

THE BOARDING SCHOOL LEGACY:  
TEN CONTEMPORARY LAKOTA WOMEN  
TELL THEIR STORIES

by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of boarding schools on the lives of Lakota women through their lived experiences as children, adolescents, and adults. The participants related their experiences through a series of open ended questions. The first interview established information about and initial impressions of the boarding school, including everyday activities and how the women felt about being away from home. The second interview allowed the women to describe the impact the boarding school had on their emotional growth and maturation. The final interview discussed how they presently function in their daily lives and the relationship it has to their experiences at boarding school.

The study found that the boarding school experience produced intergenerational effects, particularly on their ability to love themselves and to nurture their children and families. The second finding was that the psychological punishment of loneliness and alienation from the family had a far greater impact on the individuals than the physical punishment. The third finding was that although the women who attended boarding schools were prepared with the skills to lead productive lives, they could not do so effectively until they had begun healing from their experiences. The final conclusion of this study was that by speaking and telling their stories, the participants believed that they could bring healing to themselves and to other women who have had similar experiences at boarding schools.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

Beginning in the late 1800's, when American Indians were confined to reservations, the federal government made a deliberate effort of assimilation, primarily through the education of Indian Children. From its inception the goal of Indian education was to "Americanize" Indians. Boarding schools were key components in the process of this cultural genocide and were designed to physically, ideologically, and emotionally remove Indian children from their families, homes, and tribal affiliations. According to Archuleta, Child, and Lomawaima (2000), once students arrived at school, they could not "be Indian" in any way—culturally, artistically, spiritually, or linguistically. While the first priority of the boarding schools was to provide the rudiments of academic education—reading, writing, and speaking English, as well as learning basic arithmetic—students were also given religious (Christian) education and citizenship training. By the 1880's there were 60 schools with 6,200 Indian students in the United States. By 1900 there were 150 boarding schools (Reyhner & Eder, 2004).

### Missionary Schools

Before boarding schools, missionaries operated schools on many reservations. At these schools, traditional religious and cultural practices were strongly discouraged while instruction in the Christian doctrines took place utilizing pictures, statues, hymns, prayers, and storytelling. Children were taught English so they could read the Bible.

Some missionary schools received federal support, especially when Congress felt less inclined to provide the large sums of money needed to establish government schools. The Tulalip Mission School in Washington State became the first contract Indian school, an arrangement whereby the government provided annual funds to maintain the buildings while the Church furnished books, clothing, housing and medical care. In 1896 Congress drastically reduced the funding for mission schools and eventually the missionary schools lost funding in favor of the Boarding Schools (Marr, 2004)

### Indian Boarding School Movement

The Indian boarding school movement began after the Civil War, when well-intentioned reformers turned their attention to the plight of American Indian people. Previously many Americans regarded the Native people with either fear or loathing, however reformers advocated that with proper education, Indians could become just like other citizens. They convinced the leaders of Congress that education could change at least some of the Indian population into patriotic and productive members of society. The reformers assumed it was necessary to “civilize” Indian people and teach them to accept white men’s beliefs and value systems. The boarding school became the solution to this problem. In this way, the policy makers believed, young people could be immersed in the values of the dominant American society while also being kept away from the influence of their traditional parents (Bowker, 1993).

### Boarding Schools

Off-reservation boarding schools began in 1878 as an experiment by Lieutenant Richard Henry Pratt, with the opening of the Hampton Institute. Pratt, who had only a common school education that ended when he was thirteen, enlisted in the army as a private at the beginning of the Civil War and rose to the rank of captain. He reenlisted as a second lieutenant in 1867 and commanded black Tenth Cavalry troops, the “buffalo soldiers,” as well as Indian scouts in Indian Territory until 1875. Pratt obtained special congressionally approved detached duty from the army to become superintendent of America's first Indian boarding school. In 1879, Pratt solicited approval to use an old army barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and opened the infamous Carlisle Indian School to 136 students (Reyhner & Eder, 2004). His philosophy was to “kill the Indian and save the man” (Adams, 1995).

Luther Standing Bear (1928) claimed to be the first Indian boy to enter the Carlisle Indian Industrial School grounds. He reported no beds in the dormitories, bread and water for breakfast, and no practical use for the trade he learned. Pratt worked to get proper clothing and beds for his students, and he was disturbed by the small food allowance provided by the Indian Bureau. He insisted that his students have the same food allowance as soldiers. By 1894 the school had 818 students from fifty-three tribes, including 101 Chippewa (Ojibway), 93 Oneida, 76 Sioux, 70 Apache, 49 Seneca, 38 Ottawa, 37 Pueblo, 36 Piegan (Blackfeet), 34 Cherokee, 34 Assiniboine, 29 Osage, 24 Nez Perce, 20 Umatilla, and 19 Crow students (Reyhner & Eder, 2004). In 1901 Pratt was promoted to colonel and summarily retired from the army at the age of sixty-two. In

1904 he was advanced to the rank of brigadier-general and was dismissed from his position at Carlisle Indian School.

In 1887, Congress passed the Compulsory Indian Education Act to provide funding for more boarding schools (Child, 1993), and Carlisle was the model that these schools used to create their curriculums. In order to carry the plan for assimilation, the schools forbade the cultural identity of children by doing away with all outward signs of tribal life: students were not allowed to speak their native languages, boys had their long hair cut, and all received new “white” names—including surnames. Strict rules and directives, established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, were practiced at the schools. Students marched to and from classes, meals, and dormitories. Order, discipline, and self-restraint were all prized values of white society and were thought to make a person “civilized.” Punishment, which was applied for violations like speaking one’s Native language, consisted of confinement, kneeling in prayer, deprivation of privileges or food, and corporal punishment. In addition, Indian students were ravaged by disease at boarding schools. Tuberculosis, pneumonia and trachoma were the greatest threats (Bowker, 1993).

While half of the school day was devoted to basic academic studies, the other half was for industrial training. Girls learned to cook, clean, sew, and care for poultry. Boys learned skills such as blacksmithing, shoemaking, or performed manual labor such as farming. Since schools were required to be as self-sufficient as possible, students worked in laundries, gardens, cafeterias, offices, and performed janitorial services. By 1900 the schools moved even further toward industrial training, while academics faded due to lack

of federal funding.

In an effort to educate increasing numbers of Indian children at lower cost, the federal government established two other types of schools: the reservation boarding school and day schools. The reservation day school caused the least opposition from parents and was also relatively inexpensive. The reservation boarding school allowed students to live at school and go home on the weekends. However, assimilationists felt that reservations schools did not sufficiently remove the children from the influence of tribal life. Non-reservation boarding schools would be the best school for making Indian children into members of the white man's society. Because of this, non-reservation boarding schools were the preferred method of educating Native children until the 1930's.

Indian parents resisted boarding schools in various ways. Once children were enrolled in a distant school, parents lost control over decisions that affected them. As a result, parents often encouraged runaways and undermined the schools influence during vacations. In 1893, mandatory education for Indian children became law. Agents on reservations enforced these federal regulations by going to homes to collect children for school, and when parents refused to enroll their children in the boarding schools, the agents resorted to withholding rations and annuities or sent them to jail (Marr, 2004).

When children were removed from their homes and taken away from their parents and villages, their native languages and religious practices were forbidden. Boys and girls who would have learned their roles within societies, as taught by their parents and other relatives, were in the custody of individuals (usually nuns and priests) where

parenting skills were neither observed nor taught. That critical learning process was denied to several generations of children. In addition, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse was common and severe (Noriega 1992). Many scholars point out that these abusive behaviors were not only experienced, but also *learned* by American Indian children raised in boarding schools (Beiser, 1974; Brave-Heart-Jordan 1995; Noriega 1992; Tanner, 1992). Gonzales (1999) states the situation thus:

The treatment of American Indians by colonists, the government, and settlers reveals a history of decimation by disease and war, racism, exploitation of resources, seizure of lands, forced migration, introduction of alcohol, and the establishment of oppressive and coercive policies such as the boarding school and land allotment programs which have together detrimentally affected the traditional values of Native peoples. The federally sanctioned boarding school experience, which began in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, removed Indian children from their home and placed them in boarding schools where many were sexually assaulted or molested by caretakers.

Children returning home were often alienated within their communities and experienced uncomfortable relationships with guilt-ridden parents. Low self-esteem and self-hatred were commonplace. Many Natives turned to alcohol and violence as ways to express their anger and despair. The damage done to Native families and individuals through the boarding school program left a legacy of rage, and delivered children back to their communities ill-prepared to raise their own children.

Though boarding school enrollment declined in the early decades of the twentieth century, many Native children continued to attend schools, which continued to perpetrate the old curriculums and thus provided the same results. This study will focus on the stories of ten women who attended boarding schools during the middle years of the twentieth century.

### Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of boarding schools on the lives of Lakota women through their lived experiences as children, adolescents, and adults.

### Significance of the Study

Women traditionally played a central role in the majority of American Indian cultures, both within the government and in spiritual ceremonies. Men and women enjoyed considerable personal autonomy and both genders performed functions vital to the survival of their communities. Women were responsible for the domestic sphere and were viewed as both life-givers and caretakers of life; however, it was not unusual among various tribes to find women who sat in council with men and who went to war alongside of their men (Allen, 1986). The roles of women and men were passed on orally and experientially from one generation to another. The imposition of Western values and cultural standards brought tremendous historical, social, and economic changes to the lives of American Indian women. European women had few rights in their own society at the time that they first came into contact with Indian people. Men were considered their social, legal, and political masters (Bowker, 1993). While the role of Native women within their tribes remained relatively stable for some time after European contact, their subjugation accelerated dramatically with the introduction of boarding schools.

Boarding schools were structured so that Indian girls were taught to be women in the Western sense. Female students generally spent their time learning how to do

laundry, sew, cook, clean, and perform other household tasks. Older girls were taught nursing and office work skills. Academic focus for girls was limited to language, arithmetic, reading, writing, and spelling (Marr, 2004).

The rationale for this instruction was not only to assist Native American women in assimilating into mainstream culture, but also to limit their work skills so that the only choices of work they had when they returned to the reservation was to be a servant in a European American home (Almeida, 1997).

The segregation of American Indian women, both from the wider American society and from their traditional role as equal and strong members of tribal societies, has contributed to the demeaning image of Native women that has developed over the years. Additionally, by separating generations, boarding schools eroded not only cultural values but family values. The damage done by boarding schools is evident today as American Indian women struggle with family responsibilities and attempt to recapture cultural practices and beliefs so long denied to them. Only in recent years have Indian women, once stripped of any formal involvement in their political processes, become active within their tribal governments.

This study will give voice to American Indian women and their perceptions of how boarding schools contributed to their life's struggles, achievements, or failures. The women in this study range in ages from 45 to 55. They entered boarding school at a time when the government had reportedly forsaken the strategy of using the boarding school as a tool for assimilation. Although the boarding schools of the generation studied here had undergone many changes, yet vestiges of the original schools remained—rigorous structure, harsh discipline, and the taboo of cultural practices, including the use of native

languages. Like those who went before, these students also felt lonely, isolated, and angry. As recently as 1999, disclosure of extensive child sexual abuse in reservation boarding schools resulted in an amendment to the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1986. This change authorized the use of funds to improve the investigation and prosecution of child sexual abuse in Indian boarding schools.

On September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2000, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, Kevin Gover, admitted to the complicity of the U.S. government in these boarding school atrocities on the BIA's 175th anniversary:

After the devastation of tribal economies and the deliberate creation of tribal dependence on the services provided by this agency, this agency set out to destroy all things Indian...This agency forbade the speaking of Indian languages, prohibited the conduct of traditional religious activities, outlawed traditional government, and made Indian people ashamed of who they were. Worst of all, the Bureau of Indian Affairs committed these acts against the children entrusted to its boarding schools, brutalizing them emotionally, psychologically, physically, and spiritually...The trauma of shame, fear and anger has passed from one generation to the next, and manifests itself in the rampant alcoholism, drug abuse, and domestic violence that plague Indian country.

Many of our people live lives of unrelenting tragedy as Indian families suffer the ruin of lives by alcoholism, suicides made of shame and despair, and violent death at the hands of one another (qtd in Bowker, 1993).

This study explores the lives of contemporary women in a new light. The majority of the research done on boarding schools tells the story of what happened in the early years and rarely addresses the impact on female students. This study aims to document the narratives of contemporary women who have attended boarding schools in the last half century, who have lived sufficiently enough to be able to reflect upon their lives in boarding schools and articulate in a thoughtful manner the impact of those schools on their lives and the lives of their families.

### Need for the Study

In the Western world, and particularly in the United States, education has been promoted as a “ladder to success”. However, for Indian people, education has been used as a weapon of assimilation for several generations. The parents and grandparents of contemporary Indian children were forced to attend boarding schools that were utilized to eliminate Native culture. This study will add to the growing body of literature. More importantly, it seeks to explain how contemporary American Indian women have survived and even triumphed over the procedures of forced assimilation. In doing so, it will hopefully provide an opportunity for American Indian people to reexamine their lives and explore ways of healing the distress of intergenerational trauma.

### Questions to be Answered

What were the experiences of these ten women in the boarding schools, upon coming home and in the creation of their own families?

What is the impact of attending boarding schools on the lives of these women and of their families over time?

### General Procedures

The population of this study is ten Lakota women who live on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River reservations in South Dakota. The women range in ages from 45 to 55. Three focused and structured interviews were conducted with each woman, with a

minimum of one day and not more than a week between interviews. Each participant also completed a questionnaire anonymously. The methodology incorporates a qualitative research design using grounded theory from an emic perspective.

### Limitations

- (1) This researcher identified those women who participated in the study either through first-hand knowledge that they had attended boarding schools or by referral from other participants. Therefore, the sample size and procedures for participant selection will not support generalizations to a larger population of Lakota women.
- (2) The study was limited to ten Lakota women who attended boarding schools and in no way is intended to reflect the lives of all women who attended boarding schools, nor is it intended to serve as a generalization across tribal groups or within tribal groups.

### Delimitations

- (1) This study was confined to Lakota women between the ages of 45 and 55 who attended boarding school for a minimum of four years and who currently live on the Pine Ridge or Cheyenne River Indian reservations in South Dakota.

### Definitions

- (1) American Indian or Indian refers to the indigenous people of the United States of

America and is used in lieu of Native American.

- (2) Lakota refers to the members of the Lakota nation, commonly referred to as the Sioux nation.
- (3) Mission schools refer to schools established on Indian reservations through cooperation of the U.S. government and Christian groups during the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- (4) Boarding schools are the residential schools set up by religious orders and the United States government for the express purpose of educating and assimilating American Indian children. These schools were located in areas of the United States that promoted total removal of the child from parents, relatives, and their reservations.
- (5) On-reservation boarding schools refers to boarding schools located within reservation boundaries.
- (6) Off-reservation boarding schools refers to boarding schools located outside reservation boundaries, often by many hundreds of miles.
- (7) BIA is the accepted acronym for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- (8) Emic is research conducted from an “insider’s perspective”. The researcher is a member of the cultural group being studied.
- (9) Termination refers to an action mandated by HR 108 (1953), which was to terminate the relationship of Indian tribes as wards of the United States government.

(10) Relocation refers to another action initiated by HR 108, which encouraged Native people to relocate to urban areas by financing their moving expense and often gave them job training.

### Summary

Throughout American history, education has been promoted as a means to success and as a way to escape poverty—a way to improve one’s life and the lives of future generations. Indirectly, education is a way of developing values and a core of knowledge deemed important for all American youth. Educational experiences have not been the same for all American youth, however, and the American Indian is a prime example of that difference. The boarding school became a government-sanctioned instrument intent on assimilation which resulted in the mistreatment, abuse and pain of several generations of American Indian people. Isolated from their families and unable to live in the non-Indian world, children who were products of the boarding schools often found themselves unwanted and unaccepted on their own reservations. Many scholars believe that the Indian boarding schools are responsible for dysfunctional behaviors exhibited by many American Indians today. Their voices will be heard as they relate their experiences in boarding schools.

## CHAPTER TWO—REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review examines specific topics as they pertain to the education of American Indians and the boarding school experience. Traditional modes of education for Lakota people, as described in the writings of Luther Standing Bear (1931), were oral and consisted of preparation through prayer, storytelling, and imitating adults. These practices developed listening and memory skills, and gave children experiential knowledge of the world and their place in it. As settlement and wars swept across North America, the traditional educational process was interrupted. This literature review traces the educational policies forced upon the Native peoples of America during western expansion. Of primary importance are historical documents such as the writings of Christian missionaries who served as educators, treaties, and congressional records. This review is presented in two sections. The first section will present in chronological order four distinct historical periods: (1) the missionary period (prior to 1778), (2) the treaty period (1778-1871), (3) the allotment period (1887-1934), and (4) the termination period (mid 1940's-1975). The second section will review personal accounts from the literature of individuals who attended boarding schools.

### Section One—A History of American Indian Education

#### The Missionary Period

As the Indian has no chance of existence except by conforming to civilized ways, the sooner that the Government or Christian people awake to the necessity of establishing schools among every tribe the better. Little can be done with the old, and it may be two, three or more generations

before the old habits of a people are changed; but by always taking hold of the young, the work can be done (Grant, 1872—qtd. in Styron).

Although George Grant, a Presbyterian minister, wrote those words over a hundred years ago, his attitude addresses the manner in which both government and churches dealt with Native peoples. Ardy Bowker (1993) reports on the influence that various religious orders in America had on American Indians. She maintains that Jesuit missionaries, credited with establishing the first school for Indians in the Americas in 1568, actively pursued “civilizing” the native populations for two hundred years. Following the orders of Louis XIV, they sought to teach both Christianity, and the French culture and language, to the American Indian during the seventeenth century. Bowker points out that the Franciscans, who were mostly Spanish, were involved with southwestern tribes in California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas. Roman Catholic missionaries were most active throughout the Midwest and Northwest, while Protestants in the Northeast established schools for American Indians under the direct order of King James in 1617. Dartmouth College was founded for the education of American Indians; Harvard was established for educating both Indians and English youth, and both the Hampton Institute and the College of William and Mary set up special branches for American Indians (Bowker, 1993). For at least 300 years, the church played a dominant role in the education of American Indians (Bill, 1990).

Despite two-and-a-half centuries of missionary attempts to change the American Indian culture, the majority of Native Americans remained “untutored” in the European sense. Their basic economy remained unchanged, and their political and religious

concepts were not fundamentally changed either (Adams, 1971). Following the American Revolution, the Continental Congress in 1776 authorized the Indian Commissioners to engage ministers as teachers to work with Indians (*ibid*). This missionary movement increased after the war of 1812. A religious movement of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, known as the Great Awakening, stimulated missionary activity in the United States on behalf of the depressed elements in American society. (Bill, 1990). A Congressional committee in 1818 made the following statement:

In the present state of our country, one of two things seems to be necessary, either that those sons of the forest should be moralized or exterminated. Humanity would rejoice at the former, but shrink with horror at the latter. Put into the hands of their children, the primer and the hoe, and they will naturally, in time take hold of the plow. (Hagan, 1993).

The following year, Congress appropriated \$10,000 to hire teachers and maintain schools. These resources were allocated to the missionary church schools because the government had no other mechanism for educating the Indian population (Bill, 1990).

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, American Indian education was primarily a function of mission schools. Schools taught in the English language presented a problem for both instructors and pupils because students arrived at school speaking their native tongue. Most of the instruction centered on memorization work, which utilized religious instruction with the Bible, and Catechism used as textbooks. (*ibid*). According to a Senate report, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy-A National Challenge*, published in 1969, it states, “The goal, from the beginning of attempts at formal education of the

American Indian, has been not so much to educate him as to change him” (qtd in Bowker, 1993).

### The Treaty Period

From 1778 to 1871, the federal government signed 389 treaties with American Indian tribes. Most of these treaties contained provisions that the federal government would provide education, health, technical, and agricultural services to tribes in exchange for land. The last of these treaties, the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, established the Great Sioux Reservation, which encompassed western South Dakota and parts of Wyoming and Montana as the permanent home of the Lakota Sioux. One particular article in the Fort Laramie Treaty illustrates the attention the federal government paid to the “civilizing” nature of education:

Article 7. In order to insure the civilization of the Indians entering into this treaty the necessity of education is admitted, especially of such of them as are or may be settled on said agricultural reservations, and they therefore pledge themselves to compel their children, male and female, between the ages of six and sixteen years to attend school (Bill, 1990).

In 1832, Congress created the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The early commissioners, who were responsible for the education of Indians, perceived the American Indian as barbaric and/or primitive. Their educational policies revolved around controlling and assimilating the Indian. Commissioner L. Lea stated in 1850 that Indians must “resort to agricultural labor or starve” (*ibid*). During this period the government began an extensive program in agriculture and manual training, in an attempt to “civilize” the Indian. Manual training was the accepted curriculum for Indian schools and was mentioned in an 1878 circular to agents. It stated in part:

It is the policy of the Department to combine with the ordinary branches of the English education...instruction to the boys...in cultivating the farms and gardens; and also in a sufficient knowledge of the use, not only of agricultural implements, but of ordinary mechanical tools...The girls should also be taught all household industrials such as bedmaking, plain cooking, cutting, making and mending garments for both sexes, the work of the dairy, and proper care of the hours (*ibid*).

Use of the English language in the education of American Indian children was first mentioned in the report of the Indian Peace Commission, a body appointed by an act of Congress in 1867. The report stated: “in the difference of language today lies two thirds of our trouble. Schools should be established in which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialects would be blotted out and the English language substituted” (Bowker, 1993). This report created a heated controversy in Indian education since the missionaries who had been responsible for educating Native youth supported a bilingual instructional policy. In 1870, President Grant criticized the bilingual practices of the missionaries, denouncing the use of Native language in the schools. Thus began a new policy in the education of the American Indian student with eradications of Native languages as a major goal (Bowker, 1993).

In 1871, the United States government prohibited further treaties with Indian nations. During the same year, Congress passed the Appropriations Act for Indian Education requiring the establishment of day schools on reservations. In 1873, the Board of Indian Commissions argued in a Report to Congress that “It is well-nigh impossible to teach Indian children the English language when they spend twenty hour out of twenty-four in the wigwam, using their native tongue.” The Senate and House Indian Affairs committees joined in the criticism of day schools a year later when they reported in the

First Annual Report to the Congress of the United States that, “The present Indian education program tends to operate too much in the directions of perpetuating the Indian as special-status individual rather than preparing for him independent citizenship” (1874).

The boarding school movement began after the Civil War, when reformers turned their attention to the plight of Indian people and advocated for proper education and treatment so that Indians could become like other citizens. One of the first efforts to accomplish this goal was the establishment of the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, founded in 1879. Under the leadership of Captain Richard Henry Pratt, a leading proponent of assimilation through education, the school subscribed to the principle, “kill the Indian and save the man” (Marr, 2004). Carlisle opened its doors in 1879 with 136 students.

In their history of American Indian education, Jon Reyner and Jeanne Eder write:

Upon enrolling in boarding schools, students were reclothed, regroomed, and renamed. They found it difficult to adjust to schools that devalued their families’ way of life and were taught in an alien tongue. Some children were eager to learn and adjusted well to their new settings despite the hardships. Others resisted by running away or refusing to cooperate. Some began to identify with their captors and to despise their own upbringing (2004).

Hoke Denetsosie, a Navajo, described his boarding school experiences at Leupp, Arizona, in the early twentieth century:

Conditions at the school were terrible...Food and other supplies were not too plentiful. We were underfed; so we were constantly hungry. Clothing was not good, and, in winter months, there were epidemics of sickness. Sometimes students died, and the school would close the rest of the term. It was run in a military fashion, and rules were very strict. A typical day went like this: Early in the morning at 6 o’clock we rose at the sound of bugles. We washed and dressed; then we lined up in military formation and drilled in the yard. For breakfast, companies formed, and we marched

to the dining room, where we all stood at attention with long tables before us. We recited grace aloud, and, after being seated, we proceeded with our meal...Some teachers and other workers weren't very friendly. When students made mistakes they often were slapped or whipped by the disciplinarian who usually carried a piece of rope in his hip pocket. At the end of the term in May parents and other visitors would come to the school (*ibid*).

The experiences that Denetsosie describes were common to many of the students, not only during the early years of these institutions, but as long as the boarding schools have existed.

General Pratt pursued the boarding school concept first for educational reasons, and second because of his belief that American Indians should be civilized and become part of the dominant society (Bill, 1990). To achieve this end, a form of acculturation known as the "outing system" was employed which placed Indians in non-Indian homes during the summers and for three years following high school to learn the social graces of non-Indian culture (*ibid*). Government subsidies were made to participating families. Pratt believed that by placing youth outside their community and in a dominant society environment, the government was educating American Indians and making them Americans (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1983). The 1887 report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs described the Outing System:

[I]n placing out for a series of months among the families of farmers in that part of Pennsylvania, boys and girls who have had a year or so of training at Carlisle...can make the most of the advantages thus afforded them for learning practical farming, the use of tools, and thrifty housekeeping. In addition to their board they receive fair wages for their labor-from \$5 to \$8 per month for farm work-and as members of the household are admitted to the privileges enjoyed by the sons and daughters of the family. In some cases they remain a year at these places, attending district school in the winter. Such training upon a farm is the

best possible way of fitting them for the ownership and cultivation of the lands which are being allotted them by the Government. This experience, taken in connection with their training and education at school, places them beyond all reasonable doubt upon a footing of self-support. Under this system 299 Carlisle pupils have spent more or less time in private families during the past year. (qtd in Reyhner/Elder, 2004)

In 1900, 1,880 Carlisle students participated in the Outing System, each with his or her own bank account. Although historian Robert M. Utley concluded that most of the Carlisle students could make their way in Pennsylvania, Reyhner & Eder report that students were sent home to their reservations where there were few jobs (*ibid*).

### The Allotment Period

In the late 1800's, the federal government pursued a policy of total assimilation of the American Indian into mainstream American society. Recognizing the vast difficulties in achieving this goal, Congress and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) adopted a plan to remold the Indian's conception of life, or what came to be known as his "system of values". Margaret Szasz asserts that assimilationists reasoned that if this system of values could be changed, the Indian would then become like the white man. She goes on to state that the Indian's system of values is expressed in the education of his children and in his attitude toward the land (1997).

Assimilationists chose to make these two concepts the major targets of their campaign. In 1887, Congress passed the Dawes Severalty or General Allotment Act, which became the framework for white settlement of reservation land (Bowker, 1993).

Ward Churchill summarizes the condition of Native America three years after the General Allotment Act became law:

By 1890, fewer than 250,000 Indians remained alive within the United States, a degree of decimation extending into the upper 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. The survivors were lodged on a patchwork of “reservations” even then being dismantled by the application of what was called the “General Allotment Act.” Under provision of this statute, effected in 1887, a formal eugenics code was utilized to define who was (and who was not) “Indian” by U.S. “standards.” Those who could and, were willing to, prove to federal satisfaction that they were “of one-half or more degree of Indian blood” and to accept U.S. citizen in the bargain, received a deed to an individual land parcel, typically of 160 acres or less. Once each person with sufficient “blood quantum” had received his or her allotment of land, the remaining reservation land was declared “surplus” and opened up to non-Indian homesteading, corporate acquisition, or conversion into national parks and forests. Through this mechanism, the best 100 million acres of the reserved native land was stripped away by 1930 (qtd in Keohane, 2005).

The Allotment Act and subsequent statutes established procedures that resulted in the transfer of some 90 million acres from Indian to white owners in the next forty-five years. The education of American Indians was funded by the sales of these “surplus” reservation lands (Bowker, 1993). Although the federal government funded these efforts, missionary groups administered most of the schools (Szasz, 1977). Needless to say, this period of history brought about an era of bitterness between the federal government and Indian tribes, perhaps best illustrated in the words of a Lakota Sioux elder in 1891 as reported in Bowker (1993): “They made us many promises, more than I can remember but they never kept but one; they promised to take our land and they took it.”:

The philosophy of the federal government toward Indian education, however, remained the same and is typified in the report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1903:

To educate the Indian in the ways of civilized life, therefore is to preserve him from extinction, not as an Indian, but as a human being. As a separate

entity, he can not exist encysted, as it were, in the body of this great nation. The pressure for land must diminish his reservations to areas within which he can utilize the acres allotted to him, so that the balance may become homes for the white farmers who require them. To educate the Indian is to prepare him for the abolishment of tribal relations, to take his land in severalty, and in the seat of his brow and the toil of his hands to carry out, as his white brother has done, a home for himself and family (qtd in Bowker, 1993).

Although there had always been a small number of people who were convinced that Indian could be civilized, the general public believed that the Indian was incapable of progress (Szasz, 1977). Szasz also points out that this negative view was reinforced by attitudes on the frontier. She states that many frontiersmen were inveterate Indian haters, and as the frontier shrank in physical size, this attitude seemed to intensify.

As whites moved onto the reservation, they brought with them the need for public schools; however, on reservations that were not allotted (most reservations in the Southwest), public schooling did not become an issue (Bowker, 1993). As a result, compulsory school attendance was introduced and American Indians were enrolled in a number of public schools. By 1901, the states of South Dakota, Wisconsin, California, Michigan, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, and Oklahoma had federal contracts to educate Indians in public schools (*ibid*).

In 1918, Carlisle boarding school was closed because Pratt's method of assimilating American Indian students through off-reservation boarding schools was perceived as outdated (Muhammad, 1999). That same year, Congress passed new Indian education legislation, the Act of May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918. This statute states:

Hereafter, no appropriation, except appropriations made pursuant to treaties, shall be used to educate children of less than one-fourth Indian blood whose parents are citizens of the United States and the State

wherein they live and where there are adequate free school facilities provided (*ibid*).

In essence, the federal government eliminated their responsibility to educate large numbers of Indian children. This continues to be an issue of concern between Indian tribes and the federal government as well as between the federal and state governments.

Enrollment in boarding schools dropped due to the entry of Native students into the public schools system, but access to public schools had its difficulties. For example, in Nevada several communities resisted having Indian students in their public schools (Haglund, 1966 – Reyhner, Eder, 2004). In the words of Szasz (1977), “Rural teachers who had to conform to the attitudes of the local populace often found it difficult to regard their Indian pupils with even ordinary civility and kindness.” In addition, public schools were in financial crisis because of the Great Depression and were eliminating health, physical education, shop, and other courses that Collier and others thought were essential for Indian students (Reyhner & Eder, 2004).

In 1921, California law was amended to include the stipulation that American Indian children could only attend local schools if an Indian facility could not be found within a three mile distance from their homes. California native Alice Piper challenged this proviso, and in *Piper v. Big Pine* (1924), the California Supreme Court ruled in Piper’s favor, allowing her entry to the local public school. However, the court did not disavow the concept of “separate but equal,” and it was not until 1935 that the legislature deleted this discriminatory stipulation. Before the Great Depression, approximately 8,000 students remained in federal non-reservation boarding schools compared to over

34,000 American Indian pupils educated at their local public schools (The Brown Quarterly, 2001).

In 1928, the Meriam Report was published. This report was a survey of social and economic conditions of the American Indian commissioned by the Brookings Institute of Washington, D.C., which was known as the Institute for Governmental Research (Bill, 1990). The report was conducted by Dr. Louis Meriam, University of Chicago (*ibid*). Two major findings of the report were: (1) Indians were excluded from management of their own affairs, and (2) Indians were receiving a poor quality of services (particularly health and education) from the public officials who were supposed to be serving their needs. The report was extremely critical of the federal government's educational system. It condemned, among other things, removal of children from their homes and placement in off-reservation boarding schools, the irrelevant curriculum in many of the schools, dependency on student labor to maintain schools, and poor student health. One writer describes it this way:

The 1928 Meriam Report noted that meager food budgets (11 cents per child per day), overcrowded facilities, inadequate health care, and overwork of children contributed to the spread of diseases. Indeed, American Indians had a higher death rate, six and one half times that of other racial/ethnic groups. Between 1885 and 1913, over 100 children were buried at Haskell Institute in Kansas, representing only a fraction of the deaths that occurred there as the bodies often shipped home. Behind the statistics, of course, lay the families touched by tragedy (The Brown Quarterly, 2001).

The Meriam Report caused a public stir and prompted Congress to look favorably on changes in management of Indian affairs (Barrett & Wolter, 1997). It suggested that the duty of Indian Service was to provide both the youth and his parents with the tools to

integrate two worlds—the white and the Indian (Szasz, 1977). The primary task of the government should have been the education, not the assimilation, of the Indian child. The Meriam Report was an authoritative study of Indian education in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and became the symbol of definitive response to the failure of fifty years of assimilation. Although the report itself was sympathetic to the state of Indian education, it did not depart from the previous policies of the federal government as noted in the summary:

The fundamental requirement is that the task of the Indian Service be recognized as primarily educational, in the broadest sense of the word, and that it be made an efficient educational agency, devoting its main energies to the social and economic advancement of the Indians, so that they may be absorbed into the prevailing civilization, at least in accordance with a minimum standard of health and decency (qtd in Bowker, 1993).

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 ended the allotment period of history, confirmed the rights to Indian self-government, and made Indians eligible to hold Bureau of Indian Affairs posts, which encouraged Indians to attend vocational schools and colleges (Bowker, 1993). Bowker states that during this period there was a special effort to encourage the development of community day schools; however, public school attendance for Indian children was also encouraged. In the same year, the Johnson-O'Malley Act (JOM) was passed, which provided for the reimbursement of states for the cost of educating Indian students in public schools (*ibid*). This federal-state contract provided that a specified sum be paid by the federal government and held the state responsible for the education and welfare of Indians within its boundaries (Adams, 1971). Funds made available from the JOM were designated to assist in reducing the enrollment of Indian students who attended boarding schools, placing them in public schools instead.

The aim of the Johnson-O'Malley Act was to implement special programs for Indian students through the public school system. In Oklahoma, George C. Wells, an Indian Service employee, outlined a number of suggestions, giving sound advice for most communities involved with Indian education (Szasz, 1977). Wells' suggestions included; (1) a system of close supervision and in-service training of rural teachers (in cooperation with the state); (2) use of health workers and social workers in Indian communities; (3) training of Indians to serve as teachers, physicians, and nurses; and (4) implementation of a program to make both Indians and whites conscious of the contributions Indians made to civilization.

#### The Termination Period

In 1953, Congress passed House Concurrent Resolution 108, which brought about a new direction in federal policy toward Indians (Bowker, 1993). The major spokesperson for Resolution 108, Senator Arthur Watkins (Utah), stated: "As rapidly as possible, we should end the status of Indians as wards of the government and grant them all the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship" (Prucha, 1975). The U.S. Congress began to use specific language in their deliberations regarding the termination of Indians as governmental wards. In addition, the federal government implemented another new policy, aimed at relocating Indian people to urban cities and away from the reservations. The Menominees of Wisconsin became the first tribe slated for termination in 1954 (Bowker, 1993). There were sixty-one tribes terminated during this period, including tribes in California, Idaho, Michigan, Washington, Oregon, and Wisconsin.

In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson's message to Congress, "The Forgotten Americans," put an end to the termination policy. He called for federal support of Indian affairs and stated:

I propose a new goal for our Indian programs: a goal that ends the debate about termination of Indian programs and stresses self-determination; a goal that erases old attitudes of paternalism and promotes partnership and self-help. (Josephy, 1996)

Johnson also directed the BIA to:

...help make the Indian school a vital part of the Indian community. I am directing the Secretary of the Interior to establish Indian School boards for federal Indian schools. School board members selected by the communities will receive whatever training is necessary to enable them to carry out their responsibilities. (*ibid*)

This speech was a major turning point in education for American Indian schools.

In 1969, a special Senate subcommittee on Indian education—chaired by Robert Kennedy and, later, his brother Senator Edward Kennedy—issued the report, "Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge." In this report, the following declaration was issued:

The dominant policy of the federal government toward the American Indian has been one of coercive assimilation...resulting in...the destruction and disorganization of Indian communities and individuals; a desperately severe and self-perpetuating cycle of poverty for most Indians; the growth of a large, ineffective, and self-perpetuating bureaucracy which retards the elimination of Indian poverty; a waste of federal appropriations. The coercive assimilation policy has had disastrous effects on the education of Indian children...which has resulted in...the classroom and the school becoming a kind of battleground where the Indian child attempts to protect his integrity and identity as an individual by defeating the purposes of the school; schools which fail to understand or adapt to, and in fact often denigrate cultural differences; schools which blame their own failures on the Indian student and reinforce his defensiveness; schools which fail to recognize the importance and validity of the Indian community—the community and the child retaliate by

treating the school as an alien institution; a dismal record of absenteeism, dropouts, negative self-image, low achievement, and ultimately, academic failure for many Indian children; a perpetuation of the cycle of poverty which undermines the success of all federal programs (qtd in Bowker, 1993).

As a direct result of this report, the decade of the seventies witnessed major legislation aimed at improving Indian education. In 1972 Congress passed the Indian Education Act, which established a comprehensive approach to meeting the unique needs of American Indians and Alaska Native students. This act recognizes that American Indians have unique educational and culturally related academic needs and distinct language and cultural needs. The most far-reaching legislation to be signed during the 70's, however, was the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, which guaranteed tribes the opportunity to determine their own futures and the education of their children through funds allocated to and administered by individual tribes (Bowker, 1993).

### Summary

From the time that Europeans first came to America, the formal education of American Indians has been controlled by "outsiders" (missionaries and governments) with little regard to the parents, the tribes, or the needs of the children. All individuals or groups responsible for educating Indian children were determined to civilize the Indian child as a means to assimilate tribal groups and eliminate the so-called "Indian problem". There is no question that the history of American Indian education has taken its toll on

every Indian tribe; however, despite numerous early acts of Congress and presidential mandates, the American Indian people have survived as distinct cultural groups.

### Section Two—Native American Women

In the past decade, the study of American Indian boarding schools has increased considerably. The best of this literature has moved beyond an historical examination of federal policies of boarding school education to the study of the experiences of Indian children within the school. Studies by David Wallace Adams, K. Tsianina Lomawaima, Brenda Child, Sally Hyer, and Esther Burnett Horne and Sally McBeth have used oral interviews and archival research to consider the history of boarding schools from American Indian perspectives. In doing so, they have begun to uncover the impact of boarding school education for Indian children, families, and communities, past and present. None of these recent studies have focused on women. This section will examine the research on boarding schools from the perspective of American Indian women.

The popular view of American Indian women disseminated by historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and educators, as well as novelists, accords women a low status because of the nature of the duties they performed (Bataille, Sands 1984). One anthropologist has written, for example:

The Indian Country of the Upper Missouri was a man's world before the white man's civilization penetrated that remote portion of the interior of our continent. Indian men were the hunters and warriors. As partisans they led war parties. As chiefs they deliberated in tribal councils and negotiated intertribal peaces. They were the seekers of visions, the makers and manipulators of powerful medicine bundles, and the conductors of prolonged and involved religious rituals. Women, on the other hand, were the diggers of roots and collectors of berries, the carriers of firewood and

drawers of water, the dressers of hides and makers of tipis and clothing. As homemakers and housekeepers they performed scores of tasks necessary to the welfare of their families. But their role was humble one. The Indian woman's inferior status...

Katherine M. Weist, in a study of Plains Indian women, cites examples of prevalent views of American Indian women as "unfortunate and debased...beasts of burden." Although the women may be described as "humane and hospitable," they are also seen as "rude and unpolished." It is clear from Weist's summary of the research that publications about American Indian women, particularly studies of Plains tribes, have either ignored the power of women within tribal structure or undervalued or inadequately evaluated it (*ibid*).

In their roles as missionaries, Indian agents, folklorists, and ethnographers, European and European American males have throughout history been the ones to collect and interpret Native American narratives and have established themselves as the "leading experts" on Native Americans, including Native American women (Almeida, 1997). The written record is an important source of information when reconstructing any history. But for a long time it was provided by outsiders who were male and non-Indian...thus, much of it was biased. Both Indian men and women have been stereotyped to some degree because of an incomplete representation of Indian cultures in written accounts. When Indian women appear in literature or in movies, their role is often demeaning and negative. They are neither accurately portrayed nor given adequate historical representation. For the most part, whites writing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century express repugnance for Indian women and their work. In 1885, William Clark wrote: "In savagery and barbarism women are merely beasts of burden, prized and valued for their skill in fancy

or capacity for heavy work, rather than for any beauty of face or figure.” Thus, when writing on the life of Indian women, historians not only should utilize data provided by non-Indians; they should also seek to understand how an Indian society viewed its women (Green, 1992).

Literature about American Indian women has increased dramatically during the past twenty years (Mihsuah, 1996). Recent works reflect the efforts ethnohistorians have made in recreating Indian women’s histories, and their publications illustrate sensitivity to their positions as interpreters of the lives, cultures, and histories of another culture (*ibid*). Scholars such as Rayna Green (1992), Ardy Bowker (1993), Paulette Molin (Hultgren & Molin, 1989), and K. Tsiania Lomawaima (1994) have provided a forum where Native American women can be heard (Almeida, 1997). Scholars of American Indian history as well as people in Indian communities seeking to preserve their culture have begun to document on film and in oral histories the lives and stories of native women (Green, 1992). As Almeida has pointed out in *The Hidden Half: A History of Native American Women’s Education*, as Native American women, it is our responsibility and right to produce research that specifically relates to us as Native women.

Stories handed down through many generations reveal much about the beliefs, values, and laws of a particular culture. The roles that women play in these stories indicate to some extent how a society views its women. Every tribal group had a different form of social organizations. In many ways, Indian women shared a common thread in their life styles. They needed to rely on a man to hunt for them and otherwise

provide what women could not and if she lost her male provider through divorce, marriage, or death, another male would have to take his place. Not only were women in most tribes responsible for gathering and cultivating plants; they were responsible for developing all the extraordinary varieties of vegetables and fruits used by Indian people (*ibid*). Women throughout the Indian world possessed knowledge about everyday health care, though in some tribes women were acknowledged spiritual leaders. Women were responsible for treating minor ailments and served as medical consultants for their tribe. They were also midwives, taking care of pregnant women and infants (Green 1992). In *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Mission, 1630-1990*, Carol Devens documents that “as mothers and keepers of the home, women were the conservators of tradition; the links between those gone before and those to follow....women shielded traditional culture from the destructive impact of colonization even as they protected themselves (1992).

Native children were accustomed to being educated and taken care of by people other than their natural parents (Almeida, 1997). Grandmothers were one of the many adults who nurtured the children in the home. In Marla N. Powers book *Oglala Women : Myth, Ritual, and Reality* (1986), she explains the four stages of a women in the Lakota culture and the importance of the ritual for the women. The first stage was known as *Wincincala or* Girlhood, and this was a time when the mother bonded with her daughter. Girls were taught the stories about the emergence of the Lakotas and the importance of respecting nature. Their mothers and grandmothers kept careful watch over them as they began to mature. Soon their childhood would end and they would reach the next stage of

*Tankake* 'becoming a woman'. The second stage of life is called *Wikoskalaka*: Adolescence. In this stage of life the young women enters puberty and is being prepared for womanhood by all her female relatives. Her families also had ceremonies to help her move into this stage of life. According to Powers, she is also being prepared for the day her parents would exchange gifts with the parents of a suitable young man, when she would leave the watchful eyes of mother and grandmother and move to her husband's camp. The third stage of life was known as *Winyan*: Womanhood. This was the period when the woman entered into marriage and childbearing. Powers points out that this was when the women were known as "who make the family move" (p.90). The last stage of the Lakota woman life was known as *Winunhcala*: Old Age. At this point in her life, according to Powers, she had the ability to be a medicine woman or she participated in rituals. Above all, she was a grandmother, with knowledge and wisdom that is acquired through-out her lifetime. These are the stages of life that the Lakota woman transcends through during her life on this earth.

On reservations, after the government had banned ceremonies, women's roles, like those of the men, in the ritual life of their community were forever changed....the medicines and ceremonial skills they had known so well were reviled as quirks of savagery (Green, 1992). Boarding schools in America rapidly replaced the rearing of Indian children and practices like these became nonexistent in Native women's lives. The Catholics did not believe that it took a whole village to raise a child (Marken and Woodard, 2002). In *Children Left Behind: The Dark Legacy of Indian Mission Boarding Schools*, Tim Giago summarizes:

The shortest road to assimilation is through the children. If they are removed from the influence of their parents and grandparents, indoctrinated into a new religion, denied their own language, and then made over into the image of the white people while isolated from their traditions, culture and spirituality, they will be effectively assimilated into another culture. When the children are placed in an environment that institutionalizes the body and the spirit, the door is opened to molding them into the “civilized people envisioned by the government, using the minions of the Church as the tools and the enforcers. To be torn from the loving homes of our Lakota parents and then to be placed in a cold, cold institution was in and of itself extremely traumatizing. Beyond that, to be placed in an environment where all teachers and related staff were not only white but also Jesuit priests and Franciscan nuns could also be terrorizing (2006).

In *Shaping Survival: Essays by Four American Indian Tribal Women*, Lydia Whirlwind Solider recounts her days at St. Francis Indian Mission on the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota. She describes how the Boarding school has affected many:

The separation of children from their parents and sibling ravaged the family structure. Our contemporary disrespect for elders, parents, and authority in general are the results of the treatment children received in the boarding schools. The alcoholism, violence, domestic, and sexual abuse of children are also the legacy of the malevolent practices of these God fearing Christians, including the Jesuits and nuns (Marken & Woodard, 2006).

The loneliness that residential school students experienced could be so extreme that they were often in despair, wondering how they could possibly cope. Many children who reached this stage ran away (Grant, 2004). According to Giago (2006), life at the mission turned out to be one of intermittent loneliness, learning, and growing up. Homesickness was intense for many, and the first few weeks of school were usually marked by extraordinarily high rates of students running away, “going AWOL,” in the parlance of the schools (Archuleta, Child, and Lomawaima, 2000).

Adaptation to Boarding schools was difficult for many Native American women and upon returning home, women faced challenges that influence their daily lives. The effects of the boarding school experience began to influence their identity, as Giago writes:

I speak not for myself alone, but for the thousands of Indian men and women who struggled for years to find themselves. Many succeeded, but many failed. We went out into the world away from the Mission boarding schools lost and confused. *If we were not Indian, what were we?* We soon realized that in the real world, we were different. In South Dakota we were not accepted in the world we had been trained to become a part of. With the lack of acceptance came the terrible feelings of rejection that became the focal point of so many of our lives. Our self-esteem had been obliterated. Many of us were actually ashamed to be Indian. (2006).

Researchers have documented numerous accounts of how Indian women struggled with raising their children. Native Women have recounted how they lost their ability to be parents due to their time in boarding school. Giago recounts how prevalent this was:

Another terrible outgrowth of the boarding schools was the lack of parenting skills and the inability to have long term relationships, a consequence that was experienced by so many former students. Without the lessons to be learned from our parents and grandparents because of the forced separation, Indian students had no role models to emulate. How to interact with their peers as they matured and how to interact with their own children in later life would have been a part of their natural, cultural growth in an Indian community (Giago, p.5-6).

Solider recounts how she also “had lost the opportunity to learn parenting skills because of physical separation from my parents (Marken and Woodard, 2006)”. In his book, *Kill The Indian, Save The Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools*, Ward Churchill states when students were:

...seeking some sense of “normalcy” in marriage and the forming of families, they typically discover that a combination of the psychoemotional damage they suffered in the schools, their all but total lack of experience in actual familial settings, and often their inability to secure the steady work necessary to providing for their dependants, generates catastrophic results. As a rule, they end up visiting upon their offspring some variation of the misery they themselves suffered as youngsters (2004).

In *Lakota Women*, Mary Crow Dog tells how several generations of her family attended the same boarding school and nothing has changed:

My mother had much the same experiences but never wanted to talk about them, and then there I was, in the same place. The school is now run by the BIA – the Bureau of Indian Affairs – but only since about fifteen years ago. When I was there, during the 1960s, it was still run by the Church. The Jesuit fathers ran the boys’ wing and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart ran us – with the help of the strap. Nothing has changed since my grandmother’s days. I have been told recently that even in the ‘70s they were still beating children at that school. All I got out of school was being taught how to pray (1990).

According to Edith Dalla Costa, the most unforgivable damage of the boarding school experience was that she never really got to know her parents (Grant, 2004).

Some women, writing about their culture, have found that their own people are reluctant to recall the old way of life. Beverly Hungry Wolf describes the reticence she came up against during her search for knowledge of traditional life:

I recall the when I first started asking my grandmothers about their old ways they sometimes discouraged me and made me fell silly for having such interests...Even though their belief in these traditions was very strong, they had been made to feel that there was no future in this world for their children and grandchildren if they didn’t put these old ways aside (Green, 1992).

Recovering this important link to cultural tradition is a theme for many women survivors of boarding schools. Lydia Whirlwind Soldier's testimony about her return to Lakota tradition speaks powerfully about this:

In order to heal, I had to validate the trauma I had suffered in the boarding schools. My self-esteem had been assaulted. The purveyors of Christian teachings had drained and stomped me. Their approaches and censorship had taken my identity and my language. I had buried this immense loss in my subconscious. But I knew the answer to my healing was out there somewhere...[eventually] changing my reality became my conscious choice...I began to see myself in a new light. I had become cynical and numb to spirituality. I knew I had to direct myself to the specific goal of relearning what I thought I had lost and to create a future for myself and for my family...At last, the profound teachings of the Lakota came back to me. Being Lakota was not a temporary illusion. I cannot tell the day I left the hurt behind. There is no magical number or date. It was a slow and gradual process, one step at a time. But slowly the pieces of the puzzle fell into place. I had diligently held in my heart the ancient Lakota teaching of my family. The healing didn't happen overnight; the pain didn't end in one day, and it didn't leave me entirely, but finally anew strength filled my body and heart. My spirit was no longer tied to the trauma of the abuse (Marken & Woodard, 2006).

In contrast, some Native American women used their boarding school education to help them lead their people to resist extinction. Armed with knowledge of European American ways and values, these women were among the central figures in the reform and resistance movements through which many Native nations, through virtual captives of the United States, would resist non-Native efforts to destroy their culture (Green, 1992).

Though not all Native peoples see their boarding school experiences as negative, it is generally the case that much, if not most, of the current dysfunctionality in Native

communities can be traced to the boarding school era (Smith, 2004). Esther Horne articulates how Haskell shaped her life:

Most of us who are alumni of Indian Boarding schools feel a great pride and sense of belonging to a unique and special group of people...who have become part of our extended families. Even though boarding schools took children away from their homes...we created our own community at the school. We were proud of our accomplishments and proud that we had retained so much of our Indianness...the students and teachers at Haskell will forever be an integral part of who I am as an American Indian (McBeth, 1998).

The legacy of government boarding schools is still being sorted out in American Indian communities. The history is rife with complex emotions, and memories have remained strong for former students (Child, 1998).

### Summary

Native American women continue to play an important role in the education of their people. Many have come to understand and seek to preserve the traditional roles women held in the past, and have sought out women elders from their families and communities to instruct them in maintaining that knowledge. Some, such as Beverly Hungry Wolf (Blackfeet) and Ruth Roessel (Navajo) have become authors, thereby sharing their knowledge of Native American women's traditions. Native American women have become involved with their nation's political affairs and have been elected to leadership positions. Currently, approximately 12 percent of the five hundred or so federally recognized Native American and Alaskan Native nations have female leadership (Green, qtd in Almeida, 1997).

Despite the changes in government education policy from the reservation era to contemporary times, Native American women maintain their responsibilities as the keepers of their culture, working for the revitalization of the languages, arts, and religious practices of their people, always with the focus on future generations: “It was our grandmothers who held on to what they could of our identity as a People...Often times the fire grew dim, but still our grandmothers persisted. We were taught that the time we are in is only borrowed from future generations.” Native women today draw on the same inner strength that sustained female Native students attending the off-reservation boarding school of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (*ibid*). According to Giago, Indian women are the backbone of the Indian nations. They are the mothers who have dedicated their lives to their families and to their people. They are the proud women who have kept alive the traditions and culture of the Lakota nations (2006). The women of native societies have in large part been responsible for their people having something to celebrate in the modern era (Green, 1992).

### CHAPTER THREE—PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of boarding schools on the lives of Lakota Sioux women through their experiences and to generate a theoretical model of survival methods for coping with the boarding school experience as children, adolescents, and adults. This chapter includes a description of the population to be studied, the data collection process, and procedures and methodologies to be applied in the analyses of the data.

#### Population

The population identified for the study will be ten Lakota women between the ages of 45 and 55 who currently reside on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River reservations in South Dakota, and who attended boarding school for a minimum of four years.

#### Procedure

Research participants were recruited from the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River reservations in South Dakota and are either known by the researcher to have attended a boarding school or were referred by a mutual friend or acquaintance. Each participant was contacted by the researcher, and after the purpose and the scope of the study were reviewed, appointments were made for the initial interview. Each participant was guaranteed confidentiality and warned of the potential for emotional consequences of participation. The researcher will provide a copy of the study to each participant once it is completed.

### Data Collection

The process of collecting data involved three focused, one-on-one interviews and one questionnaire. The women were interviewed in their choice of location. The three interviews were conducted at least one day and not more than a week apart. Each of the interviews took one to two hours depending upon the responses of the individuals. All interviews were taped. The interviews were structured with questions formulated ahead of time. At the end of the third interview, participants were asked to add anything about their boarding school experience that has not been covered. Prior to the interview, a letter confirming the participants' agreement to the interview was mailed confirming the first appointment. Following the completion of the three interviews, a letter thanking the participant, along with a promise to share a copy of the final product, was sent.

The questionnaire inquired about coping and survival skills in six categories including: (1) physical abuse, (2) psychological/emotional abuse, (3) living/learning conditions, (4) impact of boarding school experience on adult life, (5) the legacy of boarding school, and (6) feelings. Due to the sensitive nature of these questions and the possible reluctance of the individuals to respond to these questions in a face-to-face interview process, participants were asked to complete the questionnaire in private, place it in a sealed, unmarked envelope and return the envelope to the interviewer at the time of the last interview.

In keeping with the emic method of participant-observer research, the interviewer is a member of the Lakota tribe who grew up on the Cheyenne River reservation and

attended St. Joseph Indian School. To comply with the evidentiary adequacy of the research, the researcher spent adequate time in the field to complete all the interviews during a two week time period. All interviews were transcribed verbatim.

### Methodology

Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research as “...an inquiring process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed view of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.” Hoshmand (1989) notes that qualitative research is particularly appropriate to address the meanings and perspectives of the participants. Polkinghorne (1991) points out that qualitative research methods are appropriate for uncovering meanings people assign to their experiences. Ryan and Bernard (2000) point out that grounded theory is a process by which the researcher becomes more and more “grounded” in the data and is able to develop rich concepts and models of how the phenomenon being studied really works. Patton (2002) maintains that grounded theory “...has opened the door to qualitative inquiry in many traditional academic social science and education departments, especially as a basis for doctoral dissertations.” Creswell also points out that qualitative researchers rely on a few cases and many variables in conducting their research.

This study will use qualitative research procedures based on the grounded theory approach. Creswell notes that if a researcher chooses a qualitative design, there must be a strong rationale for choosing this approach. He offers several suggestions for

determining the choice of qualitative design that are appropriate to this study including: (1) choose a qualitative study because of the nature of the research questions, (2) choose a qualitative study because the topic needs exploration, (3) choose a qualitative study if there is a need to interview the participants in their natural setting, and (5) choose a qualitative study to emphasize the researcher's role as an active learner who can tell a story from the interviewees perspective rather than an expert who passes judgment. Bartunek and Louis (1996) maintain that "People who are insiders to a setting being studied often have a view of the setting and any findings about it quite different from that of the outside researchers who are conducting the study." Pike (1954) coined the terms *emic* and *etic* to describe culture based research. Emic describes research done by a cultural "insider", as opposed to etic research done by someone who is not from the culture under investigation. Vidich and Lyman (2000) suggest that an emic approach is the only benchmark by which self-confidently valid conclusions can be made.

Grounded theory emphasizes systematic rigor and thoroughness in design, data collection, and analysis. According to Glaser (2001), "Grounded theory methodology leaves nothing to chance by giving you rules for every stage on what to do and what to do next." In order to clarify the participant's understanding of their experiences, the methods to be used will include: (1) proofreading the material and underlining key phrases (Sandelowski, 1995), (2) identifying potential themes by pulling together examples from the interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), (3) developing codes, categories and themes inductively rather than imposing predetermined classifications on the data (Glaser, 1978), (4) developing code notes or summaries of ideas of what is going on in

the narratives (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), (5) analyzing narratives of the interviewees' experiences to identify underlying cultural assumptions (Price, 1987), and using segments of interviews, verbatim quotes, as examples of concepts and theories (Ryan & Russell, 2000).

In the final analyses, this study will report findings in such a way as to “give voice” to otherwise silenced groups and individuals (Coffey & Akinson, 1996), namely Lakota women who have attended boarding schools.

### Summary

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of the boarding schools on the lives of Lakota women through their lived experiences and to generate a theoretical model for ways in which they survived or coped with the boarding school experience as children, adolescents, and adults.

All data collected for the study was obtained from three focused, structured interviews with pre-developed oral questions and a written questionnaire. The population in this study is ten Lakota women who live on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River reservations in South Dakota. The women range in age from 45-55 years. Three focused, structured interviews were conducted with a minimum of one day and not more than a week apart. A questionnaire was completed anonymously by each participant. The methodology employs a qualitative research design using grounded theory from an emic perspective.

## CHAPTER FOUR—ANALYSIS OF DATA

### Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of boarding schools on the lives of Lakota women through their lived experiences as children, adolescents and adults. To accomplish this purpose, data from this study was obtained from interviews with ten Lakota women who reside on the Cheyenne River and Pine Ridge Indian reservations in South Dakota. Demographic questions were discussed at the beginning of the interview, which were used to develop a profile of the interviewees. This was followed by a second interview that allowed the participant to describe the impact of the boarding schools on their lives. The third and final interview consisted of the participant making a connection between boarding school experiences and how they were affected in their adult lives.

### Demographic Information and Initial Impressions

#### Interview #1

The purpose of the first interview was to establish demographic information and to record initial impressions of the boarding school, including the everyday activities that the women engaged in while enrolled in school. Many of the questions pertained to the typical school day and how the women felt about their first experiences of being away from home. Questions were also asked about their recollection of punishment in the boarding schools.

The women who participated in this study were in the age range of 45-55 years of

age. Six of the women were from the Cheyenne River reservation and four were from the Pine Ridge reservation. During their primary years, six of the women attended Saint Joseph Indian School in Chamberlain, South Dakota; three women attended Our Lady of Lords school in Porcupine, South Dakota; and one woman attended Holy Rosary Mission in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. All of the women also attended a Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school during their high school years. All ten of the women had brothers and sisters who also attended boarding school.

Seven of the ten women spoke English and/or Lakota when they first attended boarding school, and three spoke only Lakota. One of the women who only spoke Lakota stated:

When I first went to boarding school I didn't know how to talk English; I only knew how to talk Lakota. We were not allowed to speak our language. It was really hard because we couldn't understand what the teachers were saying or translate what they were saying to us.

Eight of the participant's parents spoke the Lakota language fluently and two of the participant's fathers spoke the Lakota language while their mothers did not. All ten of the women stated that one or both of their parents had attended boarding school. One woman addressed the issue of losing her language in boarding school:

Going to school at boarding school, I guess I was really traumatized that they didn't let me speak my language, so I was kind of ashamed of who I was. I never got into the traditional or cultural part of our Lakota ways, even my language. Sometimes I understand it and I can talk it and I am scared to make mistakes in my language. When I am alone I talk to myself in Lakota and I always think, "why can't I do that whenever I am around Lakota people? Why can't I talk like that?" I kind of blame it on when I was in my younger years. I have a sister who went to boarding school and she still really talks Indian. We haven't gotten into our culture traditions or anything like that. We did have an uncle who was a medicine man. I remember going to sun dances and ceremonies and stuff like that,

but it was when I was young so I don't remember them as much. I remember going to them and experiencing some of the things that happen at ceremonies and sun dances. When I went to school I really felt ashamed of being Indian, until just recently, maybe in the past five years. I am proud of who I am; I am finally proud of being Lakota and my kids don't have Indian names and I always felt like I didn't belong in my own people; because of what happened in boarding school. I was really ashamed of who I was. I didn't like being Indian. So even as I got older I never went to any kind of ceremonies. I didn't care about Indian dance or anything, until my granddaughter was born and she is the one that has really helped me to understand who I am because she is the one who practices her Lakota ways. I thought to myself, "Just think if I didn't go to boarding school I would have been proud of who I am".

This quote reveals one of the lasting effects of the boarding school experience, and as powerful as these words are, they come from the heart of each participant. Another woman had a similar sentiment:

The first time I entered boarding school was a feeling ashamed of who I am and the way they treated me. They cut my hair off and I was always really proud of my hair...it was long and really thick and I remember I was really crying when they cut my hair. I remember looking down and seeing all my hair and just crying I lost my language and I lost a lot of stuff there, just that first year of attending boarding school.

All of the women in this study felt that their words would, in one way or another, bring healing to themselves and to other women who have been to boarding schools.

All of the women understood their families had reasons for sending them to boarding school. They spoke about their home life, how they came from large families and they knew that their parents were having a difficult time caring for them. Others spoke of living too far from the school or too far for a bus to pick them up and that was the main reason they were put in boarding school:

You know, actually we were pretty isolated [at home], nobody had cars. And where we lived, it was miles [away from other people], the only ones

I remember coming in contact with were relatives, you know cousins, so when I went to boarding school, I would see all my relatives; this made it easier for me.

One woman recalled her parents' reasoning, "...they thought we were safe with the nuns and priests and we ate and we would be warm." Another woman stated that it was the only option and they did not have vehicles. She remembers, "It was something that we just knew we had to do and it was perfectly understood without being spoken loudly and I knew what I had to do to go to school." Four of the women stated that boarding school was a way of life for them. As one woman put it:

I went away to boarding school when I was five and it was all I ever knew. I thought that was what the way were supposed to be that was how I was trained. To go every fall to school and come back every spring. We spent the whole year there, we didn't even come home for vacations. We had three days for Christmas vacation and one day for Thanksgiving. The whole time we were there was constant school and work.

Because the women in this study knew that boarding school was not optional, they all expressed a sense of resignation about attending.

When the researcher asked the women about how they felt when they first arrived at the boarding school, all the women had a sad look on their faces as they recalled that experience. One woman stated: "Okay, back here on the reservation we didn't have electricity and we didn't have running water and so when we go there everything was too bright. I mean, I liked going into the building and seeing where we were going to be, but I didn't think about what was going to happen." Another woman recalled her relief in getting off the bus that had transported her to school. She said that after riding the bus all day, she only wanted to lie down and sleep. However, this feeling of relief was not the norm for these children: "it was a sad time because they would be crying for their

parents.” One woman remembered children crying all night. She stated that everybody cried all night and she only remembers one student who did not. Some students were also separated from their siblings. Another woman recalled: “I wanted to be where my sister was but she was in the big girl’s side and I was on the little girl’s side. I remember feeling alone and how all those kids felt because you could hear them crying. It was sad.”

The women in this study all remember, upon their arrival at boarding school, having to put “bug juice” in their hair. It was assumed by the nuns and priest that all Indian children had head lice and this is how they dealt with the problem. One woman recalled:

I just remember when we got there it was they had to put that bug juice all over us. That is all I remember about the first day is just bug juice and wondering what it was. I have an idea what it was after being out of there for a while. I think it was a pesticide. The same kind of pesticide that you use in the fields, that kind of pesticide to kill bugs, you know, that you kill regular household bugs with...it was a pesticide.

Another woman also recalled the nuns and priest assuming all the children had head lice. She stated that she did not remember what the “bug juice” was made of, but she does recall it being white and it burned her skin. She also stated that it looked like milk. Half of the women stated that whatever was put on their hair also burned their eyes. One woman recalled that when children came back from home and had head lice, the nuns would put kerosene on their heads. They stated that if it touched your skin, it burned severely. The women who attended St. Joseph Indian School could not recall what was put on their hair. Their recollection of this chemical was only known by the name “bug juice.”

When asked about their school day, all ten of the women stated that the curriculum was standard (reading, writing, and arithmetic) in the boarding school that they had attended. One woman remarked that "...when I got to the high school we had choice. We were encouraged to take vocational classes and some of us did." One woman remembered:

I guess both experiences [primary and high school] were standard academic, but at Chamberlain we were also responsible for [pause] we all had chores and we were assigned to different areas like the kitchen, the bakery, the laundry, or like the dining room. We all had chores to do and we usually had to do those like after school and then on weekends. During my high school years it was pretty much academic until I got to my last year, then I had, I think I had two credit hours or two courses to complete. So I had like almost the whole afternoon, so then I spent time getting experience being in the office.

All of the participants said that their curriculum consisted of the standard academic areas, and that they also were required to learn practical skills outside of the classroom.

All ten of the women spoke of a typical school day. Getting up very early in the morning to do chores and pray before school was common. One woman recalled:

[We] got up at 6:00 AM and did our chores, prayed, did your chores I think, went to eat, worked again, I can't remember some of it, then went to school. After school I think you had some time, like in the play rooms, then you go to church again and then you go to supper; play some more then go to bed; oh, you pray then go to bed. There had to be more work in there somewhere, I can't remember.

Another woman remembered:

We got up at 6:00 a.m. and we were sitting in church about 6:45. Then we went to breakfast and did chores after breakfast and at 8:30 a.m. we were in the classrooms until 12:00, then we went down for lunch. [At] one p.m. we were back in the classrooms until 5:00. At 5:00 we went to benediction for a half-hour and then went to supper. We did chores after supper to 8:30 and then had free time.

All of the women interviewed cited the routine of getting up at 6:00 a.m., praying, and beginning their chores before school started. The women stated that they were in school all day and after school they returned to the dormitory and did chores before they went to supper. When the researcher asked them how often they attended church, every informant recalled going to church periodically throughout the day. They also prayed before bedtime. One woman stated:

We had to attend church. When they had benediction we had to go to that. I remember sleeping really good in December and [them] waking us up at midnight, getting us ready, going to church. We went to church all the time. I can remember standing in line waiting to go to the confessional. Standing in line, asking my cousin standing there, "what kind of lie are you going to tell?" Because like when we went and stood in line we would all talk about what we were going to lie about in the confessional. Then we would all have a big laugh about it. They would say right before you come out of the confessional, well you will have to say eight "Hail Mary's" or so many "Our Father's" and you are forgiven of your sins. I remember our cousins would be laughing, we will tell this lie and we will get out of it by saying so many prayers. But you know it was hard. It was a hard time for us. I don't think any of our parents knew what we were going through, but it was hard.

The women were asked to describe a typical Saturday and Sunday. All of the women who attended Saint Joseph Indian School recalled Saturday as a workday. The woman stated that they still were required to get up at 6:00 a.m., go to mass, and then have breakfast. After that, they did chores until noon.

Saturday was a day we did all our chores. We got all our chores done and they sent us outside and locked the doors on us. We were outside and we had to stay out there until they let us in. That was even through the winter. they made us go out there, either playing at the playground or taking a hike, it is called the chalk hill. We would take a hike out there or we would roller skate or ice skate or it didn't matter when, but every Saturday we got locked out. We had to be outside and that's the time we spent with our family members because that is when we got to see them, especially the boys because we were all separated. That was the only time we got to

Speak Lakota was because we were away from them so we would all visit. Sometimes I didn't like it because when they locked us out some of the younger kids would be cold. They would just be standing there shaking and you would just be trying to warm them up. I would just be mad that they locked us out. When it was time to go in, everyone would let the little ones go in first because they were cold and they wanted to be inside. Sunday was, basically, we spent most of our time in church. It was like, I think, we were in there for maybe four hours and then they let us out. It was just like a regular day; it is just that we were in church a lot on that day.

Another woman who attended Saint Joseph Indian School recalled Sunday as being a day of rest. The nuns and priest considered Sunday a day of rest, she remembered, and all that was required of the students was to attend church. The women who attended Our Lady of Lourdes School stated they were able to return home on weekends, and one woman who attended Holy Rosary Mission School stated that the weekends were also used for cleaning and doing chores. All of the women interviewed recalled that the older the student was, the more work they had to do.

The researcher next inquired about punishment at the schools. Specifically, why were students punished and what methods of discipline were used. All ten of the women interviewed stated corporal punishment was the primary form of discipline used in the boarding schools. All of the women interviewed recalled students who were beaten with a paddle, strap, belt, or the hands of the nuns/priests.

I remember in one grade it was the paddle, those kind that have the ball on there. I remember that teacher had a whole closet full of those. She had the girls pull up their dresses and the guys pull down their pants in front of the whole class. And another teacher who used, he had big knuckles, used to use his knuckles and hit you on top of the head or else you had to go up and hold your hands out and he would hit you with a ruler or he would pull your ear. The nuns were always spanking, either using doorstoppers or straps. One nun just used her hands and beat you. Pull you over forward and just beat your back.

Another woman recalled being whipped on the legs, “and this would be for like giggling in bed or something of that nature”. She also remembered more extreme forms of discipline:

This little nun would grab you and drag you to the east wall of the dormitory and you had to kneel down and put your arms up in the air against the wall and you knelt there until she told you you could go back to bed. I remember kids falling asleep in that position. Just putting [their] forehead against the wall and falling asleep, against the wall. I remember hearing when I was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (...at the mission the classroom was right next to the principal’s office); I remember hearing him strapping kids next door in his office. You could hear kids being beaten in there, right next door... We had a night matron who used to hit kids with keys. Just like a whole thing of keys, just haul off and whack you.

Many of the informants recalled having to kneel and pray for hours as punishment.

Yet another punishment was to sit in a broom closet for hours in the dark. One participant remembered being punished in groups for one person’s actions, stating that when a whole group received punishment, they had to stand in little squares that were marked on the floor. They could not tell time yet, so it seemed like a very long time that they stood in those squares. Another woman spoke of corporal punishment:

I remember you had to hold your hands out and you were hit with the ruler on one side and you had to flip them over and they hit you on the other side. They pulled the back of your hair behind your neck. They made you kneel in the broom closet in the dark. They spanked you with a big old board. The girls that ran away, I think they tried to run away, they used to make them wear long dresses. If the boys ran away they would shave their heads.

Running away was mentioned by all of the women who attended St. Joseph’s Indian School.

The women who attended Saint Joseph’s recalled that when boys or girls ran

away from school, they were publicly humiliated. The boys had their head shaved completely or they were given a Mohawk haircut and they were made to wear bib overalls. The girls also had their hair cut short, but they were sent to see Mother Superior, who oversaw the nuns at the boarding school. The women reported that if you had to see Mother Superior, she would talk to you about what you did and then you were given a choice of which belt was to be used on you. The women who attended boarding school on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation stated that they never thought of running away. Although one woman stated she thought of it, but her friends gave her encouragement to stay in school.

The researcher then asked the women if they ever thought of suicide while attending boarding school. All ten of the women responded negatively.

They were then asked if they knew of girls in the boarding school who were sent home because of pregnancy. Eight of them responded that they did not hear of pregnancies and one woman recalled two girls being pregnant, but she stated that it was at the end of the year and she did not know what happened to them. The other woman interviewed stated that she had been pregnant in her final years of high school and was sent to a girl's home for unwed mothers in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. When the researcher asked her about the father, she stated he did not take responsibility for the child, but she added that he did come forth later in the child's life.

The researcher asked the women if they liked boarding school and the majority of the women stated that it was a way of life for them and they had become accustomed to it. The women stated that they knew they would always have three meals a day and a

warm place to sleep. They also stated that they had lasting friendships that were created in the boarding school. Several of the women stated they did not like boarding school and their reason for this was due to the loneliness that they felt toward their families at home. One woman spoke on how she felt the boarding school had disengaged her from her family. She states:

When I look back on my elementary school experience, I realize how stifling it was and it was really emotional and hard for me cause I think that was a time when I disengaged from my mother and father emotionally. I think I had a hard time with that.

It is clear that, for these women, the emotional impact of attending boarding school has endured over time.

All ten of the women interviewed have been married one or more times in their lives. All of the women have one or more children and presently are employed on their home reservations. Of the ten women, seven speak and understand the Lakota language. The remaining three do not. All of the women stated that they have at one time or another practiced their Lakota ways. They also state that they have been involved in their community in various positions at some point in their lives.

#### The Impact of Boarding School on Emotional Growth & Maturation Interview #2

In the first interview, the researcher discussed with the Native American women issues that pertained to demographics, their school life, discipline, and how they felt about being away from home. In the second interview, the researcher asked questions which allowed the women to describe the impact of boarding school on their emotional

growth and maturation. The interviews began with the women describing a particular teacher who had encouraged them to achieve in school. Of the ten women interviewed, only two stated that not one teacher had been influential to them during their educational years. The remaining eight all remembered someone who inspired them at one time or another. One woman stated:

I think in my elementary years all my teachers were nuns. They were good teachers. They always had, seemed to have, respect for you and try to teach you different things. I think I learned a lot in my elementary years. I don't know if one stands out. Because I wasn't only learning in school in the academic areas, but other areas—in the kitchen, that type of thing. But just learning to get along with people and learning how to work, good work habits. I don't know if there was one person who stands out in my elementary years cause they were pretty much, they treated everybody alike.

Another woman recalled a teacher in second grade who treated all the students in a fair manner. She was a pleasant woman to be around and she helped the students to gain as much knowledge as they could academically. This teacher pushed them by emphasizing the importance of education; she took a strong interest in the students and seemed to really care about them. One woman recalled that it was the matron in the dormitories, rather than the nuns, who made a difference.

In the school itself there was a number of people who made a difference. One was a matron in the dorm who took me under her wing and helped me...I lived with her daughter when I was a junior and lived with her when I was a senior...then after I graduated from school, too. And she took me for a daughter and she made a real impact on my life because I learned of skills from her that I wouldn't have learned otherwise.

One of the women remembered that her fifth grade teacher, who was a nun, had a big influence on her through music. That teacher would hum through her lessons, and that was a different way of teaching. When asked if they thought their teachers had been

caring and nurturing to the students, seven of the women said they had at least one person who seemed concerned about their well-being. The three other women remembered a lot of abuse from the teachers and did not recall the teachers to have been nurturing.

The informants were then asked if there had been a particular teacher who had a negative impact on their lives. The women stressed that they recalled a lot of abuse by the nuns. One woman responded:

I think all the nuns, they were the meanest because they were the ones who did all the disciplining and then I don't know if he was a brother or what, but that fifth grade teacher who used to hit on the hand and stuff. But mostly the nuns and him, they were just too mean.

Another woman said that she did not want to go to school because one of the nuns used to pull her hair and pinch her. Another woman's recollection of negativity was when the teachers would pull the tiny hairs behind her neck if she didn't do what they asked. In addition to this physical cruelty, the women also recalled verbal and emotional abuse.

All of the women had stories about teachers who would ridicule and punish students in front of the whole class. These malicious acts are embedded in their memories. One woman recalled the shame and humiliation she felt from the nuns due to her long braided hair. This is what she said:

During my grade school years, when I first started first grade, there was a nun that was just severely...when I look back I think she was racist, very racist. She had preferential treatment and, you know, as little children you can feel it and I felt that very strongly...I remember the first thing she did to me, and I'll never ever forget it, she was um..I always had long, thick hair. My mom always used to braid it and real thick braids, French braided, and send me to school and on the first day of school [the teacher] said "there will be no braids...no long hair." I couldn't understand when I thought about it, but I remember my first experience with shame and that was from her. One day this teacher just humiliated me in front of all the kids, she made me take out my hair and I remember sitting there with my

hair hanging in my face because it was just long and you know how it is when you braid your hair, it just really stands out. I remember I was just little, but I remember thinking, “Oh, something must be wrong with me, I must be looking awful because my hair is out of sort.” So I remember feeling shame. My first experience with shame and it was with that nun.

Another participant remembered her sixth grade teacher, who was a black woman, telling her she was not college material and was not capable of anything. The words of this teacher stayed with her because they were so cutting and cruel, and she believed these words for a long time.

When asked if they thought their teachers were competent to teach, eight of the ten women responded affirmatively. Nine out of the ten women believed that the boarding schools had prepared them academically. The schools provided the groundwork for math, reading, and writing. These women believe that because they came out of the schools being able to read and write, they did succeed academically while attending boarding school. In addition, these nine women stated that their work in the primary grades prepared them for their high school years. One woman summarizes:

Well, I think because we had to learn all those skills, we came out of the boarding school knowing them. I remember I came back to Eagle Butte and back then they had “A” class, “B” class, and “C” class. I went into the “A” class with all the white kids and I didn’t want to be there. I did everything I could to get into the “C” class, so I know it had to prepare me in some way.

One of the ten women did not feel she was academically prepared when she graduated from boarding school. She stated that she had always struggled with academics and this contributed greatly to her negative learning experiences.

The researcher then asked the women if the boarding schools had prepared them for real life situations. The majority of the women answered “no.” These women spoke

about the challenge of being able to make decisions on their own after having lived such regimented lives. Three of the women reported that the strict regiment had a positive effect on their lives. They stressed that discipline—having homework to do and getting it done—helped them in their later years. One woman spoke about always doing her best at work, and never being late. She attributed these qualities to her experience at boarding school, as everything was done by the clock. Another woman stated that the boarding school helped her to be more independent. She recounted how she and her sisters are more independent than her brothers, who did not attend boarding school. She believes that this autonomy is a result of her being away all year at boarding school and only returning home in the summer.

The women were asked to recall their fondest or happiest memory while attending boarding school. Eight of the women spoke of friendship. In one woman's words:

I think the happiest memory is being with [my] friends and just...every year when [I] went back to school if those same kids came back it was a good feeling. We knew that we were going to be together this year. I think every body felt like that. I think the only ones that didn't feel that way was the new kids. The old ones that were there so many years, we were just like family. When we saw each other...it was like "Jeez, I'm glad you are here." The friendships that you made are a lifetime. You experience things with each other.

This way of thinking was common among the eight women. All of the women had a close connection to their friends that they bonded with during their boarding school years and they looked forward to seeing them the following year. One woman spoke without a doubt on how her friends replaced her family:

I remember the exact time I replaced my family with my friends. My mom came and they left and I walked into the little girl's playroom and my friends are all sitting there, talking. They don't even notice and finally

I had to point it out that I wasn't crying. Right after that every time **they** came and went I think I just...[Years later] I went to treatment and they told me that was when I replaced my family. It was probably like third grade. That is why I think it was so hard when I came out of boarding school to go back into a family. I wasn't used to that kind of family.

Two of the women said their fondest memory was going home. They stated that they looked forward to the end of the school year and returning home to be with their families.

The researcher then asked the women to recall their saddest memory of boarding school. This question sincerely touched the hearts of all the women as they struggled to find the words to relate their stories. Each of the women had a different story to tell about the sadness of boarding schools. One overall theme that flowed with the women was of leaving their families at such an early age. As one woman states:

I think it wasn't a specific memory [but a] feeling of almost helplessness, not having any say or any control over your life and having it be determined so you were someplace where you had to be. You could do nothing about it. My parents would leave us off at the school, at the fall of the year. There again you knew they were in Nebraska working, we wouldn't see them probably until Thanksgiving and after the newness of the fall wore off, then it was like you felt real lonesome.

Another woman remembered that when her mother left after visiting, she felt an overwhelming sadness. She recalled crying for long periods of time.

One woman recalled a time when a child died at the boarding school and the memory of this incident has remained with her to this day:

My saddest and worst memory was when there was a girl that went to school there and she was from one of the communities on our reservation and she died there. They didn't take her to the doctor. I remember all the girls talking about when she died and I remember thinking why didn't they take her to the doctor. I remember the parents coming and getting their child and we all got to see what...we didn't get to see her...but we knew what happened and they came after her, but she died there in the little girls section. I think she died from pneumonia.

That's what kids were saying. I couldn't believe it happened. I don't remember seeing doctors there, I just remember one day she was sick, sick for three or four days, and then she died. I still think about that today, that if they took her to the doctor I wonder if she would have lived.

Most of the women described their saddest memory as one of watching others suffer.

Several of the women recalled memories that dealt with their siblings. The women stated that they would try and help their siblings in different circumstances but would be punished for it. One woman recalled a time during Halloween in which she tried to take some candy to her sister who was sick in the infirmary. She remembers sneaking up there and getting caught. She said she received a harsh whipping for that. Another woman recalled her brother being slapped around and she did not like it but could not tell her mother. She said she took some pictures of him and sent them to her parents to inform them of what happened to her brother. The women who attended St. Josephs Indian School reported that they could not tell their parents of the abuse in letters because all letters were written for them. They stated that when they wrote letters home they were required to copy text from a classroom blackboard. These letters contained generic phrases and this is what was mailed home to parents. This explains why parents thought their students were doing fine at the boarding school, as their letters stated they were.

The women were asked if they had any recurring events that happened in boarding school that would "haunt" them in their adult lives. One woman's story illustrates the frustration she felt towards the boarding school:

I think the lack of family life...is my greatest regret. Being put in a boarding school made it so much easier for my parents not to have that

responsibility of taking care of their children and eventually they stopped. They no longer felt responsible for us and I am not making excuses for them. Eventually they both became alcoholics...after awhile, when we would go home on vacations, one parent would be missing or gone. Pretty soon, our care fell completely on my grandfathers and that also made the boarding school necessary because they couldn't care for us. Then when my parents were there it was almost like they didn't know how to deal with us. They had no parenting skills. It was removed from them, they didn't have to do it, they didn't have to correct us. They didn't have to teach us and so they didn't, they stopped. I think also the means of correction that was used in boarding schools. If something is practiced on you long enough, you...turn around and practice it on other people, especially your children. We no longer send them to boarding school, but we treat our children in that same manner that we learned in boarding school.

This story describes in detail the intergenerational effects of the boarding school experience, specifically on family dynamics. This woman feels that her lack of parenting skills is the result of her separation from her parents and the emotionless care she received in boarding school.

Other women expressed feeling lonely for many years. The women state that when a certain situation arises, it triggers loneliness inside of them and they can relate that to the boarding school years. Some of these women talked about doing something or smelling a certain food that would automatically trigger memories of their boarding school days. They stated that when this happens they are overwhelmed with a sick or lonely feeling. They also expressed that when they encountered an issue that reminded them of boarding school, those old "feelings" would appear out of nowhere and sadness would overcome them.

...my brother and I discuss it and to this day we experience it, fall time. It's like you're lost; you go through this and sometimes it'll last a week, almost like a depression. I guess you can quantify it as a form of depression, but it lasts for awhile and it's just a real deep sadness.

Six of the ten women interviewed said that they realized the origin of these feelings when they went into counseling and were able to analyze the behaviors in their lives.

The women were asked how they survived the boarding school in terms of being a child and taken away from their families. All of the women responded with talk of family kinships. Those women who had older siblings attending boarding school had someone to fall back on. Those who went into the school with no older siblings could count on a relative being there. One woman stated that she entered boarding school speaking no English. She states that she used her cousin as an interpreter and this is how she survived. The women reported that the family ties were very strong in the boarding school. Each family member always stood up for one another and this is how they survived. This is one woman's story:

Well in my elementary years I think survival for me was having my sisters there. My older sisters, I could always go to them if I was lonesome. I think that was it and my brothers, they were there and we could visit them. It was kind of like we had family there and like I said, we met other relatives. Then in high school it was having your friends and different groups of friends. Like there was a group of us who used to get together and really talk Lakota to each other, because other people couldn't talk it. I think it was mainly for survival.

As the researcher listened to the stories the women told on how they survived, it was very evident that they all relied on family members to help one another. One woman speaks for the majority of the women:

We did for alliances, because the games...like we had games and we didn't let people push us around. (You don't need this sentence) We relied on each other and if anything happened and if someone was disciplined really bad, then we would all go in and say "Just don't do that again," and tell them not to worry about it. We would give them encouragement; we were trying to protect everybody. We all tried to take care of each other.

In essence, these women relied on their family members, and the friendships that they developed over time, to survive the boarding school. This was one of the coping skills that sustained them throughout their years in boarding school, which they have passed down to their family and friends.

The researcher asked the women if they told their parents how they felt about being at boarding school, or that they did not want to be there. The majority of the women stated that they believed they had to be there so they never questioned it. Their knowingness came from the family situations at home. Several of the women talked about poverty and the many family members living in one house. This caused a lot of stress on the family and many felt that boarding schools were their only option for relieving this stress. One woman stated that she did have the opportunity to return home; "I think I did, when I seen my sister cry and getting to go home, but I didn't have the courage to ask. I thought they would be disappointed in me if I asked or something. I never did have the courage to ask to go home."

The majority of the women reported that returning home from the boarding school was a good experience. They express the excitement of being with family members, but also spoke of having to adapt to life outside of boarding school:

It was like a major adjustment that we had to make when [we] came back to the reservation. But the togetherness as a family, that is the only thing I

felt comfortable with, how we grew up. If we were really bad or we weren't listening to our parents, we got sent to our aunts and so like we were always with family. I was always with my aunts; I was probably really rebellious with my mom. That is the comfortable feeling that I get and today we are still together as a family.

Several of the women expressed that they felt good about coming home. They stated that they enjoyed the food that they were use to eating at home, and loved being back around their aunts and uncles. One woman talked about how she really missed the friends that she had become close to at boarding school, and she looked forward to returning to school because she knew she would see them again. Several of the women reported that they lived "out in the country," so when they returned home from boarding school, they enjoyed the wide open spaces. They also reported that they never recognized the poverty on the reservations until they got older.

Emerging from the boarding school era, these Indian women have struggled to regain their Lakota heritage and, in doing so they have overcome many obstacles to become who they are today. They have embraced the new day with a different attitude as to who they are; and they look forward to tomorrow.

### The Effect of Boarding School on Their Adult Lives Interview #3

In interview number two, the women described how their experiences at boarding school influenced their young lives, and then discussed the techniques they used to survive their experience. In the final interview, the women discussed how they presently function in their daily lives and the relationship it has to the boarding schools. The researcher opened the dialogue with a statement that asked the women how they

felt about themselves once they left boarding school, and if they were involved in any type of high risk behaviors (i.e. heavy alcohol consumption or having multiple sexual partners). Five of the women reported that they did get involved in risky behaviors and they did attribute these to the boarding school. This is one woman's story:

Oh yeah, it was the first time that I didn't have any rules imposed on me and I really got involved in drinking. And I think at that time there was no sense of alcohol being a bad thing. So there was times when we'd party for days on end.

Another woman stated that the emotional abuse she experienced at boarding school contributed to the behaviors she exhibited after leaving:

I think there was a lot of emotional abuse and I think that's what...probably a lot of us think. Like I will always bring up the word shame, you know, why was I ashamed of myself? ...It gets me thinking and I remember now as an adult thinking, "I can't let those kind of negative thoughts come into my mind that I am no good or that I deserve a certain kind of treatment." I think if I didn't have the blending of my own mother's influence of what a mother should be, I think I would have been...worse off with my experiences. I had some pretty risky behaviors, but realizing I could heal from them and not let that influence me anymore. I changed my lifestyle and I look now in the media and see a lot of the priest and nuns, they're the ones having a hard time. You know, we are really blessed to change our lives and live it in the best and healthiest way we can; so that proves to me [that] their institution of teaching and learning was based on lack of knowing who we really were. But they were trying to teach us and tell us that they were better than us. Probably better than being Indian, you know.

One woman stated that when she left boarding school, she was very shy. She stated that she enjoyed drinking because she believed it helped her to become more assertive. Three of the women interviewed stated that they did not get involved in any type of risky behavior. One woman reported that after high school she moved in with her dorm matron and in that home risky behavior was not acceptable. Another woman reported that she

did engage in drinking after she left boarding school, but she did not blame her school experience. One of the participants reported that when she was sixteen, she did engage in a behavior that was uncommon to her:

...I was comfortable at boarding school, but when I was sixteen I remember feeling like killing myself when I experienced what happened to me. I remember going away from my home and being out in the hills and just walking or out in the country; just walking and praying to heavenly father, and I guess more or less just talking myself out of doing anything to myself. I don't have bad feelings towards boarding schools, that was my safety area.

For this woman, the boarding school became a haven from the abuse that she suffered at home. It was not uncommon for Native children to see the boarding school as a safe refuge from abusive or alcoholic families.

Eight of the ten of the women reported either using alcohol or knowing close family members who did. Half of the women reported abusing alcohol in their younger life. One woman reported that she has been sober for about twenty years. She stated that in her younger years, she used alcohol because everybody else did. Another woman states:

Yeah, I think I was addicted to alcohol...from the time I was about 22 or 21...my life was about partying and drinking. I always performed my jobs in a good way, always to the extent that I didn't get fired. Then on weekends, weekends were party time. It seems to me like it was always done with my cousins and relatives, even my mom and dad. Now when I think of that I think it was really bad.

Another participant recalled a life changing event:

I don't know if I would say I was addicted, but I remember I always thought I really had a lot of fun and everything...I remember when...my dad was in the hospital, Fort Meade, and we were going over there and something happened and we ended up turning around, but we were all drinking. I think that is where I realized that I could so easily become an

alcoholic because I just enjoyed partying...I just thought it was the funniest thing to do...but there was something there that just triggered, maybe my angel, my guardian angel or something, put that there and made me think...after that is when I started to gradually quit. Once in a blue moon after that and then finally I just quit. I don't think I was ever addicted. I didn't drink enough where I had to have it all the time. It was just all the partying and then...I think if I would have continued I could have so easily crossed over.

Several of the women stated that they did not use alcohol and they reported that they do not like the connotation that all Native Americans are alcoholics. As one woman states: "That's the thing I know, everybody says that. When they come out of school, they eventually become alcoholics or they do drugs, but I never had a problem with alcohol or drugs."

The interviewer inquired regarding spousal abuse. At this point, several of the women became very emotional, as the memories of these relationships go very deep. Six of the women reported having been in abusive relationships. The women reported that the abuse coincided with alcohol abuse. Four of the women stated that they had been in abusive relationships, but did not want to further the discussion. Two of the women stated that they would like to forget those relationships, as there was a lot of alcohol involved. One woman stated she did not realize how bad the situation was until she herself entered a treatment program. She said she needed to be released of these relationships for the sake of her children and that she did not want her own daughters to endure this type of abuse. This is how another woman related her story:

The only abusive relationship I had was with my current husband. When we were together, we were drinking. There was a time about three years after we got married; he came home and he pushed me really hard. He pushed me backwards and my head hit the wall and at that point I knew that it was...the situation was escalating and if I didn't do something about

it; if I didn't leave, it would just get worse. So I left and at that time I made a decision to quit [drinking] myself. It was a decision I made that came about as a result of our meeting a Pottawatomie, probably a traditional leader. He was a real good person to really guide us out of that situation. I ended up leaving my husband for six weeks and then eventually, I think soon after that, I came back here. He and I were separated for about six months during that time. I decided to quit drinking and he knew I was serious about it and so he said that he would quit drinking and we could straighten our lives out, so we did. But yeah...I think that the relationships that I was in before I met him were just drinking relationships. So I don't think I even knew how to have a relationship until after we quit drinking.

Another woman reported that along with the physical abuse, she was mentally abused. She states that this type of abuse has stayed with her for many years. Even after she left her husband, many of his words still haunt her memory:

Yes, I was in a real abusive relationship. Real mentally abusive; physically, no I can handle that, I guess...but mental abuse is a lot harder. More harder on the spirit because you have to deal with it all the time. Your abusers...go away, but mental abuse you just carry that night and day. You wake up with it, you go to bed with it, you walk with it all day long, it is like no escape. It is so much harder, it just tears at you. You know, when I went to treatment there, I had no idea who I was anymore. I was just so mentally abused that I just didn't know who I was anymore. That was scary, to sit there and think about. I would sit outside and look at the trees and just watch them as they blow in the wind and I am just thinking that they have so much more freedom than I do. Just comparing the two, everything, all the grass and how freely they can grow and blow. Wishing that I had that kind of freedom.

The mental anguish that she endured had taken a strong hold on her spirit.

On the other side of the spectrum, one of the women responded that she was pessimistic when it came to relationships. This is how she described it:

I think it was the reverse for me, because I was probably pretty strong in my mind that nobody was going to treat me that way. For some reason, there was something in me that had the fight...and I became pretty rebellious, when I look back at my high school years; by then I was angry. I think a lot of my anger came out because I was really rebellious to a lot of the teachers.

I remember having to be put in “jug” hall because I cussed a teacher up. I think by then I was pretty fed up with being told what to do...I was really saying “I can do what I want to do.” So I think it was reverse for me.

Another participant recalled that she ran from every abusive relationship. She reported that she recognized when she was involved in one and did not want any part of it. One woman states that these relationships were choices she had made. She did not relate whether she was in an abusive relationship or not; but she did report that she had made some wrong choices during her lifetime. She reiterated to the researcher that, again, it was a choice that she made.

The researcher continued the interviews by asking how the women dealt with their anger or rage, if their feelings correlate with the boarding school experience. All but two of the women reported that they can trace their anger or rage back to the boarding school days. One woman’s account of her rage began with the Christian church. She describes how she did not attend church for many years due to the early teachings she received while in boarding school:

A lot of [my] rage is at the church or at God. It took me a lot of years to be able to say “God” again. Even though I knew after awhile that God and Creator are the same; but to say “God” was still part of that boarding school experience that I don’t want nothing to do with... you didn’t want to have to utter it out of your mouth ‘cause it came from the boarding school. This is how much anger you have toward the boarding school. You don’t want to go to church; you don’t want nothing to do with it. You couldn’t even see nothing good about it; and when people talked about church, it brought up a lot of anger. Their hurts toward us was pretty deep, I don’t want nothing to do with it.

This type of anguish towards the church surfaced among several of the women in this study. One woman reported that she now felt sad for the churches as they are going through a lot of humiliation and dishonor within their organizations. At the time of this

interview, many Catholic church leaders in America were being charged with sexual violence toward children. She stated that the abuses that are now being brought into the open are what the churches did to the Native Americans all along.

One woman reported that her frustration and anger would come out when alcohol was involved. She recalled that when she and her peers would drink, they would recount the abuses that they and their siblings endured at boarding school. She stated that she would feel angry and hurt about this for days and that she carried these problems with her until she sought counseling. Another woman reported that her anger became evident after she had a family of her own. She believed that her frustration was due to lacking family values, and emphasized that she had a hard time maintaining normalcy. Her definition of “normalcy” was the routine of the boarding school: working around the clock, being told what to do and how to do it, and never having an opinion in the way things were done. Because of this influence, this woman found parenting to be a challenge, because she had a difficult time making decisions and nurturing her children.

Eight of the ten women in this study stated that they have in some way come to terms with their anger and rage. As one woman states, it wasn't until she stopped abusing alcohol that the anger was manageable with outside help. The women also stressed that they have had to get some type of help in dealing with their anger; some have gone to treatment, while others have sought out counseling. All report that talking about the boarding school experience has helped them handle it in a more positive way.

The researcher asked the women if they had difficulties expressing their emotions and if this caused an inability to form close relationships with other individuals. All ten

of the women stated that in boarding school they bonded with friends and relatives. They stated that this bond is what helped them survive the boarding school experience. The women also reported that they looked forward to the following school year as they knew they would be seeing their friends and relatives again. The relationships that were created in boarding school have lasted a lifetime for all of these women. All ten of the women report that they did have a difficult time showing their emotions. One woman stated that in boarding school, the nuns and priest were very cold and soon she was imitating their behavior without even knowing it:

I don't recall a lot of affection when I think back to high school or grade school. I just recall going through kind of like a little puppet...you go through the emotions. I don't recall a lot of hugs or a lot of nice words from any of the staff.

Several of the women reported that they were seldom or never hugged in their own homes, but that they did know that their parents loved them. All ten of the women reported that they give their children plenty of hugs and tell them that they love them. The women stated that in many instances they did not receive affection in boarding school, and several did not receive this at home, and they want to insure that their children receive this type of treatment. This is how one woman described the situation:

Being at boarding school, I didn't receive any kind of love or even from my own parent, I didn't get it. I never got hugged or anything like that, but I always knew they loved me. I did the opposite of that, I always hug my children and I tell them I love them. I say this to them everyday.

This statement speaks well for the majority of the women in this study. They felt that it was very important to give their own children the affection that they did not receive when they were young.

One woman reported that along with being numb to her emotions, she also had the feeling of not liking herself, especially the way she looked. She related that in boarding school all the girls seemed to look alike. They all wore the same uniforms, they had the same haircut, and they all seemed to blend together. Her account of entering the world in this fashion gave her little self-esteem. She states that she was never taught to look at the beauty within herself, so she only focused on the outside. This caused her to shut down emotionally. It wasn't until she was in counseling, years later, that she was able to see the beauty in herself.

The women were asked how they dealt with teasing in boarding school, and what recourse they used to help themselves. Six of the women recalled a lot of teasing by older students. Two of the women had no recollection of being teased or teasing another student. Of the six women who do remember teasing in the boarding school, a theme emerges from their stories. The women stated that it was always the older students who would taunt the younger ones. They recalled that if one did not have an older sibling at school, she was almost always teased and picked on. Two of the women reported that they knew that teasing was happening, but have since blocked it out of their memories.

One participant described it this way:

I was really teased and I felt really lonely. Kids get mean to each other, but I must have put that somewhere in the past. That's how you survive; you tuck things that won't surface for a long time in your mind. It's almost like you block it out of your mind and they don't surface until something triggers it.

Another woman described how she would try to avoid the students who did a lot of teasing. She recalled that she tried to always be with a group of students and that would

make it less likely that she would be taunted by others. One participant remembered always being teased because her English was poor and because she had a lisp. She stated that she always had to call the nuns “Sister,” and the “s” sound did not come out “right.” This made her the butt of many jokes, so she just stopped talking altogether.

The majority of women in this study reported that they had found ways to cope with their situations during their boarding school experiences, and were especially grateful for their older sibling or relatives, who made the situations easier. They also reported that when they see these issues arise in their own children, it brings memories back that they would like to forget. One of these women stated that when her own children do something out of nature, like hurting a sibling, it triggers those memories within her. She also stated that she puts a stop to it right away, as she does not like those feelings.

The women were asked if they had any fear of being alone and if this fear ever contributed to their behavior as adults. Seven of the women said that they did have a fear of loneliness and two stated that they had gotten over this fear in their elementary years. One participant stated that she did not feel affected by it. Of the seven women, all stated that they carried this fear with them into their marriages. One woman said; “I think I was involved with men whom I...those relationships I knew were just doomed for failure, yet I just engaged in them.” Another participant related that she went from home to boarding school to marriage, and has never been alone. She doesn’t know if she is too scared to be alone or not, as she has never been put in that situation. The women stated that in their adult life, they have their family to fill that void, and they especially find comfort in their

children.

The researcher asked the women to describe how they, as mothers, disciplined their own children compared to the discipline they received in boarding school. Nine of the women reported that they carried within themselves some type of influence that originated from their boarding school experience. One woman's reaction to the question was a flat "no," that her influence came from what her mother had taught her. The remaining nine women had several themes that resonated between them. The most prominent theme was that they did not know how to be consistent with their children. They believe that their children did not know what to expect from them as they vacillated between the discipline models they learned at home and at school. The women ultimately relied on rigid models inherited from boarding school, which often meant physical punishment.

All of the women spoke about a lack of parenting skills when they had their own children. One woman summarized:

For me, I just did all of the things that I wanted to...maybe that helped me in my parenting, because I had no skills and you don't know how to function in a family with a mom and dad. You never seen that role growing up, so for me it was all new. Not just being a parent, but what is a parent. I had to learn all those things on my own.

Many of the women spoke about parenting their first child, they experienced quite a bit of "trial and error" learning during those first years. One woman recalls parenting her oldest daughter:

I was the sole parent for her care; I think I was harsher and maybe colder, and not as affectionate, and didn't really learn parenting. Some of those parenting skills I learned when I got married. I became gentler and affectionate. I made a lot of mistakes with my kids and had unrealistic

expectations.

Here is how another participant stated it:

To a certain extent, my first child I was very stern with because I had all these frequent notions about how children should behave; so I spanked her. I didn't start spanking her until she was three years old. Then I would spank her for swearing or fighting her little brother or something like that. I realize now that a lot of those behaviors were just ordinary kid behaviors that I overreacted to, but I didn't know.

One woman stated that she did the opposite of what she was raised with in boarding school. She contended that she did not want to raise her children the way she was raised.

I remember when I had my child, I just kept thinking about..."I am never going to do this to my child. I am never going to make him feel guilty," and I was overly free with him in that sense. At the same time, when I did [discipline him], I became really rigid about some things. There was really no balanced way of approaching parenting, so it was like living and learning.

Several of the women spoke about their own parents, their inability to parent due to outside influences. Some of the women said that their parents were raised in boarding schools also, so they did not have parenting skills to pass on to them. The majority of the women reiterated that they managed by "trial and error" with their first born; and, as they added to their families, their parenting skills improved.

The women in this study were asked to describe ways in which the boarding school experience impacted their lives in a positive way. The majority of the women spoke about academics. Although some did not recall much about the school curriculum, they know that they can read, write, and do mathematics. They attribute this to the boarding schools. Again the women spoke of the lasting friendships they developed at the schools. Also, the women mentioned that they are well-ordered when it comes to

cleaning. Although they state that they don't always follow it, they have the discipline to complete the job. Another experience that resonated with all the women was enjoying the comforts of running water and electricity. The women spoke about not having these amenities in their own homes, and how comfortable these were in the boarding schools.

The women were then asked to explain ways in which the boarding school experience negatively impacted their lives. The majority of the women spoke about the issue of losing their language and culture during their early years. The women who attended Saint Joseph's Indian School stated that they were in school nine months out of the twelve and never went home during that time. This limited their ability to learn their native culture and way of life. Those who did speak their native languages were forbidden to do so, and were punished when they did. The women in this study all agree that not growing up with the culture and way of life had been detrimental to them. However, they also stated that they relearned their cultural ways in their adult lives, and were able to teach their children their traditions and culture. Half of the women in this study spoke about the negative impact that the image of God they had learned in boarding school had on their lives. They stated that the nuns and priests emphasized how God was to be feared and that they may end up in purgatory. Their intent was to assimilate Native American people into the dominant white culture and to achieve this goal their tactic was to "Christianize" Native people. In this belief, they taught that God must be feared and this method has been employed through the generations of the boarding school era.

Two of the women spoke of the hardships of making decisions. In the words of one woman:

You never even knew you had a mind of your own in boarding school. One day you don't even have a mind and the next thing you know they are handing it back to you with no instructions. So what do you do? When you get it back, you're an adult.

This participant described leaving the boarding school with no decision making skills. She stated that, in school, every issue or problem was already addressed and you knew the outcome. When she had to deal with problems on her own, they often became overwhelming for her. She reported that she learned from her own mistakes and hopes to instill the making of wise choices with her own children.

The researcher asked the women if any of their life events (marriages, relationships, achievements, etc.) have been directly impacted by their boarding school experiences. Nine of the women stated that they had a strong connection to the Creator. They reported that, because of all the praying they did in boarding school, they have connected with their own Lakota spirituality. All of the women report that the education they received in boarding school has helped them to sustain jobs in their adult life. All of the women report that due to the lack of affection in boarding school, they have more affection for their family and friends.

The women were asked if the years spent in boarding school impacted their tribal identity. All the women responded to this question with an emphatic "yes." One woman summarized it with this response:

Yes, when I first went to school, I felt like they stripped me of who I am. I didn't get to talk my language. I didn't get to learn anything about myself or my people, so I definitely feel that they did this. I wasn't proud of who I was, and maybe it's just five or six years ago realizing who I really am and loving myself. I don't care if my skin is brown. I used to wish that I wouldn't be brown. I used to think that I had to be white in order to be accepted by anybody. Today I am happy with who I am and

I'm proud to be Lakota. I can still speak my language and I know some of the cultural stuff, but I'm just...I can't believe the way I felt before.

The women all spoke about not knowing who they were and where they came from, as this was forbidden knowledge in boarding schools. It wasn't until later in life that they acquired more knowledge of their heritage. One woman implies that she didn't really understand herself until she was in her thirties:

I don't think you even knew you had an identity. I always said I never felt like I really came home until I was, like, 37 or 38 years old. Then I finally felt like I actually came home from boarding school. I think I was doing research on boarding school and having to deal with it—then I felt like I could say I came home. But all those years I think I was always searching for who I was. I never knew a lot of things I should have known, and I felt embarrassed because I didn't know.

The women who attended boarding school on Pine Ridge reservation believe they had a stronger sense of who they were while attending boarding school. This was due to the fact that on weekends, these students were able to go home and to interact with family members. In this way, they gained more knowledge about who they are in relationship to their families and their culture. One woman spoke of not only losing her tribal identity, but also her family structure:

I think because I wasn't really attached to my family, it was easy to go and leave. I could go out into the white world and stay out there, and come back and go again. I wasn't somebody who could stay in one place very long, and I often wonder if this is because of the boarding school. I guess because you always were in a boarding school, you never felt like you had roots anywhere, so it's so easy to get up and move. I'm scared to think of having a house somewhere because that would mean I would have to stay there. That's a scary thought.

The women all felt that they lost a part of their tribal identity in some manner. A few of the women lost more than others, but they all reported that they have gained a lot of

knowledge about themselves and their culture in their adult lives. They do not profess to be experts on their tribal culture, but with each passing day they gain experience and education about who they are.

The researcher asked the women one final question: Is there anything you would like to add about your boarding school experience? Two of the women reiterated the fact that they lost touch with what a family was in their elementary years. They stated that they didn't know how families were to interact and this became a problem for them when they had their own families. One woman stated that, in a sense, the boarding school was a saving grace for her:

I think for me, the only saving grace that I saw about boarding school was that it was a haven from incest—from an uncle who lived in our home. It pulled me out of that situation and put me in a place where I knew that no one was going to bother me or hurt me. It provided that reassurance. It was probably the one thing, and, of course, the friendships that made that experience worthwhile. To this day, the lady who took me remains my mother. That situation gave her to me.

One woman stated she would like to add that all the work that was imposed on girls at an early age has helped her with her own daughters. She is able to instill work habits into her children, and hopes that they will pass this on to their children.

The final interview undoubtedly speaks to their adult lives and how the boarding school affected these women. Although friendships, intellectual development, and discipline were positive outcomes of the boarding school experience for each of these women, there were many more negative outcomes. The school experiences of these women left many unresolved emotions that followed them into later life. Most of the women spoke of rage and loneliness as they left their schools. Low self-esteem led to

low self respect, which produced risky behaviors, such as alcohol use, in several of the women. They believe these feelings and behaviors led to relationships that were unhealthy in their lives. Most of the women spoke of the challenge of parenting, which they believed to be influenced by the lack of nurturing and guidance as they grew up.

The women spoke honestly about losing their identity and language, which created separating, negative feelings toward the Christian church. Many of them related feeling fearful, confused, and angry with the God that was presented to them at school. Discipline at the boarding schools was harsh and at times it was unbearable not only to the punished, but to those around them. In this way, the effects of corporal punishment were complex and were a determining factor in the choices that these women made later in life.

All of these women professed that they were able to overcome these situations through counseling and through the practice of their traditional Lakota ways, which they are now teaching to their own children. Three of the women in this study stated that they attended college after they left high school because they were encouraged by their parents to do so. The remaining seven did not attend college for several years; however all of the women completed at least two years of college. Four of the women have completed bachelor's degrees and two have gone on to doctoral programs.

## CHAPTER 5—SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

These cases are not meant to represent all American Indian women who attended boarding schools. The case studies presented are meant to help the reader gain an understanding of the impact that boarding school had on these ten women's lives. Greater understanding may enable other women to overcome barriers and improve on their own lives. According to Barbara Kerr, case studies "provide the only resource for understanding what makes achieving women extraordinary and how they overcame barriers they faced" (1987). The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the experiences of ten Lakota women who attended the boarding school and to provide an understanding of how this early experience affected their lives.

The ten Lakota women in this study shared with the researcher their account of life in the boarding school and how it affected their lives after they left school. These women took the risk of going back into time and unlocking what they had so long ago buried in their minds. The women also shared laughter with the researcher as they recalled memories of the good times they had with family and friends. Many of the women in this study had grown accustomed to life at the boarding school. They laughed about events still ingrained in their memory, and many times these stories were followed by tears and sadness. The anger, loneliness and loss of family resurfaced as they told their stories. Some of the women had unanswered questions that were directed towards their family, unresolved issues that still lingered in their minds after all these years. The

women talked about how they have come to terms with the pain and anguish that began in their boarding school days. At times, they believed that they had reconciled these issues only to have them resurface in another situation. This has been hard on the women as they struggled to gain awareness of where these feelings come from and how to deal with them. Many of the women said that talking about the boarding school has been the best healing for them. By telling their stories, many of these women saw patterns in their life decisions that were born out of their boarding school experience.

The women in this study are courageous Lakota women, who have emerged from boarding schools which were designed to “assimilate” Native Americans. These women have overcome barriers that had once taken control of their lives. These ten Lakota women not only emerged from the boarding schools with strength and courage, but they went on to be educated women and they fought for Indigenous rights for all Indian people.

### Interview One

The purpose of this interview was to gain demographic information about these women, as well as knowledge about their school life and how they felt about being away from home. Half of the women spoke the Lakota language at home and all ten women had parents who either both spoke Lakota or a least one parent was a fluent speaker. All ten of the women had siblings who also attended boarding school. Four of the women were from the Pine Ridge Reservation and attended Our Lady of Lords School, Holy Rosary Mission and Pine Ridge High School. The other six women were from the

Cheyenne River reservation and attended St. Joseph Indian School in Chamberlain, South Dakota.

They recalled various reasons why they were sent to boarding school but the most cited reason was poverty in the home. Boarding school provided the students with a warm place to be and three meals a day, so they were an easy choice for parents struggling to feed and house several generations of family. Isolated communities made transportation to day schools a problem as well; it was convenient for parents to allow their children to be transported to the boarding schools during the week.

These women stated that leaving their family for the first time was devastating to them, and they can still recall the feelings of separation. It took several years for the women to overcome this feeling of loneliness and this was especially hard for the women who were in boarding schools nine months out of the year. Along with the loneliness, the women faced the issues of abandonment that are all too common among boarding school survivors.

From their first impressions of being sanitized and made to leave their tribal identities behind, to their daily experiences of chores, worship and study, the majority of these women did not have a positive experience at the boarding schools. The women stated that they did not recall much about the academics but they definitely remember the punishments that were imposed upon them for various reasons. Punitive discipline created pain and shame for these students, however many of them took comfort with their family members and the new friends they made at the schools. Both these separating emotions and these alliances lasted into adulthood for many of the women in this study.

### Interview Two

The second interview consisted of questions that pertained to the impact the boarding school experience had on their emotional maturation and development. The women were asked to recall teachers, staff members or matrons who impacted their lives in one way or another. Of the ten women interviewed, only two stated that not one teacher had been a positive influence to them during their educational years. The remaining eight remembered someone who inspired them at one time or another. When asked if they thought their teachers had been caring and nurturing to the students, seven of the women said they had at least one person who seemed concerned about their well-being. The three other women remembered a lot of abuse from the teachers and did not recall the teachers to have been nurturing.

The women stated that even though the boarding school was tough for them, they did learn the academics, which helped them in their later years. The women were asked if the boarding school prepared them for real life situations. The majority of the women stated that it did not. The reasoning behind this, in their minds, was that in boarding school they were told what to do and when to do it. When they left school they had to make these decisions on their own, something they were not prepared to do. Several of the women spoke of how their decisions led them into risky behaviors and relationships that were not healthy. On the other hand, the women spoke of how they were disciplined in work ethics. They knew how to keep a home cleaned, they were on time, and they took their jobs seriously.

When the women were asked about their fondest memories at boarding school, all ten of the women spoke about friendships that they made. Many of the women still have these friendships today. They state that their survival skills were attributed to family and friends. Without this bond, many of the women believe they would not have gone on to create successful lives.

The women also answered questions that dealt with their saddest memories and those were of leaving home or watching a sibling or relative being abused. The women in these interviews all cried at one point when this subject was brought up. Through their tears, the memories of those times are still fresh in their minds and although many years have passed, they carry a burden that has not yet been healed. Several of the women spoke of words that are still with them or feelings they suffer from seasonally that they believe are a result of their experience at boarding school. At least six of the ten women have seen a counselor regarding these experiences.

The most cogent report about the lasting effects of the boarding school experience was one woman's consideration of the impact on her family dynamics. She related that having been taken out of her home, her parents lost the ability and the desire to nurture her. The care she received at school in place of this parental support did not prepare her to raise her own children lovingly. This sentiment was common among the ten women.

### Interview Three

In the final interview, the women described how the boarding school has influenced their adult lives. The lasting effects of their experiences included cultural shame, low self-esteem, and rage. The researcher opened the dialogue with questions

about how the women felt about themselves just after leaving boarding school, and if they participated in any type of risky behaviors, such as alcohol and drug use or multiple sexual partners. Half of the women reported they did get involved in risky behaviors and they believe it was a reaction to their new freedom from authoritarian discipline. Though their boarding school experience did give them academic and professional tools for life, they do not believe they received love in a meaningful way as children. This made it difficult for them to love themselves and anyone else.

The women shared that their experiences with relationships—particularly with their own children—were both rewarding and challenging as a result of their experiences at boarding school. Several of the women chose abusive spouses and found childrearing to be difficult. However, most of the women also observed that the common experience of boarding school education had bound them to lifelong friendships.

Most of the women noted that they felt a lot of anger and confusion about the God that was presented to them in boarding school, and that their loss of cultural identity was problematic for them well into adulthood. Reconnection with Lakota spiritual tradition was a common thread for these women in their adult lives. They reported that their relationship with these traditions and the reclaiming of their tribal identity has allowed them to heal from their negative experiences.

### Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact the boarding school had on the lives of ten Lakota women. This study uncovered four conclusions:

1. The first conclusion revealed by this study is that the boarding school experience produced intergenerational effects on these ten Lakota women particularly on the ability to self love and to nurture their children and family.
2. The second conclusion of this study is that, while physical and corporeal punishments were a part of daily life at the boarding schools, the mental anguish associated with loneliness and alienation from family had a more lasting impact on the women's lives. While loneliness and alienation are not always viewed as punishment, the women in this study clearly revealed it as a penalty not to be separated from the boarding school experience.
3. The third conclusion of this study is that although the women who attended boarding schools were prepared with the skills to lead productive lives, they lacked the motivation, direction, and self-esteem to do so effectively until they had begun healing from their experiences.
4. The fourth conclusion is that by speaking and telling their stories, the participants felt they could bring healing to themselves and to those women who have been to boarding schools.

The first conclusion this dissertation study found was that the boarding school experience produced intergenerational effects on the family. The inability to express their feelings for one another and to nurture their own children in a traditional way was a loss for these women. The boarding school destroyed the traditional roles of Native American women. As young girls, they were expected to learn the European techniques of education and household duties. They were not given a nurturing home environment.

In turn, these women mimicked what they knew. Sixty percent of the women report that they wished they could raise their first born again, as they would give their child a stable environment, without the rigorous rules that they have been taught and they would be more affectionate in terms of hugs and telling them that they loved them.

Half of the women in this study reported that at least one of their parents attended boarding school and that their parent(s) child rearing skills were imitated from the boarding school. These women reported that their parents did not have the traditional skills of child rearing and they passed that lack of knowledge on to them. The women reported that it was not until later in their adult lives that they began to practice their Lakota traditions and teach their own children these sacred ways. In the boarding schools, practicing their traditional ways and speaking the Lakota language was discouraged by the boarding school staff in favor of preparing to be Christians.

All ten of the women come from traditional Lakota families and communities. Relearning and reclaiming what has been held sacred by their ancestors for generations was a blessing for these women. Many still had their mothers and grandmothers to help re-teach parenting skills and several of the women learned from family and friends.

The second conclusion of this study is that, while physical and corporeal punishments were a part of daily life at the boarding schools, the mental anguish associated with loneliness and alienation from family had a more lasting impact on the women's lives. While loneliness and alienation are not always viewed as punishment, the women in this study clearly revealed it as a penalty not to be separated from the boarding school experience. The loneliness that residential school students experienced

could be so extreme that they were often in despair, wondering how they could possibly cope. This despair appears to have become a pathological fear of abandonment in several of the women. Fear of being alone had an impact on at least seven of the women's adult lives, all of whom said they carried this fear with them into their marriages. Sometimes this meant staying in unhealthy relationships because they were afraid to be lonely or abandoned.

Several of the women expressed feeling lonely for many years after leaving boarding school. The women stated that when certain situations arise, it triggers loneliness inside of them and they can relate that to the boarding school years. Some of these women talked about doing something or smelling a certain food that would automatically trigger memories of their boarding school days. They stated that when this happens they are overwhelmed with a sick or lonely feeling. They also expressed that when they encountered an issue that reminded them of boarding school, those old "feelings" would appear out of nowhere and sadness would overcome them. As the women matured and healed, their families began to fill the void created by loneliness, and they especially find comfort in their children.

The third conclusion of this study is that although the women who attended boarding school were prepared with the academic skills to lead productive lives, they either lacked the motivation, direction and/or self-esteem to do so effectively until they had begun to heal from their experiences. The women spoke to the issue of making choices in their lives and what emerged was a sense of confusion about their personal authority. The women who attended St. Joseph's Indian School remember leaving

boarding school and struggling to make simple decisions. The routine of the Jesuits telling them what to do and how to do it made decision making overwhelming for them when they left the boarding school. One woman went back to St. Joseph's boarding school after being brought home to a day school, because the school she transferred to demanded that she think for herself and this was something she was not accustomed to doing.

Several of the women could not identify what their gains or losses were when they left boarding school. They stated that in boarding school they gained the education that was needed to succeed in the white man's world; however it was at the expense of their language and culture. For the women in this study, remembering their experiences in the boarding schools and evaluating what was good and what was not has helped them to regain a sense of authority with these issues. For most of these women, treatment programs and counseling has helped them to distinguish behavior patterns in their lives that have been influenced by their boarding school experience. Many of the women have chosen to return to traditional Lakota practices in order to find meaning in their experiences.

The fourth conclusion of this study revealed that by telling their stories, these women were bringing healing to themselves and other women who attended the boarding school. Many of the women spoke of relief as they told their stories. These women believe that, by speaking about their experiences, they are breaking the silence that shame has embedded in their minds. One of the participants in this study said that this was the first time she had talked about the boarding school. She stated that the memories have

been suppressed for so long, but talking about it now, it was like yesterday. The sadness is still there, but she stated that this interview has helped her to pull a lot of the questions to the surface and this has given her the courage to continue to tell her story. Several of the women who attended St. Joseph's Indian School stated that they wished they could have a "talking circle" to share stories about the boarding school. They stated that talking about it after all these years has lifted their spirits as their stories are told.

Talking about these experiences gave these women perspective on the patterns of behavior that have been prevalent in their lives. Through seeing how the boarding school experience affected their choices, these women were interested in making different choices and healing their relationships. Speaking about these experiences has also opened a way for dialogue between these women and their children, a new way for them to understand each other. In fact, one of the women asked to receive a copy of her interview tape in order to share experiences with her children that she has, until now, kept secret.

Each one of these women has a unique story, an oral history of their lives and their refusal to surrender to the assimilation policies. Although the boarding school has left deep wounds within these women's lives, they have excelled in the work that they do today. Boarding school provided the women with the basic tools that allowed them to be successful in higher education. Through this, it provided the power to fight back for future generations to come. It also provided these women with the discipline needed to succeed in the "white man's world". The boarding school was designed to assimilate children into the white American community. It appears to have had the opposite effect

in these women: they became highly independent, motivated and skillful at fighting for future generations of native people. Many of them have spoken up for the rights of indigenous people and native youth, and have become activists in their own communities. These Native women are fighting for the rights of their people and they are using the tools that have been passed on to them, whether that be from their grandmothers or the education of the boarding schools.

### Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact of boarding schools on the lives of Lakota women through their lived experience; how they survived or coped with the boarding school experience as children, adolescents, and adults. The conclusions found by this study indicate several ways in which this work could be developed. The following are recommendations which have emerged from the findings of these interviews.

1. Further Research. This study participates in a large body of continuing work which aims to bring to light the experiences of Native American people in boarding schools. More interviews with Native American boarding school students, and particularly with Native American women, will provide both relief for the person and a broader context for investigative research.
2. Provide a Forum. The effect of boarding school experiences on families is an often hidden legacy. Providing a forum for these stories to emerge, as well as making these stories available to other survivors will encourage healing for family and

communities as well as individuals. Native facilitators who are knowledgeable about the common psychological effects of the boarding school experience would be very helpful to this process.

3. Development of Curriculums. Continued development of elementary and high school curriculums that are inclusive of Native culture is very important, and developing curriculum for post-secondary psychology programs would also be beneficial. Making the experiences of these boarding school students available to psychology students will help to develop a theoretical model for the healing of these historical traumas.

4. Further Research into Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Former Boarding School Students. Many of these women remarked that certain images, smells, and sounds would bring back powerful memories and emotions from their experiences at boarding school. This researcher, who is also an administrator at a tribal school, proposes that these experiences may have an effect on (the lack of) parental involvement in their children's school activities. Cooperative research between scholars/medical professional who are studying PTSD, those who are working with former boarding school students, and contemporary tribal school administrators could benefit all avenues of inquiry.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PICTURES OF ST. JOSEPH BOARDING SCHOOL

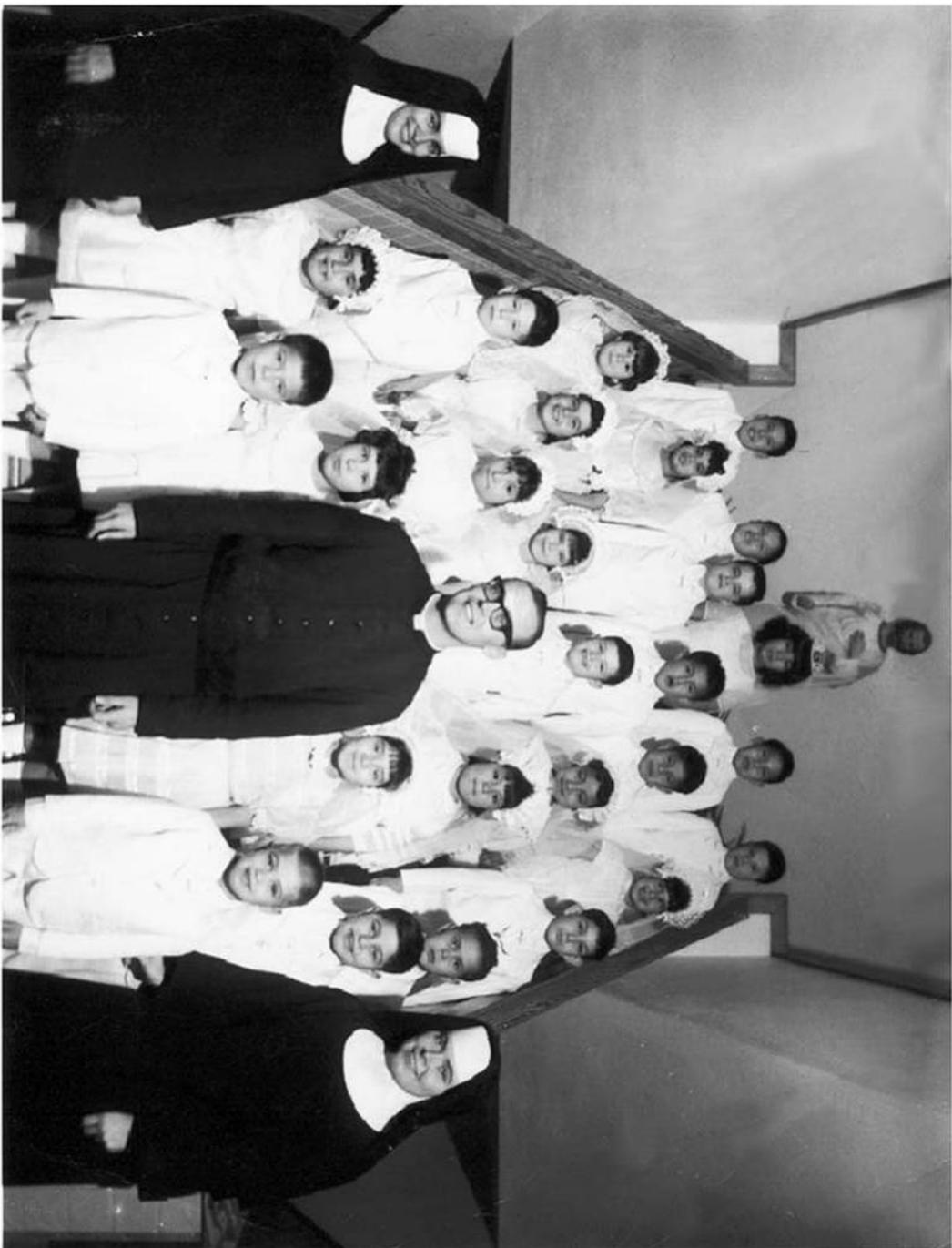


Image 1  
Confirmation day, St. Joseph Indian School, Chamberlain, South Dakota, ca. 1966.  
Personal collection from Alice Hollowhorn-Bowker.



Image 2

Children of St. Joseph Indian School, Chamberlain, South Dakota, ca. 1968.  
Personal collection from Alice Hollowhorn-Rowker.