



**THE USE OF NATIVE SPIRITUALITY IN ADDICTION TREATMENT:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE FIVE NEW BRUNSWICK NATIVE TREATMENT CENTRES**

by

**Bonnie Elaine Perley  
B.A., St. Thomas University, 1986**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

**Masters of Arts**

**in the Department**

**of**

**Sociology**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK**

**April 1997**

**© Bonnie E. Perley, 1997**



National Library  
of Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file Votre référence*

*Our file Notre référence*

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-23832-6

*This thesis is dedicated to Dustin and to the memory of Dr. Abdul Lodhi*



## ABSTRACT

The literature assumes Native spirituality is an accepted part of the treatment procedures in use at Native Treatment Centres. This exploratory study uses Mills' analytic framework to examine critically this conventional wisdom in regard to the five Native Treatment Centres in New Brunswick. This study found large variations in the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs and community conflict over the use of Native spirituality in New Brunswick NTCs. The relevant literature supports Native Traditionalists' claim that the conflict over the use of Native spirituality in drug and alcohol treatment arises from the history of missionary condemnation of Native people's spiritual beliefs. This contention is confirmed in this study by counter-example: the NTC where Native spirituality is most used is the one where it has been endorsed by visiting and local Catholic clergy. Questions are raised for further study.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following people, without whose assistance, this thesis would not be a reality.

I would first like to thank the people I interviewed in this thesis, for, without their having shared their experiences, insights and feelings with me concerning the resurgence of their ancestral spiritual beliefs and practices, this thesis would have no concrete empirical base. I am thus deeply appreciative to have been given this gift so freely.

I would also like to give a special and sincere thank you to Dr. Michael Clow and Professor Susan Machum for their support, hard work, advice, insights and commitment to the completion of my thesis. I have the deepest gratitude to them both for their much needed assistance. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. You are both beautiful people.

I would also like especially to thank Dr. Will van den Hoonaard for the work he assisted me with in this research, and the following professors for their comments and suggestions — Dr. Noel Iverson, Dr. Barbara Pepperdene, Dr. Chad Bowman, Dr. Allan MacDonnell, Dr. Andrea Bear-Nicholas, Dr. Tom Parkhill, Dr. Robert Mulally and Professor Sid Pobihushchy.

In addition, I would like especially to thank my long time and good friend Barbara Martin, who initially brought forth the idea of studying the resurgence of the spiritual beliefs and practices of Native peoples.

Finally, a deep felt and appreciative thank-you to all the special friends, of whom there are too many to list here, whose tremendous encouragement, support and belief in my efforts throughout the writing of my thesis, have been, and are, invaluable to me.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Chapter One: INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Contextualizing the Issue at Hand	2
B. Purpose of the Study	7
C. The Sociological Approach	9
D. Organization of the Thesis	18
E. Chapter Summary	19
 <b>Chapter Two: NATIVE SPIRITUALITY AND DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT</b>	 <b>20</b>
A. The Problem of Alcohol and Drug Abuse among Native Peoples	20
B. Conventional Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centres	25
C. Native People Demand Their Own Drug Treatment Centres	35
D. How Native Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centres Are Mandated to Operate	37
E. Chapter Summary	46
 <b>Chapter Three: THE CASE STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS</b>	 <b>47</b>
A. The Case Study Approach	47
B. Parameters of the Case Study	49
C. Data Gathering Techniques	52
D. Specifics of Who Was Interviewed	53
E. Chapter Summary	56
 <b>Chapter Four: NEW BRUNSWICK TREATMENT CENTRES</b>	 <b>57</b>
A. What Are Native Treatment Centres Doing?	57
B. The Nature of the Conflict	65
C. Chapter Summary of the Core Findings	88

Chapter Five: <b>EXPLAINING THE CONFLICT OVER NATIVE SPIRITUALITY</b>	<b>9 0</b>
A. The Traditionalists' Interpretation of Christianization	92
B. The Literature on Missionary Activity	95
C. Contemporary Church Rethinking of Early Missionary Activities	97
D. The Significance of the NTC #5 Case	100
E. Chapter Summary	102
 Chapter Six: <b>CONCLUSION</b>	 <b>1 0 4</b>
A. The Findings of This Thesis in Theoretical Terms	104
B. Theoretical Significance of the Study	112
C. Questions for Further Research	114
D. Thesis Conclusion	115
 <b>LIST OF REFERENCES</b>	 <b>1 1 6</b>
 <b>APPENDICES</b>	 <b>1 2 3</b>
Appendix A: Statement of Ethics	123
Appendix B: Interview Schedule	124
Appendix C: Research Ethics	126
 <b>VITA</b>	 <b>1 2 7</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: How Sociologists Conceptualize Society\_\_\_\_\_14

Figure 2: Map of New Brunswick Showing Location of  
Native Treatment Centres\_\_\_\_\_50

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

Canadians hold many contradictory images of the Native Peoples of this country. One is of "the drunken Indian," an image reinforced by newspaper headlines about the devastating effects of alcohol and drug addiction on Native peoples and their communities (Czerny et al., 1994; York, 1990; Frideres, 1974; Moon, 1991). The other is of Native peoples as possessing an unusual and deep spirituality which binds them to Nature and the Creator in a way lost by other Canadians (Czerny et al., 1994; Grumbs, 1990; Willimson, 1984). As divergent as the images appear, there is a linkage between the two because many Aboriginal peoples believe that a necessary part of the cure for Natives who suffer from drug and alcohol addiction is a return to their Native spirituality<sup>1</sup>. Indeed the literature on the newly established Native

---

<sup>1</sup> "Native spirituality" in this thesis refers to the set of beliefs and practices believed to be the ancestral, pre-Contact, spirituality of Native peoples. These beliefs include monotheism - the belief in one Supreme Being often called The Great Spirit or The Creator, with many spirit helpers (Hultkrantz, 1987). Ake Hultkrantz argues that the four prominent features in North American Native spirituality consisted of a "shared notion of cosmic harmony, emphasis on experiencing directly powers and visions, and a common view of the cycle of life and death (1987: 20 ). This shared notion of cosmic harmony involves a relationship in which humans, animals, plants, all of nature, and even supernatural figures, cooperate to bring about a balanced and harmonious universe (1987: 20). The spiritual beliefs and practices of Native peoples are believed to have been a "lived reality." The spiritual beliefs and practices encapsulated all aspects of Native peoples lives (Gill, 1976; Hultkrantz, 1976; gkisedtanamoogk, 1993; Bear-Nicholas, 1994; Trigger, 1989 et al.):

run treatment centres across Canada emphasizes the importance of Native spiritual ceremonies as part of the treatment process to cure drug and alcohol addiction (Krawll, 1988). This thesis examines the use of Native spirituality in the treatment of drug and alcohol problems amongst Native addicts in the five Native Treatment Centres in New Brunswick.

This chapter considers the situation of Native peoples, the social problems of drug and alcohol abuse they face, and the connection between Native spirituality and drug treatment programmes. The chapter outlines the purpose and goals of this study and the basic sociological approach used to study the social processes which surround the establishment and operation of Native Treatment Centres on New Brunswick Reserves. Finally the chapter concludes with an outline of the remaining thesis chapters.

### **A. Contextualizing the Issue at Hand**

It is hard to overemphasize the desperate plight of Canada's Native population. Life for the Aboriginal peoples is one of abject poverty and social problems (York, 1990; Frideres, 1974; Kellough, 1980). Native peoples are the poorest people in the country (Czerny et al., 1994; ; Marchak, 1988:40), with unemployment rates on Canadian reservations reaching as high as eighty percent (Kaye, 1990). Housing provided to people on reserves is substandard (Siggner, 1986:7; Position Paper, 1988). Aboriginal peoples suffer severe rates

---

Religion [sic] permeated every aspect of Indian life. It provided them with a sense of cosmic security, sanctioned the economic redistribution that was the basis of their economy, and helped to regulate healthy relations between the Indians and their environment. (Trigger, 1989:9)

Clarke (1968) in writing on the Micmac and Maliseet peoples of eastern Canada describes the Sweat Lodge Ceremony and other spiritual ceremonies observed in history by Christian missionaries and other writers. The spiritual beliefs and practices among modern day Traditionalists are believed by them to be the spirituality of their ancestors.

of ill-health (Kaye, 1990:3; Lautard, 1987:64; Heath Indicators Study, 1988:14-15). Child abuse is endemic on the reserves (Kaye, 1990:132; Avar, 1989; Millward, 1992; Haig-Brown, 1988; Brown, 1976). A recent study suggests that eighty percent of Native women and children have suffered some kind of sexual abuse (Kaye, 1990:134). Suicide rates for Native peoples under the age of twenty five are the highest of any racial group in the world (Avar, 1989). Educational levels are generally low for Aboriginal peoples (Kaye, 1990), and violence on the reserves is widespread (Kellough, 1980).

Alcoholism is one of the most significant and visible elements in Native social problems. Alcohol abuse has been a phenomenon surrounding the lives of Native peoples in North America since the early part of the nineteenth century (Trigger, 1989; Olson, 1984; Grant 1919). A study carried out by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission illustrates the extent of the alcohol problem among Native peoples. It shows that an estimated 50-60 percent of Native illness and deaths are alcohol related. It is further estimated that almost 99 percent of the offenses committed by Aboriginal peoples are alcohol related (A.D.D.A.C. Developments, 1985). While Native people constitute only 3.4 percent of the national population, they represent 9 percent of the prison population (A.D.D.A.C. Development, 1985). Several studies, like *The Health of Canadian Children: A CICH Profile* (1989), *The Canadian Indian* (1986), and *Aboriginal Substance Abuse Treatment Centres and Aboriginal Offenders* (1988), document the many problems associated with Native peoples and drug and alcohol addiction problems.

The high levels of drug and alcohol abuse in Native communities is widely understood to be causally connected to levels of violence, suicide, child abuse, incarceration and high mortality rates amongst Indigenous



peoples. At the level of both the individual and the community, breaking the cycle of drug and alcohol abuse is considered essential for solving the problems of Native peoples and their communities (Kellough, 1980; York, 1990; Siggner, 1986; Advard, 1989; Paul, 1990; Moon, 1991; Krawll, 1988).

It is generally accepted that Native people have not responded well to conventional methods of drug and alcohol treatment available in the larger society (Alcohol And Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick, 1984-89; York, 1990:97; J&J Research Associates, 1988:92). As part of the larger movement amongst Native peoples for improvement of their situation, they demanded their own tailor-made drug and alcohol programmes on the reservations (Kaye, 1990; Apted, 1992; Elliot, 1979:49; York and Pindera, 1992; Long, 1984; Kapica, 1991; Wilson, 1992). They insisted, moreover, that these treatment programmes be specifically geared to meet their own needs and to employ what they believe to be the most efficacious methods of dealing with Native addiction. The Federal government of Canada responded by providing funding for approximately fifty-five Native run drug and alcohol treatment centres on Canadian reserves. Concurrently with the development of these centres, the Canadian Federal government also provided funding for two national Native organizations: Addictions and Community Funded Programs [ACFP]<sup>2</sup> and the National Native Association of Treatment Directors [NNATD].

Treatment of addiction in the wider Canadian community usually involves psychological counselling on the premise that people become addicts when their personal situation, coupled with low self-esteem, makes

---

<sup>2</sup> Formerly known as the National Native Association and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP).

the “escape” drug taking offers overwhelmingly attractive. Individual or group counselling sessions are geared towards changing each individual’s behavior so their addiction can be eradicated (Fassel, 1992). The individual alcoholic or drug user will be cured through their personal efforts to control the addiction and stop repeated substance abuse (Fassel, 1992). This strategy stems from the assumption that addiction is a personal trouble (Mills, 1959:8), an individual problem of deviance. The addict must “get his (or her) act together” and become once again a well adjusted and productive member of society free of deviant behaviours (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988).

Many Natives argue that the personal situations of Native peoples which predispose so many of them to addiction are societal in character. Native alcoholism and drug dependency are more than a personal trouble. Many Native people argue, in a manner not unlike Mill's classic discussion of marriage and divorce, that the extraordinary rates of Native alcoholism and substance abuse reflects deeper societal, that is structural, problems in Native communities. Mills illustrated his point with a discussion of marriage and divorce:

Inside a marriage a man and a woman may experience personal troubles, but when the divorce rate during the first four years of marriage is 250 out of every 1000 attempts, this is an indication of a structural issue having to do with the institutions of marriage and the family and other institutions that bear upon them. (Mills, 1959:9)

Many Native people, authors of government reports (Moon, 1991; Paul, 1990, Krawll, 1988; Kaye, 1990; The Canadian Indian, 1986; Pedersen, 1992) and scholars (Kellough, 1980; Lewis, 1993; Frideres, 1974) agree that the scale of drug and alcohol problems among Native people reflects a deeper social problem in Native communities, though they disagree about what the

underlying structural cause is.<sup>3</sup> The Native addict may indeed have psychological problems which lead to addiction, but those psychological problems are produced by the social situation of Native peoples and their communities within the society as a whole. To be a Native person is to face not only appalling conditions and personal prospects, but a deep sense of cultural and even spiritual malaise rooted in the loss of Native self-identity and autonomy (Kaye, 1990:133-34; Paul, 1990; Wilson, 1983:10; Kellough, 1980:367; York, 1990; Moon, 1991; Pederson, 1992; Solomon, 1989). That many Native people turn to drug use as an escape from their lives and the marginality of life on the Reserve is perhaps not surprising.

Native Traditionalists<sup>4</sup> argue that to “beat their addiction” addicts must recover their personal identity, self-worth and purpose. In order to do so, Traditionalists argue, Native addicts must recover the particular values and beliefs which give them an authentic sense of identity, purpose and direction as Native peoples — their ancestral spiritual beliefs and practices. Traditionalists argue that in order to cure their addiction Native addicts must revive their Native spiritual beliefs, values and purpose (Kaye, 1990:133-34; Paul, 1990; Wilson, 1983:10; York, 1990; Moon, 1991; Pederson, 1992; Solomon, 1989; Krawll, 1988).

---

<sup>3</sup> Scholars tend to argue that the problems of the Native communities associated with drug and alcohol abuse stem from poverty and the socio-economic status of Native people in the wider society (Kellough, 1980; Frideres, 1974). Native traditionalists, on the other hand, argue that drug and alcohol abuse stems from the loss of Native spiritual beliefs and practices which have robbed Native people of their Native identity. Government reports, of course, are strong on documenting the state of Native troubles but are silent on any explicit explanation of this state of affairs.

<sup>4</sup> Traditionalists are Native people who believe they possess the pre-contact spiritual beliefs and practices of their peoples and who wish to see Native people return to their ancestral way of life.

The literature on Native drug and alcohol treatment programmes, though scant, asserts that effective treatment of Native addicts is dependent on restoring to Native people a sense of their own cultural and spiritual identity (York, 1990; Pederson, 1992; Krawll, 1988). The restoration of a solid sense of personal worth and direction in the recovering addicts life can only come from a full embrace of their authentic cultural values and beliefs<sup>5</sup>. The literature on the newly established Native run treatment centres across Canada emphasizes the importance of learning about and participation in Native spiritual ceremonies as part of the treatment process to cure drug and alcohol addiction (Krawll, 1988; Pederson, 1992). Both the existing literature and the mandate for federal funding start from this premise<sup>6</sup>.

### **B. Purpose of the Study**

This study was designed to examine the role and efficacy of the use of Native spirituality in the five Native treatment centres on reserves in New Brunswick. The literature on Native drug and alcohol treatment programmes assumes Native spirituality is being used in Native drug and alcohol treatment programmes across the country, that the use of Native spirituality is accepted by communities, clients and staff, and it is part of a highly effective treatment regime (Krawll, 1988). This study set out to discover to what extent Aboriginal treatment centres in New Brunswick were employing Native

---

<sup>5</sup> The Traditionalists argument about the importance of Native spirituality in Native self-identity and pride is not, in principle, very different than the functionalist argument that society is held together, and the individual given direction, by the shared values of the culture, of which religious beliefs are an important part (see Hale, 1995:19-21).

<sup>6</sup> The directors and staff of the Native Treatment Centres in New Brunswick interviewed for this thesis state that their Federal funding explicitly mandates the use of Native spirituality in drug and alcohol treatment.

spirituality in the treatment of alcohol and drug addiction, and to what extent those centres that use Native Spirituality to treat substance abuse feel it is an effective treatment. The research explores whether or not Native spirituality and practices are indeed part of the treatment programmes as the literature and federal funding mandate would lead us to believe. Finally, the thesis is concerned with what social processes account for variation in the employment of Native spirituality as a drug treatment tool in the Native treatment centres.

At the same time it is important to state what this thesis does not do. This study does not look at the overall significance of Native spirituality in the remaining fifty Native treatment centres in Canada, nor does it focus on the similarities of the centres in New Brunswick with those in the rest of Canada. This study looked only at the Native treatment centres in New Brunswick. This research is not concerned with the issue of authenticity (Hale, 1995: 434-436), that is whether or not the beliefs and practices of Native Traditionalists are or are not those of pre-Contact Native people. It is not a study in contemporary Native-White relations, though issues related to the history of Native-White relations arise from the interviews as a potential explanation of the core research findings. And it is not an examination of the wider social, political and economic conditions and issues experienced by Native people living on and off reserves.

The findings of this research are based on interviews with various staff members at the five Native treatment centres in New Brunswick, and therefore the research results are limited to their particular impressions, world views and subjective understandings of the situation. Interviewing the Centres' clients was not permissible. Thus, claims as to the significance of Native spirituality for the recovering individuals in the centres are limited to

the views of the Directors, Staff-Counsellors and Staff-Traditionalists in the Native treatment centres, and are not necessarily shared by the clients themselves. As well, no interviews were conducted with the general population or with resident Priests on these reserves. Consequently, this research is only an exploratory study of Native spirituality in the five Native treatment centres in New Brunswick. Furthermore, it primarily reflects only the experience of those who work within these centres. It is further indicative of the experiences of those interviewed and their personal experiences as long time residents on these reserves, as staff at these centres and, where applicable, as people who are themselves recovering from drug and alcohol addiction.

The significance of this study rests on the light it throws on what has been assumed about the micro situation of the Native treatment centres and the use of Native Spirituality in them. This study is the first of Native Spirituality in the five Native treatment centres in New Brunswick, and as we shall see, raises a number of issues about the politics of Native spiritual resurgence and the efforts of Native peoples to grapple with drug and alcohol problems.

### **C. The Sociological Approach**

Although this study deals with questions of addiction treatment and particularly of the use of Native spirituality in addiction treatment, this is not a study in social work, psychology or religious studies. It is a sociological study of how Native spirituality is used to treat drug and alcohol abuse within those communities. This study explores the ways in which Native Spirituality is used, who promotes it, who opposes it and with what consequences.

Native people have been studied largely within the ambit of “race and ethnic relations”. Functionalists have been concerned with whether Native people should be dominated by, segregated from or assimilated into White society for the benefit of both racial groups (Hale,1996:423-428). Marxists have primarily focused on the economic marginalization of Native people and the question of Native economic relations to White society (Hale,1996:428-432). Meanwhile interpretative sociologists and many anthropologists have questioned the whole concept of race and ethnicity, of “Indian-ness”, and the authenticity of Traditionalist definitions of Native culture and spirituality (Hale,1996:432-439). Feminists have been focused on the status of Native women and the applicability of universalist or particularist criteria in the evaluation of that status (Hale,1996:439-445). Few sociological theorists have been concerned with how alcohol and drug abuse is actually treated in Native communities. Drug and alcohol abuse is explained as an outcome of the larger structural situation faced by Natives, but their response to substance abuse has seldom been given much attention. Though it is impossible to ignore the situation of Native peoples within the larger Canadian society, the focus here is on how Native people are themselves working through dealing with drug and alcohol treatment in their own Native Treatment Centres. The available sociological frameworks are not readily applicable to this research project.

As a consequence, it was deemed necessary to return to the general principles of sociological inquiry in order to provide a theoretical framework for this thesis. First, let us examine the concept of theory itself. Theory is a *systematic, coherent explanation* offered for social events. As Armstrong and Armstrong indicate:

Theory is an attempt to organize explanations in a systematic way, to develop a connected and logical understanding of how people and social systems work. To be effective, this search for an overall perspective must be grounded by research that investigates how people actually behave; how they organize their interrelations, their production and their reproduction; and the conditions they face. (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990:11)

The kinds of explanations which theories offer are limited by the assumptions which analysts bring to their research. Theorists' assumptions shape what they observe or fail to observe and the forms of explanation which they suggest for their observations. Proposing theory is not enough, however. The explanations offered by theory must be tested. A theory can be tested against the observations which the theorist used in developing it, to see if the theoretical explanation truly accounts for that case. And theory can be tested against the predictions it makes about other cases or future events. Theory making and theory testing are the characteristic features of social science, as opposed to other ways of discussing the world in which we live. It is important to note the theoretical assumptions on which this study is based.

This research project is structured around the questions posed by C. Wright Mills and the complementary notions of structure and agency discussed by Giddens (1979), Abrams (1982), Hale (1995) and others. In Mills' best known work, *The Sociological Imagination*, he argues that good sociology "enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society" (Mills, 1959:6). For Mills, good sociological work must connect the micro and the macro views of human affairs and their relationship with each other in time:

No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography and history and of their intersections within a society has completed its intellectual journey. (Mills, 1959:6)



People who are able to comprehend the interactions between the big structural picture with everyday lived activities possess the “sociological imagination”. Mills argued people who had a “sociological imagination” had the quality of mind which would enable them to analyze and critique their social world (Mills, 1959:6).

According to Mills, we cannot make sense of our own individual actions and behavior without understanding the social processes within which we are embedded. In a typical sociological fashion, Mills argued that social events can be understood only by knowing the situation in which people find themselves. The situations people face are in turn created by the way society’s affairs have been organized. And the way society’s affairs have been organized is the result of previous human actions over time, what he meant by “history” (Mills, 1959:6). This argument is further expanded upon by Hale:

...human actions are shaped by prior human actions. Structures comprise [the consequences of] actions taken collectively in the past. Actions produce structures for the future. What we choose to do now will shape the circumstances that our children inherit. (Hale, 1995:14)

Hale’s discussion of the “structure and agency debate” reinforces the connection which Mills made between history, social structure and human action (Hale, 1995:13-15). Hale makes an excellent precis of the debate between those who argue that social structure determines behaviour and those who argue that people’s behaviour determines social structure:

A perennial problem in sociology is reconciling two seemingly contradictory views of people. Proponents of one perspective see people as agents who choose between different courses of action and so consciously create their social world. Advocates of the other approach see people as part of a **social system**, an existing set of structures that constrains and in many ways determines their actions. We have a sociology of action and a sociology of systems and tend to shuffle uneasily between the two. Some

theorists stress free human actions and choice, while others stress how the structures of society determine peoples' lives. When these alternative views are pushed to their extremes, they appear to be so different that it is hard to see how they could be reconciled or even how they could be part of the same discipline of sociology. (Hale,1995:14)

Hale argues the dichotomy between structure and agency is largely a product of the failure to appreciate that social processes occur *in time*, that is in history (Hale, 1995: 14).

Clow and Machum use a diagram to illustrate how structure and agency work together to produce social reality over time [see Figure 1]. As Figure 1 demonstrates, the way society is organized creates the situations to which people must respond. In turn, the sum of peoples' responses feeds-back upon society's structure and creates the organization of society at a later time. This feedback occurs over time and so the making of history is the process by which peoples' responses to their situations either reinforces, undermines or actively replaces the existing organization of society.

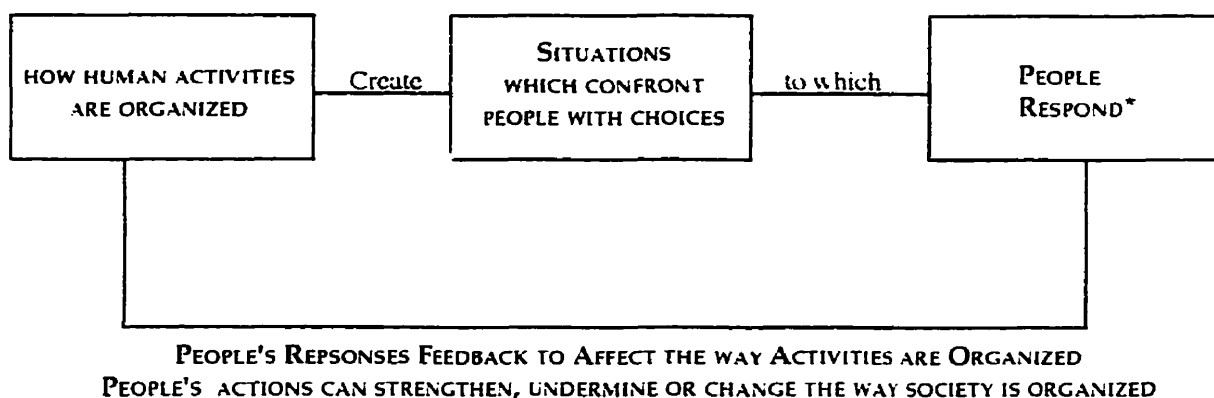
In our instance, if we look at Native peoples prior to the establishment of NTCs we find that drug and alcohol treatment is available only off-reserve in provincially funded treatment centres primarily designed for the general population of the province. Native people can go there to be treated with non-Natives. This way of organizing drug and alcohol treatment was found to be not very effective for Native peoples. This "situation" confronted Native peoples with choices in dealing with the problems of drug and alcohol addiction. These choices included ignoring the problem or denying its existence; carrying on with the existing treatment structures already in place; or creating Native treatment centres on reserves specifically for Native people. In choosing the latter, and convincing the Federal government to

**FIGURE 1:****HOW SOCIOLOGISTS CONCEPTUALIZE AND EXPLAIN HUMAN BEHAVIOR**

Human beings do not act on instinct, we are social beings who learn from experience how to respond in different situations with which we are confronted. Human responses are essentially **INFERENTIAL IN CHARACTER** (i.e. learned by trial and error). People use their past experience (their own and those of others) to help guide their guesses about what to do in a particular situation. The limitation of inferential thinking is that even if a person's response worked once it may not always work the second, third or fourth time! Our behavior only makes sense when placed in its social situation, therefore sociologists argue:

macro level

micro level

**STRUCTURE****AGENCY**

\* People can respond in three general ways:

1. They can **CONFORM** to what is expected of them in the situation and do what those who organized the activity in a particular way expect (which strengthens the existing social structure).
2. They can attempt to **EVAD**E or **CIRCUMVENT** what is expected by those who organized the activity in a certain way (which can undermine the existing social structure).
3. They can **REBEL** against the situation and **TRY TO CHANGE** the way things are organized. (Reprinted with permission from Michael Clow and Susan Machum, 1996).

fund these centres, Native people in effect changed the way in which drug and alcohol treatment for Native peoples is organized.

People's responses, argues Clow, are inferential in character, the result of a process of trial and error which leads different people to respond differently to the same situation. People can conform to what is expected of them in the situation, merely try to evade what is expected of them, or actively seek to resist and change the existing organization of society. The process of reinforcement, undermining or change which results over time is a political one. Groups of people who respond differently to a given situation may well come into conflict with each other over the desirable organization of their society. History is an account of the political process by which a society remains stable, falls apart or changes (Clow, 1995). Armstrong and Armstrong argue that the development of theory works very much in the same way, since it too is a social process:

To guide our behavior effectively, theory must be informed by our interaction with our physical and social environment, by our practice. In other words, theory is formulated not simply by formal research, but also according to our daily experience. As we interact with, and change, our world, we can simultaneously modify, challenge, or confirm our theory. (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990: 11-12)

Understanding the interaction between structure and agency has preoccupied many contemporary theorists, and must be a key component of any study of drug and alcohol abuse and its treatment on Native reserves. For we are trying to connect individual drug addiction and its treatment to the social situations and life of Native communities, that is to the social processes of drug treatment in specific communities of people in our larger society. As we will see, understanding the social processes of treatment, and the role of

Native spirituality in Native Treatment Centres in particular, will require an historical perspective.

Mills believed that any sociological inquiry would be comprehensive if it was able to answer three kinds of questions. Specifically: How is society organized? How did it come to be organized this way? and What kind of people prevail in this society, and what kind of people are coming to prevail? He argued that no matter what the specific problem to be investigated, the research procedure would require the researcher to explore the following questions:

1) What is the structure of this particular society as a whole? What are its essential components, and how are they related to one another? How does it differ from other varieties of social order? Within it what is the meaning of any particular feature for its continuance and for its change?

2) Where does this society stand in human history? What are the mechanics by which it is changing? What is its place within and its meaning for the development of humanity as a whole? How does any particular feature we are examining affect, and how is it affected by, the historical period in which it moves? And this period — what are its essential features? How does it differ from other periods? What are its characteristic ways of history-making?

3) What varieties of men and women now prevail in this society and in this period? And what varieties are coming to prevail? In what ways are they selected and formed, liberated and repressed, made sensitive and blunted? What kinds of 'human nature' are revealed in the conduct and character we observe in this society in this period? And what is the meaning for 'human nature' of each and every feature of the society we are examining? (Mills, 1959: 4-5)

Mills' research questions supply an enormously ambitious mandate for research, one quite beyond a study of this size. They do, however, indicate the framework of analysis required to make sociological sense of the use of Native spirituality in drug treatment. Applying Mills' analytic framework

enables us to develop a set of questions appropriate for studying the role and efficacy of the use of Native spirituality in the five Native treatment centres on reserves in New Brunswick. The three sets of questions appropriate to our study are:

1) How are Native Treatment Centres organized and what process do they employ to change Aboriginal addicts into well adjusted Native people? To answer this larger question requires a series of more detailed questions: How is Native drug treatment organized and operating within the Reserves? How does the process of drug treatment use or fail to use Native spiritual concepts and practices? Is the use of Native spiritual practices thought to be effective or not effective by Native people, particularly the staff at the Native Treatment Centres?<sup>7</sup> Who is supporting and promoting the use of Native spirituality in the Centres? Is anyone opposing or resisting the use of Native spirituality in drug and alcohol rehabilitation? If so, why?

2) How did Native Treatment Centres and their treatment procedures become organized as they are today? This question requires that we delve into the history of Native drug treatment Centres, the processes which led to their establishment, and the history of any dispute over the use of Native spiritual beliefs and practices in drug and alcohol treatment. Specifically, in what social context did Native Treatment Centres and the practice of using Native beliefs and ceremonies emerge? Were the Native Treatment Centres developed through consensus or have they been

---

<sup>7</sup>The actual psychological effects of Native spirituality on addicts is of course beyond our expertise to determine, it being a psychological judgement.

marked by controversy and dispute? If the latter, from whence did this dispute arise?

3) Are the proponents of the use of Native spiritual beliefs and practices prevailing within the Native drug treatment programmes? Or are they under challenge within the Native communities within which they operate? Are there people who do not accept the efficacy and desirability of using Native spiritual practices in the treatment of those afflicted by substance abuse? Which groups of people are prevailing in these disputes?

With these theoretical assumptions and questions to guide our inquiry, a useful exploratory case study of the use of Native spirituality in Native treatment centres in New Brunswick can be undertaken.

#### **D. Organization of the Thesis**

The remainder of the thesis is organized into five chapters.

The following chapter is a literature review concerning Native spirituality and the drug treatment programmes. It documents the extent of the drug problem in Native communities, the failure of conventional drug treatment programmes, and the rise of drug treatment centres operated by Natives on Canadian reserves. It examines the existing literature on how Native drug and alcohol treatment centres operate and the role of Native spirituality in the treatment process.

Chapter 3 describes the case study approach, the methodological rationale and design for this piece of research. The parameters of the case study and the data gathering techniques employed are discussed, providing information on who was interviewed and the significance of those interviewed for the study. The limitations of this case study are also considered here.

The findings of this case study, which examines the five Native drug treatment centres in New Brunswick, are presented in Chapter 4. An examination of the treatment procedures is provided for each of the five centres. The actual use of Native spirituality in addiction treatment is compared with what the literature claims is happening in Native Treatment Centres across the country.

Chapter 5 deals with the explanation of the conflict concerning the use of Native spirituality in the drug treatment programmes studied. It provides a discussion of the historical processes which appear to be influencing the use of Native spirituality in the treatment centres today.

Finally, Chapter 6 presents a summary of the findings and their theoretical significance, and ends with a list of potential questions for further research.

### **E. Chapter Summary**

This Chapter began with a brief and general discussion of the situation of Native peoples in Canadian society and the social problem of drug and alcohol addiction among Native peoples. I then noted the creation of Native treatment centres and the philosophy behind the use of Native spirituality at these centres. A discussion outlining the purpose of the study, the sociological approach used in this study and some of the significant issues and questions which will both inform and help explain our research findings followed. I then concluded with an outline of the remaining thesis chapters.



## Chapter Two

### NATIVE SPIRITUALITY AND DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT

In this Chapter we take a more detailed look at the drug and alcohol problems among Native peoples, the operation and role of conventional treatment centres and their attempts to alleviate the substance abuse problems among Native peoples. We then look at the creation of Native treatment centres in Canada within the larger social context of the quest among Native peoples for self-determination and self-government. The Chapter then concludes with a look at the theory behind the need and significance of the creation of Native treatment centres in response to the social problem of substance abuse among Native peoples.

#### **A. The Problem of Alcohol and Drug Abuse among Native Peoples**

As briefly discussed in Chapter One, drug and alcohol abuse is a serious social problem facing Native peoples. However, James Olson (1984) asserts that there has not always been perceived to be a particular "Native" problem with alcohol abuse. In colonial times, Native people's alcohol consumption was like that of Europeans: "In the seventeenth century Native peoples consumed alcohol in the same way most Europeans did" (Olson, 1984:53). Olson argues that at the point where Native peoples and settlers lived in some kind of balance of power with one another, alcohol was simply another of the European artifacts absorbed into Native cultures.

At first, when they had met on fairly equal political terms, alcohol was a diplomatic tool, a device used frequently to facilitate the negotiating process. Native Americans adopted alcohol from settlers just as they had adopted rifles and metal tools; it became part of their social life, not as a transformer of Native culture or as pathological deviance. (Olson, 1984:53)

Olson argues that two things changed over time: 1) the balance of power eroded dramatically in favour of the Europeans, and 2) the European attitude toward alcohol changed markedly against heavy and regular consumption. Olson, writing about the situation of Native people's in the West, argues that once the Native people became clearly dominated by the European settlers in the 19th century — as evidenced by the movement of Aboriginal peoples onto reserves, the passage of the Indian Act and the establishment of the Office of Indian Affairs — Native drinking changed: "alcoholism and crimes related to the abuse of alcohol were much more common" (Olson, 1984:53). Olson claims thus that the image of the "drunken Indian" commenced in the nineteenth century after the situation of Native people had been altered for the worse and the temperance movement had changed Europeans' perception of drinking itself:

People of European extraction viewed public inebriation either as a gross sin or as a pathological, and pathetic, response to social and cultural stress;. . . In either case, European Americans developed a powerful stereo-type of the "drunken Indian" - a pitiful creature unable to resist the bottle and incapable of controlling the emotional effects of drinking. The increasingly widespread use of alcohol on the reservations in the 1880s only confirmed the stereotype. (Olson, 1984:53)

Kellough argues that alcoholism among Native peoples served to form part of the ideological justification of segregation as a measure of protection from the evils of white society (Kellough, 1980). The historical problems with alcohol abuse among the Micmac people is also elucidated in a recent work of Ruth Homes-Whitehead, wherein she describes the use of alcohol among the

Micmacs and the consequences of such abuse (See Homes-Whitehead, 1991:116).

In contemporary society many scholars argue that Native alcoholism is best understood in the context that alcohol provides an escape from the miserable life conditions and situation of Native peoples on the reservations (Kellough, 1980; Frontline, 1991; The Canadian Indian, 1986; Moon, 1991; York, 1990; Olson, 1984). Kaye (1990:133-34) exemplifies this argument:

With the culture oppressed, the languages near extinction and the traditions all but forgotten, the social problems were only beginning. Now that hunting and fishing grounds were gone, men were deprived of their traditional roles as providers, and poverty was rampant. With the children wrenched from their communities and deposited at residential schools, families broke apart. Alcohol and other drugs were welcomed as a beautiful escape from hell. (Kaye, 1990:133-4)

The argument that Native people are particularly or biologically prone to alcoholism or to alcohol addiction is largely regarded as outdated by contemporary scholars. Nonetheless the legacy of the ideas of biological determinism and the ahistorical image of the "drunken Indian" remain a part of Canadian and International law (Wright, 1995). For example Native writer Lawrence Paul, in attempting to dismiss the biological explanation, wrote:

Historical facts that are very well documented reveal that Native people have always been susceptible to alcohol abuse. However, this is not because they are different biologically than any other human being. (Paul, 1990:27)

While substance abuse is seen by some as providing an escape for Native peoples from their life situation, many Native peoples see alcohol as the number one social problem and enemy facing them today (Paul, 1990; Moon, 1991; Kaye, 1990; York et al., 1990). The statistical data surrounding the

problems with alcohol abuse among Native peoples seem to substantiate this assertion.

Aboriginal people are considered the most lawless minority of their size with alcohol and drugs as the most predominant influence in regards to breaking the law (Paul, 1990:27). Alcohol abuse is related to 99 percent of offenses committed by Native peoples (Alberta Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission Developments, 1985; Smart, 1986:103). Alcohol abuse among Native peoples is also seen as influencing the high number of Native children in care (Smart, 1986:103). Further to this, a 1985 survey of Aboriginal people in Manitoba reveals that alcohol abuse features predominantly as a major cause in family discord, and in the lives of many Native people who commit suicide (Avar, 1989:114). Studies further show that approximately fifty to sixty percent of Native illness and deaths are alcohol related (Alberta Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission Developments, 1985).

Most scholars of the Native people argue that the actual social conditions of Native people are the primary cause of substance abuse, and most White social service agencies and organizations accept that definition of the situation. A position paper prepared for the John Howard Society (1988) *The Role of Native people Within The Criminal Justice System*, asserts that:

There is no denying that for this group the use of alcohol and drugs is a reaction to life circumstances - poverty, unemployment, land problems, lack of equal rights and discrimination. (Position Paper, 1988:6)

However, while social class position can be seen as contributing to substance abuse among Aboriginal peoples, class position alone it appears is not the only problem. For example, the Hobbema Reserve, home to four Cree bands, south of Edmonton, Alberta, became one of the richest reservations in

Canada following the discovery of gas and oil on the reserve. However, this same reserve has the highest record for substance abuse and suicide in all of Canada (Kapica, 1991:A1). Kapica argues that the Hobbema situation is indicative that there is more than poverty involved in the extent of Native drug addiction and self-abuse, and he identifies it as a spiritual emptiness at the centre of Native life within the larger Canadian society:

The reserve [Hobbema] is now being held up as an example that money alone cannot solve Native problems. Money, rather undermines the concept of sharing which is central to Native spiritual life. (Jack Kapica 1991:A1)

What is of interest in regard to this analysis — that a spiritual vacuum is at the heart of the Native malaise — is Stark's research, which asserts that cities with high Church membership rates have lower level rates of "social disorganization", crime and other forms of deviance, than do other cities (Stark, 1980, 1983). However, sociologist David Lewis's research on Native peoples asserts that while Native peoples continue to have high Church membership they at the same time exhibit inordinately high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, suicide and crime. Thus he states, "Clearly, then, the Churches do not function as expected in this case" (Lewis, 1993:246).

These factors appear to lead us back to the assertions made by Traditionally minded Native peoples in their quest and creation of Native treatment centres. Their assertion is that the cure or alleviation of drug and alcohol problems among Native peoples rests on the use of Native spirituality within the treatment process (Paul, 1990; Wilson, 1983; Kaye, 1990; Krawll, 1988; York, 1990).

## B. Conventional Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centres

Conventional alcohol and drug treatment centres focus on a personal and individualized form of treatment for addiction problems. The problem of addiction is seen as what Mills calls a personal trouble (Mills, 1959). The treatment processes in these centres reflect this conceptualization of the problem as an individual one, and one specifically rooted in a spiritual malaise. A concern with spirituality and a spiritual search for relief from addiction is *structured into* the whole conventional drug and alcohol treatment programme.

Within what is now the conventional treatment approach, alcoholism and drug addiction are seen as a "disease." Addicts are seen as having "an incurable [but controllable] disease called addiction" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:7). This disease, it is assumed, can be controlled or arrested, but one never rids oneself of the disease. All addicts remain "recovering" addicts. The authors of *The Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous* argue that the disease of "addiction is a physical, mental and spiritual disease that affects every aspect of our lives" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:20).

The physical aspect of the disease is understood to be "the compulsive use of drugs: the inability to stop using once we have started" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:20). The mental part of the disease is "the obsession, or overpowering desire to use, even when we are destroying our lives" (1988:20). And the spiritual aspect of the disease is "total self-centeredness" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:20). The pathology of the disease process as understood by Narcotics Anonymous is well described in the following section of *The Basic Text*:

Denial, substitution, rationalization, justification, distrust of others, guilt, embarrassment, dereliction, degradation, isolation, and loss of

control are all the results of our disease. Our disease is progressive, incurable and fatal. Most of us were relieved when we find we have a disease instead of a moral deficiency. (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:20)

For our purposes, it is important to note the centrality of what is regarded in the conventional approach to addiction treatment as the specifically *spiritual* side of the disease. It is important to note that the diagnosis of a spiritual malaise at the root of addiction and a central spiritual component to treatment and recovery is *not* something peculiar to Native drug abuse therapy. Spirituality and the acquisition of spiritual resources are an integrated part of all contemporary abuse treatment programs. The diagnosis of spiritual malaise at the root of addiction is so ingrained that it appears in concerns as widely separated from the image of the drunk or the heroin addict as in the discussion of that most revered of all addicts, the workaholic. In Diane Fassel's U.K. book, *Why Are We Working Ourselves To Death?*, the author uses the spiritual principles of other 12 step addiction treatment programs as a necessary and central part of the solution to the problem of workaholism (Fassel, 1992: 113-114).

Two further aspects of the disease of addiction are obsessive and compulsive behaviours in addicts. Obsession is defined as "that fixed idea that takes us back time and time again to our particular drug, or some substitute, to recapture the ease and comfort we once knew." (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:84) Compulsion is defined as "once having started the process with one fix, one pill, or one drink we cannot stop through our own power of will. Because of our physical sensitivity to drugs, we are completely in the grip of a destructive power greater than ourselves" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:84).

While the Addict is seen as not being responsible for their disease, they are seen as being responsible for their recovery (1988:15). The focus of recovery has to be internal and not one which seeks change outside oneself. Neither the society in which the addict lives, nor the people around them such as their family and friends are to be held responsible by the addict for their problems if they are to recover: "We can no longer blame people, places and things for our addiction. We must face our problems and our feelings", argues *The Basic Text* (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:15).

Treatment programs tend to dismiss, or not address, the question of the origin of the disease, arguing that it is not important for recovery. The significance of how the individual addict got the "disease" is specifically stated to be of no consequence to the recovery process from this disease (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:22). The focus is exclusively on what the individual now wants to do about their problem. While the disease is seen as incurable, "it can however be arrested and recovery is then possible" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:5). The solution to the problem of addiction is explicitly seen as spiritual in nature (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:33), but in order for a solution to work the disease must be arrested through total abstinence from all drugs (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:16).

To see the extent of the explicitly spiritual context in which recovery is placed it is worthwhile to examine the actual official presentation of the 12 steps:

If you want what we have to offer and are willing to make the effort to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps. These are the principles that made our recovery possible.

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction and that our lives had become unmanageable.



2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

This sounds like a big order and we can't do it all at once. We didn't become addicted in one day, so remember - easy does it. There is one thing more than anything else that will defeat us in our recovery: this is an attitude of indifference or intolerance toward spiritual principles. Three of these that are indispensable are honesty, open-mindedness and willingness. With these we are well on our way.

We feel that our approach to the disease of addiction is completely realistic for the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel. We feel that our way is practical, for one addict can best understand and help another addict. We believe that the sooner we face our problems within our society, in everyday living, just that much faster do we become acceptable, responsible, and productive members of that society.

The only way to keep from returning to active addiction is not to take that first drug. If you are like us you know that one is too many and a thousand is never enough. We put great emphasis on this, for we know that when we use drugs in any form, or substitute one for another, we release our addiction all over again.

Thinking of alcohol as different from other drugs has caused a great many addicts to relapse. Before coming to N.A. many of us viewed alcohol separately, but we cannot afford to be confused about this. Alcohol is a drug. We are people with the disease of addiction who must abstain from all drugs in order to recover. (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:17-18)

Conventional drug and alcohol treatment starts with the notion of spiritual recovery: "Recovery begins with surrender" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:86). "Surrender" refers to the surrender of the addict to the fact that they have the disease of addiction and can no longer use drugs, and to the process of recovery found in the 12 steps and spiritual principles of the program:

Surrender is the key to recovery, and total abstinence is the only thing that has ever worked for us. In our experience, no addict who has completely surrendered to this program has ever failed to find recovery. (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:87)

Since abstinence is "an abnormal state" for an addict, recovery demands a change in the addict's attitudes, thoughts and reactions. A complete personality change is required, and a change in the addict's life style i.e., changing the people they hung out with, the places they went to use, and the things they did while using. It is also "essential to accept reality" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:87). Once the addict accepts the "reality" of his or her life, and life in general, they will "...not find it necessary to use drugs in an attempt to change our [their] perceptions" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:87). Again, it is important to note that this is seen as a spiritual process, and one divorced from any desire to change "the world" rather than oneself:

Without drugs, we have a chance to begin functioning as useful human beings, if we accept ourselves and the world exactly as it is. We

learn that conflicts are a part of reality, and we learn to resolve them instead of running from them. They are a part of the real world. We learn not to become emotionally involved with problems . . . We have learned that if a solution isn't practical, it isn't spiritual . . . In recovery, we learn to depend on a Power greater than ourselves. (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:87)

The importance of psychological and other counselling is, of course, to assist the addict in the extraordinarily difficult and painful process of taking this spiritual journey of personality change and recovery.

While 12 step programs state that they are "spiritual not religious" programs, God and spiritual principles associated with religious ideas are a constant theme throughout the recovery process. The "power greater than ourselves" refers to God, but God as the addiction literature asserts him to be, i.e., "Our concept of God comes not from dogma but from what we believe works for us . . . a loving and caring God" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:24-25). Surrender to God, and beseeching Him for help are central to 12 step programmes:

We simply realize that there is a force for spiritual growth that can help us to become more tolerant, patient and useful in helping others . . . At times during our recovery, the decision to ask for God's help is our greatest source of strength and courage. We surrender quietly, and let the God of our understanding take care of us. (1988:26)

Each addict is encouraged to acquire their own personal relationship with God as they come to understand him through contact with other recovering addicts, prayer and meditation, 12 step meetings and, of course, through working and living the 12 steps of the program. According to the addiction treatment programme, each of the 12 steps brings the addict closer to both themselves (knowing who they truly are) and to the God of their understanding. Addicts are then encouraged to rely on their relationship with God to assist them in their recovery and in their lives in an ongoing process of recovery throughout their entire lives:

Ongoing recovery is dependent on our relationship with a loving God who cares for us and will do for us what we find impossible to do for ourselves. (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:96)

In following the 12 steps of recovery (styled of course, along the lines of the original 12 step program of Alcoholics Anonymous) the addict attends meetings on a regular basis, helps other addicts in the recovery process, reads the literature and acquires a sponsor (a sponsor is another recovering addict that has gone through the 12 steps who then assists the newcomer in learning about and doing the 12 steps). The sponsor is also a friend who helps and supports the person sponsored through various personal problems during their recovery. They are seen as essential for anyone seeking recovery from addiction (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988).

The expected outcome of following the course of conventional addiction treatment is that the addict will eventually loose the "desire" to use any mind altering substance. The addict, through the help of God and other recovering addicts, finds a new way to live that is once again explicitly spiritual in context:

Surrendering our will puts us in contact with a Higher Power who fills the empty place inside that nothing could ever fill. We learned to trust God for help daily. Living just for today relieves the burden of the past and the fear of the future. We learned to take whatever actions are necessary and to leave the results to our Higher Power. (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:91)

The outcome of following the suggestions of the program is seen to bring happiness, joy, freedom, self-respect and a new contentment with one's life:

As we recover we gain a new outlook on being clean. We enjoy a feeling of release and freedom from the desire to use. We find that everyone we meet eventually has something to offer. We become able to receive as well as to give. Life can become a new adventure for us. We come to know happiness, joy and freedom . . . Today, secure in the love of the Fellowship, we can finally look another human being in the eye and be grateful for who we are. (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:88-89)

The theoretical roots of the recovery process within conventional methods of treatment are thus a mixture of clinical psychology and the notion that personal change is an essentially spiritual process. The focus is on the individual not on society. If any sociological perspective could be said to underlie the psychology of the recovery movement it would be functionalism. The problem is understood as one of individual deviance in a social context which is either supportive of a healthy and spiritually fulfilling life, or neutral with respect to one's internal state of spiritual health. Injustice or dysfunction within society are not held to be a part of the addict's problem, and the solution to addiction is for that individual to become "an acceptable, responsible and productive member of society" (Narcotics Anonymous, 1988:18).

There is only one treatment centre in New Brunswick for the general population - the Ridgewood Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre in Saint John. This treatment centre is modeled after the program pioneered by Dr. Gordon Bell at the Donwood Institute in Toronto, Ontario. The centre is a twenty-bed unit, staffed by a physician and registered nurses for the purposes of detoxification from substance abuse. The length of treatment is four weeks. The treatment program includes client participation in group therapy, therapeutic recreation, relapse and recovery education, the writing of daily journals by clients, stress management, relaxation, education on sexuality, communication skills, exercise, nutrition, family life, understanding addiction, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and spirituality (Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick, 1996).

The centre also has a **Family Education Service** which assists family members, friends and significant others in understanding addiction and the addicted person. In this program family members are provided information

on the nature of addiction, and the effects of addiction on the family. They are also provided assistance in helping themselves in the provision of practical coping skills. Family members are also encouraged and provided the opportunity to share their experiences on how they have been affected by the addicted person's behaviour (Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick, 1996).

The centre also offers a program called "**Alternatives**" for adolescents abusing drugs and alcohol, and an **Out-Patient** service for those people suffering from chemical dependency but not requiring extensive in-patient care. There is also a **Follow-Up** program which involves individualized counselling for Clients who have completed the four week residential program. The centre also offers a program called **Project Recovery** which is an outreach project funded by Employment and Immigration Canada and sponsored by the Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick. This project offers Clients in the centre assistance in finding suitable employment and/or training to improve employability (Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick, 1996).

In concluding this section, it should be noted that the sociological assumptions made by the 12 step programmes are not inevitable or simply 'natural'. In the Mills' tradition one might well see widespread problems with substance abuse or addiction as both a personal trouble and a social issue (Mills, 1959). As Mills argued, when more than a small percentage of people in a society have a particular problem, the problem is bound to be connected to the social structures of that society and how they operate to create the situations faced by the individual. As statistical rates of addiction in this society are inordinately high, this would certainly be indicated to someone in the tradition of Mills as being the case with drug addiction. The "disease" of

addiction talked about in the 12 step programs, while no doubt manifesting itself in the personalities and lives of the addicts, would be seen, in part, as a manifestation of the consequences of the destructive way in which society is organized. The disease of addiction manifesting itself in the individual as a personal trouble, would be seen as being directly traceable to the social structures of the society in which the many addicted individuals live<sup>8</sup> (Mills, 1959). Such a "Millsian" perspective is completely absent from the theory and practice of the conventional drug and alcohol treatment movement.

---

<sup>8</sup> A critical approach to this society in the Mills tradition might well argue that the socialization process of the individual in this society teaches them to look outside themselves for pleasure, self-worth and respect. Materialism, consumption and money might be seen as being the things which bring one a "good life" and "true happiness" (Leiss, 1976). Furthermore, in modern contemporary North America institutionalized religion, the spiritual values it teaches might well be seen as something concerned with the "after-life," preparing oneself for life after death (Bevan, 1932); and not generally as being the answer to life's immediate problem in the here and now. Further to this, in many forms of Christianity God is seen as judgmental and one must be perfect, or as close to perfection as one can be, in order to have God in their lives. This idea then keeps many people, such as those suffering from addiction, away from anything to do with God or religion. For this reason, 12 step programs state they are not religious but rather spiritual.

Further, if we look at consumerism and advertising in this society it is not hard to see that people are encouraged to buy "things" which will make them feel better (Leiss, 1976). Whether they actually need such "things" or not is irrelevant, the point of advertising is to convince the general populous that they do "need" these "things." Leiss, in his book *The Limits to Satisfaction*, identifies the construction of personality in modern society around what we consume as a fundamental consequence of advertising in advanced capitalist society. Leiss argues that such personalities are inherently unstable and the lives of such people unsatisfying and driven toward a spiral of attempts to fill a void at the center of their being.

From this perspective the many addictive behaviours in this society are caused by the social structures of the society and the socialization processes which sustain this society. Besides the addiction associated with drugs, addiction manifests itself in a number of obvious ways in individuals in our society: food addiction, sex addiction, relationship addiction, money addiction, work addiction, gambling addiction et. al. Such a critical perspective on society might well argue that we live in a "fix it" society that teaches us from the time we are small children to look outside of ourselves, in some kind of all consuming consumption, for happiness, pleasure and self-worth.

However, as we shall see, Native "Traditionalists" do have a particular critical perspective on society which informs their "take" on the treatment of addiction among Native peoples.

### **C. Native People Demand Their Own Drug Treatment Centres**

While the statistical rates of Aboriginal peoples entering conventional treatment centres has been high (Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick, 1984-89; York, 1990; Krawll, 1988), the success of Native peoples remaining free from substance abuse upon completion of these programs has been low (York, 1990; Krawll, 1988; Moon, 1991; Paul, 1990). This failure rate appears to be supported by the persistence of substance abuse problems among Native peoples shown in the statistical data.

A study of the Ridgewood Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre in New Brunswick by J&J Research Associates (1988) found fundamental cultural and even linguistic barriers for the Micmac and Maliseet peoples entering the treatment centre: "Micmac and Maliseet people said that they found some language hard to follow and (because of their low level of literacy) were often embarrassed about the need to write up their diaries" (J&J Research Associates, 1988:92). As we shall see, some Native people had a much deeper criticism of conventional treatment programmes than this. The creation of Native-run alcohol and drug treatment centres forms part of a larger social movement among Native peoples across Canada for self-determination and self-government<sup>9</sup>.

---

<sup>9</sup> Native peoples are generally demanding control over the political, economic, cultural and social aspects of their communities. Demand for Native run education, justice and other social services have been included in demands for Native self-government. Previous to the formation of the Native Treatment Centres drug and alcohol treatment for Native peoples was provided



There can be little doubt that a concerted movement for Native self-determination and autonomy of Native communities across North America has characterized the last several decades. From the 1960s to the present day, people in Canada and the United States have witnessed the overt manifestations of Native peoples in their re-assertion of treaty rights over land ownership (York and Pindera, 1992; York, 1990; Cardinal, 1977; Adams, 1975; Elliot, 1979; Frideres, 1974; Apted, 1992; Ajello, 1996). In more recent years we have seen the quest of Native peoples for self-government on their reservations (Long, 1984; Kapica, 1991; Wilson, 1992; Ajello, 1996). We have also seen at least a significant minority of Native people who desire a return to what they see as their historic pre-Contact spiritual values. Notable have been a return by Native people to the spiritual beliefs concerning Native elders (York, 1990; Moon, 1991; Doxtater, 1992; ), as well as towards Native women and children (Paul, 1990; York and Pindera, 1992; Kaye, 1990). Further to these changes, we have seen the pursuit of Native peoples for a measure of self determination in many areas, including for their own Justice system on their reservations and for control over educating their children (Ajello, 1996:24).

The creation of Native drug and alcohol treatment centres on Canadian reserves is another part of this quest among Native peoples for self-determination and autonomy. Given the failure of conventional drug and alcohol programmes in the provincial health systems, the federal

---

only through the respective health care systems of the provinces. NTCs came into being as the result of Native demands that they run their own drug and alcohol treatment programmes on their own territory, on their own terms. Campaigns against alcohol abuse have been a recurrent feature of Native spiritual revival efforts in the last century (Lanternari, 1963; and Mooney, 1986).

government acceded to the demands of Native peoples for reserve-sited, Native-operated drug and alcohol centres. As noted in Chapter 1, there are now 55 NTCs across the country, with federal funding.

#### **D. How Native Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centres Are Mandated to Operate**

Native people assert, and with some validity it appears, that the conventional treatment centres in Canada are not working for Aboriginal peoples. The particular spirituality of Native peoples was an underlying rationale used by Native proponents of autonomous Native run drug and alcohol treatment centres (Krawll, 1988; York, 1990; Havemam, 1985; Kaye, 1990; Moon, 1991; Pederson, 1992; Solomon, 1989). And the use of Native spirituality within the Native treatment centres is what the literature argues distinguishes them from the treatment centres in Canada's general public health system.

Proponents of Native run drug and alcohol treatment centres see the problems with alcohol and drug abuse as being more than a personal trouble. Such Native people see addictive behaviour among Native peoples as being a result of their feelings of lack of self-worth as Native people in the larger society. Krawll, in her Report to the Solicitor-General made the case this way:

The result of the loss of traditional values and practices has produced feelings of frustration, a sense of defeat, and lowered self-esteem, which in turn has manifested itself in the abuse of alcohol and other addictive substances, leading to discharges of randomly aggressive behaviour against the self and others. (Krawll, 1988:2)

While the problems with substance abuse affect the individual lives and families of those addicted, many Native people, and others, see the problem of drug and alcohol abuse as a social problem as well as a personal trouble

(Paul, 1990; Moon, 1991; Frideres, 1974; Kellough, 1980; York, 1990; Smart, 1986).

Krawll argues that "Aboriginal treatment centres evolved from the stated need by Aboriginal peoples that, to be successful in addressing substance abuse among Aboriginal peoples, treatment must include a cultural component and be initiated by Aboriginal peoples" (Krawll, 1988:8). This cultural component includes the use of Native spirituality within the treatment process as well as an atmosphere in the treatment centres which "creates a culturally sensitive environment for Aboriginal-oriented services by Aboriginal people" (Krawll, 1988:8). Krawll asserts that "this concept is supported by experts in the field" (1988:8):

Aboriginal people must regain or retain their cultural identity and self-respect before they can achieve the inner strength necessary to fight alcoholism and other drug addictions. (Krawll, 1988:8)

Further to this, because Native treatment centres are staffed largely by Native peoples, the clients are able to identify immediately with the staff, which is seen as "a contrast to the threat of assimilation, through providing the opportunity for Aboriginal people to determine their own future" (Krawll, 1988:8-9). The distinguishing factor separating Native treatment centres from conventional forms of treatment, however, lies primarily in the use of Native spirituality within the treatment process (Krawll, 1988).

However, it is worthwhile noting that Native treatment centres operate in many respects as conventional treatment centres do. NTCs provide counselling for the addict and group therapy. They also provide information on addiction, nutrition, communication skills, relapse and recovery, stress management and the like. Outside of the fact that the centres are run largely by Native peoples, the primary distinguishing factor in the Native treatment

centres from that of conventional treatment centres is held to be that they use Native spirituality within the treatment process.

In the literature, the role of Native spirituality within the Native treatment centres is alleged to be the most effective means for correcting the problems of addiction among Native peoples. Through learning and participating in Native spirituality in the treatment centres, Native addicts gain self-esteem and pride in their Native identity. This rise in self-esteem and pride in their Native identity is then seen as substantially lessening or entirely eliminating their need to abuse substances (Krawll, 1988; York, 1990). The literature argues they use a combination of conventional methods of treatment such as 12 step programs and individualized counselling as well as Native spirituality. The presumption is that the most significant aspect of treatment for Native addicts is their participation in Native spirituality.

The aspects of Native spirituality used in the Native treatment centres in New Brunswick consists of the Talking Circle, Native prayers, the Sweet Grass Ceremony, the Pipe Ceremony and the Sweat Lodge Ceremony. The following is a brief description of the Native spiritual practices used in the NTCs in New Brunswick. These descriptions are based both on interviews done in New Brunswick for this study and on documentary material concerning the meaning of some of these practices.

The day begins in the NTCs using Native spiritual practices in their programme of treatment with the following Native prayer:

*INDIAN PRAYER*

Oh Great Spirit, Whose Voice I hear in the winds  
Hear me, for I am young small and weak.  
I need your strength and wisdom.  
I seek strength Oh Great One  
Not to be superior to my brothers and sisters

But to conquer my greatest enemy,  
MYSELF.

I seek wisdom  
The lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock  
So that I may learn and carry this message of life and hope to my  
people.  
May my hands respect the many Beautiful things you have made.  
My ears be sharp to hear your Voice  
May I always bask in your beauty  
And let my eye's ever behold the red and purple sunsets.  
So when life fades like the setting sun  
My spirit will come to you without shame.  
I HAVE SPOKEN

Following the prayer, one of the staff members provides an interpretation. Within this interpretation, lies the meaning of various historical Native spiritual teachings, illustrating to clients the importance and significance of the meanings to the words so prayed.

The Talking Circle follows the Native prayer. The Talking Circle consists of clients sitting in a circle (the circle having spiritual significance for Native people) passing an object of spiritual importance, namely the talking stick, from individual to individual until everyone has had a chance to speak. The person holding the object is the one who speaks, while the others listen. When the person speaking is finished, he or she passes the stick to the next individual, who is invited to express themselves:

The Taking Circle is a basic way of opening up and letting people know your emotions. It's O.K. to express yourself and your feelings, whatever they may be (Staff-Traditionalist, NTC #3).

Clients are encouraged, through the practice of the talking circle, to let their emotions surface, and to express these emotions freely:

The social teaching that men are macho and that they don't cry, was not good for me. Since becoming involved in the traditional way, I have learned that crying is a cleansing and good for the soul (Staff-Counsellor, NTC #3).

Another Staff-Counsellor states, "Everything in Native spirituality has a teaching. Like the Talking Circles, everyone has to wait to speak, it's teaching you patience and tolerance" (Staff-Counsellor, NTC #3). However, clients are not obligated to speak and speak only if they choose to do so.

The Sweet Grass, Pipe and Sweat Lodge ceremonies require the presence of a Staff-Traditionalist. To facilitate an understanding of these ceremonies, I shall present a brief description of each.

Sweet Grass ceremonies are carried out on a daily basis and explained to clients. "The Sweet Grass ceremonies, by praying and smudging over the clients, is once again helping them to work through with their inner problems" (Staff-Traditionalist, NTC #3). Sweet grass is picked and made into a braid, symbolic of the hair of Mother Earth. It is once again a cleansing ceremony, whereby the Traditionalist prays to the Creator and blesses the clients with the smoke of the sweet grass. This is commonly referred to as smudging. The smoke from the sweet grass encircles the individuals, one at a time, and prayers are offered to the Creator. It is a ceremony and ritual aimed at getting the client in touch with the spirit world, Creation and one's self.

The treatment process also involves the Pipe ceremony. The Pipe ceremony usually concludes the Sweat Lodge ceremony, but may be carried out at any time upon individual client need. The traditionalist first blesses the Sacred Pipe and tobacco. The pipe is then passed around to all participants, as prayers are said by the pipe carrier. Each individual may, if they wish, speak, or pray, while having the pipe in their possession. Only a Traditionalist trained by a Medicine Man is able to perform the ceremony.

The Sacred Pipe carrier will have studied under a Medicine Man for a period until reaching a certain level of spiritual knowledge and strength, prior to being deemed ready to carry the sacred pipe and perform the Pipe ceremony.

This requirement for a Traditionalist to preside is also true of the Sweat Lodge ceremony. The Traditionalist has studied under a Medicine Man, undergoing certain rites of passage according to Native spiritual teachings, before they are ready to carry out the Sweat Lodge ceremony. Hence the need and importance of the Staff-Traditionalists if the NTC is to make Native spiritual practices a part of the treatment process.

The Sweat Lodge ceremony is a purification ceremony, and the lodge itself represents the womb of Mother Earth.

The Sweat Lodge is a ceremony that cleanses body, mind and spirit in order to make us receptive and pure for Spiritual ceremonies, vision quest and the rigors of everyday life (Eva Solomon, 1989).

The lodge is usually made of eight willow saplings used to form a dome, which is then encircled by four rings. Each element of the lodge embodies spiritual symbolism:

The four rings that shape the dome remind us of the four levels of knowledge beyond our world. Likewise they bring to mind the four elements without which we could not survive — earth, water, air and fire — as well as the four races of humans on the earth. Although the lodge has four doors, only one is used by humans (Solomon, 1989).

The entrance door for participants is the door facing the East; the remaining doors are for the entrances of the spirit world. The ceremony is carried out in complete darkness, which helps one appreciate light. The participants wear little or no clothing, as inside the lodge is very hot. The lack of clothing is further symbolic of one's nakedness when born and being free from materialism before the Creator.

There are four rounds involved in the ceremony, each round lasting anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes depending on the individual Traditionalist running the ceremony. Each round, new stones from the fire just outside the lodge are added to the pit of stones already inside the lodge. The flap or door is pulled down by the door man, and with each round "the intensity of heat and steam are enhanced making it a true sacrifice to remain inside the lodge and endure suffering for the health and life of the whole people" (Solomon, 1989).

As the shape of the lodge symbolizes a womb, upon the opening of the door, or flap, the breath of fresh air after each round is symbolic of the first breath of a new born baby. As one client after being in the sweat for the first time puts it, "I felt like I was born again" (Client, NTC #5). As Eva Solomon (1989) explains, "This sense of createdness heightens our awareness of being a part of a much larger universe, the physical and spiritual world."

The Traditionalist performing the ceremony offers prayers in the four directions of North, South, East and West, and guides the participants inside the lodge. Prayers and Native chanting permeate the ceremony and everyone has a chance to speak or pray if they so desire. The aim of the ceremony is to bring harmony between the spirit and physical worlds.

"We seek to return to wholeness by our purification of the body, mind, heart and spirit. We seek to restore healing to our brokenness" (Solomon, 1989).

The restoration of the relationship of participants with the Creator, one's self and one's fellow human beings as with all of creation heals the brokenness. Once the ceremony is completed, participants leave the lodge and wash in cool water, symbolic of experiencing a newness of life, a new beginning, or as a renewal of the new life already found.



The holistic nature of the Sweat Lodge ceremony reflects the nature of all spiritual ceremonies carried out by Native people. One Staff-Traditionalist states, "Most of the spirituality that happens here, happens in the Sweat" (Staff-Traditionalist NTC #5). The significance of participation in the Sweat Lodge ceremony for clients is echoed by others interviewed as well.

A Staff-Counsellor, having been involved in his ancestral spiritual beliefs and practices for approximately one year, explains his experience in the Sweat Lodge, and the personal significance of participation in Native practices rather than in Christian ones:

What I resent most, was being forced to go to church, and the idea that you had to go to church in order to believe in God. All these years, I heard people say so many bad things, from my own people, about Native spirituality, like the people who practise it are crazy and stuff. But I went to a Sweat Lodge to judge for myself, and I never felt that feeling before. I didn't feel judged by anyone, like in church, and everyone was praying for each other. No one was superior to anyone else, we were all at eye level and the only one superior to us was God. In Native spirituality everything has a teaching, and all the teachings give you strength for yourself. Once you feel good about yourself, the people around you will start to feel good too. (Staff-Counsellor, NTC #3)

The various ceremonies, while performed on certain days and times, are used when needed and are not strictly performed on any pre-fixed and immovable schedule. As one Staff-Traditionalist explains:

I use Native medicine on clients when they are having a problem. Sometimes I do a Sweet Grass ceremony and smudge, or I do a Sweat, but I ask them first, 'do you want it?' Because it's of their own free will that they participate. (Staff-Traditionalist, NTC #3)

The Staff-Traditionalist explain each of the ceremonies to the client in terms of its historical, spiritual, and personal meaning while underscoring its significance to clients prior to their participation. For instance, the traditionalist introduces clients to the Sweat Lodge ceremony slowly,

modifying the number of rounds and lessening the intensity of heat in the lodge, in an attempt to lessen their fears and gain their participation. Once the client is comfortable with the ceremony, the traditionalist then performs the standard ceremony with them. Further, if the client so desires, the traditionalist gives the client a traditional Native name, replacing their Christian name, during the Sweat Lodge ceremony (Staff-Traditionalist, NTC #5).

The aim of all spiritual ceremonies is that of healing the inner self of the clients. This was emphasized by another Staff-Traditionalist who argued:

A combination of all this is used in order for clients to learn and deal with their problems in their healing process. (Staff-Traditionalist, NTC #3).

Native peoples tend to see the problems with drug addiction, while being a personal trouble of the Native person afflicted with the disease, as the direct result of the loss of their way of life and spiritual beliefs and practices during and following the colonial period. Thus, in a sense similar to that of Mills, Native peoples see the problem with addiction among Native peoples as both a personal and a social problem (Mills, 1959). Further to this, they see the root cause of the problem with addiction as stemming from the history of Native peoples in Canadian society. Native traditionalists see themselves as having been robbed of their ancestral spiritual beliefs through the missionary activities of European churches.

In terms of structure and agency, Traditional Natives see the problem with drug addiction among their people as being caused by historical processes which, over time, brought about the destruction of their spirituality and their way of life. At the end of the twentieth century Traditional Native peoples are taking "action" in creating their own treatment centres and using their

spiritual beliefs and practices within the treatment procedures as a "Cure" from addiction. And if there is resistance to a group of Native people attempting to use Native spirituality as the primary method of treatment for addiction in the newly established Native treatment centres, we can see attempts to resist the construction of new social practices.

### **E. Chapter Summary**

This Chapter discussed the problems of drug and alcohol abuse among Native peoples. We also looked at the conventional forms of treatment with specific reference to the Ridgewood Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre and what appears to be a lack of success for Native peoples entering the conventional treatment centres. We then looked at the rationale behind Traditionalist Native peoples quest for Native treatment centres in the context of the larger social movement among Native peoples towards self-determination and self-government. Finally, we looked at what the literature tells us distinguishes Native treatment centres from the conventional centres.

## Chapter Three

### THE CASE STUDY: DESIGN AND METHODS

In this Chapter we will discuss the use of the case study in social science research and in particular the kind of exploratory case study used in examining the five Native treatment centres in New Brunswick. We will also put forth the rationale of this case study, the parameters of the research, the data gathering techniques and the specifics of who was interviewed.

#### **A. The Case Study Approach**

An exploratory case study approach was chosen due to the lack of data surrounding the use of Native spirituality in the five Native treatment centres in New Brunswick. An exploratory study was the appropriate mode in that not only had no previous sociological studies of New Brunswick Native Treatment Centres been done, but none elsewhere. With no previous work on the topic upon which to build, this study had to pioneer its own path. It is presumed in the literature (Krawll, 1988) that Native spirituality makes up part of the treatment procedures at these centres. It is also assumed and asserted in the literature that the use of traditional Native spiritual beliefs and practices within the treatment process is correcting, or lessening the massive social problems among Native peoples concerning drug and alcohol abuse (York, 1990; Paul, 1990; Pederson, 1992). In this study we

critically examine these elements of “conventional wisdom” as they apply to the case of New Brunswick NTCs.

Advocates of the case study approach argue that it is flexible and versatile (Hakim, 1987; Rose, 1991), suggesting it is particularly useful when you wish to gain information about historical change (Hakim, 1987; Hamel, 1993; Rose, 1991; Stoecker, 1991; Yin, 1994). This is what we are looking for in this study of the use of Native spirituality in the five Native treatment centres in New Brunswick. How the use of Native spirituality became a part of the treatment procedures at these centres and why it is claimed to be assisting in the alleviation of the drug and alcohol problems among Native peoples point to the significance of causal relationships, historical processes and societal change. Thus, it was necessary to study each centre at an intricate and personal level. The case study approach using semi-structured interviews permitted me insight into the staffs’ use of Native spirituality in the centres and access to the staffs’ judgment of the effectiveness of Native spiritual practices in the treatment of Native drug and alcohol abuse. A standard pre-prepared questionnaire would not have permitted me to gain the staffs’ own perspectives in the same way. Since this is an exploratory study without precedents, it can not be argued there was an existing body of theoretical reflections to incorporate into a survey instrument and test on the NTC staffs.

The exploratory case study is appropriate in this study as there is not a lot of information or data available in this research area (Hamel, 1993; Yin, 1994). However, because there are but five Native treatment centres in New Brunswick, I studied all five and was able to look for variation in the use of Native spirituality in each of the treatment centres. This allowed me to compare and contrast the use of Native spirituality within the treatment procedures in different Centres and their histories.

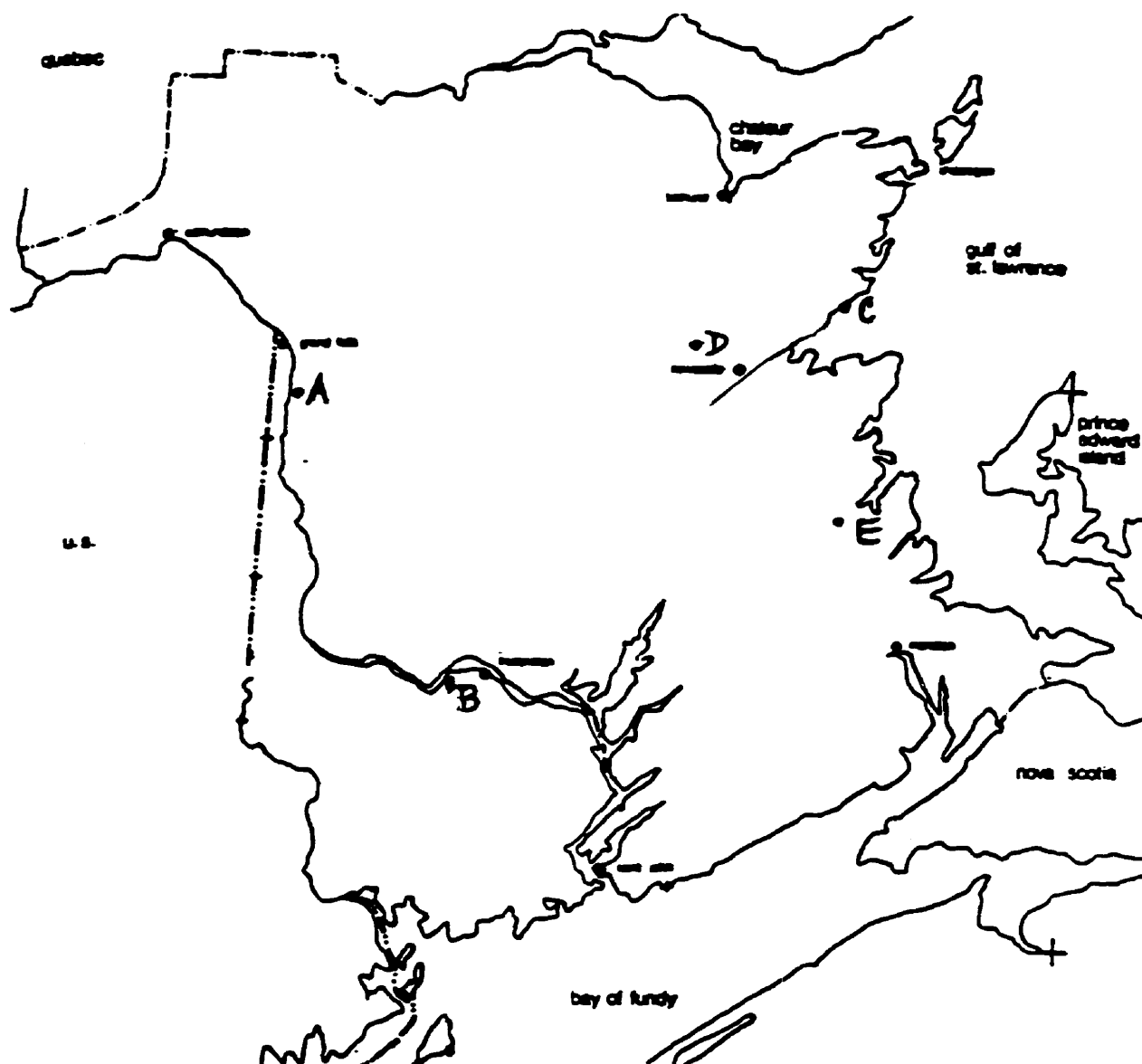
The rationale for choosing the Native treatment centres in New Brunswick rests on the literature which suggest that Native spirituality forms a part of the treatment procedure at these centres and that its use is proving to be effective in lessening or alleviating the problems of drug and alcohol abuse among Native peoples. It thus became important to look at each of the centres to study how the use of Native spirituality became a part of treatment process, and why it was proving to be effective in the treatment of drug and alcohol abuse. This approach then allowed me to examine the historical processes at work (Stoecker, 1991:93). We cannot generalize the results of this study beyond New Brunswick, but the results of this study suggest a number of questions for further research.

### **B. Parameters of the Case Study**

The parameters of this case study include all five of the Native treatment centres in New Brunswick. The centres are The Tobique Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre, located on the Tobique reserve near Perth Andover; Pili Pomawsuwakan (New Life) Kingsclear reserve near Fredericton; the Burnt Church Rehabilitation Centre, located on the Burnt Church reserve near Lagaceville; OETJGO SEGEOAT NAGOSSET WONAWKUHSE KISUHS (The Rising Sun Rehabilitation Centre) on the Eel Ground reserve near Newcastle; and the Lone Eagle Rehabilitation Centre located on the Big Cove reserve near Rexton (see Figure 2).

These treatment centres were established in and around 1987-88 as part of the funding put forth by the Federal government for the creation of Native treatment centres across Canada (Krawll, 1988; Pederson, 1992).

**FIGURE 2:  
MAP OF NEW BRUNSWICK SHOWING LOCATION OF NATIVE TREATMENT  
CENTRES**



**Legend:**

- A: The Tobique Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre**
- B: Pili Pomawusuwakan (New Life Centre)**
- C: Burnt Church Rehabilitation Centre**
- D: OETJGO SEGEOAT NAGOSET WONAWKUHSE KISUHS (The Rising Sun Rehabilitation Centre)**
- E: Lone Eagle Rehabilitation Centre**

I started my study in August of 1991 and finished by mid-October of that same year. In my study I interviewed the Directors of the centres, the Staff-Counsellors and the Staff-Traditionalists. These interviews were the primary source of my data. I also interviewed two Native spiritual Elders who visit two of the centres (Big Cove and Eel Ground) to teach and perform spiritual ceremonies with the clients. While interviewing clients at the Centre was not permissible, due to the nature of their maladies and the course of treatment, I was able to speak briefly with two clients at two different centres (Tobique and Eel Ground) during the course of my research. I was also able to speak briefly with two women on the Burnt Church reservation about their feelings on the use of Native spirituality in that treatment centre. Further to this, I interviewed Native political activist and Traditionalist Barbara Martin at the Fredericton Native Women's Council in the role of a key informant. The latter interview was done to gather information on what her views of the use and usefulness of Native spirituality was for Native people seeking recovery from substance abuse problems.

The limitations to my research rests primarily on the inaccessibility to clients in the centres, and in the limited resources with which I was required to carry out this research. Certainly in retrospect and with more resources, I would have interviewed more members of the general population on the reservations to get their responses and feelings about the use of Native spirituality in the treatment centres. I would have also interviewed the resident Priests to gather data on their views and impressions of the use of Native spirituality in the treatment centres. These interviews would have served either to strengthen or to weaken the statements of those interviewed who work within the treatment centres, and, of course, to broaden the scope of analysis. However, as Machum argued with respect to her doctoral research



on farm women, the scope of this study is quite sufficient to be useful as an exploratory study raising questions and issues for further research: "practical limits of resources, time and easy access to the actors or subjects of study may well suggest the use of a case study as a way to pioneer a subject area which would otherwise be closed to the researcher" (Machum, 1994:13).

### **C. Data Gathering Techniques**

Since the study of the use of Native spirituality in the Native treatment centres in New Brunswick is a preliminary study, I could not be sure of the range of responses I would receive. I thus used semi-structured interviews which consisted of in-depth, open-ended questions. This kind of interviewing permitted greater discovery of the staffs' own perspectives and thus more useful data on their own use of Native spirituality in the treatment centres and their evaluation of its usefulness as a treatment for alcohol and drug addiction among these Native peoples. Stoecker (1991) suggests that this kind of research enables the researcher to study individuals in their concrete situations and is useful for understanding the processes occurring and "meanings" participants give the situation being studied.

While I spoke briefly to two Clients in different treatment centres and two Native women on one of the reserves where a treatment centre is located, as well as brief conversations with other Native peoples on the respective reservations, I was able to carry out a total of sixteen "formal" interviews. Those sixteen interviews consisted of: The five Directors in each of the centres; one Assistant-Director (only one Assistant-Director existed in the centres) four Staff-Counsellors from the various centres; three Staff-Traditionalists (Staff-Traditionalists only existed in three of the five centres at the time of study); two Native Elders and a Native Traditionalist and Activist.

The majority of the interviews were carried out at the individual treatment centres, with the exception of those with the two Native Elders, which were done at their homes in Fredericton, and the interview with the Native Traditionalist and Activist, which was done at the Native Women's Council, also in Fredericton, New Brunswick. All of the interviews were carried out on a one on one basis (myself and the interviewee), with the exception of the Big Cove treatment centre, where the Assistant-Director and Staff-Traditionalist were together during the interview.

The limitations of depending on interviewing, of course, stem from the fact that the researcher must rely on people's memories. Such a reliance on interviews also means the researcher is reliant on the subjective interpretations and understandings of those interviewed concerning the situation and their impressions of the situation. However, the biases and limitations in relying on documents produced by organizations is also acknowledged (Hale, 1995:27, 32-36, 52-53). All methodologies and data gathering techniques have limitations as well as strengths.

#### **D. Specifics of Who Was Interviewed**

Since the treatment centres, as those interviewed, were assured confidentiality, I use a code to refer to the various centres. That is, the five Native treatment centres are identified as NTC #1, NTC#2, NTC #3, NTC #4 and NTC #5. Further to this, each of the individuals interviewed is identified by their occupation within the various centres and by the centre in which they work. For example, the man/woman in charge of the centre is the Director, so the interviewee is identified as: The Director at NTC #1 and so on. This procedure identifies the person interviewed, the treatment centre in which the interview took place and what the data gathered at that centre says

about the use and usefulness of Native spirituality in that centre. Those interviewed outside the context of Native treatment centres are identified as Native Elder, Native Traditionalist, Native woman, or Native Activist/Traditionalist.

The **Directors** in each of the centres are the individuals responsible for carrying out the mandate for treatment as set out by the national Native organizations overseeing funding requirements by the Federal government. Each of the Directors in the centres were involved in the creation of the treatment centres. Three of the Directors at the time of my study were Native people and two were non-Native people. Each of the Directors had also been in that position for a number of years at the time of my study and had either grown up on the reserve in question or had lived on the reserve for a number of years.

The **Staff-Counsellors** in each of the treatment centres do individualized counselling with the clients throughout the treatment process. The Staff-Counsellors are in daily contact with clients and are responsible for carrying out the mandate for treatment in each of the centres. Four of the Staff-Counsellors interviewed at the various treatment centres were recovering from past substance abuse problems. All of the Staff-Counsellors were Native people.

The **Staff-Traditionalists** are those individuals employed in the treatment centres to teach and perform Native spiritual ceremonies at the centres. The Staff-Traditionalists in the centres are in daily contact with the clients throughout the treatment process and are responsible for enacting the use of Native spirituality with clients throughout the treatment process. All of the Staff-Traditionalists interviewed in the study were recovering from past substance abuse problems.

The two **Native Elders** interviewed were individuals who visit the Native treatment centres upon request by either the Director or Staff-Traditionalist. Their role is to teach and carry out Native spiritual ceremonies with clients. Their presence in the centres is also to reinforce among the clients the Native spiritual teachings concerning the vital importance of Native Elders. The two Native Elders interviewed were also recovering from past substance abuse problems.

These people were chosen for the study as they are directly involved in the use of, and in accessing the usefulness of, Native spirituality within the treatment centres and in the recovery of Native peoples from substance abuse problems respectively. Interviews with the Directors in each of the centres provided insight into the operational procedures concerning the use of Native spirituality and the degree to which Native spirituality was successful in assisting Native peoples in their struggle with alcohol and drug abuse. Interviews with the Staff-Counsellors were significant in that these individuals have a comprehensive understanding of the daily use and success of Native spirituality among the clients in each of the centres. Interviews with the Staff-Traditionalists were extremely important as they have extensive knowledge on the actual use of Native spirituality in the centres and the success of Native spirituality in assisting clients with their substance abuse problems.

The interviews done outside the context of the treatment centres with the two Native Elders and Native Activists/Traditionalist were useful in broadening my analysis of the view toward the use of Native spirituality in the treatment of alcohol and drug abuse among Native peoples. Further, since the two Native Elders were also recovering from past substance abuse problems, their experiences were also significant in that sense as well.

In retrospect, had I had more time, it would have been useful and interesting to interview members of the communities where each of the treatment centres is located. These interviews would have provided insight into their views of the use of Native spirituality in the treatment centres and their views on the success of Native spirituality in the treatment of substance abuse problems among Native peoples.

### **E. Chapter Summary**

In this Chapter we outlined the case study approach used in the study of the Native treatment centres in New Brunswick, the parameters of the study concerning the location of the centres and who was interviewed. We also discussed some of the limitations to the study in terms of the non-availability of clients for interviewing. We then looked at the data gathering techniques that were employed i.e., the kind of interviewing used and the limitations to interviewing. Finally we looked at the roles of those interviewed in the Native treatment centres.

## Chapter Four

### NEW BRUNSWICK TREATMENT CENTRES

In this Chapter we will look at the core findings concerning Native treatment centres in New Brunswick. A short report on the situation of each of the five centres forms the first section of the Chapter. As we shall see, there is considerable variation in the use of Native spirituality in these NTCs, contrary to the supposition of the literature. The second section specifies the nature of the conflict which seems to explain the wide variation in the use of Native spirituality. Section three summarizes the major findings of our research into the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs in New Brunswick.

#### **A. What Are Native Treatment Centres Doing?**

The first finding of this research is that, contrary to expectations created by the literature, there is no uniform use of Native spiritual practices in the NTCs in New Brunswick. On the contrary, there are centers where Native spiritual beliefs and practices are used minimally, and others where the use of these Native practices conform to the expectations the literature. To see the full extent of the variation, a short report on the practices of each of the five NTCs as reported by the staff at the Centres is presented. We examine in brief what the staff of each NTC state as the practices being used in each NTC.

i) NTC #1

This NTC varies considerably from many of the features in the literature (Krawll, 1988), especially those which concern the use of Native spirituality. While the literature (Krawll, 1988) stated that this Centre was scheduled to open in 1989, the Director of this centre says it opened in 1988. According to the Director, the Centre was established through the Chief and Band Council on this reserve making a request and application to the Federal branch of Health and Community Services for a Native treatment centre on this reserve. Further, while the literature indicates that this centre is an in-patient and out-patient facility having a four bed capacity for receiving clients (Krawll, 1988), in actuality it is only an out-patient facility. Staff in this centre consists of a Director and two Staff-Counsellors. Clients served at this Centre are restricted to band members of this reserve only.

The literature concerning this treatment centre purports that the program services offered at this centre include "a structured program based on spirituality model of alcoholism, and an individual treatment plan which includes psychotherapy, AA and education and vocational services provided through local community resources" (Krawll, 1988). However, the use of Native spirituality in this Centre is minimal. What is more, the Director at this centre tells me that the centre provides counselling for drug and alcohol addicted people and provides public awareness on addiction problems. Staff also attend local Alcoholics Anonymous meetings with clients, and refer Native people suffering from drug and alcohol addiction to other in-patient treatment centres in the province. However, these referrals, according to the Director, are not always to the Native treatment centres in the province. The Centre also sponsors cultural events on the reserve and a Native language program in the elementary school on the reservation.

The Centre's staff do not keep records of success and failure, and did not make specific claims about their rate of success; and since they do not extensively employ Native spirituality in their treatment programme, did not comment on its efficacy. The Director believes the Centre is helping some people. The Staff-Counsellor, herself a Traditionalist (speaks to clients about Native spirituality at the Centre and performs the Sweet Grass ceremony with clients in her home) attributes the success they have had to the beneficial effects of Native spirituality.

## ii) NTC #2

NTC #2 opened in 1987. It was established through the application and request for funding by a local member of the community who works in Child and Family Services. The Centre is an in-patient and out-patient centre as the literature purports (Krawll, 1988). However, the capacity for in-patient clients is established as two in the literature (Krawll, 1988), while the Director of this centre states that the centre has a in-patient capacity for three clients.

This Centre offers treatment services based on personalized and individual treatment, and also offers post-program support which includes employment and family support. Each of the treatment procedures are purported in the literature to encompass Native culture i.e., Native spirituality (Krawll, 1988). However, once again Native spirituality is a very minimal part of the treatment procedures used in this centre. The length of stay for clients in the centre is staff directed but client paced (Krawll, 1988). That is, the staff direct the recovery process but may modify the pace and elements of the process in response to specific client needs. The clients the Centre serves are band members from the reserve only. Clients must be alcohol and drug free prior to admission (Krawll, 1988). Staff at this centre



consist of a Director (a non-Native) and two Staff-Counsellors. Funding for this centre is provided by the Federal government through ACFP.

The Director of this Centre did not feel the Centre was having any great rate of success. The Staff-Counsellor, a Traditionalist, feels frustrated that the Centre has not been able to employ Native spirituality at the Centre because of resistance to its use in the community.

### iii) NTC #3

This Native treatment Centre opened in November 1987. The Director of this Centre was newly appointed and was absent at the time of my study. However, the former Director, who was the person instrumental in applying for the funding and establishing the treatment Centre on this reserve, was still overseeing the operation of the centre. I was able to interview her. The Centre is an in-patient and out-patient centre. The Centre is funded by the Federal government through ACFP. The Staff at this Centre consists of a Director, (a non-Native), a Staff-Counsellor and a Staff-Traditionalist.

The clients served in this centre are band members and all Native peoples across Canada (upon available space). The Centre has an in-patient capacity for four clients - 2 male and 2 female. Clients must be drug and alcohol free prior to admission and have completed a medical. The length of stay is staff directed but client paced. The program services, while under development, include an emphasis on the enhancement of the individual and outreach programs for vocational and educational services. Native spirituality is used in this treatment centre as supposed in the literature (Krawll, 1988). The use of Native spirituality consists of Native Prayers, the Talking Circle, the Sweet Grass ceremony, the Pipe ceremony and the Sweat Lodge ceremony.

Statements quoted here are taken from the interviews carried out between August and mid-October, 1991.

The Director of this Centre, while stating that they do not keep statistics, felt that their success rate was about 50%:

I'd say 50/50, but we don't keep statistics. But we can look around and see a lot more sober people.

She argues that Native spirituality is a key factor facilitating recovery:

It helps a person's self-identity, self-esteem and [self] understanding and acceptance of life.

Arguing that Native spirituality is very effective, she argues it is so "because it helps the person to deal with their inner self.....it goes hand in hand with sobriety."

The Staff-Counsellor at the Centre similarly felt it aided in the process of recovery.

#### iv) NTC #4

This NTC opened in the summer of 1988. According to the Director, this centre was established as the result of efforts made by the Chief on this reserve. From the beginning, the philosophical ideal of this NTC, as written by the Chief, states:

Alcoholism has challenged the principles, values and behaviour of our people. The time has come for us to provide a reasonable option to alcoholism. It is time to review our purpose and the meaning of our life as Indian people. It is time to intervene!

A committee of Chiefs across Canada, primarily from New Brunswick, with the Medical Services Branch of Health and Welfare Canada, and others from Indian communities across the nation, came to a common desire in remedying the severe problems of substance abuse among Native people. The plan, however, decided on by these people is not limited to the

alleviation of chemical dependency alone. They also asserted a new vision for Native people which includes a very broad mandate explicitly involving Native spirituality:

the search for freedom to live a healthy and productive life built on traditional Indian and Inuit principles, values and beliefs. The need is for more than detoxification. It is for rehabilitation, a program built on traditional Native and Inuit spirituality (Written mandated Ideal for this NTC, 1987).

The centre is an in-patient facility with the capacity for 10 clients. The Centre, inclusive of the reserve it is situated on, also serves Native peoples from a number of reserves in New Brunswick. The treatment staff consists of a Director, a Staff-Counsellor, and a Staff-Traditionalist.

The program services offered at this centre are culturally based, providing spiritual guidance through self-directed group involvement and family counselling (Krawll, 1988). As asserted in the literature, this centre also uses Native spirituality in the treatment of Native addicts. The use of Native spirituality, according to those interviewed, consists Native Prayers, the Talking Circle, the Sweet Grass ceremony, the Pipe ceremony and the Sweat Lodge ceremony.

Clients are to be alcohol and drug free prior to admission and the length of stay is staff directed but client paced. The funding for this centre, like all Native treatment centres studied, is provided by the Federal government through ACFP (Krawll, 1988).

The Director of NTC #4 believes that Native spirituality is very important in allowing Native people to re-discover their Native identity:

I think it is very effective, in the sense that people learn about culture and tradition — who they are. We moved away from that [culture and tradition], we lost touch with who we are. The past twenty years there's been so many negative stereotypes

about Native people it's important we start moving back to the old ways.

v) NTC #5

This Native treatment centre opened in the fall of 1988. The application and request for the creation and funding for the centre were made by the Assistant-Director of this centre. The Centre is an in-patient centre with the capacity for six clients. The centre employs a Director, an Assistant-Director, who is also a Staff-Counsellor, and a Staff-Traditionalist. The length of stay is Staff directed but client paced. Clients have to be alcohol and drug free seventy two hours prior to admission. The treatment consists of a matrix design based on Native content and community, and Native spirituality is used throughout the treatment process.

The use of Native spirituality, according to those interviewed, consists Native Prayers, the Talking Circle, the Sweet Grass ceremony, the Pipe ceremony and the Sweat Lodge ceremony. The funding for the centre is once again provided by the Federal government through ACFP. In accordance to the literature, the centre only serves clients from the reserve whom are band members (Krawll, 1988). However, according to the Director, Assistant-Director and Staff-Traditionalist at this centre, the centre serves Native peoples from all the Atlantic provinces and nationwide upon available space.

While the literature does not illustrate this, the centre also has an After-Care program and a Family Program. The After-care program assist clients following their in-patient treatment. The Family Program assists family members of clients in understanding addiction and its affects on the family, and in coping with, and understanding those addicted to drugs and alcohol.

The Director of NTC #5 argued that Native spirituality was an important and effective component where the person was committed to beating his or her addiction and took Native spirituality seriously:

With some people who are really trying to help themselves and are serious about being sober, and really looking at the spiritual part of our programme, stay sober for a long time. I'd say they would have a really hard time if it wasn't for the [Native] spirituality .....I'm not saying they wouldn't have made it, I just think that the [Native] spirituality really helps.

The Staff-Traditionalist at NTC #5 also attributes their success to the use of Native spirituality:

Native spirituality in the programme is probably the most important component when we deal with our people. Its most important because when Native people come here they have no pride and the stigma of being no good. So, what we try to do is instill that pride of being Native back in them. we do that in a number of different ways [using Native spirituality].... I'm going to call this reserve the Alkali Lake [a reserve in Western Canada with a phenomenal success as a community in turning from the state where the community was nick-named Alcohol Lake to sobriety through a revival of Native spirituality (York,1990)] of the 1990s. Our mandate to us in five years was 70 - 80% [success for the Centre]. We figure we up to 50% or 60% of people are sober.

#### vi) Evaluation of Variation in the Use of Native Spirituality

According to those interviewed at all five Native treatment centres, the mandate for funding by the Federal government through ACFP, formerly NNADAP, is that Native spirituality is to be a part of the treatment procedures carried out in the centres. Further while the literature suggest that NTC #1 and NTC #2 use Native spirituality as part of the treatment process (Krawll, 1988), in actuality Native spirituality is very minimal and one could hardly say it forms part of the treatment procedures used in those centres. The only real aspect of Native spirituality in each of these centres,

i.e., NTC #1 and NTC #2, is the one Staff-Counsellor in each of the centres, both of whom are themselves learning about and teaching their clients some aspects of Native spirituality.

In regards to the remaining three Native treatment centres, while the use of Native spirituality exist, it did not emerge full blown from the founding of the Centre. There have been societal processes over time, which are outlined below, by which Native spirituality has been introduced in the centres. However, all those interviewed in NTC's #3, #4, #5 assert that Native spirituality is the most important part of treatment for Native peoples with substance abuse problems.

However, while the treatment Centres seem to be accepted in the communities, the use of Native spirituality in the centres seems to be presenting a problem for varying proportions of the communities and of the clients. Ironically, if it is the use of Native spirituality which distinguishes the Native treatment centres from conventional forms of treatment — and which provided the rationale for their creation and provides for the continuing rationale for their funding — that feature has not been, and is not, universally accepted by the Native communities in which the Centres are located.

## **B. The Nature of the Conflict**

Given the unexpected variance in the five Native treatment centres in the use of Native spirituality, it becomes important to look at the the reasons given by those interviewed for why Native spirituality does not form a part of treatment process in the centres where it does not. And it is becomes important to look at the processes which were involved in establishing the use of Native spirituality in the three treatment Centres where it does form

part of the treatment process. What the staff who were interviewed clearly argue is that the extent to which Native spirituality is used depends on the extent to which the reserve community, and specifically the clients of the Centre and the Chief and Council to whom the staff report, accept and embrace Native spirituality, or reject it as being in conflict with their Roman Catholic religion.

We shall look at the case of each Centre in turn, beginning with those which do not employ Native spiritual practices in their treatment procedures.

i) NTC #1

The Director of NTC #1, where Native spirituality is only a minimal part of the treatment process, argues that since the Centre is there to serve the needs of the community, it is difficult to implement Native spirituality into the treatment centre when the community does not accept it. He argues that Native spirituality is not used in NTC #1 because the majority of the community on the reserve identify themselves as Roman Catholics and do not accept Native spirituality:

We don't use that [Native spirituality] here. Even if we did, the people would reject it. They can't see the profit in it. You see we have every-thing now. So, why go back? You can't do this like a hundred years ago . . . I'm not sure how strong assimilation is, but I think it's pretty strong. Everyone here is Catholic. There is a small "clan" of people who practise that [Native] spiritual stuff, but the majority of people ignore, or have negative feelings about the people who practise it. You see the reserve is divided, there is a mix of attitudes. All the rest are Catholic except for that other clan [the Native Traditionalists on this reserve].

The Staff-Counsellor at NTC #1 states what she sees as the reason why Native people on this reserve reject the use of Native spirituality in this centre: "A lot of people here don't even understand what Native spirituality is. Even

though they live parts of it in their everyday lives, they don't realize it." In this context, she is referring to the cooking of traditional foods<sup>10</sup> and the vestiges of some traditional values exhibited by the people on the reserve. She further states that Native spirituality is foreign to the experience and understanding of the people of that reserve:

There is no understanding. People here have never heard these things before, or even seen Sweet Grass. It is because of this non-understanding, that the people are scared of it.

This Staff-Counsellor is a person recovering from past substance abuse problems, and she says clients often ask her how she stays sober. She says that she tells them of her struggle with her identity and how she overcame it through her involvement in Native spirituality. As a supporter of Native spirituality, she states that she tries to introduce it to clients as best she can, "Even if it [Native spirituality] is not intertwined within the program, as it is supposed to be, I still try to use it with my clients." In attempting to help the clients understand Native spiritual teachings, she starts with asking them to identify who, and what, they are. She then proceeds with a Sweet Grass ceremony, or uses the talking stick to facilitate conversation with them. However, she states: "the client may reject it, if they think it conflicts with the Christian religion."

I spoke briefly to the Native woman instrumental in reviving the traditional spiritual teachings and practices on this reserve. I asked her

---

<sup>10</sup> The cooking of traditional foods reflects the wholistic nature of Native spirituality. Native practices were tied into the spiritual worldview of Native people. In fact, foods play a significant role in many religious and cultural traditions. For example, Kosher food is a fully embedded part of Orthodox Judaism; to be a practising Orthodox Jew requires one to follow the Kosher food laws.



opinion on the reason for the non-use of Native spirituality in the treatment centre. She stated the following:

The powerful people on the reserve don't want Native spirituality here. They are threatened by it and try to keep it off the reserve. Not only this, the people are confused now between the old way, the Indian way, and the long years of Christian teaching. Some are just indifferent to it all.

The evidence is clear that there is conflict within the community over the value and validity of Native spirituality, one which stems from the advocacy of it by Traditionalists and the negative perception other Native people in this community have towards what the Traditionalist believe to be their ancestral spiritual beliefs and practices. Clients who come to this centre, as well as people on the reserve, generally perceive Native spirituality as conflicting with their Catholic religious beliefs. According to those interviewed at this Centre, it also appears as though the Chief and Council on the reserve do not want the use of Native spirituality in this centre. Only the Staff-Counsellor is promoting the use of Native spirituality in this centre. On this reserve there is also a small group of Native Traditionalists - made up mostly of Native women - who are also promoting it within the community. The Staff-Counsellor at this centre states that some of the clients she teaches at the Centre are often curious and want to know more about Native spirituality and so become involved with the small group of Traditionalists on the reserve.

## ii) NTC #2

In the second Native treatment centre, where the use of Native spirituality is once again largely absent from the treatment procedures, those interviewed provide similar reasons as to why this is the case. The Director of this Centre states that part of the problem is the opposition, particularly of

the Chief and Council, to Native spirituality. She argues opponents of it see Native spirituality as 'nonsense' in conflict with the Catholic heritage of the reserve:

It's only been in the past year that staff have even paid attention to Native spirituality. Prior to this, the focus was strictly on the individual, family and community . . . It's only been in the past two and one half years that the word culture has come back . . . It is hard to introduce anything that the Chief and Council don't approve, since they approve all funding. If they think anything conflicts with the Christian religion, they won't support it. I wanted to invite an Elder, a Medicine Man, from Woodstock to the centre, and the band manager said, "He's not really a Medicine Man. He took some course, and now thinks he's a Medicine Man." If it doesn't fit with the Catholic Church, it is seen as heretic, like they are witches.

The Band manager, in this instance, approved the visit of the Medicine Man to the centre, but is quoted by the Director as saying, "I don't see what good it will do." The Director further emphasized the perceived conflict on the reserve between Native spirituality and Catholicism among the majority of people:

Everyone on this reserve is into Catholicism. Even the older people on the reserve who are into Native spirituality, they are still very much into Catholicism. So, the only events the Chief and Council will approve in the centre are the ones seen by them as cultural events. They see spirituality and culture as separate, and so will allow things cultural here more readily.

Beyond these obstacles to the use of Native spirituality in this centre, the Director points to the lack of knowledge concerning Native spirituality both on the reserve and among the staff in the Centre. She says that even the staff themselves are unprepared to use Native spiritual practices and that the support system for Native spirituality is weak on this reserve:

I don't think we are ready for it as workers. We have a lot of work to do on ourselves first. It is hard to get knowledge about it. We started bringing in Elders from the community, but there

are not many left here. We had to lower the age to fifty and over just to get a group [Elders here referring to older people and not necessarily Traditionalists].

The Director here says the Elders come to the centre once a week, but even they have a hard time remembering about Native spirituality:

They have to try to remember what their parents told them. They have little vague memories, but they can't give you enough, any more than you could read in a book. There is a big loss, when you lose that knowledge base.

The Director of NTC #2 feels that the best hope they have of introducing Native spirituality into the centre is the one Staff-Counsellor who is attempting to learn about Native spirituality. This Staff-Counsellor states what she sees as the problem in using Native spirituality in the centre as follows: "They [the community] think it is a bunch of crap." She says she remembers feeling the same way herself before she got involved in Native spirituality. She states, "The people don't know what it is. Even if you talk about it here, it's taboo." She says she never knew what Native spirituality was either. "I never understood what it was like to be Indian until I got involved in Native spirituality." However, because of her limited knowledge, this Staff-Counsellor is not qualified in performing spiritual ceremonies with clients. She attempts rather to bring in Traditionalists from around the region to talk to clients. She says, "I brought in a Traditionalist and she did a talk on the medicine wheel. The people loved it. They had never heard any of this before."

This Staff-Counsellor is aware of the use of Native spirituality in other Native treatment centres in New Brunswick and across Canada, and says, "They use it in the treatment centres to restore dignity and pride . . . To help Native people be proud of who they are, which gives them self-confidence." She feels the absence of Native spirituality in this centre is the result of the

negative image people in the community have toward it, in not knowing what it really is. She states, "Remember when the Priest use to say the Indians were practising witchcraft? Some people still believe that." This Staff-Counsellor also sees the presence of the resident Priest and Church on the reserve, as a hindrance to the use of Native spirituality in this centre:

They [the community] can't see what the Church has done to us . . . I'm not Catholic, but I was forced to do all of these things and it confused me. I always wondered why I needed a middle man [a Priest] when I prayed to God.

The conflict over the use of Native spirituality in this treatment centre is very similar to that in NTC #1. According to those interviewed, the Chief and Council on this reserve do not appear to support the use of Native spirituality in this centre due to the perceived conflict of Native spirituality with their Catholic religious beliefs. Further, it appears as though the Native people on this reserve are also unaware of what Traditionalist claim as their ancestral spiritual beliefs and practices. Also there appear to be negative attitudes and feelings towards Native spirituality among the Native people on this reserve due to the historical teachings of the Catholic missionaries.

There are, however, the Director (a non-Native) and the Staff-Counsellor at this centre who are trying to promote the use of Native spirituality in this centre. They are convinced that the use of Native spirituality in Native treatment centres is helping to alleviate the problems of alcohol and drug abuse among Native peoples. This Staff-Counsellor is herself a recovering person, and says she tried everything, but Native spirituality is what helped her, and continues to help her, stay sober:

It makes me feel calm inside, and from what I see, it works for a lot of people, and I'm glad it is coming back. I think it should be taught, along with Native language, to the little ones, so they will be proud of who they are. . . I was ashamed of being Indian,

and I believe there is now an identity crisis among Native people. I was really lost, but at least I have now an idea about Native spirituality. I still have much to learn though. But what I do know, I find very comforting.

The Director states that there is a huge problem with substance abuse on this reserve and that the centre is not having very much success in overcoming the problems. At the time of my study those prevailing in the conflict over the use of Native spirituality in this centre are the Chief and Council and members of the community who reject the use of Native spirituality in this centre.

iii) NTC #3

The Director, Staff-Counsellor and Staff-Traditionalist at NTC #3 are all promoting the use of Native spirituality in this centre, and Native spirituality does form a part of the treatment process. While Staff at the treatment centre use both Native spirituality and conventional methods of treatment, all those interviewed at this centre state that Native spirituality is the most significant and effective form of treatment used in the centre for Native people with substance abuse problems.

However, there was a long process involved in achieving the general use of Native spirituality at this NTC. This NTC, had been in operation for a period of five years at the time of my study in 1991, but had only recently gained some acceptance by the reserve community, and clients, in having Native spirituality as part of the treatment program. The Director of this Centre explains the delay in bringing in the Native spirituality mandated by the national Native organization and federal funding:

It is a part of the NNADAP program, and we have been attempting to introduce it since the beginning. We would always add elements of it, but the community wasn't ready for it.

However, she says, "they have become more ready for it over time."

Native spirituality was implemented into this Centre slowly, and piece by piece. The staff began by introducing only aspects of the spiritual philosophy. The procedure consisted of teaching clients about Native spirituality, followed by inviting spiritual Elders from the community to come in and talk with clients, proceeded by taking clients out to Elders' homes on the reserve where they could engage in spiritual ceremonies, progressing eventually to the hiring of a Staff-Traditionalist in the summer of 1991, who could then teach and perform ceremonies right at the centre. The Director says that, "the implementation process has mostly consisted of re-educating the people over a four-year period about what Native spirituality really is." Moreover she says the struggle to win acceptance of Native spirituality is not over:

While the level of acceptance has gained momentum with the presence of Native spirituality in the centre, the obstacles still exist.

With the hiring of a Staff-Traditionalist at this centre, the Pipe and Sweat Lodge ceremonies became a part of the treatment process on an on going basis. However, this did not alleviate all the problems concerning clients' perceptions and participation in those ceremonies, for there is still significant resistance to the embrace of Native spirituality by clients:

There's this thing about getting into it too much. There's a non-acceptance, it's like frowned upon and made fun of. They mostly refuse to participate because of all the negative things they have been taught about Native spirituality. They are afraid and they don't really know what it is.

The Director gives insight into the reluctance of some clients based on their distaste for what they perceive as simply another religion:

They think when you say spirituality, you are talking about religion, and going to church on Sunday and they don't want anything to do with it.

Another factor influencing client participation, beyond those formerly discussed, is family opposition. The following statements by a client and Staff-Counsellor at this centre exemplify the problem. The client said she involved herself in Native spirituality without telling her family:

I have to hide from my family. I tell my kids, "Don't tell them I went to a Sweat Lodge ceremony." I hide, because I am tired of defending myself to people who are against it. They are still brainwashed by Christianity. They think they [Native spiritual ceremonies] are heathen.

This client also says that while she did not attend a residential school, the Catholic Nuns taught her at the school on the reserve to reject Native beliefs and culture:

I was not allowed to speak my language, or speak of anything Native. You had to be Christian, and I hated that. I was forced to write and speak English, and I wasn't good at it, but when I went home after school, I spoke my own language again. I lost a lot of friends because I refused to be the way the nuns wanted me to be. I still carry that pain around with me.

The Staff-Counsellor at this centre had this to say this about his family's opposition to Native spirituality:

They didn't understand at first. My Grandmother said, 'You're just hurting yourself.' She saw me come off of a fast and I had lost a lot of weight. It was the same with my Mother and Father. They didn't understand. My Grandmother is a true blue Catholic, and my parents just don't understand. But, now they see how much being a Traditionalist has helped me. In all my life it is the only thing that's been helping me. And, each time I go to a spiritual gathering, I realize more and more people are finding that road.

According to the Director, the Centre has a specific strategy to overcome resistance to Native spirituality based on its perceived conflict with Catholicism. Clients in this centre are first introduced to aspects of Native spirituality which are viewed as non-threatening to their Christian, namely

Catholic, religious beliefs. These elements include lectures on Native spirituality, talks on Native spirituality from visiting spiritual Elders, the Native morning prayer and the Talking Circle. Those interviewed state that, because of the non-threatening nature of these practices within the treatment process, they have existed in the Centre for a more lengthy period. The Director explains the unevenness of participation by clients because of their levels of discomfort with what they see as something alien to their Catholicism:

They [the clients] all will participate a little bit. How far they go, depends on how good they feel about themselves. They will just shun away from it and we don't ask for any reasons, although one man said he didn't want to participate further because he was Catholic. He would go into the Talking Circle, but that's as far as he'd go . . . We have been using the Talking Circles for about two years now. Participation in the circle is an option, but everyone participates no matter what their belief. They could be strong Catholic and still participate. This is where they draw the line though, because the next things are the Sweet Grass, Pipe and Sweat Lodge Ceremonies.

The Sweet Grass, Pipe and Sweat Lodge ceremonies came to each of the NTCs with the hiring of a Staff-Traditionalist. The Staff-Traditionalists at the centres thus serve to restore the loss of Native spiritual knowledge, and provide for an extension of the elements of Native spiritual ceremonies not possible without their presence. Additionally, the presence of a Staff-Traditionalist has made the availability of Native spiritual ceremonies a stable and concrete part of the treatment process at each of the NTCs.

Concerning the use of Native spirituality in this Centre and problems with the community, the Director states that one of the ways they have managed to achieve the use of Native spirituality within the treatment process is by making it an option. She states:



We don't make it, even now, our number one focus. It's an option, and by having that kind of formula, we are not put in a controversial position. We don't want to be in a controversial position. We don't have time to deal with that. There are people who like it, and people who don't. So we don't flaunt it. We keep it low key.

She says, however, that resistance has gradually ebbed, "over time though the people have come to see the good it is doing in the centre with clients". She feels that people are now realizing that whatever works is good.

While the presence of Native spirituality, as a complete part of the treatment program, is as recent as the summer of 1991, the Director states, "We don't keep statistics, but I believe there is a fifty-fifty success rate here at the centre." The Director states, "There is a progression of progress by having Native spirituality available. The availability increases the probability of people becoming involved."

While the use of Native spirituality formed a part of the treatment process at the time of my study in the fall of 1991, we can see that Staff at this centre had to overcome obstacles in both the community and among the clients in the centre. What the staff sees as a lack of awareness and knowledge appears to be one of the variables causing a conflict over the use of Native spirituality in this centre. And there seems to be a continuing sense in which some people, both in the community and among clients, perceive Native spirituality as being in conflict with their Catholic religious beliefs. These conflicts are similar to those patterned in NTCs #1 and #2. However, the Director here says the Chief and Council are not opposing the use of Native spirituality in this centre, which is a variation from the pattern in NTCs #1 and 2.

iv) NTC #4

While Native spirituality forms a part of the treatment procedures used in this treatment centre, the rise in the use of Native spirituality in this centre, like NTC #3, required a process of gradual introduction which occurred slowly over time. The process, as well as the conflicts surrounding the use of Native spirituality in this Centre, are closely parallel to those which occurred in NTC #3.

Once again here, the conflict concerning the use of Native spirituality in this centre is claimed by the staff to be resulting from both the client's lack of knowledge and their negative perception of Native spirituality. And once again the roots of the conflict over the use of Native spirituality arose from the client's perceived clash between their Catholic religious beliefs and their participation in Native spiritual ceremonies at the treatment centre. While all the Staff at this centre, and the Chief on this reserve support and encourage the use of Native spirituality in this centre, there remain, most significantly it appears, persistent obstacles in gaining client participation. Yet, all those interviewed at this treatment centre state that Native spirituality is the most significant and effective form of treatment for Native peoples with substance abuse problems.

Even with the support of the Chief and council on this reserve (the idea for the treatment centre on the reserve originated with the Chief) the dispute over Native spiritual practices remains. The Director explains the struggle to expand the use of Native spirituality in this centre:

I'd say one of the biggest obstacles has been the lack of knowledge we have concerning Native spirituality. It's been in the developmental stages for the past few years. The intention was always to incorporate it into our program. We'd give lectures on Native spirituality, bring in Elders from around the area to talk to clients and take clients out to Elder's homes to spiritual

ceremonies, but it still wasn't a complete part of our program until recently.

In attempting to overcome the barriers resulting from what they see as the loss of spiritual knowledge and lack of information on how to implement Native spirituality within the treatment process, the Director of this centre has taken five trips to NTCs in Western Canada. He sees these Western NTCs as a model for his own:

We found a high success rate in the centres out West. The success, comes from people getting in touch with who they are and feeling pride once again about that identity. A lot of the ideas on how to implement Native spirituality, come from out West, from visits to both Poundmakers Lodge in Alberta and Roundlake in Vernon, British Columbia.

The Director of NTC #4, while fully committed to implementing Native spirituality, is not himself a spiritually qualified person to perform spiritual ceremonies with Clients. He explains that "You have to do a certain amount of work to be able to perform these ceremonies." In attempting to alleviate the problem with the lack of knowledge concerning Native spirituality and the carrying out of actual spiritual ceremonies, the Director of the centre hired a Staff-Traditionalist. He had heard of other NTCs in New Brunswick having hired Staff-Traditionalist and so decided to follow this procedure in the fall of 1991.

Like NTC #3, the hiring of a Staff-Traditionalist aided significantly in the use of Native spirituality in this NTC. The Traditionalist hired at this centre is a Native person from a nearby reserve, who was one of the Elders previously coming to the centre periodically to teach and perform spiritual ceremonies. The Staff-Traditionalists states that "Since I've been here with the clients full-time, there is more spiritual awareness." Common to all NTCs, with the hiring of a Staff-Traditionalist, came the building of a Sweat

Lodge on the grounds of the centre, providing the opportunity for the Sweat Lodge ceremony, as with other Native spiritual ceremonies, to now to be carried out on a regular basis at the centres. Performing the Sweat Lodge ceremony is significant, in that all those interviewed point to the Sweat Lodge as the main source of healing for Native people.

A recovering person, this Staff-Traditionalist says "Native spirituality was, and is, the ultimate help for me." He says he has abstained from substance abuse since becoming involved in Native spirituality. Prior to becoming involved in Native spirituality, the Staff-Traditionalist states that he felt shame at times about being Indian:

I felt ashamed, because people would shoot down the Indian people, but Native spirituality lead me right out of that . . . I found more beauty in life than I ever imagined.

The Director explains the significance of the hiring of a Staff-Traditionalist in this centre, the ability to perform the actual spiritual ceremonies themselves:

We took the process of lectures, teaching, and we went through that, but it does not compare to the experiential learning basis. We do not get up and lecture now. We perform the ceremonies right here, giving the clients a taste of the real thing. And, as we got more into it, we saw self-esteem was better among clients. The clients didn't seem to be learning in any real way about Native spirituality from the lectures we were giving in the centre, or from the visits of Elders to the centre and so on. Since we have a full time Traditionalists on staff, spirits have risen considerably. There is a very noticeable improvement among both clients and Staff as well. There has been a development in knowledge about Native spirituality, and as a result the clients are having more respect for themselves and others. Everyone here is participating in the spiritual ceremonies, Staff included. It is really a great improvement. I guess the clients needed consistent hands on experience, rather than being told about Native spirituality in a lecture.

However, according to the Staff-Traditionalist at this centre, some of the clients remain apprehensive about participating in Native spiritual ceremonies carried out at the centre:

They [the clients] feel that someone will make fun of them if they get involved, and because they are so vulnerable and sensitive in the treatment centre, they will shun away for fear of being laughed at by others not participating.

The Director also states that clients in this Centre have problems participating in Native spiritual ceremonies because of the negative ideas they have about Native spiritual practices when they arrive at the Centre door. This negativism, he asserts, is a result of their religious socialization:

I think all the labels have been damaging to Native spirituality and Native people. If you are told something long enough, eventually your gonna believe it. It is only by becoming involved in the spirituality that you can overcome this negative stereo-type.

The Director expands further on this theme:

Some clients are wary of it. They, however may decide to participate after some time in the centre. They are wary in the sense that they are not sure what is involved with Native spirituality. Even if they don't want to directly participate in a ceremony, we try to involve them in some way. Like in the Sweats, we encourage them to participate in some way, like the fire keeper or door man, but it is never mandatory. If they don't want to become involved at all, we respect that to.

The Director further explains the apprehension among clients to Native spiritual ceremonies in terms, once again, of their perception of a conflict between Native spirituality and their Catholicism, a negativity he believes goes back to a suppression of Native beliefs by the Church:

Most of the people here are Catholic and you run into problems because they feel that they should not be involved in Native spirituality if they are Catholic, plus the negative way in which the Church has looked at Native spirituality in the past. Our way was put down by the Church. I had a bad experience with

the Church. If I didn't know the ten commandments, I was beaten, and that was in my own home . . . It's been a lack of knowledge about the Native spiritual way that has brought so much negativism toward Native people. They have never experienced it. So they don't know what it is, or what is going on in ceremonies. They think it is something bad because of what is written about it in books, and because of what they've been taught by the Church . . . I think when people are forced to do something it always creates problems for future generations, such as the religious movement here with European contact. The negative part to the movement, is that our way of life, which was spiritual, was being put down and we were being forced to live another way.

I spoke with one of the clients at this treatment centre and the negative views he had on arrival concerning the use of Native spirituality in the Centre:

I always wondered about Native spirituality, but I knew nothing about it. My parents didn't know anything about it and never talked about it. I saw it once on T.V. and I wanted to learn about it and participate in it, but I didn't know how or where to go, but then coming here now is my first chance to get involved. I saw sweet grass for the first time here, I never knew what it was before, and I always thought it was some kind of dope in the pipe, because that's what an Indian guy told me when I was a kid, and I didn't know any better and believed him.

This client has only recently arrived at the centre from Ontario and is excited about getting involved in Native spirituality: "I hear that people really like it, and that it makes you feel really good inside. I am just so glad that I am about to experience it." While this client admits his lack of knowledge of Native spirituality, he is nonetheless eager to learn and participant in the aspects of Native spirituality offered at this centre. However, this client's eagerness is not, according to those interviewed, shared by all clients in the NTCs.

## v) NTC #5

We will now examine the use of Native spirituality in the final Native treatment centre in New Brunswick. Unlike the previously discussed treatment centres, knowledge concerning Native spirituality has ceased to be a problem in this Centre. The Assistant-Director, who was instrumental in acquiring funding for the centre, is also a Native Traditionalist. The use of Native spirituality in this centre also had the support of the Chief and Council on the reserve from the outset. However, even with these supports to the use of Native spirituality, the process of implementing it as part of the treatment program echoes that of NTCs #3 and #4.

Like the two previously discussed treatment centres, Native spirituality was introduced in this centre piece-meal and over time. The Director states they studied the work of other Centres closely:

We went to all the different centres around the region and studied them to see what was working and what wasn't. Then we sent one of our staff out West to be trained.

The staff member, in this instance, sent to Native treatment centres in western Canada was the Assistant-Director. The training received, rather than being merely the acquisition of spiritual knowledge, focused on the process of implementing Native spirituality within the treatment process.

This centre thus had some advantages over the other NTCs discussed in having a Native Traditionalist in an administrative role on staff from the beginning of operation. Over time the Director and Assistant-Director also hired three other Native Traditionalists to fulfil various staff positions in the treatment centre, one of whom was hired as a full-time Staff-Traditionalist. The Staff-Traditionalist also benefitted from training received from trips to Western Native treatment centres. However, even with this availability of

Native spiritual knowledge, the difficulties in the use of Native spirituality in this centre among both community and clients persisted.

As in the other NTCs in New Brunswick, the conflict in the use of Native spirituality in this centre appears to have originated in both the clients' and the community members' perception of Native spirituality as conflicting with their Catholic religious beliefs. However, with the support of Chief and Council, Staff at the centre, and, most significantly a Native Priest, Nun and resident Priest on the reserve, the conflict over the use of Native spirituality seems to have dissipated much more quickly than in the other two NTCs using Native spirituality. The use of Native spirituality in this centre has gained acceptance among Clients and community members, and has become a permanent and concrete part of the treatment program used for Native addicts at a more rapid rate than NTCs #3 or #4.

As in the case of the two other NTCs employing Native spirituality, the implementation process commenced here with the teaching of clients, inviting Elders to the centre to teach clients and taking clients out periodically to Elders' homes for spiritual ceremonies. Whereas in the last two centres the momentum for the resurgence of Native spirituality increased with the hiring of a Staff-Traditionalist, this facility, in contrast, has had several Traditionalists on staff for a period of time. The Staff-Traditionalist, as with the Assistant-Director/Traditionalist in this centre, have been involved in Native spirituality for a number of years, and both are Pipe carriers. This NTC has the highest degree of spiritual practices among the three NTCs employing Native spirituality in New Brunswick. The hiring of a full-time Staff-Traditionalist at this NTC came one year prior to that of the other centres.



The Director explains how this centre was able to expedite the process concerning the use of Native spirituality in this centre, namely by bringing in a Native Catholic priest who accepted and promoted a fusion of Catholicism with Native spirituality:

The intention to employ Native spirituality was there from the beginning, you know, but the clients weren't ready for it. You see, after we started our spiritual program, we didn't want people to think that in order to take part in it, they had to put aside their Catholic spirituality and beliefs and stuff. We were a little undecided as to what to do about that. Then we heard of this Native Priest that combines the two spiritualities. We finally got this Priest to come here, and he put on a two-and-one-half hour mass [combining Native spirituality with Catholicism]. People came from all around the region to witness that.

The Director further states that this process of overcoming the notion one had to choose between the Native spirituality and Catholicism was central to the process of increasing the use of Native spirituality in the treatment Centre:

The people on the reserve were confused as to whether they had to drop Catholicism in order to become Traditionalist, but this Priest said, there is only one God, one Creator, no matter what denomination you are, and that cleared up the confusion.

The Priest whom the Director refers to is also a Native Traditionalist, and he performed Native spiritual ceremonies consisting of a Sweat Grass and Pipe ceremony as well as Native chanting, during the regular Mass. The Director states, "Even the (Catholic) Sisters who were present participated in these ceremonies," and says, "the non-Native and Native people who came to that were fascinated."

Following the visit of this Native Priest, Staff at this NTC then acquired the participation of the resident reserve Priest. The Director explains:

After this, we had our own Priest participating, and then we finally said, O.K. now we're ready. Now we are on are way, because now the people understand our program better, and so it's been like that ever since.

Prior to the visit of this Native Priest, after whom the centre is named, the Staff-Traditionalist argued that Native spirituality was only a small part of the treatment process:

Native spirituality was only a small part of the treatment process. It happened very slowly, we'd try different things to see what was gonna work. We started with teaching the clients and utilizing Elders from around the province.

The momentum to full implementation of Native spirituality in the centre, the Assistant-Director states, came only with the visit of the Native priest. The Staff-Traditionalist at this centre explains the lack of conflict within the community once the Priest had blessed Native spirituality:

We are not running into problems here because the Chief and Council back us and the Church backs us. We don't put down Catholicism. We tell people, "this will enhance what you already have." It works because it is not a threat to anyone. We bridge the gap.

The gap he refers to is the division in the community over Native spirituality and Catholicism which we have seen so prominently elsewhere among the NTCs and their communities. The Staff-Traditionalist further states what the benefits of this religious accommodation for use of Native spirituality in the Centre are:

One thing, we're not a threat to the community. If we started going against the church, we'd have problems. There's a lot of Christian people out there [meaning Native clients]. So, we said to the priest, "will you help us. Will you work with us?"

The Director says that another factor, following the visit of the Native Priest, serving to bridge the gap between Catholicism and Native spirituality was the visit of a Native Catholic Nun, also a Traditionalist, in the summer of 1990:

Then we had a Native Sister, who travels around to different reserves, come here last summer. She explained the comparisons between what the Indian people believed in before the white man came, and what happened in the Old Testament to the people. She said those people in the Old Testament were Traditionalists, just like we are Traditionalists.

The Native Catholic nun referred to here is the founder of a current social movement called The Kateri Movement. The movement is supported by the Catholic Church and is based on a combination of Native spirituality with Catholicism. She uses the Bible to legitimate the resurgence of Native spirituality (*Catholic New Times*, Sept. 23, 1989). She says she became a Nun so she could help her people, but when her father became a member of the American Indian Movement and a Traditionalist, he both rejected and hated Catholicism. She said she then tried to find a solution to the problem in combining the two spiritual philosophies (Conference on Native Spirituality at Saint Thomas University, Feb.24th, 1992). The name given the movement is after the Catholic Saint Kateri. The movement has spread across Canada and is aired periodically on National television (*Catholic New Times*, Sept. 23rd, 1989:7). Following the visit of the Native Priest and Nun in 1990, and having gained the participation of the resident Priest on this reserve, Staff at this NTC began to expand the use of Native spirituality in the larger community:

We got all the staff at the band office to come here for two days and we took them into the Sweat Lodge. Then, we brought the teachers from the reserve school in and trained them on what our children really mean to us, so the school has really turned around. They are letting the children be Indian. In the morning, the teachers do a Sweat Grass ceremony and the whole school does an Indian prayer. Now the kids are getting pride in being Indian, which is what they need.

I asked the Director of this centre whether there was any conflict among the non-Catholic Traditionalist, strict Native Traditionalist, on this reserve

concerning the combination of Native spirituality and Catholicism in the centre. The Director stated the following:

Well, I don't think so. Most go to the Church. Not as regular, but they do go. [He then hesitates, and continues]. There's one, or some, that are really, really traditional, and you never see them at the Church. But then, if there is a death in their family, [long pause], you see, they have to come to the Church here, because that's the Catholic Church. And then we have a cemetery, which is a Catholic cemetery, and you see, nobody decides to be buried somewhere else. This is their home. We are all baptized Catholic here. I think a lot of them are doing some very serious thinking about that.

The Director also says that these strict Traditionalists who come to funerals of family members carry out Native spiritual ceremonies within the Mass. "They do their traditional thing, you know, like burning sweet grass around the coffin, and doing chanting and stuff like that." (Chanting is the singing of traditional Native prayers). However, strict adherence to Native spiritual beliefs and practices excluding Catholicism are seen as hindering the process of the use of Native spirituality at this NTC. The Director, Assistant-Director and Staff-Traditionalist state that combining Catholicism with Native spirituality has made the use of Native spirituality in this treatment centre more successful. The Staff-Traditionalist also states that this centre is having great success:

I'm gonna call this place the Alkali Lake of the 1990s. Right now we are achieving, I'd say a sixty percent success, and in five years we hope to have eighty percent success. People come here to the Sweat Lodge ceremonies who have never even gone through the program, and people come back after treatment to do spiritual ceremonies too.

Unlike the NTCs where Native spirituality is minimally existent, but similar to the other two NTCs using Native spirituality as a part of the

treatment program, this Centre is full at all times, with a waiting list of thirty six people in the fall of 1991.

### **C. Chapter Summary of the Core Findings**

The findings of this study with respect to the NTCs on New Brunswick reserves are quite strikingly in contrast with the expectations created by the literature (Krawll, 1988). What was expected was a uniform and extensive use of Native spirituality in drug and alcohol treatment, in communities which embraced Native spirituality for those purposes. What was actually found was quite different:. There is, in fact a wide variation in the use of Native spirituality in different Centres, from some making minimal if any use of Native spirituality to those whose use conforms to the full expectations of their national mandate. Rather than there being a uniform embrace of Native spirituality and acceptance of its efficacy, there is variation in its acceptance and in the evaluation of its effectiveness. One Centre not only does not use it but sees no reason to do so, while the majority of Centre's staffs do believe in its use and efficacy.

Rather than there being a Native consensus regarding Native spirituality, there is conflict of varying intensity in reserve communities over the introduction of Native spiritual practices at the NTCs. This conflict concerns what is the legitimate spiritual framework required by 12 step programmes which underlie drug and alcohol treatment Centres: the "Native spirituality" promoted by Traditionalists, or the Catholicism of many others. According to our sources, many Native people who identify their religious framework as Catholicism often reject as nonsense or paganism the Traditionalist's notions of Native spirituality. Similarly, Traditionalists identify resistance to what

they regard as the authentic Native spiritual beliefs as being the results of ignorance of those beliefs and 'brainwashing' by Catholic clergy.

While it is possible to label the two camps in this conflict on the reserves over the legitimate framework of Native spiritual identity as the Traditionalists and the Catholics, membership in each group seems to vary reserve by reserve. NTCs seem to be a focal point for the Traditionalists and the NTCs are the vehicle through which Native spirituality is introduced to the community as a whole. On some reserves the Chiefs and Band Councillors are staunch opponents of the expanded use of Native spirituality; in other reserves some of these officials have been the most active promoters of Native spirituality. Since the NTCs are responsible to the Chief and Band Council, the politics of spirituality involves in a direct way the larger political processes of the reserve.

Finally, what seems significant to the degree to which Native spirituality is accepted by the clients and incorporated into the arrangements of the Centres is the degree to which local and visiting Catholic clergy embrace Native spirituality as compatible with Catholicism. If the heart of the struggle over the use of what Traditionalists regard as Native spirituality is its acceptance by members of the Band in a heavily Roman Catholic Native community, the degree to which Native spirituality is seen as opposed to or in harmony with the existing beliefs of the population, or can be made to be seen to be so, is crucial.

## Chapter Five

### EXPLAINING THE CONFLICT OVER NATIVE SPIRITUALITY

Contrary to expectations, there is, in fact, a wide variation, not uniformity, in the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs of New Brunswick. And there is conflict in most communities, not consensus, over the value and acceptance of Native spirituality: there are many clients and community members on New Brunswick reserves who resist the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs because they see it as in conflict with their Catholic religious beliefs. In this Chapter we seek to understand the origins of these unexpected findings, both through the interviews conducted for this research and in the wider literature on missionary activity.

Given the discrepancy between expectations and findings it is not surprising there is no ready model of conflict within Native communities over the use in the NTCs of what Traditionalists claim to be their ancestral spiritual beliefs of Native people<sup>11</sup>. If one assumes there is no conflict, one is not going to develop a model of that conflict and its origins. The task at hand is to make sense of why Native communities are riven by such conflicts over

---

<sup>11</sup> The models Hale discusses concerning the claims of Traditionalists and Catholics in Micmac communities (see Hale, 1995: 435-436) attempts to reduce the battle to one of those well integrated into capitalist social relations (Chiefs and others in positions of authority) versus Traditionalists outsiders to the power structure. This fails to account for those Chiefs who have played a strong role in promoting Native spirituality and therefore does not seem to fit the facts of our cases.

the use of Native spirituality in the treatment of drug and alcohol abuse. Following Mills, we shall seek to discover the historical process which has created the present situation of conflict over Native spirituality amongst the Native peoples on the reserves studied in New Brunswick.

Therefore, this Chapter attempts to explore, if only in a tentative way, the historical process by which Native peoples have come to dispute with one another over the use of Native spirituality. We are concerned with examining the historical origins of this conflict as an explanation of the current situation: namely the variation in the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs of New Brunswick studied here.

This study, based on the research findings and literature review, focuses its attention on the suggestion by Traditionalists that Christian missionary activity suppressed the pre-Contact spiritual beliefs and practices of the Native peoples, and that the legacy of that suppression continues to stand in the way of a resurgence in Native spirituality. In the first section, I briefly document the existence of that charge by Traditionalists interviewed for this study. In the second section I examine what is argued on this subject by some of the existing literature on missionary activities among the Native peoples. In the third section I examine the current re-evaluation of past missionary activities among Native peoples by the contemporary church ; in the final section, I argue that the evidence of this study tends to confirm the Traditionalists assertions by counter-example: in the case where acceptance of Native spirituality by Church authorities has been overt, Native spirituality is most used in the treatment programme of the NTC.



### A. The Traditionalists' Interpretation of Christianization

Though Christianity made many accommodations to various European cultures in the long process of Christianizing Europe, Native Traditionalists believe that the Christianization of North American Native peoples was one which suppressed their peoples' pre-Contact spiritual beliefs. This process of suppression, they argue, has continued into the present and represents the most significant obstacle to the resurgence of what they believe to be their ancestral spirituality. Many of the interviewees in this case study made this claim, usually as the backdrop to remarks about the present day. A few examples will suffice.

The Staff-Traditionalist at NTC #3 argued that Christian missionaries worked hand in hand with government to try to assimilate Native peoples to European culture, a process he called 'Christian abuse':

Natives were being driven here and there. In other words we were being dominated. The government and Christianity got together to work on Native people into accepting their way of life. For all during that time, everything was one sided. The Natives could not bring their point of view.

The Staff-Councillor of NTC #3 argued that missionary activity stripped people of their own culture :

I don't think a lot of people realize here what happened to us. How the missionaries took away our way of life . . .

One of the Elders who was interviewed made the same point:

When the white people came over, that was the start of it. The old people were forced to hide a lot of their stuff [spiritual objects]. Some of the people fled out West and took their teachings because contact was not as strong as it was here.

The Assistant-Director at NTC #5 argues that many of the problems faced by Native people are caused by "...the loss of our [Native] identity", and that

"because our way was not understood by non-Natives they forced Christianity on us as the only way." This, he says, caused the identity crisis among Native peoples and explains why the use of Native spirituality is so important in the treatment of drug and alcohol abuse. Native spirituality allows Native clients to regain their Native identity, and pride in that identity. This restores their self-esteem and self-respect, alleviating their need to abuse drugs and alcohol:

Native spirituality is the most important component to our treatment program when we deal with our people. It is most important because when Native people come here they have no pride and carry a stigma of being no-good. So, what we try to do is instill that pride of being Native back in them and we do that in a number of ways through the use of Native spirituality.

The Director at NTC #4 had similar beliefs to the others interviewed about the historical processes which served to suppress the spiritual beliefs and practices of Native peoples, and what the effects of the loss of Native spirituality has had for Native peoples. He states, "I read where Native people were savages because they wore loincloths and ran around half-naked, but have you ever been to a beach?" He says that he thinks that "when you're being forced to do something it always creates problems for future generations, such as the religious movement with European contact." He says he thinks that the problem with what happened in history is that "our way of life, which was spiritual, was being put down and we were forced to live another way." He further says that it has been "a lack of knowledge about the Native way that has brought so much negativism towards Native peoples." He states:

I think the labels [assigned to Native peoples] have been damaging. If you tell someone something long enough eventually they are going to believe it. But by developing a strong spirituality, only then can you overcome the negative stereotypes.

Traditionalists argue that this suppression is not merely part of the remote past of the near present. The Staff-Counsellor at NTC #2 sees the presence of the resident Priest and Church on the reserve as a continued hindrance to the use of Native spirituality in this Centre:

They [the community] can't see what the Church has done to us . . . I'm not Catholic, but I was forced to do all of these things and it confused me.

Other interviewees see the general climate of hostility to Native spirituality as being the legacy of clergy attitudes in the past. The Staff-Traditionalist at NTC #3 argues that a powerful legacy of fear towards Native spirituality remains among the clients and the community:

There's a non-acceptance [of Native spirituality], it's like frowned upon and made fun of. They mostly refuse to participate because of all the negative things they have been taught about Native spirituality. They are afraid and they don't really know what it is.

A similar remark was made by one of the clients of NTC #3 who said she involved herself in Native spirituality without telling her family:

I have to hide from my family. I tell my kids, "don't tell them I went to a Sweat Lodge ceremony." I hide, because I am tired of defending myself to people who are against it. They are still brainwashed by Christianity. They think they [Native spiritual ceremonies] are heathen.

This client also says that while she did not attend a residential school, the Catholic Nuns taught her at the school on the reserve to reject Native beliefs and culture:

I was not allowed to speak my language, or speak of anything Native. You had to be Christian, and I hated that. I was forced to write and speak English, and I wasn't good at it, but when I went home after school, I spoke my own language again. I lost a lot of friends because I refused to be the way the nuns wanted me to be. I still carry that pain around with me.

## **B. The Literature on Missionary Activity**

No one doubts that the mandate of the missionaries sent to the Native peoples was to Christianize them. As David Lewis argues, this meant denigrating their existing belief systems:

Conversion of Natives peoples to Christianity involved separating them from their old beliefs by 'proving' these beliefs inferior. (Lewis, 1993:243)

The literature asserts that Native peoples were generally very spiritually devout peoples. Sociologist Gail Kellough explains:

The Indians of Canada were a religious people. Their 'fervency of spirit and diligence in prayer' as well as their 'good sense of forgiving' and principles of sharing were noted by incoming missionaries. (1980:360)

However, the spirituality of the Native peoples was strongly qualified by the missionaries:

They had a Zeal of God but not according to knowledge. Besides ... What did the Indian pray for? Exactly the same as the unenlightened Gentiles did in the days of St. Paul, whose thoughts were confined to this present life only, saying what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or where will all shall we be clothed. (Hines 1919:108)

Gail Kellough (1980) argues that missionaries commonly identified Native spiritual beliefs as pagan and sinful, believing that their indigenous ideas had to be rooted out and replaced by European ones, for their own good:

Not only were the Indians to be separated from their religion and traditions, but they had to be made to regard their former customs as sinful. Without a sense of sin, the message of salvation would be meaningless. If the Indian could be made aware of the sinfulness of his own society, it was felt that he could be converted. (Kellough, 1980:360)

It is the contention of Native Traditionalists that this identification of Native spiritual beliefs as pagan, wrong and sinful has served to suppress Native spirituality up till the present.

Lewis has argued that the criminalization of certain Native spiritual practices (for example the Potlatch ceremony) in the 19th century accelerated the demise of Native people in the West (Lewis,1993). The literature also notes that other laws were created to prohibit and suppress other elements of Native culture. In 1884, the Federal government authorized their agents on the various land reserves to assist the missionaries in suppressing Native spirituality. Government agents and missionaries insisted Native people attend Christian services, consult physicians when sick and bury their dead in Catholic cemeteries after appropriate Catholic burial services (Olson, 1984:56). The promulgation of non-Native ideology was further fostered by the creation of the Indian Residential Schools in the 19th century. These schools, noted now for the scandals of sexual abuse, were designed to strip Native people of their culture and beliefs and to assimilate them to White values and beliefs:

Across Canada, Protestant and Catholic missionaries were granted the right to force Native children from age six to leave their families and live in residential schools - a practice that continued into the 1960s . . . In virtually all schools, children were punished for speaking their own language or performing traditional ceremonies. (Kaye, 1990:132)

A report of the Province of Canada in 1847 presented cultural oppression as stated policy concerning Indian education:

Their education must consist not merely of the training of the mind, but of a weaning from the habits and feelings of their ancestors, and the acquirements of the language, arts and customs of civilized life. (Prentice and Houston, 1975:218)

While the residential schools were state funded, Christian missionaries were given the powers of administrative, academic and religious instruction (Lewis, 1993):

There was, in essence, a deal between the state and the Churches, where the latter were to provide cheap education and social welfare; in return, the churches received virtual carte blanche for religious recruitment. (Hawthorne, 1976, 46ff in Lewis, 1993:243)

The role of the Church in the residential schools, was, most significantly, the enforcement of a non-Native spirituality among Native children (Millward, 1992). Given that the young were not as indoctrinated in the traditional spiritual beliefs and practices, it would be substantially less complicated to convert their beliefs to some form of Christianity (Haig-Brown, 1988; Lewis, 1993). Further, in replacing the spirituality of Native people at a young age, through enforced European Christianity at residential schools, the infiltration of this new ideology would then influence generations to come (Lewis, 1993). The focus of ideological assimilation in these residential schools was hence geared toward the young people (Lewis, 1993).

### **C. Contemporary Church Rethinking of Early Missionary Activities**

The basic thesis of the Traditionalists, that Christianization involved an attempt to suppress and demonize Native spiritual beliefs, is backed up by more than the scholarly literature on missionary activity. It is now recognized by mainstream Canadian churches, in particular the Roman Catholic Church (which Christianized the Native peoples of New Brunswick). Contemporary Christian churches in Canada acknowledge the cultural damage and disrespect with which missionaries have historically treated Native people, their culture, and their spirituality. The Catholic Church has admitted and

apologized for its damage to the Native peoples of North America (Shorter, 1988; Cerbnetig, 1991; Lewis, 1993). It is precisely for these reasons that the Christian Churches have changed their methods of conversion among non-Christian peoples around the world (Shorter, 1988).

In July of 1991, Canada's Oblate Brothers sought the forgiveness of Native peoples. In an open air Mass on the shore of Lac Ste. Anne, a body of water that is believed by many Christians to have miraculous restorative powers, the spokesperson for the brothers, Father Crosby, apologized to Native peoples for missionaries' activities in history (Cerbnetig, 1991:A4). Father Crosby states the following in his address to Native peoples:

The Oblate of Mary Immaculate seek forgiveness for their role in belittling and, in some cases, destroying native culture and tradition. We broke some of your peace pipes and we considered some of your sacred practices as pagan and superstitious . . . This, too, had its origins in the colonial mentality, our European superiority complex which was grounded in a particular view of history. We apologize for this blindness and disrespect . . . We also wish to apologize for the part we played in the setting up and the maintaining of those schools [residential schools]. We apologize for the existence of the schools themselves, recognizing that the biggest abuse was not what happened in the schools, but that the schools themselves happened. . . The residential schools were an attempt to assimilate aboriginal peoples and we played an important role in the unfolding of this design. For this, we sincerely apologize. (Cernetig, 1991:A4)

The Catholic Church in Canada as well as the mainline Anglican and Protestant denominations have sought to 'nativize' the church, that is to turn over to Native people as much of the running of their own affairs as possible. Lewis, a sceptic about the process of Christian/Native spiritual accommodation, argues that the "recruitment and training of more clergy and other personnel from among Native peoples themselves and the establishment of separate administrative bodies to serve Native peoples

exclusively" (1993:249) has led to forms of syncretism, the attempt to fuse the belief systems of Native spirituality and Christianity:

The syncretism once so abhorred by missionaries is now official policy among the major denominations. Typified by the Kateri Movement in Roman Catholicism, syncretism now involves incorporating traditional Native and Inuit objects, practices and beliefs into the churches liturgy and dogma. Thus, the Anglican church provides a specific liturgy for Native peoples, while drum and sweetgrass form part of the Catholic mass. Both of these churches also maintain exclusively Native parish organizations, while the United Church has fifty-five Native congregations, most organized into its 'All Native Circle Conference.' (Kenny, 1989:9)

If some Catholics might fear that Lewis is right, then there are Native Traditionalists with similar fears of syncretism. The Staff-Counsellor at NTC #1 had this to say about the combination of Catholicism with Native spirituality:

No matter how much they use it, it's not going to be the same because nothing compares with any other Catholic in this world. There is no money, committees or any thing like that. I don't think that it is right. . . I hope it [the Church] doesn't start accusing people like it did before. They should stay with Christianity and not combine it with our traditional ways. It [Native spirituality] is not anything like that [Catholicism].

The Staff-Traditionalist at NTC #4 also had some reservations about combining Native spirituality with Catholicism:

I don't know what they think. I heard some of them [Priests] trying to use Native spirituality in their ceremonies. I also saw it at a burial one time. Native peoples drumming and chanting and the burning of sweet grass. I guess if its gonna help people it's o.k. with me. It's just that you can't follow two paths. You can, but you have to make a choice sooner or later. You come to a fork.



The compatibility of Catholicism and Native spirituality is a matter for theological discussion. That at least segments of the the Catholic Church have embraced Native spirituality cannot be denied. The importance of Church endorsement of Native spirituality is illustrated on the reserve where NTC #5 is located. Here, where Native clergy have endorsed the use of Native spirituality the conflict over the use of Native spirituality in drug and alcohol treatment was largely dissipated.

#### **D. The Significance of the NTC #5 Case**

Despite the public apologies of the Christian Churches to Canada's Native peoples for the historic suppression of their spiritual beliefs and practices, the findings in New Brunswick are that a conflict exists over the use of Native spirituality at NTCs among both community members and clients in the Centres. Whatever the attitudes of the Church hierarchy, there remains a legacy in the minds of many contemporary Native peoples concerning Native spirituality which has its consequences for the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs of New Brunswick. Some Native peoples on the reserves continue to view Native spirituality as demonic, sinful, nonsensical and or threatening, and so oppose the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs. The Native communities studied here remain divided in their religious worldview, and therefore in the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs on their respective reserves.

As we have noted, though there has been conflict in all 5 Centres over the use of Native spirituality, there are significant differences between them. At one level there have been significant differences in the political situations of the NTCs relative to the local power structure to which the Centres must report. In NTCs #1 and #2 , where Native spirituality is very minimal, the

staff interviewed say that one aspect of the conflict over the use of Native spirituality involves the resistance of the Chief and Band Council on the reserve. In NTCs #3, #4 and #5, the use of Native spirituality in the Centres had the support of the Chief and Band Council. Even with this support, however, the use of Native spirituality was met with resistance among community members and clients in the Centres.

There are strong similarities in the history of the development of the use of Native spirituality in Centres # 3-5. First, it was introduced in a piece-meal fashion and slowly over time. At the time of my study in 1991, each of the Native treatment centres had been in operation for approximately 3 years, yet the use of Native spirituality as a full component of the treatment program at these centres, with the exception of NTC #5, was as recent as a few months prior to my study. Those interviewed state that they used various means in attempting to deal with the conflict over the use of Native spirituality among both clients and members of the communities where the centres are located. They introduced it slowly, gave lectures to re-educate the people about Native spirituality in hopes that this would alleviate their fears. They took clients out to spiritual Elders' homes on the reserves so that they could, if they chose, engage in Native spiritual ceremonies, and invited Native Spiritual Elders to the Centre to teach clients and perform ceremonies. They also keep participation in Native spirituality an option and never a requirement for clients in the centres.

There is also a major difference in the history of NTCs #3 and #4, and NTC #5, a difference which throws light on the thesis that the degree of use of Native spirituality has been constrained by the consequences of Christian missionary activity since colonial times. This difference is that at NTC #5 the co-operation of the Church was sought and received in introducing Native

spirituality into the drug and alcohol treatment programme. Through the process of bringing into the reserve a Native priest who is also a Traditionalist and a Nun who is a Native Traditionalist and through the participation of the reserve's resident priest, staff at this NTC were able to combine the use of Native spirituality with Catholicism. They have, as a result of this action, acquired both community acceptance and client participation. As a result, active resistance to the use of Native spirituality substantially dissipated, and hence, this Centre, in comparison to the other Centres, had the highest degree of use of Native spirituality, and for a longer period of time. Staff at this centre have also been able to expand the use of Native spirituality into the local Band office and elementary school, also something none of the other NTCs were able to do.

The full significance of the case of NTC #5 is then more than just a 'static' correlation: acceptance by clergy of Native spirituality is associated with lowered resistance to its use at the NTC. Knowing the history of when the clergy are drawn in, we are able to argue that general acceptance by the reserve community of Native spirituality followed the endorsement by Catholic clergy and appears to be causally connected to it. NTC #5 represents rather strong evidence by counter-example for the thesis that condemnation of Native spiritual beliefs and practices during the course of Catholic missionary activity in the past is responsible for the resistance today of many contemporary Native peoples to the use of Native spirituality in the programmes of NTCs.

### **E. Chapter Summary**

Traditionalists interviewed for this thesis argued that Native people's resistance to the use of Native spirituality in drug and alcohol treatment is

rooted in the denigration of Native spiritual beliefs and practices during the long history of missionary activity. We found that argument is backed up both by the wider literature on missionary activity and by the apologies of the mainstream Christian churches to Native people for the effects of missionary activity. We also find that the case of NTC #5 gives a dramatic example of how Church approval of Native spirituality can have a decisive impact on making Native spirituality acceptable to a strongly Catholic Native community, a confirmation of the Traditionalists argument by counter-example.

## Chapter Six

### CONCLUSIONS

This thesis represents a preliminary and exploratory study of the use of Native spirituality in the five New Brunswick Native Treatment Centres. Having examined the findings of the study, it is now appropriate to reflect on the theoretical import of these findings and the questions raised by this study for further research into the use of Native spirituality in Native drug and alcohol treatment. In the first section of the Chapter we review our findings in terms of the theoretical questions which guided our research. In section two, we examine the theoretical significance of our findings. And in the final section, we put forth questions for further research raised by this study.

#### **A. The Findings of this Thesis in Theoretical Terms**

In Chapter 1 we argued that an appropriate theoretical approach to this study was one derived from C. Wright Mills' concept of the "sociological imagination" and the notions of structure and agency it implies. We employed his analytic framework to generate a series of questions to guide our inquiry. It is worthwhile at this point to remind ourselves of those questions:

- 1) How are Native Treatment Centres organized and what process do they employ to change Aboriginal addicts into well adjusted Native people? To

answer this larger question requires a series of more detailed questions: How is Native drug treatment organized and operating within the Reserves? Does the process of drug treatment use or fail to use Native spiritual concepts and practices? Is the use of Native spiritual practices thought to be effective or not effective by Native people, particularly the staff at the Native Treatment Centres?<sup>12</sup> Who is supporting and promoting the use of Native spirituality in the Centres? Is anyone opposing or resisting the use of Native spirituality in drug and alcohol rehabilitation? If so, why?

2) How did Native Treatment Centres and their treatment procedures become organized as they are today? This question requires that we delve into the history of Native drug treatment Centres, the processes which led to their establishment, and the history of any dispute over the use of Native spiritual beliefs and practices in drug and alcohol treatment. Specifically, in what social context did Native Treatment Centres and the practice of using Native beliefs and ceremonies emerge? Were the Native Treatment Centres developed through consensus or have they been marked by controversy and dispute? If the latter, from whence did this dispute arise?

3) Are the proponents of the use of Native spiritual beliefs and practices prevailing within the Native drug treatment programmes? Or are they under challenge within the Native communities within which they operate? Are there people who do not accept the efficacy and desirability of

---

<sup>12</sup>The actual psychological effects of Native spirituality on addicts is of course beyond our expertise to determine, it being a psychological judgement.

using Native spiritual practices in the treatment of those afflicted by substance abuse? Which groups of people are prevailing in these disputes?

What then can we say are the answers to these questions used to construct an explanation of the use of Native spirituality in the five New Brunswick NTCs which we have studied?

i) Let Us Look at What We Have Discovered By Way of Answers to These Questions:

First, let us begin with the answers to the questions regarding the organization and procedures governing the treatment of Native addiction at the time of the research. The first finding is that there was no single set procedure for the treatment of addiction in the NTCs studied (a significant deviation from what the literature leads one to expect). All Native Treatment Centres follow generally similar methods to those employed by conventional drug and alcohol treatment centres in Canada — procedures built on 12 step addiction recovery programmes and supporting individual and group counseling. A concern with spirituality does not arise as some eccentric ‘wrinkle’ of Native addiction treatment. Concern with spiritual renewal and spirituality runs right through the conventional 12 step recovery programmes, since recovery from addiction is believed to involve a spiritual transformation within the individual addict. A spiritual transformation is deemed in all 12 step programmes to be required in order to for the addict to overcome the process which leads to and develops within addiction. However, it appears that conventional treatment Centres have had little success for Native peoples. Recovering Native addicts and Native

Traditionalists claim that only by a return to Native spiritual beliefs and participation in Native spiritual practices can Native addicts find recovery.

The mandate of Federal funding for Native drug and alcohol treatment Centres is that they employ Native spirituality and Native spiritual ceremonies as part of their treatment procedures to enable Native addicts to gain the spiritual means by which to achieve and maintain a drug and alcohol free life. However, what was discovered during this research is that not all NTCs employ Native spirituality in the way set forth in their Federal mandates or as depicted in the literature. In some NTCs the use of specifically Native spirituality was minimal at best. In others Native spirituality was used to varying degrees, and in one it achieved a use similar in extent to that put forth in the literature. In those NTCs which extensively use Native spirituality, it is regarded by the staff of the Centres as the central element of the treatment process, and reported to be highly effective in enabling addicts to overcome their addiction. In NTCs which do not employ Native spirituality, staff report low levels of rates of recovery, but are divided over whether the absence of Native spirituality is the causal factor.

What we have found on reserves in New Brunswick is a conflict, not consensus, over the use of Native spirituality in the treatment of addiction. One camp, those supporting Traditionalists claim of the importance of the use of Native spirituality, support it; while others, who feel that Native spirituality is in conflict with their Catholic religious beliefs, oppose the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs. The groups in support of Native spirituality vary somewhat from reserve to reserve. Those who support the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs are primarily, but not solely, those who have themselves recovered from their own substance abuse problems via their return to what they believe to be their ancestral spiritual beliefs and practices.



The Chief and Council on the reserves where Native spirituality is used, NTCs #3-#5, also support the use of Native spirituality. The Directors of these three Centres, while not always Traditionalists or even Native, further support the use of Native spirituality, as do the Traditionalists in the reserve communities.

Those who resist and oppose the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs also vary. On the reserves where NTCs #1 and #2 are located, the Chief and Council do not support the use of Native spirituality. On all reserves there are varying numbers of clients and members of the communities who reject the use of Native spirituality as they perceive it to be in conflict with their Catholic religious beliefs. A weakness of this study design is that interviews were focused on the staff of NTCs and did not involve the wider reserve community, resident clergy and others who could have thrown light on opposition to the use of Native spirituality<sup>13</sup>.

Interviews indicate that a process of gradual introduction of Native spirituality was followed by all the successful Centres, but that the key to general client and community acceptance on the reserve with the widest acceptance and use of Native spirituality was the endorsement of Native spirituality by visiting and local Catholic clergy. The degree of acceptance by the community of Native spirituality seems dependent on the degree to which the community perceived no threat to their Catholic beliefs from the employment of Native spirituality.

In theoretical terms, what was witnessed in the NTCs studied was a very active process by which Native people responded to the desperate situation of

---

<sup>13</sup> Following the literature, I expected little resistance to the use of Native spirituality and set out to study the process of its use and gauge the NTC staff evaluation of its effectiveness.

Native substance abuse. However, not all Native people responded in the same way. Different groups of people found themselves in conflict over the initiatives of Traditionalists regarding the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs. The outcome of local struggles at the reserve level seems to be the determining factor in the degree to which Native spirituality forms a part of the social arrangements in treating substance abuse or not.

## ii) The Historical Emergence of Native Spirituality in Drug and Alcohol Treatment

The emergence of separate Native run drug and alcohol treatment centres is part of the larger movement among Native peoples for greater autonomy, self-determination and self-government. The mandate to employ Native spirituality was the Federal government's response to the demand for effective, Native run drug and alcohol treatment. Individual NTCs were the product of initiatives by local influential Native people. Theoretically we can understand this as individuals and small groups of people responding to a social problem, and taking action to change the way drug treatment is handled in their communities. The emergence of NTCs in response to both national and local initiatives is an instance of social agency in response to existing social arrangements inadequate in dealing with the high incidence of substance abuse. These Native peoples felt that only a re-organization of social arrangements could effectively alleviate the social problems experienced by their communities. As we have seen, however, the degree to which Native spirituality forms a part of the treatment process is the result of local conflicts within reserve communities and is highly sensitive to the extent of local support or resistance to Native spirituality. The degree to

which Native spirituality becomes a part of organized drug and alcohol treatment procedures is dependent on the social processes which change or maintain the relative numbers of supporters and opponents of Native spirituality in the reserve community.

I found that a particular series of events characterized the process by which Native spirituality came to be successfully introduced to the three Centres where Native spirituality is used as part of the formal treatment procedures. In NTCs 3, 4 and 5 Native spirituality was introduced in a piece-meal fashion and slowly over time. Those interviewed state that they used various means in attempting to deal with the conflict over the use of Native spirituality among both clients and members of the communities where the centres are located. They introduced it slowly, gave lectures to re-educate the people about Native spirituality in hopes that this would alleviate their fears. They took clients out to spiritual Elders homes on the reserves so that they could, if they chose, engage in Native spiritual ceremonies. And they keep participation in Native spirituality an option and never a requirement for clients in the centres.

What marked the process in the Centre where Native spirituality has achieved the highest degree of use, and the longest period of use, was the active co-operation of the Church. Through the process of bringing into the reserve a Native Priest who is also a Traditionalist and a Nun who is a Native Traditionalist, and through the participation of the reserve's resident Priest, staff at this NTC were able to end the conflict over the use of Native spirituality in the NTC. As a result of this action, staff at this Centre acquired both community acceptance and client participation. As a result, active resistance to the use of Native spirituality has largely disappeared, and this Centre has the highest degree of Native spirituality in any of the Centres

studied. Staff at this centre have also been able to expand the use of Native spirituality into the local Band office and elementary school, something none of the other NTCs were able to do.

In theoretical terms, the accommodation of clergy and proponents of Native spirituality, indeed the inclusion of clergy amongst the supporters of Native spirituality, was required to make the use of Native spirituality a generally accepted part of the substance abuse treatment process at the NTC. This might be seen as one limiting case of the possible outcomes governing the extent to which the 'resurgence of Native spirituality' takes root in the formal process of Native drug treatment. Lewis indeed argues that it is highly ironic that Native spirituality seems to be achieving widespread community acceptance when it is endorsed and promoted by the very organizations which once sought so strenuously to destroy it:

spirituality seems to be of central importance to Native peoples' lives. Ironically... First Nations cultural revitalization appears to be occurring in large part through the medium of the very churches that sought so strenuously to destroy those cultures in the past (1993:251).

### iii) Who is Prevailing in the Controversy over the Use of Native Spirituality? Who is Coming to Prevail?

At this point in time it is not clear whether the supporters of what is referred to as the "resurgence" in Native spirituality, or its opponents, are in the ascendance. In some places those opposing it seem to be prevailing, in others those supporting the "resurgence." This is itself of interest, in that the supporters of the use of Native spirituality are often perceived to be leading a popular resurgence within the treatment centres and on reserves across the country.

In NTCs #1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 those supporting the use of Native spirituality seem to be met with persistent forms of resistance among members of the communities and clients. In NTCs #1 and #2 the opponents of the use of Native spirituality seem to be in the ascendance, with such powerful people as the Chief and Council on these reserves rejecting the use of Native spirituality in their NTCs. In NTC #1 the Director does not see the usefulness of Native spirituality in the treatment of alcohol and drug addiction among Native peoples. In NTC #2, the Director supports the use of Native spirituality in the centre but is met with resistance by the Chief and Council on the reserve as well as the community members on the reserve.

With the use of Native spirituality in NTCs #3 and #4 having been accepted with the support of Chief and Council on these reserves, and with the hiring of a full-time Staff-Traditionalist, the supporters of the use of Native spirituality seem to be strong and gathering strength. However, the conflict over client participation and community acceptance remains. In NTC #5 the Traditionalists and others who support the use of Native spirituality seem to be prevailing more completely. While the conflict over the use of Native spirituality existed at this centre, and the same set of processes used in NTCs #3 and #4 were used in this centre, supporters appear to have alleviated the conflict through an accommodation of Catholic clergy.

However, these patterns of predominance and resistance seem to be local. It is not possible to generalize to the Canada-wide scene. Indeed the pattern in New Brunswick is not clear.

## **B. Theoretical Significance of the Study**

There are a four points of significance to this study.

First, the “conventional wisdom” put forward by the literature, namely that Native Drug Treatment Centres are all employing Native spirituality in the treatment of substance abuse, is in error. There is wide variation in the use of Native spirituality in NTCs in New Brunswick. Studies of Native drug treatment need to begin with the possibility that this is true outside New Brunswick. More research is needed into this topic.

Second, rather than there being consensus amongst Native people on the value of Native spirituality, there are varying degrees of conflict, which typically pits proponents of the use of Native spirituality in the NTCs against proponents of some denomination of Christianity. Models of Native spiritual ‘revival’ need to be able to account for this conflict, which is essentially ideological in nature, and for the possibility of reconciliation through an endorsement by Christianity of Native spirituality.

Third, this study demonstrates the value of the exploratory case study using qualitative methods to determine participants’ understandings of the events and processes in which they are involved. This mode of inquiry made it possible to discover the conflict over the use of Native spirituality and from where it arose. Such a study cannot be atheoretical — the assumptions which one inevitably brings to any study shapes who one seeks out as ones sources of information, what one bothers to observe and/or fail to observe, and what kinds of explanations one offers for what one finds. But qualitative research does offer an opportunity to be surprised by what one finds, that is to find what one does not expect, and this is the main value of preliminary studies of this kind. This study is an illustration of that process.

Fourth, this study shows the continued usefulness of Mills’ notion of the “sociological imagination” and the value of the questions with which he argued all good sociological research must be concerned. Because Mills’

approach does not prejudge the content of the social processes, but provides a sociologically sound way of attempting to conceptualize various possible social processes, it is a particularly good approach to employ in exploratory studies where existing theory is inadequate. Mills' emphasis on the importance of a historical perspective, the need to pay close attention to the role of agency within the limitations and opportunities presented by existing social arrangements, and the need to connect the structural and historical "big picture" with the lives of individuals has lost none of its force in the four decades since he wrote *The Sociological Imagination*.

### C. Questions for Further Research

This study has raised a number of questions for further research into the subject of the use of Native spirituality in drug treatment in New Brunswick and Canada, and questions raised about the effects of increased interest in Native spirituality outside the context of drug treatment. The following are the most important:

- i) Are other Native Drug Treatment Centres operating as the literature suggests, or is the New Brunswick pattern uncovered by this research more widespread?
- ii) What would research into the attitudes of people outside the NTC staff — clients, Chiefs and Councillors, clergy and general populations of the reserve — reveal about the processes of support and opposition to the use of Native spirituality in New Brunswick and across Canada? What processes have limited and facilitated the use of Native spirituality on other reserves in Canada?
- iii) Is there a "resurgence" of Native spirituality going on outside the NTCs among Canada's Native population, and if so with what

opposition? Are NTC's a primary vehicle for whatever resurgence is occurring?

iv) What is the wider significance of the historical pattern of the suppression of Native spiritual beliefs by missionary activity? How is it connected to the situation of contemporary Native people and the social problems they face?

v) What is the broader significance of the resurgence in Native spirituality beyond drug and alcohol abuse treatment. If the adoption of Native spirituality gives Native peoples an ability to recover from addiction and an increased sense of self-esteem and Native identity, are there longer term structural consequences to this development?

#### **D. Thesis Conclusion**

This thesis raises a number of questions not only about the social processes which have surrounded the use of Native spirituality in addiction treatment, but in relation to the wider study of Native life. It suggests that more attention be paid to the processes occurring within Native communities today, as well as to the history of Native peoples and its effect on their present situation. These matters have been relatively neglected by sociologists, certainly in regard to New Brunswick's Native peoples.



### List of Cited References

- A.A.D.A.C. (1985) **Alberta Alcohol And Drug Abuse Commission Developments**, Vol. V #4.
- Abrams, P. (1982) **Historical Sociology**, Open Book Publishers. Shepton Mallet, Somerset.
- Adams, Howard. (1975) **Prison of Grass: Canada from a Native Point of View**. Fifth House Publishers. Saskatoon, Sask.
- Advard, Denise and Louise Harvey. (1989) **The Health of Canada's Children: CICH Profile**. Canadian Institute of Child Health. Graphic Production. Gallant Design. Ottawa.
- Ajello, Robin. (1996) "Bittersweet Victory: The Nisg'a Land Claim deal faces stiff opposition" *MacLeans*. Feb 26: 24.
- Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick. (1996) **Ridgewood Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre, Saint John, New Brunswick**
- Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick. (1984-89), Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- Anderson, Charles A. (1974) **The Political Economy of Social Class**. Prentice-Hall. Englewood Cliffs. New Jersey.
- Apted, Micheal. (1992) **Incident At Okala: The Leonard Peltier Story**. Alliance Releasing. Spanish Folk Motion Picture Company.
- Armstrong, Pat and Armstrong, Hugh. (1990) **Theorizing Women's Work**. Garamond Press, Network Basics Series. Toronto, Ontario.
- Bevan, Edwyn (1932) **Christianity**. Oxford University Press. London.
- Bear-Nicholas, Andera (1994) **Colonialism And The Struggle For Liberation: The Experience Of Maliseet Women**. Chair Of Native Studies, St. Thomas University. Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- Cardinal, Harold. (1977) **The Rebirth of Canadian Indians**. Hurtig Publishers. Edmonton, Alberta.

- Cernetig, Miro. (1991) "Oblage Brothers Seek Natives Forgiveness: Missionaries Apologize for Treatment of Indians at Residential Schools, But No Compensation Offered", *Globe and Mail*, p. A4, July 25.
- Clarke, George Frederick. (1968) **Someone Before Us: Our Maritime Indians**. Brunswick Press. Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- Clow, Michael. (1995) "Society in the Natural World: Can Sociology Adapt to the End of Material Progress?", a paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Atlantic Association of Sociologists and Anthropologists, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, October, 1995.
- Conference on Native spirituality at St. Thomas University, Feb. 24, 1992. Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- Czerny, Michael; Swi t, Jamie and Clarke, Robert. (1994) **Getting Started on Social Analysis in Canada**. Third Edition. Between the Lines. Toronto, Ontario. Second Printing January 1995.
- Doxtater, Micheal. (1992) "Failing To Reach The Indian People: What is the Democratic Base of the Assembly of First Nations?" **The Globe and Mail**, A19. (Nov.5).
- Drug And Alcohol Commission Of New Brunswick (1984-89). Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- Elliot, David W. (1979) "Aboriginal Title" **Aboriginal Peoples and the Law**. pp 48-51.
- Fassel, Diane. (1992) **Working Ourselves to Death**. Thorsons. Hammersmith, London.
- Frideres, James S. (1974) **Canada's Indians: Contemporary Conflicts**. Prentice-Hall. Scarborough, Ont.
- Frontline** (1991) "In The Spirit Of Crazy Horse." Television Documentary, Oct.
- Giddens, Anthony (1979) **Central Problems in Social Theory**, MacMillian. London.
- gkisedtanamoogk & Frances Hancock (1993) **Anoqcou: Ceremony Is Life Itself**. Astaturte Shell Press. Portland, Maine.
- Grant, John Webster. (1919) **Moon in Wintertime: Missionaries and Indians of Canada in Encounter since 1534**. University of Toronto Press (1984). Toronto, Ont.

- Haig-Brown, Celia. (1988) **Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School**. Published by Tillacum Library. Vancouver, British Columbia.
- Hakim, Catherine. (1987) "Chapter 6: Case Studies" in **Research Designs: Strategies and Choices in the Design of Social Research**. Allen and Unwin. London. pp. 61-75.
- Hale, Sylvia. (1995) **Controversies in Sociology: A Canadian Introduction**. Second edition. Copp Clark Ltd. Toronto, Ontario.
- Hamel, Jacques. (1993) "The Case Study in Sociology: The Contribution of Methodological Research in the French Language" in the *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol. 30, No.4, pp. 488-509.
- Harriet Starleaf Grumbs (1990) in **WISDOMKEEPERS: Meeting With Spiritual Elders**. Wall, Steve & Harvey Arden. Beyond Words Publishing, Hillsboro, Oregon. at 42.
- Haveman, Paul. (1985) "Law and Order for Canada's Indigenous People." **Prairie Justice Research Council**, University of Regina. Regina, Sask.
- Hawthorne, H. (ed.). (1976) **A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada**. Volume II. Indian Affairs Branch. Ottawa, Ontario.
- Health Indicators Derived From Vital Statistics 1978-1986** (1988). Published by authority of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Sept. Ottawa.
- Hines, Rev. J. (1919) **The Red Indians of the Plains**. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. London.
- Holmes-Whitehead, Ruth. (1991) **The Old Man Told Us: Excerpts from Micmac History 1500-1950**. Nimbus Publishing. Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- Hultkrantz, Ake. (1976) **The Study of American Indian Religions: Retrospect, Present Trends and Future Tasks**. In Capps, Walter H. **Seeing With a Native Eye: Essays on Native American Religion**. Harper & Row Publishers. New York.
- J&J Research Associates Ltd., (1988) **Parrrtown CCC Ridgewood Treatment Program**. University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, New Brunswick.

- Kapica, Jack (1991) "Investigating A Different Faith: The eighth of the Canadian Council of Churches Marks a watershed as Christians Venture out to discover Native Beliefs."Hobbema, Alberta. **The Globe and Mail** A1-A2., May 18.
- Kapica, Jack. (1991) "Look at Columbus from Native Side, Churches urge: Assembly Examines Sexual Assault, Pollution, Arms Race, Immigration", **Globe and Mail**, p. A7, May 17.
- Kaye, Marcia. (1990) "In The Spirit of The Family: Native Women are Turning to Old Ways to Heal Their Wounded Families"**Canadian Living**. Oct. pp 131-138.
- Kellough, Gail. (1980) "From Colonialism to Economic Imperialism: The Experience of the Canadian Indian." in **Structured Inequality In Canada**, edited by John Harp and John R.Hofley. Prentice-Hall. Scarborough, Ont.
- Kenny, Gary. (1989) "The Mosaic and the Church." *Manadate* (Special Edition) 20 (4): 8-10.
- Krawll, Marios B. (1988) "Aboriginal Substance Abuse Treatment Centres and Aboriginal Federal Offenders," No. 17 Prepared for the corrections branch of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada. **Government Document, Solicitor General Canada**. Ottawa.
- Lanternari, Vittorio. (1963) **The Religions of the Oppressed: A Study of Modern Messianic Cults**. Macgibbon & Koe. London.
- Laurtard, Hugh (1987) **An Overview Of Registered Indian Conditions In New Brunswick And Prince Edward Island**. Under the direction of N.H. Lithwick, Lithwick Rothmans Schiff Associates Ltd. for Indian And Northern Affairs Canada.Ottawa.
- Leiss, William. (1976) **The Limits to satisfaction: An Essay on the Problems of the Needs and Commodities**. University of Toronto Press. Toronto
- Lewis, David (1993) "Canada's Native Peoples and the Churches" in Hewitt, W.E. **The Sociology of Religion** (1993). Butterworths. Toronto.at 235-252.
- Long, J. Anthony. (1984) in **Pathways to Self-Determination: Canadian Indians and the Canadian State**, edited by Leroy Little Bear, Menno Bolt & Anthony Long. University of Toronto Press. Toronto.

- Machum, Susan. (1994) "In Defense of the Case Study Research Design".  
Unpublished research paper.
- Marchak, M. Patricia. (1988). **Ideological Perspectives on Canada, Third Edition**. McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited. Toronto
- Mills, C. Wright. (1959) **The Sociological Imagination**. Press
- Millward, Marilyn. (1992) "Clean Behind The Ears? Micmac Parents, Micmac Children, and the Shubenacadie Residential School" in **Toward A NEW MARITIMES**, edited by Ian McKay & Scott Milsom. pp: 45-59. Ragweed Press. Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.
- Moon, Peter (1991) "Reserve Drinking Itself to Death." **The Globe and Mail**, 2 March: A-1-3.
- Neill, S. (1964) **A History of Christian Missions**. Penguin. Harmondsworth.
- Olson, James S & Raymond Wilson. (1984) **Native Americans In The Twentieth Century**. Brigham Young Press. Provo, Utah.
- Parkhill, Tom. (1985) "An Introduction to Micmac and Maliseet Spirituality."  
Unpublished manuscript. St. Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- Paul, Lawrence. (1990) "Alcohol: Why Do They Drink?" **The People's Voice**.  
Oct. p. 27 Vancouver, British Columbia.
- Pedersen, Ileane. Executive Assistant., PoundMakers Lodge. In an interview  
letter. Edmonton, Alberta. March, 1992.
- Position Paper** (1988) "The Role of Native People Within the Canadian Justice System." Draft prepared for John Howard Society Canada.
- Prentice, Allison L. and Susan E. Houston. (1975) **Family, School and Society In Nineteenth-Century Canada**. Oxford University Press.  
Toronto.
- Rose, Howard. (1991) "Case Studies" in Allan, Graham and Skinner, Chris  
(eds). **Handbook for Research Students in the Social Sciences**.  
The Farmer Press. London. pp. 190-212.
- Shorter, Alward (1988) **Toward A Theology Of Inculturation**. Cassell  
Publishers. London.
- Siggner, Andrew J. (1986) "The Socio-demographic Conditions of Registered  
Indians" PP: 2-9 in **Canadian Social Trends**

- Smart, Ronald G. (1986) "Drinking In Canada: Then and Now." **Addictions Research Foundation**. Ottawa.
- Solomon, Eva. (1989) "The Sweat Lodge: Spiritual rebirth for men and women through the revival of a Sacred First Nationstradition." **Home Missions, Catholic New Times** pp: 10-12. Sept 23.
- Stark, Rodney et al. (1980) "Rediscovering Moral Communities." in T.Hirschi et al. 1980. **Understanding Crime**. Sage. Beverly Hills, CA.
- \_\_\_\_ (1983) "Beyond Durkheim: Religion and Suicide." **Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion** 22:120-131.
- Stoecker, Randy. (1991) "Evaluating and Rethinking the Case Study" in **The Sociological Review**, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 88-112.
- The Canadian Indian** (1986) Indian and Northern Affairs Publication. Indian and Northern Affairs. Ottawa.
- Trigger, Bruce. (1989) **The Indians and The Heroic Age of New France**. The Canadian Historical Association, Ottawa. Historical Booklet No. 30.
- Waubegshig. (1972) **The Only Good Indian**. New Press. Toronto.
- Williamson, Ray A (1984) **Living The Sky: The Cosmos of the American Indian**. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston.
- Wilson, Deborah. (1992) "Natives to Create New Society: B.C. Band Will Become Self-Government Laboratory." **The Globe and Mail**, March, A1-A6.
- Wilson, Doug. (1983) "Native Health Problems." Unpublished paper. October. New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council. Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- Wright, Shelly (1995) **On Becoming "Human" Subjectivity And Identity In International Human Rights Law**. First Inaugural Lodhi Lecture On Human Rights. Atlantic Human Rights Centre St. Thomas University-University New Brunswick. March 28.
- Yin, Robert. (1994) **Case Study Research: Design and Methods**. Second edition. Sage Publications. Thousand Oaks.
- York, Geoffery & Loræen Pindera. (1992) **The People Of The Pines: The Warriors And The Legacy of Oka**. Little Brown. Toronto.

York, Geoffery. (1990) **The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada.**  
Vintage Press. U.K., London.

## **Appendix A.**

### **Statement of Ethics**

Each person interviewed will be given the freedom to choose to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time. Also, complete anonymity of participants and confidentiality of information will be maintained. Furthermore, each person will be informed of the purpose of the study and be provided with, upon request, a copy of the research findings. Each person within the course of the interview will be provided with a statement confirming these details. A copy of the research ethics statement is included as Appendix C.



**Appendix B.**  
**Interview Schedule**

1. Do you use Native spirituality in this Treatment Centre? If not, why not?
2. If so, how was Native spirituality introduced in the treatment procedures in this Centre?
3. What does using Native spirituality as a means of treating substance abuse consist of ?
4. In your opinion, how effective is Native spirituality in the treatment of substance abuse among Native people?
5. Has anyone in the program (clients) decided not to use Native spirituality? If so, what reasons were given?
6. How has the Native community reacted to your using Native spirituality as a means of treatment for substance abuse in this Centre?
7. How did this Native Treatment Centre get organized - Who had the idea for the Centre?
8. How many years has this Treatment Centre been in operation?
9. How did this Treatment Centre become a part of this reserve community?
10. In your opinion, is there a problem on this reserve with drug and alcohol abuse among the Native people?
11. What do you believe is the cause of the problems of substance abuse among Native peoples?
12. In your opinion, do you think Native people are suffering from an identity crisis? If so, what do believe caused this crisis in identity?
13. What Native spiritual practices are used in the treatment process in this Centre?
14. What was the process, or processes, which brought about the use of Native spirituality in this Centre?

15. Are there any obstacles to the use of Native spirituality in this Centre? If so, what are they?
16. Do clients in this Centre readily participate in Native spirituality as part of their recovery process? If not, why not?
17. What incentives do you use at this Centre in gaining client participation?
18. In your opinion, how does the use of Native spirituality in this Centre enhance Native peoples recovery from substance abuse?
19. In your opinion, how important is Native spirituality for Native peoples with substance abuse problems? What effect is the use of Native spirituality having among clients?
20. Are you yourself a Native Traditionalist?
21. Did you have past substance abuse problems? If so, how did you overcome them?
22. How long have you been involved in Native spirituality - a Traditionalist? How did you become involved in Native spirituality?
23. What was the most significant thing about your involvement in Native spirituality in terms of your own recovery process?
24. What was your perception of Native spirituality prior to your involvement?
25. What do you believe to be the central problem among clients and community members who reject the use of Native spirituality?
26. Who is promoting the use of Native spirituality in this centre?
27. Who, or what factors, are causing the resistance to the use of Native spirituality in this centre?

## **Appendix C.**

### **Research Ethics**

You are free to participate or withdraw from participation in this interview at any given time. Any questions being asked which make you feel uncomfortable answering shall be disregarded by me, and anything you do not understand about the nature of the study can be further explained by me.

No use of names, unless given permission by you, will be made and all information being used can be checked by you prior to being included within the write-up of the study. A summary of the findings will be available to you upon request. Further, all findings of the research may be used by you once the study is complete.

Your cooperation in the study is greatly appreciated by me and I will take this opportunity to thank you, once again, for your participation.