"FENCED IN": HORDEN HALL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL AT MOOSE FACTORY

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by

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ABSTRACT

The residential school experiences of 25 James Bay Cree individuals from Moose Factory who attended Horden Hall, an Anglican institution, are examined using the oral history method. Memories of residential school experiences reveal themes of the emotional significance of the first day, loneliness, routines, metaphors of involuntary institutionalization, separation into peer groups, resistance, gangs, punishment and abuse. Individuals had a range of negative and positive experiences in Horden Hall. The effects of residential school experiences on the individual, family of origin and community are explored. Individuals commonly experienced ambivalence over native identity, difficulty opening up emotionally and difficulty re-establishing close ties with their families of origin. The community of Moose Factory currently reflects the pattern of peer group interactions from Horden Hall in the area of socializing. By analyzing the generation of individuals who attended Horden Hall in the 1960s (17) collectively, culture change in terms of both altered life cycle and an altered culturally patterned psychological response, namely reticence, are examined. The life cycle of James Bay Cree individuals has been significantly altered from the traditional pattern. Reticence, a traditional, culturally patterned emotional response to a demanding subarctic physical environment, has been adapted by these individuals in response to the extreme social environment of residential school. Finally, the effects of residential school experiences on parenting in this community and culture are examined. Patterns of discipline and parental affection extended beyond infancy reveal a significant shift from traditional child-rearing practices of gradually acquired competence in the physical, mental and social environments through apprenticeship to adult standards.

To the people of Moose Factory and Moosonee, in particular those who suffered hardship as a consequence of EuroCanadian native residential school policy. Your courage and strength in adversity as children and as adults speaks to the resiliency of human nature. I offer you this work towards the ends of open discussion on residential school experiences and effects, and continued emotional healing.

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I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the many individuals who assisted me throughout this enterprise. To my supervisor, Dr. Richard Preston, whose guidance and wisdom have blessed me many times over, thank you. Thanks to Chief Ernest Beck of Moose Factory First Nation, whose assistance has been invaluable. To John Long and Wayne Warry, committee members who have offered me insight, support and friendship, thank you. To Jen Dawson, whose friendship in the field and at home has brightened many days, thank you. Thanks to Janis Weir, the Graduate Secretary of the McMaster Department of Anthropology, whose kindness and patience with many questions will not be forgotten. Thanks to friends and members of my family and extended family whose faith, comfort and cheer have been immeasurably helpful. And my love and thanks to my spouse, Matt Sendbuehler.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the repercussions of residential school experiences on James Bay Cree individuals who attended Horden Hall in the 1960s. Horden Hall was an Anglican residential school located in Moose Factory, Ontario. Twenty-five individuals were interviewed during two months of research during the summer of 1993. In February of 1993, a proposal for the research project was submitted to Moose Factory First Nation, and received support from the Chief and Council. The thesis is that a generation of James Bay Cree individuals have been affected by residential school experiences and that these effects, when examined collectively (not omitting individual variations), reveal patterns of cultural change impacting life cycle and interpersonal interactions. Overall, the research contributes to a growing body of literature that explores residential school issues from the perspective of Native individuals. This research also makes a significant contribution to the minimal literature on the relationship between residential school experiences and parenting (see Chapter 2).

After an examination of the methodology (Chapter 1) and relevant literature (Chapter 2), the traditional life cycle of the James Bay Cree is outlined and early childhood

experiences are discussed (Chapter 3). Life in Horden Hall is discussed in three chapters: Chapter 4 recounts the first day, the routine and metaphors of involuntary institutionalization; Chapter 5 explores peer group interactions, resistance and gangs; Chapter 6 explores inter-generational interactions, punishment and abuse. The effects of residential school experiences are explored in three chapters: Chapter 7 examines effects on the individual, with specific focus on Native identity, relationships with family of origin, and effects on the community of Moose Factory; Chapter 8 examines these residential school experiences collectively, outlining the life cycle of this generation and comparing it to the traditional life cycle. Through examining an aspect of the psychology in the traditional culture, reticence, which these individuals had started to develop prior to residential school, we deepen our understanding of how the social culture has changed. Chapter 9 explores the effects of residential school experiences on parenting. Chapter 10 makes some concluding remarks and suggests areas for further research.

RESEARCHER'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROJECT

I first became interested in Native residential school experiences through a course on anthropology and education. I had been working as a research assistant with material on the James Bay Cree and I was very curious about how Cree

individuals from the James Bay Coast viewed their experiences. There was very little published on residential school experiences in the James Bay area (with the exceptions being Preston 1967b, Sindell 1974, Willis 1973 and Wintrob and Sindell 1968). As a teenager, at a time when my family relationships were in turmoil, I went to residential school in India. I remember feeling lonely, cut off from a sense of family, dependent on peers and terrible homesickness. I felt that the experience of attending a boarding school in a different culture might give me some personal insight into the experiences of Native individuals in religious boarding institutions. I was greatly humbled by listening to these individuals' experiences. Not only were they in an institution based on foreign values, but their autonomy as individuals and their culture were not respected. Individuals described often painful events with such humour and generosity of spirit. I personally learned a great deal about the common human experience of living and the importance of re-establishing family connections.

THE INDIVIDUALS

Seventeen of these individuals attended Horden Hall in the 1960s, and the other eight attended its precursor, Bishop Horden Memorial, from the 30s through the 50s. All currently reside in Moose Factory and Moosonee, and with the exception of one individual, their families of origin also reside in

these two communities. All identify themselves as survivors, and their success at re-adjustment to living in this Native community and their levels of emotional healing vary. This individual variation is linked to their effectiveness at examining residential school experiences, the age at which they started consciously addressing these issues and the degree to which they were successful at re-establishing bonds with their family of origin and extended family. All of the individuals have children of their own, which is a result of the fact that few James Bay Cree adults are childless, in the present and traditionally. The interviewees are married, with the exception of one single parent and two divorcees. A few of these individuals are closely related to each other, but in order to assure anonymity, the relationships will not be revealed. All of the interviewees have been assigned pseudonyms to ensure their anonymity.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology is interpretive, and the specific method for the research is recording personal narratives in interviews and then conducting an analysis of the values and attitudes relating to childhood residential school and effects on later life. Recording personal narratives is an established research practice in the area (Preston R. 1975, Preston S. 1986, Brizinski et al. 1985 and Logotheti 1991). The interviews were conducted in an open-ended fashion, to

allow individuals to explore their own memories and thoughts. The methodology may be viewed as a cross between oral history and life history. Oral history may be defined as "recorded interviews which preserve historically significant memories" (Morrissey 1984:xix). Life history may be defined as "an orally narrated life story" (Cruikshank 1990:4). These interviews, the qualitative data which are the basis of this thesis, may be viewed as orally narrated life stories which focus on historically significant memories about residential school experiences.

THE SAMPLE

The sample may be characterized as a snowball sample. A notice of the research project and a request for participants was placed on the Wawatay community television channel. Early in the research period individuals were personally contacted, but as the summer progressed individuals who wished to discuss their experiences contacted me. I feel that positive word of mouth may have had an influence on the increasing willingness of individuals to participate. There are, however exceptions, and a few individuals either refused a request or did not meet me at the specified time and place. Only one interviewee contacted me as a direct response to the Wawatay request, however, the notice was widely read and many individuals interviewed commented on the notice. In the summer of 1992, I worked for the Mushkegowuk Tribal Council

based in Moose Factory, and I feel that part of the reason for positive response from many community members was the fact that I was a familiar face, and the relative confidence that I would return with the results of the study. A trip to distribute this thesis is planned for January 1995.

THE INTERVIEWS

Roughly half of the interviews were conducted in the workplace, and half in the home. The level of comfort and openness did not seem to be much influenced by location, but rather by degree of familiarity with myself as an individual through personal experience or word of mouth, or by level of desire to discuss their residential school experiences and life histories. Interviews generally lasted an hour and a half, but varied from one hour to three hours. The individuals interviewed discussed not only their experiences in residential school, but also the subsequent effects they feel those experiences had on their lives.

Being an ousider with no personal experience of Horden Hall and no authority to contradict any statement had a positive effect on the interviews. Some individuals mentioned this to me, and also that they felt a reluctance to discuss negative aspects of their experiences with fellow survivors. The fact that I was available and provided a specific forum for individuals to discuss and reflect upon their residential school experiences I feel was also positive. I tried to stick

to the spirit of the responses I received, and not to impose any judgements. In keeping with this philosophy, the analysis is based on themes which arose from the interviews or "qualitative data". I had originally intended to focus on parenting exclusively, however, the work evolved to include the effects of these residential school experiences which were laid out in such detail in the interviews. I do not consider myself an expert on this institution, merely informed. Moose Factory is filled with many experts who have intimate knowledge of Horden Hall. This thesis is filled with the interviewees' words, and I think they do an excellent job of imparting their words with feeling, meaning and insight. I tried to stay true to their accounts. I felt that my function was not to appropriate voice, but rather to facilitate a collective piece in which many individuals' voices could be heard.

There was a high level of awareness about research and research practices. Many individuals remembered researchers who were in the community for a brief period of time, and whose reports they never saw. Apart from the previous summer working in Moose Factory, I made two brief visits in the winters of 1991 and 1992. The fact that I had returned to the community had a positive impact on this study, both in terms of the quality of the interviews and my (visible) level of comfort in the community as an outsider. This general awareness of research practices had an effect on the study. Some individuals specifically directed me to alter their

grammar. I had some experience with interviewing Cree elders, and was used to respectfully waiting through pauses until the end of a story. Some individuals, those in their 30s and 40s especially, were uncomfortable with this, and would ask me to ask them questions. I had a list of questions prepared for this occurrence. These questions asked for: memories of early childhood and residential school experiences; experiences after residential school with further education and work; and for perceptions of the effects of these experiences on themselves, their families of origin, their community and their parenting practices. However, most of these individuals unconsciously responded to this style of interviewing, and would continue to explore their own memories and thoughts after a pause.

REFLEXIVITY

Examining my relationship to the research topic is a start at reflexivity, but a further exploration I feel would help the reader to situate my subjective experience in relation to the research. I had semantic difficulties in the area of researching abuse. When I first started interviewing, I was repeatedly told "nothing bad happened to me", then these individuals would go on to describe such things as loneliness, physical punishment, difficulty opening up emotionally after residential school, feelings of alienation from and ambivalence towards Native identity. As the summer progressed, people started coming forward with experiences of

verbal, mental, physical and sexual abuse. It was at this point that I realized that "nothing bad" referred to sexual abuse, and that "nothing bad happened to me" meant quite specifically that no-one had forced them to participate in sexual acts. I also had personal difficulty dealing with this issue. This difficulty typically manifested itself in nightmares about the individual who physically abused me as an adolescent. I also felt a lot of anger towards the individuals in the residential school system who, by abusing these children, had also abused their positions of power. When writing the section on abuse, I consciously chose not to express condemnation towards these abusers, because I felt it would only serve to vent my anger. It is not my place to speak for others, or to put my agenda before theirs. On one occasion I called a member of my committee and told him that I had a very strong urge to burn a particularly explicit interview. He was very kind and patient, advising me to hold on to it and reinforcing my conviction that in doing this study, I had a responsibility to do the best job I could. In this interview, the individual said:

> It's too late now to fix what was done. It's what you call irreparable damage. We can't forget the past. You can't remove part of our brain and take away that emotion. They can't take away any part of us. It's how we have to live for the rest of our lives with what we've learned, what we've experienced, no matter how many people do interviews with us, the only benefit is that you'll get your Masters out of it....
>
> I: This has been very valuable for me. I feel bad. I feel sorry that, like you said it just gives me

> my Masters and it doesn't change anything. It makes me feel really bad.
>
> We had a lot of people come up here to study us, you know, anthropologists. But like I say, you'll never be able to replace what we've lost. (pause)
>
> When we die you can hang us up to dry and study us all you want. (laughter) See what kind of blood we have. (more laughter) (pause)
>
> It's part of life though.

My supervisor helped me to realize that these statements were a challenge for me to finish this study and to return to the community with it. The experience of naming past hurts may help with healing, "before the healing may take place, the poison must first be exposed" (Longclaws in Highway 1989:6). It took me some time to realize this, but ultimately it is the Native individuals who went through this inhuman system who need healing for themselves, their families and their communities. All I can do is offer this research towards that end.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF NATIVE RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION

Residential schools for Native children in Canada have a long history, going back almost as far as first contact in some areas (Bull 1991). "Historically, Indian Education in Canada began with missionaries who followed closely the establishment of the first fur trading companies." (Bull 1991:10) Industrial schools and boarding schools for Native children were the result of a shift in policy in the 1800s. As more immigrants encroached on Native lands, the role of the Indian was shifted from "partner in the fur trade or fighting ally to an obstacle in the expansion of husbandry." (Miller 1987:3) The first residential schools were called Industrial schools, as the emphasis was not placed on academic learning but trades, as a 1912-3 Methodist Church publication entitled "Our Indians and their Training for Citizenship" succinctly states: "His education should be along the line of the physical and not the mental." (Ferrier 1912-13:30) The government and churches were in agreement that First Nations peoples should be trained for working class jobs. In these schools, academic instruction was restricted to a half-day, while working in the garden and with the animals was required for boys and working at cleaning, laundry and cooking was required for girls. (Miller

1987:5, Bull 1991:10) Specific trades were taught at industrial schools (for example shoemaking, blacksmithing, etc.) (Titley 1986:77, Long, personal communication, December 1994). The overall goal was to rid the nation of having to accommodate Natives by assimilating them into society. Industrial and boarding schools were set up with the aim of instilling in their graduates a desire to enfranchise. (Oblates of Mary Immaculate: Indian and Welfare Commission 1958, Miller 1987) The common perception of the time was that "Nothing can be done to change the Indian who has passed middle life. He will remain of the old school until the last. Trying to change the old may be like putting the fire out of a rotten log. The ash may be worth more than the log." (Ferrier 1912-13:21-22)

Industrial and boarding schools were amalgamated into a single category of residential schools in 1923 (Miller 1987:5). Although neither Horden Hall nor its precursors, Bishop Horden Memorial (1937-1955) and Moose Fort (1905-1936), were industrial schools, from 1905 to the 1950s attending these schools was a qualitatively different experience. The graduates that I interviewed from that period remember that classroom instruction was for a half-day. The males tell of hard work in the gardens, in the barns, and in the bush cutting firewood. The females remember cooking, cleaning, laundry. One female elder fondly remembers spending an entire week out of doors during harvest time, digging up potatoes and sleeping in tents.

Of note is rivalry between different church denominations over "souls" (see Prucha 1979 for a detailed examination). In this area, the rival churches were Catholic and Anglican. Recently, both the Catholic and Anglican churches have offered public apologies for their role in Native residential schooling. (Larmondin 1993, Legge 1991) "The pattern of Native schooling that was laid down in the 1880s persisted with only occasional alterations until the 1960s." (Miller 1987:5) This assimilation policy had severe ramifications for Native individuals all across Canada. It is to the literature on these ramifications that we turn next.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Native individuals' residential school experiences have only recently become a publically topical issue as indicated by the title of the recent Assembly of First Nations report "Breaking the Silence" (1994) and as reflected in numerous newspaper articles (Simpson 1991, McKay 1991, Roberts 1990, Cumming 1991, Berthelette 1991, Buffalo 1990, York 1989, Acoose 1991, DeWolf 1991). "Where the Spirit Lives", a 1989 CBC drama visually depicting the atmosphere and common experiences of many Native individuals in residential schools, also made a significant contribution to "breaking the silence" on this topic (Miller 1990:2). Residential school literature prior to this time generally falls into two categories. The first documents problems in these schools, in

work done by social scientists primarily in the 60s and early 70s (Urion 1991:i) (Beiser and Attneave 1982, Boyce and Boyce 1983, Bryde 1971, Caldwell 1967, Dlugokinski and Kramer 1974, Havighurst 1970, King 1967, Preston 1967b, 1974, 1979b, Schottsteadt and Bjork 1991, Kleinfeld and Bloom 1977, Hammerschlag et al. 1973). The second category consists of histories of education focussing on particular Native groups and/or institutions (Abbott 1987, Barman 1986, Coates 1984-5, Garmhausen 1988, Redford 1979, Trennert 1989, Wilson 1974). Native voices are conspicuously absent in these documents (Long 1986:125), but individual Native viewpoints may be found in autobiographies. In addition to the published material on this topic, there is a wealth of archival material from church and government sources. A survey of this material would be a volume in and of itself. From roughly 1989 onward, the literature on Native residential schools has taken a major turn towards documenting the experiences from the vantage point of individuals who attended these institutions using oral history methodology. As this work falls into this genre, it is the oral history and autobiographical accounts which will be the focus of this literature review.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNTS

One of the earliest published autobiographical accounts of life in residential school is Francis La Flesche's "The Middle Five: Indian Schoolboys of the Omaha Tribe" (1963,

originally published 1900), about his attendance at a mission school in Nebraska in the mid-1860s. In his preface, La Flesche writes "The object of this book is to reveal the true nature of the Indian boy. ...The dress of the Indian are marks of savagery to the European, and he who wears them.... finds it difficult to lay claim to a share in common human nature." With this goal of demonstrating a common humanity, this account is not dissimilar to the genre of books about British Public Schools (for example "Tom Brown's School Days" Hughes 1892), and is filled with entertaining stories about the antics of these rambunctious boys. Basil Johnston's "Indian School Days" (1988) is similar in tone, although it concentrates on a different historical era and geographical area. Johnston attended Garnier Indian Residential School for Boys in Northern Ontario in the 1940s. While these works are not written for scholarly purposes, they are commendable for rendering residential school experiences accessible to a wider audience and subtly presenting the realities of the difficulties of being away from home, hunger, rules and punishments, and restrictions on Native language use.

Minnie Aodla Freeman's "Life Among the Quallunat" (1978) outlines her experiences in residential schools and working for Indian Affairs after graduation. The book is mainly about differences between Inuit and EuroCanadian culture and attendant culture shock. Aodla Freeman attended Horden Hall for two years and Fort George Catholic Residential School for

six years in the 1940s. Her description of her experiences there are brief, generally focussing on the routine.

Jane Willis' autobiographical account "Geneish: An Indian Girlhood" (1973) is markedly different from the previous accounts. It details her own experiences in St. Philip's Indian and Eskimo Anglican Residential School, located in Fort George (now relocated to Chisasibi), Quebec. Willis also relays the loneliness, homesickness, hunger and regimentation of the system through a chronological account of her experiences with education. The end result of her story is a condemnation of the residential school system and the implicit and explicit messages about her Native culture. In her concluding remarks she states:

> For twelve years I was taught to love my neighbour- especially if he was white- but to hate myself. I was made to feel untrustworthy, inferior, incapable and immoral. The barbarian in me, I was told, had to be destroyed if I was to be saved. I was taught to feel shame for my "pagan savage" ancestors..... I was told I was intelligent but not intelligent enough to think for myself...
>
> When I was stripped of all pride, self-respect and self-confidence, I was told to make something of myself to show the white man that not all Indians were savages or stupid. When I failed, I was told with a shrug, "Well, what do you expect from an Indian?"
>
> For twelve years I was brainwashed into believing that "Indian" was synonymous with "subhuman", "savage", "idiot" and "worthless". (Willis 1973:199)

These autobiographical accounts are useful as individual narratives which are both entertaining and accessible. They can be viewed as exercises of these individuals at placing their childhood residential school experiences in

perspective. As the Native voices on residential schooling in their time frame, these autobiographies are important documents.

ORAL HISTORY IN ACADEMIC LITERATURE

There are patterns in the literature about Native residential schools which incorporate oral history into their analyses, which are linked to the uniform structure of these institutions across Canada and the United States. Because of this uniform structure, descriptions of routine, punishment, separation from family, and resistance vary only in detail. A number of largely descriptive ethnographies have been written as contributions to the growing knowledge of residential schools from the Native's point of view, with the purpose of contributing to healing (see Persson 1986, Coleman 1993, Knockwood 1991, Bull 1991, Hyer 1990, Assembly of First Nations 1994, Jaine 1993).

McBeth's "Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experiences of West-Central Oklahoma Indians" (1983) is one of the earliest published works to incorporate oral history into its analysis of boarding school education. McBeth theorizes that the meaning of boarding school experiences fell into three symbolic dichotomies: 1) that boarding schools "represent separation from White society and unification with other Indian people" (McBeth 1983:116); 2) that boarding schools represent "acceptance of those values

and experiences which are interpreted as meaningful for survival and resistance to those values which are opposed to the "Indian way."" (McBeth 1983:117); and 3) that boarding schools represent "government control of Indian people and... government obligations towards Indian people" (McBeth 1983:134). Using these dichotomies it is impossible to categorize the experiences of individuals as either positive or negative and herein lies its strength. As McBeth was covering four residential schools over approximately six decades, which housed thirteen different tribes, any definitive statement would have been contentious. The three areas she specifies have been explored over the last decade, although only the second theme, resistance, has been closely linked with residential schooling. The first theme of separation/unification can be linked to Pan-Indianism, although it has rarely been linked with residential schooling (see Miller 1987, Schuurman 1990). The theme of government control/obligation underlies the issue of Native control of Native education (see Barman et al 1987, National Indian Brotherhood 1973).

Haig-Brown's "Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School" (1989) was the first to explore in detail the resistance within a particular residential school (Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia). "The most outstanding feature which is revealed by this study is the extent and complexity of the resistance movement which the students and their families developed against the

invasive presence of the residential school." (Haig-Brown 1989:21) Haig-Brown's work is regarded as benchmark for depicting Native children not as passive victims, but as actors (Miller 1991:6).

There are three articles which focus on female experiences in residential schools. In "Gender and the Paradox of Residential Education in the Carrier Society", Fiske (1991) argues that the social goals of the Catholic missionaries at LeJac Residential School in British Columbia were to "train female students to become farm wives" (Fiske 1991:131) and that traditional Carrier values countered these teachings to encourage participation in the political realm. In "'If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race': Missionary Education of Native American Girls", Devens (1992) examines the deleterious effect that residential schooling had on daughter-mother-grandmother relationships in Ojibwa and Dakota cultures in the mid 1800s. In "Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools: the Power of Authority Over Mind and Body" (1993), Lomawaima analyzes domesticity training and notions of proper dress for females in the context of power relations in Chilocco Indian Agricultural School in Oklahoma.

ACADEMIC LITERATURE ON RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS AND PARENTING

There is very little directly written about the effects of residential school experiences on Native parenting. There is a general perception that residential schools have negatively affected parenting (Chaumel 1991:10, Ryan in Ing

1991:84, More in Ing 1991:84, Haig-Brown 1991:37 and 111, Assembly of First Nations 1994:92, Bell in Jaine 1993:16, Kenny 1992:19, 29, 45). Ing (1991) in "The Effects of Residential Schools on Native Child-Rearing Practices" conducted a search in the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology and social work and came up with one case study, which focussed on Navaho women's experiences with parenting (Metcalf 1975). These two substantive articles are the focus of this survey.

Metcalf (1975) in "From Schoolgirl to Mother: The Effects of Education on Navaho Women" conducted detailed life history interviews with 13 Navaho women who attended both federal boarding schools and community day schools. Metcalf argues that the more time spent in boarding schools the less these Navaho women felt competent as mothers and satisfied with their parenting. She states that those who spent more time in boarding school (6) had ambivalence towards their Native identity and lower self-image. These women

> seemed less confident in their roles as mothers... They were more likely to seek advice from an "expert," e.g. a doctor or a teacher. Often their efforts at control over their children were inconsistent, vacillating between spanking and bribery with a cookie. They would sometimes express negative feelings towards their children, including anxiety about their offspring's rate of development, lack of "good" behaviour and resistance to parental control. They frequently mentioned frustrations or disappointments in their roles as wives and mothers. (Metcalf 1975:543)

Metcalf does not, however, address the concept of culture, and how these patterns of parenting may differ from the

traditional ways in which these women as children were raised at home, before boarding schools for one half of the interviewees and during day schools for the other. In addition, all of the individuals at the time of the study were residing away from their reservation. Overall, her analysis indicates that lack of individual emotional health may be the most serious factor affecting Native parenting.

Ing (1991) interviewed three individuals from across Canada. She provides a general overview of traditional child-rearing practices, with an emphasis on the oral transmission of knowledge and extended family participation in child-rearing. Her findings indicate that individuals who attended residential schools had diminished self-esteem, and significant ambivalence towards their Native identity. The individuals interviewed did not teach their children their Native language, and felt that they did not pass on a sense of pride in their Native identity. They directly link a practice of leaving children unattended to residential school experiences of being locked in dormitories unsupervised. As an exploratory piece, this article suggests a strong link between residential school experiences in childhood and a breakdown of inter-generational communication, connected to a lack of positive role models.

CONCLUSION

The literature on Native residential schooling in North America indicates a growing public awareness of the deleterious effects of a childhood spent removed from family and culture. Historical and social scientific research has given way to ethno-historic and oral history examinations of residential school experiences. This work contributes to the increasing body of literature which contributes to an understanding of the effects of residential school experiences and their effects on Native individuals, families, communities, cultures and parenting skills.

CHAPTER THREE

TRADITIONAL LIFESTYLE OF THE JAMES BAY CREE

This chapter provides background for understanding the Cree families, lifestyle and culture that most of the individuals interviewed experienced in early childhood before attendance at Horden Hall. The James Bay Cree, or Swampy Cree, up until the 1950s (Liebow and Trudeau 1962, Preston 1981, 1986), lived primarily off the land in the area called the Hudson Bay Lowlands. This area extends from the Moose River Basin at the Southern tip of James Bay, heading Westward up the James Bay Coast in Ontario to the Hudson's Bay. This area is typified by swampy land with many little and larger rivers flowing into James and Hudson Bay (see Rogers 1969 for details of the physical environment). The Eastern Cree, on the Quebec side have a different terrain but the social culture is very similar, particularly childrearing practices. (Long, personal communication, December 1994). The period from approximately the mid 1600s to the 1950s was called the contact period (Mason 1967:6-8) and the traditional pattern of hunting, trapping and fishing incorporated trapping beaver and other animals for the purpose of selling furs to the trading companies. In this area the Hudson Bay was the predominant trading company.

The Cree spent their winters in the bush in hunting groups. These hunting groups were mainly extended family groups and were flexible. These groups might consist of a hunter, usually the eldest male, who was considered the informal leader of the group, his parents and his brothers and their wives and children (Rogers and Rogers 1963, Rogers 1969, Preston 1980). In the late spring, when travel along the rivers was possible by canoe, these family groups would gather for a period of rest and socializing, returning to their hunting and trapping grounds in late fall before freeze-up (Honigmann 1981). These resting areas became the locations for Trading Posts during the contact period and eventually the communities became year-round sites with permanent occupation. Moose Factory was actually established as a Fur Trading site in 1673 (Long 1985:138), but had been a gathering area for the Moose Cree prior to that time, and is today the site of the Moose Factory First Nation reserve (No. 1).

Having situated the James Bay Cree locationally and historically, let us turn towards a closer examination of the lifestyle and culture of the James Bay Cree through an account of the life cycle. An article entitled "The Individual in Mistassini Society from Birth to Death" (Rogers and Rogers 1963) documents the life cycle of the James Bay Cree (Mistassini is located on the Quebec side of James Bay, approximately 200 miles East of Moose Factory). Many children from this area were placed into Horden Hall in the 50s and

60s. Rogers' collected this material throughout a year spent with an extended hunting group in 1953 and 1954. The documentation of this life cycle is important for this study for two reasons. First, it approximates the dates that the majority (18) of the individuals mentioned in this study were born and secondly, it provides a context for the comparison of life cycles, and ultimately the culture change resultant from residential school experiences of the present adult generation of Cree in Moose Factory.

The Rogers (1963) describe four stages in the life cycle of a James Bay Cree individual based on age. These four stages are a very small child, an unmarried boy or girl, an adult and an old person. "These stages are not sharply differentiated...the transition from stage to stage is gradual and...continuous...[And] socialization continues throughout the life cycle of the individual." (ibid:15) This gradual maturation of the individual is marked by increasing competence in the "social, mental and physical environment" (Preston R. 1976:468, Preston S. 1982:20) . Now that we have briefly outlined the life cycle of the traditional James Bay Cree, let us turn a closer examination of each stage in turn.

Preston describes the early socialization of infants and young children:

> Infancy was characterized by strong emphasis on indulgence of the child's wants, by such manifestations of parental affection and admiration as kissing, nose rubbing and intimate talking. The mother was scarcely able to carry and look after more than one child while going about her outdoor work....Safeguarding of the children by an older

> member of the group, or by means of swaddling restriction, continued [from weaning at about age 2] until the child was deemed able to accompany the father (if a boy) or the mother (if a girl) on their respective daily rounds. (Preston 1979a:85)

Children were taught by example, and were encouraged to learn at standards of adult behaviour and competence. There was an informal apprenticeship to adults. (ibid:85-86) Children were taught competence in both the physical and social environment by example. Children who misbehaved were very rarely subject to physical punishment and were remonstrated through "a subtly elaborated pattern of teasing, threats and withdrawal of emotional response... [As] children mature... the threats seem less scary, and gradually the child learns to respond with the emotional reserve and self-control that the adult had shown." (ibid:86)

In this traditional method of childrearing, children are autonomous individuals. Mason (1967:47) understands this type of childrearing through the philosophy "that a child had not the understanding to recognize its faults [and] that that power would come to him as he matured." This autonomy encompasses the freedom to learn at ones' own pace and, more significantly, grants the child the status of an individual at a very early age.

Rogers and Rogers state, "The transition from childhood to adolescence is not an abrupt one and involves the gradual ascription of more and more responsibility... and the performance of all types of work." (1963:26) During this

stage, the division of the sexes becomes noticeable, as adolescents accompany parents of the same gender and learn to perform tasks and acquire skills which will be necessary for competent adult participation in the physical and social environments. "While there is a habitual division of economic tasks between the sexes....there is no stigma attached to performing work usually reserved for the opposite sex." (ibid:30-31) Men generally hunt and trap, while women generally perform tasks around the camp. (ibid:31-32)

Adulthood was generally marked through marriage. At that time and continuing into the present, females married in their late teens, and males in their early twenties. "Although socialization does not automatically cease with marriage, they have acquired the minimum requirements necessary to establish their own households and conduct the affairs of everyday life." (ibid:30)

Adults gradually matured into elders. Elders are greatly respected. "The emphasis on age was apparent in many cultural situations - the oldest male of the hunting group; the old men acquire the greatest amount of religious lore; older siblings are in charge of their youngest siblings; the elders must be cared for; old people must receive game." (ibid:34)

In terms of the social environment, children gradually acquired a sense of social responsibility to the group. The James Bay Cree culture "may be characterized in its emotional tone by the restrained intimacy of a small number of persons

who typically live out their lives together, with an effort to prevent the development of conflict, and to enhance their hunting success." (Preston 1991:70). Social control is largely internalized in the form of self-control. "Self-control is...closely related to a well developed sense of self-esteem, for competently controlled action is the means to maintaining one's self-esteem." (Preston 1979a:84). Reticence is "that area of self-control that directly affects personal exposure or self-expression." (Preston 1967a:468). There is also an ethos of non-interference in this culture (Preston 1991). The autonomy granted children may be an extension of this principle of non-interference.

Learning these emotional responses are the traditional means of facilitating survival in the bush. A response which lacks emotional self-control in the hazardous physical environment can have severe and even fatal consequences. The main vehicle for teaching this lesson is narratives, or storytelling. The elders in these extended family hunting groups are the repositories of this specialized form of knowledge which instruct and entertain both children and adults. Different stories reflect different aspects of the social and spiritual culture of the James Bay Cree, and hardship stories generally demonstrate the consequences of "an individual's mental response to an ecological challenge" (Preston 1975:250). This cultural form of knowledge is another reason for the respect of elders.

In these multi-generational extended family hunting groups, children were taught all facets of physical, mental and social competence by all of the members. Perhaps the most important point, for the purpose of this document, is that the entire life cycle is spent within one or two closely knit hunting groups, with no periods of extended absence from family.

Before examining residential school experiences, let us briefly examine what this traditional cultural pattern of existence meant to these individuals as young children growing up in the bush within their families.

EARLY CHILDHOOD IN THE BUSH: "IT WAS REALLY THE ONLY KIND OF LIFE THAT WE KNEW" (Arthur)

The majority of interviewees(17) spent their early childhood in the bush. A few individuals' families were based in communities year-round, but the up-bringing they received was based in the same culture. These individuals, like the others, remember nurturing and caring from their parents. And even if the lessons taught were not about traditional ways, they were still remembered with appreciation. Mark recalls:

> Basically I guess my childhood was a lot of fun (laughs), with rough times that all kids go through... I was quite a small guy, and I used to get picked on quite a bit, until my dad talked to me one time when I came back home for the weekend. He told me, "I'm going to teach you how to fight." (laughs) He tried to encourage us to look after ourselves... I [was] outgoing and sometimes people would see that as [different], I guess because Native kids are shy. I used to get teased a lot. They'd say "Hey, you ever act good!" because [I was] a little more assertive. My dad gave me a lot

> of confidence in myself, I guess that's why I was so assertive.

Of those individuals who spent their early childhood in the bush, a few shared what these years meant to them. June remembers:

> Well I never really thought about it, whether those years I spent in boarding school have anything to do with the way I am now. My parents taught us a lot of things during the time that we were with them. I think most of the values that I have now are from them... we used to sit outside and hold our hands out, like this, with bannock or whatever on our hands, and birds, whiskeyjacks, they would just come and land in our hands. We would try to catch them sometimes (laughter). Of course if something happened you know, there isn't much that you can do, we had to rely on what they knew in the way of taking care of somebody if they got hurt. I remember my brother's wife got sick one time, I think she had an infection, a bladder infection or something and my mom gave her [some] berries and she ate them and she got better.

In the subarctic physical environment, it was very important to know how to treat illnesses with the resources at hand. For the females, they remember time spent with their mothers and grandmothers, and starting to learn about things like tanning and sewing. These skills, in the traditional life cycle, would have been performed with gradually increasing competence. Their mothers and grandmothers would have been constantly teaching these, and social skills, through example.

However, the male individuals interviewed were more expressive about early childhood experiences. In the following example, Gerald discusses his father's proficiency in the traditional knowledge that was required to be

successful in the bush. This example is a "very powerful metaphor for knowing what to do" (Preston, personal communication, December, 1992).

> We came out of what we considered to be a very nurturing environment. We were completely isolated, there was only one other family that we stayed with, trapped in that area....there was a lot of dependency on one another. In order to succeed in that environment you had to have that mentality. There was a lot of sharing, a lot of caring, a lot of support....How [our] parents raised us was very different from the way that people raise children today. Theirs was a very traditional kind of teaching, but very much a knowledgeable one. They were very much aware of their environment. [They were] very wise in that sense, but not very much aware of the trials and tribulations that we as children would have to face whether we stayed there or whether we left. It was very different, their mentality. [The] teaching was that as children first you are a human being and you're nothing but a human being and that your only [task] in life was to be responsible, become a responsible person... coming from that kind of environment, it was different, a very Native perspective on life....Their subsistence depended on their knowledge. I'll give you an example. My dad used to cut wood, about oh, 9 or 10 miles away. He had one dog that he used. A very good dog, very smart, very powerful female. I think her name was Sheck or something. My dad didn't have to tell her what to do, she knew what to do. My dad would take me out to the bush, 10 miles away, and be cutting wood. He would throw logs on the sleigh and he would put me on the sleigh, I was maybe 5 or 6 yrs old, and he would tell the dog to go home. This was in winter, and the dog used to take off and pull the sleigh and go home. The dog would run right up to the house, jump up with the sleigh and bang into the house. So there would be this big thump, and my mother would come out, take off the logs, put me back on the sleigh and send the dog back (laughs). If I were to do that today, if I were to put my 5 or 6 year old kid on the sleigh and say go, people would say I was crazy. But that's how much confidence [my father] had in that environment, on just a dog doing his job. I learned how much security he had working in that environment where there was some risk.

Gerald's parents taught their children that "first you're a human being...and that your only [task] in life was to become a responsible person." This reflects that, in the traditional life cycle, children were taught to adult standards and that competence, "responsibility", in the physical and social environments was the ultimate purpose of the gradual socialization previously discussed. Gerald's memories of the nurturing caring home environment of his early childhood was shared by others, Leonard for example:

> We were treated so [well] at home you know. As Native children we were always treated [well]. We were never scolded for anything we did, we were complimented. We were taught at an early age to do things for ourselves. It was part of our livelihood to fit into our society. We survived on the land by doing things with the family group, like trapping, fishing and hunting. All that was part of survival ...We believe everybody is equal. We shared everything. You learned from your grandmother. Your grandmother was a teacher. Your grandfather was a teacher. You learned how to do things from your grandparents, how to survive in the bush, how to set snares, how to catch fish, how to catch game. We never wasted any food, and the catch was treated with respect. We treated it as sharing; the animals shared themselves as food for survival. We respect that you know. I think that's nature, Creator or God. We say the Creator provides everything, and everything is alive. Trees, and everything alive, have a spirit, so we treat everything with respect.

Leonard eloquently illustrates the traditional respect for both elders and the environment. There is a sense throughout these interviews that somehow this traditional way of life, specifically intimate knowledge of hunting and trapping in the bush, has been lost to their generation. The adult struggles these individuals went through to reestablish family and community ties, Leonard's included, are discussed

in chapter 7. At this point, it is important to note that while recalling early childhood, some individuals cannot help but wonder at how their understandings of traditional ways might have been different if they had not spent so many years removed from their families.

> Arthur:
> That lifestyle was ah, in late fall, October, we'd go inland for trapping beaver. We'd be in, inland, from October until early March, and by March because of the spring thaw we'd go out from inland, otherwise we could get trapped in there. We usually headed towards the coastline, the Bay, James Bay, in order to prepare ourselves for the spring hunt of Canada Geese. We'd live along the coast right up until June, after the ice had broken up and melted away. Then we'd go back to the community around the end of June and we might stay in the community for a couple of weeks or so. Then we'd move out again to the coastal area to fish. Then we'd move back to the community for only a short period of time, around early August. Then by the end of August we'd be moving to the river where we normally trapped at that time. There was a hunting camp there, an outfitter's camp, and my dad might end up ah working there for a month I guess, while the hunting camp was open. And then at the end of that October would come around and we'd get ourselves ready for the winter.
>
> So I lived like that for the first seven years, I was just at the verge of my dad teaching me how to trap, or at least I'd be going with him. I was right at that age where I'd be learning a few things about living in the bush, on the trapline. And it was just right at that time that I had to leave, I had to go to school..... Deep down I keep thinking about those days when we used to live in the bush, and my parents. Even though it might have been a hard life in some ways, I remember it as a happy life. It was really the only kind of life that we knew.

Gerald was told by his parents that he would be making sacrifices by going away to school:

> My parents recognized, were very adamant, that education was the key to success for us. Very often my parents would say, "You'll go to school." They

> were very much aware of what the impacts (of development) were going to be, and what was going to be required of us as children to.. insure the continuation of us as a people. I remember being 5 or 6, and my parents saying "If you're going to have any success in life in terms of assisting your people, you're going to have to make the sacrifices. [You have to] go away from your people so you can come back and assist them." They wanted to prepare us, I guess, for what was going to happen. They wanted us to have the same security that they had in the[ir] lifestyle.

Many of these individuals knew that their parents felt education was important. A few of the individuals had more specific information on conditions in Horden Hall from older siblings and cousins. But I think few were actually prepared for the reality of an institutionally structured life.

With this understanding of the James Bay Cree traditional lifestyle that these individuals experienced in early childhood, we now turn to an examination of their residential school experiences.

CHAPTER FOUR

LIFE IN HORDEN HALL: "THESE WERE THE KIND OF THINGS WE ENDURED" (Stuart)

In the sixties these Cree individuals left their families and the "bush life" to enter Horden Hall residential school. The adjustment to this new way of life was difficult for all of the children, and I say children because, although it is adults who are telling their life stories, these are experiences of childhood that they are recounting. To understand the emotional effects of these childhood residential school experiences on these individuals, families and ultimately the community in the present, we first need a picture of life in this institution. To accomplish this, the recollections of individuals interviewed are presented in three main chapters. As these residential experiences are explored, the richness of the memories will become evident. Chapter 4 introduces aspects of life in the institution through: recollections on the first day; the routine or daily structure of activities; and metaphors of involuntary institutionalization. This chapter is designed to provide an idea of the overall setting and the general feeling of dislike that individuals had for Horden Hall. This chapter will also provide a perceptual basis for understanding the dynamics of interacting within this

institution. The next chapter(5) focuses on peer group interactions: familial ties within the institution, resistance, gangs. This chapter is designed to provide a basis for understanding the ramifications of peer group socialization on the emotional development of the individual and further towards understanding the dynamics within the community today. The following chapter(6) focuses on non-peer group interactions within the institution, exploring the nature and extent of intergenerational interactions and discussing punishment and abuse. These chapters are structured in this manner to provide a background to the interactions and emotional dynamics present in this institution in the sixties, to aid in understanding the implications of these interactions on the individuals, their families and their present community of Moose Factory.

THE FIRST DAY: "IT WAS HARD FOR US TO LEAVE OUR PARENTS" (Todd)

To illustrate the institutionalized life in Horden Hall, I will start with recollections about the first day. Although the interviews were open-ended and only loosely strctured (see chapter 1), I began many of the interviews with the question about the first day. Not only did this question serve to draw the individual into the realm of memory, but the responses revealed this day to be very significant emotionally.

The first day in Horden Hall marked a shift from human interaction in a multi-generational family group to a peer group setting, but also from a family community of interdependence to an existence in an institution where to survive you had to be emotionally self-reliant. A symbol of this shift from a family-oriented to a peer-oriented existence is marked by the recurring theme of "the number". When these individuals entered into Horden Hall, after all the things they had brought with them were removed - from their hair down to their underwear - they were assigned a number that was placed on all their belongings. All of these belongings were provided for them - clothes, bed and bedclothes - every article was given down to their toothbrush. About half of those interviewed did not remember the actual first day, but all remembered the procedure or the "initiation" into the institution.

> Annie:
> Yeah, I cried (chuckles) they took me in, they took me upstairs, they made me take a shower, I had never had a shower before and I didn't know what to do, I stood there and the lady showed me what to do and what to wash, but before I showered they chopped off my hair. We all had the same haircut, bangs, like halfway to the ear. They put some stuff in my hair for cooties [lice], I don't remember the name of it but it was really strong, it had a powerful smell, then that's when I took my shower after they did that to me. And then they took me down to a place where they give out clothing and I didn't know what size clothing I took so they just measured me like this, try that, try that. It was a room just full of clothes and there was a lady up there just handing down dresses and whatnot. Everything was numbered, I had a number, my number was 209, I had to remember my things by that number, 209. I met a few of my cousins that were there too, older ones. I was in the Junior wing. I cried all the time. I went to school, I had to

> learn, there was a lot of things I didn't know so I just followed people, just followed the whole crowd.

Following the example of other children was useful in learning the ropes, however, many of these children did not know any English when they arrived at Horden Hall, and so learning the expectations placed upon them was more difficult. Many felt resentment at being punished for things they did not understand. Annie continues:

> I remember the first time I got in trouble, I didn't know what "play clothes" meant because apparently at school we had a period of gym. We wore a dress to school every day and I didn't know what "play clothes" were. There was a big room downstairs called the play room and that's where I was, standing around there. It wasn't explained to me what play clothes were. I missed school that afternoon and I got in trouble for that. My supervisor wouldn't listen to me and I got sent to bed early, I didn't have supper, I was in bed at six o'clock. After a while some of the other girls in the group told me what play clothes were. I had to remember what day I had to wear play clothes.

In addition to learning the routines, regulations and requirements, loneliness, in fact homesickness, was particularly acute in the first weeks and months in Horden Hall. Stuart states:

> I remember very clearly that day because it was the first time I left home. We left on a Canso, that's what they called that plane then, it's a flatbellied plane. I remember that plane ride very clearly, crying and all that kind of stuff. I remember landing in Moosonee, people were waiting for me there and they were taking me to the school here, assigning me a number and giving me clothes and putting my number on. My first number was 53, I remember that very clearly. And that was the start of it. It was, the first few weeks anyways were long weeks, long days, long nights. It didn't bother me much in the daytime because I would be

> with friends and playing, doing things, going to school, but at night, they were long nights, I remember crying almost every night, just thinking about it makes me [sad].

That sense of loneliness endures to the present day, a sadness that can't be erased because they didn't spend their childhood and grow up within their families, the childhood that they knew from early years, irrevocably lost. Sam remembers:

> I guess the worst thing was the loneliness. Oh sure you'd see your brothers and sisters there sometimes, but there's a loneliness. There were a lot of depressed kids there. You could tell. You could tell by the way you told stories. They would almost lament. They would say, oh, "I remember I would be at home now, I would be doing this, I would be on a sled" [They would] almost create a fantasy or story in their mind that they would be at home doing something with their parents and with their friends. It was almost like, ah, there's a song that reminds me, it's about the Jewish people when they were exiled into Babylon, and the Babylonians asked them to sing a song, and they said we hung our harps in the trees, because they wanted us to sing a song about the homeland, but we hung our harps and we didn't sing because in our hearts we are discouraged, we couldn't sing the song that we loved because we aren't home yet. That [was] kind of the essence of that [loneliness]. A lot of the students I saw and also myself that... they took a part of that away from me, that I could have enjoyed with my parents, in my home and with my family. I was put in a place where I couldn't develop as a normal kid. I think that's one of the greatest injustices. If anybody could be so violated. I think of a child being totally ripped out from [his or her] family structure and being directed not to speak his or her language, the language of their culture. And all they could play in their minds were the songs and the dances and the memories that they knew. And they wanted the chance to have that back.

The feeling of a childhood lost is mirrored in the statements of these individuals that they don't have anything to reflect on from their parents, in raising their own children. This connection will be explored further in Chapter 9 on parenting. As children, these individuals didn't have much time that wasn't structured in group activities, so time for "playing memories in their minds" was limited. And for some of these children, being among Cree children, many of them relatives, eased the pain. June states:

> I remember I was really upset, I cried and cried (laughs). Well I didn't cry right away, when it became time to go to bed I just cried and my supervisor got really mad at me. I wanted my sister to come and see me, to come and sleep with me, she was in Seniors, I was in Juniors. And I cried for my mom, before this I used to sleep with my parents all the time, so it was really hard for me at first. I remember I used to run home, run home during lunch hour sometimes (before her parents went out to the trapline in October or November), and I used to run home at recess sometimes too (laughs). But I only went like that for just a short time, I was OK after, after I made friends.

Even a simple thing like not being able to sleep in the same bed with her sister emphasizes the different world she had now entered. One of the greatest differences from the traditional lifestyle she and the others originally experienced was the emphasis placed on routine, and following the first day it quickly became apparent that life in this institution would be highly structured.

ROUTINE: "WE DID ALL THESE THINGS ON CUE" (Julie)

The routine was unvarying; day in and day out these children would rise at seven and brush their teeth, wash their faces, use the toilet, and then there would be breakfast, chapel, chores, out to school, back for lunch, back to school, play time, supper, homework and/or playtime, bedtime, each in unvarying formation, lined up in pairs or single file, separated by age and gender into dorms, spending every waking hour in each other's company. Weekends had a routine of their own, structured around seasonal group activities like hikes, wiener roasts, sliding on the dykes and the invariable chores, Saturday night movies in the auditorium, and church on Sunday. The routine was the structure of their existence and the backdrop against which childhood residential school experiences were played out.

> Edith:
> With the Junior Girls we got up in the morning, I think it was seven or earlier than seven, I couldn't tell time then so I don't know, and we had to wash and we had to shower and wash and dress up and then when everybody was ready at a certain time we had to line up to go down for breakfast and then once your breakfast was done we had chapel in the morning before we went to school. When chapel was done we went to school and then when school was out at lunchtime we went home, then when lunch was over we went to school and then when school was over we would go for supper and then after supper we had a little bit of playtime, and playtime yes, that's all I recall, but on Saturdays, like on weekends in the mornings you had to go to church, washing the floor in your dormitory or the hallway or the stairwells or the playroom downstairs, you were assigned chores, you had to look for your name on the list, like every week it was separate what you were assigned to, and once you got into the older girls, I mean once you got into the higher dorms, like Intermediate or Senior then you did other

> chores, on weekends we used to go too on picnics, and go to town or sliding on the dykes and sometimes we had movies, you know Saturday night movies, used to have Zorro, there used to be a new chapter every week, and on Sundays we use to have chapel in the mornings

Even though the routine was static, the experiences in residential schools were not. And from my own experiences I remember how an endless number of weeks would go by in which duties were performed according to a routine but looking back there are things that differentiate that time: for example; a letter or a fight with a friend could change a week. In Horden Hall you could be affected by the activities of a gang, by a shift to a different set of chores (for example: two weeks in laundry followed by two weeks in the kitchens for Senior girls), a punishment for a wrongdoing or by someone running away, to name but a few things. Also, there are built in exceptions like religious holidays (Easter, Christmas, etc.) or becoming sick and being sent to the infirmary where you were excluded from the routine, a non-participant.

The ways in which the routine was relayed in interviews reflects this reality. Very few made it through a recitation of the routine without getting sidetracked to an explanation of a portion of the routine or a reminiscence of an incident that had significance. For example:

> Annie:
> Well I got older and I sort of knew the routine. After [a while I] got used to it. There was a lot of teasing going on inside there, among other students. I got involved once, one time I remember

> clearly I was ganged up on by other students but I fought back (chuckles) I had to fight back. So, discipline, one time, I don't remember what I did wrong, but I remember scrubbing the stairwell, staircase with a toothbrush. I [don't] remember what I did wrong but I remember clearly brushing the stairs with a toothbrush.

One of the most interesting aspects of the details of daily life was the way in which it was relayed - in a kind of monotone voice, droning off a list of activities, the daily tedium of an unvarying routine. Tom recites:

> They were really pumped about religion. We used to have prayers in the morning, prayers at breakfast, prayers after breakfast, prayers before lunch, prayers at lunch, prayers after lunch, prayers before supper, prayers at supper, prayers after supper, and prayers before we went to bed.

Julie was particularly lively in her interview, and the intense humour and emotion was starkly contrasted by the flat monotone of the following quote:

> Going to church, going to chapel, and they were always on time - we all had to get up at the same time, go to the washroom at the same time, brush our teeth at the same time, eat at the same time, finish at the same time, everything. We had to wear the same clothes (uniforms), and if we didn't follow [the schedule] they would punish us, if we were too slow. The schedule was so rigid.

Horden Hall is remembered as a rigidly controlled environment where there was "one supervisor for every twenty-five to forty children" (Julie), but the metaphors for describing that environment are significant in themselves. They are metaphors of involuntary institutionalization.

FROM ROUTINE TO REGIMENTATION: METAPHORS OF INVOLUNTARY INSTITUTIONALIZATION

This routine has similarities to the daily requirements in a number of institutional settings including nursing homes, hospitals, orphanages and boot camp; but the parallels drawn by interviewees were invariably to those institutions in which it was perceived that attendance was involuntary and that adherence to the rules was strictly enforced, such as jails, reform schools, concentration camps and military schools[1]. All of the above institutions are "total" institutions.

> "A total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-minded individuals, cut off from wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life." (Goffman 1961:xiii)

Some of Goffman's observations on total institutions apply to the residential school situation (see also Persson 1986). For example;

> "The admission procedure can be characterized by a leaving off and a taking on, with the midpoint marked by physical nakedness. Leaving off of course entails a dispossession of property, important because persons invest self feeling in those possessions." (Goffman 1961:18)

> "Once the inmate is stripped of his possessions, at least some replacement must be made by the establishment, but these take the form of standard issue, uniform in character and uniformly

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[1] Military schools, although not strictly speaking institutions in which attendance was involuntary, were perceived as institutions in which there was a high level of regimentation and an invariably rigourous punishment for the slightest offense. This parallel will become clearer in the third section outlining non-peer group interaction.

> distributed. These substitute possessions are clearly marked as really belonging to the institution." (Goffman 1961:19)

Goffman's theory on the mortification of self that occurs among "inmates" in total institutions is not, however, applicable in this instance because of the fact that these individuals are children and because one of the purposes of Native residential schools was separation from family (Bull 1991:5). For these children, recognizing that they were in an institution which paralleled places you were sent to when you had been bad, resulted in feelings that they were somehow to blame for being put in such a place. As we shall see in Chapter 7, for these individuals finding a reason for why they were placed in residential school is an important step on the road back to emotional health[2].

There were no metaphors of "a home away from home" (with one exception, this individual later in the interview talks about residential school being "a terribly bad experience") and no wistful nostalgia for a simpler time. These metaphors were aimed at educating me to the harsh realities of their childhood residential school experiences. I was told numerous times that when the interviewees got together with friends and acquaintances from those years in Horden Hall that they talked about only the good times, (with two exceptions which

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[2] This ties into feelings of rejection from the family. An interviewee who attended in the 1940s wondered why they were the one of their siblings sent and not exempt. But also the woman now in her 50s who wasn't sent and couldn't speak English, had also felt left out, which speaks to the collective experience, a non-participation with the group. Emotional pain and problems were caused for both the generation included and in the individuals in that generation who were excluded.

will be discussed in the sexual abuse section of Chapter 6). If we understand these metaphors as instructional, they can inform us of both how these individuals felt about the institution as children and how those residential school experiences are currently perceived. The following nine brief quotes are used to illustrate the near unanimity of this feeling of being in a regimented environment and the volume of these metaphors that are present in the material collected.

> Michelle:
> There was this one guy, I forget his name... he used to stand on a table or stool or something and he'd watch everybody [in the dining hall]. We weren't allowed to talk. [He'd] watch everybody like a, right now when I think about it was like a prison guard, watching all the inmates (laughs).

> Sandra:
> The thing I didn't like about [it] there was that ... we were not allowed to go out of that fence. We had to stay within that area, and every time other kids that were not in there used to tell us we're in jail, that's what [it] felt like when we were there. It was like a jail and we couldn't even go out into the community at all. We had to stay within that area, and if we went out we would get in trouble, we would get disciplined and they would take privileges away from us.

> Leonard:
> A lot of times many of us ran away from school, we ended up somewhere, You know they always found us (laughter). We were captured, taken back to school and we were punished. Instead of counselling we were told that it was bad. [We were] almost like criminals running away.

> Alice:
> Once when I was talking to the dishwasher and I was drying the dishes. I was talking and as I was working, all of a sudden this woman was calling me, and I turned around and she gave me a big slap [right] across the face for no reason at all. It was almost like we were in reform school.

Gerald:
A lot of times many kids didn't understand what they were doing wrong. They were being punished for speaking their language. They were being punished because they didn't understand the rules, even though for some of them it wasn't their first language. It was very difficult for them to make the adjustment. It was sad because it was almost like a penitentiary mentality.

Sam:
[One] of the positive things that came out of it was that you were a survivor. If anything it taught you to survive. You had to. In the environment that you were in you had to make do with what you had, and most of the time it was just your wits. And my parents didn't really come to see us that much too, I don't know if it was because they weren't allowed. Actually it felt like a prison, if I think about it now, [it felt] more like a prison or a detention center.

Sam:
I mean there were great atrocities there, maybe they are equal to the camps and the Jews, except for we weren't gassed, at least they had death to look forward to and knew they were going to die, that's true, but here people are walking around maimed for life, for the rest of their lives. I mean which would you prefer, suffering for the rest of your life from what you endured under the hands of oppressors like the Church, or dying with dignity?

June:
I remember the supervisor they had used to be really mean. She used to make them (Junior Junior dorm children, three and four years old) line up for every little thing they did. You'd see them outsides sometimes when they went to the swings, they'd be lining up, they'd go to the swings in a line and stay in a line and swing and take turns swinging (laughs), just like a military school. She was really strict with them.

Annie:
During the week we weren't allowed to leave the grounds at all, if we did we'd get in trouble, AWOL we'd call that (laughs).

Tom:
Number one you were taken away from the reserve, with no family upbringing whatsoever. [It was] like

> a military school, Horden Hall, we had no feelings after that. That's what I find, [I have] no feelings for my family, no feelings for my culture, no feelings for my brothers.

These metaphors of involuntary institutionalization are very persistent and very powerful for the interviewees. This is the reality of their childhood, that they grew up in a place where they had to be survivors, where they were treated like bad people, like criminals who are separated from their families and isolated from their society. These children were separated from their culture and denied their childhood with their families. The analogy to these institutions, jails and military schools especially, is quite visible with the uniforms, lining up for all activities and the monotonous routine. However, the strongest analogy lies in the locus of power; an inmate or criminal is not free and the lowest ranking military student is subordinate to everyone else. (see Comaroff 1985, Foucault 1979, Goffman 1961) The next passage clearly illustrates how little control over their environment these children possessed. Stuart remembers:

> The other thing of course was not being allowed to go out of the grounds, there's a big fence around it, around the school, it's still there, that fence. You weren't allowed to go outside of those grounds, unless of course you were with a supervisor. And the thing that comes to my mind most about the residential school is that it was really regimented just like the army: you line up to go here; you line up to go there; you line up to eat; you line up to wash; you line up to go to the canteen and spend your five cents; you line up to do everything! And some of the supervisors, even when you play, you march single file down to the playroom to go play, they line you up again and tell you what room you're going to play in, and

> what kind of arrangement it's going to be. Some supervisors were very strict. But I think they started believing themselves, in their own mind, that it was an army of sorts: if you stepped out of line, even by the shortest distance, just a couple of inches stepping out of line; if you smile when you're not supposed to smile; if you talk when you're not supposed to talk, you were in trouble, you got a slap right across the head so fast. And these guys got really good at it, these supervisors, you know, they'd be standing right beside you, maybe you've got a grin on your face and they didn't like it, they'd have a hand right across your face before you could even think. That's how good they were at it. In other words they were good at slapping around little kids. Those were the kind of things we endured.

Stuart draws the analogy for us very clearly. This was not a place of love and respect for autonomous individuals, as in their homes, this was a place where your individuality was not acknowledged and certainly not respected. Each of these children felt alone, homesick and to some extent, controlled. And while it is certainly true that these James Bay Cree children were separated from their parents, it is equally true that they spent most of their formative years with their peers in residential schools. The nature of the peer groups these children were segregated into, and the ramifications of that segregation on their emotional development will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

PEER GROUP INTERACTIONS: "IT'S PRETTY ROUGH TO LIVE IN A DORM WITH THIRTY KIDS AND ONLY ONE SUPERVISOR" (Sam)

The previous chapter's introduction into the routine, followed by metaphors of regimentation gives you an idea of the atmosphere of the institution; rigid and controlling. The structure of the institution was conducive to abuse; an environment of total control, where access to community members was cut off and one adult was in charge of twenty-five to forty students. This has serious ramifications when it comes to abuse, one "good" supervisor cannot know every child well enough to tell if they have been abused by a teacher, by another supervisor or Horden Hall employee, and one "bad" or "strict" employee can get away with abusing these children in their charge. But leading from a discussion of the routine and physical and emotional environment directly into a discussion on abuse can be misleading by negating both the personal empowerment and the interpersonal power some children attained. By placing this chapter on peer group interactions before the one dealing largely with abuse, we can view these children as actors, not as completely passive individuals but as ones who empowered themselves by the means available to them. This chapter is divided into three sections: the first is a general introduction to the nature of the peer groups in this institution and the effect

it had on sibling relationships; the second defines resistance and explores the forms that it took in Horden Hall in the sixties; and the third explores "gangs" which formed in Horden Hall.

PEER GROUPS: "THEY WEREN'T ALLOWED TO MINGLE WITH US" (Edith)

The children were separated first by gender; the boys resided in one wing of the building and the girls another, they ate in one dining room but at different tables, they had separate playrooms within the building. Tom explained "They wouldn't let us play with the girls. If you got caught talking to the girls or playing with the girls you were punished." Secondly, these children were divided by age into Junior, Intermediate and Senior dorms. Access between the dorms was also restricted, as Edith outlines:

> It was very seldom that you [saw] the older girls. I don't think they were allowed to mingle with us. If the supervisor saw them [in our dorm] then they would have been sent back...I don't think they were allowed in our playroom [at the same time].

Siblings who were of the same gender and only one year apart in age were occasionally placed in the same dorm, however, if there were two dorm groups in the same age category, Junior A and Junior B for example, siblings might be separated. This meant that you had limited access to siblings, the only possible family connections available to you in the institution. Mark remembered how hard it was to even get to talk to his brothers:

> When we first went in [to Horden Hall] my brothers were right across the hall from me. They were in the Junior Dorm and I'd get to see them once in a while, outside, but when we [were] inside I couldn't really go across the hall and talk to them.

Older siblings in particular were unhappy about the segregation as they felt a sense of responsibility toward their younger siblings, that in the absence of parents they were the only ones that could look out for their brothers and sisters. Julie was the oldest daughter in her family:

> And also feeling somehow like you had to protect them... It was really hard when you saw your own siblings, like your relatives, when you saw the way that they were treated. They didn't understand any of the rules, and that you had to eat all your food, "But I don't like it" or "What is it?" "Just eat it anyways". Of course we were segregated from the boys too. I never saw my brothers during the school year, and that was a hard too, not being able to talk to them, seeing them with other students.

Occasionally, older siblings were asked to comfort younger siblings who were having difficulty adjusting.

> Mike:
> I know (my brother) had a really hard time of it. He was really homesick, and did a lot of crying. The supervisor asked [me] to go and try to comfort him and be with him. I was at a real loss because I, I didn't know what to say to him and I didn't know how to comfort him. (pause) I guess, being the youngest, he missed the family the most.

In interviews, as I hope you can hear in the last two quotes, there was a great deal of pain over this inability to protect siblings. More pain, in fact, than was shown over the losses felt to themselves; their own loneliness, homesickness

and ultimate feelings of alienation from their families. These losses were articulated in terms of what they learned, and overwhelmingly that lesson was to "be a survivor". But the problem was that the cost of being a survivor was the loss of the natural flow of emotion. To survive you had control your emotions.

> Julie:
> There was so many of us and only one worker, there was never that one to one, it was just, only with each other. The worker sometimes would have their favourites amongst the girls and it would cause a lot of resentment, bullying and teasing. We were angry little kids holding [our] emotions in.

And some of the children were resourceful, like Mark:

> I think being in Horden Hall I learn[ed] to get along with people. I always tried to figure people out. It was sort of like a defense mechanism I guess because I was small. What I would try to do is try to figure out people, try to figure out what they like and stuff like that. I would try to be friends with them I guess. I don't know if it was a manipulation of their emotions but I got along with most people.

There was a range of feelings about friendship, and the possibility of friendship in Horden Hall. They ranged from a feeling of camaraderie with fellow students,

> Arthur:
> Aside from missing my parents and not liking school sometimes, they were happy days. A lot of it had to do with the fact that we identified with each other. We spoke the same language. I've already said that a lot of the students were Quebec students and we all spoke the same dialect. So I think even though we didn't know each other when we got there, we certainly developed friendships. We basically looked at each other the same.

to a feeling that there really was no possibility of true friendship in the institution.

> Tommy:
> We didn't have friends, we just had allies. Friendship was something we didn't have. Except with my brother, [there was no] true friendship except as an ally. That's how we grew up. One of the kids I went to school with came here last winter. He was glad to see me, but he was not a friend of mine. We just shared the experiences together, it's just like France and England, we went to war together. They'll never become any more than allies. And that's how I perceive the rest of the kids.

These opinions describe the scope of experiences with friendship, but for most of the children some friendship was possible. Sam reflects that "It was rare to have really good friends, but if you did have a really good friend... it was a bond for life." These bonds were of central importance to many of the students.

> Gerald:
> There's a whole span there of several years that you don't have the access to the physical warmth and holding and caring that children have. That's something that we never had when we were in [residential school]. So the bond we had was with people in that same situation. What I'm talking about with the bond... in residential [school] a lot of kids never bonded with their parents. So the bonding that normally would happen between parent and child, that now happened between child and child instead. It's sad...

One of the long term routes to surviving for these individuals has been to focus on the positive: from punishment for infractions of the rules, working within existing structures toward their own goals was learned; from

rigid routines, the self-discipline to complete further education was attained; and from surviving the residential school, came a sense of individual self-preservation. The costs of these lessons to the individual, to their families and ultimately the community are linked to the redirection of this bond from inter-generational to peer group orientation and will be explored more fully in Chapters 7 and 8. Another way these individuals focussed on positive aspects of their experiences was a tendency to recall humourous incidents when reminiscing with acquaintances and friends from Horden Hall. And some of the most positive accounts relayed to me were those on resistance.

RESISTANCE: "WE FOUND WAYS" (Julie)

These children, like many Native children in residential schools across North America, empowered themselves through acts of resistance (Haig-Brown 1988, McBeth 1983). The literal meaning of resistance is "the act, on the part of persons, of resisting, opposing or withstanding" (Little et al 1973:1807). For the purposes of this discussion, I will take resistance to mean the act or acts of opposing the forces exerted by people in Horden Hall on these James Bay Cree children to conform to the rules of the institution. There are many examples in the material collected of resistance in Horden Hall, which fall into three main groups: defying the rules; stealing food and speaking Cree; and

running away. All of these categories are by definition, acts of defying the rules, however, stealing food and speaking Cree are significant because participation was universal and running away is significant because it was an act of total non-participation. These forms of resistance are not opposites, universal participation vs. non-participation, but actions along a range of behavioural responses inside the institution. These children were individuals and, as in any group in a collective experience, each individual responded differently to those in their peer group (as seen from the range of views on friendship) and to those in authority. Not only is the emphasis on individual responses important when discussing these individuals' childhood experiences, but it also continues to remain important in further analysis. The people interviewed are cognizant of this fact, for example,

> Eric:
> They had a canteen there later on in years. We were allowed to go and buy things like gum or whatever. A lot of us kids, because we were away from home, we hardly ever had any money to spend. Once in a while we'd get some in the mail. So the stuff we bought, you either shared it or, [depending on] the kind of a personality you had, you'd hide it, you'd hoard it and try and keep most of it for yourself.

When discussing acts of resistance, the interviewees take pleasure in reflecting on these endeavours, however, they do not explicitly state that these acts gave them a sense of personal empowerment for two reasons. First, because of the open-ended nature of the interviews, aimed at encouraging participants to reminisce about experiences and

reflect on the meaning of those experiences for themselves in the past and the present, the terms "resistance" and "empowerment" were not raised. Secondly, it is consistent with the reticent nature of individuals in the Cree culture to simply take pleasure in recalling the acts (Preston, personal communication, July 1994).

RESISTANCE: DEFYING THE RULES

Humour was expressed throughout the interviews, but nowhere more frequently than in describing this defiance, as Annie illustrates with this short comment, "we did a lot of things that they didn't know about (laughs) once [one person] started everybody would do it (laughs)". The next two remembrances give examples of how these children defied the rules.

> Annie:
> There were a lot of things we did [that] we weren't supposed to do, like switching beds. I got caught doing it once too. When you made a new friend [she might] be sleeping across the room, and then you would go ask someone to switch beds with you, so that you could to be near your friend. Well some girl did that to me, she was from Waskagonish, I remember her very clearly, the lights were out and she wanted to sleep beside her friend in the next bed, and that was my bed. So she asked if she could change for the night, "You sleep on my bed I'll sleep on your bed". I said OK, and I was just getting down because I slept on the top bunk and her friend slept on the top bunk across from me, and I was getting down to go and I was sitting on the night table and the light came on (laughs) and she came running up, she kneed me right in the eye. She hit me with her knee as she jumped up to get on my bed and then we both got caught, and we got in trouble. In the morning when I woke up I had a big black eye (laughs) because she kneed me right in the eye. I remember that day.

> Annie:
> We used to sneak around (laughs) After a while I got to the point where I never wanted to wear dresses anymore. We had to wear dresses [uniforms] to school. I would hide my dress in the big closet in the dormitory. They found my dress one time (laughs) I wasn't allowed to go out after school, I couldn't go out to play for one week, and I couldn't leave the dorm, I had to stay there with another girl who got caught. We did it because at the Main School there were other kids from the village that never wore dresses and we wore dresses every day, and that's why we snuck into our pants when we went to school.

Annie's account of hiding her uniform and sneaking into her "play" pants was one of five. These girls recalled being teased about their uniforms; the boys would do things like hide in the stairwells to peer up their skirts. They were teased in much the same fashion as village children taunted them about being in jail from the other side of the fence "Kids that were not in there used to tell us "You're in jail" (Sandra). It must be pointed out here that apart from the uniforms and their segregation from the community in Horden Hall, these children and the village children were visibly much alike; they spoke mutually intelligible dialects of James Bay Cree and some were actually related to each other. The fact that in 1964 the Horden Hall children were integrated with James Bay Cree children of the community of Moose Factory in the classroom is significant: their inter-relationships as children will be explored further in the next section on gangs; and the effect of these relationships on the community of Moose Factory in the present will be

discussed in Chapter 7. By hiding their uniforms and donning pants, these girls were making a physical statement that they weren't as restricted as other Horden Hall students, and further, it was a statement of identification with their classroom peers from the village, who were, after all, not so different from themselves.

As the children got older, into their early teens, they had more interest in the opposite sex, and some lasting relationships were formed. Many of the interviewees met their spouses while in residential school, although some of them weren't interested in each other at the time. The following quote demonstrates how rules on segregation were also defied:

> Mark:
> We used to go sneak over to the girls side in the middle of the night (laughter) in our last year at Horden Hall, I was in Grade 8. It was like a game to see who was going to get caught and who wasn't going to get caught. We used to run over there and hang around for a while and run back. Eventually we got caught, but I think some of the supervisors didn't care at all. I think some of them found it amusing. I don't know if anything ever happened, anything serious, if it happened I would probably tell you, notice I said probably (laughs).

Early teens was also a time for experimentation with new things:

> June:
> Well we used to try things eh. I remember one time we tried drinking. We got one of our friends that was living in the community to bring a bottle to us. So during the night we opened up the window, we used to be on the second floor, we threw a string down and she tied the bottle to the string and drew it up through the window, and we drank it. I remember feeling high and wanting to go out, go somewhere. That was my first experience (laughs) ...It was just one bottle of beer (laughs) We

> couldn't get that drunk, it was a Bud. We didn't get sick or anything. (laughs)

Most of the respondents interviewed didn't experiment while in Horden Hall because the majority were sent on to other residential schools further south around Grade 5 or 6, or they waited until high school, when they were boarding in family homes in communities south of Moose Factory and had more freedom. It's interesting that most of these individuals were "caught" at these clandestine activities and that the pleasure they obtained from rebelling was not negated by being discovered and punished.

RESISTANCE: STEALING FOOD AND SPEAKING CREE

Speaking Cree was a universally practiced form of defying the rules of these children. Speaking your Native language was always discouraged in Horden Hall, because one of the primary functions was to teach each child English. However, early in the school's history, when it was an industrial school in the thirties and forties, Cree syllabics were taught (Mary, Kirk). One interviewee who attended in the sixties didn't recall punishment for speaking Cree.

> Arthur:
> When we entered Horden Hall we spoke only Cree. As far as I can remember, maybe just the once, or the odd time that I remember we were told to speak English instead of Cree. From what I can recall I don't think that there was any kind of strict policy to stop kids from speaking their language.

One person saw the loss of proficiency in Cree not as a result of a policy but as a natural consequence of acquiring a second language, but even he did not stop using Cree while in Horden Hall. The majority of those interviewed, however, do remember the restrictions on speaking Cree. Fred states:

> The kids grew up in their own homes and their parents talked to them in the Native language. Some of them had a hard time speaking English and they were scolded when they were not speaking [English]. When they were speaking in their Native tongue to their own brothers or their cousins or their friends from their hometowns, they were punished for that when they were in earshot of the supervisor. That was a very strict rule.

> Vera:
> There were few girls I had known before, older girls, and the first thing they told me was don't speak Cree. Don't speak Cree in front of the staff or you'll get strapped. Do it, but outside and don't do it in front of any staff.

Stuart remembers being told that Cree was discouraged because it made the supervisors uncomfortable:

> I grew up knowing the Cree language and the English language, so language wasn't a problem when I got to school. It was a problem in the sense that you weren't allowed to speak [Cree]. The supervisors told us that the reason behind that was that we might be saying something about them. They didn't like the idea of us talking in our language because we might be saying rotten things about them. We might be talking about them, whether it was good or bad. So we didn't, some of us also spoke it away from the supervisors and some of them did in front of them. There was a lot of discipline for those people, to made them not speak Cree. [They would] put bars of soap in their mouth or you wouldn't get your night snack and there's the other extreme case of punishment whereby they strapped you.

That individuals who knew speaking Cree was not allowed and knew that they would be punished for it, spoke it in front of

supervisors can be viewed not only as resistance, but also as defiance. Again we see a wide range of responses based on individual actions, that some elevated this resistance to an active defiance while others resisted this rule more discreetly.

A few of the individuals interviewed felt that the suppression of Cree was a direct attack on their culture. Tommy for example:

> If you were caught speaking your language you were punished and you got a severe spanking (chuckles). They didn't let [us have] anything from our culture. The way we lived, everything was taken away from us. We were stripped, we were raped of what we were. We were not allowed to talk in Cree, our own language. The community would collect some geese to feed us, but we were not allowed to [eat it]. Everything was not Native, it had nothing to do with Native origin. If we were caught speaking Cree they ground the whole dormitory. [We would have] to go to bed after supper....I had a different dialect, the Moose Cree dialect when I went in, and all the others had an Eastern dialect, from Waskagonish and all the other places. They used to make fun of me, but I ended up speaking their dialect. I'm fluent in the Eastern Cree dialect cause I went to school with them.

Whatever the extent of the suppression of Cree, some individuals lost proficiency in Cree, and others, like Tommy above, actually gained the ability to converse in additional dialects. Sam sees this ability as a positive result of his time spent in Horden Hall:

> [Horden Hall] had a lot of other First Nation members like from Quebec, Waskagonish, Fort George, East Main, Mistassini, Nemiska. I didn't use my own language, I started picking up other dialects, from those other communities. So I actually learned more Cree than I lost. I'm able to converse in three dialects now, the East Coast and the West Coast and the Moose Cree. The suppression of the language,

> the attempt at suppression actually created a situation where people were able to communicate more effectively in 2 or 3 dialects, which is pretty good. I think if I had not gone to Horden Hall, I wouldn't know how to speak these dialects.

That these children defied the rules to the extent that some of them actually learned additional dialects is a testament to the strength of their will, and a tangible benefit of resistance. Not only did defying this rule offer some satisfaction at the time but it had a lasting positive result.

Stealing food is a form of defying the rules that also had universal participation, as even the children who were particularly obedient, would either actively steal food or eat food stolen for them by older children, relatives or friends. Another factor that contributed to the pervasiveness of stealing food was the inadequacy of the amount of food supplied, coupled with the often distasteful quality of the food. Although a majority of the interviewees commented on the poor quality and quantity of the food, just three quotes should be sufficient to illustrate the point.

> Michelle:
> Well, if it was cooked properly I guess I would have liked it. They used to just mush it up. I didn't like turnip when I was in there, now I love turnip. And I didn't like the liver the way they used to cook it but I eat liver the way I cook it (laughs) They just cut it up and put it in a pot with water and onions and let it stew, it tasted bleah (laughs) I don't know what they put in it but it didn't taste very good. I can say that the food wasn't that hot. (laughter) It's a wonder I survived! (laughter) ... I gained weight when I went home in the summer because I ate what I liked.

> You were nice and trim when you left [Horden Hall]. (laughter)
>
> Edward:
> I remember running around and playing ball before suppertime. I felt very hungry then but even after we had a meal, supper or lunch, I still wasn't full, I still felt empty, I never had enough [food].
>
> Annie:
> Sometimes when my kids don't eat I say, "It's a good thing you're not in Horden Hall. You wouldn't have your next meal until tomorrow and you'd be hungry if you didn't eat everything". Today I clean my plate all the time. I still do that. (laughs) I have to clean off my plate because [I still feel like] I won't have my next meal until tomorrow morning. If you didn't eat you were hungry. You'd go to bed hungry. (laughs)

So food was an important factor of daily existence. It became a preoccupation for most of the children, as reflected in the fact that every single person mentioned the food, although not everyone condemned it - the interviewees that were there in the 40s and 50s (hardship years for families who were hunting for their living, Preston, personal communication, November 1994) appreciated the fact that even if the food was not always plentiful, they were fed every day. An illustration of this preoccupation with food is revealed in a comment that Vera makes that the children in the dorms would try to find out who was cooking that day, because some cooks were better at making the volumes of food (for roughly two hundred students throughout the sixties) palatable. Stealing food was resistance surely, but it was also a way of assuaging the constant hunger: although volumes of food were cooked, you were limited to eating what was on

your plate - there were no seconds allowed. Food was also a negotiating tool, paid for protection, or stolen from children's nightside tables (those of hoarders at any rate) by gangs (discussed further in the next section). And along this range of behaviours around stealing food it was also judiciously shared across dorms and genders when opportunity arose. The most common methods used to steal food were surreptitiously taking it while helping in the kitchen and raids in the evenings after the kitchen was closed, hoping that some fridge or cupboard would happen to be unlocked. But the children were always on the lookout for opportunities to steal food. And some of the methods for stealing and sharing food were quite inventive. Julie remembers:

> We'd go to the kitchen because that's where the food was. We'd sneak down there or we would take the laundry down because the supervisor never went to the laundry room. They kept the food locked up but we would take handfuls of fruit. We would have to set the tables (in the staff dining room). It was too awkward to check all of us, but you had to make sure you didn't get caught. We found ways, like sometimes we would have to slice the bread, and the boys would have to come down and pick up the laundry, we would put the crusts together in a little packet, and so we'd sneak food to them that way, or we'd hide food in the hall.

> June:
> I remember we used to go and steal in the kitchen sometimes, fruit or peanut butter. In those days I really liked peanut butter. (laughs) We 'd go downstairs and sneak in the kitchen. I remember some boys stole a whole bucket of peanut butter one time, they used to have these big buckets, and all these girls were coming in[to the dorm] with this peanut butter in their hands. I guess they had given it to other kids. I don't remember if they got caught though.

The importance of stealing food in terms of resistance cannot be overstated, not only did it supply the emotional lift of defying the power structure and those in authority, namely personal empowerment, but it also supplied a physical lift, temporarily alleviating the constant appetite of these growing children. The feeling of well-being and security that comes from living with your family was not replaced by these windfall acquisitions, but it may have been a temporary solace, a small victory against an impersonal system.

RESISTANCE: RUNNING AWAY

Running away was a rejection of the entire residential school system. When the loneliness and regimentation became unbearable, students would jump the fence and hide in the community or head for the railroad tracks leading south towards their parents' trapping grounds. It was commonly understood by the children that some of them would attempt to run away.

> Leonard:
> We were very, very lonely in school because we didn't know how the other world lived, the white system. A lot of times many of us ran away from school. We ended up somewhere, you know they always found us. (laughter) We were captured, taken back to school and we were punished. Instead of counselling we were told that it was bad, almost like criminals running away because we didn't do it right. We were punished. We more or less retaliated against the system.

Some children made repeated attempts to run away,

Tommy:
But later on in years I made every attempt to escape. I'd crawl under the fence, I'd climb over the fence. The supervisor would come to my mother's or my uncle's. I'd hide underneath the blankets when the supervisor would come.

for others it was a one time, desperate attempt to reach their parents,

Julie:
One time we ran up the tracks, too...We were so lonesome, we missed our parents. Her parents were trapping on the railroad tracks, just about 150 miles from where we were, but we only made it as far as 20 miles over there. She said "Once we get to my parents camp, my parents will drive you to your parents camp." ...We were going to go to Chapleau. [It was a] good thing we didn't freeze, it was the winter time...We made it up to this part where, it's called *outeebohe (Kwatabohegan?)*. There [was] a little hut along the tracks, and there was a man working there. We walked in there .... it so happens there was a train coming this way too...[We had been] walking all day, from early that morning...and then she told me we better go back to residential school... we walked all day, and then the train came and that man put us back on the train, we were here in about half an hour...we got back to residence that night and we slept...and they grounded us for a week, they put us in this room on the third floor. We weren't allowed [out]. We had to wear just our pajamas, and we stayed in there for seven days. We couldn't go outside, we couldn't go out of that room period...Like a prison we got confined in that room, they punished us... [There was] just me and that other girl, but we didn't stay in the same room, she stayed about four or five rooms down the hall. I could hear her, I would hear a tap, and then I heard, "Pssht," and then answer, "Pssht, pssht," and I heard her say "Pssht, pssht, pssht". We were sending signals to each other, and she caught on, and then I'd run to my door. We could open the door a little bit and I opened it and I could see her head sticking out, "Is that you?", "Yeah, it's me". So we sent signals. We would meet at the washroom, there was a washroom we had to share. So every time we had to go to the washroom we would send a signal, and we'd meet in the washroom. (Change in tone) Of course, we were made fun of after.... but we were so lonesome.

and for others it was a spur of the moment rebellion.

> Fred:
> In the third year I was there, I think I had more or less had enough of the residential school system the way it was. I ran away, I ran way from the residence....We just decided [to run]. We got too far away from the residence, we were playing around the old Parish Hall and we were sliding and we noticed the time, it was getting late. We said, "Oh, we're going to get in trouble," we didn't want to go back, and so we said, "Well, we should just run away," so we ran. (chuckles) We ran down the tracks. (chuckles) I'm lucky I'm still alive today, it was in the early part of winter and you know how cold it gets at night here. If it had turned cold I probably would have frozen, but luckily for us on that day it wasn't cold, it was warm, and it stayed warm through the night. I don't know where we were going but we kept going South, my parents were trapping in the Chapleau area at that time. But we got taken back the following day because a train was coming the following day, it was coming back to Moosonee. So we stopped it and we hopped on the train and came back... We stopped it ourselves, because we got tired of walking, [and the] tracks were too long. (laughs) We were just about, maybe two or three miles up out of Moose River [Crossing] (around 70 km from Moosonee). It was actually getting colder. So we got back into the residence and they punished us again. They gave us the strap, this time it was severe, a severe strapping. And we got grounded as well, if I remember correctly, and we had to do extra chores for a time, I don't remember how long.

These are the only first hand accounts of running away out of twenty-five interviews. But they inform us of the need to assert one's self in an impersonal, controlling environment. Even the attempt is a step towards a reconnection with their families, in the heart and the mind.

GANGS: "A PECKING ORDER IN THE DORMS" (Sam)

Another important aspect of peer group interaction in Horden Hall, and many other Native residential schools (see Haig-Brown 1988 and Coleman 1993), was that of the formation of gangs. In Horden Hall, these gangs were structured around the reserve communities of origin, usually communities of the East Coast of James Bay. The communities of Waskagonish and Mistassini were most often named, possibly because they had the largest populations of the communities represented in Horden Hall. The membership in these gangs was generally dorm specific, although not static and the rank of these gangs was shifted from week to week or month to month, depending on how many individuals could be swayed over to their group. Establishing who was strong and determining this pecking order started almost as soon as you entered Horden Hall.

> Gerald:
> You went into residential school at that time and had five or six fights before you understood where your place was, and everyone had to fight. It kind of makes you cry when you hear that. That stuff is suppressed for a lot of people, and a lot of them were just separated [from their families]. Our situation was coming from a nurturing environment to another environment, a different set of rules.
>
> Arthur:
> My dad took me and my brother to Horden Hall on that day. That's when we began our education years, on that day. We spoke only Cree. There was a lady who worked there who was actually from [our community], who was a supervisor. When we saw her and she actually talked to us in our language in a way that seemed to settle some of the fears we had. At that time, that's when it really hit us that we were being put in school and we were going to have to stay there for the year. We were taken to a

> dormitory. We were placed in a Junior boys. The other thing I remember really well about that day, they took us into the dormitory and there were boys in there, they were from Mistassini as we found out later, and my brother and I were standing in there and they started making fun of us. They made some remark and my younger brother, who was more aggressive than me I guess, he got really upset and told the other guys to keep quiet or [else], and then when they didn't keep quiet he went over and hit one of them. He got into a little scrap there, right off the bat. That's how we started our education years at Horden Hall.

Arthur mentions that his brother was more aggressive, and this seemed to play a large part in determining how you fared in Horden Hall. Interviewees discuss this in terms of "spirit". Individuals who had a strong spirit were alright, but those with a weak spirit were picked on by both gangs and supervisors (see Chapter 6 sections on punishment and abuse). The category "spirit" has meaning for these individuals, and they can name who had a particularly weak spirit, and who had a strong spirit. Again we see that the nature of the residential school experience was dependent on the individual, across a range of behaviourial responses. There are, however, commonalities to these experiences and their effects on these James Bay Cree children's lives, as will be discussed further in Chapter 8 on life cycle. Michelle provides an example of what it means to have a strong spirit:

> Well, some of the girls from Mistassini used to try to boss everybody around. There's this one girl, a friend of mine who used to hang around with me lots. Anyway, it had been raining that day, and we went outside after dinner. [There were] a lot of puddles all over the place. We were just sitting there talking and some of the girls started pushing her, they started pushing me too. I said "We're not

> doing anything to you. Leave us alone." They just kept doing it, pushing us. At last (laughs) I got mad, I grabbed one of them, I pulled her by the hair and shoved her head in a mud puddle. (laughs) I remember that because oh, I was so mad. Why pick on us? We weren't doing anything to them. But they were like that you know, those girls from Mistassini. [They would] pick on you and make you cry. They left me alone after that. (laughs) That's one [time] I remember clearly. But they used to do that to other girls, girls that wouldn't fight back.

I hesitate to say that Todd, or anyone who survived their residential school experiences, had a weak spirit, but his description of these gangs paints a picture of the kind of atmosphere gang activity contributed to the residential school environment. You could fight back, but you couldn't necessarily win:

> There used to be little gangs in the residential school, a little group of guys and one leader for them. Then basically you were part of them and if not you were with another group. [There were] fights here and there. When I first went in there was a lot of that going on, where you'd pick on one person, or a group would pick on one person, and fight that person. There was one guy who would sort of be leader of the whole group. He'd say to you, "Hey, you better give me your toast from breakfast. You're my friend. If you don't I've got three guys here who will beat you up." (laughs) I'm pretty sure you're going to hear that from other people... [the gangs were based on] the same age group, then four or five kids. They [would] do that for a while, not all year, maybe for a month or so. One guy would sort of be a leader and the next month somebody else would be leader. Then if you were in that group you were safe. There would only be four or five of them and everybody else would be afraid of them. And you'd never know when it was your turn to be picked on. I don't think I was ever in that group, as part of the gang like. I don't remember being picked on too much, though I was always one of the biggest kids in each of the groups that I was in, because of my size. They hardly bothered me, except the few times that they tried to and I'd

> fight back. I'd be sitting there crying and the supervisor would come and say "What are you crying about? You're the biggest in the group, you should be making them cry." (laughs) But you'd fight one guy and the other four would jump in. That stands out in my memory.

The next two quotes from Vera clearly illustrate the absolute power that some of these gang members had over the other children:

> [They would make us do] crazy things, like there was this one girl that told to her to "Come to my bed and chew your gum until I fall asleep,", can you imagine? Going to another girls bed and sitting there and chewing your gum until the girl falls asleep? The girl is married now and I see her sometimes and when I see her I say "Do you remember the time you had to chew your gum at Jenny's bed until she fell asleep?". I feel crazy when I say that and I laugh. Of course she didn't know any better, she didn't know how to say no because she was afraid, Jenny was the queen of our dorm so whatever she said had to go...
>
> This girl, I don't know what she did, but they got her in the night. We used to have these bunk beds and she happened to have the top bunk. They went to her bed and beat her. You know, she ended up in the infirmary. We couldn't do anything and even in the morning when she was all, I guess aching all over from last night, we couldn't go and talk to her. Of course we knew who did it. She was in the infirmary, and we were afraid to tell the chaplain so and so did this. I don't know if they ever found out why it happened. Whatever the reason, I never found out. I used to feel so sorry for her. But you don't ask questions, if you do they'll get you when the lights are turned out.

For most of the children it was simply a fact of daily existence, another thing they put up with, because they couldn't change it.

> Mike:
> There was a pecking order, I guess as in any institution. I was the youngest of the Senior Boys

so I got picked on the most, at least I thought I got picked on the most. Some of the experiences were, oh we'd just be walking in the dormitory and two of the older boys come along pick you up and throw you in the garbage can, that was basically routine... I had a top bunk, so on many occasions you'd be laying up there reading a book or something and an older guy would come and sneak under and they would literally kick you off the bunk bed, so they were doing things like that... Rough-housing it, the other things were that the bigger boys, stronger guys used to always be at the front of the line, or sometimes they wanted to be at the back of the line. So if you wanted to be at the front of the line you always had to give in to somebody, or if you wanted to be at the back of the line you'd have to give in to somebody. And I can recall at breakfast they used to have these bowls filled with peanut butter, and often the bigger boys would just take the whole bowl and you wouldn't get any peanut butter even though it was meant for all the boys at the table. And you couldn't go complaining to the supervisor, even though the supervisor was present because eventually it would come back on you, when the supervisor wasn't around.

Sam:
I was a small kid so I had to kind of... I had to learn to keep my distance from those big bullies. I had to stay with the crowd that was kind of, like safe, a safe crowd. I think there was a lot of us that were mediocre kids, like average, and I kind of hang around with those sorts of guys. I did belong to a clique at one time, and I didn't.. I mean after belonging there and coming out of there I didn't like it because you had this, this heavy duty stuff on people which I didn't like. And a lot of kids were mean to each other too. I mean the abuses weren't only by supervisors, but by big kids on little kids. I mean physical abuse, you know, punching and kicking and regular bully fights, those kinds of things, but nothing, not to my knowledge, sexual like raping a kid or forcing a kid to have sex with you. There was a lot of just general bullies, and a lot of games being played against sides. I kind of stayed away from that after a while, I kind of kept with my friends.

So it took just four or five coercive "bullies" to turn the dorms and the playground into a battleground, or at least

a self-defence zone. Apart from Sam, only two of those interviewed remembered belonging to a gang. For Stuart, the gangs offered a measure of protection, and also a sense of belonging to a group:

> Most of the kids here came from the East Coast because they were Anglican. It was an Anglican school.. myself and a cousin of mine were the only Anglicans from the West Coast that came down here. So we didn't know any of the kids. I didn't know them, but fortunately I had an uncle who had been living in Wemindji, so right away this East Main-Wemindji group of kids took me in as one of their own because they knew my last name. So I wasn't alone that way. If my uncle hadn't been over there, it would have been just me and my cousin against the whole school. I'm lucky this group of kids took me in. They were large enough, they protected me and I became part of them. So luckily I was picked up by them.

Sandra was having trouble remembering, and as we talked things would come rushing back to her, and it was almost as if I could see this flood of memory washing over her face when I mentioned that other people had talked about gangs. When you read the following quote, try to hear the laughter as shocked and slightly nervous.

> Sandra:
> Yeah (laughs) now I remember. We used to have little gangs in the Horden Hall. I remember, I was in one group, I used to be in one group. We were really bad. We used to beat up other kids, we would kick them and they were so bruised up. We used to get in trouble for it too, but sometimes we wouldn't tell on each other, but somehow they would find out who was involved and then one person would, they would punish just [one person] for the other people and we wouldn't tell on each other. Oh yeah I remember, one time we were playing, we beat up one girl in the playroom, we were kicking her. Oh my God, I did that (laughs) Oh, my God. I remember that part, where we beat up one girl in

> the playroom. We had little gangs, boys and girls but I can't remember if the boys ever did touch us, I don't think so, it was just in our own sections. But I'm sure the boys had their own, and the girls had their own, so we would pick on any girl that we didn't like. I remember too I used to get beaten up by this gang and once you get to know them, then you would join in. I remember that one incident where we beat up that girl in the playroom.

A few of the interviewees remembered the gangs and bullies with anger, while others had a "forgiven but not forgotten" (June) sort of attitude, but a few had some very perceptive thoughts about why these children acted in the way that they did. Edith was told by a childhood bully from Horden Hall that she was acting out of anger at being sent away. Julie felt that these gangs gave you something to belong to in the absence of your family. Todd was in Horden Hall from the mid-sixties until the early seventies, just before Horden Hall closed. In that time dorms were replaced with family type arrangements, with one living room and dining room to six bedrooms, keeping children of one family all together, with no sex segregation. He noticed that as these changes took place and the ratio of supervisors to children went up, the gangs dissolved. But Tommy's account is one of anger mixed with insight:

> I remember going home for a weekend to have my birthday, and my mother gave me a watch. In the dormitory [they] took the watch, took everything that I had for that birthday. Another time they would piss into a bottle and make you drink it. Your own kind, but from a different community, they... you know, I think maybe that's the [worst thing] about the way we were treated, they couldn't rebel against the supervisors or the teachers so they chose to pick on their own kind.

Tommy's account is the reason cited by Haig-Brown (1988:98) for this type of behaviour. These children acted in violent, coercive ways towards one another but it was a way of gaining power in a situation designed to make you powerless. Perhaps it wasn't the best response to that situation, but it was a way of asserting their own order in an environment where everything was ordered for them.

So now we have a picture of these James Bay Cree children in a rigidly structured environment, segregated into highly specific peer groups. In spite of the structure designed to control every aspect of their lives, these children took control through the means available to them, resisting by defying the rules, asserting their own "pecking" order and mentally resisting the messages about their inferiority that were sent to them. But there is another major aspect of their daily lives that requires scrutiny, non-peer group interactions.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONS

To understand fully the scope of residential school experiences for these James Bay Cree individuals, we now turn to an examination of inter-generational relationships within Horden Hall. As has already been mentioned (pp. 43, 50), there was only one supervisor for each dorm of twenty-five to forty students. There was less contact with the rest of the staff, which included the principal, invariably the Anglican minister for the community until (until 1964), the administrator and assistant administrator of the residence, a nurse, situated in the infirmary on the third floor, and kitchen and laundry staff. In addition, teachers in the community schools had regular interactions with the children. The interactions between the generations did not mirror family relationships of either James Bay Cree or EuroCanadian culture. To place the issues of punishment and abuse in context (sections two and three respectively), we must first explore the nature of these inter-generational interactions.

INTER-GENERATIONAL INTERACTIONS

There were occasional visits from adult family members. But these were rare, as Michelle recalls:

> The first year I was there my uncle came down in October I think it was, I don't know why he came down, maybe to see a doctor or something. Anyway one of the girls came upstairs, I was a Junior girl and she said there's a man downstairs and he's asking about you and your brother. We went downstairs, his name was Timmy, Uncle Timmy, and there he was standing there. I was so happy to see him, I went and hugged him, and my brother and I were crying. He gave us [each] a bag, he had two big paper bags, he had oranges and candy and cookies in there for us. That was the only relation I saw all year, that was in October. He had to go back before the weather got too bad. But you know what I did? I went upstairs and I shared my goodies with all the girls that were in the same dorm as I was, because they had nobody to come and see them and I was lucky, because my uncle came to see me. It was only for a half hour or so, but that was the only time I saw a relation was during that time, that first year. The rest of the time nobody came. That's one of the things I remember.

These visits were brief, and although they brought some happiness, after they were gone it could intensify the loneliness, for themselves and for others with no family to visit them. And sometimes parents were not permitted to visit with their children.

> Alice:
> I remember one time when my mother just came to [leave me] some supplies. I was sick, I had the measles or the mumps. I was in the infirmary. I just happened to be looking out and I saw my mother walking by, two minutes later she was walking by again. You know, they didn't even let her come and see me in the infirmary, they wouldn't even let her come in there to see me. I asked her why she came there and why she left, and she was told that she couldn't see me because I was very sick. Why would they keep my mother away from me if I was really sick? And I didn't see her again until summer, and it was in January when she came by, to give me some money and junk food. But they didn't allow her to see me...

That glimpse of her mother certainly caused Alice pain. A few of the children had some family members in the community, and were allowed to visit them occasionally on weekends.

> Todd:
> I guess we went out a few times to my grandmother's. My grandmother would go to the school and ask if any of us wanted to come for the weekend. [We would] chop and carry wood and stuff like that, with my grandfather. So we'd go out for the weekend and stay for the weekend.

If their parents were based out of Moose Factory, until they left for the trapline in early fall and when they returned from the trapline in early spring, children were occasionally allowed to visit them for a weekend. Some families were originally based out of communities up the coast, but to be near their children, even if they couldn't see them very often, they would come to Moose Factory and camp on the flats or in "tent city" as it was called. Members of MoCreebec whom I interviewed believe that this is one of the reasons that so many people from the East Coast of James Bay settled in Moose Factory. They formed MoCreebec, a First Nation in Moose Factory with no reserve land base, comprised of members of East Coast communities. But overall, these interactions with family members were generally scarce for the ten months of the year the children were in Horden Hall.

Teachers also interacted with the students, but for the most part they were not recalled as significant adults in the memories of these individuals. Some of them lived on the

grounds of Horden Hall, but after school hours they had little interaction with the children and they ate in a separate dining room. They had a little more contact with the Senior girls, who served them in a separate dining room and who were hired to clean their rooms on weekends. Only one of those interviewed talked about a teacher having a positive influence on his life. Two other interviewees talked about incidents of abuse in the school. These incidents will be discussed in the section on abuse. But for the most part, supervisors were the adults who shaped the children's experiences in Horden Hall, as was represented in the importance they attached to remembrances about supervisors in their interviews.

The majority of the interactions with adults that these children had was with the supervisors. (For further information about the "culture" of supervisors and their interpersonal interaction see Kreiner 1983 and King 1967.) The supervisors were responsible for all the children in their dorm, but with such a ratio of students and such a rigidly structured day, that it was impossible for the supervisors to give each one individual attention. The individuals interviewed were aware of this reality.

> Julie:
> It was just so... there was so many of us and only one worker. There was never that one to one, it was just, only with each other. And the worker sometimes would have their favourites amongst the girls. It would cause a lot of resentment.

It is also commonly understood that the type of supervisor you had, "good" or "strict" played a large part in how positive or negative these residential school experiences were. So in addition to a variation among the students, strong or weak spirits, aggressive or non-aggressive personalities, the variation among the personalities of the supervisors was also a factor.

> Sandra:
> I don't recall ever being hit, maybe some of the other of the kids that were there. They were probably hit. Some of the supervisors that we had there were really strict and really spanked and hit other kids that I know. But I never had any of them at all, it was other people that got them and some of them were pretty mean.
>
> Gerald:
> T: But there were some good people there too, you know some good supervisors that cared a lot. I guess the experience largely depended on what kind of supervisor you had.
>
> Annie:
> I think it all depends on how, how you were treated by the supervisors. I don't remember if I was ever mistreated by one person like a worker. I saw kids get slapped for nothing, they never would listen to the kid.

The supervisors who "cared a lot" didn't have the time resources to develop a one-to-one relationship with all the children in their dorms. And the strict supervisors had enough control, without actually being abusive, to make your life miserable. Michelle gives a good example of the kind of tension that can ensue when there is strife between a student and a supervisor:

> Another thing, there was a supervisor there, I don't know why but for some reason she was...there

> must have been something about me she didn't like. Anyway we went to visit a[nother] supervisor there, she was an Indian from out West, and she was very nice. [She was] very good to the girls there because she was an Indian herself. So we went to visit her one time and when we went back downstairs, my supervisor asked me where I had been. I told her where I had gone, and she said I hadn't let her know where I was going and then she poked me with her knitting needle! She was knitting and she poked me in the head. I didn't like her after that. I thought to myself you know, I'll beat her. (laughs) Anyway, I did things to make her mad after that. One time I didn't clean my locker, we used to have night tables beside our bed and I just shoved everything in there. I made my bed but I wasn't really neat about it. I knew she'd come and get mad. We used to line up outside the school, before we'd go to school and she'd check everybody out. She said to me "Michelle, your night table is very messy and you didn't make your bed properly." And she said, "There'll be no movie for you this week." We used to have movies every Saturday night. And she poked me in the arm, she pushed me like that. I just went like that (miming a shove) and there was a fence there, she fell down over the fence, her skirt went up. (laughs) Oh, I got sent to the office for that. I was punished for that. (laughs)

In this drama, both the child and the supervisor were active participants. Some of the actions of the supervisor, like poking the child in the head with a knitting needle or shoving her in a public line up, would be considered abuse today. But in that environment, and in that time period they were not. Her supervisor was "strict". This example also juxtaposes the concepts of resistance and power: Michelle resisted by not performing her tasks adequately and by pushing back; the supervisor responded by removing her movie privilege and sending her to the office for punishment, exercising her authority and demonstrating the locus of power in this institution.

PUNISHMENT:

These children were punished for a variety of offences, including speaking Cree in the hearing of a staff member, talking while in line, not performing chores adequately, being late in following the routine, getting caught at stealing food or not wearing the required uniform, leaving the grounds without permission, running away, and fighting amongst themselves. These punishments varied from extra chores, diminished privileges such as a restriction from attending movies, strict grounding, to strappings. The strappings that children received were either public, everyone in the dorm was strapped by number, or private, individual strapping in the principal's office. When the whole dorm was punished it was because no one would admit to a particular offense, as Mary remembers "Sometimes when someone got into trouble, we would all have to get strapped, because nobody wanted to name the person that did it." As we have seen from the section on gangs, children may have been afraid to tell who committed the offense, and would rather have taken the punishment of the supervisors than the revenge of gang members. Another reason the entire dorm would be punished was for group offenses.

> June:
> We used to get in trouble. The whole dorm would get into trouble sometimes. We'd be like making a lot of noise or something. I remember one time we had a pillow fight and there were feathers all over the floor. (laughs) Sometimes what they'd do is they'd line us and give us the strap.

Often the interviewees did not remember the reason for a particular punishment, although they remember the punishment itself vividly.

> Annie:
> [There was this] one time, I don't remember what I did wrong, but I remember scrubbing the stairwell, staircase with a toothbrush. That's all I remember. I don't know what I did wrong but I remember clearly brushing with a toothbrush on the stairs. It must have been something really bad I guess.

Some individuals might not remember what they had done wrong because they didn't understand what they had done wrong in the first place.

> Gerald:
> Certainly there was disciplinary action. Striking us was no problem, that was daily kind of stuff. And they had all kinds of [punishments], we would do the stairwell with a toothbrush and scrub every inch of it, that kind of stuff. You did something wrong you got strapped and then you were told to scrub the stairwell or the playroom with a toothbrush. But that was it, you never understood what you did wrong. And a lot of times a lot of kids didn't understand what they were doing wrong. They were being punished for speaking their language, they were being punished because they didn't understand the rules but for some of them it wasn't their first language.

Others had a firm grip on the rules, as did Stuart, who described the variety of offenses and punishments:

> You weren't allowed to speak [Cree]. A lot of us spoke it when we were away from the supervisors. And a lot of them did in front of them, and there was a lot of discipline for those people, to make them not speak [Cree]. They would put bars of soap in their mouth and punish [them]. One of the most common punishments was ... we used to call them dog biscuits, big crackers a couple of inches long and a glass of milk, we got that at bedtime, a snack

> (in the late sixties). So if you weren't behaving, if you were speaking your language, you wouldn't get that glass of milk and dog biscuit with everyone else. And there's the other extreme case of punishment whereby they strapped you. I got the strap once for standing on a swing during recess. Another form of punishment was scrubbing the playroom, which was quite large, the playroom was maybe about fifty feet long by about thirty feet wide, and they'd give you a toothbrush and you'd have to go scrub it. Anybody trying to do that with a toothbrush, it would take them a good couple of weeks to do it, but I never saw anybody finish it, they just sort of took them off [that punishment] once they learned their lesson. The other thing of course was not being allowed to go out of the grounds. There's a big fence around the school. It's still there that fence. You weren't allowed to go outside of those grounds, unless of course you were with a supervisor. They had movies [and] every now and again we weren't allowed to watch those. So those are the kinds of punishments [we received].

Stuart describes strapping as an "extreme punishment" but remembers an incident in which he was strapped for standing on a swing. The implication is that his particular punishment for that offense was too extreme. However, I think the categorization of strapping as extreme is correct, as individuals who were rarely strapped recall.

> Michelle:
> I don't remember anybody being mean to me. I got strapped, it was my fault. I got strapped once. I was at school when it happened, it was my fault. The teacher was out of the classroom and we were running around. (laughing) I was bugging somebody else across the room and I got caught when he came back in so I got a strap. That was the only time I got strapped. If I got into trouble you know, it was my fault. I was bad sometimes (laughs) not really bad you know, I wouldn't hurt other kids.

Although strapping was considered an extreme punishment, none of the individuals in Horden Hall at that time would categorize the strap as abuse. Arthur explains:

> Another thing I remember well about Horden Hall [is that] we got disciplined quite a bit, especially in terms of the strap. Personally, I feel that's kind of a significant thing to recognize [that was] the way discipline was administered back then. I look back on the type of discipline I got when I was in Horden Hall, and most of the times that I did get it, the strap or whatever, well I figure I deserved it. I also feel that the type of discipline I got didn't really hurt me at all, in fact , maybe I learned more. Discipline was administered to me as a result of what I did. I don't think that I could say that there was any abuse involved.

Not all the individuals would agree that they deserved the strap every time they received it, but it was not then considered abuse. Today, some of the interviewees do feel that the strap was physical abuse. On this cusp between physical discipline and physical abuse most interviewees agree that the boundary was crossed when the supervisor lost control. Four such incidents were relayed in the interviews, and Tommy provides a good example of this:

> I know a guy [that] got beaten black and blue. We had to jump on the supervisor to help him out. I think what happened was, we were sitting at the edge of our beds, and the supervisor started spanking everybody with a strap all the way around. I just happened to be number 16, and Tony was either number 13 or 14. It came to him and [the supervisor] said put out your hands, and he said no. The supervisor slapped him and pulled his arms out, Tony pulled them away and [the supervisor] hit him in the face. Tony did the same thing again, and [the supervisor] hit him again. The supervisor got fed up and grabbed him by the hair and started attacking him on the floor, on his back, and the supervisor kicked him. Finally we all jumped in (laughs) we all jumped in. Somebody must have heard the ruckus down the hall and two supervisors came and started pulling us apart, but they weren't worried about the kid. Poor Tony, his arms were blue, he had a black eye on his face, a chunk of

> hair [had been pulled] out of his head. They didn't even take him to the infirmary.

Now that we've identified what was considered punishment and broached the boundary between physical discipline and physical abuse, let us turn to a full discussion of abuse in Horden Hall.

ABUSE: "I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES" (Sam)

Physical, emotional and sexual abuse have been incorporated into one section because the lines drawn between these types of abuse are not always accurate or helpful. For example; a sexual assault is a physical one with emotional ramifications, and verbal abuse can make an individual physically ill. This is an emotionally charged issue, and it is important to recall that the incidents discussed here were perpetrated on children, in an environment with very little individual attention.

Many of the interviewees told me that they were not abused, and that they had not heard of any abuse in Horden Hall. They also compared Horden Hall favourably with Ste. Anne's, a Catholic residential school, about 90 miles up the West Coast in Fort Albany. Former students of Ste. Anne's residential school have recently made allegations of horrific incidences of physical, emotional and sexual abuse[1], and a criminal investigation is under way. Horden Hall, as an

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[1] Conclusions from the Ste. Anne's residential school reunion, publicly issued by Fort Albany First Nation in August 1992.

Anglican institution, is generally perceived to have been a less violent, less damaging residential school. However, in later interviews, especially in those where people approached me to be interviewed, allegations of serious abuse at Horden Hall arose. Mark gave me reasons why people would avoid talking to me about abuse:

> Did you get what you were wondering about?
>
> I: (pause) I went to that reunion in Fort Albany and a lot of people talked about really disturbing, intense kind of abuses, physical abuses, sexual abuses, mental [abuses] and I've been here a few weeks talking to people and they don't seem to be... they often say none of that happened here and I haven't heard of it and it didn't happen to me. And I don't know... is it because for them it didn't happen? Or how does it stay so secret, at least some things happened.
>
> How does it stay so secret.
>
> I: Or is it just secret from me?
>
> I think people are just afraid to talk about these things and I think it's a confidence thing. I guess there are a lot of things that people like to forget, and just don't want to talk about. Even if they are aware of those things they just don't want to talk about them. People in Moose Factory are different from people in Fort Albany, or other communities up there. People in Moose Factory [have an] every man for himself kind of attitude. Like you look after your own little clan and there's no real community spirit. Before you could walk into anybody's house, the door wouldn't be locked. You could walk right in unannounced and people would say, "Hey, you want some tea?" or you could just go into somebody's house, go into his kitchen, pour yourself a cup of tea and sit down. That's how it used to be around here, it's still like that up in Albany or Kash[echewan] or Waskagonish. It's not as open as it used to be you know. But that community spirit [is] still up there. But [not] here. Years ago you could talk to people, you'd stop on the road and talk to people for half an hour or an hour but now you walk by or you don't even walk, you drive by and sometimes you don't even wave at

people, or people don't even wave at you when you're going by. And you know these people, you've lived on the same Island. People are different now, they prefer to mind their own business, I guess, if you want to call it that. People don't even want to talk about things and support each other or even start the healing process. There are some people who've said, "If you have a reunion for Horden Hall, I wouldn't go", and these are some people that you think are better off than your average person, because they just want to forget about it. And there are some that say, "Oh yeah, I'll come along", people who didn't know what was going on, [to them] everything was just fine and it was like a home away from home. And there are people that say to you, "I wouldn't go back there," I think these are probably some of the people that things happened to. And I know that there are probably some supervisors that wouldn't come back, or even principals for that matter. A lot of times my family members don't want to hear what I have to say because they think I'm blunt, they think I don't care, but that's how I've been able to deal with everything. I think that's wrong with people around here because I think it would be pretty hard to believe that just 90 miles away in almost the same kind of atmosphere [things] were totally opposite. And, these things were happening not only in Native boarding residential schools, they were happening all over. I really believe that things have happened, like sexual abuse, I know there was mental abuse and there was physical abuse too. I, like a lot of other kids there, was on the receiving end of the strap, and I got hit hard, real hard. I'm pretty certain there are some instances that happened, like with the girls and most of them probably weren't aware of what was going. They didn't see it or they thought they saw something and naw. I think if my imagination were that active or hyperactive I wouldn't be sitting here today making a living and setting goals. I don't think my credibility is not there, if it were so then I'd probably be out in the street there with all the people who are not doing anything. But these things did happen. I think it's unfortunate, but that's why people are not coming out and talking. There's one particular guy that I know, and he just wants to forget about it. And I think that's the attitude of a lot of people. It's too bad because it's something they carry with them and it probably affects their family and how they are able to function from day to day.

There are important issues raised in this excerpt. Mark's comments on changes in community socializing and the effects of residential school experiences on individuals' abilities to function are significant, and these issues will be explored in the next two chapters, however, they are not edited out because they contribute to the full understanding of why only certain individuals raised actual incidences of abuse in interviews. The "confidence thing" shifted after this interview, and accounts of incidences of all kinds of abuse, including sexual abuse, increased. Whether this is coincidence, a product of increased time spent in the community or a product of favourable "word of mouth" within the community, there is no way of knowing.

Mark's comment that there was widespread, publically acknowledged abuse in a similar institution, 90 miles distant, raises the question of how widespread abuse was in Horden Hall. Two other individuals feel that it is difficult to believe that there was no abuse in Horden Hall because of the acknowledged abuse at St. Anne's. However, no account may be simply negated. Some individuals experienced abuse while others did not. You and I as outsiders and readers of text can only listen to and accept the remembrances of these experiences at face value. To do otherwise would negate the validity of studying these residential school experiences from the perspective of those who went through them. So, with a clear understanding that not all of these individuals experienced abuse or knew about such abuses in Horden Hall,

let us turn to the accounts of those who did discuss incidences of abuse, about a quarter of those interviewed. Sam recalls abusive supervisors:

> Some of the supervisors were really... they were bastards. They were really physically abusive to the kids, they would strap them and they would ground them. They would really make them suffer, psychologically too, they would ostracize them in the group, they would send them a note and to all the other kids in the room those people were dirt, scum. And I think after a while, because everybody started having their own chance at being scum, we really understood what we were going through, and then we'd rally around them, and say well we really understand why you did that, we would try to be supportive to them. (pause) One time when I was a kid I had one supervisor tell me, "I wish you had hair around your mouth," and I was little then, I didn't understand why. It didn't really matter I guess. I said, "Why?", [and he said] "Because I would stick my dick in your mouth", that's what he told me. I didn't know any better, I was a kid. And you saw the inconsistencies in their lifestyle, the supervisors would be sleeping with each other and the resident supervisor was a man and they would do it in front of the kids. There was also this one particular woman there she used to dress up in her tights, just in her tights, I don't remember if she wore a top or not. She would come over in her tights, and she was into gymnastics and that. She'd do all these moves on these kids, she would come in and do the splits and everything just in leotards. And the kids would massage her too. She would turn around and do these fancy moves. Then she'd go have a shower with the boys too. She used to wear a bikini when the kids were having showers with her. What do you expect? Young adolescents starting to get boners because they see her in her bikini there. She used to enjoy that. And I don't know what the story with the girls was, what happened to them. That's how it was. I saw that with my own eyes.

This example illustrates that the lines drawn between different kinds of abuse, verbal, mental, physical and sexual are not clear cut. Telling a child that you wish he had hair

around his mouth so you could put your dick in it qualifies as both verbal and sexual abuse. And all of these abuses have emotional effects, and the most straightforward one is lifelong pain. Julie recalls an incident that caused her pain:

> There was another supervisor there that was physically abusive there. I got mixed up, we did chores before we went to school, and I thought I was supposed to do the hallway upstairs, and she came up to me and she said, "What are you doing here?", I said, "I'm sweeping the floor." "No, you're not supposed to be up here, you're supposed to be down in the basement cleaning out the toilet bowls, " Like this (hard voice). I didn't know, and I just dropped the broom and I ran downstairs, and you know she must have called me, I don't know. When I got down there, she just came barging in there and yanked me from [where] I was cleaning the toilet bowl, and she said "You get back here, you stand here." I didn't know what the heck was going on. And I was standing there and she just slapped me across the face, and slapped me again and slapped me again. My glasses went flying, and she went on ranting and raving. And I was so shaky, I didn't even know, you know, I got confused, I got mixed up. And she just shoved me and my head went into the toilet bowl too, and my glasses broke, and she said to me, "Don't tell anybody". And she jammed my finger [in] the door. I didn't want to go to school because I couldn't see and she just forced me out the door and she slammed the door shut like she had on my finger. She told me not to tell, it was our supervisor's day off, she was the casual. And I told what happened and luckily for us [the regular supervisor] was not strict. Maybe she was told [that] I wasn't the only girl she was treating like that, but she left shortly after, we never saw her [again]. This was a Native girl, they were starting to hire Native people to work in the residential school. You learn to hold in your emotions, I wanted to cry. If I see her I'll slap her. (laughter)

If Julie had had a strict supervisor, she probably would not have reported the incident. And this underlines the point that the type of supervisor you had could make a major

difference in the quality of your stay at Horden Hall. But even though she could tell an adult, she had emotional pain that she had to suppress. In later years, suppressing emotions had serious ramifications for many of these individuals, as will be discussed in the next two chapters.

Julie was the only individual I interviewed who reported the abuses in the incidents she relayed to me. She found this next incident considerably more frightening:

> I think some girls became victims. I remember one time there was this [man who] worked for the school. He was on the third floor. This was before I left [Horden Hall]. These girls were lined up outside his room, and there was a bunch of quarters on his desk. He was telling them, "Come in here. You can have a quarter, but you have to kiss me first," and these were only little girls. They [were] seven or eight years old. I remember some of us went to tell the supervisor what this man was doing. I remember afterwards he said "Hey, you come here. What did you tell that supervisor?" I said, "Nothing, I was just fixing the bath." "Come here," he said, and I was kind of scared. And he said, "Come closer because I want to kiss you." And I got scared, I ran away. He was chasing me around the dining room. It's a good thing he didn't catch me. We never saw him again, he got fired.

Stuart told me that he had seen and heard of very little sexual abuse in Horden Hall. When I asked what he meant by that he recalled this incident:

> Well, I'll tell you one experience. I had a teacher.. I had a sore stomach and he said, "Well, go to the washroom. Here let me come with you." So he took me in the stall, I was eleven years old, he took me in the stall, "Take down your pants," he said. He started rubbing my dong, "This will help." And somebody came in, a couple of students. I didn't think anything of it then, I was eleven years old. I just [thought] my teacher is trying to help me, I didn't think anything of it. But when I think of it now, this guy was going someplace. It's a good thing students come in so that was it, we

> went back to the classroom. After that I started wondering about it, and I don't think I should have trusted that guy. So things like that happened to me, and I imagine though I didn't see it, there was more of it that I didn't see or hear. Just what happened to me before those two saviours came into the washroom.

Stuart doesn't seem to think that this incident was particularly damaging for him, perhaps that's why I was told it. But it's disturbing to hear him taking some of the blame "I don't think I should have trusted that guy." Another incident was relayed to me that occurred in school, this one in the classroom.

> Tommy:
> They always expected you to be healthy, bright. I remember one time, this guy he was... we didn't know he was an epileptic. So one time in Grade _, he was older than me, he had an epileptic fit and fell down. And he fell into those old steamer radiators, his head went underneath and he was just banging his head on the rad. And the teacher came and started hitting him, "Come on Richard. Get up. Behave yourself. Get up. Quit acting up." (Tommy was yelling like the teacher had been). He was foaming at the mouth. And finally we told the teacher he was sick, and she said no, and she kicked him, hit him with her ruler, her yardstick. And I look at how Richard got treated for that.

Tommy and Mark discuss incidents of abuse that happened to other people:

> Tommy:
> If you didn't have a strong spirit you were a victim of abuse. If your character was weak, everybody picked on you. But if you learned through a bloody nose, fighting and all that, people didn't bother you, even the supervisors. With the supervisors you [would] sort of suck up, not suck up to them, but do as you were told and they wouldn't bother you. But if you were [rebellious] and always into trouble, you just made life miserable for yourself. [My friend], the kids used to pick on him, the supervisors used to take him

into his room. Sometimes they'd have about four kids, five kids in the supervisor's bedroom. And they would go around at night, fondling the kids. I used to hear this one kid, I can't remember his name, I could hear him crying. He was a very deep person, I used to feel sorry for him.

Mark:
I guess when you started to take up this study here, you were probably curious as to whether there were incidences similar [to those in] the Catholic boarding schools. There was an incident one time, and about five or six of us boys were taken to the office, one by one, and we were asked whether we played with ourselves. I was really shocked that this principal asked us that. I guess I was confused about what he was asking. I found out later, after talking to the rest of the guys, that everybody [had] said no, and everybody was asked who does it, and everybody said somebody else, just to get out of it. That was basically the story of everybody I guess, until recently a friend of mine, I guess about three years ago, he was talking one time, he was having a rough time with his family, his marriage wasn't all that great and his kids were... they were just going through a stage, teenagers. And he came to talk to me and he said, "Hey you remember that time when the principal took us in the office one by one?" I said "Yeah," and he said "Well, when we talked about it afterward. What happened to me, you know that guy jerked me off in there." And I said "Holy Shit, you've been carrying that around with you all this time." He said, "Yeah, I didn't know what the hell was going on". [He is] probably a couple of years younger than me. My dad used to work for the board of education and be around the school, doing work for the school, and I believe today that this guy didn't do anything to me because my dad was there.

The emotional effects of being in an institution where there was some abuse, where the routine was rigid, the rules strictly enforced and individual adult attention was negligible has had serious repercussions for these individuals, their families and the community of Moose Factory. It is these repercussions that we now turn to in further detail.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EFFECTS OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

The next three chapters explore the various effects of residential school experiences. This chapter explores the effects of these experiences on the individual, on their relationships with their family of origin, and on the community of Moose Factory. The term "families of origin" is used throughout the following chapters to distinguish the families these individuals were born into from the families that these individuals started during or soon after high school, as chapter 9 focuses on the effects of residential school experiences on parenting and the families these individuals themselves established. Chapter 8 explores the differences between the life cycle of this generation and the previous two generations, in order to explore the impact of residential school on James Bay Cree culture. Examining residential school experiences in this manner allows for a shift in the level of analysis from the individual to culture, and finally towards the implications for the next generation.

EFFECTS ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Once these individuals left Horden Hall and other residential schools, they had feelings of ambivalence towards their identity as Native individuals and attendant feelings of not belonging anywhere. What these individuals did after they left residential school will be fully explored in Chapter 8; this section is specifically dealing with these emotions. It should be noted here that only about a third of the individuals interviewed discussed these feelings. This could be a result of: specific individuals being more comfortable with me; the opened-ended nature of the interviews in which nothing about these sorts of feelings was specifically asked; or that fewer people experienced these kinds of feelings. Because those individuals who resolved these feelings found that they belong in their Native community, the issues of ambivalence over Native identity and feelings of not belonging anywhere are both addressed in a single section.

Gerald realized that he was "Indian" when he entered Horden Hall. The children he was interacting with are all Native.

> I remember one of the first things the kids had asked when I first got [to Horden Hall] was, "Are you an Indian?". And I didn't know how to respond, because in the environment that I came out of there was no such thing as black, white or whatever. And I didn't know how to answer the kid. There was another kid coming by that said, "Yeah, they're Indians." (laughs) And that's when I became aware that I was an Indian.

Two others stated that they didn't have this realization until they went for schooling further South:

> Tommy
> We didn't know we were Indian until we went [down South] to another Indian reserve, then we had another culture shock, everyone calling you Indian, on the bus, we used to walk to school because [of that]. Number one you were taken away from the reserve, totally different people, no family upbringing whatsoever, like a military school, Horden Hall. We had no feelings after that, that's what I find, no feelings for your brothers, no feelings for family, no feelings for your culture.

Julie talks a little about negative messages about Native people received in Horden Hall:

> I think that's the thing that bothers me the most, you know being taught that Indians didn't have no morals, they were trying to change the family... I didn't even know, when I was going to school I didn't know because [teachers] were a notch above, I didn't know that they could use washrooms. I was shocked the first time I found that out, a teacher used the washroom and she actually peed, I said, "Did you know she pees just like us" (in an excited voice) "Yeah, I know" (in a calm voice), is that ever awful. We didn't know, we were taught that you people were superior.... It's so strange that feeling that you're nothing in society.

Mark remembers special classes for the Senior boys given in the evenings at Horden Hall:

> When I was in the Senior dorm they had these night classes, that were taught by the principal there. It was mandatory, so I went down there...what I remember.. what we were taught was the history of the United States, the settlement of the Western part of the United States. I didn't know it then but, I believe today that it was a form of brainwashing. I guess that's why I didn't like going to those classes. My dad always taught me to be proud of myself, of my heritage. But when we were taking those classes everything was positive [about] how the Europeans were discovering, settling if you want to call it that, the Northwest

> and Southwest United States. And all the Indian tribes out there were like savages, and all they did was massacre, burn, rape and pillage. Some of those words would come up in describing Native people, although I learnt somebody else's version of the history of the States, it didn't make me feel too comfortable. The stuff I was learning, I guess it made me feel guilty. (clears throat) And I just kept going after but I blocked things out. I'd sit there and look interested. I guess being in Horden Hall there I had to learn how to act, how to mask my emotions or even how to fake them to satisfy somebody, either the big bully or your supervisor or your principal.

There are a number of relevant points raised in this quote. Mark clearly explains this ambivalence about Native identity; shame and pride conflict, and cause discomfort. The costs of this discomfort in terms of difficulty in re-establishing close bonds with their families of origin are explored in the next section. Another salient point is that this ability to mask your emotions as a child made it difficult for these individuals to open up to others as adults. Stuart clarifies this point:

> I feel having been through that, you are more able to stand up for yourself. I grew up that way and after I left those schools, I won't say you were tough but you were sort of, you wouldn't take anything from anybody. You were strong with everybody, whether it's elders or peers, you try not to show that you're weak.

This difficulty in opening up emotionally also inhibited closeness not only with their families of origin, but also, in some cases, with spouses and children. The final point that needs addressing from Mark's quote is that these are powerful messages to send to children who have very little

one on one interaction with adults who might be able to give them some perspective. Leonard discusses the long and painful process of addressing these messages as an adult:

> They would call us Bush Indians. [They said] you would never survive in the bush if you were with your family. They ran your family [down] to the point that you were ashamed of who you were. You were an Indian, a Cree Indian and you were ashamed. Even when these kids came out of residential schools a lot of times they didn't want to believe that they were Indians. They wanted to be white because they were so, so assimilated in the system I guess. Some of them even dyed their hair just to look like white people and the system was so.. and that attitude, by the supervisor, by the school, was so implanted in your head that you believed that your family was no good, that they could not provide the things that you needed. I was almost ashamed of my father, my family when I went home because of what I was told, "You live in a tent. You spend your time in the bush that's no way for a person to live." Your supervisors did this... I was almost ashamed, I denied my family, my tradition, my culture. And this happened to a lot of kids after we came out of the school system. It was put in their minds so much, they were repeatedly, repeatedly told that your family traps, your family cannot provide the things for you, your father and your mother are a bunch of drunks, they're alcoholics, all they do is drink and I've never seen my father drink in my whole life, up to the time he died, and I've known my father all my life, I've never seen him drink....
>
> I: When you left school and you went home and you had this feeling that came from what you were told in residential school about being ashamed of being Indian, how did you get over that? You obviously got over that, but how did you get through those feelings?
>
> I worked it out with myself and the elders and my family, we talked about it. It brought us closer together when we started to understand what was happening. We realized what they were doing was wrong, because we were so brainwashed that we believed the school system was right, to follow whatever advice they gave us, whatever was said, whatever was put into your head was right. So when we went home we believed that it was right and your family was no longer important, what was important

> was you as an individual. I had to work with my family and that's what I did. And I felt really bad, really bad, and I felt like that for years, until just recently... I used to think that our own people, that Native people, the trappers and the hunters are a bunch of lazy beasts. And I'd go home and I'd work all summer, everybody'd be laying around doing nothing. And all winter they'd be gone but I'd never see that. I never saw Cree as good, all I saw was the bad part because I was told in residential school that, you know, you couldn't survive as a trapper or as a hunter because it was impossible to live in the bush... it took me years before I realized that these Native people, the trappers and hunters were hard workers and they deserved that time, those three months.

Leonard illustrates here the great impact these messages from residential school can have on individuals throughout their lives. Connected to feelings for some individuals is a perception that they don't really belong in their Native community because they don't have the traditional skills that they feel they should have as Cree individuals.

> Eric:
> When I went to high school my parents knew I went to a city, and they think I don't know anything about hunting and stuff. So you have a shortfall. It's same when you go to a city, your background isn't the same so you feel incompetent. You're not competent in any place. My parents say you don't know anything about this and that so you feel useless. I'm caught between two cultures and I can't fit in with both sides. I noticed when I came back from college that my father instructs me to do things as if I were a little kid, maybe because he never saw me grow up.

At this point it should be noted that Eric's feeling of incompetence is a complete contrast to the gradual competence acquired in the bush in the traditional life cycle described in Chapter 3. Also Eric states that he can't fit in with both sides, not that he can't fit in with either side. This

indicates that he has a choice, and may still be caught up in feelings of ambivalence about his Cree identity. Furthermore, Eric gives us the beginning of an understanding of the difficulty in readjusting to a family of origin and a community. It is towards these individuals' relationships with their families of origin that we now turn our attention.

EFFECTS ON RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN FAMILY OF ORIGIN

This section addresses the emotional implications of these experiences on the family of origin. To place these implications in perspective, I will briefly outline the continued pattern of time away from family and community, which has resulted in an altered life cycle in this generation of James Bay Cree individuals. After attendance at Horden Hall and other residential schools, the individuals in this generation were required to attend high school. In the mid and late 60s there were no high school facilities in the James Bay region, and all of these individuals attended high school in more Southern locations in Ontario. Many of these individuals discussed feelings of loneliness during this period. After high school and, in about a third of these instances, further education still, most of these individuals returned to Moose Factory. Three or four interviewees lived in various cities across Canada for a few years after further education.

Many of the interviewees felt that attending residential school(s) prepared them for further education:

> Todd:
> I guess living in Horden Hall we were sort of used to living away from home and coping with a system like that. When we were little kids going to school, (laughs) we started when we were five years old and they raised us to go to school and live a lifestyle like that. We didn't bother about going [away] to school because we'd been in Horden Hall for 8 years and away from our parents. Mind you it was still hard leaving your parents and knowing that you were not going to see them for four or five months, and then to see them for two weeks and not again for four or five months. (In the 70s the government would fly children to their parents traplines for the Christmas break.) So, it wasn't easy or anything like that.

This preparation that allowed these individuals not to "bother about going away" was linked to the rigid routine, which individuals have identified as the source of their self-discipline, one of the positive things they identified that they learned from Horden Hall that endured throughout their lives.

> Mike:
> In one sense I find that for myself the experience helped me to be more disciplined in the things I had to do. It gave me a sense of routine for my own personal life. We had to do things at a certain time and I guess that basically came from if you didn't do things at a certain time while in the residential school you were penalized, you went without supper or that type of thing. (pause) It just seems to me that those who were in residential school had more success when we went out for high school and other courses. I think it was mainly due to a sense of routine, a sense of self-discipline....[In high school] I felt guilty if I didn't do the work, because that had been ingrained in me. You do it otherwise there's consequences that you have to face.

Others identified a lack of connection to their families of origin as a factor that allowed them to leave the area for further education.

> Annie:
> Then I had to leave for high school. I got my Grade 12. I went to North Bay for three years, [up to Grade] 11 there, then I transferred over to Ottawa, I went [to high school] there for one year and then I just continued on to [college]. I was so used to being away from parents. My mom and dad, they were just people that I knew in the summer time when I grew up.

This final comment in Annie's quote indicates that the extensive peer group interaction that was part of their residential school experiences greatly disrupted their familial ties. Seeing their parents in the summer wasn't enough time to bond with their parents. Julie comments on the difficulty of adjusting to being home in the summer:

> It was such a change too, when we'd come out of boarding school, because our parents would have no food like in boarding school, it was hard to make the adjustment, where we were served three meals a day and... in Horden Hall we did all these things on cue like, and at home you could eat when you want and sleep when you want.... [we went] from that environment (Horden Hall) into more a more relaxed one and just when you had adjusted it would be time to go back (laughter)

Another difficulty in returning home for the summers for some individuals was the language adjustment required.

> Vera:
> You get so used to speaking English [that] when you go back home it's hard to go back to your Cree. My mother was getting upset with us because everything we said was in English. She said, "Well you're just going to have to go back to Cree because you're in the community now." It took us quite a while before

> we got adjusted back to Cree, and the next thing you know we're right back into school again.

Both of the above quotes about summers at home indicate that two months just wasn't enough time to become comfortable with their families and communities and to reestablish childhood bonds. For the most part, individuals started realizing the full scope of the effects of residential school experiences when they were back in Moose Factory, where Horden Hall was located and where their families of origin are located.

There is one theme that recurred in all the interviews, namely that about a quarter of the individuals questioned their parents and that all of the interviewees offered reasons why their parents placed them in Horden Hall. Having an understanding of why they were placed there seems to have been a necessary step along the path to becoming closer to their parents and ultimately to healing. The reasons offered varied. Some felt their parents wanted them to learn to speak English and to get an education. Others suggested that their parents had no choice about sending them to residential school. Some suggested that residential school was a way of ensuring that all the children in the family were. Many stated that placing them in residential school allowed their parents to go trapping for the winter months. In a few cases one of the parents had a prolonged illness and they either weren't able or allowed to keep them at home with a single parent in Moose Factory. Many of the individuals had an

understanding that their parents weren't happy about placing them in residential school.

> Sam:
> I guess to large degree there were no real happy memories as you would experience in a family setting. What really happened was circumstances were dictated to my parents that were beyond their control. I guess as we got older [my father] was just not able to provide as much as he wanted to and also he wanted to see his kids get an education. My dad only went to Grade 2 or 3 and he knew that he had to sacrifice, you know, his kids... he had to sacrifice his time to give them a start. And I remember the frustration that I saw in my mom's face as when we went to the school. We could tell that she wasn't happy but [that] it was something that she had to do. I think there was also some coercion by people maybe by the Anglican Church and Indian Affairs had a lot to do with it too by saying that your kids have to be in residential school. And they never really came out and said it, but I could tell that my parents would say that if you don't go to this place we won't get our family allowance, or we won't get relief. So they were kind of forced to put us in those places, by coercion and by almost blackmailing, blackmailing my parents to do that. I think the circumstances, economic circumstances had an effect too, because when you don't have a house and you have 10 kids it's not an easy thing to do, it's like a hen with all her chicks.

In some instances, one child was kept out of the residential school and remained with their parents in the bush. This indicates that the coercive power of those in positions of authority was not absolute. In some circumstances, the parents put some pressure on people in authority to have their children admitted to Horden Hall rather than having them sent to institutions further south. Many of the parents saw a value in their children getting an education, but still believed that it was important for their

children to have some experience of their traditional lifestyle.

> Todd:
> I guess they had to do that to us in order for us to get an education, and yet they still felt that the lifestyle that they were leading was important for us to know. They'd want us to go out with them and we'd still be able to go out hunting and fishing, and after we were out of the residential school they always gave us the opportunity to go with them if we wanted to go with them. I think my mother was rather strict with us for continuing our schooling, she always insisted that we go to school and stay in school "[you'll have] nothing to do if you don't go to school". She was strict with us in that [sense]. She always encouraged us to go, but at the same time she always wanted us to be with them too.

Some individuals felt that although they understood their parents' reasons, their parents didn't have an understanding of how it was going to affect them.

> Eric:
> I questioned my mother one time about why we were put over there. I felt like, in my mind I felt that there wasn't enough resistance from them... and so I questioned her. And it seemed that she was really being pressured by the chief of the community... and so I told her that I would have preferred being with you and dad, through that whole time, even if I didn't learn the English language or get education, that was something I could go for later. I guess in some ways, when you're looking back at the fact that you did get educated while you were there, and the fact that you were fed [regularly] and that stuff, you can look back and say well that was good. But I think I would say what I don't like is being taken away from my family which is important to a child. Maybe parents were thinking too at that time that the child was going to be well fed and looked after. I don't think they realized the impact, the effect it can have on a child, you know, even later on in years.

> Chris:
> I want to ask my parents why did you do it, but it was financial and because they didn't know the law.

> And my parents also wanted me to have an education. When I confronted my parents they said I don't know, or I thought it would be good for you to get an education because the traditional lifestyle is changing. You either get an education or you hunt, fish and trap, and that was how my parents viewed it. They didn't know the family function would be jeopardized.

One of the ways the "family function" was jeopardized was a difficulty in regaining closeness with their parents. Todd felt he had a positive experience overall in residential school, and yet he regrets all the time he was away from his parents:

> I heard of a lot of people going to residential school that had a hard time in residential school, it almost destroyed them in a way, coming out of there you had no confidence in yourself, or whatever. I've heard of a lot of people too though that it had no effect on them. I don't know, I don't think it effected me. The only thing is that I sort of look back at.. I've lost the use of being with my parents, we were away from them most of the time, right through the Horden Hall years and into high school, all those years (pause)

Leah discusses the difficulty she had connecting with her mother after attending Horden Hall for four years in the late 40s:

> I'm not sure with my family that they understand what it's like to be away from home, to be placed in a residential [school]... The only thing that I can say I experienced [that was negative] is, my mom and I have become separated... I don't know, we're not close, we weren't close for a long time. It was like she was almost a stranger to me and yet she was my mom. I guess it's because I was away from home, I lost all that time being with my parents, so that's the only thing that I know that I.. (pause) I missed out on a lot of things, just sitting around and talking to my mom and doing things together. I didn't even know if she was feeling sad.

Many individuals expressed this feeling of estrangement and lack of bonding with their parents. Mike discusses the effects of a childhood and adolescence away from his whole family of origin:

> It seemed to me that until all of us were married and we returned to the Island to establish our own families, then, by our own efforts again [we tried] to restructure and get the family ties back together again... it seems to me I got stuck in the residence and became somewhat institutionalized, where everything is done by routine and rules... after coming out of there I went to high school so the separation just continued, another 4 years in high school and I used to come home for summers. The saddest thing I recall is coming home after graduating from [high school] and coming home, after being home for about two weeks my mom just basically said, "I don't know you any more, you're a stranger." That was very scary. This was supposed to be my family. And in the same fashion too it seemed like I was a stranger in the house because those years I experienced them basically alone. I was apart from my family rather than with them and apart from my other siblings. There was some contact with my brothers and sisters at the school but it was limited, it was restricted. (pause)

There are two individuals in this study who never reestablished close ties with their family of origin or with their spouses and children. If we place Leonard's struggling with his Native identity and becoming closer to his entire family at one end of a range of these readjustments, and Eric's continued ambivalence (see pp. 99-101 in last section) in the middle, then we can place Alice at the other extreme:

> I'm just starting to get close to my brother, since 1986 we started talking. My sister just lives over there (points to a house diagonally across the street) and I don't talk to her, never spoke to her... I keep my emotions to myself. Sometimes I'll

be depressed for three or four days, I won't go to work, I won't even get out of bed, I won't eat. I feel that I cannot trust anybody from what my parents did to me. I feel that everybody else is going to do that to me. So I just keep all my problems to myself and if you start bugging me to bring them out I won't even say, I'll just tell them that it will pass. It'll just go back in my mind, and come back all of sudden again, I'll stop eating, working, cause I just can't take it anymore, I don't even go see a doctor about it, I just keep it to myself. Sometimes I wish, sometimes I talk about suicide, and I don't know why, it's just an idea sometimes. I can't trust anybody, I always, I feel alone. I never used to be like that until I went to school. I always talked to my parents, after that it was just, always, I'm alone....Well I talk to a lot of people and I laugh a lot, you know when I'm out there, but on the inside, there's a lot of emotions that I find, you know, nobody knows these but me. Yesterday my son asked me, "Mom, who was your best friend when you were small," something like that, "I didn't have any friends", "Well, who did you hang around with?" I just hung around a lot of people but never had friends, I didn't know how to become friends with anybody, you know close friends. I don't know how to do that.... And the people that we trusted the most, your parents when we were young, and all of a sudden they tell you, they don't even let you know that they're putting you away, that's where my trust just went. Don't even let you know until the day before they put you in there. That's where trust goes away, it's a betrayal. I felt that I was betrayed. I can't even be close to my kids. I can't talk to them about their problems. It's like I don't trust anybody, that's how I feel (starts to cry). (long pause) I don't know how to react when they have problems. The only thing I can get around is when I laugh with my kids, have fun with my kids, play with my kids. I try to do what my parents never did, I get involved with them, but I can't, I don't have emotions to ah, I can't tell them that I love them. All that was taken from me when my parents put me in residential school... There was never really any trust in my relationship with [my spouse], even though we've been married 23 years there's no trust...There's times when.. after I got married, there were times when I never used to go visit my parents' house, only once in a while. And then my mother would start complaining [that] I never go see her, but I never had the courage to tell them why, that I actually blame them for putting me in a boarding school. Until the

> day they died that's what they said, how come she never comes over. I could never come out and tell them the reason why I never really wanted to visit them. And my sister comes around too, she's always saying that she doesn't care. I care but I don't know how to show it, you know. They don't realize the damage they did when they put me away, because they never experienced it. I was the only one that was put in that school, and they didn't believe me when I used to tell them stories about how the kids were treating me....The first time I saw my mother, I would tell her how I was treated there by the other kids and she always used to say, "It'll be OK," but it was never OK, to this day it's not OK, not for me.

As we can see from Alice's assertion that the moment she was placed in residential school was the moment when the trust was broken, the point of betrayal. This inability to share emotions has serious repercussions for all the relationships in her life. Alice also states that she could never bring herself to tell her parents that she blamed them for putting her into residential school and betraying her trust. From this statement and from the fact that almost all the individuals explained reasons they were put into residential school in interviews, it seems that attaining a perspective on their parents' reasons for placing them in residential school is an important step towards opening up to other people and allowing yourself to share your emotions for these individuals. With an understanding that many of the current generation of adults in Moose Factory are in various stages of resolving feelings towards their Native identity and reestablishing childhood bonds of closeness with their family of origin, let us turn to an examination of the

effects of these residential school experiences on the community.

EFFECTS OF HORDEN HALL ON THE COMMUNITY OF MOOSE FACTORY

The fact that Moose Factory is the community where Horden Hall was located and where these individuals were in residential school is significant. As children, these individuals were geographically close to their community, yet cut off from family interaction. As adults, these individuals reside in the community, close to the site where they were initially separated from their families. A few of these individuals mentioned that they found it difficult to be so close to community members and cut off from them.

> Mark:
> I don't know whether... if you asked me today whether I liked being in Horden Hall I'd probably tell you no. I think other people, because they were like a long ways from home, they were better able to adapt. Because I'd see my buddies going by and I wouldn't be able to go and talk to them, it probably made me lonelier than people who didn't see their friends or elders walking down the street.

Many of the children, even though they were geographically in their community, felt closed off from it while in residential school. Sandra describes such feelings:

> Every time we stayed in there for long periods of time, we'd come out of there and go home, we'd go into our community, it looked so different ....the whole view of where you live in the community, on the reserve, it looked different, like it had changed, because we stayed in there so long I guess.

In the section on Intergenerational Interactions (in Chapter 6), Alice shared how devastating it was to glimpse her mother from a distance while she was in the infirmary and be unable to have a visit from her. In the section on Resistance (in Chapter 5) we saw how some of the older girls disliked their uniforms and tried to blend in with the other children at school. It is important to restate here that these children from Horden Hall were in classes with children who were also Cree, but who returned home after classes. The following quote from Annie illustrates this separation:

> We couldn't talk when they used to send us to bed. I got caught for talking to kids from the village that had to come up around to the grounds. They were my cousins and friends. I got caught talking in the window, it was daylight still. My supervisor was standing there, I guess she had been standing there for a while before she said anything to me. When I turned around she said, "Close that window and go to bed, the next time I catch you doing [that] you know what will happen," I said, "OK" and everybody was giggling away in the dormitory because I didn't know that she was standing there. And then my friends were outside calling me, "Annie! Annie!" and I couldn't answer them because she was standing there. (laughs)

When I was interviewing Annie I could see the whole picture in my mind's eye and it has endured in my mind as a metaphor of this imperfect separation, where those you love are so close and yet just out of reach.

The fact that Horden Hall was in Moose Factory has current significance too. When I was in Moose Factory in the summer of 1993, most of the Cree individuals that I told my research topic to quickly pointed out that the fence that separated the grounds from the community was still intact.

Many more people than I interviewed pointed this fact out to me. Camera in hand, I went to the site where the elementary school for the community, Ministik, now stands. (Horden Hall was demolished in 1983.) The fence looked very small to me, especially with the gaps where the gates used to be, which took enormous proportions in individuals memories. The best photographs I have of the fence show the three rows of barbed wire at the top, tangled with overgrowth. When these individuals returned to be near their families of origin it was to the location where they had first been separated from them. And this fence is a visual reminder of that separation.

Apart from the significance of Moose Factory as the location of Horden Hall, some interviewees commented on the way in which Moose Factory as a community has changed. Tommy commented: "Natives have very close knit families sometimes, that's not happening in this community, we are separate." Mary, an elder, also noticed a change in the community. "Everything is different now, nothing is the same. There used to be only one road here, and everybody walked around. Now nobody walks around, so [many] vehicles in this small little place." Mark's comments from chapter 6 in the section on abuse also explains how visiting and talking along the road has decreased. Mark feels his own tendency not to visit others may be partly influenced by his residential school experiences:

> I: When you talk about the change, how it was with people years ago visiting each other and having a sense of community and now it being very ah, I don't know if you used the word individual, do you

> think that has something to do with the way you're forced to rely on yourself in residential school?
>
> I think maybe somewhat... I guess it's like survival. You had to try to be independent. [You] more or less looked out for your own survival and sort of put other people on the back burner, things you usually do, like go visit people. [You] try and keep to yourself a little bit. But I don't know what happened to the rest of the people who I know didn't go to residential school. I know there is a difference there, you know in individuals. I know there's a difference in the sense of the pride for their culture. There's respect for the family. For myself, I pretty much keep to myself, like around my neighbourhood and stuff like that. I don't visit my neighbours. My aunt lives next door, I never go and visit my aunt, not because I don't like her, when I see her I'll talk to her, but I'll never go next door and see her. My parents I rarely go and see. My family members I rarely go and see. It's not because I don't like them, I'd do anything for them, I'd give them my arm. But it's just the way I am, I find that my family members get along better, are closer. I tend to keep to myself I guess.

Sam and Gerald both feel that a lot of the social problems in Moose Factory today can be linked to attendance at residential schools:

> Sam:
> That's why a lot of people like that have alcoholic problems. That's why people like that have suicide tendencies. That's why we have family dysfunctions. That's why we have these things going on in our communities now, child molestation and rape and incest because a lot of that did come from residential schools.
>
> Gerald:
> I think people haven't been able to release their [anger] and deal with it, it's made them... in a lot of ways it's made us dysfunctional. [These people are] unable to grow and prosper as individual people, within themselves in a spiritual way. And because they haven't done that, that's something that they carry into their relationships, in their marriage, they carry that with their children that they may have and into the community as a whole... People couldn't talk the language,

> people were displaced, carrying around a lot of psychological problems. They're dysfunctional in terms of working in the community because they carry all these things. They're only interested in themselves and nobody else because that's the way you approach things in residential school. You look out for yourself, for number one, you know... Having gone through the residential school system you just want to be left alone. Where it was supposed to create an environment that would attempt to integrate you, basically it produced the opposite effect. People came out of there and said I don't want this. I want nothing to do with this. I do not want to be educated. I do not want to leave the security of my community. I want to be around my people. I do not want this to happen to me again. And in turn basically creating communities of people that were, to a large extent, very reclusive. They only have security within the community but then the community as a whole is very stagnant. It has a lot of very suppressed people and it makes it very difficult for a community to grow and expand to the areas that they want it to, because there's so much depression, so much animosity, so much anger, so much interest in alcohol.

Traditionally, extended family hunting groups gathered in the summer for socializing, as a rest from the physically demanding winter bush environment. Gerald's description of a community in which many people who haven't dealt with their anger over residential school experiences marks a shift from the intimate extended family hunting group of the James Bay Cree. Mike describes how the multi-generational aspect of traditional life has greatly diminished in Moose Factory:

> Many of the activities in the community are adult directed, curling clubs, that's all for adults. You see the mom that's working, the dad that's working and where are the children? They're left with a babysitter or sent off somewhere to do something and maybe they're told to join Minor Hockey. But the parents aren't at minor hockey, they're doing their own thing, it seems to me that we have a new generation of parents that are doing all of these things with their social group, and the children

> are over here, and we're losing family values and we're losing the support from the home. There was a time when we had such a community awareness. Support in the sense that, if you did something as a child and one of the adults saw you, you could be sure when you got home mom or dad would know about it, and you were corrected. And today, if I saw a child throwing stones at somebody's house or breaking somebody's window and I took the initiative and I called the parent, the parent would become angry, would tell me to mind my own business, would tell me that I'm finking on his child, it's none of my business what his child was doing, and for all we know it's not his child it's probably someone else's. There's no community, everything is becoming individualized.

Today in the community we see a pattern of peer group interactions, which mirrors the forced peer group interactions of residential schooling. It should be recognized that individuals do spend time with their children, but that social interactions in general have shifted from traditional multi-generational socializing (in the sense that getting together for fun tends to occur within generations). Mike's comments on the lack of support indicates that there has been a shift from the traditional practices of multi-generational child care. Peer group interactions may be the norm for socializing, but in terms of parenting, Mike indicates that some individuals deny even the legitimacy of peer pressure ("it's probably someone else's" kid). Before exploring changes in parenting further, and to understand some of these changes better, let us look at these individuals' experiences collectively, tracing the life cycle, to ultimately look at ways in which the culture has been affected.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EFFECTS OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL EXPERIENCES: ALTERED LIFE CYCLE

If we look at the commonalities that exist in these individuals' lives after residential school as patterns of behaviour, then we can compare them with those of previous generations and examine the changes in culture which have ensued. In particular, if we contrast the life cycle of these individuals with that of the one two generations ago, which is described in Chapter 3, we can see how much the life cycle of the traditional James Bay Cree has been altered in this generation. First, we must address the reasons why this particular generation was more affected by residential schools than the preceding generation.

There are three reasons why the generation preceding this one wasn't as greatly affected as the one under study here. Firstly, not as many children were sent to residential school. The practice of sending Indian children was not widespread in this area at that time. Usually only one child from a family, the one that was considered to have the most aptitude for learning, was sent to residential school. The preceder of Horden Hall was called Bishop Horden Memorial and its enrollment was 30 to 40 students, compared with Horden Hall which housed 200 to 250 students at its peak in the 50s and 60s. As previously mentioned, up until the mid 1940s Cree

syllabics were taught in the school. The second reason is that the residential school was set up as an "industrial" school, in which the children were scholastically taught for half a day and taught trades for half a day. For the boys this generally meant working on the farm tending animals and crops. For the girls this meant training in housekeeping; cooking cleaning and laundry. But perhaps the most important skill was learning English, which gave these individuals an added advantage when it came to finding wage labour. The final and perhaps most important reason is that individuals who went to residential school in the preceding generation were immediately reabsorbed back into their multi-generational family groups and communities. They were instructed only until the age of sixteen. Very few of these individuals proceeded to high school or further education. So in the generation preceding the one under study here, the majority of individuals did not attend residential school with the subsequent alienation from the traditional life cycle, and those who did returned to their families directly after attending residential school. This subsequent alienation from family is the second factor in the altered life cycle, the first being that the practice of widespread removal of almost all the children in this generation from their families and the placement of these children in residential school.

PROLONGED ABSENCE FROM FAMILY AND COMMUNITY: "WE WERE USED TO LIVING AWAY FROM HOME" (Todd)

The generation of individuals whose residential school experiences are described in the preceding three chapters were not reabsorbed into their families and communities directly after Horden Hall. Some of these individuals (8) were sent to residential schools farther south for Grades 6, 7 and 8, and were not with predominantly James Bay Cree children. All of these individuals were required to continue on to high school. Of the 25 people interviewed, all 18 of those in attendance at Horden Hall in the 60s continued their education away from Moose Factory and the 7 that attended in earlier years returned to their families and communities directly after residential school. Perhaps one of the reasons for this conformity is that all of the individuals interviewed were survivors, although there are varying degrees of success along the spectrum of emotional health.

A notable exception to the pattern of at least ten years away from parental families is that of children whose parents withdrew them from formal schooling for one year to take them into the bush on their traplines. Three individuals interviewed had that opportunity in their teen years. Julie reflected on what that experience meant to her and her identity as a Native individual:

> When we went to school all the feelings, the mixed messages that they're trying to make you white... I used to get this feeling that I'm not proud to be a Native person, I guess that's what they all say. I think that [residential school] is where this comes from. We lost some of our Indianness. We don't know

> who we are because we didn't have that lifestyle, trapping and hunting and skinning animals and eating the food that is [part of] our culture. We never ate it there, and therefore some of those children who came out of residential school never developed a taste for it, it was so foreign. When I was thirteen my parents told the school that I wasn't going to be going back to residential school for one year. My mother said, "I need my oldest daughter to be with me in the bush because she has to help me". I was taken out of school for one year and I lived with my parents on the trapline. It was a totally different way of life you know (emphatically). It was so nice, I vaguely remember parts of that year. I remember running around these trails and I didn't wear shoes... and so when I went on the trapline with my parents it was a good experience for me. Of course it had its' disadvantages as well, because I was one year behind the other kids when I went back. But I think because of what I had to go through with my parents on the trapline, it broadened my knowledge of how life was to be for... and I see now why my parents wanted to do that, to hang on to that way of life, cause it's so.... like living. To me out in the bush is living off the land, that's what it is. You know, before we left, all those foods, I knew that I could survive [but] there were some things that I would miss... it was a long time ago, the trapline was like.... there were some times I would think I can't wait to get back to Moose Factory, "When I get home the first thing I'm going to eat is French fries." I would eat macaroni and all those things you know... cause I was sick of rabbit, sick of beaver and sick of ptarmigan. There's not enough children who appreciate food, the food which they eat...

Even with the opportunity to experience the traditional way of life of her parents, Julie had ambivalence about her identity as a Native person, as did most of the individuals in this study who went to residential school. Most of the individuals did not have the opportunity to experience a traditional way of life after early childhood, and they have been dealing with the issues of Native identity later in

life. But even though Julie and a few others had this opportunity, they continued on to high school with a subsequent continued alienation from their families and communities. In addition to attending high school, some of the individuals that attended Horden Hall in the 60s had further education still and went on to college or Bible college or university. What followed this particular stage in life cycle and sometimes overlapped with it, was a period of intense wildness described by Sam as time of loss of control, that involved partying and drinking accompanied by feelings of helplessness and having no direction.

ANOMIE: "LIKE A DOG TURNED LOOSE" (Mark)

This period in these individuals lives is also described as "wild times" (Sam). This period may be described by the term "anomie" (Durkheim in Giddens 1972, Orru 1987). For the purposes of this discussion, I will define anomie as feelings of not belonging anywhere or with anyone, more specifically a feeling of being disconnected from their traditional James Bay Cree culture. And these individuals were going through these feelings with very few individuals from the preceding generation who had similar experiences in residential school and a similar life cycle. This manifested itself in a period of wild parties and alcoholism for many of these individuals, and it was accompanied with feelings of depression and lack of focus in life. Although most of the interviews were

focussed on the actual residential school experiences, some individuals discussed this period of their lives.

> Mark:
> I left Horden Hall in (the late 60s), that was my last summer here and then I went out to school. [It was] just like somebody turned me loose. Probably the best way to describe it is a dog that's tied up, and you turn him loose and he just takes off. That's exactly how I was.

Sam describes his feelings during this period of anomie in his life:

> I guess from age 12 to 27, [about] 12 to 14 years, I was a mess, I was a total absolute mess. It seemed like there was a reason for me to destroy myself. Why? [because] a) I didn't belong anywhere b) I didn't know where I was going, c) I didn't care, nobody was going to care for me. I had a lot of, what's the word, unexplained longings and I had a lot of unexplained resentment (pause) and I had a craving to be loved, or wanting to love, of wanting to have something with someone special. But I didn't know what it was, you know? And obviously one thinks in his mind, well maybe that's what it is, it's just a physical thing. And there were a lot of girls with that too, in that time, because they were looking for the same thing, they came through the same system. I guess the big question that a lot of people ask is why? Why do I feel this way? Why do I do this? Why does this happen? Why are you like that? I guess there's a lot of unexplained unhappiness. That's one of the major things I see now, unhappiness, loneliness, and along with that there's frustration, and loss of control. (pause)

Sam links these cravings to be loved and feelings of not belonging anywhere to his residential school experiences. Leonard explains how alcohol fits into this pattern:

> I: You were talking about drinking and you said that you can understand that many people thought it was a good way to get high, a good way to feel good. Do you think that it might be the opposite, that it might be a way to stop feeling bad?

> Well that too, definitely. It's a way to make a feeling, a hurt feeling go away. And a lot of people did not want that to come back. You know when you're feeling bad, if you take some kind of a remedy that will make you feel good, you're going stick with it. A lot of the Indian people did not know how to handle alcohol, they still don't. I know I don't know how to handle alcohol, it almost ruined me in the 70s, my family. Nobody knows how to handle alcohol, once you get involved to a point where you can't turn back... an alcoholic must rely on feeling high from day to day because he doesn't want to go back to a depression or a feeling of being useless, helpless, helplessness. They don't want to go back to that. So they feel that alcohol is an outlet because they can rely on it to make the hurt go away... It's ruined a lot of good families. The hurt that comes with it is unreal, and like I said, it almost ruined me and my wife.

The feelings of not belonging anywhere, not knowing where you are going, and of unexplained longing that Sam identified are not incompatible with the feelings of helplessness and uselessness that Leonard described. Sam goes into further detail about this "wild" time when asked about his brothers:

> Obviously all of us were like that, my brothers [and I]. We all went into a stage, crazy like that. Some of us have got out of it, maybe not all of us, but most of us. You see when you have a lot of junk in you, you're not working right as a person and you're kind of disinterested in a lot of things. You're not really committed to a lot of real genuine good stuff because there's a lot of junk in you.[You can't see] things in a, in a holistic fashion or a clear fashion. You just kind of existed you. I suppose that's what happens to a lot of people, they just haven't really deciphered their feelings, it's just like a bunch of hieroglyphics on the wall. They don't know why they have brutal feelings against women or men or people in authority. It's crazy... you've got to deal with it or you're forever going to have that problem.

Some individuals never made it out of this "crazy stage", and a number of individuals committed suicide. Due to the qualitative nature of this study, I have no estimation on the proportion of people who didn't, or haven't yet, made it out of this stage. A few individuals told me about close friends and relatives that committed suicide or died by violence during this period of feeling helpless and not belonging anywhere. I don't feel at liberty to disclose those stories, as these individuals cannot consent or refuse to have their story told. This is an important point because again we see the influence of the individual in the range of experiences relayed throughout this examination of residential school experiences and their effects. Also, in traditional James Bay Cree culture there is an abhorrence towards suicide (Preston 1967a:482), so I suggest that these individuals were both deeply distressed and in some fundamental way alienated from their culture.

The individuals in this study all identify themselves as survivors, those with strong spirits. Gerald succinctly said about residential school that "it made you or it broke you" and these individuals "made it" with varying degrees of success at dealing with emotional issues and adjusting back into community life. At the other end of the range are a few individuals who never had this wild time, but settled down and started adjusting to living in their communities again and coping with issues that arose out of residential school experiences earlier than their counterparts. The next stage

in this life cycle is one of settling down, which is sometimes accompanied by a "mid-life awakening".

SETTLING DOWN AND THE MID-LIFE AWAKENING: "PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO SEE THINGS AS THEY REALLY ARE AND THERE'S HOPE" (Sam)

These individuals settled down as they grew older. Almost all of the individuals interviewed were married by their early twenties, and all of them had children by their mid-twenties. The women tended to settle down earlier, possibly because they tend to be the primary care-givers for their children. The ages at which they settled down ranged from mid-twenties to mid-forties. Sam comments:

> An interesting thing is that when Native people arrive at the age 30, or close to that age, they become almost like changed people. They become more... they quieten down and, you don't see much of them. They're usually pretty settled even if they're not married.

Preston (R., personal communication, November 1994) believes that settling down used to happen at the point of marriage until the 1970s. This indicates another difference between the life cycles of these generations.

For some individuals this process of settling down came through a mid-life awakening that is comparable a "mid-life crisis" but diametrically opposed. The mid-life crisis is a questioning of individual satisfaction (Pitt, 1980, Sharp 1988), some of the questions asked are "What have I done with my life? Am I fulfilled? What can I change in my life to make

myself happier?" The mid-life awakening of the James Bay Cree in the generation under study is a sudden awareness that there is more to life than themselves as individuals. There is a shift in focus from the self and self preservation to those outside themselves. They have a realization that there is a whole community that needs them. Often the focus is shifted towards helping the next generation, the generation of their children. Sam had such an awakening:

> I: You mentioned that you were about 17 or 18 before you got your self-identity...
>
> I think I was pretty much too wrapped up in my own little world. My instruction I guess from my teacher was that I was very self-centered and [that residential school] had taught me to be self-centered and self-motivated and selfish I guess. I really couldn't care about Indian people. I really wasn't interested in any one else's affairs while I was like that, before I turned 17 or 18 or so. I was just going to go out and get a good job and just be a teacher or whatever. I was just very selfish. And from about 18 to 26 or 27 I had to sort it all out, all that garbage. I was into drugs, alcohol, I got married, I continued my lifestyle as a real wahoo you know (laughs)... That's the kind of guy I was, just totally wild. Things started falling in place after that, I started thinking seriously about myself and about my marriage and about my family and my kids... It's after a time that you have to deal with these things because if you don't it'll destroy you. There's a lot of people in this state. If you don't deal with that, if you don't come to grips with what you are and where you're going and what you want to do, you're... you're lost in space, lost in time, you have no sense of what you are and no sense of what direction you're going. And there's a lot of people out there, they're just like smashing into everything, you know, there's no rhyme or sense or reason to their existence and a lot of it is due to things like that... there are people out there that are, I don't know if you want to call it healing or whatever, but the fact is that they just got their head together and their lifestyle the way that they feel is the best for themselves and their family. [They are] focussed on their existence for

> the betterment of themselves and other generations. I mean they want to do something for their kids. I think for a period of close to fifty years there was a lot of... this total almost alienation. What do you call it? The extinction of the culture of the Native people, it never really was lost, it was just messed up badly, disfigured. Just now, people are starting to see things as they really are and there's hope.

Sam clearly expresses the inward focus, describing himself as "selfish" and "totally wild", with no sense of what he was or where he was going. This shift in focus involves first focussing on his own existence, and then towards his marriage and his children. Once he "got his head together" he was able to expand that focus outward. It may be useful for you to know that he has expanded his focus beyond his family and is actively contributing to the community.

There is another excellent example of a James Bay Cree woman who went through Horden Hall in the 60s and whose life cycle fits this profile: attendance at Horden Hall; further residential school experiences down South; a prolonged absence from her family of origin and community; a period of wild times during which she married and had children; and finally this awakening that focussed her life on her own existence and towards the next generation. Her life history is described in an MA thesis entitled "Six Moose Factory Cree Life Histories: The Negotiation of Self and the Maintenance of Culture" (Logotheti 1991). Here is the account of her awakening:

> "Well, I'll tell you something that happened, (..) why I started looking at my kids too. They were doing things (..) that touched me... I was crying

> one time and my son, Craig was only about four or five. (...) He crawled up onto my knee and I just sat crying, he was going like this to me [she gestures wiping off her eyes]. Like to me? And I looked at this kid and I thought, 'My god! I should be doing that to you, sitting there comforting you.' And I thought, 'Oh, I'm going to snap out of it. No more!'" (Logotheti 1991:72)

Fred sums up this point of awakening in the next quote "there comes a moment in our lifetime", and this moment is connected to religion for three of the interviewees, who felt that they were successful at quitting drinking and settling down through embracing Christianity. (For an excellent descriptive account of Native drinking patterns see Maracle 1993.) Fred's describes the catalyst for his settling down in his late 20s after a period of drinking and partying:

> A lot of things happened in terms of trials in our family. [There were] a lot of difficult circumstances we had to face. The first time I ever faced death was in the year before my mom died [when] my grandmother died. Then my mother died, then my aunt and my grandfather, then my niece, she was only five years old, she died of a brain tumor. And that's where ah my life changed again, my life changed in terms of... I guess maybe you could say religion... I starting asking questions when mother got sick and was on dialysis for a year. Where do you go after you die? When [my niece, the] little girl died, people from the whole community came. The pastor came and spoke. [He said] the little girl is not lost, she's in heaven. That started [me] questioning.
>
> I: When you started to question, when all those people were dying, when you started to think about heaven and hell, did you connect what you understood with all those times you were in chapel and in church in school?
>
> No, it never really dawned on me that it was that important, but I always remember those times though when we went to church and singing about Jesus at Christmastime, the Saviour being born and Eastertime, that he died Good Friday and rose again

> on Easter Sunday. I didn't realize the importance of those dates. I always remembered them, but I didn't realize how we interpret those things until I became a Christian. You see our focus is not very strong, we rebel against God I guess, in the early part of our life. There comes a time or a moment in our lifetime that we realize that there's someone there for us, for all of us I guess.

Fred interprets his period of anomie as a rebellion against God, and keeping in mind that we cannot negate his interpretation, we can recognize that it fits the pattern of other individuals who attended Horden Hall in the 60s. Another interesting issue raised in this quote is that Fred does not feel that the religious aspect of Horden Hall had a strong influence in his finding faith in Christianity. The other two interviewees that had a similar awakening through Christianity felt the same way, and all three chose churches which were not Anglican. The influence of the Anglican Church in Moose Factory and other James Bay Cree communities through their church functions and residential schools in the 20th century is an area for further research, but does not fall under the scope of this study, partly because the interviewees did not stress the religious side of the institution even though they all remembered the requirement for daily chapel services.

Other interviewees settled down after realizing that something was wrong in their lives and needed to change through a feeling of emptiness in spite of apparent success at adjustment.

> Julie:
> I got married because I thought it was the (emphasis in original interview) thing to do, to get married and have kids but I never did [finish high school], it was only for a year. I was 26 years old, I had my own house, I had a husband, my two children. We had everything, a car, motorcycle, skidoo, everything, nice furniture, anything you could possibly want. But I still wanted more, there had to be more. It didn't make sense to go back [to school] I had a job with the First Nation. [I felt that] there still had to be more. We carried a lot of unresolved issues with us into our marriage. We were kids, were so young too, I was only eighteen when [my oldest child] was born (sigh and pause).

Julie did complete high school. And she went on to build a life for herself that was "more". She described to me a process of grieving for her lost childhood some time after our interview together. There are individuals in this study who did not disclose an "awakening" to me, and probably some who have not completed settling down. However, all of the individuals in this study did return to Moose Factory.

LIFE CYCLE AND CULTURE CHANGE

This pattern of prolonged absence from family and community, questioning of Native identity, feelings of belonging nowhere, wild times and settling down is the general pattern of the life cycle of the generation that attended Horden Hall in the 60s interviewed in this study. If we contrast this life cycle with the traditional life cycle in which individuals spent their entire lives in an extended family hunting group, we can see that the life cycle is radically altered.

The gradual socialization of the traditional way of life was replaced with peer socialization in the residential school. Instead of learning to adult standards of competence in the physical and social environments, and gradually acquiring the skills that previous generations witnessed others acquiring in multi-generational groups, these individuals were left with no Cree models of the transition from adolescent to adult. In addition, many had feelings of ambivalence towards their cultural heritage, anger, loneliness and no sense of purpose. This is a sharp contrast from the gradually acquired skills, self-control and self-esteem of traditional James Bay Cree culture.

Comparing the life cycles informs us not only of the contrast in the lives of these individuals to their parents and grandparents, but it will also enable us to look at individual experience in the context of culture. Although the responses of these individuals are similar to the responses of other Native children in residential school, they responded from within the culturally patterned emotional responses of James Bay Cree to their environment. As children, these individuals were loved autonomous human beings, learning reticence, competence and social responsibility to the best of their abilities. Through an examination of the concept of reticence which is one of the culturally patterned emotional responses of traditional James Bay Cree, we can explore how one internalized norm was

adapted in response to the new environment of residential school and has been altered by these cultural actors.

Reticence is "that area of self-control that directly affects personal exposure or self-expression", (Preston 1967a:468). In both the physical and social environments, reticence typifies the way in which James Bay Cree individuals in traditional culture interacted. Preston explains how the social and physical environment are linked in such a way that reticence is, in both arenas, the competent cultural response.

> The hunter must <u>know</u> the animal, his condition and mood, and the possible avenues of response that the animal may choose when it is aware of the hunter or the trap. In effect, man and animal interact; knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the animal is the basis of the hunter's or trapper's strategy. A similar sensitivity to social cues is the source of the skill precision and subtlety that characterizes Cree human relations....The hunter's world is characterized by one of contingencies of an ungenerous and inconsistent environment. But the social environment is also one of contingencies. Here, as in hunting, the individual depends on his own and others' competence. [emphasis in original] (Preston 1967a:467-68)

In the social environment, reticence is a behavioural mechanism that facilitates human interaction with minimal risk. "Reticence allows appropriate disclosure so that each individual maintains autonomy." (Preston 1967a:451). There is individual variation in the degree of reticence an individual commonly practices and in the competence with which it is practiced. Preston (1967a:469) describes this variation as increased self-control across the categories of "quietness",

"shyness", "withdrawal" and "avoidance". The degree of reticence also varies within the same individual from situation to situation. Quiet or shy competence is viewed as ideal - capable, aware, non-aggressive interaction. In this manner, Cree individuals channel self-expression. Reticence that can be typified as withdrawal or avoidance behaviour, blocks self-expression (Preston 1967a:472). The internalization of the reticence norm increases gradually and slowly until marriage in the traditional life cycle (Preston 1967a:486), and is balanced with increasing self-awareness and self-reliance.

In a paper examining what Eastern Cree children bring with them to the milieu of formal education, Preston (R. 1967b:1), lists self-control in the form of reticence. "Reticence in uncertain situations begins very early in the life cycle, and persists long." (Preston R 1967b:6). As children in residential school, many of these individuals suppressed emotions (Julie "We held our emotions in."), and the reticence practiced tended toward the avoidance end of the spectrum. It is important to recognize that residential school was an emotionally extreme environment. A child alone would not be expected to successfully deal with the contingencies of death through starvation and exposure in the bush. Nor in the traditional life cycle would a child be expected to respond with the same competency in self-expression as an adult. After residential school, a few of the individuals relayed that others viewed them as "cold",

"blunt" or "not having a heart". What has been damaged, through an environment that didn't allow it to develop, is the ability to allow appropriate disclosure. Instead of learning to allow personal exposure with close family members, this reticence went too far, and became an avoidance of emotional intimacy, inhibiting self-expression. The ability to increase or decrease the level of self-control for different situations was not learned in residential school.

Those individuals who were able to find some healing and deal with childhood residential school experiences, particularly those who turned to elders for guidance, may have gradually acquired the facility with this traditional pattern of self-expression. However, not only have these individuals been denied a gradual maturation within a multi-generational family group, but they are also no longer in a physical environment in which reticence is reinforced as the competent response. Ultimately, residential school experiences in this group of individuals has resulted in an altered life cycle and patterns of emotional responses which differ from previous generations.

CHAPTER NINE

THE EFFECTS OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL EXPERIENCES ON PARENTING

This chapter focuses on how these individuals who went through Horden Hall in the sixties feel it affected their parenting. While this chapter has implications for the effects of residential schools on the following generation, it is the effects on parenting within the current generation of individuals that is the focus and not the experiences of their children. There are two patterns which emerged from discussions on parenting, namely those of affection and discipline, which will be explored in two sections. These styles of parenting are not mutually exclusive, nor are they exhaustive. As we have seen with Tommy and Alice, individuals who have not been able to deal with the effects of their residential school experiences had great difficulty expressing affection towards their children. In addition, all the individuals interviewed are survivors, and have emerged from the period of anomie discussed in chapter 9 with varying degrees of success. Therefore along this range of emotional healing, it must be acknowledged that some individuals established their own families during periods of anomie and emotional turmoil. The ramifications for various stages of childhood experienced in these families established by individuals during these periods are not under study here. It

must also be stated that there is a cultural ethos of responsibility towards one's own children that has persisted throughout the generations examined in this study; and that this responsibility, coupled with their love for their children, has been a powerful positive motivator for these individuals to strive for emotional healing. As we might expect, residential school experiences have had ramifications not only for these individuals' relationships within their families of origin and community, but also within the families they created.

PARENTING

Before we address these two styles of parenting, let us examine some general feelings and perceptions about parenting. These individuals share a common perception that their children are not as mature as they were at their various ages and therefore they would not be able to survive in a residential school.

> Arthur:
> I think when I look back on it my generation, or at least the generation that went to Horden Hall, we had to be adults I guess, or disciplined, responsible, be more mature at an early age. But even then, that's the way we were taught, when we lived off the land. You have to be responsible at a very early age when you grow up in the bush. You're taught that you have responsibilities, whereas kids today, maybe they're too sheltered in the home setting. They [don't] have the same kind of upbringing. They haven't been disciplined or pressured to bear that much responsibility at an early age.

> Todd:
> I've got one that's fourteen. I just talk to him a little bit about how we were brought up. [It's] different from the way he's being brought up and I guess a lot of times I tell him he's lucky, [because of] how he's being brought up. I guess it's a whole different generation. They expect different lifestyles. I don't know maybe [my experiences] helped me to discipline him a little. I was brought up in a stricter environment and kids were more in control of themselves. But I think he was brought up pretty good. He's pretty good. He listens to us pretty good. My wife and I were brought up differently. My wife was in a big family too. [It was] similar to ours so she's used to being around a lot of people, [with] sharing and stuff like that, the same as what I was brought up with.
>
> Sally:
> I had to grow up quickly, and not be a kid. I look at my son and I think he could never do that. Kids around my age when I was young seemed to be more mature. But I look around now at [kids] that age and they don't seem mature at all, to me anyways.

All of the individuals who attended Horden Hall in the sixties expressed that under no circumstances would they ever send their own children to residential school. They made comments such as "To this day, I guess I felt I could never put them through what I went through" (Arthur) "If you asked me today if I would put my children in [residential] school, I wouldn't allow it." (Todd) or "I think if anyone ever came to take away [my daughter] I would fight tooth and nail."(Julie). Michelle elaborates on her feelings:

> I just, I don't know, I couldn't, I wouldn't be able to live with myself if I sent my kids to residential school. I just wanted to look out for them myself. I wouldn't dream of sending them to a place like that. I don't know, that's [just] the way I feel. You know it started when I brought my first baby home. I was scared to bring it home because you would see everything, the world, all

> the bad things that happen in this world. I used to be like that with all of them. I just wished I could keep them inside me. (laughs) I don't know how other women feel but that's how I was with every one of my kids. Every time the nurse would ask, "Are you going to go home," I was scared to go home, you know? [I didn't want to] expose my kids to this world and all the troubles going on in this world. (laughs) I was very protective of them as kids. I mean I wouldn't, you know if someone was teasing them and picking on them I wouldn't go out there and hit the kid that was responsible, but it really bothered me. When they got to be teenagers and they started hanging around with their friends and staying out late and, I couldn't sleep until I knew they were safe in the house, you know? I don't know if other parents are like that. (laughs)

There is also a feeling among some of these individuals that because they had no personal experiences of growing up in a family unit that they have had nothing to reflect on to guide them in raising their own children. Stuart states that "I lost a lot of the skills needed to be a good parent, I lost that because of residential school, and I haven't been in residential school for thirty years."

> Leah:
> I got a bit mixed up with alcohol after I got married but I was always very concerned for my children. I have a lot of love and respect for them. Some say they weren't taught to be parents, I don't know if I could say that.... I learned a lot of things from books when my kids were small. I read a lot of books, baby books. I thought that I had this responsibility, that they were my children. I loved doing things for them. I was concerned for them. I did my best for them. That's all you can do for people is to, you know, hope for the best for them, wish the best for them, they have to do the rest.
>
> Mike:
> My own personal desire is to be with my children, and I view that as.. when I was in residential school being separated from family and family members, and thinking about the times we were

> together as a family and did things together as a family. That's what my wife and I do with our children, we spend time [with them]. For example, this weekend I went fishing with my sons, and several weeks ago we went camping with the family. [We] participate with the children, doing various things with them. I think many of the other residential school individuals do the same, if I think about it. [They] do things with their children, maybe because they want to spend time with their children, time they never had with their own parents.

Other individuals feel that they draw from their early childhood experiences when it comes to parenting. Fred, for example:

> I think [I use] the same values that I learned from my parents. You know your parents tell you a lot of things, they tell you stories, the way you should live in the community or amongst the people in the community, but you also learn about responsibility and what you are accountable for, in terms of, you know life. You have to meet at least those basic needs, you know shelter and providing for your family. My mother used to talk about going to church and about religion and that's important in your family. Everyone knows that education is also important. Being able to meet those [needs] I think was the basis of bringing up my family. Instilling values such as hunting and fishing and maintaining some knowledge about trapping, that way of life too is important.

Many of these individuals feel that teaching traditional practices and beliefs is important, but it is difficult to draw conclusions about the extent of this practice. In terms of culture loss, a few of the individuals discussed Cree language when talking about their children. Some feel a deep regret that they didn't speak to their own children in Cree from infancy.

Fred:
The only thing that I regret is not being able to speak our language to our children. We're getting scolded today by both our parents, like my dad and my in-laws for our children not being able to speak [Cree]. I can't seem to get my kids [to speak it]. Do I change my whole language in my house? Do I start talking Cree when I should be talking Cree? How are they going to respond? Is it going to be the same way I responded when my parents were doing the same thing? They spoke to us in Cree and we in turn responded in English and we understood each other, amazing eh?

Michelle:
I didn't teach any of my kids Cree, they just know what they know now from what they learned in school, when they were going to school. I don't know why [I didn't teach them Cree]. I should have talked to them when they were small. But when they started school they taught them Cree words. My oldest daughter used to ask me, "Mommy how do you say this in Cree?" and I'd tell her, and she'd say "That's wrong. You say it like that." (different dialects) (laughs) And I've been speaking Cree ever since I first started talking and she'll tell me how to say (laughs) But most of them understand [what] I'm talking about when I [speak in] Cree. They know a few words in Cree, [but] they can't speak it like I can.

Arthur:
I guess one of the things that's been lost or sacrificed in that whole process is our language. I guess you eventually begin to believe that the required language is the English language. Maybe we just weren't ready for these new requirements, and the effect it was going to have on our lives, and then the effects it has on our children. Now, if anything, we wish we could go back in time if we could and do it over again and make sure that the kids learn the language. It's not too late but I guess there's a feeling of regret.

Another common statement made by the males is that residential school experiences made them determined to "make a good living". While their fathers were "very capable at supporting" (Kirk) them in the bush, they feel that it's

important to provide for their children within today's environment, the community of Moose Factory.

> Fred:
> Yes, it did. Yes, it affected [the way I decided to raise my kids], for sure, in the way that, I was going to be determined to try and get a job and to support my wife and my kids. I was more or less determined to make it I guess, for us. I'm not saying that my parents didn't make it, that was a different circumstance in their situation, certainly, and their way of life was totally different from what we do today.

The phrase "make it" or "make a good living" is a traditional concept (Preston, personal communication, December 1992). Fred's comment raises the question about the extent to which traditional concepts have been incorporated into present day parenting. One of the individuals interviewed was "mother" to her daughter's child, and it is not uncommon for individuals to rely on their parents for babysitting. The extended family group, with intimate personal involvement in daily life, however, has to some extent broken down among those who were interviewed, whom perceive parenting as their personal responsibility. This shift away from extended family group involvement has also been influenced by the move from bush-oriented towards community-oriented life. As this is a qualitative study, no conclusions can be drawn about the extent of involvement with extended family groups.

Similarly, with the patterns of discipline and affection, no conclusions can be drawn about the extent of this shift from traditional patterns. Only a few interviewees

went into detail about their parenting techniques. I made it clear that I was interested in parenting, but I did not press for responses, in keeping with the unstructured nature of the interviews. The reflections of those who did express their views are important for an understanding of the effects of residential school experiences on parenting.

DISCIPLINE:

Many of the individuals interviewed felt one of the positive things acquired in residential school was a sense of personal discipline and routine, and wanted to pass that positive lesson on to their children. Again we see a range of responses; some individuals do not discipline their children, while others consider themselves to be strict.

> Edith:
> The only thing is [that I try] to let them know about their routine, like when they have to get ready for school, to be awake to be on time and to make sure they clean their room and things like that. But you can only tell them so many times and then... but I don't follow a rigid routine or anything like that. [They have] plenty of time for stuff. But then we usually have our meals, breakfast and lunch and supper [a set times]. Supper is between five and six.

> Arthur:
> I guess I felt I could never put them through what I went through. I don't know why, but they're still home with us. [They stayed] even in their high school years. I guess we just felt, my wife and I, those years are critical years for them to be home and get the kind of discipline or stability that they need from the home until such time they're able to leave on their own. I don't know if it's so much because of what I went through, even though it was a terribly bad experience, but just the fact of being away from my parents. And I maybe just

thought that I didn't want to put them through something like that, if it was possible.

Sandra:
It taught how to discipline my kids, to be disciplined. Horden Hall also taught me that any way you want to go, to succeed you have to finish your schooling first, and that has stuck to my head to this day. I did finish school, all of us did. There's a lot of things that I learned from there, the routine that I have for brushing my teeth, I still do that and how to set a table (laughs) because that's what they taught us, skills and proper manners and the way to treat people. I think what I learned from there stayed with me, and I'm using it.

The next two fathers, Gerald and Sam, went into greater detail about the implications of "discipline" and the expectations they place on their children. Both fathers make the rules and obligations very clear to their children.

Gerald:
I look at a child that I have, I try to teach them the same things that my parents taught me. But the environment that they're in now, there is some focus I guess in terms of the importance of being responsible. They learn very quickly what that means, you know their role, the expectations [placed on them]. I've taken some good things that I experienced in the residential school and tried to make them aware of those, and by the same token sharing some of the other things that came out of it.... Just the benefit of having gone through the experience of a system like that, one minute you were in complete control and the next minute you didn't know what the hell was going on, the uncertainty, that kind of stuff. I try to impress on them that they have to be careful and aware of how they should be approaching things. They may be intended supposedly in your best interests but they are not always in your best interests... One of the good things was responsibility for yourself. My son, he's completely self-sufficient. I don't have to get up in the morning to wake them up myself; he changes, he washes, he does all the regular things, he does his own clothes, his own sheets, he can cook for himself, you know that kind of stuff. And maybe that's hard but that's stuff I've come to expect of him. Stuff that I was taught going to

residential school and having been there. He's different in a sense because I tried to encourage that kind of stuff at an early age.

Sam:
I see a lot of crazy stuff going on today, you've probably seen it yourself, a lot of drinking a lot of booze a lot of drugs, a lot of sex, and a lot of AIDS. I see that and for my kids that's not a healthy environment for them. I tell them this is happening out there, but I tell them when you're here, when you're under this roof, I expect you to observe what I'm directing you to do as my child. They're all teenagers except for one. The rules within this house is that.. dad is the man that sets the rules and you play by the rules. That's basically it, and you respect people, you respect property, you respect values. Respect your Creator, honour your Creator, you're here [in] life for a purpose OK not to take something away from life but to give into life. That's how I teach them..... I believe I should be responsible to my children. I'm in a position to raise them properly.... Right from day one I instilled values in them and treated them with [respect], like a person. Now, today, we sit down and talk about things that are important to them and I listen to them.... All my [children] have chores, they make their beds, they wash the dishes. They do all that kind of things that you expect them to do. They do their part in being responsible, sometimes when my wife and I are busy we get one of the [kids] to cook, or if mom is busy and everybody else is busy I cook. We all.. we get to share responsibilities and we depend on each other.

Do you think of the home you're setting up as a safe environment and an ordered environment?

I try not to make it too regimented, it reminds me of Horden Hall. What I try to do is.. I can be very strict in terms of grounding them or taking away privileges, but I'm also very lenient, if they appeal to me and say well dad a) I'm sorry and b) I cleaned up my room like you told me to do, I straightened it out and I say OK you can go.

Sam strives for a balance between strictness and leniency. Although this style of discipline in parenting is a recent shift, traditional concepts remain, such as Gerald

teaching reticence, "they should be careful and aware how they approach things" and Sam teaching social responsibility "we get to share responsibilities and we depend on each other".

The next father, Stuart, describes himself as strict. Stuart defines discipline more in terms of being a disciplinarian. His description of the uncontrollable anger that he feels while disciplining his children gives a glimpse into the negative effects that residential school experiences may have on parenting.

> Stuart:
> The positive, there is a positive out of all this, if there's a positive out of all this I think it's that it taught me discipline. It taught me how to, I'm not sure what the right word is, it taught me discipline, it taught me to accept things and to be thick-skinned and , to be stubborn. Sometimes that's good and sometimes that's bad. It taught me to have no heart basically, because there was very little affection or love shown in those residential schools, very little of that. And the down side is, I think I lost a lot of the skills needed to be a good parent. I lost that because of residential school, and I haven't been in residential school for thirty years. I'm strict, a very strict father, and usually Indian fathers aren't strict but I am. I find myself losing my temper, getting mad, and I trace that back to residential school. I trace it back to that because it was there that I learned how to feel anger and get mad. And, and when I think of getting slapped, getting strapped, getting punched I feel mad, and when I see my kid doing something wrong all that comes back to me and I get mad the same way those supervisors did with me. That's the down side, that's the part I don't like, and I can't control it. I get mad at my kids because of the way I was treated and the way I saw other kids being treated. That's the down part of it, but the good part I guess (chuckles) it's a good thing having discipline... of course like today in 1993 if a kid does something wrong you discipline them. It was that way when I went to school. But back then there were some that overdid it, they strapped you when they should have done

> something else. We weren't all good, a lot of us were bad news bears, (laughs) naturally we had to be disciplined.

Stuart's response of anger to his children gives us an indication of how individuals who are not closer to emotional health may be perpetuating negative childhood experiences in the next generation. I am very grateful to Stuart for sharing this experience, and rather than judging him, I hope you will join me in applauding his courage to recognize the connection between his actions and his experiences. In the traditional James Bay Cree culture, adults exhibit self-control and follow a principle of non-interference with both adults and children, and therefore this "loss of control" and use of physical punishment marks a radical departure. With few individual exceptions, this concept of "discipline" was not present in the traditional James Bay Cree, and the laying down of rules and establishment of routines constitutes a significant change from the child-rearing practices of previous generations.

AFFECTION:

A few of the individuals interviewed stated that they were deliberately affectionate with their children, holding, hugging and kissing. They link this to a lack of affection in their own childhood residential school experiences. Julie, for example, states that "I made sure I was affectionate with my children, and that I praised them, because it was

something I didn't grow up with." Some, however, felt that they could not be affectionate with their children because of the emotional damage done to them in residential school. Again we see a range of individuals' responses linked to a variety of levels of emotional healing.

> Gerald:
> Aside from that (the discipline) I guess the other difference is that there's a lot of care, stuff that we never got in residential school. There was no one there to give us the same physical kind of warmth and attention, care, that kind of stuff that they get from parents. So in that respect there's a lot of that at home, a lot of holding and stuff. People find that weird, my son will come up to me and give me a big hug and try and lift me off the ground. It's not uncommon for them to kiss me goodbye. There's a lot of [affection], which is different, but it's something that we encouraged because we never got that.
>
> Sam:
> I reinforce love to them, I hold them, I hug them. I mean if they're walking by I say "Hey, you know what?" and [my daughter] says "Yeah dad, I know, you love me." (very teen voice, a bit of resigned sarcasm that teens are so good at) It's important to me for them to know that. It's same with my (young) son, when I come home for lunch I'll call him over and say I want to hug you, and then I hug him, then I hold him for a couple of minutes and that's important to him. You see I never had that. For me to turn around and say you know I never had this I never had that, that's not a constructive way to.. this is what I was learning in Horden Hall and I got beaten up and verbal abuse, that's not of any importance to them. What's important [for] them is what I give them now, that's what I believe.

That both Gerald and Sam balance their philosophies of discipline with affection is significant. These two individuals indicated that, together with their wives, they considered the question of what they felt was important to provide for their children. Both Gerald and Sam addressed

residential school issues in their personal lives quite early (in their late teens and early twenties). Alice and Tommy, who provide a contrasting example of little affection with their children, both feel that they are emotionally scarred with unresolved issues about their residential school experiences.

> Alice:
> I can't even be close to my kids. I can't talk to them about their problems. It's like I don't trust anybody, that's how I feel (starts to cry). (long pause) I don't know how to react when they have problems. The only thing I can get around is when I laugh with my kids, have fun with my kids, play with my kids. I try to do what my parents never did, I get involved with them. But I can't, I don't have emotions to ah, I can't tell them that I love them, all that was taken from me when my parents put me in residential school.... I never did tell them how much I love them, I just can't express that, I don't know how to do it.
>
> Tommy:
> I can't show affection [to my children] because of what I saw in the school, the sexual abuse and all that. I was afraid to hug my, I hardly touch my daughters or my sons, it has an effect on that.

Both of these responses, physical affection continuing throughout teenage years and avoidance of affection throughout early childhood mark a departure from traditional child-rearing practices. Traditionally, physical affection in infancy gradually diminished with the child's growing self-awareness and self-control.

Overall, some parents have responded by a shift to close involvement with children (rules, affection), while others have responded with an emotional detachment towards their children. All of these reflections inform us that parenting

is no longer solely based on a traditional group mode of both living and parenting.

CONCLUSIONS

For the individuals interviewed, Horden Hall represents a large portion of their childhood. Throughout this study we have seen that individuals had a range of responses which influenced their overall residential school experience, and the effects of those residential school experiences. For example, some individuals felt they had positive experiences overall in Horden Hall, while others felt that their experiences were entirely negative. Regardless of the nature of their experience, all of the individuals regret the time that they lost with their families of origin as children.

We have examined how these individuals came from traditional James Bay Cree cultural backgrounds. In early childhood, they were taught by all members of the multi-generational extended family group through example. Competence in the physical and social environments was acquired gradually. At the point these individuals left for Horden Hall they were beginning apprenticeships to adult standards, acquiring skills which would prepare them for adulthood in the physically demanding subarctic James Bay environment. The environment they entered, Horden Hall, was an extreme social environment. From the first day, they experienced loneliness and major adjustments to a demanding schedule. Looking back now, these individuals compare Horden

Hall to institutions such as jails, reform schools, military schools and concentration camps. This caused them problems later in life, and we have seen that finding reasons that they were sent to such an institution has been an important step on the path to healing.

Horden Hall was peer group oriented. Maintaining sibling relationships was difficult in this age and gender segregated environment. In Horden Hall, within those peer groups, resistance was widely practiced. Speaking Cree and stealing food were resistance behaviours that they universally practiced and provided a measure of satisfaction. Running away was a rejection response to the system. Within these peer groups, some individuals formed gangs and would extort food and demeaning behaviours from children in addition to bullying and fighting. For the children in those gangs, they provided a sense of belonging, and a way to act out their anger from being in such an environment, which they could rarely direct towards those in charge without punitive results. Throughout the rest of their lives, crossing peer group boundaries to bonds of closeness has been a difficult challenge. Today in the community of Moose Factory, we see patterns of peer group interactions reflecting in the common practice of socializing within peer group boundaries.

Intergenerational interactions within Horden Hall may be characterized by a lack of individual attention. The supervisors were the most significant adults for the children, as was reflected in the large proportion of

interview material devoted to interactions with supervisors. Supervisors punished children for a variety of offences. Corporal punishment, or strapping and hitting, was common, and was not considered abusive unless the supervisor lost control. Abuse was present, although not all individuals experienced or acknowledged the presence of abuse. Although these individuals were not merely passive victims, they were in an environment where they had very little control. This lack of control was responded to in later life again through a range of responses, varying from conscientious control over home environments (an atypically "strict" Native father) at one extreme to a total lack of control (anomie) at the other.

After Horden Hall, the individuals who attended prior to the 1960s all returned to their families of origin, and individuals who attended in the 1960s all had a prolonged period of absence from family and community. After returning to the community, most individuals experienced feelings of not belonging anywhere and ambivalence over Native identity. This ambivalence stems both from negative messages about Native cultures from residential school, and from feelings of incompetence in James Bay Cree traditional ways. The injunction against speaking Cree is a factor in this ambivalence, and while most of the people interviewed retained some degree of proficiency in Cree, most did not teach Cree to their children. However, these individuals are raising their children in a Cree community. Returning to

their Cree community was an action that facilitated examining personal issues of Native identity, whether consciously taken toward that end or not. With the current practice of self-consciously promoting culture, manifested in a range of ways which include political representation and Cree language being taught in James Bay schools, these individuals have been obliged to deal with their Native identity. It is impossible to generalize about this complex issue, but we can note that those who have consciously examined their residential school experiences, particularly those who turned to elders for help in healing, have been more successful at attaining some degree of comfort and proficiency within their traditional culture.

As adults, their life experiences after Horden Hall have some remarkable similarities: prolonged absence from family and community after residential school(s); a difficulty re-establishing ties of closeness with their family of origin; a period of anomie in which feelings of hopelessness, anger, frustration and ambivalence over Native identity manifested itself in bouts of partying and drinking; a point at which they settled down, sometimes accompanied by an awakening to the existence of a community and, more specifically, a generation of children, who need them. By viewing these commonalities in terms of a life-cycle, without negating the reality of individual variation, we have been able to examine cultural change. If we view the life-cycle as a set of common expectations for life experience, we can see that, for the

most part, the life experiences of this generation differed greatly from previous generations of James Bay Cree. This altered life cycle is one facet of cultural change.

For the first five emotionally formative years of childhood, these children were socialized in James Bay Cree culture. By examining one facet of this social culture, reticence, we can pinpoint another cultural change. In the bush, reticence was taught to these children for the eventuality of self-reliant survival in a harsh physical environment. Instead, these children were faced with surviving in a completely different environment. Reticence, in the extreme social environment of Horden Hall, was used as a defense mechanism, tending towards the avoidance end of the spectrum. The effectiveness of reticence as a defense mechanism rested in the individual. Some individuals used reticence to cope with all situations, never revealing their emotions, or forming close friendships with other children. Other individuals balanced reticence in certain situations (where there was personal immediate emotional risk) with an almost opposite reaction, extroverted behaviour (such things as defiant resistance or oppressive gang behaviour). As adults, all have experienced, with varying degrees of difficulty and success, problems learning to open up emotionally and learning to accept risk as a facet of emotional intimacy.

There are a number of areas for potential further research stemming from this study. One obvious area is the

effects of these patterns of parenting on the current generation of children. Some individuals indicated to me that children in families which were in turmoil during their parents' period of anomie turned to grandparents for guidance. Other individuals suggested that the current generation of children is more education oriented, and more professionals in the community will be a result. Another area for further research is an exploration of the traditional Cree concepts of non-interference, competence and social responsibility. Year round community living and subsequent lessening of the restrained intimacy of traditional bush life may have combined with the presence of a generation of individuals who attended residential schools for some changes in both social situations and acceptable responses. For example, one individual discussed a period in the seventies in Moose Factory when every weekend 100 to 150 people would line a particular street, clustered around a series of fights. Open conflict was rarely resorted to in traditional James Bay Cree culture. The conditions under which interference in such circumstances was acceptable may have changed. A final suggestion for further research is a link between residential school survivors and community and political leadership. There is much evidence in these data to suggest that allies in residential school became both community leaders and political allies in later life.

In terms of a contribution to academic knowledge, this study has explored the specific way in which residential

school experiences, in a particular culture (James Bay Cree) and community (Moose Factory), have affected these individuals' parenting skills. Some individuals were so hurt as children that opening up emotionally with close family now feels like an insurmountable challenge. Others may have had their capacity for containing their anger and confusion damaged, and may have hurt their own children in turn. Some individuals, as we have seen, have at some point consciously considered what they wish to give their children. These individuals have drawn on both their early childhood and residential school experiences in raising their children. They have tried to provide things which they felt they lacked as children (affection, praise and individual attention), and positive things they feel they have learned in an alien environment (discipline, rules and routine). Some people have deliberately emphasized their demonstrations of parental love, compensating for their remembered deprivation.

This study also contributes to an understanding of cultural change. The life cycle of this generation of individuals has been altered and the social skills they were taught within their traditional James Bay Cree culture, have been adapted for survival in a radically changed, more institutionally defined environment. The effects of residential school experiences for these James Bay Cree individuals has been felt throughout their families of origin, their community, the families they established, and ultimately, their culture.

The value in studying residential school experiences of Native individuals as an intellectual enterprise is shadowed by the need for open Native discourse for the purpose of healing. Native adults who were emotionally, systematically hurt as children by agencies and staff of our EuroCanadian society cannot be dismissed by the label "victim". These individuals, regardless of their level of healing, are all survivors. It is my sincere desire that this study be used in the community, and that through seeing that others experienced not only surviving the residential school(s), but also similar effects in later life, that the process of opening up about these issues, which is a step on the road to healing, may be served.

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