

TRYING TO HELP:
A CONSIDERATION OF HOW NON-ABORIGINAL EDUCATORS WORKING
AMONG FIRST NATIONS POPULATIONS MAY BE PARTICULARLY
SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE EFFECTS OF CULTURE SHOCK

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Abstract

A review of a variety of literature related to the topic of culture shock was carried out. This information, including such things as models, definitions, causes and cures was then considered in light of literature and personal reflection on teaching in First Nations communities as a non-Native educator. Evidence is provided to support the notion that non-Native teachers working among Aboriginal populations may be very susceptible to the onset of culture shock. Recommendations are made based on this evidence for teacher educators, teacher sojourners, and First Nations communities.

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A Consideration of How non-Aboriginal Educators Working Among First Nations Populations May be Particularly Susceptible to the Effects of Culture Shock

As an educator with approximately ten years experience teaching in First Nations communities, I have seen first hand the devastation that has been wrought upon Canada's indigenous peoples by centuries of governmental mismanagement and good intentions. Despite the efforts of thousands and the spending of billions, First Nations populations still lead the way nationally in such categories as illiteracy, suicide, substance abuse and poverty.

One area under particular scrutiny has been the various efforts put forth in the realm of education. From the original attempts of the missionaries, through the astonishing devastation of the residential schools, to the more modern thrust of governance, European style education has often been both a blessing and a curse for the First Nations of this country, offering hope of a better tomorrow in one hand and the destruction of centuries of cultural values, family units and oral traditions in the other.

Much has been written around the quandary that is First Nations education, and there is a great body of data, both qualitative and quantitative, on how the First Nations people have been affected by the various forms education has taken over the years. Indeed, one can hardly begin to study any facet about this country's indigenous cultures without unearthing some reference to how individuals, communities and nations have been affected, for better or worse, by the education system. Oddly enough, however, there is one issuing surrounding First Nation's education about which relatively little has been written.

When one considers the classroom relationship that exists between First Nations students and their often non-First Nations teachers, one's thoughts almost automatically turn to considering the effect that the teacher will have on the students. How will the teacher's words, actions and deeds impact on the life, culture and language of the First Nations student? Many pre-service programs spend much time on this, making teachers aware of the potential they have to impact their pupils. This thesis sets out to examine not the effect of the teachers on the students, but the effect of teaching in a Native community on the teacher.

Every year, hundreds, if not thousands of graduating teachers decide for various reasons to accept postings in one of the multitude of First Nations communities that dot our Canadian cultural landscape. Some stay for years, but the vast majority does not. Some, indeed, survive in their positions only a few days. Despite the lure of more money and the multicultural training offered by so many institutions, teacher retention remains one of the most serious issues facing First Nations Education. But why? Why is it so difficult to retain professionals?

This paper will propose that culture shock plays a pivotal role in this problem. The first section will be dedicated to a discussion of the various issues surrounding culture shock and will look at such things as models, discussions of causes, and suggestions for cures. Part two will present the bulk of my argument that not only is culture shock prevalent amongst non-Aboriginals who sojourn into aboriginal communities to teach, but that its effect is indeed magnified by other insidious factors. These factors include such things as the unexpected nature of experiencing culture shock within one's own country, the magnifying effect of combining culture shock with such

other “new teacher” issues as reality shock, and how some of the sweeping statements made in the literature about First Nations education may indeed contribute to the onset of culture shock. This section will include a consideration of some such literature, coupled with a critically analytical exploration of my own experiences as an educator of First Nations students. The paper will end with recommendations for teacher education programs, sojourners and the First Nations educational authorities to help new teachers avoid the dangers and pitfalls of culture shock, with an eye to improving retention rates and, if that is impossible, at least making classroom teachers themselves more effective during the service period.

Culture Shock

Although he himself gave reference in his inaugural work on culture shock to Cora Dubois (1951), it is most often Kalervo Oberg who is given credit for presenting the first model of this condition. In a now famous address to the Brazilian women's club in 1954 Oberg presented the idea that culture shock was a condition that was "...precipitated by the anxiety that results from the removal of all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" (1954, p. 1). Oberg hypothesized that when moving to a foreign country, individuals, no matter how broad minded and well meaning, suffer from a sense of confusion and frustration as the cultural "props" upon which they have stood to make sense of the world around them are knocked away. This would lead, according to Oberg, to feelings of "frustration and anxiety" which would evoke in the sojourner a sense that most of what was being experienced as culturally new would be simultaneously experienced as culturally bad. Coupled with these feelings of negativity that were projected out upon the host society was a sense that what had been left behind, the elements and nuances of the sojourners home culture, was an ideal of some kind, a glowing representation of all that was right and good in the world. In short, as much as the sojourners found themselves disliking the host culture, they came to glorify and aggrandize their own (Oberg, 1954).

Oberg would go on to claim that this discomfort and loss of cultural orientation manifested itself in a wide array of symptoms that ranged from "excessive washing of the hands" and "excessive concern over drinking water" to "a feeling of helplessness" and "fits of anger over minor frustrations", (1954, p. 2) but it was his model of the

progression of culture shock that would prove to be the most enduring legacy of Oberg's work.

Oberg stated that culture shock occurred in four basic stages for everyone who experienced the phenomena with the exception of those rare few who simply could not live in a foreign country. Although later authors would develop and expand upon this, it must be recognized that his original model would serve as a template for all future research. In Oberg's first stage, sojourners experienced a period of fascination and awe as they uncovered the various cultural idiosyncrasies of their new home. This period, which Oberg labeled a "honeymoon period", was accented by discovery and pleasure in all that was new, different and quaint within the host culture. In Oberg's model, the typical sojourners would at this point in their travel be staying in hotels and would be interacting with a certain strata of the host society that was used to "pampering and petting" foreign nationals. The length of this stage would vary from sojourner to sojourner, but inevitably would come to an inglorious end (1954).

The second stage that Oberg identified in his model was the ugliest of the four, and was "characterized by a hostile and aggressive attitude toward the host country" (1954, p .3). These angry and often irrational feelings arose out of the frustration experienced as day to day existence was complicated and muddled by cross-cultural misunderstandings. It is also at this stage that the sojourner found her or himself inexorably drawn to seek out the company of others who were of a similar stripe. These cliques of those for whom the host culture has lost its power to charm, clubs and groups made up entirely of visiting sojourners, became hotbeds of criticism and stereotyping of the host culture and its people. Oberg writes "The second stage of culture shock is in a

sense a crisis in the disease. If you come out of it, you stay; if not, you leave before you reach a stage of nervous breakdown” (1954, p.3).

If a sojourners toughs it out and comes through the second stage which is accented by a high level of negativity towards the host culture, then they will enter into the third stage of culture shock where the most prevalent manifestation of emotion, surprisingly enough, is humour. Oberg holds that after learning a smattering of the language and gaining enough knowledge around culture to “get around” without the aid of a local, the sojourner will find herself on culturally arrogant high ground where the idiosyncrasies of the culture and her own awkwardness at dealing with them become a source of amusement rather than distemper. The sojourner becomes, in her own eyes, a noble bearer of suffering, and is on the way to complete cultural recovery (1954).

Finally, after passing through wonder, anger then, finally, humor, the sojourner finds himself entering into the fourth stage, where “adjustment is about as complete as it can be” (Oberg, 1954. p. 4). The host culture is now not an unsolvable mystery, but rather an interesting puzzle, to which one can apply learned cues and strategies to find meaning within nuance. Gone is the stress and angst of not understanding ones place in ones surroundings and the constant struggle to stand on a shaken cultural foundation, and in its place is a willingness to accept “the customs of the country as just another way of living” (Oberg, 1954. p. 4). Oberg goes on to conclude that not only will this stage be characterized by a wonderful openness, but that the revelations of this period will ingrain themselves so completely on the psyche of the traveler that there is a good chance that some of what is adopted culturally will be carted home when it is time to return to one’s country of origin.

Now, although subsequent writers would criticize Oberg's model, as we shall see, it has remained the basic benchmark against which all other models of culture shock are measured. What follows is a consideration of some of the models which emerged from Oberg's first definition of the problem of culture shock.

In 1955, Sverre Lysgaard published an article entitled "Adjustment in a Foreign Society: Norwegian Fulbright Grantees Visiting the United States". In it he reported on a study in which 200 Norwegians who had spent time in the U.S. on Fulbright Scholarships were interviewed about their experience. The people interviewed were of varied age and background, and although they had obviously had very different experiences in the United States, an interesting pattern emerged. When questions were posed around what Lysgaard referred to as "adjustment items" (1955. p. 49), a generalized pattern was uncovered whereby the adjustment of sojourners who had been in the country for less than six months and more than eighteen months seemed to have undergone "good" adjustments, and those who had stayed for more than six months but less than eighteen months were able to be characterized as having "poor" adjustment. Not only was Lysgaard able to identify a pattern, but he also discovered that the poor-adjustment-at-the-intermediate-stage-of-sojourn pattern held true regardless of such other variables that one might expect would impact on adaptation such as age, academic status, program of study and so forth.

Another important revelation was that this pattern, which Lysgaard called U-shaped, held true even in those sojourners who found themselves required to stay in the United States longer than they had initially anticipated. The importance of this is that those sojourners did not experience a move towards positive adjustment because they felt

well adjusted and decided to stay longer in country, but rather that they began to feel more adjusted because they had to stay longer in the country. Lysgaard wrote:

The relationship between duration and adjustment is therefore not an effect of time selection of persons differently adjusted, but refers to a genuine time process that every grantee must be assumed to have passed through or would have passed through if he had stayed longer (Lysgaard, 1955, p. 49).

He then stated that there was good evidence in this that adjustment happened in a series of stages, “characterized by good initial adjustment, followed by an adjustment ‘crisis’, after which adjustment is good again” (Lysgaard, 1955, p. 49).

This U-curve model was characterized in the first stage, much like Oberg’s model, by a sense of joy and discovery where sojourners sought out all that was new and pleasurable in the new society, in this case, American society. Lysgaard went further than Oberg, however, and also considered the importance of developing relationships in regards to cultural adaptation. The sojourners in his study were happy to have what Lysgaard called “accidental, superficial and segmental” (1955, p. 50) relationships with those with whom they came in contact. Still, echoing Oberg, the sojourners at this stage were quite happy with the overall adventurousness of the situation and happy to explore the “material facilities available” (p. 50).

Again, as with Oberg, Lysgaard discovered that before long, however, the newness of the situation began to wear off as “the ‘adventurous’ pleasures of the introductory stage lose their appeal and a need makes itself felt for more intimate personal contact” (1955, p. 50). Because of the level of their social discomfort, sojourners may find themselves quite isolated from the host society, and, not surprisingly, lonely.

There was also a tendency evidenced to blame these feeling on the host society, with the rationalization that because the sojourners were unable to make friends, it was because Americans, in this case, were unfriendly. Lysgaard hypothesized that language played a role in this stage of cultural adjustment, again an important extension of Oberg. He stated that part of the problem was that as the student searched for more meaningful and fulfilling relationships within the host culture, the inability to articulate on more than a superficial level served to foil attempts at what would necessarily be more meaningful communication. The language that served sojourners so well during stage one was found sorely lacking during stage two, thus contributing to the sense of loneliness and isolation (Lysgaard, 1955, p. 50).

Discussion of stage three in Lysgaard's model was sorely bereft of detail in his article, but consisted of a simple statement that eventually all sojourners would make friends and work their way out of the loneliness and despair of stage two and "become more integrated into some social group and they feel like regular members of the community" (Lysgaard, 1955, p. 51). However, this research squarely backed up Oberg's theory of culture shock as a process which evolved over time and was characterized by a variety of emotional responses, tied directly to the adjustment process. It also was a rather important claim that the developing of close personal relationships could be used as a way to endure, if not cure, culture shock.

By 1963, the model of culture shock again underwent a fundamental change, this time at the hands of Gullahorn and Gullahorn. In their article "An extension of the U-curve hypothesis" a model was again presented on the effect of traveling to another culture upon the sojourner, but it was augmented by a second model which, according to

the authors, enacted itself upon the sojourner when they returned home. Basically, their claim was that the “problems of alienation, anomie and rejection” (p.33) which often accompanied a cross cultural excursion was not only experienced when traveling to a foreign culture, but “also recur with varying intensities when the sojourners return to their home environment” (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 34). They wrote:

In looking at the total exchange experience, therefore, we may speak of a W-curve rather than a U-shaped curve to characterize the temporal patterning in individual reactions to foreign settings and subsequently to their home cultures (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 34).

Now, although the Gullahorn and Gullahorn model mirrors that of Lysgaard in that it was comprised of three stages, they offered an even more detailed accounting of the process. They argued that when interacting with another culture, sojourners would find themselves undergoing a process whereby their previous cultural upbringing and experiences would help or hinder attempts at cross cultural interaction. Essentially they felt that all cultural interactions are framed by the previous experiences of those involved, and that any interactions between cultures would be evaluated within that framework. When two members of the same culture interact, there is a real expectation between them that they can understand each other and mutually interpret these interactions correctly. However, these “expectations” become problematic when “an individual moves from one social system to another where differing values and normative expectations are characteristic” (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 34).

Another important development by Gullahorn and Gullahorn was the expansion of culture shock away from a construct determined by overseas sojourns to a dilemma

which may be faced by those who travel within their own country but find themselves out of their culturally familiar routine. They presented the example of someone from a small town moving to a large urban center, and although they did offer that the amount of U-curve experience endured in this context may indeed be “trivial” (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 34), the notion that one can experience culture shock within one’s own country is worthy of note and will be returned to later.

The authors went on to expand upon how cultures could clash around such obviously concrete situations as dating rituals to the more subtle and thus more culturally difficult situations such as learning language, and explained that it was a small wonder that with so many possibilities for trap and pitfalls the task of experiencing another culture was often “shocking” (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 38). Key to their model, of course, was the claim that the sojourner would go through a similar experience upon their return to their culture of origin. The issue, quite simply stated, is that once one has adjusted one's cultural frame of reference, returning to the original cultural orientation also requires adjustment.

As a consequence of the resocialization experience in the alien environment, a sojourner tends to acquire expectation patterns compatible with his new social system...The result, of course, is that the sojourner typically finds himself out of phase with his home culture on his return (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 39). Interestingly enough, this was one area of the culture shock model where a connection could be made between the characteristics of the sojourner and the experience. Gullahorn and Gullahorn found that the readjustment back into a host culture was easier for older, more established sojourners, presumably because “the impact of their original

socialization was sufficiently strong that relearning the patterns of their home social systems was not difficult” (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 39).

Another similarity between this work and that of Lysgaard was that Gullahorn and Gullahorn also noted a positive connection between adjustment and relationship developing. They found that those sojourners who expressed their adjustment as “good” were more likely to have maintained positive contacts with their colleagues than those who expressed disappointment in their experience (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963, p. 43). Presumably, those who chose to maintain contact had developed a stronger bond in the first place, thus the connection with good adjustment. The notion of the importance of relationships in regards to the effects of culture shock will be revisited later in this work.

There were other models presented, such as the “J” model by Lambert in 1966, and the oft cited 5 stage model presented by Adler in 1975, but, regardless of the letter orientation, all such models came under harsh criticism by the 1990’s. Bochner and Furnham (1990) had a very close look at the literature that had been written to that date around culture shock, and identified the fluid motion with which culture shock was supposed to be experienced by all sojourners as fundamentally flawed. They cited a study by Toriborn from 1982 that showed that the “U-curve” when actually tested resulted in a representation that looked very little like a U. They also cited Church (1982) who discovered “seven studies that found some evidence for the hypothesis but a similar number that did not” (Bochner & Furnham, 1990, p. 132). Their argument was that the way a person adjusts to a culture could not be determined by any patterned model, but would rather depend more upon the person themselves and what they called contact variables. These variables included things like initial experiences with the host culture,

how successful how one was as a culture learner and something Bochner and Furnham called cultural distance. They also cited the abysmal record of the Peace Corps in retaining volunteers, reporting on work by Harris (1973) who kept records of attrition rates from 1961 -1971. The data showed that almost half of all those who volunteered did not finish their assignments despite a careful selection process and an almost limitless supply of resources (Bochner & Furnham, 1990, pp. 136-138). These attrition rates were based on a world wide sample, so the penchant for quitting was not limited to volunteers of one particular country or culture. This led to the Peace Corps looking for better and better selection processes, but Bochner and Furnham argued it wasn't the selection process that was flawed, but rather the model itself upon which the selection process was built. They cited Guthrie (1975, 1981) and Guthrie & Jektick (1967).

Guthrie became convinced that in unfamiliar cultural settings, situational determinants assume far greater significance than they do when one moves to a new assignment in a relatively familiar environment...during the first few weeks in a strange place, the volunteers would develop confidence or despair due to the experiences they encountered over which they had little control. These experiences far outweighed whatever attributes of character or personality the volunteers might have brought with them (Bochner & Furnham, 1990, p. 138).

As an example to which the complexity of culture shock had been underestimated up to that time, Bochner and Furnham looked at motivation as a determining factor. They described how whenever there is a move, the individuals involved are "often motivated by 'pushes' (dissatisfaction with current conditions) and 'pulls' (a belief in increased satisfaction at the new [location])" (1990, p. 39). They allowed for Toirborn's contention

that greater satisfaction could be traced from positive motivation and greater choice in moving, and, conversely, that a decreased level of satisfaction could be traced to lower “levels of adaptation and satisfaction” (1990, p. 39). Since such determiners can not possibly be standardized, those models which asserted that the effects of culture shock would occur in any sort of predictable pattern were flawed.

As the definition of culture shock continued to adapt and develop, this notion that there was no particular pattern with which one could approach culture shock tended to become the guiding principle for all models. One such model was presented by Elizabeth Marx in 1999.

Many experts have tried to...define what is ‘normal’ in adapting to a foreign culture. However there is no fast and hard rule...the timing of culture shock will depend on the ‘foreignness’ of the culture... the social context and the personality of the [person] involved. These phases of culture shock may not always appear in such a neat sequence. It is more realistic to use a model of culture shock that is not strictly linear but integrates a dynamic and repetitive cycle of positive and negative phases until you break through culture shock... (Marx, 1999, p. 10).

Marx presented a new model which she called the culture shock triangle, criticizing Oberg’s original four stage model for not being comprehensive enough. She claimed that there were three major factors that would be affected by culture shock within an individual. They were 1) Emotions, 2) Thinking, and 3) Social Identity and Social Skills. In her model, each one of these three facets was going to have to undergo a fundamental change in a sojourner in order for the cultural transition to be effective, with emotions going from “euphoria to depression to contentment”, thinking transforming from

“stereotyping to culturally effective thinking” and social identity and skills shifting from a national focus to include “transnational social skills and an international identity” (Marx, 1999, pp. 12-13). As well, these three contributing factors might not necessarily occur as isolated segments of a larger process, but rather would be developed and changed by international travel simultaneously and, if one wanted to adapt successfully to a new culture, one had to “cope with the stress of transition, change the perception and interpretation of events and behaviour and develop better social skills and understanding in the host culture” (Marx, 1999, p. 12-13). All three contributing factors needed an equal amount of attention if true acculturation was to occur.

As stated before, this list can in no way be considered as a complete consideration of the models of the progression of culture shock. Not only are there other ‘stage’ models, (Lesser and Peter, 1957, Torbiorn, 1982) but there also exist models that use other metaphors, such as using a disease model to describe the process. These were largely discredited by Bochner and Furnham, but do contain some interesting discussion around the process of acculturation. Finally, there are some models that suggest that culture shock is actually a necessary although painful growth process that allowed sojourners to ultimately arrive at a higher level of integration (Pedersen, 1995).

Regardless of which model one chooses as most correctly reflecting the process, the very fact that there are so many models and theories give one a sense of the depth and breadth of this complex, misunderstood and often under appreciated phenomenon. As well, despite the myriad of differences in shape and form, there is enough shared by these models to say with relative certainty that culture shock is something that will be experienced by a great deal of sojourners when they travel to a culturally unfamiliar area,

and that at some point in the process the sojourner will experience at least some of the accompanying symptoms. In the next section, we will not only look at what some of the literature says around the notion of symptoms, but also give consideration to what actually causes the sojourner to experience them and some of the recommendations for dealing with the process. In short, we will look at some of the suggested causes, symptoms and cures for culture shock.

Before going too deeply into causes, symptoms and cures, however, it might prove useful to take a step back and dedicate some time to attempting to pin culture shock down to a workable definition. Not only is the field rife with conflicting models of the progression of culture shock, but there is also a struggle to define the condition itself.

Culture Shock - Definitions

In 1967, Dr. Nathan Gould stated:

Culture shock, an experience individuals have upon being immersed in an alien culture, is characterized by a state of disturbance followed upon the loss of the familiar that sustains the individual in everyday life.... it has been characterized as a mental illness... (Gould, 1967, p. 18).

In 1969, Bergman et al offered up culture shock as “a form of psychological trauma...” (p. 3). By 1977, Ronald Taft suggested “When an individual finds himself in an unfamiliar cultural environment where his previous learning is inadequate for coping, he may suffer from some degree of emotional disturbance, a condition often referred to as culture shock” (p. 139). Taft went on to present six different uses of the term culture shock up to that time. Included in his list was “Strain due to the effort required to make the necessary adaptations” (p. 140) to a new culture, “Sense of loss arising from being

uprooted from one's original surroundings" (p. 140) and "Confusion in one's role and role expectations and in one's values and feelings of self-identity" leading to " phobias, psychosomatic symptoms, depression etc." (p. 141). He also offered up the following:

The most common meaning of culture shock is the feeling of impotence on the part of the stranger who can not deal competently with his environment owing to unfamiliarity with the cognitive aspects of the culture and inability to perform necessary role playing skills. This incompetence may well exacerbate shock in some of the senses described earlier; for example, it may lead to cultural fatigue, to a sense of loss, and to actual rejection by the host society with consequent damage to self-esteem (Taft, 1977, p. 142).

Among those who compared culture shock to the contracting of a disease, La Ray M. Barna, (1976) stated:

Culture shock is a complex phenomenon at psychological and cognitive levels....our bodies go through tremendous changes in order to deal with the bombardment of new stimuli....the whole body is in massive change. Extra adrenalin and noradrenalin pour into the system, general muscle tone rises, pupils in the eyes dilate, sense organs are directed toward the incoming stimuli, palms sweat. This psychological response is in constant operation, even during sleep (Barna, 1976, pg. 51 in Dale, 1996, p. 6).

Barna goes on to explain that these physical changes are the result of what psychologists call 'orientation response', (Barna 1976, p. 51 in Dale, 1996, p 6). Every time a person comes in contact with an unfamiliar stimulus, the body regards it as invasive and intruding, so the body becomes super alert as it works to find a way to

classify the new information. Another disease-like definition emerged in Bergman et al in 1969. They claimed that culture shock was actually a “form of psychological trauma” which was “caused by reaction to strong psychological stimuli of cross-cultural strangeness and is usually accompanied by a violent, indiscriminate rejection of everything that is part of the other culture” (Bergman et al., 1969, p. 6). Taft (1977) considered culture shock a form of emotional disturbance, and declared that the most common definition of the term was “the feeling of impotence on the part of the stranger who can not deal competently with his environment owing to unfamiliarity with the cognitive aspects of the culture” (p. 142). Of course there were those for whom the term culture shock had little value.

‘culture shock’ is a term used by the lay person to explain...some of the most unpleasant consequences of travel...However...it is more of a generic expression connotating much and signifying little - a term which in attempting to explain all, fails to explain a great deal (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p. 47).

Conversely, there were those for whom the term was not completely associated with negative connotations. Bock, 1970 declared that culture shock, although not of value in and of itself, was important in that going through the experience would allow for a greater appreciation of other cultures coupled with a realization that they held a deep social value (pg. xi). Marx, (1999) stated rather simply that “Culture shock is...a positive sign on the road to ...adaptation. (p. 6)

Culture Shock - Causes

Whether one sees culture shock as a disease, as a form of trauma, or as a positive influence of change, this consideration of a number of possible definitions leads us back

to a consideration of the causes of culture shock. What, after all, predicates the conditions that lead to a state of mind and body that warrants such a myriad of definitions? As stated earlier, Oberg thought that culture shock was caused by “the anxiety that results from the removal of all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse” (1954, p.1) and Bergman et al. (1969) offered that culture shock was “...caused by reaction to strong psychological stimuli of cross-cultural strangeness” (p. 6). There were others who attempted to ferret out the cause of culture shock. Taft (1977) stated that culture shock was caused when a person was confronted with a situation or a cultural environment for which their previous cultural learning had not prepared them. This idea that culture was something that was learned and which determined your reaction to unfamiliar situations was also used in Dana, (1992) when she wrote about preparing monocultural teachers for multicultural classrooms. She discovered that culture shock was caused in her study group by the realization that “their prior childhood experiences were dramatically different from the experience of the students in their class” (Dana, 1992, p. 10). It was her claim that the student teachers with whom she was working had established a norm for appropriate behaviour of children based on their childhoods. They used this norm to dismiss any and all other experiences as abnormal. Their experiencing of culture shock was brought about by this conflict.

This was certainly not a new idea in the field. As early as 1970, Philip Bock wrote about the possibility that the interrelatedness of culture to its various manifestations within a society would ultimately determine a set of rules for how people should interact and “behave toward one another” (p. 67). He stated that although the members of a society certainly were not above breaking the rules from time to time, it was the inherent

knowledge of the existence of these rules that would at least offer some assistance in the prediction of behaviours. He further suggested that culture shock was caused when an “outsider” was attempting to determine what was happening in a given situation “in terms of his own social system”. This would lead to a state of “constantly upset” expectations (Bock, 1970, pg.67).

Another contention about the relationship between internal norms and the onset of culture shock stated that culture shock could be caused by misunderstood cross cultural communication that might not be intentional on either side. This might not necessarily occur because of some inherent insensitivity or maliciousness on the part of those involved, but rather by confusion around the meaning of an event. Some authors have contended that the meaning of an event can not be interpreted through either action or words independently, but rather must be interpreted through “the context of the situation in which the interaction is taking place” (Gordon, 1970, p. 26). Gordon went on to claim that:

The most relevant elements in the situational context are the participants’ silent assumptions about roles, relationships, and style of interaction appropriate to the situation. Without agreement on these assumptions, the same message, verbal or non-verbal, can have two different meanings (Gordon, 1970, p. 26).

Gordon provided an interesting scenario based around a situation that might occur when an American attempted to access services in a Latin-American bank. In his model, the American, following typical practice, walks up to a bank teller and asks to have his cheque cashed. The teller takes his cheque, but does not return with his money, and the American stands, waiting politely. Meanwhile, a Columbian pushes by the American and

places his cheque on the counter to be cashed. The American feels the Columbian is being rude for cutting in line, and the Columbian feels the American is being rude for not leaving the window and waiting off to one side for his money, as is the custom of the country. Neither party is aware that the other is ignorant of their own transgression, and neither is aware that they themselves have transgressed (Gordon, 1970). Although this incident may more correctly be called a “culture bump”, a term coined by Dr. Carol Archer, it is repeated incidents like this that are connected to our personal definitions of norms which can bring on culture shock.

Bochner and Furnham also offered a consideration of this clash of norms as a cause for culture shock. They claimed there were several ways to look at cross cultural encounters, a primary cause of discomfort and ultimately one of the major causes of culture shock, and offered the suggestion that a useful consideration was to see them as failed communication incidents, whether that be verbal or non-verbal communication. Somehow, the information which had been sent out by one party had simply not successfully reached the other, or if it had, the message became “incomplete, garbled or distorted” (Bochner & Furnham, 1990, p. 202). This situation becomes more convoluted since the receiver also sends out information, which is based, of course, on the receiver’s inappropriate interpretation of the original message. The message that is sent by the original receiver then itself becomes a victim of unsuccessful transmission, leaving the original sender even more at odds with the original intent of the message. This “spiral of miscommunication” could “accelerate very quickly into a vicious circle of misunderstanding, the final result being the breaking off of the contact” (Bochner & Furnham, 1990, p. 202).

The authors provided another very useful analogy for this, similar to Bock, comparing it to two people attempting to play a game when one of them, or in some cases, both, does not know the rules. This places the sojourner at a disadvantage since it is the host who is expecting the sojourner to know the rules without explicitly being taught them. This can work in favour of the sojourner, as it supplies an incentive for them to learn the game as quickly as possible, but it can also lead to the sojourner becoming discouraged and “ultimately induce them to withdraw from the game” (Bochner & Furnham, 1990, p. 203).

Craig Storti (1989) also provides a useful discussion of how culture shock actually happens to sojourners, most of whom, he claims, “genuinely want to adapt to local culture” (p. xiii) but fail in their attempts. He uses a very practical argument that in order to attempt to survive in another culture one, presumably, has to move. This move in and of itself is a tremendous source of stress, requiring that the sojourners “get used to a new job, a new community, and a new country” (Storti, 1989, p.2). Although the culture may be of primary interest on an intellectual level, the sojourner must deal with the demands of immediacy first. If all does not go well on this front, cultural adaptation may never actually come to pass. If a sojourner has moved to a new cultural landscape for employment, then there is an added strain of adapting to the processes and procedures of a new work environment, a work environment where, not insignificantly Storti suggests, one was presumably at the peak of operational efficiency in their last appointment, or at the very least comfortable and confident in their abilities. To suddenly find oneself scrambling in an environment where one is used to being in charge can be disconcerting, to say the least (Storti, 1989).

Storti makes some further rather interesting comments around the causes of culture shock, not the least of which is the issue he takes with the suggestion that what needs to occur for someone to be successful in another culture is cultural adjustment. He claims that this is a bit of a misnomer, because it is not the culture that we actually need to adjust ourselves to, but rather behaviour. This is an important distinction for Storti, because where culture is “an abstraction that can be appreciated intellectually” (1989, p. 14), it is the behaviour dictated by culture which is experienced by the sojourner and becomes the source of the problem. In Storti’s own words, “...it is culture encountered as behaviour that we must learn to live with” (1989, p. 14).

It was this behaviour and the stress that it caused in the sojourner that would lead to what Storti called a “cultural incident” (1989, p.29). This incident would in turn cause a reaction in those involved, such as anger or fear, which would ultimately lead to the sojourner withdrawing from the situation. This withdrawal and anger are certainly accepted standards as far as symptoms of culture shock, but of real interest was Storti’s claim that this reaction, this withdrawal, was actually a natural occurrence.

Storti posed a question around why it was that so many people who start off into another culture with the best of intentions ended up, as he put it “cultural malcontents, or, in the case of those who go home, cultural casualties?”(Storti, 1989, p. 32). Again with a penchant for practicality, he answered by saying that not adjusting to a culture was simply the easiest course, offering the path of least resistance, as it were, to the overburdened sojourner. This non-adjustment would presumably begin quite innocently enough as a person in a foreign society initially reacted to uncomfortable and unfamiliar situations by withdrawing or attacking, much as one would when threatened in any

situation. The danger was that this technique could quickly harden “into a pattern of systematic evasion and withdrawal” (Storti, 1989, p. 32). This suggestion has some particularly pointed implications for our argument around non-Native teachers and First Nations communities, and is yet another facet of culture shock to which we will return at a later time.

As evidenced by the preceding pages, the literature around the idea of what actually causes culture shock is varied and multifaceted, as is most of the literature around this issue. Since Storti’s article straddled the boundary between “cause” and “symptoms”, this is a rather opportune time to look at the effects of culture shock. What, exactly, does culture shock look like in a sojourner, what does it feel like, and how do the symptoms, if one is open to the disease analogy, manifest themselves?

Culture Shock - Symptoms

With all this conflicting data, it is not surprising that pinning down a definition of culture shock or deciding which model is more accurate than the others is so problematic. However, for the purpose of this essay it need only be accepted that culture shock does happen to many sojourners, and that there are many plausible definitions for the experience itself. Regardless of which school of thought one follows, it is important at this stage to consider what culture shock actually does to the sojourner. Now, of course, since seeking to organize these experiences within some sort of framework, a model must be adopted through which to understand these incidents. As a very broad and general framework a four stage model based loosely on Oberg’s original definition will be used, but as stated before, the danger of adopting any model must be recognized. To quote Paul Pedersen:

Culture shock is a profoundly personal experience. It does not affect all people in the same way or even the same person in the same way when it reoccurs...Culture shock happens inside each individual... (Pedersen, 1995, p. vii)

Stage one - The honeymoon

Very little has been added to this first stage of culture shock since Oberg's original model was introduced. Most authors agree that there is an initial stage of euphoria and excitement when one enters into a new cultural setting, but, as with most of the literature, one should be careful about making too broad a statement of the universality of any section of culture shock. As previously cited, the experiences one has play a significant role in colouring one's attitude towards a culture. If one has negative experiences around a cultural encounter when one steps off the proverbial boat, one is unlikely to experience much of the joy and euphoria. However, as is human nature, a great deal more is written about the second, more negative and traumatic stage of culture shock.

Stage two - Hostility

The title of this stage is relatively self explanatory, but the reason why so much is written about this particular experience is that it is here that the real effects of culture shock are seen.

Before, the person loved everything. Now, the crisis occurs and the panel moves to the other extreme. The person hates everything. 'The person is confused, perhaps disoriented, and feels isolated and lonely. Frustration and inadequacy become a common experience. Frustration may turn into defensiveness' (Wilson,

341)...Self doubt, self pity, melancholy, and severe homesickness overwhelm the person. Now, nothing positive can be found about the new culture. The only solution seems to be to escape all this misery by going home (Bunz, 1997, p. 3).

Bunz was speaking in particular of business people who sojourn to other countries, but it seems that from Israeli nurses (Cole, 1996) to educational evaluators (Bergman et al, 1969), from researching anthropologists (Barker, 1980) to seafaring students (Pedersen, 1995), the vast majority of individuals experience similar reactions when they enter this stage of culture shock. The exact moment of the manifestation of this hostility stage and its duration remain difficult to pin down, but that it will take place seems almost a certainty.

The reaction that is experienced may be similar among those who are occupying a similar sojourner role. This idea is supported by Bochner and Furnham and who write about how many students who inhabit a foreign country for extended periods of time are often prone to depression, seemingly because their initial expectations and optimism are at such a high level (Bochner & Furnham, 1990). Marx, similar to Bunz, addressed the reactions of those within the business community (1999) explaining that culture shock could affect job performance by producing anxiety. "In unfamiliar situations we often feel anxious. We have no idea what is going to happen, we don't know how we will react and we don't know whether we will be able to cope" (Marx, 1999, p. 24). This anxiety could then lead to obsessive behaviour; those who feel like they are losing control wish to work harder to apply even more control, and even to paranoia, where "foreign colleagues are seen as obstructive and are blamed for everything that is wrong" (pp. 26-27). Any of these reactions would obviously be of detriment to anyone trying to establish themselves

in a new work environment. These negative reactions continue, and because of the increased stress, the business person experiences feelings of helplessness, a decrease in self confidence, decreased production at their job, irritability and , in many cases, an increase in the use of alcohol (Marx, 1999, p. 32).

Even more nefarious emotions may be experienced according to Storti (1989). He attributes feelings of bitterness and anger in those who stay, and feelings of failure and loss of self esteem in those who do not, directly to this second stage (p. xvii). Pedersen goes even further, stating that the “individual may experience a sense of profound loss” which in “extreme cases” could lead to a “complete disintegration of personality” (Pedersen, 1995, p. 79). Once in this stage the sojourner would display “confusion, apathy, isolation, loneliness and a sense of inadequacy” (p. 79). Not only are these emotions sometimes debilitating in their own right, but there can also be a sense in the sojourner that somehow they are responsible for these emotions, that they themselves are somehow at fault. This leads to further negativity and further self blame.

As we can see, many of the emotions attached to the hostility stage are fairly negative, but tend to be of the self effacing kind, that is, they are turned inward upon the sojourner. Not all the emotions of this stage remain directed inward, however, and indeed there is a point where the negativity and guilt one directs inwards is turned outwards against the host culture. It is for this reason that some authors include this as a separate stage in the process (most notably, Adler, 1975), but for our purposes it will suffice to include it here.

If the feelings that had been so self directed turn against the host culture, they do so as a volatile and deliberate channeling of anger. It is during this time that there is a real

tendency to blame the host culture for the discomfort of the sojourner, and perhaps even a tendency to involve oneself in prejudice and stereotyping (Pedersen, 1995). The sojourners may conclude that it is not they who are at fault during all of these cultural miscommunication incidents, but rather it is the host culture, and more than likely, some perceived shortcoming of theirs. It is during this stage of internal and external emotional trauma that one of the most damaging of all phenomena emerges to inhibit the sojourner from ever reaching cultural adaptation: The expatriates club.

As is quite clear, a person in the throes of either the first or second level of the hostility stage is obviously going through a tough emotional time. The tendency here is to find others with whom one can commiserate and share in experiences. "It is not so much a desire to be back home as it is a desire to feel at home in the new surroundings" (Storti, 1989, p.7). This need to feel wanted is often emphasized by the difficulty one might have in forming relationships with members of the host culture. Indeed, one may find that attempts at forming such relationships are initially rejected outright by the host culture, especially if one finds oneself in a position that has a transient nature to it. The subject of this thesis, non-native teachers in native communities immediately comes to mind, where teachers tend to come and go with alarming regularity.

One feature of culture shock...is disappointment over the relations possible between the newcomer...and the local people. Many workers go to another culture with enthusiastic expectations of being welcomed, and becoming close with their new acquaintances...Though such hopes are often ultimately fulfilled, they rarely are at once...It is easy for...people to react with disapproval to those

who have disappointed them by seeming to reject offered friendship (Bergman et al, 1969, p. 6).

Facing these feelings of loneliness and cultural disorientation, the sojourner will tend to seek out other sojourners who are going through or have gone through similar circumstances and with whom one can talk. Groups of people with similar experiences are formed, made up of those for whom the host culture is proving difficult and frustrating. Peopled by those who are depressed, angry and frustrated, these groups become hotbeds of discontent and provide a very real barrier to true cultural adaptation. After all, if one can find a group of people who share one's views, why bother spending too much effort and time worrying about the host culture? The perception that what is different in the host culture is wrong can be reaffirmed by a simple process of meeting with other ex-pats.

Craig Storti (1989) spends a bit of time considering the ex-pat culture, and says that it results as the sojourners are subjected to more and more daily situations where they feel uncomfortable and out of place. The more uncomfortable they feel, the more they withdraw from the culture, and thus the less they are able to learn. The less they learn, the more uncomfortable they feel, and the more they withdraw. This becomes a repeating spiral, and unwilling, or perhaps unable, to go home, the culture weary individuals need to find a refuge where they can catch their proverbial breath from the onslaught of all this newness. Barna (1976) refers to the sojourners becoming exhausted as they work day and night to attempt to orient themselves to their new cultural surroundings and work their way out of the negative emotions associated with phase two. Finding a group of like

minded people who will welcome them with open arms and empathize with their plight is like finding an oasis in a cultural desert.

Much as an oasis does little to teach about surviving in what is perceived to be a harsh and inhospitable climate, the expatriate subculture does little to teach about adapting to a new culture. Safe here, and understood, with all their cultural needs being met, those suffering from the early stages of culture shock may find themselves simply staying, unwilling to be subjected to any more cultural rigors.

We take comfort in being among people we understand and who instinctively understand us. It is exactly the same relief we feel when we spot someone we know in a room full of strangers...the expatriate subculture...evolves quickly enough into a permanent home (Storti, 1989, p. 33).

Thus safely ensconced in the oasis, why indeed would the ex-patriate wander back out into the desert of the host culture for more than brief periods of time? Marx (1999) calls this “Joining the cocktail set” (p. 67), where one busies oneself with “finding refuge from...the foreignness of the place and retreating into our own culture...where we meet people ‘just like us’ (p. 67). Marx states that this subculture provides a great deal of comfort for those who are feeling angry or perhaps inept and guilty, and although strong relationships are developed quickly, it may soon be discovered that this oasis is little more than a mirage.

Both Marx and Storti warn against the expatriate culture as being a rather shallow and hollow existence. Storti explains how the “expatriate culture tends to be sterile and vaguely unsatisfying” (p. 34) because what keeps it together is not mutual interests or natural affinity, but rather:

...a shared reluctance to delve into the local culture and take what comes.

Members of the community have not sought each other out so much as they have collided with each other in their flight from the indigenous culture (Storti, 1989, p. 35).

Marx also decries the value of this group, stating that although relationships will develop that are quite close on the surface, they will be limited. Talk will most often turn to diatribes against the local culture, how horrible the living conditions are, and often “criticism and bitching about the other people in the set” (Marx, 1999, p.67). Marx offers that this is because these relationships are simply those of convenience, and are not based on much else. These people with whom we associate are not necessarily those we would choose to be friends with in any other circumstances, but since our choices are limited, we accept help in our adaptational dilemma wherever we can find it. By filling in these emotional gaps in our well being with relationships with those from a similar cultural background, we rob ourselves of opportunities to fill them with relationships with those from the host culture. This relationship quandary has some significant implications for how to deal and cope with culture shock.

Another rather interesting thing that may happen to those who are in the midst of stage two is that rather than discard the host culture in favor of their own, a sojourner may discard their own culture completely and undergo something called “Going Native” (Marx, 1999, p. 67). This reaction to culture shock can be just as damaging, if somewhat less common, than rejecting what is being experienced. A person who is going native “will throw themselves into an intense phase of learning...the characteristics and values...of the culture” (Marx, 1999, p. 67). Now, although it may seem that on the

surface this is the better of the two choices, it is not a viable option because it leads to a veritable idolization of the host culture and an eschewed world view. Even more damaging, it can lead to a rejection by the host culture as such efforts to try and become what one is not often lead to feelings of suspicion on the part of the host nationals (Marx, 1999).

So, from exhibiting signs of depression to going native, stage two of culture shock is easily the most traumatic and trying of the four. It is during this stage that the risk of remaining stuck in adaptation limbo is at its most likely, with the sojourner unable to advance towards contentment because of a variety of reasons. However, for those who are willing to learn from their experiences and leave the ex-patriate oasis in order to truly learn to travel in the desert, stage three awaits.

Part three and four-Humour and home

Few authors after Oberg credited this third stage with humour as he did, many choosing rather to see this as a stage where adaptation and autonomy begin to take over. For those who actually do emerge from stage one and two, stage three is a time of developing balance. Gone is the “see no evil” exuberance of stage one and the “see no good” fatalism of stage two, and what develops is a more “balanced and impartial view of the whole situation” (Pedersen, 1995, p. 201). Sojourners begin to understand that the angst that they have been experiencing and, indeed, the angst they have been inflicting upon others, is not the fault of either the sojourner or the host, but rather just a conflict of perception. Like the other stages, arrival here was not an absolute, nor can it be guaranteed that a sojourner will not regress occasionally into stage two or even stage one,

(Pedersen, 1995) but at this point the sojourner is at the very least on the way up on the U-curve scale.

It should not be assumed; however, that the sage-like wisdom of this stage will be without its emotional trauma, for the sojourner may find that there are some manifestations of culture which, even after a period of reflection and evaluation, they simply can not accept. Storti (1989) reminds us that although a cultural incident results from behaviour that is exhibited on both sides, it is ultimately the responsibility of the visitor to find a solution to the problem. If, after an honest and heartfelt reflection period, the sojourner still can not come to terms with what has happened, then it is still the responsibility of the sojourner to develop a strategy for dealing with this manifestation of culture that does not involve withdrawing. That is, as long as true cultural adaptation is the goal.

...in every culture there will be behaviours we cannot accept even after we have conditioned ourselves to expect them...And this is how it should be...If we genuinely respect another culture, we must allow ourselves to be appalled by it.
(Storti, 1989, p. 67)

The final stage of the whole process is, of course, adaptation to the host culture, or reaching a point where you “feel at home” within the host culture. There does appear to be some doubt as to whether complete adaptation can actually occur and although they may come to feel somewhat at home, it seems rather doubtful that a person will become as comfortable and adapted to their host culture as to their own (Pedersen , 1989). This is the ultimate goal, however, as was so with the “honeymoon stage”, comparatively little has been written about what this stage looks or feels like to the sojourner. This may be

because, as previously suggested, so relatively few sojourners reach it, or perhaps because the process remains ongoing, with adaptation continuing to evolve over the course of one's time in a foreign culture, even after returning home. Storti writes about how sojourners will be at this final stage of cultural adaptation when they realize that in order to do so, they must accept the differences between cultures and "develop culturally appropriate expectations" (1989, p. 59). However, the real value in Storti's consideration of this final stage of culture shock is his treatment of why all this has been worth such an effort. In his concluding chapter he explains how one obvious benefit is that it improves our overall job performance. The more we understand the locals, the more we can cope in this new environment. A matter he relates to this is how when we get to know the culture, we can differentiate a behaviour that is cultural from a behaviour that is simply unique to that individual. Just because a person who is First Nations is chronically late for work does not necessarily mean that person is chronically late for work because they are First Nations. His final reason, however, is the one that echoes with the most validity.

Perhaps the most important consequence of pursuing adjustment is the fate it saves us from. Life in the expatriate subculture can be an unwholesome proposition...the ever greater retreat from reality...can do damage to our ability to function as sympathetic, compassionate human beings. When we withdraw from the culture around us, we not only isolate ourselves from the local people, but from our own humanity as well (Storti, 1989. p. 96).

With so much at stake, and the proportionately large volume of writing dedicated to the unpleasantness associated with cultural adaptation, it should come as no surprise that a great deal has been written to help sojourners rapidly progress through, or skip

altogether, the middle stages of culture shock. Now, keeping in mind that Bochner and Furnham (1990) have suggested that some seasoned sojourners may not experience culture shock at all, we will now turn to a consideration of some of the suggested courses of action for curing, abbreviating or perhaps even preventing, culture shock.

Culture Shock - Survival

Despite the obvious complexity of the problem, it is somewhat surprising to see how many authors offer rather trite and simplistic solutions for what one should do in order to deal with culture shock. Consider the following list from J. Hachey (1998) on coping with culture shock cited by Thomas Gougeon (2000). Although Gougeon's article dealt with the rather specific incident of the professional who moves from an urban to a small rural setting, something of relevance when discussing teachers moving to work on reservations, Hachey's list of ways to get through culture shock provides for a nice beginning.

- 1) Get out and socialize with the locals and try to learn about your new community.
- 2) Stop being over critical and over examining people's behaviours and habits.
- 3) Try to learn local idioms or language and practice it in public.
- 4) Find a local person as a mentor and supporter.
- 5) Remain curious.
- 6) Do something stereotypically "Urban" once in awhile.
- 7) Stay on e-mail with friends and family back home or keep a diary.
- 8) When confronted with expectations that are difficult to meet, find imaginative ways to circumnavigate them without offending people.
- 9) If you are too overzealous about your work, you might reduce expectations.
- 10) Accept that you are going to fail at things and prepare

yourself for this natural phase of adjustments (Hachey, 1998 (n.p.) in Gougeon, 2000, p. 37).

Reading through this list, a young sojourner could very well assume that adjusting to a new culture is a rather simple proposition. Get out, meet some people, and relax. Anyone who has experienced the emotional roller coaster that is cultural adaptation certainly knows that it is not that simple, but these checklists pervade the literature around culture shock. Ulla K. Bunz, (1997) offered an even simpler five step plan first presented by Wilson in 1995.

To overcome culture shock, there are five basic guidelines. (Wilson. 342-345)

First, find out as much as you can about the new culture...Second, try to learn the basics of the culture's language...Third, observe carefully once you have arrived in a new culture...Fourth, tolerate differences...Fifth, develop the flexibility to try something new. (Bunz, 1997, p. 3)

Marx(1996) also includes a "how to" list, which is divided up in a similar fashion to Wilson in that it follows a chronologically linear trend, containing suggestions of what do to before, during and after your sojourn. It begins with a few preemptive suggestions such as making sure that you expect culture shock to occur, then moves to suggestions of establishing support networks and giving oneself time to adapt to the new surroundings. It ends with a reminder to expect culture shock upon the return to one's country, and how one should realize that culture shock can actually be beneficial to adaptation. Marx summarizes by stating:

The first stage of emotional adaptation to any international assignment is therefore to anticipate early on the challenges you are likely to face. Secondly,

envisage yourself and your emotional reactions, and finally, learn techniques that will help you deal with these situations successfully (Marx, 1996, p. 22).

One area to which a great deal of the literature has been dedicated is to the questions surrounding notions of relationships and their importance in coping with culture shock. Keeping in mind the danger the sojourner runs of entering into an expatriate lifestyle, it appears that the development of relationships do play a vital role in battling culture shock and provide some unexpected benefits to those who take the time to develop them. For example, it has been suggested that establishing a network of friends leads to lower rates of failure among students who are studying in another culture (Bochner and Furnham, 1990).

Bochner and Furnham go even further than suggesting that establishing a support network is desirable, they declare that "...social support is directly related to increased psychological well being and to lower probability of physical and mental illness" (p. 185). As well, they cite Henderson and Byrne (1977) claiming "... for some migrants, deficiencies in social support are related to the emergence of psychiatric symptoms, rather than to a personality attribute which antedated migration itself" (Bochner and Furnham, 2000, p.185). Other authors appear to agree. Marx (1999) states that among international managers, those who reported using social support systems more often had to contend with shorter spells of culture shock than those managers who did not use social support as often. Storti (1989) drew similar conclusions around the importance of developing relationships.

Not only is it important for us to develop a network of friends, but it is vital that we attempt to include friends from the host culture. Bochner and Furnham (1990) draw

on Klienberg and Hull (1979): “Those...who had made satisfactory social contact and established relationships with local people during their sojourn, reported broader and more general satisfaction with their...experiences” (p. 125). They present the research of several others, and conclude that that one of the most important factors in being happy in a host culture is establishing friends from that culture (p. 126). One particularly telling body of research was from I. Toriborn (1982) who looked at the pattern of cultural adjustment of two groups of people, those who developed friends among co-nationals and those who developed friends among host nationals. Both groups’ adjustment followed a U pattern, but with two marked differences. Those who developed host national support structures suffered a greater trough during adjustment, but after six months were generally more satisfied than those who had only adopted co-national relationships. Not only that, but those who had developed host national relationships displayed a level of satisfaction that continued to rise after six months, as opposed to the leveling off experienced by the second group (in Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p. 136). One can obviously see the advantage of establishing these relationships if one is hoping to receive cultural coaching from a host national.

One other common theory around how one should attempt to deal with culture shock involves strategies around pre-service training. After all, what better way to avert, or at least soften the negative effects of culture shock on sojourners than to pre-empt them with effective pre-service education? Jim Schnell (1996) points out that there is no better way to deal with culture shock than to “recognize the stages...as you experience them” (p. 6). Gould (as cited in Weinstein, Gerald et al, 1967) concurs, and although his suggestions deal specifically with training teachers for working within the confines of

inner city schools to deal with what he feels would be more correctly titled “reality shock” he suggests that the difficulties encountered could at least be somewhat alleviated by educating “students to conditions of ‘real life’ in the socio-cultural milieu in which they will teach” (p. 18). Samuel J. Mungo (1981) suggests a rather detailed pre-service approach to help teacher’s deal with culture shock. He first suggests that pre-service teachers be placed into a community that has a “diverse population” and placed within “programs and agencies”. The idea here is that by being exposed to “experiences in programs and agencies that are culturally and ethnically diverse” (p. 7) students will be better prepared for the shock of cross cultural stress. He suggests using such areas as geriatric units and correctional facilities as proving grounds where young pre-service teachers will be exposed to a culturally diverse cross section of society. The second part of his model offers that students then be permitted to stay in these institutions for 9 weeks and be given tasks under the criterion of time, variety and challenge. The third stage of this model has the students bonding together, “developing into a close knit, cooperative, caring unit” (p. 10). The final stage of the model allows for seminars and feedback from the director of the program. In these sessions students would be allowed “opportunities for clarification of cultural confusion, analysis of experiences, and discussion of role determination...” (Mungo, 1981, p.11).

The failures of the Peace Corps to retain a higher percentage of volunteers lead to a belief by some that there was a basic flaw in pre-service models that hoped to promote cultural adaptation by exposure. George Bragel (as cited in Weinstein, 1967) points out:

...we have instituted various programs to lessen the anxiety and fear resulting from culture shock. We have devised various types of pre-service laboratory

experiences; we have insisted on course work in urban sociology and urban anthropology; we have practiced certain successful teaching strategies. What we have not done is remind ourselves of Skinner's remark that 'In spite of discouraging evidence to the contrary, it is still supposed that if you tell a student something, then he knows it'. Our basic function in the area of teacher attitudes should be to produce teachers who are able to get outside of their own familiar patterns of perceiving and acting and to confront aspects of the world that they did not know existed (p. 17).

Bochner and Furnham, (1990) dedicated quite a bit of time to this subject of how to successfully train people to deal with culture and, more particularly, culture shock. They first looked at what they considered to be strategies that were developed in light of pseudo-medical models of culture shock, identifying Oberg's model, the U-curve and the notion of people being caught between two cultures as examples. The problem with these clinical models is that "...there is very little evidence that 'culture stress' can be regarded as a form of mental illness, or that counseling or 'therapy' are the most appropriate or effective means of alleviating such stress..." (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p. 234).

Another problem with the pseudo medical model is that it relies heavily on the idea of adjustment (p. 234). There is an idea that the failure of the sojourner to adapt to their surroundings points to an underlying pathology that must be treated. This turns the focus inward on the sojourner and not outward on the host society. Thus it might lead to the "patient" focusing inward to look for solutions or adaptational strategies rather than face the culture itself. They also caution against this approach when the society in which one finds itself is "... 'sick' in some sense" (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p. 235). Further,

they make the point that the second concern around models which suggest adjusting a person is that it is fairly society centered. Adjustment tends to suggest that the sojourner give up his or her own values and beliefs. Cultural differences are not solved by eliminating difference, but rather by improving relations between culturally diverse people.

The authors move on to a consideration of the variety of training techniques that are used to prepare sojourners. The first is information giving. The authors claim that the most common way to teach sojourners about another culture is simply to present the information. This is an easy and relatively effective way to get the information out to the potential sojourner, but it is questionable how much is retained and to what extent the information will actually be useful to the sojourner. For example, these types of training sessions tend to discuss the obvious and aggrandized events in a cross cultural encounter, but not the mundane and, therefore, more useful.

Another common preparation is that of cultural sensitization. These types of classes give sojourners the opportunity to look at two cultures and compare how they are similar and different. In particular they allow sojourners to look at their own culture with a critical eye and recognize their own cultural biases. This method is criticized because it is one thing to know that there is a cultural difference, but it is quite another thing to actually experience a cultural event that is outside your realm of experience and do so with an impartial eye.

Isomorphic attribution is the next consideration. Basically this is the idea that you train people to attribute the same meaning to incidents and behaviour as the people in the culture they are dealing with. Borrowed from H. C. Triandis (1975) this preparation is

essentially in booklet form and presents a group of scenarios between two cultures which the students have to interpret from the other side. The example given by Bochner and Furnham is that of an American and an Arab, where if the American is being trained, he must apply an attribute to a certain set of behaviour as if he were Arabic. The issue again becomes the validity of the situations, with the authors claiming “exotic, strange and hence less common events tend to be given greater prominence than the less interesting but more frequently encountered day-to-day problems...” (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p. 238).

One final methodology that is given some consideration is that of learning by doing. The authors claim that most of this type of training takes the form of role playing, although they do cite an effort by the Peace Corps who built an actual village in Hawaii and hired locals to occupy it (pg 238). They do not seem to have a great deal of use for this as a method and say that most of those “...who come into contact with members of other cultures...receive no systematic culture training whatsoever” (p. 239). They mention that most often the training that does occur is the imparting of knowledge by “old hands” to the “new chums”. They criticize this idea by saying that although this has some merit, some of the old hands may have distorted or even prejudiced views of the host culture.

Not wishing to be left out of the pre-service training circle, Bochner and Furnham present their own method of preparation which they call “Social Skills Training” or “SST”. They waste little time in expressing how this model is

...firmly based in theory, takes the social psychology of the cross cultural encounter seriously, has clear cut implications for applied intervention, can draw

on already existing technology for its implementation and avoids some of the ethical, ethnocentric and stigmatic connotations inherent in[other] approach[es] (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, pp 239-240).

Interestingly enough, considering the thrust of this thesis, they use an example taken from LaFromboise and Rowe (1983) who wrote about efforts directed at an American Indian reserve where they hoped to "...improve the ability of the Indian to cope in a white person's world, with fewer negative consequences than other approaches currently available" (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p.240). They are cognizant of some of the drawbacks of SST, in particular they caution that it must be:

...tailor made for the population, task and milieu. It does not make sense to look for some universal rule that might apply to intercultural communication in general...If two cultures are to be bridged, their specific social skills, interpersonal rules and underlying values must form part of the curriculum, information that can only be derived from ethnographic research and a sound knowledge of both cultures and not from some general principle of behaviour (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p. 221).

The authors talk about the advantages of SST by saying that the training is 1) Based on a specific theory. 2) Practical in that it deals with common situations and avoids what they call "vague statements" about culture shock. 3) The program can diagnose social skill deficiencies that a person may have and offer remedial training in those skills. 4) "The training uses well tried, behavioural techniques...." (p. 242). It does not solely use either cognitive or information giving techniques. 5) It focuses on how to handle interpersonal

encounters, preferring “social psychology” to “vague assumptions about achieving interpersonal growth” (p. 242) 6) The program is easily evaluated.

Now, although giving few details as to what a social skills training might actually look like, they end by stating:

SST techniques are particularly suited for the training of minority members in multicultural societies to become competent in both of their cultures, that is to learn and maintain the social skills of their own ethnic group, while adding to their repertoire the social skills of the dominant culture (Bochner and Furnham, 1990, p 243).

It would be of some value to look more into SST if one were interested in finding out about the best methodology for training sojourners, but it will suit the purposes of this paper to be aware that this is yet another example of an approach to pre-service preparation for sojourners.

In this first section I have attempted to give a relatively brief but somewhat detailed overview of the literature that exists around culture shock. I have tried to provide models that exist for describe the progression of culture shock including Oberg’s four stage model, Lysgaard’s U-curve models and Gullahorn and Gullahorn’s W-model, as well as several others. I then presented a variety of definitions that have been offered for culture shock, and followed this with a consideration of some of the suggested causes. Next, I moved to a summative discussion of the effects of culture shock, settling on a four stage model to describe some of what has been written around what could be expected to happen to someone experiencing culture shock. Finally, I moved into a brief presentation

of a variety of models which have been presented as ways to lessen or pre-empt the effects of culture shock.

I would like to repeat at this time that this paper in no way pretends to be the last word on this topic. What I have tried to provide is a general overview of the literature so that it would become clear that culture shock is a very real phenomena and something which is not to be taken lightly. If nothing else, it is hoped that by presenting this brief summary of some of the literature, readers will be made aware that there is a long and recognized list of authors and data around this topic. It must be remembered that the major thrust of this paper will be to consider the effect of teaching in a First Nations community on a non-First Nations educator, and I will now offer a consideration of how I believe many non-Native educators do indeed suffer from a unique brand of culture shock.

Part II-Introduction

It must be understood that the history of First Nations education has only relatively recently begun to be examined from a First Nations perspective, and as such, the injustices and inequalities of this system remain relatively fresh on the collective First Nation's psyche. Adding insult to injury has been the reluctance of the culpable parties to take any responsibility for the devastation wrought on First Nations communities by these systems. It was not until recently that the federal government has actually announced a reparation package for residential school survivors. Thus, the sojourner who travels to the reservation to teach may very well unknowingly carry with them the stigma of representing the very system that has for so long tried to eradicate the First Nations people. This notion leads us nicely into the next part of this document, which is a consideration of some of the ways in which non-Native educator may come under the influence of a particularly insidious and very unique brand of culture shock.

The Culture Shock Trap

As we have already learned, many of those who sojourn into the realm of another culture will find themselves the victims of culture shock. The best evidence we can collect suggests that there is no real pattern to this development (Bochner & Furnham, 1990) yet, as stated previously, it seems likely that if not a certitude, there is a relatively high probability that it will occur. The suggested methods for relieving culture shock are relatively straight forward, including some aforementioned strategies such as learning the language and making friends. Yet, when one considers the unique relationship that has developed in this country between the aboriginal community and the education system,

one begins to consider that the educator/sojourner may very well find the application of these methods more problematic than they might first appear. The educator who embarks into First Nations education may very well find themselves faced with so many multilayered and emotionally charged obstacles along the way to cultural adaptation that reaching even the humour stage of culture shock may seem impossible. Even if the training they received in their teacher education program included a section on culture shock, and they are aware of the steps that should be taken to hasten such adjustment, they may find that it is these very steps that are the most difficult because of some underlying idiosyncrasies that exist around First Nations education. It is with an eye to some of these conflicts between ideologies and good culture shock recovery practice that we now turn towards an examination of some of the particular pitfalls which may be experienced.

A cautionary note before proceeding. Based on the preceding pages, it becomes apparent that the process of culture shock is one that can certainly have an effect on the teacher/ sojourner, and thus far I have tried, to the best of my ability, to present a rather academic look at the issue. The crux of my question, however, originates not within the realm of a literature review of culture shock theory, but rather in the realm of experiential data which I have gathered over the past ten years of teaching among First Nations people. Although what follows is predominantly based in action research, I will, whenever possible, use the conclusions of other writers to provide a lens through which to examine some of the complex issues that surround First Nations education, and in particular try to focus on how these issues might negatively impact on the teacher/ sojourner as they try to work through the quagmire of culture shock.

First Nations Education

From the moment the non-Native educator steps off the proverbial plane, they will find themselves entering into the maelstrom of contradiction that is First Nations education. One of the first things that may set First Nations education apart from educating in any other culture is what is at stake as far as the overall humanitarian cost of not changing current practice. The poor overall quality of life and general poverty that is the reality for much of the First Nations population in this country is alarming, let alone the state of education. For example, despite spending in excess of 7.6 billion dollars over a twenty five year period following the release of the White Paper in 1969, very little changed in First Nations education as far as success rates.

The 1986 census revealed that 37 percent of the adult Indian population, almost double the national average, was considered illiterate or had less than a grade 9 education; 5 percent of Indians graduated high school, compared to 13 percent of all students nationally and only one percent of native people were university graduates, when 9 percent of all Canadians had a university degree. The 1991 census showed marginal improvements: 28 percent of the adult Indian population was considered illiterate or had less than grade 9 education, and 1.3 percent of native people were university graduates (Comeau & Santin, 1995, pp. 126-127).

These sentiments are also echoed in Binda, (2001)

The auditor general of Canada in his annual report of 2000 stated that 'Canada's one billion dollars a year Native education system is failing Aboriginal children' (Samyn, 2000a). The auditor reported that with the slow rate of progress it will

take approximately a quarter of a century for reserve students to reach educational parity with the rest of Canada (p. 180).

It is not just within the realm of education that the startling statistics exist pointing to the dire straits that are the reality of life for Canada's First Nations peoples. Consider the following:

- 1 out of every 4 First Nations people in 1993 was under the age of ten. Among that population, more than half lived in low income circumstances, and they had an infant mortality rate nearly twice as high as the non-Native population.
- Suicide rates for Aboriginal peoples are three to four times the national average.
- This suicide rate doubles for youth between the ages of 15 and 24.
- The suicide rate among Aboriginals in Manitoba has been reported to be as high as ten times the national average.
- Unemployment rates on reserves are estimated to be between 60 and 90 percent.

(Goulet, Dressyman-Lavale & MacLeod, 2001, Henderson, 1994, Reginer, 1995)

Still more timely data can be found in publications directly from Health Canada, where it is shown that suicide was still a leading cause of death for Aboriginal people at the turn of the twenty first century, and that on reserve First Nations people have a lower rate of attainment in all educational indicators (Health Canada, 2005). The stakes are obviously incredibly high, and such statistics certainly reinforce the necessity of education.

Another way the teacher/ sojourner who travels into the realm of First Nations education may find themselves particularly vulnerable to culture shock is around the very notion of culture itself, and the sojourner's ability to escape from it. Even the most remote and isolated communities in the North have the modern communication facilities which

we in mainstream Canadian society have come to rely on, and in order to remove themselves from the offending host culture all the victim of culture shock need do is turn on the TV. Here they can isolate themselves in the realm of the familiar and not need to concern themselves with adapting to the culture to the extent which some one would have to in a completely foreign country where such pop culture may not be as easily accessed. Although things as English language newspapers may be in short supply, the development of the internet and other technologies have made it relatively easy for the sojourner to remain in contact with "the outside world". Although such contact is often seen as a way to deal with culture shock, it could perhaps end up a double-edged sword. Remembering that Oberg's model of culture shock shows how everything of one's home culture becomes glorified when one is in the hostility stage of culture shock, one could easily surmise that such daily reminders of the "glory" of one's own culture could easily highlight any perceived shortcomings of the host culture. It is easier today to remove oneself from the offending culture, at least psychologically, than it ever has been, thus possibly slowing the adaptation process. The effect of these technologies on culture shock remains an area requiring further research, but even removing oneself physically from the situation has also become relatively easy, in this day of cheap flights and on-line bookings. This escapism tactic is cited by Taylor (2001) as the most common way in which sojourners in First Nations communities deal with culture shock:

The most common method of dealing with culture shock for non-Native teachers is escape. Non-native teachers simply avoid as much contact with the local Native community as possible. Teachers will spend free time in isolation doing what is familiar from 'home'. Perhaps they will spend their

leisure time with other non-Native teachers, thus avoiding the shock of trying to communicate with and involve themselves in the different culture (p. 230).

Knowing that this is a common symptom of culture shock, we should not be surprised that it manifests so significantly in this particular cross cultural situation. What may be of some surprise is that it is just this reaction to the unpleasantness of cross cultural adaptation, which manifests itself in things like the mass exodus of non-Native staff during school holidays, that often leads to criticism by the host community. Although this is one of the recommended practices for alleviating culture shock (Hachey, 1998 (n.p.) in Gougeon, 2000) there are problems that are inherent in this tactic, leaving community criticism aside for the moment. Remembering the glorification that one imparts upon one's home culture and the negativity that often accompanies adjusting to the host culture, traveling out of the community may lead to a detrimental cycle.

Assuming that one "gets out" of the host community in order to "get a break" from the ordeal of culture shock, then there is little doubt that where ever one travels to will be imbued with the appropriate cultural grandeur which Oberg speaks about in his model. Presumably, one is only in the new setting for a brief period of time, say a weekend or a March break, and thus there would seem to be a higher probability that one will only experience the honeymoon stage of sojourning into that new community. In fact, I would also suggest that if coming from a hostility stage in the host community, the honeymoon stage in this new, temporary setting could very well be heightened by comparison. Then, when the time comes to return to the host culture, the hostility stage may also be highlighted by comparison. I can recall such an experience myself, when, to

my mind, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, became the most enchanting city I had ever visited. Prince Albert was about a seven hour drive from the reservation on which I was teaching, and it absolutely shone in comparison. In fact, my wife and I toyed with the idea of settling down there. In retrospect, I have come to the conclusion that the only real allure of the city for me at that time was that it was not the reservation on which I was teaching.

The criticism one may face from the host culture for traveling out of the community is also problematic, as previously indicated. Travel plans to leave the host community often lead to excitement and anticipation of departure, which not surprisingly can translate into the “I can’t wait to get there” attitude. This attitude can also far too easily translate into the “I can’t wait to get out of here “ attitude, which may cast the sojourner in a negative light as far as the people of the host culture are concerned. Teachers who leave for vacations on weekends and during longer holidays may be seen as having only a passing commitment to the community, and thus have their motivation for being there called into question. My wife and I often stayed on the reserve where we were working over such holidays and heard many comments from the people of the community that were critical of teachers for “always leaving”. Another result of this exodus in our case was that the empty homes and apartments of these teachers became a prime target for thieves who would take the opportunity to break into the teacherages. Upon their return, teachers were often faced with dealing with the fact that they had been the victims of crime, in a community they may have left because they had been experiencing culture shock. Combine this with the added sting of perhaps feeling victimized by the very community they envision themselves as "trying to help" and one

can see how the sojourner might again find themselves reeling under the effect of the hostility stage. We will return to the role of the teacher in the community later, but for now let us allow that being the target of criminal activity when partaking of a vacation that the literature suggests may actually assist in helping cultural adaptation certainly could very well serve to hinder the process.

Another component of adjustment which faces the sojourner is the environmental factor. In many instance of cross cultural First Nations teaching in Canada, the sojourner comes from a larger urban center in the south to teach in an isolated community in the north. Although trivialized by Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963), I would contend that in many cases, moving from, say, Toronto, Ontario to Canada's Arctic is paramount to moving to another country. The level of isolation which may exist, especially if the community is a fly-in, the cold, which can leave people basically housebound for weeks at a time, the lack of sunlight, which saps energy reserves, all these factors are sure to contribute to the depths of melancholy and depression which are culture shock symptoms.

One final issue which may face the sojourner, especially if they are new to teaching, is "reality shock", the challenge of marrying the expectations of what teaching is going to be like to what it actually is once one first sets foot in the classroom. A sojourner may have a very clear idea of what teaching is going to be like, but when they enter the First Nations classroom and face the students, they may find what they have learned has not prepared them for the reality of what education means on the reserve. As we have read, Storti (1989) suggests that feeling inadequate in a job where one may have felt confident in the past can have a devastating effect on cross cultural adaptation.

However, in such circumstances the sojourners at least have previous success upon which to draw to bolster their self esteem. The teacher/sojourner that is new to the profession may not have such confidence, and thus may have even less to draw upon in order to help with adaptation. This conflict between theory and reality will be returned to at a later point, but for now it is enough to allow that it is another stressor which may apply influence on the sojourner during their time as an educator working in a First Nations community.

Even putting the notion of what is at stake in First Nations education aside for a moment, it may be argued that there is not much, thus far, that sets this brand of culture shock apart from the garden variety. Others who travel to teach are certainly apt to find themselves in situations where the weather is different or where they are able to get on-line to read longingly about the latest Queen Street restaurant. Indeed, one could easily see how even a basic preparatory perusal of information about the community one is traveling to could at least make one aware of some of these potential pitfalls. As well, some could be avoided altogether; if one chose to not travel to a fly-in community, for example. However, it is my contention that there are other, more insidious factors that are at work in First Nations education that may completely derail the sojourners efforts to adapt culturally to working among Canada's Aboriginal peoples. What makes these cross cultural incidences so insidious is that they are often only going to be encountered when one is attempting to implement some of the strategies which are suggested to help in adaptation. The first one which we will discuss centers on the suggestion that one way in which to adapt is to learn the language.

Language

Now, as we have read, one of the suggestions put forth as a possible way in which to lighten the burden of culture shock is to learn the language (Bunz, 1997, Hachey, 1998). Although seemingly a logical first step in working in any culture where the language may be different than one's own, accessing this language may prove difficult. If the community does not have a specific program in place for sojourners or trained language teachers available, then the responsibility for learning the language falls squarely on the shoulders of the sojourner. They are often left to their own devices on this, perhaps getting what instruction they can from their students or a fellow staff member. This haphazard method may work for some but it is doubtful that such methodologies are going to achieve wide success, as the benefits of such an undertaking may not be as apparent to the sojourner as one might think. First, there is the notion of motivation. Unless one is sold on the benefits of being able to communicate in the host language, one may see little real need to learn how to speak the native tongue. In most cases, the primary language of communication in First Nations communities, especially in matters of education, is English. Although the native language may be spoken by the elders of the community and perhaps even heard in the hallways of the school, the majority of Aboriginal Canadians are able to speak at the very least conversational English. Thus, the sojourner will be able to cope quite nicely on the reservation without knowing the language.

Another key to motivation hearkens back to Bochner and Furham (1990) and their discussion around the reason for the move in the first place. Many educators from the non-Native community are lured to reservations to teach by the promise of full time

employment and high paying positions. Although I would certainly not wish to say that all sojourners travel to Native communities for these reasons, I would say with a fair amount of certitude that there are at least portions that do so. I would also hazard to say that many of these are fully aware that their sojourn will be of a temporary nature. Harper (2000) addresses this very issue when she deals with how the lack of permanency affected a group of twenty non-Native women teachers she interviewed about teaching in the North. She writes:

The teachers interviewed seemed cautious about their position as outsider...To various degrees the teachers were uncomfortable with their status...as an outsider who would eventually leave the community. All the teachers indicated that they were not intending to stay... Most were struggling to find meaningful and positive roles for themselves, knowing as they did-as did the community-that they were transient ... (p.147).

Again, we will return to the notion of the teachers attempting to define their roles in a moment, but for now let us allow that, although such things as duration and motivation may vary, one could be fairly safe in stating that there is a great over riding understanding that the stay in any First Nations community is only temporary for a vast majority of non-Native teachers (Taylor, in Battiste, 1995). Although it might be argued that learning a second language may have inherent intrinsic value, the sojourner may not see the need to spend the time necessary to master a skill that will have little practical use in their career once they inevitably leave the host culture, intrinsic value aside. It must also be recognized that the learning of a language, even if lessons can be obtained within the community, is a very time consuming task which requires a certain amount of energy

and commitment from the sojourner. It is this very energy, however, which the sojourner who is in the hostility stage of culture shock lacks (Taft, 1977, Barna, 1976).

Obviously these same arguments could easily be made into a case by any sojourner in any situation for not learning a host language, but there are several issues that I believe may be unique to some Aboriginal communities in this country. The first that comes to mind is that there are some communities which have several versions of the same language. This is true of the Mi'kmaq, for example, whose language contains an acknowledgement of two separate orthographies, one being the Francis/ Smith version of Mi'kmaq, and the Pacifique Orthography. There remains some debate in the Mi'kmaq community over which version is the correct one to be used when teaching the language to their children, and which one should be used when developing curriculum resources. Even within the communities there may be dissention as to whose version of the spoken or written language is the correct version. I can recall several incidents from my career when the First Nations staff I was working with expressed concern and doubt about something that was produced by another First Nations member of the community. One in particular that stands out was presented to me in the course of a conversation I was having with a peer around language.

Our conversation had been sparked by an incident in the staffroom. I had been listening to some Native staff speaking Mi'kmaw, (as I often tried to do), and had tried to interject when I thought I knew what was being said. I explained to the people present that I had been trying to get one of my friends from the community to teach me some Mi'kmaw, and one of them commented , quite critically, that the person I was learning from could not speak the language properly themselves.

Now, this comment was certainly not indicative of the attitude of the Mi'kmaq I worked with in general, but I was intrigued and brought the incident to the attention of a colleague of mine, a fluent speaker and educator in the community. She explained that there were several families on the reservation who claimed that their way of speaking was the correct way, almost to the exclusion of the others. She then showed me a Mi'kmaw story book which had been produced by a community member for use at the elementary level which, according to her, was filled with errors. On one page in particular, she had highlighted every word which was spelled incorrectly. All that remained un-highlighted on the entire page was the Mi'kmaw word for "and".

Anyone who is familiar with reservation life will certainly not be surprised by the suggestion that there was disagreement amongst several family groups, especially when it is noted that the band had paid for the creation of the story book. Such opportunities to work for the band are highly sought after and can be quite lucrative. My point here, though, is not to criticize band politics, but rather, as stated previously, to offer a consideration of how such incidents could affect someone attempting to deal with culture shock. Remembering that the sojourner who is in the hostility stage is apt to look disparagingly upon the host culture at the best of times, it is an easy leap to conclude that such confusion and dissention among the host culture towards language could serve only to highlight these negative feelings. The sojourner could very well find themselves discouraged by such revelations, and abandon attempts at language learning, as is the tendency for those who are suffering from culture shock, especially if one accepts Guthrie's (1977, 1981 in Furham & Bochner, 1990) conclusions around situational

determinants. Being told that the person I was learning Mi'kmaw from was incompetent did little to further my desire to pursue my lessons.

The development of curriculum materials themselves can also be a point of contention, beyond their validity of representing the true version of the language or who writes them. One must consider the scarcity of such materials when looking into the effect teaching within the First Nations community may have on the sojourner. Certainly one of the major thrusts of modern First Nations educational theory has been around the notion of developing culturally relevant material. The incident of the text book I just described was a perfect example of how such simple solutions are not always as easy as first presented. Consider the following advice from Smith (2001), on how to improve First Nations education:

Aboriginal cultures are primarily oral cultures. Oral cultures need resources such as any other culture, though, to prepare students in the use of their own language...To provide materials in the Aboriginal language and content, it may be necessary to look beyond the present curricula and text production...Materials could be written in [various Native] languages and distributed throughout ...communities...more materials in the Aboriginal languages could be produced (p. 83).

The in-fighting and criticism that sometimes surrounds the preparation of such curriculum could easily leave the sojourner disillusioned about this advice and the place of language at all in the curriculum. There are also times when these very attempts at creating such resources are curtailed by band politics. One such incident happened relatively recently on a reservation where I taught when a center that had been designed

to create First Nations language texts for use in the classroom was closed by the Chief of the reservation who, it was given out, felt that the expense was too great and that the center had simply not produced enough material to warrant keeping it open. One hearkens back to Marx's (1999) warning that the sojourner in the hostility stage may have a tendency to blame host culture colleagues for "everything that is wrong" (p. 27). If one sees the lack of culturally relevant resources as a flaw in the system, as the literature suggests, then it would be an easy leap for the culture shocked sojourner to lay blame on the host culture when witnessing the closing of language centers and dissention about resource creation.

Paupanekis and Westfall (2001) offer a consideration of this and other issues around the teaching of First Nations language. Their claim is that there are several key issues that must be addressed in order for a First Nations language program to be successful. They quote the claim from Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer (1998) that what is "more important than books and other material resources" when developing successful language program are "Native language teachers who are educated in effective language teaching methods" (p. 90). They state that the first condition of a successful program that needs to be met is a consistent writing system. This, as per my example, does not necessarily exist, and because of this, the authors claim that efforts to teach the language are weakened.

At the present time, many individual teachers and users have their own writing systems...the absence of...rules...leads to inconsistency...Writing in the native language using different systems of roman orthography...adds just another burden to the learner. No learner should be required to memorize several

different spellings of the same word. Inconsistency leads to a situation where teachers work by themselves and can't share their materials with anyone else; as well, there is dissatisfaction with their own work. Also, various spellings of a word...create a feeling of cynicism among the learner (Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer, 1998, p. 91).

The authors continue to take issue with Native language programs concerning who is being selected to teach. They criticize the widespread notion that just being a speaker of the language makes one a good teacher. They quote Ahenakew (1987)

...many people seem to have the notion that just because you are a fluent speaker of the language you ought to be able to teach it, too. This idea is simply preposterous; still, it is an assumption that is often made when hiring Indian teachers. I wonder how many school boards would let their English or French courses be taught by someone without years of special training. Fluency, in any language, is just not enough (p.92).

Now, although the authors present this information to support more professional development for Native language teachers, these two ideas support what my experiences were in First Nations community. I have seen examples of what I thought were exemplary language programs, but this dissention is a weakness easily focused upon by the sojourner wrapped up in the throes of culture shock. Remembering that they are attempting desperately to orient themselves and make sense of the new situation in which they find themselves, one can see how this lack of a united approach to teaching language could affect them, especially when so much of the literature points to language retention and revival as fundamentally important to the overall improvement of the state of First

Nations education. Indeed, one of the major thrusts and purposes of Indian control of Indian education was the salvaging and preservation of language (Battiste, 1995). Goulet (2001) cites Deyhle and Swisher who "pointed to research conducted on cultural differences [where] it was shown that students who were fluent in their own language or who had a strong Aboriginal cultural identity did better in schools than those who did not" (p. 71). Yet even whether to teach the language at all has been a spot of some controversy. Some First Nations parents do not wish to teach their children the language, and make a conscientious decision not to do so, as they see the ability to speak a native language as a hindrance to advancement. This controversy is echoed by Smith (2001).

Fundamental to the culture is the language, and therefore, many

Aboriginal groups are revitalizing languages that have been partially lost.

This process is not easy, as there are few people prepared in the techniques of teaching Aboriginal languages...Some aboriginal communities are split on the teaching of Aboriginal languages, as English is the path to higher education (pp. 81-82).

So despite what the literature says, the sojourner may find that they are unable to reconcile what they have read about the wish of First Nations people to revitalize the language and the reality of what they face on the reservation. The sojourner who is in the grips of culture shock and attempts to turn to the language in order to find some way of adapting to their new situation, may find themselves embroiled in a controversy that can, at times, make little sense to the outsider. Lack of instructors, disagreements about orthographies, cynicism among students and parents about the value of the language, can

all combine to lead the sojourner to the conclusion, erroneous as it may be, that there is not much to be gained from learning the language at all.

It must be remembered that we are talking here about a sojourner who is emotionally drained and culturally bone-weary. I am not suggesting for a moment that this will be the experience of every non-Native who decides to take a position as a teacher on a reservation, or even that my experiences reflect any sort of nation wide norm. What I am suggesting, however, is that when thinking about the effect of teaching in First Nations communities on non-Aboriginal teachers, this type of complex relationship must be taken into consideration as it can become a dangerous downward spiral. If the educator is unfamiliar with the effects of culture shock, they may find themselves becoming quite critical of the host culture for this seemingly counter productive approach to language. The sojourner may end up concluding that since there is no united front amongst the people around language acquisition, then perhaps learning the language may not be as important as suggested by the literature. This negativity leads, naturally, to further withdrawal from the host culture and a reduction in the probability of adapting. As if this were not enough to discourage the process, the sojourner may find her or him self criticized for not learning the language, even if the community offers no formal training. Unable or unwilling to articulate the reasons for not doing so, the sojourner may withdraw even further from the process. Again, we must remind ourselves that this will certainly not be everyone's experience. However, I think that when one begins to peel back the complexities of the issues, one can see how they may serve to exacerbate the effects of culture shock.

If this difficulty, this complexity of issue were only attributed to the learning of the language, then one might find it hard not to simply expect the sojourner to work through these issues which are by no means insurmountable. It is certainly possible to learn a First Nations language without getting caught up in the downward spiral of questioning and blame. Even in their weakened cultural state, it could be argued that a bit of fortitude should allow the educator to push past this problem and at least learn something of the language, which I would say most do, picking up basic commands to help with classroom management, perhaps even a greeting or two. This type of language learning is more about survival than anything else, and how much such a limited command of the host language helps to deal with culture shock is beyond the scope of this piece, although, as previously pointed out in this paper, Lysgaard concluded that limited language use could be attached to an increase in symptoms. However, it is not just within the realm of language where there are inconsistencies in theories that can confuse the already struggling cultural refugee. The issue of culture itself is often problematic. Again, returning to the suggested methodologies of dealing with culture shock, authors have suggested that learning about the host culture before embarkation is a way of lessening the negative effects of the process. However, when one turns a critical eye to the literature, one finds, not surprisingly, that it is almost impossible to pin down any culture to a list of assigned attributes. This problem is amplified in First Nations communities, however, because of the cultural genocide all have endured, the emergence of pan-Indianism in the popular literature, and the abundance of literature that suggests successful First Nations programs require the inclusion of culture within the classroom.

Culture

The suggestion that the key to successful Aboriginal education lies in incorporating more of the culture within the curriculum is probably one of the most touted sentiments in the field. In his consideration of the meaning of Aboriginal education, Hampton (in Battiste, 1995) offers the following view of "Traditional Indian Education".

Prior to the influx of Europeans, each Indian nation had its own forms of education. Generally these traditional Indian forms can be characterized as oral histories, teaching stories, ceremonies, apprenticeships, learning games, formal instruction, tutoring and tagalong teaching (Buffalohead 1976)...All traditional Native methods occurred within cultural settings that were characterized by subsistence economies, in-context learning, personal and kinship relations between teachers and students, and ample opportunities for students to observe adult role models who exemplified the knowledge, skills and values being taught (p. 8).

In the same piece, Hampton offers up the idea of what he call "Indian Education Sui Generis", or Indian education as a thing of its own, something that uses "...models of education structured on Indian cultures. The creation of Native education involves the development of Native structures for education as well as Native content and Native personnel "(in Battiste, p. 10).

Hampton is a long way from alone in echoing the sentiment that there is a correct way to teach First Nations peoples and that this correct way involves including cultural structure and content in the classroom. Robert Leavitt (in Battiste, 1995), writes about a

group of Native and non-Native teachers who, while taking a class on the cultural implications of teaching language in First nations communities, discovered "...how traditional Native education relies upon ways of knowing and interacting...which are not normally exploited in formal school...The teachers saw...that these 'ways' are the basis of culturally appropriate education..."(p. 125). In the same piece, Leavitt explains how

Non-Native teachers...discovered how much Native languages, value systems, and traditional educational practices contrasted with their own. They realized that they would have to learn about the first language and culture of any child they taught - and would have to take account of these in their teachings (p. 126).

He goes on to offer that the culture of the student contains four aspects. First, there is the Material Culture, which he claims is "ordinarily the sum total of 'Native content' found in schools". This consists of the "objects and skills pertinent to a people's ecology and economy". Next is Social Culture, which is how the students interact within their community, followed by Cognitive Culture, which considers such things as the world view and "spiritual understanding" of the student. Finally there is Linguistic Culture, which is the role of language within the community (Leavitt, in Battiste, 1995, p. 126). In order to fairly address all these, Leavitt suggests that an educator must base education in native culture rather than simply focusing on the material aspect. He criticizes education and curriculum in general for not paying enough attention to this multiplicity, and advises that educators can use all these aspects in their class room if they modify their methodologies (p. 127). A further example of this approach to improving Aboriginal education can be found in Goulet (2001):

Effective teachers bring the language and culture of their Aboriginal students into the classroom to enhance learning (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). They learn about the community (Noordhoff & Kleinfeld, 1993), are aware of cultural differences (Deyhle & Swisher), and acquaint themselves with culturally appropriate methodologies and resource materials (FarrellRacette, Goulet, Pelletier, & Shmon, 1996). Teachers recognize that culture is dynamic and changing, so they incorporate both traditional and contemporary culture in the curriculum (Farrell-Racette et al.; Lipka et al.; Miller Cleary & Peacock, 1998; Pewewardy, 1999) (p.71).

Taken on the surface, these suggestions seem rather straight forward once again. If a teacher is hoping to be successful in a First Nations setting, they need only ground their education in the culture of their students. As a sojourner/ teacher, one would assume that this will be an effective way of coping when entering into the host culture and one would certainly not be remiss in attempting to immediately establish some way of bringing culture into the classroom. There are again, however, some particular pitfalls which lurk beneath the cultural surface of First Nations education, waiting to catch the unwary wanderer as they attempt to establish a professional as well as cultural orientation in their new community. The first of these pitfalls is the fairly recent phenomenon of pan-Indianism.

Pan-Indianism is basically the idea that there is one way to be First Nations. What has happened in many instances is that as First Nations cultures have combined and interacted, there have been a few ideas that have come to be accepted as universal beliefs

for all First Nations peoples. This has been cited by some authors as a very large threat to the integrity of the original cultures.

Pan-Indianism refers to the increasing influence of some First Nations cultures as various cultures meet and interact in new environments. In itself, it is a site of conflict...R. Carlos Nakai...opposes Pan-Indianism as destructive and confusing to original cultures:

'We need to realize that we don't think homogeneously either...The philosophy from a band or a family is from individuals thinking together, comparing notes with each other. The onslaught now, with the New Age idea of Indians, is that all Native people are supposed to think one way about one thing or another...We don't work that way, we're not products of an externalized system of theosophy' (1989, 38) (Haig Brown, in Battiste, 1995, 276).

Powwows are offered up as an example of this confusion, with a suggestion that the way we understand these events today is vastly different than their original intent. Although there are some who believe that pan-Indianism has actually benefited the Native population (Haig-Brown, 1995), the dangers of applying one set of cultural attributes to a group of people who are vastly different are quite obvious, especially when one is taking these attributes as truths to hang one's cultural adaptation hat on. This recalls Bochner and Furnham's (1990) notion that looking for some universal rule in any cross cultural situation is pointless. Yet, this is exactly what the literature often suggests, that by applying uniquely Native ideologies to a classroom, a teacher will become more effective. Yet if these common ideologies are nothing more than constructs, there is no

way for a teacher/sojourner to know if what they are calling culturally relevant practice is actually culturally relevant to the people whom they are teaching.

There is an even greater risk here in that if the sojourner has seized onto a set of beliefs that are not legitimate for the community they are working in, they may end up trying to teach young Aboriginal children how to be Aboriginal. If a strong cultural foundation does not exist in the community, and if the pan-Indianism is what the sojourners are teaching in school, then there is a real possibility the system will be doing more damage to an already near extinct culture.

Consider another example from my own past. I was working in a Northern Cree community and struggling with the lack of culturally relevant material that was available for my students. I was working with a group of educationally and behaviourally challenged youth, most of whom were reading at a very low level. At a loss for material that was age appropriate and culturally relevant, I approached the school board and asked for funding to create my own resource. During the summer of 1996, I worked on a two book series which I entitled *Tansi: A Culturally relevant reading improvement program for First Nations Students*. I set out to create a reader/ workbook that would improve vocabulary and reading skills for my students and would include a list of spelling words for each unit. I organized these words into families, using such divisions as short and long vowel sounds and diagraphs and blends as my criteria.

I struggled for quite a long time before taking on the project with the dilemma of what types of stories I was going to write to accompany the lessons. I knew I wanted to use Cree legends in order to follow what I had read was best practice for educating First Nations students, that is, infusing the culture into the curriculum, but I knew that if I used

such stories, I might well be forced to change them in order to have them include the words from the vocabulary lists which I had generated. Recognizing that legends often contain the moral teachings of a society, I was in a real quandary. If I changed these stories, I ran the risk that my changed versions would become truths for the children I was teaching. They might very well grow up only having read my versions, and perhaps even pass those stories on to their own children as truths. I would thus be inserting myself into the Cree oral tradition and affecting some level of change.

Feeling that the Cree oral tradition had suffered enough at the hands of well meaning white educators, I decided to create my own legends, using the stories I had read as a guide. I wrote an impassioned introduction to *Tansi* explaining my dilemma and asking that any educator using the text explain to the students that the stories were not passed down Cree legends. Ultimately, however, in attempting what I had read was best practice I ran into a situation for which none of the literature had proposed a solution.

Now, although I felt the introduction addressed the problem of the ownership of history to some extent, it did not address the perhaps even larger issue of cultural orientation. Because I am not First Nations, there is no way that my writing could ever hope to accurately reflect the Cree culture. The way the characters I created interacted, spoke and made decisions was ultimately decided by their non- Native creator. Despite my best efforts to make them "sound Cree" I now recognize, almost fifteen years later, that I was in no way capable of detaching myself enough from my own culture, nor did I know enough about the Cree culture of the time, to make the characters in my stories authentically reflect my students' attitudes and beliefs. What I was doing was writing stories based on some of the pan-Indian beliefs that I had internalized over the years, and

then I used those beliefs, filtered through my own culture, to determine the actions of my characters. This dilemma of basing teaching on your own culture in a cross cultural situation is recognized by Stairs (in Battiste, 1995)

Native education recognizes teachers as the immediate agents of contact - and therefore of conflict or reconciliation - between diverse cultural learning models. Teachers bring with them not only their fund of knowledge but also their culturally patterned ways of organizing and passing on that knowledge (p. 146).

Thus, despite my best efforts, I may have ended up perpetuating the pan-Indian truths that I had come to accept as universals. I was showing my students how an Indian is supposed to act. This text was fueled by the fire of youth and the necessity of the situation, and as mis-guided as it may seem now, it was created with the greater good of my students in mind. However, the point here again is the sojourner may indeed try with great tenacity to follow best practice only to realize that they are perpetuating the very thing they set out to overcome. This is exactly what Marx (1999) speaks about when addressing the idea of the frustrated sojourner working even harder to compensate for a system they see as flawed, and how this may have lead into such things as "decreased self confidence" (Marx, 1999) and feelings of inadequacy and self doubt (Bunz, 1997).

Consider another incident from my past. A school I was working at had decided that they were going to develop a school logo, and it was put to the staff, the students and the community to generate ideas. I volunteered to sit on the committee which was to decide on the design for this, and put forth the notion of the medicine wheel. This was a symbol which I had read was widely accepted and vital for understanding the workings of

the First Nations community. Poonwassie and Charter (in Caillou and Binda, 2001) offer one example of the universality with which medicine wheels are accepted.

Holistic Aboriginal healing practices emerge from a philosophical worldview shared by many indigenous people...In extracting aspects of traditional and cultural practices relevant to Aboriginal healing approaches, an understanding of the medicine wheel paradigm is important...The Medicine Wheel approach is a specific culturally relevant model which includes individuals, families, communities and connections to the universe. As such, it provides Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal helpers, healers and counselors with principles and aspects they can use in bridging Aboriginal and Western worldviews and approaches to healing (p.130).

I did some research and made a presentation to the committee members about how the medicine wheel worked, and why it would be a good choice for a school crest, but much to my surprise, no one on the committee had any idea about the medicine wheel or how it worked. Included on the committee were two First Nations teachers. When they questioned the elders of the community, they reported back that the elders had heard something about a tipi being used as a symbol, but not a medicine wheel. I would be very interested to return to that community today and find out if the medicine wheel is any more well known, but the point here is that by attempting to bring culture in the community, by attempting to evoke a symbol which I knew something about and thought was universally, authentically Aboriginal, I may have inadvertently caused the school to adopt a symbol which was not inherent to the community, and may, indeed, have supplanted something that was. According to Taylor (in Battiste, 1995) my mistake was

not educating myself enough about the specific community into which I was traveling. However, I doubt any amount of pre-service preparation could prepare the sojourner for all the contingencies in which they may find themselves.

There are other issues with this simplistic notion that all an educator need do is to bring the culture into the classroom. One is availability of such content. Often there simply is no culturally relevant material available, which was true in the case of *Tansi!*, or if there is, it is used by certain grades and grade levels specifically. Curriculum can get old for First Nations students just as easily as it can for Non-Natives, and it has been my experience that there is often a clamour for new First Nations resources when they arrive at the school. Thankfully, this is becoming less and less an issue in the arts as more First Nations authors are published, but accessibility to these resources may be limited by funding concerns. So, although it might be a good idea to try to incorporate culture into the classroom by using culturally relevant curriculum resources, scarcity can breed competition and repetition.

One final obstacle which may throw itself into the path of the teacher who attempts to bring culturally relevant methodologies into the classroom is that it may very well be an issue for the community itself in that they may not want "traditional" First Nations education preached.

In one community school, discussion of anything to do with Native culture was known by everyone to be unacceptable...Discussions of the sweat lodge or medicine wheel or sweet grass did not occur in that school. In fact, the school was once closed down because of a confrontation between traditional and Christian people on the reserve (Taylor, 1995, p. 237).

Even in communities where the traditional practices are valued, there may be a reluctance to accept the risk of having these practices appropriated by a system that reflects, for the greatest part at least, the values of a colonialistic society.

To what extent is it possible, and desirable, for Native educators to synthesize traditional and formal teaching? Many Native elders fear that traditional skills and approaches to knowledge will be trivialized or perverted by formal educators, that the informal teaching role of the community will be destroyed, and that the overriding educational goal of social cohesion will be abandoned...parents also fear that children taught Native ways in school will not acquire mainstream ways and so will not be able to cope in either world. Linguists...worry that the Native languages will become assimilated through formal teaching or lost in universal bilingualism. Educators and social-scientists worry about the panorama of culture-contact problems (Stairs, in Battiste, 1995, 149).

Of worthy note in this quotation is that the concern expressed here is that the Native teacher in the school system runs the risk of harming traditional practice. The non-Native teacher bringing traditional methods adds another layer of potentially damaging complexity.

The sojourner may thus become yet again ensnared in a tremendously vicious cycle. They may want to learn the language and find that they are unable to do so. They may wish to infuse culture into the curriculum, and find they are unable to do so. This exacerbates the effects of culture shock, and one might suggest, begins to have a negative effect on the sojourner's overall state of mind. In such a situation, feelings of helplessness are to be expected, and, as educators are prone to wanting to help, they may begin to feel

as if they are to blame. If they are following best practice as per the literature, attempting to orient themselves professionally as well as culturally, and still not succeeding, then they are likely to focus on themselves as the root cause, at least initially. This will undoubtedly affect their professional esteem, if not their self esteem, and leave them more and more vulnerable to the negative effects of culture shock. If this pattern remains unaltered, then the literature around culture shock would seem to suggest that there is little hope for adaptation, and little doubt that these feelings will eventually be transferred outwards onto the host culture.

There are still other examples where what is professed by the literature as universal truths may hinder the process of adaptation if the sojourner has invested too heavily in them. One of these is the romanticism that exists in the field of First Nations education, a nobility that is associated with those who work in the field and the ideals that they uphold.

Romanticism

There is certainly no lack of authors who profess to have the solution to what makes a good solid First Nations education program. These ideals, however, are often a concern for the sojourner if they arrive in a community that may not reflect these notions. Consider what is often written about the natural connection between the First Nations people of this country and the environment. The "Mother Earth Syndrome" would have us believe in another universal truth ,that somehow all the First Nations people of this country have an inherent bond with nature. This ideal is often cited in the literature as something which should be reflected in the education system, that programs should be developed to recognize this traditional symbiosis. Archibald (in Battiste, 1995), although

taking issue with the romanticized notion of traditional education, states that one of the key facets of such an education system is that it must encompass "traditional patterns of teaching" which includes "respect for nature" (p. 303). Poonwassie and Charter (in Binda and Caillou, 2001) speak of how a traditional Aboriginal model would need to be based in a recognition of "Aboriginal peoples' intimate relationship with the earth and all living things" (p. 129). Furthermore, Goulet, Dressyman Lavallee & McLeod (in Caillou and Binda, 2001) state:

First Nations philosophy of education is built on the foundation of Aboriginal spirituality...Cree...Beliefs are a part of the cultural awareness lessons taught to children. The traditional Cree believe that rocks, trees, wind, sky animals, earth, all things of nature are an extension of the Great Spirit. The life giving qualities of plants and trees are sustained by Mother Earth. All creatures depend on her gifts for food and shelter. The symbol of the circle helps to communicate the meaning of life. The circle teaches that all things in the universe are connected to and depend on all other things.

The ancient organizational system of the Medicine Wheel is a circle symbol used to convey the diverse ways of knowing and learning from a First Nations perspective (p.139).

Having already discussed my Medicine Wheel experience, I will leave the reader to draw what conclusion they will about its inclusion here, adding only that I was working among the Cree when I ran into the situation described in the previous section. However, this does help make my point about the ideals of Mother Earth Syndrome. If a sojourner buys into this philosophy too heavily, they may expect that this is the reality of all

reservations, that all Cree people show this respect and that if they don't then they should, or they are not representing the true First Nations beliefs. This ideal may be hard to reconcile against what one sees on the reservations. It was often commented that the reserve I was working on in the mid 90's was most beautiful in the winter when the snow covered the garbage that was often left where it had been strewn about by dogs. Dirty diapers were so commonly discarded on the ground that they were jokingly referred to as the community's "landmines". Dogs themselves could potentially be a source of chagrin to the idealist as well. The same reservation had a series of "dog days" in the winter when the band hired individuals to hunt any stray dogs that were in the community with shot guns. Although an obvious necessity due to overpopulation and packing, the associative images of these days and urban legends that circulated in the community of pets being shot while tied in yards was hard to reconcile with the romanticism of some authors. It was certainly not uncommon for the non-Native teachers to adopt some of the stray dogs from the community, and indeed, the rescuing my own dog from a group of elementary age students who were kicking her about much like one would a soccer ball, was a cross cultural encounter that would give me pause for some years to come. I distinctly remember the incident, and when I angrily asked the children to stop, they seemed surprised. When I told them that they should not be treating an animal like this, one of them asked me "Why?" It was an honest question, and I remember being without an answer. This was certainly a case of expectations created by the literature not being reflected in the reality of the situation.

A similar cross cultural encounter is discussed in Harper (2000), who quotes one teacher who faced this dilemma:

I think they [the community] could use some help with environmental issues around here...but then I don't want to feel like the white person coming in and saving them...Maybe if I can get into a classroom where I'm teaching biology...Explain to them why you don't throw raw sewage into your river (p. 147).

This teacher found herself in the unenviable position of coming up against a situation where her instinct was to intervene, but where she was unsure of what her role should be as far as that intervention. This recalls the dilemma I faced in writing *Tansi!*, and reaffirms the cautionary note with which such universals as this almost mystic connection with Mother Earth must be approached. There certainly seems to be an overriding theme in Native spirituality that this connection does exist, yet I must again state that I am not here to argue that point. My concern remains the sojourner, and the effect that finding out such realities do not exist universally will have on their overall emotional state. If a sojourner has accepted that which much of the literature states as true, that is that the traditional, proper First Nations person respects the environment and the plants and animals in it, then how can they help but be disappointed in the host culture when they are faced with realities like people shooting dogs as a means of control, and reservations dumping raw sewage into a waterway? They are left to make sense out of this duality, and may very well end up again projecting their confusion, anger and hostility towards the event onto the host culture, and feel negatively about the host community because it does not live up to the ideal. It almost seems as if the literature is procreating a myth about the First Nations community in this country; the "Noble Savage" image that one often associates more with Hollywood than with education.

Indian Control of Indian Education

This "falling short of the ideal" has many layers of complexity, not the least of which is the notion that somehow all the problems facing First Nations communities today will be solved by Indian Control of Indian Education. That Native control of Native education is a positive and helpful thing for First Nations education is another of the fundamental truths upon which the whole system stands. Since the National Indian Brotherhood's famous red paper of 1972, this ideology has remained a driving force behind the entire First Nations education movement. Indeed, there is no doubt in my mind that the First Nations people of this country must continue to fight for control of education, and that it is only within this control that true progress can be made. However, it is dangerous to assume that simply passing control of schools over to the respective bands and hiring more First Nations teachers in and of itself is going to miraculously improve the state of education. Unfortunately, this is often exactly what much of the literature suggests.

I turn first to Hampton, (in Battiste, 1995) and his suggestion that there are certain standards which must be met in order for true Indian education to exist. The first he cites is spirituality, at the center of which "is respect for the spiritual relationship between all things" (p. 19). His second standard is service. He writes,

The second standard of Indian education is *service*. Education is to serve the people. Its purpose is not individual advancement or status. As Levine and White point out, Western society and education too often promote and glorify individual options for achievement...It is no light matter for an Indian graduate student to articulate a communal purpose in his or her education. Virtually all these students

fulfill that purpose, working with and for Indian people. Today's educated Indian is a triumph of the Indian people over a school system that in most senses is the enemy (Walcott 1987) (p. 21).

Ignoring the notion of the school systems as enemy for a moment, let us focus momentarily on these two concepts of First Nations education, Spirituality and Service. This would seem to suggest that in order to be effective, quality teachers, Aboriginal people themselves must be spiritual and must be in their positions for the greater good of their community. Stairs echoes this sentiment.

Native educators additionally function as brokers within their own communities, seeking to find the best balance between the divergent goals of education for economic advancement and education for cultural maintenance...In traditional communities, the teacher is often chosen by the population and feels her or his job to be a 'calling' comparable to that of a priest...non-Native teachers identify primarily with the formal education system and strive to bring the community into the school, while Native teachers identify with their communities and strive to make the school a significant part of the students' community life (in Battiste, 1995, p. 147).

This is again a case of sojourner beware. If one buys into this notion, then one forms an ideal of the First Nations educator who is actively involved in spirituality and who is extremely dedicated to using education to improve the lot of their people. This type of glorification may set the sojourner's hopes too high and when they encounter a First Nations education system where the teachers are just "regular folk" then they are again primed for the onset of culture shock. There is also the further danger that they will

encounter a First Nations educator who took a position because it was a job on the reservation that paid well and because of the holidays.

This is no different than the non-native school system in that there are exceptionally dedicated and professional teachers, those who have moments of excellence but are simply effective for the majority of the students they see, and the small minority who perhaps should have chosen another career. What is different, however, is that the excellence or mediocrity of one educator is seldom used in non- Native education as a description of all educators. Attaching these labels based on race is even less often done. Yet when one reads the literature, there is a suggested nobility that surrounds the First Nations educator that automatically makes them dedicated and effective teachers. One hearkens back to the suggestion that it is misleading to assume just because one speaks the language one should be permitted to teach it. A First Nations person who has little use for spirituality may be an excellent teacher, and one who is traditional in their beliefs may be ineffective.

I feel I must again clarify my point here so that my words do not get taken out of context. I am not suggesting that First Nations schools should not be completely filled with Aboriginal educators; I actually firmly believe the opposite is true. However, as this is still not the case in the majority of First Nations schools, it is not helpful for the sojourner to enter into a teaching position with a skewed notion either way about the effectiveness of the Aboriginal staff they may find themselves working with. I have worked with some First Nations professionals who can only be described as exemplary, and I have worked with those who were biding their time until a position opened

elsewhere on the reserve. When expecting the former but encountering the latter, cultural adaptation can only be hindered.

This problem of over generalized ideals does not just apply to the educators; the idea of Indian Control itself is an oft lauded goal, but, unfortunately, the associative improvement in the field of First Nations education has not necessarily been realized. Binda (2001) refers to this very issue.

Band and Tribal Council operated schools are rather complex affairs... Various models...are currently in existence... Whatever model is developed, the system operates at the dictates of Chief and Council and owes responsibility to the Chief, firstly...System failure and breakdown largely due to continuing discursive power control, inadequate experience with administration and sometimes personal interest are often encountered. Some band schools are controlled directly by the Band Council, with the Chief exercising almost despotic power with a propensity for poor management, a frequently heard complaint...Investigations by this author in Manitoba, and other provinces indicate that many parents ... have not developed positive feelings about the manner in which local control is operating, as well as the effects of local control... the data reveal low to medium levels of satisfaction. What appears to be happening in these communities is that those who are in control of the education system have not significantly changed the method of doing business in accordance with what was expected. Rather, officials appear to be carrying on as their predecessors, the federal government. Despotic behaviour by band officials is a frequently heard complaint by many band members across Canada (pp. 47-50).

Many authors will argue that the failure of this system is due to the fact that the system itself is set up to mirror colonial values and traditions, not those of the First Nations, but this lack of trust that sometimes exists within the community for the effectiveness of local control may serve to undermine the entire process in the eyes of the sojourner. Binda (2001) continues to discuss how the way in which education develops may not be quite as straightforward as supposed even with ICIE.

Other factors internal to the community may also influence how the education system develops. In Long Plain...the Chief and Council appoint [school board members] on the basis of kinship...Internal bickering and infighting at the community level have had negative effects on schooling and on the development of an effective education system. Distrust among the communities has also been a negative factor. In Manitoba, not all Bands have signed the *Education Framework Agreement*, and in Nova Scotia, the situation is the same with the...*Mi'kmaq Education Agreement*. These differences and disagreements within and between communities hinder the development of effective education systems, much to the detriment of the students, who have to face an increasingly tenuous future in a globalized environment (pp. 52-53).

One need only look to the fact that when there are two options available for education, some parents on reservations choose to send their children to a non-Native institution rather than the schools that are on-reserve, as an example of the lack of faith some First Nations people have in locally controlled institutions. A sojourner who has read the literature and bought into the notion that ICIE is a fix-all solution may again find themselves projecting their confusion unto the host culture, and using the lack of

cohesion to fuel any notions formed during the hostility stage. This can be especially true when one is working on a reservation where the good of the community members, and particularly the students, is superseded by corruption and mismanagement at council level. Although the literature may suggest that the most successful models of schools come from reservation where "chiefs and councils rank the education of their children as top priority" (MacKay & Myles in Battiste, 1995, p. 172), the reality of some reservations is that the system of money management leads to questions around the motives of those in charge. Again, the sojourner who sees the mismanagement of reservation funds may be more prone to applying blame to the entire culture as opposed to simply the person in charge at the time. This recalls Storti's (1989) notion of how the sojourner may be unable to distinguish between traits that are personality driven versus those that are culturally driven until true adaptation has taken place. For a more complete, although somewhat inflammatory consideration of the extent of these trends see Flanagan, 2000.

The mention here of the system reflecting the ideals of colonialism leads us further into our consideration of the ways in which the sojourner/teacher of First Nations students may be particularly susceptible to culture shock. If we allow that schools may embody colonialism for many First Nations people, and if we allow that teachers are the embodiment of schools, then it may follow that the teachers themselves may be seen as perpetuating the values of colonialism. Therefore, it may very well end up that the teacher may become viewed as the enemy by the very community he or she is "trying to help".

This idea may be the hardest of all that we have discussed so far on the teacher/sojourner. Now, although there may indeed be teacher/sojourners who throw themselves

into First Nations education for the experience and the paycheck, I would like to think that this may be the reason for taking the position, but not teaching itself. Indeed, it is true of most of the reservations in Nova Scotia that they actually pay less than the provincial standard. Perhaps, after the onset of culture shock and several failed attempts at cultural adaptation some teachers on some reservations may appear to be "here for the money", but I believe with all my heart that teachers teach because of an innate personality trait that causes us to want to help, to be the catalyst that causes the light to go on in the eyes of our students. Many times, it is that very notion that sustains us, the idea that we are making a positive difference in the lives of those we teach.

Many, perhaps most, non-Native teachers accept teaching positions on reserves with the intention of completing a couple of years before landing the job they really want. Often non-Native teachers envision their time at a reserve school as an 'interesting, learning experience'...believe that if they can survive this experience, they can survive anything. They hope that these...years will equip them to gain employment...where they plan to settle permanently...enable them to pay off a student loan or accumulate the down payment for a house...an adventure. The above scenarios have one preconceived notion in common- the reserve school is a temporary station to achieve or begin to achieve personal goals. Of course, this is not as selfish as it sounds. As teachers fresh to the profession, these non-Native people may feel strongly committed to their pupils and will quite often invest a lot of themselves in their work (Taylor in Battiste, 1995, p. 225).

Although temporary positions may be sought for financial gain and experience, the effort put forth in teaching is driven by a deeper ideal. It may be this very ideal which, ultimately, may prove fatal to our attempts to cross the cultural divide between ourselves and the First Nations communities we serve.

Teacher as enemy

That Eurocentric models have failed the First Nations people of this country seems to reflect itself in the high drop out rates that exist in First Nations schools. The fact that ICIE has done little to improve this trend points to a larger problem within the very system itself.

For the vast majority of Indian students, far from being an opportunity, education is a critical filter indeed, filtering out hope and self esteem. The native student who sees the 'teacher as enemy' (Walcott 1987) may have the more realistic and , in some ways, more hopeful view than the student who fails to see beyond the apparently benign purposes of schooling. The failure of the non-Native education of natives can be read as the success of Native resistance to cultural, spiritual and psychological genocide. For whatever reason, whoever is to blame, Indian education defined as non-Indian education of Indians has a long and conclusive history of failure (Hampton, in Battiste, 1995, p.7).

This idea that the system itself is so damaging to the First Nations psyche that the act of dropping out is seen as an openly defiant act against the trends of colonization is also discussed in Goulet:

Social struggles are enacted in classroom practice where Aboriginal students can encounter an ethnocentric curriculum, authoritative relationships, racist attitudes,

and prejudicial beliefs about their inferiority or deficits. Conditions such as these are intolerable for Aboriginal children, who are made to feel stupid when they cannot learn under these circumstances and fail in school. Some resist the oppression and so do not participate and drop out of school (Goulet, 2001, p. 68).

This particular read on students dropping out of school is of some value in the discussion of the effect teaching has on the sojourner. The negative influences that are encountered by the Aboriginal student in the list above are presumably enacted by, or at the very least not resisted by, the teacher. Thus the teacher/ sojourner embodies the forces of oppression that require resisting. The teachers may indeed view themselves as being in the community to help, but the extent to which the community accepts that based on how that "help" has manifested itself over the history of First Nations education remains a point of question.

This very vision that the non-native educators may hold of themselves is another area of contention and difficulty. Although the educator may indeed believe that they are out to "fix" what is "wrong" with the system, they may well find themselves criticized for the very action they see as so magnanimous.

What then shall we do to protect ourselves from those millions of whites, high and low, who believe that all others are deluded and that they know what is best for the Indian? I have heard countless white educators passionately, even desperately; argue for their vision of Native education. Their desperation to save the Indian on white terms makes me believe that it is their own world view that the existence of Indians threatens. We are victims of the best intentions of the white educators (Hampton, in Battiste, 1995, p. 34).

Hampton goes on to say that every white educator who says 'These people have to learn what we have to teach' is guilty of nothing less than cultural genocide (in Battiste, p. 35). Hampton concludes his discussion by stating that the system of what he calls "Western education" is implicitly hostile to the culture of the First Nations communities that it serves, and how it inevitably transmits to the students a set of values and beliefs to the students that are not their own. He also claims that this hostility manifests itself in structures within the school that seem unavoidable to white educators and which, ultimately "undermine the Native child's culture."

These are obviously harsh words for the sojourner to hear used in describing their role in the community they may envision themselves serving, especially when there is such a lack of alternate models for education for the teacher to tap into. Although the teacher may wish to not be part of the problem, their efforts to do so may lead them directly into some of the traps and pitfalls already discussed around bringing culture and language into the classroom. Thus, the cycle of culture shock continues. The sojourner attempting to pursue what he sees as good practice finds himself accused of perpetuating cultural genocide against a people he is attempting to serve, within a system that seems to be the only acceptable option.

Hampton relies heavily on Walcott (1987) for his consideration of teacher as the enemy, who suggests that teachers must recognize themselves as the enemy in order to understand their failures with the students. Walcott uses the analogy of schools being similar to prisoner of war camps where the instructors are there to recruit new members into a society by "encouraging prisoners to defect" (p. 420). Although perhaps sound advice, it can only be wondered what effect this knowledge may have on the teacher/

sojourner. Teaching is a difficult enough job as it is, but after being told that all you have ever learned about education is wrong and damaging to the students whom you are teaching, and to have few viable alternatives presented, there seems little wonder that educators often abandon First Nations positions after only a brief time.

A further note from Hampton. He writes:

I believe that Indian children struggle against a pathological complex endemic to North American society. The pathology is made up of the largely unconscious process of: (1) a perverse ignorance of the facts of racism and oppression; (2) delusions of superiority, motivated by fears of inadequacy; (3) a vicious spiral of self justifying action, as the blame is shifted to the victims who must be 'helped' that is, controlled for their own good; and (4) denial that the oppressor profits from the oppression materially, as well as by casting themselves as superior, powerful and altruistic persons (in Battiste, 1995, pp. 34-35).

This damning list of ignorance, delusion, self-justification and denial can only serve to further damage the already low self-image of the culture shocked educator. If this is the manner in which the community is viewing them, or even the way they feel the community is viewing them, there is little wonder that they feel the need to withdraw. Much of what Hampton writes is directed at the system itself, yet it must be taken into consideration when thinking about the sojourner as representing this system.

The literature will suggest that in order to help deflect some of the issues of culture shock it is important to involve oneself in the community (Hachey, 1998), but to what extent can the sojourner who is viewed as the enemy really expect to be accepted by the community? Harper (2000) offers a consideration of this, stating that the teachers she

interviewed were very cautious of their role as an outsider, and aware of the transient nature of the position. One can certainly see how in a cross cultural situation, neither the sojourner nor the host may be overly committed to developing lasting, meaningful relationships with each other if both parties are aware of the sojourners' imminent departure. The sojourner may attempt to make such an effort, but may find the people of the host culture reluctant to reciprocate, which could lead to the sojourner concluding that the host culture is inherently unfriendly (Bergman et al., 1969). This is not surprising and in no way reflects poorly on the Aboriginal society; one can hardly blame a member of the host community for not wanting to take yet another well meaning southerner under their wing and show them the community ropes. Taylor (2001) also offers a fascinating view of this conflict. He expresses concern that there is almost no support evident for a non-Native teacher who is trying to orient themselves to a new position in a Native school, and how difficulty in defining role leads inevitably into the ex-pat society. He claims that the issue is not around the commitment of the educator, pointing out that many non-Native staff are new to the profession and full of vigor and vitality, but rather lies in their inability to define a role for themselves in the community, or in the classroom. He writes:

Interaction between non-Native teacher and community is important because it helps define how that community and its students perceive the teacher...Participation in community daily life as well as major community events may cause the non-Native teacher to want to be part of reserve life and will, therefore, assist in establishing mutual respect between teacher and community. However, if the initial involvement by the non-Native teacher is unpleasant, the

teacher may withdraw and become negative. The reality is that the non-Native may be met with hostility when attempting to enter the reserve's social milieu (in Battiste, 1995, p. 226).

This hostility can have other sources as well. There are times when political forces at work combine to create a considerable amount of tension between the non-Native teacher and the community. The confrontation at Oka comes to mind, and although it occurred before I went North, a fellow teacher told me of how he was forced to face a roadblock coming back to the community from a fishing trip, and of how what developed could have easily turned violent if cooler heads had not prevailed. This particular educator had lived on the reserve for a good number of years, and was able to accept the actions of those involved at the time as connected more to the individuals than the community itself. However, one wonders what effect a similar confrontation would have had on a sojourner new to the community attempting to find their cultural bearings.

The transient nature of the non-Native teacher is something that is certainly often determined by the teacher, but when it is not, there is another layer of complexity to the issue. Many, if not all First Nations communities in Canada are actively pursuing the goals of ICIE, and are thus attempting to hire as many people from the communities as possible. In many communities this causes internal tension. As more First Nations people become teachers, there is more competition for jobs in the on-reserve schools. The bands often have very aggressive policies for hiring Native teachers; sometimes going as far as to automatically guarantee a job to anyone who graduates with a teaching license. This often places the non-Native teacher in an awkward and unenviable position. They may very well live with the fact that at any time they may be replaced with a Native teacher,

or, if they are not replaced, they may be viewed by the community at large as taking a job from a community member. Harper (2000) deals with this very issue.

Considering the history of education in the North and the overt and subtle forms of systemic racism that continue to permeate schooling practices generally, it should not be surprising that First Nations communities wish to hire Aboriginal teachers. For non-Aboriginal teachers, particularly those who had been in the community for years and who really had made their lives in the North, contending with the changing nature of their relationship to the community knowing that they might soon be replaced was a difficult issue (p. 149).

She goes on to reveal the thoughts of an educator who had more experience than some of her counterparts in the study, and explained how this educator often felt "undervalued" by the community, particularly by this ongoing emphasis on replacing the white teachers.

They keep telling us that they'll be replacing us with Native staff, but I don't see that happening any time soon. I see the importance of Native teachers, but don't degrade what I am doing. Don't make us feel like we're just here for the duration until they can replace us, you know. I think we've done a good job... (Harper, 2000, p. 149).

This idea of being undervalued really boils down to an issue of power relationships between the teaching staff and the band itself. If a sojourner takes a position in a First Nations community, it is very likely they will find themselves without the representation of any kind of professional union. Now, those who have worked in any education system understand that schools are often political tools for those in power. This also holds true for First Nations communities, with the chief and council feeling, not

surprisingly, that they owe their attention and resources to concerns raised by the people they serve, that is, the members of the community. Since the non-Native teachers do not have any say in band elections, there is little reason for elected band officials to pay particular attention to the complaints of the non-Native staff, nor is there much reason to refrain from using them for political grandstanding. Indeed, I have seen the issue of firing all the non-Native staff put forth as a political platform by those running for council several times in my career, and can think of at least one instance when this actually happened. Although the majority of the staff was rehired in this case, they were made to reapply and re-interview for their positions. This, not surprisingly led to feelings of bitterness and resentment among the non-Native staff.

This, of course, needs to be understood within the framework of politics on the reservation. If the non-Native teachers are being viewed as the enemy and as taking jobs away from Native staff, then it only makes sense for politicians and others in power to focus on them as needing to be removed. The entire thrust of ICIE has been to do just that, and once again I will state that I do not intend to argue the merits of this policy. However, when considering the teacher/ sojourner, one would not be remiss in concluding that if there is an expatriate society in existence on the reservation, these experienced teachers who are feeling undervalued are prime candidates as its leaders. Who better for the sojourner who is feeling lost and disoriented to turn to than the more experienced teacher who feels that their years of service and dedication to the community are being constantly degraded by the threat of replacement? The new sojourner may feel that they are themselves being undervalued, and will certainly find a sympathetic ear within the expatriate club. An example of this very reaction is found in Taylor.

A group of new non-Native teachers started together at this band run school on the prairies. Several of them had known each other at university and most of them were from eastern Canada. It did not take long for these teachers to become close and slowly they began to form a community within a community. They started a supper club where they had weekly meals together, each taking turns as host. These social gatherings originated in past shared experiences but eventually became a 'defence' against what they perceived as a different and confusing community. At these meals they had a chance to maintain their universe-they could reminisce about home and the way things 'should be.' This was also their chance to complain about the community and the people and to discuss how strange things were. These meetings were necessary to remind them that although many things were different around them, they could continue to do things as they always had and be sure that they were right and correct. Before these teachers arrived, other non-Native teachers had met and shared similar attitudes, a common phenomenon on reserves across Canada (in Battiste, 1995, p. 229).

Taylor provides further credence to my arguments when he cites an incident later in his piece where this same group of teachers comments negatively against the band's decision to pay for a group of kids to go to a conference in Alberta. The local community people were offended, and the non-Native teachers criticized for making the comment in the first place.

In this section I have discussed a number of issues that I feel arise out of First Nations Education that may serve to increase the negative effects of culture shock and retard recovery. From rather standard culture shock elements like change in climate and

the transient nature of teaching positions to elements that I feel are unique to First Nations education such as "Teacher as Enemy" and "The Mother Earth Syndrome", I have offered a picture of First Nations education that would seem to almost guarantee the onset of the condition. So if we allow that there is a high probability that culture shock will affect educators who go to work for the First Nation schools of this country, and we allow that because of the emotional drain and negativity of the condition that the overall effectiveness of the teacher will be reduced, what is to be done? In the next and final section I will offer some thoughts and recommendations that I believe should be explored in three distinct areas of responsibility: Teacher education programs, the sojourner themselves, and the various First Nations educational boards.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Teacher Education Programs

As we have read, conclusions have been drawn around the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of the current methodologies for preparing pre-service teachers to work in multi-cultural settings. Indeed, when one reflects on the Peace Corps data, one despairs if any amount of pre-service training, regardless of funding, is sufficient to help teachers who are planning on working with this country's Indigenous Peoples. The SST training suggested by Bochner and Furnham (1990) holds some promise, but without specific data connecting it to First Nations education I am reluctant to suggest it as a strategy. I do believe that any preparatory program that is based on teaching pre-service teachers about the universal truths of First Nations culture is dangerously bereft of merit. To tell sojourners about medicine wheels and Mother Earth may serve them well as a general concept about some of the philosophies they may encounter, but may also set them up to be disappointed and critical of the culture they actually do encounter. Although outside the realm of this piece, ESL strategies hold some hope, but there are related difficulties that are again possibly unique to First Nations Education. For example, much of the material that is created around ESL is focused, not surprisingly, on the international market, and finding culturally appropriate material may prove difficult, especially when working in isolated Northern Communities. There are other issues as well, but for now I will simply state that I have pursued ESL training, attended National Conferences, and used ESL materials and methodologies in my classroom with mixed results. Although I feel ESL training certainly can help a sojourner, it is not, in and of itself, a solution for how to educate First Nations People, and thus may not offer much help in dealing with

culture shock, especially if the methods of ESL instruction are unsuccessful in the classroom. So, what then, is to be done? How are teacher education programs to help educators be more effective during their time in First Nations Communities?

To my mind, probably the most logical first step in serving pre-service teachers is simply to educate them on what is to come, that is, on the causes, symptoms, effects and suggested cures for culture shock. If the sojourner knows what to expect, then they may be better prepared to deal with the hostility stage of cultural adaptation. Since the literature would seem to suggest that there is a very high probability that the teacher/sojourner will experience culture shock, it only seems to make sense that a truly effective teacher education program would include a section on the condition. The sojourner who is trapped in the hostility stage is not in a very nice place. They are confused, angry, hostile and more than a little self deprecating. They may tend, as we have read, to blame themselves initially for the negative emotions they are projecting onto the host culture and feel generally bad about themselves, the job and the host community. As culture shock has been documented to manifest in physical illness, there is the added stress of being sick, perhaps hundreds of miles from any medical facility other than the local nursing station. One can see how a teacher in this condition is certainly not going to be effective as an educator, however if they are aware that the feelings they are experiencing can be attributed to culture shock, and not some personal character flaw, they may find the situation more endurable.

There is no way that teacher education programs can prepare teacher/sojourners for every possibility they may encounter when entering into the field of First Nations education. There is no way to predict the level of spirituality of the host community, the

extent to which the language is used, or desired to be used in the classroom, or the extent to which the educator is going to be viewed in a hostile or welcoming manner. The only thing that seems very likely is that the sojourner will experience culture shock regardless of where they find themselves or within what political climate. Thus, education about the condition of culture shock seems to my mind to be paramount above teaching about universals which may not even exist in the community. As previously stated, there are some concerns with the insidiousness of culture shock as experienced by the non-Native sojourner to a First Nations reservation, but I still feel that educating about culture shock is the best role teacher education programs can play in this experience.

The Sojourner

As we have seen, there are many reasons why a teacher may decide to involve themselves in First Nations education. Although perhaps not universal, the literature would seem to suggest that many educators are drawn to the positions by the promise of full time work and good pay. A graduating teacher wants nothing more than their own classroom, and when faced with the choice between substituting on a day to day basis and getting immediate full time work, it is little wonder that some teachers choose to throw their hat into the First Nations education ring. However, when taking these positions, I feel that it is exceptionally important that the teacher/sojourner have some background in the history of First Nations education before moving to the community. Although certainly not an end in itself, nor a total solution, understanding something about the way in which the residential schools have damaged the fabric of the First Nations social order, for example, seems fundamental. Without at least a preliminary perusal of the literature, the sojourner may not understand the root causes of some of the realities of reserve life,

and may have a harder time coming to grips with the perception of teachers within the community. They may feel that they are coming to the reserve to help, but they must realize that they are only one more in a string of well intentioned whites who have promised the same thing, often with disastrous results.

My second suggestion is that teacher/sojourners may need to go into an educational situation with the realization that they may be powerless to evoke change. This may seem a difficult idea to accept at first, but it must be remembered that the schools remain to this day at the mercy of and under the control of the Chief and Council. Since they are working in a different cultural setting, many of the decisions made that affect the school and the community may be difficult to understand for the sojourner/teacher, and may even not be in the best interest of the children. However, it is on the sojourner to come to terms with this, and accept that the view they have of what is best for the children may not be shared by the community. Even though reasons for change may seem blatantly obvious to the sojourner, the truth is that decision to implement that change lies within the power of the community alone. It is the community that must decide, for better or worse, where the future of education lies. The transient nature of their position may dictate that they become followers and not leaders, and it is perhaps this which will be the greatest adjustment.

The First Nation Educational Authority

Of all the stake holders, it is the First Nations people themselves who stand to lose the most because of culture shock. The problem of retaining teachers in the First Nations system is not just one that impacts on non-Natives. Retention rates amongst Aboriginal teachers are low as well, and I will have to once again bow out of the debate and allow

that this issue is beyond the scope of this piece. However, if one allows that First Nations schools are going to need teachers and Native teachers are not only in short supply but leaving the profession, then it will continue to fall to non-Native educators to provide education for the Aboriginal population of this country. Thus, it seems to serve the best interest of the aboriginal people themselves to create an environment which helps in cross cultural adaptation. This is not to suggest that the school boards or council change anything at all about the way in which they deliver education, or choose their board members, or even control wild dogs. What is suggested is that the bands take a few, relatively simple steps to provide support for non-Native teachers during the adaptation process, and thus provide themselves with a higher quality tool through which to enact whatever vision they may have for the future of their community.

Culture Shock

As there is no way for the band to be certain that the educational institution which the sojourner has attended has provided this crucial piece of information, I believe that each and every orientation course offered to new staff should include at least a consideration of some model of culture shock. This, to my mind, is as fundamental as showing the staff how to use their keys, or how to log in at the computer lab. This first step may at least provide the new sojourner with some sort of template for which to cope with the roller coaster ride that is culture shock, especially if a group of new sojourners arrives together, as is often the case. Since culture shock is, as we have seen, seldom experienced in the same manner or along the same time frame by any two individuals, having a peer who is able to perhaps point out to the sojourner a specific behaviour that is indicative of the condition may be useful in expediting the adaptation process.

Language

Bands should provide instruction for the non-Native educator in the host language. The reason for this instruction should not be framed in such a way that it appears to be for the good of the community, but rather that it will be good for the sojourner. Knowing the transient nature of their position, the sojourner may very well see that time spent learning a language they will never use again is time better spent on other endeavours. However, if the reason for learning the language is to help with cultural adaptation, and it is shown how the learning of the language will ease the process, then a more self serving motivation emerges. The sojourner may very well see the value of learning a language when doing so is possibly going to ease the stress and strain of culture shock. The educational authority on the reserve should build these lessons into the schedule of the teachers' work day without reducing prep time or asking teachers to attend these classes after school hours. To do otherwise would make the language learning an added stress and burden on the sojourner. This might require a greater expenditure on the part of the band, since they will need to have enough staff on hand to allow for this in the schedule and they will presumably need to pay someone to offer the classes. However, if the result is educators who are better adapted and thus more effective, the band will presumably see an overall improvement in their education system. This could foreseeably lead to higher retention rates for students, then higher graduation rates, then perhaps even a higher number of students returning to the reservation as educators. As the pool of qualified First Nations educators grows, the band will have more choice in whom they hire, leading to further improvements in the system. Arguably,

this may seem a bit excessive to expect, but ultimately something has to change. That the system in its current state is failing First Nations people is an undeniable fact.

Mentors

Common estimates suggest that learning a language takes seven years, so the chances that language alone is going to solve all the sojourner's problems remain slim. However, the literature does point squarely to the connection between developing meaningful relationships and positive cultural adjustment, especially if that relationship is with a member of the host community. Thus, for reasons similar to those presented as a defense of language lessons, it seems that the various First Nations Educational Authorities might be well served to present the sojourner with every opportunity to develop these relationships. One possible way to facilitate this would be to set up a mentoring program, whereby someone from the community would work at fostering a relationship with the sojourner. These mentors could act as guides through the cultural adaptation process, and provide a sounding board for any questions or difficulties the sojourner may encounter. First Nations students in my experience are no different than any other group of students in that they may try to manipulate a new teacher into something by using such time honored platitudes as "That's the way we Indians do it." The value of a mentor to whom the teacher can refer or who the teacher can call upon to verify such claims seems to speak for itself.

The choice of these mentors would obviously require careful consideration. The mentors would need to be open enough that any question could be asked of them, regardless of how racist sounding or ignorant. They would need to be aware of some of the idiosyncrasies that their own community might possess which would appear strange

to the sojourner, and they would need to be able to discuss such issues as band politics and any partisanship of the system openly and honestly. This list sounds demanding, but if even a small handful of people on the reservation could be found that were able to do this, I believe the dividends paid would be well worth the expense. The hope would be that the mentor would only need to offer up their services to the sojourner until they were able to develop their own meaningful relationships with those in the community. However, if the sojourner feels uncomfortable investing too heavily in the development of relationship with members of the host community because of their sense of the temporariness of the position, they will not find themselves totally isolated, nor left entirely to the devices of the ex-patriates club. The mentor would offer a guarantee of at least some personal relationship development within the host community.

Definition of Role

This final suggestion may be the most difficult for First Nations educational authorities, because I believe defining the role of non-Native educators within the Native schools system remains an elusive piece to a complex puzzle. The educational authorities themselves may have to struggle with this definition, and may have to present some rather harsh realities to the sojourner/ teacher at the onset of their employment. Explaining to the sojourner that their voice will not be heard and that they may be undervalued by the community no matter how hard they might try certainly sounds like a daunting task indeed. However, it would perhaps be better if these points of contention were clarified as early as possible so that the sojourner is conscious as to where their energies would best be directed.

There is no way for these recommendations to be tested other than by further research. Although I believe that they may help the sojourner in their adaptational development, results around such things as "teacher effectiveness" would be very difficult to quantify. However, if one allows that the hostility stage of culture shock is going to have a negative impact on the teacher/ sojourner, then relieving the stress of this stage will presumably reduce that negative impact. Of course, it must be recognized that there is no way to predict the extent to which the individual sojourner will experience culture shock, and there is no way to predict such things as situational determinants. There is also, realistically, little to be done around relationship development, best intended mentoring programs aside. What seems certain is that for the foreseeable future, First Nations students will continue to be educated by well meaning non-Natives, and that there is a high possibility that these sojourners will experience culture shock. With so much at stake, and so much uncertainty, it would seem good practice to at least attempt to eliminate one of the potential pitfalls of First Nations education.

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