leaders will persist and the momentum is building (Reed Interview 2012, Lloyd Interview 2011, Lickers Interview 2011, Thomas Interview 2011, Hill Interview 2011, Roberts Interview 2011). The past forty years of building the structure, staying focused on the outcome and never giving up have resulted in an Indigenous cultural renaissance.

Conclusion

The data contained in this chapter’s graphs, maps, and tables show that there is a significant increase in the offerings of Native Studies courses, the number of schools and school boards offering them, as well as the number of students enrolled. Spikes in the implementation of Native Studies courses tend to coincide with the Ontario
Ministry of Education’s funding initiatives. My analysis of the maps indicates a higher per capita rate of implementation of Native Studies courses in Northern Ontario than in Southern Ontario. The maps also show clustering of course implementation and higher student enrollments near Indigenous communities in both Northern and Southern Ontario. Self-identification data has promising implications for cultural continuity given that Indigenous parents, leaders and Elders must collaborate with school boards in the tailoring of mutually acceptable Self-Identification Policies; parental involvement is a predictor for higher retention and graduation rates. The foregoing suggests a resurgence/revitalization of Indigenous cultures in Ontario.
Chapter 5 - Conclusion

_Education is the most powerful weapon ... you can use to change the world._

Nelson Mandela

The educational theorists and practitioners I have interviewed and cited would all agree that Indigenous control of Indigenous education is central to the revitalization of culture amongst Aboriginal peoples. The Indigenous struggle to achieve that control was most significantly catalyzed in the late 1970s by what are essentially reversals in assimilative federal government policies. The closing of residential schools that raised Indigenous hopes of reacquiring control of education was soon followed by the White Paper which threatened to dash those hopes. However, the socio-political context within which these and other relevant events took place galvanized Indigenous peoples to finally break a century-long silence in their bid to protect their constitutional rights, including that of control over education. Furthermore, in Ontario, a historic collaboration between the Ontario Ministry of Education and Indigenous peoples gave Indigenous educators a voice in the creation of culturally appropriate curricular content. The creative activities of the Indigenous leaders I interviewed in the Creation chapter document their critical role in using education to effect significant social change. I think Nelson Mandela and Paolo Freire would be proud. The data describing the growth
of the number of Native Studies courses offered, the number of students enrolled, the number of schools offering courses and the number of school boards offering courses all indicate significant cultural revitalization and herald vital cultural continuity.

According to Reed (2011) the major trend of continued growth of Native Studies courses is assured. By implication, then, as Native control of Native education is one of the principal factors predicting the cultural continuity that lies at the heart of community health, the future for Indigenous people in Ontario looks brighter than it has for a long time. Continued growth in the uptake and delivery of Native Studies courses is likely, provided the OnSIS data trends to 2009-2010 continue. While data collected by Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns in their 2011 survey raises questions about what kind of impact changes in provincial government funding might have on the delivery of Native Studies courses, there is no available parallel data from OnSIS for the same period; their data on the number of Indigenous students who self-identified sends positive signals of a deepening commitment between Indigenous communities and the OME and participating boards and schools.

Adoption and implementation of the **Self-Identification policy** by most school boards further suggests there will be continued growth of Native Studies courses. Support for the **Self-Identification policy** is, in itself, a clear indicator of commitment by participating school boards and their Indigenous clients to collaborate with government authorities. The results (>10,000 Indigenous students) from the first few years of operation of the **Self-Identification** program are promising: Anuik and Bellehumeur-Kearns’ survey results from 33 out of 76 school boards demonstrates significant
endorsement of the self-identification process at the community level, though this has not yet been corroborated by the results of OnSIS data collection.

We cannot yet gauge how recent changes (2011-2012) in OME rules will affect the pattern of course uptake, which was established in 2007-2010. OME has determined that Native Studies courses can stand on their own; they no longer need the same level of subsidization that they were allocated for the period 2007-2008 to 2010-2011. What might be the effect of their decision to raise the minimum enrollments for a Native Studies course from six to twelve in 2011-2012? Will it encourage or discourage involvement? What we do know is that some degree of government support will almost certainly be needed in the near and middle-distant future, for which a practical prerequisite will be on-going collaboration and mutual problem-solving by all interested parties. This is the way of constructive progress.

I have demonstrated through my literature review and my research that there is a clear correlation between education and the revitalization of culture amongst Aboriginal peoples in Ontario. I also have made a good argument that especially in recent years, the Ontario government has been more of an ally than an opponent of Aboriginal cultural continuity. Through a combination of deliberate policy and political correctness the Ontario government (with federal funding based on treaty and fiduciary agreements such as Tuition Fee Agreements19), has meaningfully supported Indigenous education and affirmed Indigenous control of Indigenous education.

19 In the context of tuition agreements the use of the word treaty is a sensitive issue. Many First Nations may not consider a tuition agreement to be a treaty agreement because not all tuition agreements are treaty-based, i.e. made with communities that control their own systems. Treaty
Going beyond cultural revitalization, I have intimated that we are in the midst of a Indigenous renaissance of historical importance. In part, this has been built on the momentum gained from the closing of the residential schools; accompanied by the increased ability and desire for Native peoples to express their autonomy; and a series of milestones which has created the framework and opportunity for increased cultural continuity, rebirth, and generational awakening. Ultimately this is leading to a renaissance of Native culture. Some of these milestones include *People of Native Ancestry* documents; suite of Native Studies courses; *The Ontario, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*, and the *Aboriginal Self-Identification Policy*.

I can say now with confidence that the Ontario government in particular has earned my congratulations and respect for the historically-important, culturally-enhancing work done in the field of Native Studies. The scope for further research is broad, considering we are in the infancy of a formal approach to Native Studies. Rather than enumerating here the areas for further research, I would instead propose that the greater need lies in forging an agreement on how all governments and curriculum writers can best serve the Indigenous peoples of Ontario, and beyond. The critical need at present is to build the trust that underlies better relationships and enduring collaborative action in the Spirit of the *Guswentah* - the *Two Row Wampum*.

Invisible aspirations have become visible.

agreements are more constitutional. I have used the word *fiduciary* to cover business agreements for the purchase of services to permit First Nation students to attend regular provincial schools (Thomas Interview 2011; Lickers Interview 2012).
Abstractions of culture have become tangible.
Native dreams have become waking reality.
Sprouts are re-greening, forest re-stirring.
Hope is alive.
Drum beats.
Native Renaissance is dancing.

*Running Hawk – 2011*
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Appendix A – GREB Approval

August 03, 2011

Mr. Paul Chaput
Master’s Student
Department of Geography
Queen’s University
Kingston, ON K7L 3N6

GREB Romeo ref. #: 6003216
Title: GGEO-107-10 - Why Has the Ontario Post Secondary Native Studies Curriculum Been Offered Where It Has and What Impact Has it Had Where It has Been Offered?

Dear Mr. Chaput,

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB) has reviewed and approved your request for renewal of ethics clearance for the above-named study. This renewal is valid for one year from July 22, 2011. Prior to the next renewal date you will be sent a reminder memo and the link to ROMEO to renew for another year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period. An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours. Report to GREB through either ROMEO Event Report or Adverse Event Report Form at [http://www.queensu.ca/orse/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html](http://www.queensu.ca/orse/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html).

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes in study procedures or implementations of new aspects into the study procedures. Your request for protocol changes will be forwarded to the appropriate GREB reviewers and / or the GREB Chair. Please report changes to GREB through either ROMEO Event Reports or the Ethics Change Form at [http://www.queensu.ca/orse/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html](http://www.queensu.ca/orse/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html).

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Stevenson, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
General Research Ethics Board

c.c.: Dr. Anne Godlewksa, Supervisor
Dr. Anne Godlewksa / Dr. Mark Rosenberg, Co-Chairs, Unit REB
Joan Knox, Dept. Admin.
July 22, 2010

Mr. Paul Chaput  
Master's Student  
Department of Geography  
Queen's University

GREB Ref #: GGEO-107-10  
Title: "Why has the Ontario Post Secondary Native Studies curriculum been offered where it has and what impact has it had where it has been offered?"

Dear Mr. Chaput:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB), by means of a delegated board review, has cleared your proposal entitled "Why has the Ontario Post Secondary Native Studies curriculum been offered where it has and what impact has it had where it has been offered?" for ethical compliance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS) and Queen's ethics policies. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6) and Senate Terms of Reference (article G), your project has been cleared for one year. At the end of each year, the GREB will ask if your project has been completed and if not, what changes have occurred or will occur in the next year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB, with a copy to your unit REB; of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (details available on webpage http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html – Adverse Event Report Form). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes in study procedures or implementations of new aspects into the study procedures on the Ethics Change Form that can be found at http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html - Research Ethics Change Form. These changes must be sent to the Ethics Coordinator, Gail Irving, at the Office of Research Services or irvingg@queensu.ca prior to implementation. Mrs. Irving will forward your request for protocol changes to the appropriate GREB reviewers and / or the GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Stevenson, PhD  
Professor and Chair  
General Research Ethics Board

cc: Dr. Anne Godlewksa, Faculty Supervisor  
Dr. Mark Rosenberg, Chair, Unit REB  
Joan Knox, Dept. Admin.
Appendix B - Questionnaire

“Why has the Ontario Post Secondary Native Studies curriculum been offered where it has and what impact has it had where it has been offered?

Kinds of questions that will be asked during the interview: (The participant will be asked to introduce themselves and give a verbal consent to the interview and its intended purpose.)

1. Has your school (Board, organization, friendship centre) offered courses from the Native Studies curriculum? (If not; “Why not?”) If yes continue with question 2.)
2. For how long have they been offered?
3. What was your role in the decision to offer or not offer one or more of the courses from the Native Studies curriculum?
4. Do you have any insights as to why your school wanted to (or did not want to or did not continue to) offer the course(s)?
5. How many others were involved in the decision?
6. What factors shaped this decision?
7. Was it difficult to find teachers to teach the material?
8. Do you know if teachers were comfortable or happy with teaching it?
9. Who took the Native Studies courses; did any non-Aboriginal students take these courses?
10. Do you have any stories to tell about the impact of the courses on students, teachers, parents, the community?
11. Can you identify any other people with whom I should discuss the nature and impact of the Native Studies courses in your school and the communities it serves?
12. In your view what link, if any, is there between the Native Studies courses and the Aboriginal language courses available from the Ministry?
13. Should Native Studies courses be offered here? Elsewhere in Ontario? Why or why not?
Appendix C- Hailey

Hailey was enrolled in Native as a Second Language courses in her primary school years on reserve and in Native Studies courses throughout secondary off-reserve education. Her background knowledge of Aboriginal ways, acquired at on-reserve ceremonies, made it comfortable to relate to the content of the Native Studies Courses once she enrolled in high school. She has a cultural “edge” and motivation to live a life bridging two worlds. “Hailey is very bright; she is an Ontario scholar,” (Thomas Interview 2011). Thomas explains how Hailey’s interest in traditional teachings at home, complemented her Ontario high school curriculum. In Ohsweken on Six Nations territory, Hailey as a teenager attended ceremonies of the Haudé nosaunee Longhouse traditions, complemented by participation in study groups of Six Nations youth who prepare for ceremonies by learning songs and speeches. Then, through a Native Studies class, Hailey attended a meeting facilitated by a graduate student from the University of Western Ontario. “Who here knows about The Great Law?” Hailey raised her hand. He said, “Really, you know about the Great Law?” “Yes,” replied Hailey “It’s what we learn at home.” That was a defining moment; she suddenly understood the significance of her Indigenous culture, of how her culture and language tied into the world and made an impact beyond Six Nations, and what’s more, this content related to the Native Studies curriculum she was studying in secondary school. With that turning point, her interest in the meaning and content of the Native ceremonies lead her to a deeper appreciation of both her language and culture. Hailey has since expressed deep interest in re-focusing on learning her native language: a major turning point in her view of cultural inheritance and a step towards cultural continuity. Hailey is now at the University of Western Ontario studying to become a secondary school teacher in Native Studies.
Appendix D - Data Collection

In addition to personal interviews, data for this thesis was drawn from the following:

1. The Ontario government’s *Managing Information for Student Achievement* (MISA) initiative for improvement of student achievement.
2. OnSIS data, for development of figures - graphs and maps - and tables, which in some cases augments work done by Godlewska, Moore and Bednasek (2010).
3. 2006 Statistics Canada Census Division data - shown on Ontario maps - from Godlewska, Moore and Bednasek (2010). Thanks to Godlewska et al for their kind permission to use this information.

The OME has been working to improve data collection through OnSIS - the data collection component of the MISA initiative of the Ontario government. MISA is a provincial capacity-building initiative designed to increase both provincial and local capacity to use data and information for “evidence-informed decision-making to improve student achievement” (OME site accessed March 2012 http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/misa/index.html). OnSIS has collected data on high school Native Studies courses since the launching of the Grade 9 course (NAC1O) in the fall of 1999-2000. The data in the figures and tables that follow is drawn from the academic years spanning 1999-2000 to the most recent data available for 2009-2010. I have updated Excel charts to include this 2009-2010 OnSIS data, but have not done likewise with the GIS-based maps given the restricted time and resources available.

OnSIS collects data only from publicly-funded day schools. Not included are: private schools; publicly-funded hospital and provincial schools; facilities for care, treatment and correctional institutions; summer school; and night and adult continuing education. A student enrolled in a course more than once is counted more than once. OnSIS only collects data from publicly-funded day schools. Private schools, publicly-funded hospital and provincial schools, care, treatment and correctional facilities, summer, night and adult continuing education are not included. A student enrolled in a course more than once is counted more than once. In addition to OnSIS, other sources of data represented in the figures - graphs and maps - and tables have, in part, been built upon the analysis generated by Godlewska, Moore and Bednasek (2010) in their ground-breaking study *Cultivating Ignorance of Aboriginal Realities* (Godlewska et al use, among other sources, 2006 Statistics Canada Census Division data). I updated their GIS-based maps to include the years 2004-2005 to 2008-2009, adding magnified insets.
to enhance readability, where heavily concentrated course implementation made it difficult to decipher the number of sites, courses and enrollments.

Cohen et al (2007) provide a much-needed introduction to the GIS computer-based system which figures so importantly in my quantitative analysis of OME data (2007, 251) Their chapter entitled Geographical Information Systems (GIS) is particularly pertinent. I understand that GIS-configured data can be used to assess and modify educational policy, which, in turn, may have geographical implications. These implications may bear directly on elements of my research, including location of schools and school boards, census divisions, number of Native Studies courses offered by high schools and by school boards, and numbers enrolled in each course for each of the ten Native Studies courses. The power and value of GIS includes its ability to integrate all of these factors. What emerges visibly and clearly is the immense potential for these kinds of data to influence political decision-making, a dominant theme running through the story of Indigenous education in Ontario (2007, 251). Finally, the Anuik Bellehumeur-Kearns (2012) Report on Métis Education in Ontario’s K-12 Schools presents the only School Board-generated Indigenous Self-Identification data available to date.
Appendix E – Working List of Graphs, Tables and Maps

Following is a list of Graphs, Tables and Maps that I created in preparation for this thesis and which were generated from the OnSIS data from 1999-2010. The titles are self-explanatory. It is important to note that these do not correspond to the figures and tables in Chapter 4 and only a few are represented in Chapter 4.

**Figures - Graphs**

1. Number of Native Studies Courses Offered by Year (1999-2009)
2. Number of times offered (2006-2007)
3. Number of times offered (2007-2008)
4. Number of times offered (2008-2009)
5. Number of times offered (2008-2009)
6. Number of Schools Offering Each Course, by Year (1999-2009)
7. Frequency of Course Offerings by Grade (2006-2007)
10. Number of Schools Offering Aboriginal Courses, by Grade and Year (1999-2009)
11. Enrollment by Course (2006-2007)
14. Enrollment by Course, by Year (1999-2009)
15. Number of Schools Offering Courses (1999-2009)
17. Courses offered in Grand Erie DSB, by Year (1999-2009)
18. Courses offered in Keewatin-Patricia DSB, by Year (1999-2009)

**Figures - Maps of North & South**

The following maps graphically present the areas of southern and northern Ontario where Native Studies courses have been implemented, the percentage of Aboriginal peoples by census division, and the proximity to First Nations reserves of courses offered. These maps help illuminate the per-capita contrasts between North and South in the implementation of Native Studies.

**SOUTHERN ONTARIO MAPS**


NORTHERN ONTARIO MAPS

Tables
1. Grade, Name, Type, and Code of Each Native Studies Course
2. Number of Native Studies Courses with Fewer than Six Students Registered
3. School Boards offering Native Studies courses and Number Offered