

**THE INTEGRATION OF FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES AND
PRACTICES INTO THE MASTER OF ARTS IN LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING
PROGRAM AT ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY**

By

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THE INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES INTO THE MASTER OF ARTS IN LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING PROGRAM AT ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER ONE – STUDY BACKGROUND

Introduction

In the latter half of this century an awareness has emerged about, not only the historical treatment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, but also the importance of establishing equity and balance in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations. In Canada there are few community, provincial, or national forums that do not require the inclusion and involvement of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal concerns. Since the real inclusion of Aboriginal people and their concerns is relatively new to most administrations, the demands for learning to lead differently are challenging to Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals alike. Aboriginal leadership offers much experience and wisdom, in both content and process, to the current migration from Western, hierarchical leadership models to the servant leadership and holistic systems thinking inherent in much of Native leadership.

The intention of this action research project is to assess the potential for including, with integrity and authenticity, the study of Aboriginal leadership principles and practices into the Master of Arts in Leadership and Training (MALT) program at Royal Roads University. The project was born out of the expressed desire of many learners to become competent at recognizing, understanding, and addressing the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal life and leadership challenges.

In this writing the word “Western” is used to represent a genus of Western European/North American socio-political, economic, and religious values, perceptions, and practices. Equally it is meant to represent the historical dominance of the Caucasian form of the Judeo/Christian world-view within North America.

The words “Indigenous” and “Aboriginal” are meant to represent the indigenous people and indigenous nations of North America. Other words like “First Nation”, “Native”, and “Indian” are used in specific contexts or by other resources used as reference within this text.

The term “cross-cultural” is used in this context, specifically to describe environments of contact between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

The term “learner” is used by the researcher and by Royal Roads University to describe their students and themselves as a “community of learners”.

The Problem/Opportunity

The intent of the research question and this action research project is to build a learning bridge in a university environment that espouses the bridging of diverse learning paths and welcomes a milieu of learning and leadership relationships. This project examines a profound Canadian leadership learning opportunity that continues to present itself as our greatest provincial and national cross-cultural leadership challenge.

Research Question

Is there a way to integrate with integrity and authenticity, Indigenous leadership principles and practices into the Master of Arts in Leadership and Training (MALT) program at Royal Roads University?

Additional Questions

Is there sufficient student interest and organizational interest at Royal Roads University in exploring Aboriginal leadership principles and practices to support incorporating them into the MALT learning?

How would this learning be facilitated most effectively?

Background

The definition of the term “leadership” is continually evolving. A significant part of the current impetus for re-defining leadership comes from the increasing multi-cultural challenges within communities and workplaces. Current leadership learning argues that leading is different from managing human operating systems; systems as small as a family or as large as a culture. The managing of hierarchical, administrative power is giving way to holistic leading through reciprocal sharing of power and influence and through legitimate inclusion of other cultural values and perspectives.

The principle of inclusion is a dominant theme in defining the quality of leadership today. One of the modern (and ancient) tenets of leadership is the modeling of behavioural principles. Integrating Aboriginal leadership learning is a move towards modeling inclusion in our learning community. This is significant if Royal Roads University wishes its present and future

programs to attract learners from an expanding multi-cultural and global community. To be truly inclusive, leadership in our country must reflect and honour our cultural diversity.

The history of cultural diversity in Canada predates, by millennia, much of European history and certainly European settlement in North America. The communal and empowering nature of traditional Indigenous leadership presented a sharp contrast to the hierarchical, positional leadership familiar to Europeans. The egalitarian, consensual, gender-inclusive, and character driven leadership principles inherent in traditional Indigenous leadership are now considered to be some of the fundamental principles needed to face current leadership challenges. The historical imposition of Western hierarchical governance models has eroded and in some cases destroyed the adherence to these old principles in many current Aboriginal communities and leadership structures. The two differing leadership traditions have profoundly affected each other and continue to do so. There cannot be a legitimate study of the Canadian leadership experience without including the learning, wisdom, and leadership of First Peoples.

The Organization

Royal Roads University (RRU) is a new university established in June 21, 1995. It began offering degree programs in July 1996, stating its vision of becoming “an innovative twenty-first century university in a traditional nineteenth-century setting” (Royal Roads University Calendar 1999-2000, p. 10). The university’s stated mission is “to deliver world-class applied and professional education relevant to the workforce of this new century. Royal Roads’ current programs are a response to four key needs: sustainable development, entrepreneurship, empowering leadership, and conflict analysis and management” (Royal Roads University Calendar cover - 1999-2000). The

RRU mission statement states also that the RRU programs are designed “to serve the needs of British Columbians” and “will also be international in scope.” Royal Roads intends “to deliver global-class applied and professional programs to British Columbian, Canadian, and international learners” (Royal Roads University Calendar 1999-2000, p.7).

Royal Roads University’s commitment to a different kind of inclusive learning community is commendable and worthy of support. Also, the university has demonstrated a laudable desire to seek out and welcome other forms of learning, other kinds of learners, and a broad based exploration of leadership. Providing competent and effective leadership in the context of increasingly multi-cultural and global relations is one significant challenge, whether those relations are for business, cultural, environmental, or social reasons. It is clear from the researcher’s many conversations with faculty and administration that Royal Roads University is committed to providing the kind of high quality programming that will prepare learners to address those challenges.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of Organizational Documents

Royal Roads University First Nations Cultural Competency Training Program Report June 17, 1997

In 1997, Royal Roads University attempted to initiate greater awareness about Aboriginal culture and issues. It engaged the First Nations Education Coordinator from Camosun College, Janice Simcoe, to provide direction and advice to the university about First Nations awareness and programming. This was a .2 contract position for January to June 1997.

Simcoe researched, organized, and facilitated three learning experiences for the staff and administrators of RRU. The three experiences were entitled “Knowing Your Own Culture” (35 participants), “First Nations Territories of Vancouver Island” (50 participants) and “First Nations Education, 1990’s and Beyond” (18 participants) (Simcoe, 1997. p. 3).

Simcoe’s report states that the most powerful exchange came from two Aboriginal presenters sharing their residential school experiences. This was hard for the participants to hear and evoked strong responses ranging from finding it offensive, to feeling motivated to assist in the healing process, to accusations of racism against white people. The researcher noted that the number of participants at the next and last session was 36% of the attendees at the previous session. There is no indication in Simcoe’s writing to account for the difference. She does refer to the harshness of the third session and that “participants were not given any pre-information about how challenging and disconcerting it might be” (Simcoe, 1997, p. 10).

In her recommendations Simcoe identifies the problem of not making cross-cultural learning systemic to the organization. “One lives within one’s own culture so deeply that ten hours of training over a period of one month will not likely have long term effect without on-going reinforcement” (Simcoe, 1997, p. 11). She suggested that Royal Roads “may wish to integrate this kind of training into its programming (the Masters in Leadership and Training is already doing so)” (Simcoe, 1997, p. 11). In conversation with the researcher, Dr. P. Gerry Nixon, Director of the Organizational Leadership and Learning Division of Royal Roads University, stated that, “About 6% of our enrollment over time has been First Nations as has been membership on the MALT PAB (Program Advisory Board). Both these figures are significantly higher than graduate courses elsewhere”.

The researcher entered the MALT program in June 1998 and the absence of any learning opportunities about Aboriginal leadership principles and practices quickly became apparent. With the exception of one arranged lunch hour discussion with Dr. Taiaiake Alfred, Director of the Indigenous Governance Program at the University of Victoria, the researcher, as a learner in the process, has encountered no learning focused on Aboriginal or cross-cultural leadership within the MALT program. Other contact with Aboriginal issues came from personal exchanges with Aboriginal peers in the program, the reference to an Aboriginal high school student dissatisfaction “factor” as one of many factors included in an education-based Problem Based Learning exercise, and a few comments by summer faculty about the growing multi-cultural reality of most organizations and communities. Although, according to MALT Program Director Gerry Nixon, discussions are ongoing with the BC First Nations Council, it is not evident, to date, that anything systemic has been integrated into the MALT program.

Royal Roads University Calendar 1999-2000

The Royal Roads University Calendar is one of the University's public introduction tools. The researcher scrutinized the MALT program and course descriptions and found no reference to Aboriginal issues, in fact, not a single Aboriginal word. This encouraged the researcher to read the complete calendar. The Royal Roads Calendar 1999-2000 is a 112 page document. It contains four Aboriginal words, all proper names; the Esquimalt Lagoon (p. 11) and three colleges: Keyano College, Kwantlen College, and Seneca College (p. 18). The words "First Nations" appear twice; once on page 70 and again on page 71. Both references are listed with three other forms of government, once each in the course material for ES 571-Environmental Law and ES 540-Sustainability I (Royal Roads University Calendar 1999-2000). There are no other references to anything Aboriginal. If there is an Aboriginal person, or representative of any Aboriginal organization, on any of the governing bodies, advisory boards, or faculty and teaching staff, it is not evident to the reader.

The Master of Arts in Leadership and Training Program

The design of the leadership learning in the Master of Arts in Leadership and Training program including the Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations course does not reflect cultural diversity. The views, references, and systems models offered in the Classic Studies in Leadership course and the general MALT course content are restricted, almost completely, to the Caucasian, Western European/North American cultural, educational, and economic experience. There is a heavy focus on business leadership without balanced explorations of social, cultural, or spiritual leadership. This seems to be inconsistent with the principle of inclusion and the generous welcome offered by the MALT program to individuals from

diverse learning paths. The University's stated goal of attracting national and international learners will be difficult to achieve or sustain without a curriculum and faculty that models cultural inclusion. Preparing learners and faculty for leadership in an increasingly multi-cultural country and global community requires the learning of and from the leadership of other cultures. There are leadership models and structures within the varied Aboriginal cultures of North America whose histories provide centuries old models of success in consensus, community consultation, shared leadership, shared governance, and cross-cultural relations. The MALT commitment to developing an ever-expanding community of learners provides a rich environment for cross-cultural learning opportunities.

The current curriculum offers little to enhance the learner's ability to understand, be constructive, or know when to lead and when to follow, in the evolving relationship between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginal Canadians. It strengthens the learner's knowledge and ability to understand leadership from within a Euro-American ethnocentric perspective. It is this ethnocentrism and its colonial applications, historical and current, that are at the root of the challenges in our cross-cultural relationships in Canada.

As the struggle for justice and equity strengthens, the challenge of understanding and resolving Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal issues is increasing in the lives of all Canadians. The four key societal issues of "sustainable development, entrepreneurship, empowering leadership, and conflict management" identified in the RRU calendar are present in most of the current cross-cultural issues (RRU Calendar 1999-2000, p. 7).

The study of leadership without understanding Aboriginal leadership principles, paradigms, and models, perpetuates existing stereotypical mental models rather than building new learning bridges and healthier relations. It

does not strengthen the leader's ability to function competently in relations with Aboriginal people or to lead and follow effectively in cross-cultural domains. The long experience of Aboriginal egalitarian leadership based on equity, respect, generosity, and courage is integral to this learning. The researcher, as participant and observer, knows that these principles are the leadership and learning goals of the MALT program content and collaborative processes. Cross-cultural learning and leadership exchanges require equity of representation. Without addressing this multi-cultural inconsistency, Royal Roads University will struggle to credibly offer the kind of current and relevant leadership learning it states is its chosen mandate.

Review of Supporting Literature

The Literature Review is grouped into four themes; Historical Context, Leadership Philosophy, Ethnography and Ethnocentrism, and Current Challenges. It was the researcher's original intention to work from within three theme areas. Throughout this research process a fourth theme emerged, and, although dealt with as separate, Ethnography and Ethnocentrism permeates most of the writing in this action research project. These themes are addressed separately but they do not stand alone and are constantly influencing each other.

Historical Context

Current issues in Native leadership have been shaped profoundly by what has transpired since first contact. That history is the foundation for understanding present challenges in Native and Canadian leadership alike. In Canada, the singular, profound expression of that ongoing historical relationship is the *Indian Act*. Designed, imposed, and enforced by non-Native legislators, it is the regulatory legislation defining how Canada

relates to Aboriginal people. The Act, passed in 1876, is described by Former Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Ovide Mercredi as,

“a cradle-to-grave set of rules, regulations and directives. From the time of birth, when an Indian child must be registered in one of seventeen categories defining who is ‘Indian’, until the time of death, when the Minister of Indian Affairs acts as executor of the deceased person’s estate” (Mercredi/Turpel 1993, p. 81).

The design and implementation of the *Indian Act* could not hide the willful intent to destroy a culture or the clear commitment to assimilation. Sir John A. Macdonald’s statements from the discussions and debates of Hansard encapsulate that commitment in an early form. “Ultimately, within a few generations, there will no longer be any Indian reserves, there will no longer be any Indians and, therefore, there will no longer be any Indian problem” (Sinclair, 1997, p. 6).

A historical cascade of laws was born in the *Indian Act*. These laws methodically eroded Aboriginal peoples’ human and civil rights to live, move, work, make decisions, and gather in ways that are consistent with their beliefs and cultural practices. In over a century since its passage, and in spite of some significant rewording and reframing and further consultation, the Act and successive governments have retained nearly absolute legislative control over Aboriginal peoples and administrations. Taiaiake Alfred describes this as “redefining without reforming” ensuring that “it is still white society’s needs that are met” (Alfred, 1999, p. xiii).

In Canada, the *Indian Act* and the legislation it spawned, effectively destroyed the long standing governance processes on First Nations. It imposed the Western process of selecting and then electing candidates to

hierarchical term positions. These laws created what Ovide Mercredi calls the "10 second model of democracy." "It gives us input at the ballot box for a total of about 10 seconds every few years" (Mercredi/Turpel, 1993, p. 90). Recent history and scrutiny reveals that this was not so much the instituting of the democratic model as it was the pragmatic forcing of Aboriginal people to fit the Western ethnocentric world view. These were the ongoing regulatory tools necessary to cleanse Canadian culture of the Indian problem. Ojibwa Associate Chief Judge of the Province of Manitoba Murray Sinclair explains.

"Beginning with Confederation in 1867, the government set out on a deliberate attempt to undermine the very existence of Aboriginal communities, to undermine the very nature of Aboriginal families in society" (Sinclair, 1997, p. 5).

In his speech to the Elders-Policy Makers-Academics Constituency Group Meeting in Aylmer Quebec in 1997 Sinclair lists the legislative ways the government went about revoking the human and civil rights of Aboriginal people by policy makers who believed "that Aboriginal people were inherently inferior and needed to be brought up to a state of civilization..." (Sinclair, 1997, p. 5). To accomplish this goal, Sinclair states,

"They passed laws, for example, that said Indian people living on reserves were incapable of entering into contracts, were incapable legally of selling anything that they produced, anything they manufactured, anything they discovered" (Sinclair, 1997, p. 5).

This legislative oppression initiated the degradation that currently consumes many Aboriginal nations.

The *Indian Act* is the focal point of any appreciation of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relationships in Canada today. It challenges non-Aboriginals to examine the mental and social constructs, which enable this legislative racist relic to survive today (Mercredi, 1993 and Alfred, 1999). For Aboriginal peoples, it challenges them to address the most difficult byproducts of colonization, that of undermining self-confidence and the erosion of self-belief through systemic dependency on non-Aboriginal structures.

Contrasting world-views manifest themselves in every dimension of the historical relationship between Western and Aboriginal cultures. They can be characterized respectively as exclusive and inclusive views. Judge Murray Sinclair explains,

“In the matter of the hierarchy, or relative importance of beings within creation, Aboriginal and Western intellectual traditions are almost diametrically opposed. It goes without saying that *our world-view provides the basis for those customs, thoughts and behaviours we consider appropriate*” (Sinclair cited by Ross, 1996, p.61). (Italicized in the original).

Leadership Philosophy

Aboriginal cultures in North America are as different from each other and unique as individual European nations. There is no generic Indian leadership “style” or model to work from, nor is this work an attempt to find or create one. The researcher is attempting to highlight the similarities in Aboriginal approaches to living on the land and within community that represent a millennia old understanding of holistic, interrelational living which was, and is, radically different from what Western Europeans practiced or believed important. It is the Aboriginal willingness to share

wisdom, knowledge, and practices that enabled early settlers to survive and thrive. In his book *Indian Givers*, Jack Weatherford explains not only how the early settlers were saved but also how the cultural, social and political practices of the Indians transformed the way life is lived throughout the world.

The foundations of North American Aboriginal leadership are fundamentally different from those in Western Classical leadership. An understanding of the differences is critical to appreciating the evolving leadership challenges for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals alike. At the root are the contrasting beliefs about ecological placement. In his speech to an Aboriginal Justice Conference in Saskatoon in 1993, Associate Chief Judge of the Province of Manitoba, Murray Sinclair, pointed out the differences between the Western tradition in which “man” is placed in a hierarchy just below God but above “all other earthly creation” and the Aboriginal tradition in which the interests of mankind “are not to be placed above those of any other part of creation” (Sinclair 1993, cited by Ross, p. 61). This expresses the same philosophy of non-hierarchical understanding of interrelationship with the rest of nature. Nuu-chah-nulth elder Simon Lucas expresses the same understanding of non-hierarchical interrelationship with nature,

“Those animals have a right to the forests too. They belong there - it is as much theirs as ours. If the water can no longer support the salmon, if the land can't support the deer and bear, then why do we think it will support us?” (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992, xxviii).

The Aboriginal understanding of interdependence and stewardship stood and stands in stark contrast to the industrial development mentality inherent in Western cultural history on this continent. Aboriginal leadership challenges

have profoundly changed and in many cases must accommodate both world views.

In the past, many Aboriginal communities selected leadership only as the need arose, utilizing the talents and skills they had from within their people. According to Antone, Miller, and Myles (1986 p.13) there are five basic areas in which communities sought leadership.

- Education
- Government
- Economics/Production
- Social Organization
- Spiritual/Cultural support

Those chosen to lead in these areas revealed their appropriateness through living a life of demonstrated competence and character. They performed the key functions of:

- a) Catalyst or Guide: The guide/catalyst was afforded the “right” to lead because of a known commitment to respecting the rights, traditions, and desires of the community. This person led the community to discover its own potential and to resolve problems.
- b) Facilitator or Enabler: This person was chosen to facilitate the community organization process. Enabling the community to define and act upon its decisions. This person often was called upon to represent the community in dealings with other organizations.
- c) Expert or Teacher: This person provided information, technical experience, advice, and evaluation to the community or to groups within the community. This person was not an enabler but rather an informer/teacher.
- d) Therapist or Counsellor: This person was empowered to deal with underlying, often unconscious forces which undermine the

community confidence and ability to organize (Antone, Miller, and Myres, 1986 p. pp. 55-69).

Many Aboriginal cultures in North America measured character and competence against a set of universal principles described in different ways. In Anishnaabeg teachings they were described as the Seven Grandfathers or the Seven Truths. These principles are Honesty, Bravery, Kindness, Wisdom, Respect, Love, and Humility. Individuals who adhered to some or all of these in their behaviour, were expected to lead. In close-knit communities, those who kept these Truths were well known and would be approached to lead when the community needed them. Because of the communal nature of Aboriginal communities, members could allocate leadership by consensus on the basis of long observed behaviour.

“So there is no such thing as a leader who has authority over all things. Instead, it is a question of exercising leadership *skills* as the occasion demands, rather than having authority over others given to you for a set period of time” (Ross 1996, p. 58) (Italicized in the original).

In *Return to the Teachings*, Rupert Ross explains that leadership was not based on command or expected obedience. Leaders had to rely on persuasion and moral stature instead of force. Once a process or project was completed, “members disbanded and the act of leading was terminated” (Ross 1996, p. 58).

This holistic approach to leadership was misunderstood often by the Western colonizers. They assumed that Aboriginal peoples had no leadership because they often couldn't easily identify a hierarchical power figure. Depending on the context or issue, the non-Aboriginal leader may be dealing with a variety

of representatives. Western colonizers brought a legacy of power based hierarchical structures of leadership they failed to recognize the subtle complexities of the functional leadership they encountered.

They did, however, recognize the strength and sophistication of the centuries old League of the Iroquois. According to Weatherford , “the league constituted the most extensive and important political unit north of the Aztec civilization” (Weatherford, 1988, p. 135). He describes an exchange in which Chief Cannassatego spoke at an Indian-British assembly in Pennsylvania in July 1744. Cannassatego was a member of the great Iroquois Confederacy or the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and he was complaining “that the Indians found it difficult to deal with so many different colonial administrations, each with it’s own policy” (Weatherford, 1988, p.135). The Haudenosaunee Confederacy was and is the longest standing democratic government in the Americas. Research offers no exact starting date of the Confederacy but places it’s origins between 1000 AD. and 1400 AD. This confederacy is still operational today. The researcher could find no evidence to refute the assertion that this may be the longest intact democracy in human history. The Haudenosaunee Confederacy considers itself an independent nation representing the democratic union of six nations; Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and the Tuscarora who were admitted to the Confederacy last in 1722.

The Confederacy was structured around the *Kaianesakowa* or the Great Law of Peace, which contains,

“principle objectives of political life as well as the definitions of the main institutions of government, the division of power among these institutions, and the relationships between governments and the people” (Cassidy and Bish, 1989, p. 34).

Unlike the European governments, the league blended the sovereignty of several nations into one government. This model of several sovereign units united into one government presented the solution to many of the problems confronting the writers of the United States Constitution. It was what today is called the federal model of government.

Not all Aboriginal nations had this level of sophistication, but in varying degrees, most had a representative process usually involving some form of community consensus. So the Aboriginal leaders that the white negotiators did encounter returned to their communities to formulate, often at great length, a decision based on consensus. It is noteworthy that recent developments within Western theories of leadership and systems chronicle a migration from traditional hierarchical and reductionist models to servant leadership and holistic systems thinking inherent in Aboriginal life and Aboriginal leadership. The ancient understandings of community consensus and interdependency re-emerge in the work of current leadership teachers like James O'Toole, and Margaret Wheatley and consistently within the structures of the MALT program. In his book *Leading Change*, O'Toole makes clear distinctions between the Western industrial leadership mentality which he calls "Western Realist" and the relatively "new" Western values based leadership thinking that he labels "Rushmorean" where leadership is based on trust, integrity, example and inclusion (O'Toole, 1995, p.282). Wheatley notes that,

"scientists in many different disciplines are questioning whether we can adequately explain how the world works using the machine imagery created in the seventeenth century, most notably by Sir Isaac Newton. In the machinery model, one must understand parts. Things can be taken apart ... (as we have done with business functions and academic disciplines)... The Newtonian model of the world is characterized by

materialism and reductionism... a focus on things rather than relationships.

In the new science, the underlying currents are a movement toward holism, toward understanding the system as a system and giving primary value to the relationships that exist among seemingly discrete parts... When we view systems from this perspective, we enter an entirely new landscape of connections..." (Wheatley, 1994, pp. 8-9).

In her more recent book, *a simpler way*, Wheatley states,

"This simpler way to organize human endeavour requires a belief that the world is inherently orderly. The world seeks organization. It does not need us humans to organize it" (Wheatley, 1999, p.5).

She expresses a shift in understanding of ecological placement strikingly consistent with the Aboriginal perceptions expressed earlier in this section by Judge Murray Sinclair and Nuu-chah-nulth elder Simon Lucas, and many other historical and current Aboriginal leaders. This shift in thinking demonstrates a capacity for understanding and integrating wisdom and knowledge from sources other than the Eurocentric intellectual constructs that have dominated Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relationships since first contact.

The leadership principles, structures and practices of the MALT program exemplify this shift in leadership thinking. Well over half of the learners who took the Aboriginal Leadership option in LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations noted the similarity between the Aboriginal leadership and learning described in the course literature and the holistic nature of their personal MALT learning experiences. As one learner

expressed, "I found ...that many of the First Nations principles are in the MALT program". This has been the researcher's experience as a MALT learner as well. His focus, in this action research project, has been to expand the content and context of the examination of leadership. One revelation of this action research project is that the origins of this new thinking mirror centuries old Aboriginal learning, traditions, and thinking models. Within the MALT program, the root constructs of community and consensus, collaborative and principle based leadership represent both new and very old learning. The structure of the MALT program offers a rich opportunity for exploring cultural and cross-cultural leadership.

Ethnography and Ethnocentrism

The growing awareness of the ethnocentrism of researchers and of common research methodologies substantively challenges the ethnographic integrity and accuracy of much of the accepted body of existing research about Aboriginal people done by non-Aboriginal researchers. The causes of the general lack of balanced knowledge and understanding about Aboriginal life and leadership are found in the evolving history of European domination of North America and its indigenous peoples. Any informed understanding of the outcomes of that history and its effects on contemporary Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal life and leadership, requires that it be learned from both sides of the relationship. This involves retaining the accuracy and integrity of the perspective of Aboriginal peoples. This cannot be accomplished by drawing on the vast body of ethnocentric research about Aboriginal people done by non-Aboriginals.

Even those non-Aboriginal researchers wishing to do no further harm, until recently, built their work on the large and accepted body of information gathered through the practices of, what Arthur J. Ray calls "Salvage

Ethnologists” (Ray, 1996, p. xiv). He describes the works of influential anthropologists Franz Boas and Diamond Jenness as largely ignoring the significant contributions Aboriginal peoples made to Canadian history while propagating the image of Aboriginal as only being able to cling to ancient ways and “predicting their demise as a ‘race’ within a generation” (Ray, 1996, p. xiv). Western challenges to the veracity of Aboriginal oral traditions were and are absurd if those challenges use the intensely ethnocentric “scientific” research as their basis. Balanced ethnographic research, and utilizing Aboriginal people and Aboriginal expertise are critical to understanding the concepts and context of Aboriginal life and leadership. Palys describes the ethnographic distinction as “*knowing about* people” being different “than to *know* them” (Palys, 1997, p. 202) (Italicized in the original).

Historically, the research results rarely represented Aboriginal peoples’ picture of themselves. It did, however, create the solid non-Aboriginal stereotypical image of Aboriginal culture that continues today. The growing unacceptability of this situation is reflected in Biolsi’s reference to Odawa educator Cecil King’s assertion that representations by outsiders should be subject to control by Aboriginal peoples.

“We want to say who comes to our world, what they should see, hear, and take away. Most important, we want to appraise, critique, and censure what they feel they have a right to say” (King, 1999, cited by Biolsi and Zimmerman, p.118).

Biolsi goes on to say that anthropologists may consider this “dangerous infringements upon academic freedom” (Biolsi and Zimmerman, 1999, p.10) of anthropologists. The defense of academic freedom is weak if it cannot be distinguished from academic license and if it cannot survive the scrutiny of those being researched.

Contemporary Aboriginal critics challenge the ethnocentrism inherent in the research paradigms used. Historian Vine Deloria Jr states,

“Anthropology carries with it some incredibly heavy baggage. It is, and continues to be, a deeply colonial academic discipline, founded in the days when it was doctrine that the colored races of the world would be enslaved by Europeans, and the tribal peoples would vanish from the planet” (Deloria, 1999 cited by Biolsi, and Zimmernam, p. 211).

Deloria clearly identifies the problem.

“The stereotypical image of American Indians as childlike, superstitious creatures still remains popular in the American mind—a sub-human species that really has no feelings, values, or inherent worth. This attitude permeates American society because Americans have been taught that ‘scientists’ are always right, that they have no personal biases, and that they do not lie, three fictions that are impossible to defeat” (Deloria, 1995. p. 20).

Available research information is varied, much of it prejudiced by the ethnocentrism of the researchers and their reductionist methodologies. Much of the data came from “Aboriginal communities victimized by ‘parachute scientists’ who exploit the community for its data and leave nothing behind...” (Palys, 1997, p. 4). These visitors were in no position to assess issues like implicit consent or the assumed beneficence of their interventions. Whether the technical approach was deductive or inductive was irrelevant to the results. Often there was no congruency between the community history, the research questions, the researcher’s understanding of context, or the future implications of the research intervention including the

intended use of the data collected. “Understanding context is essential to a holistic perspective” (Patton 1987, p. 73).

Milton M.R. Freeman, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alberta, elaborates on the fundamental cultural differences by explaining that Western methods are reductionist. They seek to “understand organisms or nature by studying the smallest or simplest manageable part or sub-system in essential isolation” (Freeman, 1992, pp. 9-10). Aboriginal views, on the other hand, focus on life

“in a world not of linear casual events but of constantly reforming, multi-dimensional, interacting cycles where nothing is simply a cause or an effect, but all factors are influences impacting other elements of the system-as-a whole...” (Freeman 1992, pp. 9-10).

In *Vine Deloria & Anthropologists*, editors Biolsi and Zimmerman introduce the writing by Odawa author/educator Cecil King’s indigenous view of ethnography. They state,

“He concentrates on the issue of representation, and the intellectual violence done to indigenous thinking by the “conceptual packages” deployed by anthropology. It is not just an intellectual matter, however, because the anthropological representations have a lot to do with the stereotypes of Indians that circulate in the wider society” (Biolsi & Zimmerman, 1997, p.113).

The dominant and dominating ethnocentric perspectives of Western culture are eroding as a more balanced and honest recording of history evolves. The disabling effects of the Western version of history and its heroes are the foundation of the conflicts in today’s cross-cultural exchanges. Western

recording of history is rife with heroic images, like that of Columbus, that are not sustainable when viewed from a balanced perspective. Taiaiake Alfred illustrated this in conversation with Michael Enright, host of CBC's *This Morning* January 4, 2000, (Enright and Alfred). He read from Columbus' own diary an account of his imprisonment and rape of a young Aboriginal girl. Also, "Columbus personally oversaw the genocide of the Taino Indian nation of what is now Haiti and the Dominican Republic" (Means and Morris, 1991, p. 1). Aboriginal opposition to the celebration of Columbus Day has grown in strength in recent years. The American Indian Movement presented a position paper explaining their views.

"When Taino Indians saved Christopher Columbus from certain death on the fateful morning of Oct. 12, 1492, a glorious opportunity presented itself. The cultures of Europe and the Americas could have merged and the beauty of both races could have flourished.

Unfortunately, what occurred was neither beautiful nor heroic. Just as Columbus could not, and did not, 'discover' a hemisphere that was already inhabited by nearly 100 million people, his arrival cannot, and will not, be recognized as a heroic and celebratory event by indigenous people. Unlike the Western tradition, which presumes some absolute concept of objective truth, and consequently, one "factual" depiction of history, the indigenous view recognizes that there exist many truths in the world... From an indigenous vantage point, Columbus' arrival was a disaster from the beginning" (Means and Morris, 1991, p. 1).

Three hundred years later, the great Shawnee leader Tecumseh encapsulated the results of what Columbus' arrival started and the contemporary Aboriginal point of view.

“Where today are the Pequot? Where are the Narragansett, the Mohican, the Pokanoket, and many other once powerful tribes of our people? They have vanished before the avarice and the oppression of the White man, as snow before the summer sun.

Will we let ourselves be destroyed in our turn without a struggle, give up our homes, our country bequeathed to us by the Great Spirit, the graves of our dead and everything that is dear and sacred to us? I know you will cry with me, ‘Never! Never!’” (Techumseh, cited in *Quotes from our Native Past*, p. 5).

There has been an almost continual Aboriginal voice, since those words were spoken, echoing the same sentiments. Speaking to a group of high school students in Fort McMurray, on February 2, 1991, Federal Member of Parliament Elijah Harper explained,

“The truth doesn’t need defending. ...One hundred years ago in Oka, the headlines in the newspaper were the same, ‘Indians refuse to accept offer’. Except today we deal with the government not missionaries... I did not only say no to Meech Lake, I said yes to a new relationship in this country... we have to be masters of our own destiny” (*Cross Cultural Relations*, 1991).

Elijah Harper refers to a new relationship that challenges Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike to grow out of the colonial relationship. The root theoretical design of the colonial relationship is oppressive and requires active imposition upon the oppressed. To break out of this requires great self-learning by the oppressor. In conversation with the researcher, at Royal Roads University in June, 1999, Salish consultant Carrie Ford put this into

context. “ What non-Native people need to know about me is far less than they need to know about themselves.”

Current Challenges

The current challenges fall into three general categories: Challenges to Aboriginal Leadership, Challenges to non-Aboriginal Leadership, and Cross-cultural Challenges.

Challenges to Aboriginal Leadership

Given the history, the current challenges in Aboriginal leadership are enormous. Much of the work is impeded by the on-going oppression of the *Indian Act* and its related legislation. It is hated by many. Former Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Ovide Mercredi stated that,

“We cannot survive and make progress under the totalitarian rule of the Indian Affairs bureaucracy; we have to do it through the free will of our peoples” (Mercredi, 1994, p. 90).

Both Mercredi (1994) and Alfred (1999) reflect the opinions of many Aboriginal leaders that the *Indian Act* is an unacceptable racist relic. The desire to be rid of it is strong, yet many Aboriginal leaders and communities are dependent upon the inherent paternalism in the Act and its bureaucracy and fear a life without it. Many First Nations are accustomed to paternalistic bureaucratic structures running their lives. Some Aboriginal communities choose simply to fill in the Western hierarchical, administrative

roles with Aboriginal people. Alfred states that the existing power structures are content with Indians running the reserves,

“...so long as they behave like bureaucrats and carry out the same old policies. Redefined and reworded, the ‘new’ relationship still abuses indigenous people, albeit more subtly” (Alfred. 1999, p. xiii).

The historical revisions made to the *Indian Act* have addressed many issues about the administration of the legislation and have improved some things for Aboriginal people. Recent improvements in the superficial elements of the Act have not had a direct, positive effect on the lives of Aboriginal people. Its core dimensions of domination and control of a people continue to be its defining features.

The fundamental results of centuries of ethnostress have not changed or been addressed successfully by any of the negotiating to date. Antone, Miller, and Myers define ethnostress as the stress experienced by members of a culture when their self image and sense of place in the world are repressed as a result of contact with another culture. They explain, “Despite recent changes, many of the religious and political beliefs that disrupted our original forms of existence still remain” (Antone et al, 1986, p. 51). They state that indigenous people still lead both Canada and the United States in suicides, alcoholism, family breakdown, and substance abuse. They present enlightening strategies for addressing community and personal health. They suggest that the effects of continual oppression are most often expressed in the way individuals treat themselves, their families, and their communities.

As a result of feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and buried rage and the seduction of greed and power, Aboriginal people sometimes turn on each other. Taiaiake Alfred addresses the critical dimensions of oppression that

other. Taiaiake Alfred addresses the critical dimensions of oppression that now manifest themselves in such destructive behaviours, Aboriginal to Aboriginal, man to woman and child, and greed and power-driven Aboriginal administrators to other community members.

“Colonialization created the conditions of material and social deprivation, but the failure to confront them is our own. Why have we directed our anger at ourselves and our families rather than its source?” (Alfred, 1999, p. 35).

Much of current Aboriginal leadership, he states, is using power and Western style structures “with the best of intentions for the good of the people” but “the fact remains that holding non-consensual power over others is contrary to tradition” (Alfred, 1999, p. 28). There are those leaders who believe in the retention of traditional leadership principles. They are regularly in disagreement with those who they consider to be the co-opted leaders who have bought into and as a result support the Western systems that oppress them. Adhering to those “Western style structures” has created the kind of hierarchies in First Nations that express the values of the non-Aboriginal designers, and has created a different kind of economic and power elitism on reserves. In the June 1999 edition of *Saturday Night* magazine, writer Gordon Laird explains that the recent controversy on the Stoney First Nation near Morley, Alberta is descriptive but not unique. The problem gained national notoriety for two predominant reasons. Firstly, from its rich deposits of natural gas, “the band received \$15 million in natural gas royalties, in addition to \$19 million in direct subsidies from the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.” Secondly, when complaints of abuse of the funds, and excessive graft and nepotism were raised by poor members of the community no accounting for large sums of money could be found. Finally the federal department placed the control of

the reserve's financial management in the hands of a private financial services firm. The 1999 Auditor General's Report, issued in April 1999, revealed that Indian Affairs intervened in the management of 167 of the 585 or 28.5% of the First Nations for similar reasons (Liard, from Saturday Night, June 1999 p. 70).

Current Aboriginal leadership must juggle the multiple challenges of behaving in ways that are consistent with their cultural traditions and at the same time developing the complete spectrum of services necessary to elevate the current quality of life of their people and their communities usually from within the very systems that oppress them. Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine explains that it,

“must be a balance between the promotion and protection of First Nations rights at the national and international levels and continuing to work to ensure that the day-to-day lives of our people improve in relation to health care, housing, education and jobs” (Fontaine, from the First Nations Messenger, February 10, 1999, p. 4).

Those leaders who attempt to work within or succeed within the existing bureaucratic structures struggle because that relationship by design leaves them always at a distinct disadvantage. They are often challenged by traditionalists and hereditary leaders as having abandoned the very traditions that distinguish them culturally. The dynamic tension between the hereditary and traditional leadership and the more administrative and management-focused co-opted leadership varies in intensity with each differing First Nation. Those leaders who choose to retain and rekindle the roots of their traditions are seen often as being fundamentalist and militant. They express active opposition to the continuance of the familiar historical relationship with non-Aboriginal bureaucratic structures and criticize the

continuing validation of the structures and values of non-Aboriginal bureaucrats. They believe that the methods of conciliatory negotiation practiced by many current leaders have not and cannot free Aboriginal peoples from their present situation. Members of each leadership style see the other as problematic and yet important. The challenges facing Aboriginal leadership are enormous internally as well as externally.

Challenges to Non-Aboriginal Leadership

Until recently, the non-Aboriginal's understanding has been framed within the context of the historical relationship constructed by non-Aboriginal researchers, non-Aboriginal political and religious leaders, and non-Aboriginal historians. Most of the dominant society's view of North American history treated the presence of Aboriginal cultures as incidental to their own. During the last half of this century, awareness has grown and perceptions are changing. The learner responses to the basic information provided in the MALT LT516 unit on Aboriginal Leadership validate the problem. One learner response typifies the general responses,

“I have had a lot of first hand experience working with First Nations children but I am sad to say I was almost completely ignorant of the importance of the leadership style distinctions in understanding the difference in cultural behaviour” (Appendix C. p.4).

In its February 10, 1999 edition, The Assembly of First Nations Bulletin reported the results of an Environics poll performed between Nov. 27 and Dec. 5, 1998 (“Poll Shows Canadians Support...,” 1999, February 10). The results indicate that Canadians strongly support the improvement of First Nations health and social conditions and they believe that the federal government should support First Nations self sufficiency. To establish

non-Aboriginal peoples, non-Aboriginal people face significant challenges. Bringing non-Aboriginal people to understand and address their historical position of privilege and prejudice, and how those ingrained perspectives influence the current relationships, is an essential part of the learning and the leadership challenge. Another LT516 learner expresses this clearly, "Now I realize that it is because I walked around in my 'privileged' white skin, not knowing the very history that gave me that privilege" (Appendix C. p.5).

The challenges for non-Aboriginals and certainly non-Aboriginal leadership are significant. First, non-Aboriginals must "remove the barriers to growth" (Senge, 1990, p. 95). One fundamental barrier is the existing colonial relationship. Another is the challenge of developing a body of research that offers responsible ethnographic information from which to build a non-colonial relationship. Anthropologist Peter Whiteley believes that constructing research projects differently is the only way anthropology can become truly multicultural. "...anthropology is the most sophisticated potential tool for understanding cultural realities, dialogically bridging difference, and therefore engaging a truly multicultural perspective" (Whiteley, cited by Biolsi and Zimmerman, 1999, p.197). He notes however, that, "this remains potential" (Whiteley, cited by Biolsi and Zimmerman, 1999, p. 197). Accurate information is a critical and positive step but will be of little use without a context in which to apply it. The third and critical challenge is the development of an accurate understanding of the history of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations. As will be expanded upon later, expressions like "Why is it we were not taught this?" and "One lesson is that...we do not know our real history" and "We don't have to look in third world countries or to South Africa to see that tyranny, genocide, cultural assimilation and oppression can do to a people" were common among the mid-career professionals who worked in the LT516 Aboriginal Leadership unit

this past fall. The imagery of what one learner called “the colonizing folk heroes” of Hollywood and the history books remains strong. To provide equal and respectful attention to the Aboriginal view of our collective history will require involvement and from that involvement will come new awareness. In response to the course material one learner stated, “The material thus far had deepened my resolve to do things differently” (Appendix C. p.9). That awareness is essential for sustaining Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people during the challenges of building equitable and mutually beneficial future relationships.

For many non-Aboriginal people, what they are learning about the historical legacy left them by their Western ancestors is deeply unsettling. Some have realized that the unicultural perspective they learned, and learned to believe in as children, is unsupportable when prejudice is replaced with real information. Black activist and satirist James Baldwin, speaking to the Association of Life Skills Coaches of Ontario annual conference in Toronto in 1988, explained that as strong and as just as their arguments were, little changed for black Americans until white Americans began to dismantle their own personal practices that consciously or unconsciously supported black disadvantage and white advantage. Peggy McIntosh outlines one of the challenges resulting from Western cultural blindness.

“As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage.” She describes this privilege as “an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious” (McIntosh, 1988, p. 1).

Much of the prejudice continues, albeit more covertly. The systemic commitment to assimilation is solidly entrenched in our national structures and although the philosophical support for Aboriginal people's pursuit of justice and equity is high, so is the resistance to examine or dismantle the oppressive mental and legislative frameworks. Those frameworks fuel everything from non-Aboriginal social and sociological attitudes, to the design of corporate policies, to the continuing application of federal and provincial legislation. Noted First Nations leader Harold Cardinal believes that little has changed over the past thirty years in government thinking.

"It really goes back to what I think I would call an in-grained institutional racism which refuses to acknowledge or accept First Nations in other than the traditional ways that they view them. And a very strong resistance to change... And I think that it's something that's ingrained into the educational system as well" (Cardinal, February 1999, p. 6).

Cardinal notes that something is inherently wrong with the educational system if university-educated people with presumed analytical skills are having difficulty accepting First Nations rights and title issues.

There has been a noteworthy shift in federal policy regarding relations with Aboriginal people. In 1984, the *Guerin vs The Queen* Supreme Court decision established that the federal government had not only a moral, and political obligation, but most importantly a legal obligation, to act in the best interests of First Nations people. The Musqueam Indian band had won a lower court decision of "breach of trust" against Indian Affairs. The Supreme Court upheld the decision and awarded the Musqueam \$10 million in damages. This shift in legal responsibility, according to writer Gordon Laird, caused the federal government to start its "get-out-of-the-Indian business" era as a way of avoiding the "wealth of opportunity for litigation from other First

way of avoiding the “wealth of opportunity for litigation from other First Nations” (Laird, from *Saturday Night*, June, 1999, p. 68) whose challenges of shoddy management by Indian Affairs were equal to or greater than the Musqueam. Liard cautions against believing that the government is acting out of a sense of its own beneficence, or long overdue justice, or because of its sensitivity to strong public opinion. Rather, with “608 lawsuits filed by aboriginal individuals and tribal governments”, this shift in policy “has been motivated less by native demands for autonomy than by the Crown’s fear of expensive lawsuits” (Liard, from *Saturday Night*, June, 1999, p. 68).

In examining the legal and social implications of the current relationship Judge Rupert Ross takes issue with the non-Aboriginal continually colonial approach to cross-cultural relations.

“As long as the government and officials of this country continue to act as if the original peoples are the ones in need of instruction and improvement, so long will suspicion and distrust persist” (Ross, 1992, p. ix).

Taiiaki Alfred expresses that distrust in a variety of ways in his writings. “Lawyers, advisers, consultants, managers, government agents” he says “are not Native and therefore cannot be expected to share our ideals” (Alfred, 1999, p. xv). This simple expression of distrust of non-Aboriginals speaks to the natural results of oppression and unearned privilege. Even a cursory examination of the history of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations reveals issues of lack of integrity and inequity that are so large and so deep rooted, that most Canadians have no idea how to respond. As a result, many don’t. They view the issues and conflict from the perspective of a third party point of view: observing but not involved. The issues, once understood are so large

Another non-Aboriginal leadership challenge is to define and then facilitate the development of an inclusive, ethical framework for our future. That framework must address these issues and privileges and encourage commitment from the privileged. We cannot expect trust from our Aboriginal partners unless we become trustworthy and truly inclusive ourselves. Director of Communications for the Assembly of First Nations, Maurice Switzer, states that trying to understand the challenge is only as complicated as you wish to make it. At its root, it is a simple point of principle. In trying to clarify the recent Donald Marshall case, the Supreme Court decision upheld the Mi'kmaq treaty of 1752. Switzer explains,

“You can easily get bogged down in all the debate about Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal title, treaty rights, pre-confederation rights, existing rights, fiduciary obligations, status, non-status, sovereignty, nation to nation, Section 35 and on and on... A promise is a promise. That's all you need to remember” (Switzer, December 1999, p. 5).

Cross-Cultural Challenges

Reaction to long-standing oppression and distrust permeates the issues of our day as well as our past. The intensity of the conflict surrounding the *Delgamuukw vs. The Queen* during 1987-1991 and the Nisga'a Treaty settlement of 1999 in British Columbia brings the larger issues into focus. These newsworthy issues are the tip of our cross-cultural iceberg in the ongoing attempts to establish equity and justice between Native and non-native peoples.

As a more honest and balanced understanding of our history emerges, current leaders, Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals alike are, willingly or

As a more honest and balanced understanding of our history emerges, current leaders, Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals alike are, willingly or unwillingly, being charged more and more with the responsibility of facilitating restitution. In the introduction to his speech to the First Nations Summit on October 1999, in Campbell River, BC, British Columbia Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Dale Lovick puts that cross-cultural relationship into context.

“...the relationship between aboriginal people and the rest of the provincial community is flawed, fatally flawed: we, the provincial government, must therefore negotiate a new social contract with First Nations” (Lovick, 1999, p. 1).

He describes the deep-rooted social and historical context by stating that,

“since the prospect of fair and just land claims was first raised ... entire generations of aboriginal people have grown old and died without ever seeing that promise fulfilled” (Lovick, 1999, p. 2).

Without the capacity to resolve the cross-cultural challenges facing British Columbians and Canadians, current and future leaders will struggle in a global community which is more informed and increasingly less tolerant of the colonial mind-set which continues to fuel Canadian and British Columbian cross-cultural conflicts.

At the root of the colonial mind-set is the issue of sovereignty and how it is acquired. The belief that sovereign rights brought by the Europeans is somehow more legitimate than the sovereignty of people who have lived here for millennia, is racist and will not survive serious scrutiny for much longer. Lawyer Louise Mandell states,

“The Indian elders in British Columbia question why they must subject their relationship to the land to a non-Indian court’s strict scrutiny: why they must explain their use of the land to obtain ‘rights’ abstractly defined by others.

They believe that the Indians have rights to their land because their people go back with the land for thousands of years. What they do not understand is how the Crown acquired its ‘rights’ to their land” (Mandell 1987, cited by Culhane, 1998, p. 15).

In the on-line review of the Delgamuukw National Process the introductory question of the section entitled “The Onus of Proof of Aboriginal Title”, expresses the same fundamental question.

“Why, one might ask, is the onus of proving Aboriginal title on the Aboriginal peoples, and not the Crown, when we all know that the Aboriginal peoples were here first?” (Delgamuukw National Review).

Although dealt with previously in this writing, looking at the power designed into the *Indian Act* will help clarify the depth of the cross-cultural challenges ahead. In October 1999, the Canadian Human Rights Act Review Panel came to Edmonton on its cross country consultation of the effectiveness of the 22 year old act. The Native Council of Canada for Alberta (NCCA) represented by Chief Kieth Moon from Treaty 7 and NCCA Executive Director Richard Long, offered the panel some recommendations for dealing with Section 67 of the Canadian Human Rights Act. Their position is that the section openly discriminates against treaty Indians because it omits them from the protection of the legislation. Section 67 states, “Nothing in this Act affects any provisions of the Indian Act or any provision made under or

pursuant to that act” (from Windspeaker, December 1999). Although this section was up for review 10 years ago, it remains untouched. Considering the aforementioned racist roots of the *Indian Act*, Section 67 effectively removes treaty Indians capacity to defend against discrimination. Since the Canadian Human Rights was written only 22 years ago, Harold Cardinal’s admonition that little has changed in 30 years would have been just as accurate had he said 130 years ago.

Understanding our history is essential to knowing what to do to improve current and future Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relationships. As Stephen Covey suggests, we must start within our own “circle of influence” (Covey, 1989, p. 81). We must become mindful of our position of privilege and that it is not free, rather, it has been extracted from the lives of others. As referred to earlier, James Baldwin described that change for blacks in America escalated once white people began dismantling the structures that created the black disadvantage and white advantage. It is not just the responsibility of Aboriginal peoples to dismantle the colonial structures they still live under. The researcher’s circle of influence includes the learning community at Royal Roads University. The intended goal of this action research project is to start an examination of a broader conceptualization of cross-cultural leadership in Canada, one built on a foundation of trust, honour, equity, and inclusion. Neither Aboriginal nor non-Aboriginal needs to continue to replicate the historical relationship.

CHAPTER THREE – CONDUCT OF RESEARCH STUDY

Research Methods

The researcher chose action research as the primary methodology for a variety of reasons. Action research is participative, reflective, cyclic, and qualitative (Dick, 1997). It promotes input, evaluation, and redesign by and with the participants. Thus action research is alive in the moment and “is able to respond to the emerging needs of the situation” (Dick, 1997, p. 2). Secondly, it serves as a holistic process for growth. Thirdly, particularly in cross-cultural venues, this method appears to make research a much more equitable and collaborative exercise. It supports participants having their own voice.

The researcher’s understanding from his own experience and that of many Aboriginal collaborators is that the research done “on” Aboriginals by non-Aboriginal researchers often bore little resemblance to how Aboriginal people saw themselves or life around them. There is, “a shortage of research that is useful from Indian points of view” (LaFramboise and Plake, 1983; Maynard, 1974; and Goddard and Dinges, 1977; cited in Hampton, 1994, p. 271). The inherent colonial myopia in the methodology, implementation, and conclusions of much of the research is raising serious questions about ethnographic integrity and accuracy. Writing about doing research on “others”, Palys states, “The power of the text is ours” (Palys, 1997, p. 206). He continues by citing Clifford,

“Many voices clamor for expression. Poly-vocality was orchestrated and restrained in traditional ethnographies by giving to one voice [that of the researcher] a pervasive authorial function and to others the role of

sources, “informants” to be quoted and paraphrased” (Clifford, p. 15, cited by Palys, 1997, p.206).

According to Palys, bell hooks expresses the phenomenon clearly,

“Often this speech about the ‘Other’ annihilates, erases:... no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me ...your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Re-writing you, I write myself anew. I am still the colonizer, the speak subject, and you are now at the center of my talk” (hooks, cited by Palys, 1997, p.206).

Deloria supports this and asks, “How naïve can outsiders get about the social effects of their representations?” (Biolsi and Zimmerman, editors. 1997, p.194).

Action research appears to offer some ways to address these large research challenges by engaging the researcher directly in the research relationship and enabling those involved to collectively generate and validate the data themselves. Action research appeared, to the researcher, to present a remedial response to understanding the “fatally flawed” (Lovick, 1999, p. 1) relationship much of which was reflected by the data generated and generalized by Western research methodologies. The researcher chose, therefore, to seek out, as much as possible, Aboriginal authored research and information when expressing Aboriginal views and opinions. During summer residency, the three available Aboriginal RRU learners, and also some long-time Aboriginal associates of the researcher were consulted regularly as to the integrity and authenticity of the program material being written. For the longer-term completion of the thesis work, Taiiiake Alfred Phd., Director of

the Indigenous Governance Programs at University of Victoria, agreed to be the researcher's Project Supervisor.

Action research removes the historical colonial relationship of "the researcher as an expert who *does* research" (Stringer, 1996, p. 22) and replaces it with the role of, "resource person... He or she becomes a facilitator or consultant who acts as a catalyst to assist... to support" (Stringer, 1996, p. 22). Stringer states that,

"This collaborative approach to inquiry seeks to build positive working relationships and productive interactional and communicative styles. Its intent is to provide a climate that enables disparate groups of people to work harmoniously and productively to achieve their various goals" (Stringer, 1996, p. 19).

The researcher could find no other research methodology that offered the potential for collaboratively building bridges of understanding and learning. The methodology is imbedded in the MALT program design and philosophy. The learning value of the MALT program design, the strength of action research cyclical questioning, and the invitation to seek further learning are exemplified in the response of one of the MALT learners,

"Our 'Western' models of leadership have begun to move towards a more holistic/values based model of leadership... something aboriginal cultures have done for centuries. Is this concept of servant leadership really an emerging transformational theory?" (Appendix C. p.6).

This action research project has revealed that the simple and complex answer to that question is "no it isn't... and well, yes it is" and that further learning is required.

Finally the action research process facilitates shared learning for all participants, including the researcher. Stringer describes it as “look – think – act” (Stringer, 1996, p.39). This learning process is descriptive of the learning styles of many Aboriginal cultures, where much was, and is, learned by the act of observing others, which generates understanding, and guides action. Mohawk psychiatrist Dr. Clare Brant, worked extensively with the Swampy Cree of James Bay and Hudson Bay. He explains.

“Native tribes use modeling almost exclusively. One is *shown* how rather than *told* how. The teachers who usually are parents and older members of the extended family...through their own actions convey useful and practical information. ...Modelling seems to increase attachment to the older members of the group, promoting group cohesiveness and continuity” (Brant, 1990, p.537).

Arlene Stairs agrees. Describing the Northern Baffin Inuit, she writes:

“*isumaqsayuq* is the way of passing along knowledge through observation and imitation embedded in daily family and community activities, integration into the immediate shared social structure being the principal goal” (Stairs, 1991, p. 281.).

Rita Jack, a member of the Secwepemc Nation in British Columbia, agrees with Brant and Stairs. She writes that, “The methods of teaching skills for everyday living and to instill values and principles were participation and observation” (Jack, 1985, p. 9).

Much of this learning and integration was non-verbal, observational, and intrinsic to the cultural and natural ecology. How could some stranger, sent for a short time, and from a culture applying what Palys describes as,

“the Darwinian evolutionary theory to social matters – an approach that placed human beings at the top of the natural order, and was conveniently adapted to place Caucasians at the top of the human order” (Palys, 1997, p. 204).

be considered a credible source of information about an Aboriginal culture? “Can a non-Aboriginal person ever *really* understand what it’s like to grow up as an Aboriginal person in Canada?” (Palys, 1997, p. 203). In the unlikely event that a researcher could understand what he was witnessing, Palys states that. “The scholar’s challenge was to translate indigenous beliefs and practices into terms that Europeans could understand” (Palys, 1997, p. 204). Odawa Cecil King, a Faculty of Education professor at Queens University and long time leader in Aboriginal education explains,

“We have to describe our essence, *d’ochichaugwunan*, to fit academic conceptual packages, and we have become prisoners of what academics have done with our words to verify their words” (King, cited by Biolsi and Zimmerman, 1999, p. 116).

For the traditional research community to present the results of these colonial research practices as credible representations of Aboriginal life is audacious and many informed Aboriginal people understandably find it offensive.

Kemmis and McTaggart suggest a four-step framework for action research projects. The first step is Reconnaissance, which they describe as the

defining of a thematic concern on the basis of a preliminary review (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, pp.49-65). Upon entry into the MALT program in June 1998, observation and participation, by the researcher in the first year residency and on-line courses, revealed the absence of any learning opportunities about Aboriginal leadership, historical or current. Informal discussion with learners from both years in residency (MALT 97-1 and MALT 98-1) indicated that others recognized the absence, and that there was sincere interest in learning more about Aboriginal leadership and cross-cultural leadership. A mid-course exchange between the researcher and his assigned teaching assistant in Course LT 513 – Ethical Considerations and Evaluation in Action Research, was the catalyst for the thematic approach used in this project. The exchange indicated a clear perceptual difference concerning the ethnographic integrity and accuracy of research performed “on” or “in” First Nations by non-Aboriginal researchers. This researcher was examining the ethical question of the assumed rights or “privilege” (Palys, 1997, p206) of any researcher involved in cross-cultural research of an “other”. The researcher was stating that “parachute scientists” (Palys, 1997, p. 4) have little capacity to understand the effects of their interactions or their research results because they were only visitors in someone else’s life and as such were hardly the ones to determine the beneficence (if any) or maleficence of their actions. The underlying ethical question was and is, if we don’t know what harm is being done, what gives one the right to go and do it at all? The researcher was attempting to answer two questions asked by Laflond and Laflond, “Should this particular group, setting, or question be studied by *anyone*?” (Laflond and Laflond, cited by Kirby and McKenna, 1989, p.104) and “Should this group, setting, question be studied by *me*?” (Laflond and Laflond, cited by Kirby and McKenna, 1989, p.104).

The second step in the action research cycle is Planning. “What needs to be done?” This step involves orientation, organization, collaboration,

identification, and decision-making. It is important to think strategically during this phase (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, pp.65-77). The researcher, upon completing the required first year courses, realized that the absence of any available learning about First Nations leadership, had been validated by experience. He developed a Major Project Prospectus suggesting inclusion of learning about First Nations leadership principles and practices into the MALT program. The researcher's hope was to begin a conversation about a broader definition of leadership. He proposed developing an introductory section of course material as a project deliverable to be included in his completed thesis in April 2000. On June 17, 1999, during second summer residency, the researcher was asked to research and produce a draft unit of material for inclusion into the LT 516 Classical Studies in Leadership course for the coming September. The importance "to think and plan strategically during this phase" (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, pp.65-77) was compromised by a mid-July deadline. This action research project immediately took on the non-linear process Stringer describes as "working backward through routines, repeating processes, rethinking interpretations, leapfrogging steps or stages, and sometimes making radical changes in direction" (Stringer, 1996. p. 17).

The third step is Enacting the Plan and Observing How It Works. This step involves monitoring what is happening closely, and enacting and observing the product (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, pp.77-86). The researcher completed one unit of course material, which was included into the LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership fall program in September 1999 (Appendix B). During summer residency June 7, 1999 to July 9, 1999, at Royal Roads University, some summer faculty expressed doubt about whether there would be enough learner interest to warrant inclusion in the MALT programming. Of the 110 learners enrolled in the MALT 99 programs, 37, one Aboriginal and 36 non-Aboriginal, chose the Aboriginal Leadership Unit. The

researcher was able to monitor what was happening closely because RRU agreed to permit him to be the teaching assistant (TA) who monitored and evaluated the course work and on-line discussions with the 37 learners. In addition to the TA functions defined by the University, the researcher established some base-line monitoring criteria of his own. These criteria involved some running questions about learner response to new information, integration of new information into personal leadership style, and placement of self in the issues (Appendix B). Finally, at the end of the course work, the researcher posted a series of questions into the on-line discussion groups and invited anyone interested to answer them. It was explained that these questions would aid in the research for this thesis and hopefully contribute to an expanding leadership conversation involving Aboriginal leadership within the MALT program. There was a two-fold insurance of agreement to use participant responses, the first being the freedom not to even respond, and the second being a last question formally requesting permission. Appendix C contains the questions and the collated responses from each learner in their own words.

The fourth step is Reflection. This step involves reflecting, analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting, explaining, and drawing conclusions. This requires reflecting about the product, revising the analysis, and writing a rationale for a revised action plan (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, pp.86-90). The researcher designed several layers of reflective and evaluative questions that ran parallel with the course work and responses of the learners. There were the questions within the course materials (Appendix A, p. 1-38). There were the introspective and evaluative questions at the end of the unit (Appendix C). Also, there were the on-going base-line questions mentioned in Step 3 (Appendix B). Lastly, there were the continual introspective questions the researcher asked of himself. These will be addressed under Lessons Learned.

Although admittedly subjective to a degree, the lengthy and varied experience of the researcher as participant observer in cross-cultural and First Nations environments enables him to speak to some issues with a degree of credibility.

“Both participant observation and ethnography refer to methods whereby the researcher spends extensive time (e.g. months or years) in a setting trying to understand some aspect(s) of the setting from the perspective of those in it” (Palys, 1996, p. 203).

In this way, the researcher has a greater opportunity to “know” not just “know about” (Palys, 1997, p.4) the issues.

As described earlier in the Ethnography and Ethnocentrism section, a research methodology best described as postmodernist evolved from the critiques of “scientific” research methodologies provided by First Nations researchers. Laurel Richardson (1994) explains that,

“the core of postmodernism is the *doubt* that any method or theory, discourse or genre, tradition or novelty, has a universal or general claim as the “right” or privileged form of authoritative knowledge. ...No method has a privileged status” (Richardson, 1994, 517-18, italics in the original, as cited by Palys, 1997, p.207).

For the researcher, the search for Aboriginal research sources throughout the project generated an extra layer of ongoing research work, that of doubting the methodology itself. It was increasingly necessary to question the validity of the data collected from non-Aboriginal sources, but about Aboriginals.

Scrutinizing for the ingrained colonial mind set that governed past and much of the continuing research methodologies became essential.

Data Gathering Tools

During the June and July 1998 summer residency of the MALT program, the researcher conducted informal interviews with as many different learners and faculty as possible. At the beginning of residency, the researcher had no plan to use the information gathered from his questions as part of a major project. As a result, specific numbers were not kept but a safe estimation is that he spoke to approximately 36 learners or 65% of his own (98-1) class of 55 and approximately 16 learners or 30% of the second year (97-1) class of 55. Three of the interviewees were Aboriginal, two in 98-1 and one in 97-1. The questions below were also asked of four of the summer faculty and administrators.

The questions are general because, at the time, the researcher was trying to establish a sense of context. They were incorporated into mostly individual conversations and 4 or 5 group discussions. At that time, the researcher asked two basic questions. The first question was whether the individual had contact and/or involvement with Aboriginal people or cross cultural issues in their work and/or their lives. The second question was about whether the individual thought learning about Aboriginal leadership and cross-cultural leadership should be included in the MALT learning.

From the positive results of the data gathered from this questioning during first residency, the researcher began to formulate his thesis prospectus. His experiences as a learner in the first year on-line courses, particularly LT 513 Ethical Considerations and Evaluation in Action Research and LT516 Classical Studies of Leadership in Organizations, solidified his decision to

choose this subject as his major project. In the preparation of his Major Project Prospectus, the researcher prepared an initial literature review of relevant materials, prepared the supporting data, and forwarded a prepared prospectus to Royal Roads University in accordance with MALT program requirements. It was the intention of the researcher to seek organizational sponsorship from RRU directly since the project would address the content and process of their MALT programming.

Within a week of arriving at RRU for second residency, the researcher received approval for sponsorship from the RRU MALT program director, Dr. P. Gerry Nixon. As stated earlier, the researcher was asked to author an initial unit of course material on the subject of Aboriginal Leadership to be included in the coming fall 1999 course LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations. The researcher's original plan had been to present an outline for development of a course unit or module as a project deliverable upon completion of his thesis. The plan was that once/if the University agreed to include Aboriginal Leadership materials in the MALT program, the researcher would engage a collaborative team, predominantly Aboriginal, to methodically design both the content and process for an effective and authentic Aboriginal Leadership learning experience for primarily non-Aboriginal learners. The absolute necessity of this still needing to happen will be dealt with later under study recommendations.

The choice facing the researcher was whether to extricate himself from the planned schedule of participation and accept the challenge of preparing course materials during the remainder of residency, or to continue to participate in the regular schedule of activities for second year learners in the MALT program. It bears noting that the researcher originally envisioned his role as participating in a team primarily led by Aboriginal course designers. This did not happen. Therefore, the initial research concern

became whether the “integrity and authenticity” alluded to in the original thesis question would be compromised by preparing materials in a rush and not having the opportunity to engage Aboriginal collaborators as had been originally envisioned. The researcher consulted with the few Aboriginal people he was able to contact considering the timeframe and considering that the researcher was a resident of Northeastern Ontario and in Victoria only for summer residency. The Aboriginal people contacted supported the idea of making use of the opportunity to begin a broader conversation of leadership that included Aboriginal principles and practices. The integrity of the project would not be compromised if the researcher remained mindful to not present his work as representing Aboriginal peoples perceptions, values, or views. During all the literature reviews related to this thesis, the researcher has utilized Aboriginal authored sources whenever possible.

An initial unit of course material on Aboriginal Leadership was offered to learners in the LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations for the first time in September 1999. The researcher became the Teaching Assistant for the learners who chose the Aboriginal Leadership unit. Data were gathered in the following ways. First, the learners were asked to write a study paper on one of a number of Points to Ponder (Appendix A p. 1-38.). Secondly, the researcher monitored and participated in the on-line discussions between learners, who were expected to discuss with and provide feedback to each other in relation to their written submissions. Thirdly, the researcher entered into an evaluative discussion with each learner at the completion of the unit. Also the researcher posted a series of questions into the discussion groups at the end of the unit. Learners were free to answer them and permission was sought to use their responses as data for this thesis (Appendix C). Finally, throughout the process with the learners, the researcher maintained a set of empirical questions running parallel to the learner’s process. These observational questions were about sense of

placement of self in the issues, evaluation of personal response to cross-cultural challenges, integration of new information, and expression of desire to alter personal approach in light of new learning. The same questions were asked of the whole major project as it evolved and of the learning of the researcher (See Program Lessons Learned, this report p. 65).

Additional to the data gathering described above, the researcher expanded the literature review for three reasons. First, the researcher believed that the initial course material was incomplete even as a catalyst for further exploration. Because of the time-frame restraints, the researcher did not actively engage a team of Aboriginal collaborators except in a cursory way. As a result, the “authenticity and integrity” can be easily questioned despite the researcher’s use of predominantly Aboriginal reference materials and his focus on his own aversion to appearing to represent Aboriginal perceptions. Second, in response to the above, the focus became to expand the available information about Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal history and connect it to current Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal leadership and cross-cultural challenges. The intent was to create a context for legitimate exploration of different points of view. Third, the response from many of the learners working with the course material was that it was not enough information considering the enormity of the issues and certainly not integrated enough into the whole module and MALT program curriculum.

CHAPTER FOUR-RESEARCH STUDY RESULTS

Study Findings

The results of the research indicated the following. They appear in a sequence consistent with the evolution of the project.

- (1) All of the MALT learners and faculty that were interviewed during first summer residency 1998, agreed that knowing more about Aboriginal and cross-cultural leadership challenges would enhance their leadership capabilities.
- (2) In 1997, Royal Roads did attempt to generate greater awareness about First Nations culture within its staff and administration. The 10 hours of training called the First Nations Cultural Competency Training Program, was offered in a series of three workshops spread over a month. The facilitator indicated that not making cross-cultural learning systemic neutralizes any possible workshop benefits. This remains as a challenge to be addressed.
- (3) There are no Aboriginal faculty and one member of the Administration team with some Aboriginal ancestry presently involved in the MALT program.
- (4) According to Dr. P. Gerry Nixon, Director of the Organizational Leadership and Learning Division of Royal Roads University, about 6% of the enrollment over time has been First Nations as has been membership on the MALT Program Advisory Board. He points out that both these figures are significantly higher than graduate programs elsewhere.
- (5) Except for the researcher's initial unit on Aboriginal leadership in LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations, 1999 fall course, there are no formal opportunities offered within the current

MALT programming for learning about Aboriginal or cross-cultural leadership.

- (6) There was, in 1999, a solid interest in learning about Aboriginal Leadership. 37 learners or 33.6% of the total MALT enrollment chose to take the Aboriginal Leadership option in Unit 1 of LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership. There is a significant desire to know more and be more competent in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations within the community of learners in the MALT program.
- (7) The literature review and ensuing discussions revealed a significant distance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal historical views.
- (8) The introductory partial unit of material presented in LT516 Classical Studies in Organizational Leadership in September 1999, stimulated considerable interest but was of insufficient content and context to generate understanding or build capacity. The rest of the LT516 module structure offered no opportunity for integration and expansion of the learning. The following is an analysis of the data drawn from the responses to the researcher's questions asked at the end of the unit. The list of the questions and verbatim responses are found in Appendix C.

There was a 38% response to the questions. The following is a statistical breakdown of the responses.

- (1) 86% stated that they didn't know the origins of the problems facing Aboriginal communities and leaders.
- (2) 93% indicated that they had life or work contact with Aboriginal people.
- (3) 43% expressed surprise and concern about their growing awareness of their position of privilege.

- (4) 86% described being strongly affected by the information contained in the program material.
- (5) 93% expressed greater awareness of the challenges for Aboriginal leaders and greater sensitivity to them.
- (6) 71% indicated their intention to make changes to their approach to cross-cultural environments.
- (7) 100% expressed the desire to know more about the subject
- (8) 29% stated that the learning helped validate some dimensions of their present leadership style.
- (9) 14% expressed criticism of the generalized overview of such large issues.
- (10) 93% made recommendations for greater inclusion in the MALT program. These will be listed as Learner Recommendations in the Study Recommendations section.

What the research revealed wasn't a model for resolution or a clear direction but rather the revelation of the problems and challenges of ensuring integrity and balance in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations in general and in the on-going inclusion into the MALT program.

Study Conclusions

There is a solid interest within the MALT community of learners to know more about and be more competent in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations and leadership exchanges. There is also an acceptance that these competencies are important if a more just and equitable relationship is to be established and maintained. A comprehensive understanding of the history of the colonialization of Canada from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives is critical to the success of cross-cultural relations.

Any expansion of content and context of learning opportunities within the MALT program must include First Nations people directly. Any design and presentation of First Nations life and leadership realities must be designed and facilitated by First Nations people. Any expansion must be multi-level, affecting not only the MALT program distance learning and residencies, but also be supported by representation on faculty, and systemic inclusion in curriculum design, decision-making, and delivery of the MALT program.

Any comprehensive curriculum design must include the study of race and racism, privilege, governance, colonialism, and cross-cultural facilitation from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives. Cross-cultural competency building in all domains including negotiation, problem solving, community consultation, and conflict resolution must include training from First Nations facilitators and educators.

The ongoing use of established research data and research methodologies, as sources of legitimate information, must include serious scrutiny of the ethnocentrism of the intent of the research, the researcher, the data and the resulting conclusions. The cultural accuracy of the data, its use and presentation, must be validated and supported by First Nations researchers.

Lastly, in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal cross-cultural leadership exchanges, the enormity of the learning necessary to achieve a degree of leadership competence must be recognized and addressed in any further expansion of the curriculum. The brief partial unit offered in LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations in 1999 generated some significant learning for the participants but is insufficient in content or context to be considered a legitimate foundation for capacity or competence building in cross-cultural leadership.

Study Recommendations

The relationship between Canadians and Aboriginal peoples is constantly evolving; however the colonial foundations of the relationship have not. Knowing and understanding the historical relationship is essential to any attempts to structure a more just and equitable arrangement. The problems and challenges inherent in leading are enormous and require much of a leader who would try to build functional relationships that are sustainable. Specific to MALT is the question of how and where does one learn to lead competently in cross-cultural environments?

It is clear, from the research and learner interaction, that the initial Aboriginal Leadership unit material included in the LT516 course material requires serious upgrading. It was developed reactively to satisfy both the decision that a start that semester was better than waiting and the short timetable established by the course supervisor. An expanded literature review and bibliography are essential. Also an appropriate pre-residency reading list will support learner preparation for any learning which will be integrated into first residency, and as preparation for the first year on-line learning in both LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations and in LT513 Ethical Considerations and Evaluation in Action Research.

In addition, there are four areas requiring significant attention if RRU intends to integrate expanded Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal leadership learning into the MALT program or any other program.

These areas are:

- (1) Learning about historical and current Aboriginal life and leadership

- (2) Learning about the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal cross-cultural leadership challenges facing current leaders in both cultures, separately and collaboratively
- (3) Critically examining the ethnocentric and colonial paradigms engaging both cultures including critical examination of available research
- (4) Identifying the challenges and opportunities for the MALT program to build effective and equitable learning bridges

Because of the nature of this action research project, all of the recommendations have impacts on RRU as an organization and all address the issue of future research. Therefore the expansion of these four areas and the inclusion of the learner recommendations will be dealt with in Chapter Five, Research Implications.

CHAPTER FIVE – RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Organizational Implications and Future Research

As a preamble to discussing the four areas, the researcher feels it is necessary to identify some influential factors in the current learning exchanges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners. There is a growing awareness of the historical treatment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada and with many non-Aboriginal people there is a sincere desire to facilitate restitution and balance. The understanding by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal that they are engaged in a destructive colonial relationship, not of their own making, is essential to their capacity to share resolution. Aboriginal people rightly reject being treated as just another minority group or, even worse, a special interest group. Non-Aboriginal people regularly are repelled by the powerful expressions of pain, anger, grief, and rage about Aboriginal peoples' treatment at the hands of the non-Aboriginal controllers of their lives. The researcher is left to speculate on whether this discomfort was part of the response from RRU faculty, to the intense description of their residential school experiences by two Aboriginal presenters during Janice Simcoe's workshops at RRU in 1997. Considering the intensity of the damage done, whether one is expressing it or listening to it, it is difficult not to take it or make it personal, particularly if one believes, as many non-Aboriginal people do, that they themselves are not responsible for the racism and colonialism. As referred to earlier in this research, one systemic problem with privilege is the unconscious ignorance it engenders in otherwise caring people. Many non-Aboriginals struggle to see how their normal behaviours contribute to the colonial relationship. They resist the concept of complicity in the problems.

The pain, anger, grief and rage of Aboriginal people are legitimate. As victims of the colonializing structures that still control their lives, they continue to struggle for justice and the basics of legitimacy. The challenge is not so much in identifying the racist source of the historical and current problems as it is in engaging non-Aboriginal people in the destruction of the colonial systems. The consequences of colonialization and the realities of what changing it will demand of both cultures will increase as attempts to dismantle these systems intensify. Neither culture can live in isolation of the other and neither knows enough about the other to function comfortably and effectively. The truth is that non-Aboriginal people know incredibly less about Aboriginal people than Aboriginal people know about them, because non-Aboriginal people are the privileged ones in the colonial relationship. They have never had to know much about Aboriginal people. They have never had to think much past the cultural stereotypes and the social myths. As stated earlier, most of the learners involved in the new LT516 course material expressed surprise at how little they actually knew about the history of the issues.

The first area to be addressed is learning about Aboriginal life and leadership challenges, historical and current. This is the teaching domain of Aboriginal educators, elders, facilitators, and guides. As the research in this project supports, the University must engage Aboriginal educators, elders, and facilitators to create learning opportunities about Aboriginal culture, values, and historical evaluation. The need for collaboration with non-Aboriginal peers is important but the learning content and context, must be directed and delivered by Aboriginal people. The original material inserted into LT516 in September 1999, will not survive as much more than a token exercise unless followed by significant expansion into MALT programming.

One option available to the university is to hire Aboriginal faculty and course designers and start building a program that will be a complete course and can be interwoven into existing programs like MALT. Another is to find and negotiate course and credit exchanges with existing Aboriginal learning programs like the Indigenous Governance Program at the University of Victoria where learning programs developed by Aboriginal faculty offer legitimate learning from Aboriginal perspectives. Not only is this an opportunity for profound learning for administrations as well as learners but it also offers a model for the kind of inclusion and relationship building necessary for success in cross-cultural leadership. The exchanging of modules and credits between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal programs, learners, and faculty creates enormous learning and leading opportunities at a fraction of the cost of providing a comparable learning experience at the individual institutions.

The second area, learning about the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal cross-cultural leadership challenges is the most significant part of the recommendations. The learners who chose the Aboriginal Leadership option in LT516 Classical Studies of Leadership in Organizations made a series of recommendations in response to the research questions posed (Appendix C). They suggested some ways that greater learning could be incorporated into the MALT program. 64% recommended inclusion of an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Problem Based Learning Project to be presented during first residency. 14% suggested inviting a Native leader or elder to a Café Philosophy evening. 29% recommended more direct contact with Aboriginal people and more opportunity to experience functions like Band Meetings or ceremonies, and direct contact with leaders and elders. 36% expressed the desire for a more culturally diverse learning community and an equal number recommended expansion of the learning into a whole module or full course including a full Cross-Cultural Leadership Program.

The suggestion to develop a full Cross-Cultural Leadership Program has considerable merit. There continues to be a significant awkwardness and disparity in the area of distance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world-views and aspirations. Under the shadow of the historical and current colonial relationship, leaders from both cultures struggle to know how to engage the other effectively. It appears to the researcher that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leaders continue the long practiced colonial paradigms; one seeking self-directive opportunities and control of their destiny and the other seeking to hold onto advantage and control. Although this is an opportunistic paradigm present in national and international business development, it is not a foundation for building a sustainable future in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations here in Canada or anywhere else.

The recommendation to establish course and credit links with existing Aboriginal programs could easily have been included here as it would be, by definition, cross-cultural. The concept of focusing on cross-cultural leadership appears uniquely suited to the leadership learning spirit embedded in RRU's mission and in the MALT program. In the thinking of the researcher, as this action research project evolved, the development of a Cross-Cultural Leadership Program is both a natural extension and a significant addition to many of the courses presently offered at Royal Roads University.

Other options include hosting cross-cultural conferences, symposiums, and open forums on current issues. Certainly the direct inclusion of some of the learner suggestions, particularly an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Problem Based Learning Project during first residency, would be a significant contribution to the learning. The researcher also recommends that

appropriate additions be made to the “pre-residency” reading list for those interested in Aboriginal issues.

As the catalyst for the above recommendations, the researcher suggests that the university engage a pair of trained experienced facilitators with a history of cross-cultural advocacy, immersion in cross-cultural adult learning program design, and significant familiarity with the challenges to both cultures. This pair, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, would be charged with the responsibility of researching, developing programs, and, in collaboration with faculty and administration, facilitating the integration of cross-cultural learning within the MALT and RRU community of learners. Their role would not be that of expert as much as that of gathering expertise, designing curriculum, and integration. They would research the above recommendations, large and small, as to feasibility, appropriate delivery methodology and staffing, and facilitate the process of inclusion in a systematic and systemic way. The researcher’s long experience as a consultant/trainer within operating systems and the research in this project clearly indicate that building this kind of cross-cultural bridge requires significant commitment from the University.

The third area, the ethnocentric and colonial paradigms that define the nature of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations, cannot be challenged or changed successfully without significant learning about race and racism, privilege, power, governance, negotiation, and human rights. As the research identified, even the new human rights legislation in Canada abandons the rights of Aboriginal people to the very legislation that extracted those rights, the *Indian Act*. Each of these issues could be a complete study course and all of them profoundly affect one’s capacity to lead in our increasingly cross-cultural society. The pair of researcher/facilitators, referred to previously,

will develop a learning process that incorporates these subject areas and examines them from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives.

The research also presents a potent challenge to the credibility of much of the large body of research about Aboriginal people performed by non-Aboriginal researchers. Current Aboriginal historians like Vine Deloria are successfully refuting the mental models, the methodologies, and the results of much of the research. A significant and critically important challenge for the researcher/facilitators is to create a process for scrutinizing available research and to develop a network for accessing authentic information, research, and facilitating awareness about Aboriginal people's realities. The capacity to distinguish between authentic and inauthentic representations about Aboriginal people is important to the learner and critical to the leader.

In the fourth area, the primary challenge for Royal Roads University is to decide on the degree of commitment it is prepared to make with respect to providing cross-cultural leadership learning opportunities. The pair of researcher/facilitators can, as a primary mandate, investigate the potential choices and challenges, and develop a set of recommendations for achievable, incremental integration that adhere to the critical principles of integrity and authenticity identified throughout this project. As a learner immersed in the MALT program, the researcher is encouraged by the collaborative environment inherent in the content materials and the leadership models presented in the program. He believes that integration of cross-cultural learning opportunities into the MALT program is a natural fit. However, the researcher has considerable experience with the subject matter and recognizes the challenges that this kind of systemic integration can generate. It challenges an operating system, with its established paradigms, to self-examine. It regularly asks the human beings within the system to self-examine as well. This is often taken as an affront to individual and

organizational good intentions. It needs to be recognized at the outset that dealing with such potent issues as race and privilege is not easy or smooth. The capacity to lead competently in cross-cultural environments is an increasingly critical part of current leadership challenges and will not be easy to achieve. The researcher believes that there is opportunity for Royal Roads University to establish yet another twenty-first century leadership role in a profound way.

CHAPTER SIX – LESSONS LEARNED

Research Project Lessons Learned

hishuk ish ts'awalk t'un
(everything is connected)

This Nuu-chah-nulth guiding principle provides the basis for the lessons learned during this action research project and process. From the inception of the planning and development of the research question, the researcher has struggled with the compatibility between the research process and the learning required to answer the question. The researcher began this project intending to research the information necessary to create a welcoming opportunity for a predominantly non-Aboriginal community of learners to broaden the exploration of leadership through learning about Aboriginal leadership principles, practices, and challenges. The researcher's personal experience in living and working within the functional distance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures, was the catalyst for development of the project.

With the advent of the Federal government's current movement to "get out of the Indian business", the leadership challenges for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike are changing fundamentally. The non-Aboriginal legislative commitment to assimilation has been a dismal failure in every imaginable way and, although seriously damaged, Aboriginal people have endured. In their gathering strength, Aboriginal people are insisting that any further interaction be guided by the principles of justice, equity, and restitution. The researcher believes that what each culture knows about the other is insufficient to enable them to dismantle collectively the current destructive

relationship that haunts them and controls their capacity to design equitable, just, and sustainable solutions.

The legacy of *hishuk ish ts'awalk t'un* is reflected in the experience and the research of this action research project. As the research shows, the challenges ahead of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leadership and populations are enormous. They cannot be resolved by a series of "scientific", anthropological research exercises. There are no singular, specific, research questions that do not have holistic implications. Nor are there singular or specific solutions. A lesson learned is that action research, as a methodology, has proven valuable as a tool for facilitating inclusion in developing the ongoing questions, immersion in the issues, and validation of the results. It is also cyclical and living, returning to new growth to examine and build anew.

Another lesson learned is that the issues involved in understanding Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations are much larger than can be legitimately addressed in one unit of LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations. A learner conversation got started this past fall, but without providing substantive expansion of the learning opportunities, little can be expected in the development of deeper understanding or enhanced leadership competency. The researcher remembers speaking with the team that RRU engaged to develop their Conflict Management program during first summer residency in 1998. The eclectic expertise of that team ensured the quality of the program design. The researcher believes the same degree of involvement is necessary to design and facilitate a viable cross-cultural leadership program that would, in fact, lead in this growing and vital leadership field.

The researcher learned that the colonial context of systems thinking of non-Aboriginals has not changed much in the 30 years he has been involved in

these matters. There is greater awareness about the genre of Aboriginal culture, and, as indicated earlier, there is a sincere desire to know more, but the mind-sets and paradigms of a privileged, dominant culture are what Aboriginal people continue to deal with in most cross-cultural exchanges, certainly with non-Aboriginal institutions be they economic, social, political, or educational. It is worthy of note that there is a growing phenomenon of privilege and elitism that Aboriginal peoples are having to deal with from within their own administrations as well. The challenge for all involved, and certainly RRU, is to create an inviting, dynamic, and balanced cross-cultural learning environment.

The research project has been difficult to manage. The researcher feels like he has been “coming through the back door” throughout the project. He has tried continually to balance the amount of actual time this subject requires, with the timetable demands of LT516 course involvement, with a working life and with the constant, pervading enormity of the issues. He learned that existing research methodologies were not a reliable source of data for creating a holistic understanding of what has, in truth, transpired or what to do about it. From his experience in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal environments, the researcher knew instinctively that most of the “scientific” interactions were not reflective of Aboriginal realities but the research in this action research project revealed the scope of the problem. As indicated in the recommendations, and the research, future researchers need to examine the potential research project on a variety of planes including the appropriateness of doing it at all, questioning the mental models behind the exercise, and primarily questioning the research methodologies and results of the research they will encounter while fulfilling the traditional paradigm of literature review.

The researcher followed a familiar researching path of designing a relatively specific question to be explored and proceeding to explore it. The simple truth is that the question could have legitimately changed weekly as the project evolved and the greatest mistake the researcher could have made would have been to restrict his search to just the areas that would answer the question rather than let the breadth of the subject reveal itself and direct the learning where it needed to go. The researcher was continually left wondering how a novice to the issues would be able to survive or even discern credible data and relate it holistically to its current implications. Everything is connected. In retrospect, the research question could have been "What factors control and affect current Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations and where can leaders from both cultures go to learn how to manage the relationship better?"

The researcher finished with a shorter bibliography than when he began. The primary reason is the researcher's commitment to use Aboriginal sources of research and the ethnocentric and ethnographic challenges that some of his sources could not survive. The other reason was that the researcher's original list contained many personal books on the subject of Aboriginal spirituality. Aboriginal spiritual beliefs are integrated into everything Aboriginal and it would be completely inappropriate for this researcher to attempt to express or explain them.

The technical act of doing research on other human beings is preceded by some basic assumptions thrown into question by this experience. Does the researcher's curiosity grant him/her any special rights or obligate any "other" to get involved in satisfying the curiosity? There is much ethical focus on ensuring the accuracy of the data and on doing no harm while there, often without a corresponding ethical focus on the right to be there doing it at all. To go to another's culture to find an answer simply because I/we have a

question is no less colonial an act than deciding this land is now my possession just because I showed up here. Over the centuries Aboriginal traditional protocols of generosity and kindness to strangers were often misread by researchers who interpreted them as Aboriginal acceptance of their presence or worse, willing support of the research initiative. It is no wonder that many First Nations are resisting and refusing to have any more research “done” on them and demanding control of the process and the data.

A lesson learned is about the growing amount of information available on-line and from Aboriginal organizations about these issues. Here again, the seeker needs to scrutinize the on-line material as diligently as any other research about Aboriginal people.

Finally the project lesson learned is that the feasibility and necessity of developing a holistic, integrated, cross-cultural leadership program is achievable. In order to facilitate competency enhancement in the area of cross-cultural leadership, the university has a unique opportunity to address the matter proactively. The researcher admittedly does not have a deep understanding of the University's internal cultural protocols. Given that fact, it is the researcher's view that RRU's leading edge approach to leadership and learning, the MALT approach to problem based learning and action research, and the growing availability of opportunities for learning from and with Aboriginal people, seem to be a natural fit, albeit a challenging one.

Program Lessons Learned

During the completion of this action research project the Master of Arts in Leadership and Training (MALT) candidate demonstrated his ability to apply and integrate the following MALT program competencies:

1b) *Demonstrate leadership characteristics.*

The graduate candidate demonstrated leadership in a variety of ways. He designed course material, participated in the process of integrating the material into LT516 Classical Studies in Leadership in Organizations, provided the role of Teaching Assistant for on-line discussions and evaluated course submissions for 37 learners, mostly mid-career professionals in LT516, and facilitated exploration of cross-cultural issues. His focus on integrity and authenticity directed the course of the project. With the learners, he acted as guide, facilitator, counselor, advocate, and mediator as learners dealt with new and sometimes controversial issues. He modeled his own behaviour on a simple set of principles, those of truth, kindness, bravery, wisdom, love, respect, and humility, and strove to enable others to use these principles to guide their learning. His participation in shared learning and individual learning demonstrated organizational commitment, integrity, and generosity of spirit.

1c) *Provide Leadership*

The graduate candidate demonstrated both leadership and organizational commitment by choosing to contribute to the learning of his peers and the administration of his own learning institution. His work initiated a broader examination of leadership from a cross-cultural perspective in ways not approached before by learners in the MALT program. He chose to address a large cross-cultural leadership learning gap and is recommending ways to include improved and broader learning in this area. He prepared initial course material and will work with RRU to upgrade the quality and scope of this material and appropriate learning experiences as the development of cross-cultural learning evolves.

1e) *Recognize ethical considerations*

The graduate candidate recognized and explored ethical considerations in different and deeper ways. Not only did the candidate adhere to the level of ethical considerations at the core of LT513 Ethical Considerations and Evaluation in Action Research, his research led him into the examination of research methodologies and philosophies as they were perceived from the perspective of Aboriginal researchers. This resulted in examining and challenging some of the root assumptions about research and its implications to Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal historical and current relationships. Ethically, research and researchers cannot expect to perform research in Aboriginal environments without considering and accommodating these growing research concerns. As a result the researcher used predominantly Aboriginal authored research when representing Aboriginal perspectives of the issues addressed in this project.

2b) *Apply systems thinking to the solutions of leadership and learning problems.*

The graduate candidate applied systems thinking when designing and implementing the learning of the course material for LT516. He also required significant systems thinking in designing the recommendations he presents in this document to Royal Roads University. The significance of the issues addressed required that his recommendations be *realistic*, *achievable* socially and cross-culturally and economically, *inclusive*, and *respectful* of all cultures involved. The systems designs or redesigns necessary to include cross-cultural leadership learning are beyond the scope of this action research project although the project and researcher can be the catalyst for facilitating the inclusion.

4c) *Create learning opportunities in the work place.*

The graduate candidate has facilitated concrete opportunities for learning within the defined work place of this project which is the university itself. The learning is as multi-level as this project demonstrates in it's exploration of these complex issues.

4e) *Help others learn.*

The graduate candidate received considerable feedback that his work had resulted in significant learning for the learners enrolled in the Aboriginal Leadership unit in LT516. He facilitated the learning of others not only through the course material but also through the discussion group exchanges, communication with individual learners, the evaluation process and through extended supports that continued after the course.

5a) *Identify, locate, and evaluate research findings.*

5b) *Use research methods to solve problems.*

The graduate candidate's entire course material and bibliography demonstrate how he identified, located, and evaluated the research findings. As described throughout the research project, experience led the researcher to a process of questioning and evaluating the research methodologies and findings as they look through the "eyes" of Aboriginal people and researchers. Many of the LT 516 learners needed help with their research as Aboriginal authored sources are sometimes more difficult to find and there are challenges in discerning accurate representations from within the large existing body of research about Aboriginal people done by non-Aboriginals.

7b) *Communicate with others through writing.*

The graduate candidate demonstrated this competency in a variety of ways. He authored the Aboriginal Leadership course material that was included in LT516 in September 1999. He communicated on-line as the Teaching Assistant for 37 learners. This included written exchanges, evaluations, and questionnaires. He has rewritten and up-graded the literature review that hopefully will be included in the next presentation of LT516.

7e) *Use computers to facilitate communication.*

All of the correspondence with the 37 learners enrolled in LT516 was done on-line. The responses to learners, submissions to their learning, evaluations and questionnaires were all communicated to and from the graduate candidate through computers. The candidate's knowledge about communication using different software, best use of attachments, and tracking learners' work and responses, increased dramatically during this process. He recognizes that more personal learning in this area would only improve his communication with learners.

Additional Competency Added

3d) *Evaluate and plan one's own role and future within an organization.*

The graduate candidate believes that Royal Roads University is the appropriate host for a serious study of the cross-cultural challenges facing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leaders. Furthermore, the candidate believes that his 36 years of involvement with the subject are of deep value to the successful evolution of this project. His long history of innovative program design, his 14 years as a private consultant/trainer (much of it developing infrastructure and skills building with First Nations), his high level of involvement in designing and facilitating competency based adult experiential learning processes, and his life long

personal commitment to improving Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations through personal involvement and the training of many others, make him the appropriate choice to facilitate this development. Upon completion of this thesis, the graduate candidate intends to facilitate a discussion with MALT and RRU program administrators about the feasibility and appropriateness of proceeding with expansion of cross-cultural leadership learning to a degree that befits this important leadership challenge.

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IV. Aboriginal Leadership

Introduction: This section of Unit One is the result of a growing interest in the MALT learning community in aboriginal leadership and aboriginal leadership challenges, historical and current. There is no assumption that this brief introduction represents anything other than a limited view of an enormous body of knowledge. Aboriginal peoples' spiritual understanding of themselves and their connection to the living earth, and their strong relationship with their Elders, are two important areas of knowledge and are intentionally not dealt with in this writing. Considering the magnitude of their importance, the author believes it would be inappropriate for anyone, certainly any non-aboriginal, to attempt to encapsulate the scope of their pervading influence. The author does not assume that this writing represents the views of aboriginal peoples. The intent is to inform the reader of some of the issues, historical and current, challenging aboriginal leadership today. It is an invitation to the learner to explore further, and an expression of hope for a more inclusive human community.

In this section, the word "Western" is meant to represent a genus of Western European/North American socio-political, economic, religious values and practices. The word "aboriginal" is meant to represent the indigenous peoples of North America.

Historical Context: Current issues in aboriginal leadership have been shaped profoundly by what has transpired since first contact. That history is the foundation for understanding present challenges in aboriginal and Canadian leadership alike.

The basic elements in the content of the Indian Act have remained unchanged for over 100 years. The Act, passed in 1876, is "a cradle-to-grave set of rules, regulations and directives. From the time of birth, when an Indian child must be registered in one of seventeen categories defining who is 'Indian', until the time of death, when the Minister of Indian Affairs acts as executor of the deceased person's estate, . . ." (Mercredi/Turpel 1994)

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A historical cascade of laws was born in this Act. These laws methodically eroded aboriginal peoples' human and civil rights to live, move, work, make decisions, and gather in ways that are consistent with their beliefs and cultural practices. In the more than two centuries since its passage, in spite of some significant rewording and re-framing and increased consultation with aboriginal nations, the Act and the government has retained nearly absolute legislative control over aboriginal peoples and administrations. Taiaiake Alfred describes these changes as "redefining without reforming", ensuring that "it is still white society's needs that are met." (Alfred, 1999)

The superficial benevolence in this process can not hide the clear commitment to assimilation. Sir John A. Macdonald's statements from the discussions and debates of Hansard encapsulate that commitment in an early form. "Ultimately, within a few generations, there will no longer be any Indian reserves, there will no longer be any Indians and, therefore, there will no longer be any Indian problem." (Sinclair, 1997)

Given this history, the current challenges in aboriginal leadership are enormous. Some aboriginal communities choose simply to fill in Western hierarchical roles with aboriginal people. Alfred states that the existing power structures are content with Indians running the reserves "so long as they behave like bureaucrats and carry out the same old policies. Redefined and reworded, the 'new' relationship still abuses indigenous people, albeit more subtly." (Alfred, 1999)

The Act is hated by many. Former Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Ovide Mercredi stated that "We cannot survive and make progress under the totalitarian rule of the Indian Affairs bureaucracy; we have to do it through the free will of our peoples." (Mercredi 1994). Both Mercredi (1994) and Alfred (1999) reflect the opinions of most aboriginal leaders that the Act is an unacceptable racist relic. The desire to be rid of it is strong, yet many aboriginal leaders and communities are dependent upon the inherent paternalism in the Act and its bureaucracy and fear a life without it.

The historical revisions made to the Indian Act have addressed many issues about the administration of the legislation and have improved some things for aboriginal people. But its core dimensions of domination and control of a people continue to be its defining features.

Philosophy of Leadership: The foundations of North American aboriginal leadership are fundamentally different from those in Western Classical leadership. An understanding of the differences is critical to appreciating the evolving leadership challenges for aboriginal and non-aboriginal alike. At the root are the contrasting beliefs about ecological placement. In his speech to an Aboriginal Justice Conference in Saskatoon in 1993, Associate Chief Judge of the Province of Manitoba, Murray Sinclair, pointed out the differences between the Western tradition, in which "man" is placed in a hierarchy just below God but above "all other earthly creation", and the aboriginal tradition, in which the interests of mankind "are not to be placed above those of any other part of creation." (Sinclair 1993) Chief Seattle summed up the aboriginal view in this way: "This we know, the earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. This we know, all things are connected like the blood which unites a family. All things are connected." (Seattle, 1852)

These contrasting world-views manifest themselves in every dimension of the historical relationship between Western and aboriginal cultures. They can be characterized respectively as exclusive and inclusive views. "In the matter of the hierarchy, or relative importance of beings within creation, aboriginal and Western intellectual traditions are almost diametrically opposed. It goes without saying that our world-view provides the basis for those customs, thoughts and behaviours we consider appropriate." (Sinclair 1993) (*Italics in original*)

Milton M.R. Freeman, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alberta, elaborates on the fundamental cultural differences by explaining that Western methods

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are in essence reductionist. (Ross, p.62) They seek to "understand organisms or nature by studying the smallest or simplest manageable part or sub-system in essential isolation." Aboriginal views, on the other hand, focus on life "in a world not of linear casual events but of constantly reforming, multi-dimensional, interacting cycles where nothing is simply a cause or an effect, but all factors are influences impacting other elements of the system-as-a whole..." (Freeman 1992) It is noteworthy that recent developments in Western theories of leadership and systems chronicle a migration from traditional hierarchical and reductionist models to servant leadership and holistic systems thinking inherent in aboriginal life and aboriginal leadership.

Traditional approaches to leadership in most Western societies were hierarchical. In contrast, much of aboriginal leadership was ecological. The community decided who would be best suited to lead in the endeavour at hand. The selection of a leader was driven by the needs of the community at any given time. One cannot abstract from or eliminate the concept of community when discussing aboriginal leadership. "In fact, it is impossible to understand an indigenous reality by focussing on individuals or discrete aspects of culture outside of a community context." (Alfred, 1999) To build on Chief Seattle's earlier words, the belief in universal interrelationship was expressed by consensus in the community. Consensus decision making processes in aboriginal communities were representative of the thoughts and needs of all, often including children. The quality of the decision reached was more important than the efficiency of the process used to come to the decision. This stands in stark contrast to the Western hierarchical method, where decisions only need represent the interests of those in power took precedence. The primary example of the contrast is the selection of leadership. Clan mothers often did the selection. Leadership was functional and, at every moment, was in the decision-making hands of the community. Leadership in the Western definition was positional. It meant having power and influence over others.

From the Western viewpoint, the most easily recognized form of aboriginal leadership was the hereditary chieftom. The chieftoms mirrored the familiar Western models of

royalty where leadership stature was a matter of bloodline. Less easily understood by Westerners was the clan system where certain responsibilities for the larger, common good were allocated to specific clans who supported the learning of the skills needed to fulfil those responsibilities. In Ojibway culture "children of the bird clans, for example, were expected to put special effort into developing their leadership skills by concentrating on such things as speaking, grammar, history, and tradition, given that leaders had no other authority except the force of ... character and persuasion." (Ross, 1996) The young in these family/clans were groomed from an early age to expect, accept, and carry out the leadership roles. They were neither selected nor elected. Electing leaders was a Western process imposed, by government legislation, upon aboriginal communities. It continues to be the process of choice in selecting leadership in contemporary aboriginal life.

The majority of aboriginal communities, however, used to select leadership only as the need arose, utilizing the talents and skills they had from within their people.

According to Antone, Miller, and Myles (1986 p.13) there are five basic areas in which communities seek leadership.

- · Education,
- · Government,
- · Economics/Production,
- · Social Organization,
- · Spiritual/Cultural support.

Those chosen to lead in these areas revealed their appropriateness through living a life of demonstrated competence and character. They performed the key functions of:

- a) *Catalyst or Guide*: The guide/catalyst was afforded the "right "to lead because of a known commitment to respecting the rights, traditions, and desires of the community. This person leads the community to discover its own potential and to resolve problems;

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- b) *Facilitator or Enabler*: This person was chosen to facilitate the community organization process. Enabling the community to define and act upon its decisions. This person often will be called upon to represent the community in dealings with other organizations;
- c) *Expert or Teacher*: This person provided information, technical experience, advice, and evaluation to the community or to groups within the community. This person is not an enabler but rather an informer/teacher;
- d) *Therapist or Counselor*. This person was empowered to deal with underlying, often unconscious forces which undermine the community confidence and ability to organize. (Antone, Miller, Myres, 1986).

Many aboriginal cultures in North America measured character and competence against a set of principles described as the Seven Grandfathers or the Seven Truths. These principles are Honesty, Bravery, Kindness, Wisdom, Respect, Love, and Humility. Individuals who adhered to some or all of these in their behaviour, were expected to lead. In close knit communities those who kept these Truths were well known and would be approached to lead when the community needed them. Because of the communal nature of aboriginal communities, members could allocate leadership by consensus on the basis of long observed behaviour. "So there is no such thing as a leader who has authority over all things. Instead, it is a question of exercising leadership skills as the occasion demands, rather than having authority over others given to you for a set period of time." (Ross 1996) (italics in original)

In Return to the Teachings, Rupert Ross explains that leadership was not based on command or expected obedience. Leaders had to rely on persuasion and moral stature instead of force. Once a process or project was completed, "members disbanded and the act of leading was terminated." (Ross 1996)

This holistic approach to leadership was misunderstood by the non-aboriginal colonizers. They assumed that aboriginal peoples had no leadership because they

couldn't easily identify a hierarchical power figure. The Indian Act and ensuing legislation imposed on all First Nations the process of democratic election of selected candidates to hierarchical term positions. These laws created what Ovide Mercredi calls the "10 second model of democracy." "It gives us input at the ballot box for a total of about 10 seconds every few years." (Mercredi/Turpel, 1996)

Recent improvements in the superficial elements of the Act have not had a direct, positive effect on the lives of aboriginal people. The fundamental results of centuries of ethnostress have not changed or been successfully addressed by any of the negotiating to date. Antone, Miller, and Myers (1986) examine ethnostress in an educational book titled The Power Within People. They begin by stating that indigenous people still lead both Canada and the United States in suicides, alcoholism, family breakdown, and substance abuse. They present enlightening strategies for addressing community and personal health. They suggest that the effects of continual oppression are most often expressed in the way individuals treat themselves, their families, and their communities.

Feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and buried rage, when combined with the seduction of greed and power, often lead aboriginal people to turn on each other. Taiaiake Alfred addresses the critical dimensions of oppression that now manifest themselves in such destructive behaviours aboriginal to aboriginal, man to woman and child, and greed and power-driven aboriginal administrators to community members in some communities. "Colonialization created the conditions of material and social deprivation, but the failure to confront them is our own. Why have we directed our anger at ourselves and our families rather than its source?" (Alfred, 1999)

Current aboriginal leaders, he challenges, are using power and Western style structures "with the best of intentions for the good of the people" but "the fact remains that holding non-consensual power over others is contrary to tradition." (Alfred, 1999)

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Closing Remarks: To establish justice, restitution, and integrity in the relationships between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples, non-aboriginals face significant challenges as well. Peggy McIntosh outlines one of the challenges resulting from cultural blindness. "As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage." She describes this privilege as "an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious." (McIntosh, 1988)

Black activist and satirist, James Baldwin, speaking in Toronto in 1971, said that as strong and as just as their arguments were, little changed for black Americans until white Americans began to dismantle their own personal practices that consciously or unconsciously supported black disadvantage.

The challenges for non-aboriginals and certainly non-aboriginal leadership are two-fold. First, non-aboriginals must "remove the barriers to growth." (Senge, 1994) The first challenge in leadership is to see and challenge cultural and personal paradigms which encourage us to seek privilege over others. One systemic problem with privilege is the unconscious ignorance it engenders in otherwise caring people. Salish consultant, Carrie Ford, talks about this: "What non-Native people need to know about me is far less than what they need to know about themselves."

Judge Rupert Ross agrees. "As long as the government and officials of this country continue to act as if the original peoples are the ones in need of instruction and improvement, so long will suspicion and distrust persist." (1992, p.ix). Taiaiake Alfred expresses that distrust in a variety of ways in his writings. "Lawyers, advisers, consultants, managers, government agents" he says "are not Native and therefore cannot be expected to share our ideals." (Alfred, 1999) (author's italics). This simple expression of distrust of non-aboriginals speaks to the natural results of oppression and unearned privilege.

The second leadership challenge is to define and then facilitate the development of an ethical framework for our future. That framework must address these assumptions and privileges and encourage commitment from the privileged. We cannot expect trust from our aboriginal partners unless we become trustworthy and truly inclusive ourselves.

Guide to Readings:

FIRST READING. Judge Murray Sinclair has distinguished himself as one of many current aboriginal leaders. He is Ojibway and an Associate Chief Judge of the Province of Manitoba. He has practiced law since 1980. His teaching and speaking on matters of law as it relates to aboriginal issues and aboriginal rights keep him in great demand nationally. He presents a aboriginal perspective of Canadian law and its past and current impact on aboriginal lives.

The reading is a speech he offered to the Aboriginal Justice Learning Network in 1997. He examines the relationship between Canada and aboriginal people by highlighting the legislative history.

SECOND READING. The second reading is a small book to help people and communities understand the origins of the confusion in their lives and to offer some methods for organizing healthier communities. Its purpose was to support aboriginal communities but has contributed greatly in the organizing of non-aboriginal communities as well.

1-38 *Philosophy of Leadership***Points to Ponder**

1. In your view, what can non-aboriginals learn from the issues facing aboriginal leadership in Canada? What can they learn from these issues that will improve non-aboriginal leadership issues?
2. Describe and comment on the gender system differences (e.g., the placement and treatment of women) between aboriginal culture and Western culture (or contemporary mainstream Canadian culture). Discuss the implications for leadership of these differences.
3. Elaborate and reflect on the philosophical differences between aboriginal leadership thinking and *one* of the other philosophical approaches covered in this unit. Make careful and detailed comparisons, pointing to similarities or opportunities of convergence, as well as dissimilarities and ultimate incompatibilities. What can be done to bring about a meeting of minds?
4. What, in your view, are the leadership challenges involved in establishing justice and equity in aboriginal/non-aboriginal relations? From a leadership perspective, what can non-aboriginals do to help improve their evolving relationship with aboriginal people in Canada?
5. The Seven Grandfathers or the Seven Truths, as ethical principles of some aboriginal approaches to leadership, suggest comparison with ethical principles from Western culture. Is this similarity less than it seems, or does it hold out some hope of convergence, despite cultural differences, of leadership philosophies?

1. Is the learner familiar with the context of Aboriginal issues?
2. Is the learner familiar with current and historical Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal cross-cultural issues?
3. Does the learner address the current issues from a first person or a third person perspective?
4. In relationship to the information, is the learner developing a learning path for themselves?
5. Does the learner express any interest/desire to alter their personal approach to leadership as a result of the new learning?
6. What/who does the learner believe needs changing in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations?
7. Does the learner define a role for themselves in the changes?

Questions for MALT 99-1 and 99-2 Learners Who Chose the Aboriginal Leadership Option in Unit 1 of LT516 for Oct. 1999.

1. How do you feel this course material, readings, and discussions have affected your understand of:
 - i. Aboriginal Leadership?
 - ii. Non-Aboriginal Leadership?
 - iii. Your own Leadership style?
2. What can we, as contemporary leaders, learn from our historical relationship Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal?
3. Would it be useful to expand the learning about Aboriginal leadership into other parts of the MALT program? What kind of learning do you think would enhance the learning?
 - i. The summer residencies
 - ii. The distance learning
4. What have you learned about yourself in this process?
5. How can we find a way, with integrity and authenticity, to integrate First Nations leadership principles and practices into the MALT program?

My last question is:

“Do I have your permission to use your answers (data not names) as part of my research for my major research project?”

I thank you for your generosity, wisdom, and open spirit as we explore this difficult subject.

Paul Bagordo
MALT 98-1

Questions for MALT 99-1 and 99-2 Learners who chose the Aboriginal Leadership Option for Unit 1 of LT516 for Oct.1999.

1. How do you feel this course material, readings, and discussions have affected your understanding of:

a. Aboriginal Leadership

* I really enjoyed the course material, readings and discussions for this module. With the historical perspective, I found myself feeling more empathetic regarding the Aboriginal leadership challenges today. Antone et al articulated the information very well. The Executive Director for our Health Board would like to borrow the readings. We work so closely with Aboriginals, that I think it is important to learn as much as we can about each other and our leadership similarities and differences so we can attempt to better understand why we do the things we do and how we can improve our relationships.

*This course has been an "eye opener" for me with respect to the history of the treatment of aboriginal peoples in Canada. I particularly enjoyed Judge Sinclairs transcripts. As someone living and working in a region of our country that has a majority aboriginal population, I recognize how little I know. It has given me a better appreciation/understanding of the "anomie" I see and feel prevalent in aboriginal (and other) cultures today

* In terms of the issues affecting aboriginal peoples, I found the readings and discussions very humbling and illuminating. I have been vaguely aware of the issues and history, mostly by "osmosis" - the news, friends, working on projects with the Friendship Centre, etc.. But to actually sit down and focus and pay attention - I needed to do this. It makes the issues much harder to ignore.

Over and above the module I have sought out additional resources and opportunities to learn more.

This section was different than the others (Plato, etc) because history and context and personal stories were stressed much more here. This is a good thing, but it feels a bit like "which one of the four does not match the others...." I chose to do this module partly because it was different, and certainly more relevant to me. I understand the value of knowing about long-dead white guys' thinking as that has certainly shaped our current reality, but aren't we trying to change that? (Heh, why weren't there any women studied?)

* Although I have a deep interest in Aboriginal culture, my knowledge is limited. The readings and discussions were extremely valuable in opening my eyes to Aboriginal Leadership - I was struck by their deliberate strategies to identify leaders as children and develop leaders for specific situations.

* I feel that all the above have helped me understand general issues about aboriginal leadership. It makes me want to study more.

**** They transcript by Chief Judge Murray Sinclair was very insightful from a Justice System perspective. I have shared this paper with many others both from the Aboriginal community and in the College. The true nature of Aboriginal Leadership today, was not really examined. The concern that I have is the credence given to the "myths" of Aboriginal leadership. I have been involved with Aboriginal communities most of my life, and a few years ago worked with the local communities to develop a Management in Aboriginal program which we delivered through the College for 2 years. I have also been involved in Treaty Training for Treaty Liaison Workers, and I'm presently involved in workplace training for community people who are learning challenged. I guess I wanted to know about leadership today and Aboriginal Canada with all its new dynamic and challenges.***

I think we definitely need to have more reading/listening/viewing by Aboriginal leaders and authors. To understand Aboriginal leadership one has to have an understanding of what has made Aboriginal communities what they are today, and an awareness of the issues they are currently facing. Too little information leads to negative or pan-Indian stereotypes and 'instant expert' syndrome - scary stuff.

We are not studying non-Aboriginal leadership in terms of how the Romans or Greeks led in this unit, and we do not do justice to modern day Aboriginal leaders and their eclectic leadership strategies/philosophies by focusing on a mix-n-match of poorly understood traditional models from a variety of very different Aboriginal cultural groups.

* I have a new and better understanding of the Aboriginal culture now. I have a respect for the method of leadership. It is not what I am used to. It may be slower than Western democracy but I feel it is more inclusive i.e. the community takes ownership. There is a sense of responsibility to each other and no emphasis on power e.g. the leader can change according to the project

* 1a) b) c) I feel the readings gave me a more complete understanding of the
 > historical events surrounding the destruction of the Aboriginal culture
 and
 > a more complete vision of the process of destruction. I have always been
 > interested in how an individual's esteem is ruined as I am confronted with
 > this issue regularly in my work. The formulas presented in the "Power
 > Within People" for the process of psychological, emotional and cultural
 > dissolution were enlightening and re-inforced my belief that it is a
 simple thing to understand, despite the difficulty we face in rebuilding. I came
 > to realize that non-aboriginal leadership is very victimizing, again,
 > something I have always sensed but had not been able to articulate. I
 > learned several practical approaches for helping children who have been
 > victimized in a similar fashion and for working within my organization
 with a clear understanding of and strategy for dealing with the hurt and pain

> that surrounds most individuals.

* I found "Power of the People" to be a very inspiring book. There is a good balance of explanation (history) with solutions and ideas and a solid message for the plan for the future. I also found Sinclair's speech enlightening. It gave me a solid base from which to write my statement. I must say, my biggest learning came from reading everyone else's comments, reviews and replies. This allowed great expansion of my understanding and also spurred many thoughts.

* I have had a lot of first hand experience working with First Nations children but I am sad to say I was almost completely ignorant of the importance of the leadership style distinctions in understanding the difference in cultural behaviours. I finally understand just the beginnings after reading the materials and partaking in the discussions why it is so difficult to communicate as a non aboriginal with the leadership of our local aboriginal people concerning their children. As a people, the evidence of the shock of ethnostress is glaringly evident. The internal struggle to refocus and live traditional forms of leadership while the external world pressures with paperwork and mechanized/computerized timelines must be tremendous.

* 1. I found the material indeed useful in understanding Aboriginal Leadership. I had done some basic reading on Aboriginal issues a few years ago when I was taking a Strategic Studies course, but I tended to concentrate on the Politics and the legal framework, and not on the humanity and leaderships aspects of the Aboriginal Culture. I am not sure the reading has affected my understanding of non-Aboriginal leadership per se, but it did shed a big light on the conflicting philosophies of the past, as I see it. Nearly autocratic governments dealing with a People living on consensus leadership sounds like a recipe for the disaster that occurred in the last century. As to my own leadership style, well... I am a Commodore in the Navy. I was raised since 17 years old to make plans, assess risks, and give and take orders. As I matured and progressed, I realised that my successes were more due to a blend of participative and consultative then autocratic leadership. I am not sure that my environment would always allow me to abandon myself to the collective wisdom of others, but I have come to value consultation. So there is a thread.

*. The material thus far has deepened my resolve to do things "differently".... I have been fortunate in the past 13 years to work with very pro-active people in terms of furthering/developing relationships between community groups. I can still grimace in recalling my former principal call "Indians" down to the gym for a "dressing-down" (lots of fighting had been occurring) in my first or second year as a teacher. (Oh it was shocking....I couldn't believe that someone in a leadership position ...just years away from retiring... could be so insensitive.) There was a lot of you-know-what hitting the fan after his "page" in the following days, and it

was a symbol of how far the school had fallen in interactions between the two groups. From there it has only gone up, to the point that the middle school is teaching the s'encooten (spelling?) language. We have incredible teaching assistants, a full-time instructional support teacher at the board office, all to support our better liaising and meeting the needs of the aboriginal students/community. There has been opportunity for us to attend several long-house functions, and, unfortunately, to attend too many funerals on band land. In my current position as administrator of alternate schools in the district, I see students who did not succeed at all in the regular system....and of course we have 10% population at the one campus as aboriginal students. I need to know how to better service/address their needs, how to play a more effective role in their lives, and how to learn more about why they have the learning challenges they do. The materials and discussions in this section have helped me somewhat--although more discussion, perhaps on-line or in-person, would greatly benefit me, rather than our generalizing. I'm at the point where I need specifics.

* The course has absolutely, irrevocably affected my understanding of Aboriginal people. Having been born and raised in BC, you may think that I would have some knowledge of the Aboriginal culture and people. In fact, I didn't. It took the Malt program to open my eyes, ears and pores to the fact that I knew nothing! I now believe that I have at least touched the surface of understanding the culture and, indeed, do feel that at least the top layer of the onion has been peeled back. I am a believer that whatever culture we are born into is but an accident of birth and that we share this land together and so I have never felt distant or separate from Aboriginal people. Now I realize that is because I walked around in my 'privileged' white skin, not knowing the very history that gave me that privilege. It has been exciting, enriching and worthwhile for me to learn the very little that I now have. It is but a beginning.

b. Non-Aboriginal Leadership

**** The demands of non-Aboriginal leadership are enormously different from those of Aboriginal leadership. The course materials are excellent in terms of developing a better understanding of non-Aboriginal leadership. Perhaps there is even more we could learn about ourselves and our own systems by increasing our understanding of the impact our leadership has historically had on Aboriginal people, how this impact has contributed to the state of Aboriginal communities today, and the ongoing affects today of our current political agenda's.***

* This module did not really give me any different perspectives on Non-Aboriginal leadership styles, but rather the differences between the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal leadership.

* Our "western" models of leadership has begun to move towards a more holistic/value based model of leadership....something aboriginal cultures have done for centuries. Is the concept of servant leadership really an emerging transformational theory?

* In terms of leadership: One thing I found interesting is that the other three leadership philosophies that were studied were attributed to one person - Plato, Machiavelli, Lao Tzu. Yet this section was "Aboriginal Leadership" as if aboriginal leadership were a homogenous thing. I found that reading through "Chiefs and Elders" there were many similarities in the chiefs' and elders' philosophies, but they by no means agreed on everything - and that was just in BC. I think it is important to point out that different aboriginal communities may highlight different values and exhibit leadership in different ways. If we are going to generalize, we should acknowledge that we are doing so. And if we are going to call it Aboriginal Leadership, we have to remember there are aboriginal peoples all over the world, not just in BC.

Having said that, I really enjoyed learning what Judge Murray Sinclair had to say. I also enjoyed the Power Within People, although I found it more of a "how to be a community facilitator" than an actual treatise in leadership philosophy in the manner of the others (again this is not a bad thing, just different). And that doesn't mean it's not a valuable resource.

* I believe my understanding of non-aboriginal leadership was also enhanced, particularly due to the comparisons made in preparation and writing of the statements. Throughout the exercise, I consistently compared my own leadership style, and, more importantly, identified more specifically with what I believe my leadership style should be.

* I have a frustration with Western Leadership, as it seems all our leaders when given power do not serve the people. I think our Government is driven by the dollar. There is no consequence for poor judgement or basic incompetence. If we ran our households budget as they have the national or provincial budgets. I think the country would be in a better state. For example if the fast ferries was purchased in BC had been a business deal with the minister responsible truly accountable to all BC tax payer there may have been a business plan in place.

* This course and its readings, discussions have made me think more of non-aboriginal leadership and how it may benefit from aboriginal-style leadership, particularly around the issues

of the importance of communities and leadership from within.

* I am not sure the reading has affected my understanding of non-Aboriginal leadership per se. but it did shed a big light on the conflicting philosophies of the past, as I see it. Nearly autocratic governments dealing with a People living on consensus leadership sounds like a recipe for the disaster that occurred in the last century.

* I think that everything we did in this unit can be applied to non-aboriginal leadership. Although the background is different, the philosophy is the same. I think studying different culture's leadership styles is an excellent way to bring new ideas into leadership.

It is also important to look at how the aboriginal community was treated by "our" historical leaders. There is so much to learn from this so that hopefully it will never be repeated.

c. Your own leadership style

**** My leadership style depends upon which culture I am working within; however my values/principles do not vary. As a non-Aboriginal working in Aboriginal community my role is enormously different from that of a leader from community. The more I learn about nonAboriginal leadership, the greater the differences I recognize between leadership in the two cultures***

* I believe that this module gave me validation that the shared leadership model has many advantages and that a leader takes on many roles at one time depending on the situation and the people involved. Involving people in decision-making gives them a feeling of self-respect and energizes them to work through the issues at hand. Also, the process is not always easy and resolving the root issues needs to happen before any real progress can be made.

I believe or perhaps just aspire, to have an "aboriginal soul" My leadership style is value based. I am learning to look to myself first for answers and am continually humbled by what I have yet to learn from others. This will now include aboriginal perspectives on leadership.

In terms of my own leadership style. I believe it is so important to know more about our community and people's stories and to tell our own. Working in Africa for 12 years, I know that you have to take a lot of time to get to know people before you can expect to "do business" in any meaningful way. You can't make any assumptions. You have to find common ground and work from there.

* The above have helped reinforced my leadership style, one of a shared, participative nature.

* The course has absolutely, irrevocably affected my understanding of Aboriginal people. Having been born and raised in BC, you may think that I would have some knowledge of the Aboriginal culture and people. In fact, I didn't. It took the Malt program to open my eyes, ears and pores to the fact that I knew nothing! I now believe that I have at least touched the surface of understanding the culture and, indeed, do feel that at least the top layer of the onion has been peeled back. I am a believer that whatever culture we are born into is but an accident of birth and that we share this land together and so I have never felt distant or separate from Aboriginal people. Now I realize that is because I walked around in my 'privileged' white skin, not knowing the very history that gave me that privilege. It has been exciting, enriching and worthwhile for me to learn the very little that I now have. It is but a beginning.

* One of my failings is I am very impatient. The Aboriginal leadership style supports "slower is faster". Having read the literature provided I think that this is a wise move as it will build the commitment necessary to sustain any initiative.

In my new position as Manager I facilitated the forming of "ground rules' or guidelines for behaviour which will ensure everyone gets the most out of the workplace. I believe the leadership philosophies of the Aboriginal Seven Grandfathers and Secretan's values cycle support this style of leadership. I have been in my position for two years and the feedback so far is very positive.

On a more personal note. The Cancer Centre for the Southern Interior serves a large native population. I have never really understood why the natives were different. I have had my eyes slightly opened and will endeavour to share my understanding, of how we can adapt to better serve the Aboriginal community.

As to my own leadership style, well... I am a Commodore in the
> Navy. I was raised since 17 years old to make plans, assess risks, and give and take orders. As I matured and progressed, I realised that my successes
> were more due to a blend of participative and consultative then autocratic
> leadership. I am not sure that my environment would always allow me to
> abandon myself to the collective wisdom of others, but I have come to value consultation. So there is a thread.

* As above (b) I think the discussion of other culture's leadership is very important in the learning and finding of our own leadership styles. I can take away a great deal from the philosophies of the aboriginal people and apply it to my own style.

* I think I need to look at time in a different light, as well as looking to my community for participation in leadership. A good decision will only come with full knowledge and participation. I feel that my own tendency has been almost bi-polar: I either fill the servant leadership role, help build the community and support the appropriate leader for the circumstances or I rush out and provide direction and order. Not understanding either behaviour has been stressful even though successful. I believe that the knowledge I am gaining through this program will help reduce the stress of my day to day interactions.

* The material thus far has deepened my resolve to do things "differently".... I have been fortunate in the past 13 years to work with very pro-active people in terms of furthering/developing relationships between community groups. I can still grimace in recalling my former principal call "Indians" down to the gym for a "dressing-down" (lots of fighting had been occurring) in my first or second year as a teacher. (Oh it was shocking....I couldn't believe that someone in a leadership positionjust years away from retiring... could be so insensitive.) There was a lot of you-know-what hitting the fan after his "page" in the following days, and it was a symbol of how far the school had fallen in interactions between the two groups. From there it has only gone up, to the point that the middle school is teaching the s'encooten (spelling?) language. We have incredible teaching assistants, a full-time instructional support teacher at the board office, all to support our better liaising and meeting the needs of the aboriginal students/community. There has been opportunity for us to attend several long-house functions, and, unfortunately, to attend too many funerals on band land. In my current position as administrator of alternate schools in the district, I see students who did not succeed at all in the regular system....and of course we have 10% population at the one campus as aboriginal students. I need to know how to better service/address their needs, how to play a more effective role in their lives, and how to learn more about why they have the learning challenges they do. The materials and discussions in this section have helped me somewhat--although more discussion, perhaps on-line or in-person, would greatly benefit me, rather than our generalizing. I'm at the point where I need specifics.

2. What can we as contemporary leaders learn from our historical relationship Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal?

**** We have historically been remarkably arrogant as a people and our attempts to impose our values and systems on Aboriginal peoples all over the world. We don't have to look in third world countries or to South Africa to see what tyranny, genocide, cultural assimilation and oppression can do to a people. Perhaps we can look at the affects of our work on Aboriginal people and begin to respect the phenomenal tenacity and courage of Aboriginal people to survive and protect their identity as culturally unique people.***

* As above, I feel that by learning more about the history, I certainly have become more empathetic towards the Aboriginal leadership challenges.

* Can we really learn from our mistakes? Do we have the ability to seek first to understand and ask forgiveness.? It will be a long difficult road to develop the trust necessary to heal the relationships.

* It has taught me to really question my motives when I make leadership decisions and ask "who does it serve?". Have I done things because they seemed expedient and pragmatic at the time? Have I really taken the time to find out what is behind people's actions? Do I know people's stories? Am I really respecting other people and their needs and desires? Have I honoured what they bring to the table? Do I project and assume what is in others' "best interests"?

* Again, the emphasis Aboriginals place on identifying and developing leaders is what organizations and non-Aboriginals can learn (and need to learn). I rarely see a dedicated strategy towards developing leaders in organizations, communities, or families.

* We must learn that we cannot dictate our views on others without understanding what things are important to them. We must that their are differences in our cultures that will affect all aspects of how we act and function within our communities. We must try to understand those differences and work to build bridges as opposed to imposing our own.

* In short there is no quick fix. That has been tried by the enforcement of the Aboriginal act. I believe we can live in harmony if both sides can address the issues openly. There must be a balance established between the old and the new of both cultures. We cannot focus on the past mistakes otherwise we all become victims (The Aboriginals of the laws imposed and the others of the upholding ridiculous laws.)

* . As contemporary leaders I think we can learn from our history to be more secure in our own beliefs and culture. To be accepting and supportive of > all human beings and to get to know about others before judging them. Seems pretty universal and quite like the ten commandments.

* . One lesson for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationship is that we > non-Aboriginals do not know our real history. The old text books > concentrated on the deeds of colonising folk heroes and their good or bad > encounters with First Nations. The Baby Boomers were raised on a diet of > Hollywood movies which we know depicted until this decade most First

Nations as savages who needed to be spiritually saved and culturally transformed. I have had increasing contacts with politicians and industry leaders and I suspect that for most, their understanding of Aboriginal culture and value is extremely limited, or at least as limited as mine was. In today's context, we are dealing with a country which is a mosaic of ethnicity and which is changing in my view as rapidly as every decade. I would expect some political leaders at the local/municipal levels might get to know their constituency and its mix of culture, but I suspect many would not. The same would apply in business. Take for example Toronto where a large influx of East Europeans has changed the demography of the labour force. Have managers bothered understanding the deep-seated values and the culture of their employees? If they have not, how can they be effective in engaging a true dialogue to reach equitable and humane work conditions and practice, etc.

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* From historical relationships we can learn that change is absolutely essential to developing a more collaborative approach to determining the 'common' ground between us. Autocratic, imposed 'white mans' rules' should be abolished in favour of an attempt to find leverage. We are brothers of a common humanity.

* That each community has incredible strengths, and that we need to capitalize on learning how to share those strengths with each other, rather than re-invent any wheels. The aboriginal's "grounding" to earth and core values is a direction in which non-aboriginals have been drawn to in recent years ("trendy")....we need to drop discrimination as barriers and respect and learn from each other.

* The main points of my statement was that we can learn from the aboriginal values and the group/team approach. Their respect for the environment and mother earth is also something that needs to be near to all of us. Everthing we do, impacts someone or something.

* We must learn to build and value community build on solid vision and values in order to have a community of leaders that will provide quality rather than charismatic leadership.

* From historical relationships we can learn that change is absolutely essential to developing a more collaborative approach to determining the

'common' ground between us. Autocratic, imposed 'white mans' rules' should be abolished in favour of an attempt to find leverage. We are brothers of a common humanity.

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3. Would it be useful to expand the learning about Aboriginal leadership into other parts of the MALT program?

What kind of learning do you think would enhance the learning?

a. The summer residencies

* **ALL Leadership in Canada involves Aboriginal people and so an awareness of Aboriginal cultures and people is essential. Any inclusion of Aboriginal materials or learning should be done by or under the guidance of Aboriginal people with the expertise to take on this challenge.**

The involvement of Aboriginal leaders/educators in the development of any and all materials about Aboriginal people and the involvement of more Aboriginal lecturers and students in the program.

* I found that many of the seminars during the summer residency were unproductive. I would have appreciated learning more about various leadership models, history of leaders and their styles etc... I do feel prepared for the distance learning, and I am appreciated of the knowledge and skills that I acquired through the residency. Problem-solving groups, peer evaluations, celebrations etc... have all contributed to a comfortable setting for on-line discussion.

I have thought about how to incorporate more Aboriginal leadership into other parts of the MALT program, and I believe that by having a Aboriginal guest speaker within the first 2 weeks of the residency would be beneficial. Last year our guest speakers were really of the same culture as most of the students. Seeing that much of MALT is so non-traditional in nature, having a traditional Aboriginal guest speaker might be very enlightening.

* Perhaps aboriginal guest speakers, elders/ ceremonies, perhaps opening/closing ceremonies....cafe philosophy with perhaps an elder or contemporary aboriginal leader, or even aboriginal students like Angie Lafontaine. I find myself wanting to have these discussions with people like Angie. I would like to know what my aboriginal peers have to say (rather that

perhaps angry aboriginal leaders..I have the sense from Taiaiake Alfred's readings that he is fairly left wing)

* As an alternative to Leadership Philosophy, it might be useful to have a module in Cultural Studies of Leadership that explores various cultures' approaches to leadership, values, principles, etc. When you look at old Christian or Muslim or even Wiccan values, are they really so different from BC Aboriginal ones? The problem is that few really honour them.

Or if there is an Aboriginal Leadership module perhaps other aboriginal people's could be included: Lapp's, Maori, !Kung San, Roma, etc.

I think a focus on BC aboriginal peoples is justified since many MALT students live here, but maybe putting their leadership philosophy into a broader context would be interesting as well. Maybe even aboriginal philosophy contrasted with colonial/imperialistic philosophy would be interesting....

* I would like to see one of the Problem Studies in the summer residency address an Aboriginal Leadership issue. I believe the first year residency would benefit from learning about Aboriginal Community, leadership history and current issues. A problem, for example, which involved current Aboriginal negotiations would be an excellent scope for the residency.

* It is difficult to say as the summer was so busy.

* Yes it would be useful to expand the Aboriginal leadership part. Even during residency there were several comments made around natives. My feeling is that they were made in ignorance of the true picture. Given that many of the people on the course have interactions with the Aboriginals it would be very beneficial to enlighten us on the Aboriginal culture. Speaking for myself I have a completely different understanding which I will be able to use in my workplace.

> a. The summer residencies. Captures everyone when they are they are in the learning mode and very receptive to all input. Maybe a café philosophy evening around the Aboriginal culture.

* . I think the learning about Aboriginal leadership is already threaded
> through MALT learning. I think we could spend more time identifying the
> threads and their sources in the Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal relationship.

* > Absolutely! I am not sure if we need to expand the distance learning (it is a balancing act), but clearly we need it during the first residency. I was most

disappointed that in MALT 99-2 we had a lack of diversity. Yes, we had a couple of francophones, a Canadian classmate of Japanese descent, one expatriate Scot and one transplanted (white) south African; but that was it. Attending a BC University, I just assumed that there would be a strong Aboriginal presence and due consideration in the residency curriculum. I particularly like the idea of the residency because we could meet > face-to-face and dialogue. Some ideas:

>

- > a. Aboriginal Day at RRU with speakers and workshops;
- > b. Weekend outing visiting local Aboriginal community
- > c. Learners as guests observing community meetings

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> a. The summer residencies. Captures everyone when they are they are in the learning mode and very receptive to all input. Maybe a café philosophy evening around the Aboriginal culture.

* While reading the information on Aboriginal leadership styles, I kept having a light bulb go off in my mind. It was as if I was being confirmed in my belief that respect for each other is the most important value. I learned that many of my values are common to Aboriginal beliefs and that we seem united in our approaches to many things. It embarrassed me that I did not know this many years ago. My misconceptions and lack of understanding have been shaken and I know that my learning has just begun.

* When we had the accreditation problem, and the First Nations IST from the Victoria board office attended, I would have appreciated a small group access with him for a few hours to have the in-depth conversation to which I'm referring above (re acquiring specific information to help my students). I think an educational offering re more awareness-raising of community concerns and issues, even into land claim and whaling issues, would be beneficial to us all. Ideally, I'd love to see this as a problem-based activity in the summer residency #1, or, not having yet been through summer residency #2 (which I understand is more relaxed and less pressured), perhaps time could be built into that overall schedule.

* I think a session in the summer residency would have been beneficial. Aboriginal affairs is such a big part of current issues in Canada. I think that it touches each of us and I would have enjoyed a problem solving session in this area. I would encourage you to leave the distance learning as an option as I found it very valuable. Just as an FYI, I work in the private sector, and my work does not directly involve the aboriginal community. I still found this a very valuable unit.

* Include a problem based learning unit on an Aboriginal issue? The integration of the Niska treaty.

* There are still elements of the summer residency of which I have concerns. I feel that although staff was present, it was definitely a voyage of self-discovery that had the feeling of jump off the bridge first but we will be there to help you dry off. It was only in the third and fourth weeks that the dance of seminars and readings and assignments were starting to form a balance.

I believe that preparation for the summer residencies could entail a little more direction on small Points to Ponder connected with each of the 'suggested' readings - although it was evident that most people had not had the opportunity to read. I don't feel that there should be any expectation at all for people to enter the program memorizing these prereadings, but I feel that it would be vital to provide a smaller list of readings and be firmer in the expectation that reading had occurred. I feel that Antone's book would be an important prereading suggestion.

b. The distance learning -

***ALL Leadership in Canada involves Aboriginal people and so an awareness of Aboriginal cultures and people is essential. Any inclusion of Aboriginal materials or learning should be done by or under the guidance of Aboriginal people with the expertise to take on this challenge.**

The involvement of Aboriginal leaders/educators in the development of any and all materials about Aboriginal people and the involvement of more Aboriginal lecturers and students in the program.

*I am trying to incorporate the thread of themes of aboriginal leadership as I am developing my final assignment but am finding I am having to do independent thinking (a novel concept don't you agree?) on how I will accomplish this as it is not formally threaded through the next units of LT 516....is there a way perhaps to include historical and contemporary aboriginal leadership issues as a section in each of the units...seem to me it would make sense. I recognize we are covering a lot of information in a short period of time.

* This module has been an excellent way of proving this learning.

* The distance learning. I have enjoyed the course but my preference is live learning so I would have probably been able to experience more if I had been in a real life discussion.

* If in distance learning, more specific and extended specifics, rather than just a single unit on aboriginal leadership/issues would be wonderful! Somehow I thought that we would spend more time on this than just a unit....I had thought it would be the vehicle for everything else this fall... So much to learn, so little time.

* I liked Sarah's point regarding having the aboriginal choice in Unit 1 because it did not seem as threatening. I chose it because I work First Nations children and was aware of my ignorance and the difficulties of communication we have. But also, I must confess it seemed less threatening to participate in because the culture is still living and like it or not. I had opinions about present circumstances. I like the way we have opportunities and are expected to reflect back to each leadership philosophy and weave our understanding into the next unit's offerings.

4. What have you learned about yourself through this process? –

* **I expected too much. This is an area I perhaps have too many strong feelings about to feel comfortable addressing in such a cursory manner.**

* I realized that I do have a style and traits that I am pleased with. The more I read about participative leadership, shared leadership, value-based leadership etc...I can say that I practice the basic principles and can continue to concentrate on enhancing my leadership qualities.

* How little I know, reinforced how privileged I have been and (unconsciously) patronizing of aboriginal cultures..this came as a huge shock to me. I am recognizing the mental models I have constructed. I have a desire to understand more, be a better person.

* **That I have a lot to learn. That we shouldn't be afraid to learn and accept our own complicity, because it's there whether we acknowledge it or not, and others know that. Once we acknowledge our complicity we can start changing and building trust.**

* I continue to become aware of my leadership style and my development. Units such as this give me the confidence to continue with my own Rushmorean style, and continue being values-based.

* I have been reminded that it is important to view the unique cultures and their beliefs with respect that it deserves. I have learned that my own cultural identity, beliefs and values have been very important in how they influence me to become the person I am now - more than I have ever recognized before.

* Well you certainly kicked the door open for me. Because the module was so short, it certainly raised more questions than it answered, but that's what successful "teaching" is all about, I think. Raising enough questions in a provocative enough way to get the "student" eager to explore the answers outside the requirements for the MALT program.

I figured that there was a conscious choice made regarding the generalization thing and recognize that there are many things that can be generalized about (excuse the grammar).

I had no idea that Benjamin Franklin studied at Six Nations or that he used that model - very cool! We should know stuff like that!

* I am more open to different ways of doing things. I should not elevate my points to the superior view point as it is not a win/win position. We are all in the leadership arena together.

* I have learned that I already have a sound understanding of the
> principles of Aboriginal leadership, the impact that the Non-Aboriginal
> leadership had upon them, the style that pervades Non-Aboriginal
leadership and the reasons for it, and the strategies for healing such destruction
and power mongering that occurred historically, and continues today. I was the
child of an Alcoholic father, who was a child of the second world war, and an autocratic
father. Through my own counselling and inner work I have met with several of the
principles explored in this unit.

I have come to see that the 'problems' faced by Aboriginal at the hands of
Non-Aboriginal are not distinct to that society or culture but are human
problems faced universally. Through the study of Aboriginal leadership
however, I have come to expand and clarify my learning, and develop more practical
strategies, on the issues of power and security.

* When I moved to BC three years ago, I visited the Royal Museum which has a
significant Aboriginal Gallery. Late summer after the residency, I went back with my
wife after having browsed through this unit's material. I am sure it will not be a surprise
to you that my optic was different. Instead of seeing a collection of "interesting art", I
saw a proud, orderly, resourceful and culturally vibrant people. In the theme of
RRU, you are never too old to learn, if you open your eyes and soul.

• I agree with Jean-Yves that actual contact with Aboriginals would be an
incredible benefit to us as learners. A circle of general discussion would
offer us all the opportunity to share knowledge and gain a better
understanding of each other. It is not only non-Aboriginals who need to

learn, it is Aboriginals as well, and if we could come together with the understanding that we are all of a common family, perhaps "courageous conversation" could happen.

* >I have learned that I can discuss philosophy when it is something I understand and am passionate about. I was worried that I would not be able to relate to Plato and Machiavelli, the aboriginal leadership option gave me the confidence to explore the other areas.

* That my gut instincts and desire to learn more about aboriginals' history, needs and culture are shared by others and seen as important as well--not just that I am inadequate or ignorant, having grown up in an extremely racially biased home.

* * I think I need to look at time in a different light, as well as looking to my community for participation in leadership. A good decision will only come with full knowledge and participation. I feel that my own tendency has been almost bi-polar: I either fill the servant leadership role, help build the community and support the appropriate leader for the circumstances or I rush out and provide direction and order. Not understanding either behaviour has been stressful even though successful. I believe that the knowledge I am gaining through this program will help reduce the stress of my day to day interactions

5. How can we find a way, with integrity and authenticity, First Nations leadership principles and practices into the MALT program?

Bring in Aboriginal people to do it. By this I refer to First Nations (Indian) people (perhaps urban and reserve), Metis people and Inuit people. These groups are so distinctly different that to lump them together makes about as much sense as lumping Japanese and Iranians simply because they were at one time both considered 'oriental' races.

* I do believe that MALT program encourages shared leadership, ownership, honesty and accountability through the problem-solving work groups. A shared leadership model is followed.

* It could begin by RRU demonstrating it's belief in the value of aboriginal leadership principles through: formal participation of Aboriginal leaders staff, on the Board of Directors, as guest speakers, lecturers, increase the enrollment of aboriginal students.

thread the theme of aboriginal leadership throughout the LT 513, separate module solely on aboriginal leadership, perhaps as an optional choice...

* **There should be First Nations faculty who are acknowledged by the First Nations community as a spokesperson for them. They could facilitate a First Nations module on their own or ensure that First Nations perspectives are considered and incorporated into all facets of the program....**

* I believe a strategy must be developed to include Aboriginal leaders and faculty into any problem or unit. They must tell the story. The enrollment of Aboriginal students into the program would benefit authenticity and long-term success and involvement of RRU.

* I would suggest that it would have to be a module in itself. I feel that this unit has given me a general understanding of First Nations leadership principles and practices, however, it has not been a long enough period of time (with other courses and future assignments/readings to worry about) to give this topic the justice it deserves.

* In 99-1 summer res we had a member of the community who was Aboriginal > and offered many insights and personal perspectives based on her own > experience, culture, history and beliefs. We were fortunate to be educated by someone so open, gentle and genuine. I think the principles of .Aboriginal leadership are woven throughout the malt curriculum as I said before. However, perhaps they could be articulated more clearly

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* It think we did. The background reading and the group's own growth and acute awareness became fertile ground where value-based leadership was welcome. Integrity and authenticity were pillars of the leadership appreciation and development. After 2 or 3 weeks into the residency, it would have been great to confirm that with interaction with .Aboriginal members of the Community.

* Should first of all be taught by First Nations people. Students should be allowed choice to select it as a theme or not--especially if it is a longer course (whether in summer or distance), as personal relevance and interest will create a more meaningful learning atmosphere. I would like to meet with Elders, observe/listen in on Band meetings, observe a tribal school's day of learning, learn more about culture and traditions. The brief bit of history portrayed in this unit was but a taste of what could have been done, with greater exploration: I think a longer course that delved more deeply into the issues glossed over here could be very insightful.

* I found, from my experience at the summer residency, that many of the First Nations leadership principles are in the MALT program. The experience of working on an actual problem during the first residency would be a benefit to all learners and expose them to more of the first nations values.

* I think the attempts of the faculty to encourage community building is a very good beginning and one that should be emphasize more in the program. The Keepers of the Dream concept met with interesting reactions as people perceived it as 'extra'. I think more of the program should look towards providing opportunities for leaders to come from the community to help focus the program - but at the same time, I think the connections to leadership philosophies should be made clearer in the first residency. I received a review from faculty suggested I had modeled servant leadership and I thought this was a bad thing!

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