

**THE CITIZEN SELF AND ABORIGINAL “OTHER”:
NOTIONS OF CITIZENSHIP AND ABORIGINALITY IN BRITISH
COLUMBIAN SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION, 1945-PRESENT**

by

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ABSTRACT

Social studies education in British Columbia from the 1940s until present has upheld active citizenship as a central objective of the program. While active citizenship is never clearly defined, generally it has been assumed that through a process of self-actualization students come to know their rights and responsibilities as Canadian citizens.

Problematically, these notions of citizenship have shaped the narration of Aboriginality within social studies education. Aboriginality has been represented in learning outcomes and resources materials within a framework of a singular progressive Canadian metanarrative, creating inaccurate assumptions and uninformed characterizations of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. The marginalization and appropriation of Aboriginality within the curriculum resulted in their disassociation with idealized Canadian citizenship. Overall, the framework of social studies education, which over the past sixty years has consistently promoted individualized active citizenship while misrepresenting Aboriginal people's vital role in Canada's history, has had a negative impact on the First Nations-Canadian relationship. However, social studies education could function otherwise in order that mainstream Canadians and Aboriginal peoples develop more honest and positive relationships. Engaging students in a transformed version of historical study that fosters questioning, examines narrative choices, sees negotiation and interaction as an appropriate outcome, recognizes and honours difference, and allows for dialogue, may foster more promising relationships in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Social studies education in British Columbia from the mid 1940s until present day has upheld active citizenship as a foundational outcome of its programs. While the Ministry of Education has never clearly defined active citizenship within social studies guides, ideal citizenship has consistently been concerned with the development of individuals, who, through a process of self-actualization, come to understand their place and responsibility as a Canadian. Through the acquisition of ideal characteristics, such as a strong work ethic, self-control, respect, and civic pride, students become citizens capable of full participation in Canadian society and perhaps even in changing the nation for the better.

Since the 1940s idealized Canadian citizenship expressed in B.C.'s social studies curriculum has evolved from being exclusive, intended for only a select few, to being supposedly more aware and inclusive of diversity. Content on Aboriginal life and culture has been included within the social studies program since the 1940s, becoming a fundamental feature of the program in the 1960s. Although Aboriginality is increasingly more visible and treated with greater consideration within outcomes and resource materials, Aboriginal identities and cultures continue to be defined in and through ideals of mainstream Canadian authority and not by Aboriginal peoples themselves. Descriptions of Aboriginal peoples within B.C. social studies programs are generally founded on pre-conditioned and predictable conclusions of what mainstream Canada determines the reality of Aboriginal nations to be. Representations of Aboriginality are often superficial in that Aboriginal peoples are presented as cultural object lessons or museum people, lumped together as one large people group defined by simple and

random cultural descriptors. Within the mainstream Canadian narrative, Aboriginals cooperated with and assisted Europeans in their nation building efforts, but beyond assistance to explorers and settlers they have no significant history of their own. Aboriginal groups may be included as secondary players within a narrative of Western progress, however, their inclusion is characterized by the lack of any significant past or present.

The assumed “truth” of a marginalized Aboriginality is repeatedly presented within social studies education through an authoritative narrative of a progressive Canadian nation. The purpose of the mainstream Canadian metanarrative is to communicate modern national values to students in order that they understand their responsibilities as Canadians and in turn work to resolve “problems” of the present. Therefore, because the narrative is concerned with current ideologies and national progress, the historical realities of the Aboriginal-Canadian relationship have not been communicated. Choosing to ignore or minimize the relationship and to represent Aboriginality through a base line narrative of Western progress does little to engage students in a historical reconstruction that would encourage them to understand the current and complicated state of relations between Aboriginal nations and the Canadian government. Furthermore, the perpetuation of an exclusive Canadian metanarrative not only affects the way young Canadians understand First Nations-Canadian relations, but directly effects Aboriginal groups themselves. The decision to represent Aboriginal identity and life through mainstream determinations of ideal citizenship is unethical because it takes away the voices of Aboriginal peoples and imposes a restrictive and ill-suited citizenship upon them. The perpetuation of the Canadian mainstream narrative is

problematic in that if Aboriginal peoples resist the imposition of citizenship, it is not the ideals of citizenship that are questioned, but Aboriginal people themselves who are blamed for their lack of participation.

Deconstruction of the Canadian narrative and its representation of Aboriginal peoples is essential for developing a social studies program that brings the historical difference of First Nations and Canadian society into conversation with each other. However, the intent of this study is not to simply criticize, but to reveal inadequacies in representation in order to suggest alternatives for how social studies education could function otherwise in terms of pedagogy, content, and methodology. Both citizenship and Aboriginality have a great impact on how learners come to form opinions about and to see their own place within the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians. If relationships are examined as the basis of social studies programs, a communal space could develop where more equitable relationships are formed. Within a communal space, or community of learning, students and teachers together examine the power of narratives, especially the discourse of Canadian “history” and its appropriation of the Aboriginal and Canadian past, present, and future. A communal space may allow learners to suggest alternatives to mainstream telling that may be more effective for future relationship building. Alternative tellings founded on historically imaginative methodology, which, unlike mainstream narratives, engage students in asking *why?* about the decisions of how to represent peoples and cultures, about the students’ own place within the narrative, and about the impacts of the story’s form. Historical imagination presents choice, agency, interaction, and negotiation to communicate to students the relationship between Aboriginal nations and the Canadian mainstream. Revised social

studies methodology centered on historical imagination permits contradictions within historical narratives and focuses on an ongoing (re)telling of many versions of the Canadian past in order to work towards healing, rather than on the presentation of predictable descriptions and comparisons of culture and history that have through their presentation sought to resolve issues by conveniently forgetting the past.

If social studies education could function beyond static and monolithic descriptions of “Canadians” and “Aboriginals” to recognizing historical difference and interaction, learners may be able to see the *ongoing* negotiation present in the relationship between Aboriginal nations and Canadians. A transformed understanding of relations is founded on describing Aboriginality and citizenship beyond the development of individual success and superficial celebrations of difference toward students and teachers understanding their role in the relationship with Aboriginal nations. Transformed social studies education could provide a space where Canadians work toward relationships with Aboriginal nations based on non-interference, hospitality, forgiveness, and care.

The social studies program in British Columbia holds a unique place within public education, as its stated purpose is the development of Canadian citizens. The 1950 *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies* program included the following statement about the importance of citizenship development within social studies education: “The central objective... is the promotion of better citizenship... It cannot be stressed too frequently that the central objective of the Social Studies is the development of worthy citizens... [The purpose of Social Studies is the] building of citizens of quality.”¹

Likewise, the *Public Elementary and Secondary Education* guide of 1955 stated that the

¹ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1950), 9.

aim of social studies education in B.C. was, “developing the character of young people, training them to be good citizens, and teaching them the fundamental skills of learning necessary for... adult life.” The guide went on to suggest that “all good school programs develop children in two ways: as individual persons and as citizens.”² The pedagogy, methodology, and content of social studies education have affected learners’ understandings of not only the Canadian past, but also the nations’ current state, and particularly for this study the relationship between mainstream Canadians and Aboriginal nations.

By interrogating the progressive Canadian narrative we may recognize misinformed representations of Aboriginal peoples and begin to formulate alternative approaches to communicate the past. A historical analysis of the development of learning outcomes and resource materials, particularly in terms of idealized citizenship standards and presentations of Aboriginal identity and culture, may allow a more honest relationship between Aboriginal nations and mainstream Canadian society to develop. The intention of the study is to provide for B.C. educators background information on how Aboriginality and citizenship have been represented. A challenge of social studies is that teachers often speak of fear when having to present Aboriginality, especially when having to present issues concerning government treatment towards Aboriginal nations (i.e. residential schooling). A reason for fear may be that teachers, many having gone through the B.C. social studies program themselves, lack adequate understandings on such issues, and thus feel unsure of how to present them in ways that do not offend or

² Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Public Elementary and Secondary Education in British Columbia* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1955), 7.

challenge Aboriginal peoples.³ The hope is that the study will offer a transformed version of social studies education founded on a nation-to-nation understanding of relations. Furthermore, while the study analyzes the representation of Aboriginality, it also seeks to bring the concept of it in conversation with notions of idealized Canadian citizenship. Seeing how Aboriginality and citizenship interact within social studies education may contribute to a broader understanding of First Nations representation within the curriculum.

Evidence that is used in my analysis of the ideals of active citizenship and representations of Aboriginality is located within the mandated British Columbian Ministry of Education social studies learning outcomes, methods, and recommended or required resource materials, including textbooks and teacher guides. Specifically grades four and ten social studies outcomes have included content on Aboriginal life and culture within the overall narrative of the development of Canada. Generally, grade four social studies learning outcomes have contained identification of the characteristics of Aboriginal culture, mostly in periods of pre- and proto-contact through a comparison to European explorer and settler culture. In grade ten, students examine themes of Canadian culture, identity, and history as they developed from approximately 1815-1915. Additionally, there are two elective courses at present that include content on Canada's past, Aboriginal peoples and culture, and ideal Canadian citizenship. Established in 2005, the purpose of *Civics Studies II* is to provide students with an awareness of what it means to be an active member in Canadian society. The course determines that "ideal citizenship" is obtained through students thinking critically about Canadian social issues

³ Penney Clark, "Representations of Aboriginal People in English Canadian History Textbooks: Towards Reconciliation," in *Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation*, ed. Elizabeth A. Cole (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield and Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, 2007), 82-83.

and having them subsequently seek social justice. *First Nations 12*, which was first introduced in 1995 and revised in 2006, includes an in-depth study of the various cultures and histories of British Columbia's Aboriginal peoples.⁴

Both Aboriginality and citizenship will be examined within learning outcomes and resources materials through the use of four eras of social studies education development within the province. The first, referred to as the post war era, examines the establishment of modern methods and content of the program between 1945 and 1960. The second era examines social studies programs of the 1960s, which focused on hard academics, or the development of the mind, through the application of scientific methods and the use of reason. The third era, often referred to as the multicultural or Canadian studies era, looks at the period between the 1970s and mid 1990s where there was a clear shift toward recognition of diversity, cultural celebration, and inclusion of minorities within social studies education. Finally, the fourth era, from mid 1990s until present day, analyzes the ongoing use of modern social studies methods and content under a program committed to having students thinking critically and develop solutions for societal injustices.

The specific findings of this thesis are consistent with the interpretations of historian and educator Penney Clark who argues that Aboriginality in social studies education has been represented in "misunderstood" and "marginalized" ways. Clark maintains that the long history of inaccurate representation has created within the Canadian nation "two solitudes" between Aboriginal peoples and mainstream Canadians. Her analysis suggests that social studies programs in B.C. have contributed to the strong

⁴ This course offers a better example of content and methodology founded on a nation-to-nation understanding of the past in that it recognizes Aboriginal self-determinism and variety within and between Aboriginal cultures.

polarization between the Canadian citizen and the Aboriginal “Other”, by reinforcing opposing definitions of identity and culture. The consequence of the naturalization of these cultural binaries is that the historic role and legal position of First Nations are never fully recognized in Canada. Clark divides periods of representation into the “more distant past” and “more recent past and present”, suggesting that within the former, Aboriginal peoples are seen either as spectator or savage warrior, and within the later, they are depicted as exotic, problems, protestors, invisible, or uniquely spiritual.⁵ Alongside Clark’s categories of analysis of Aboriginal representation, I have included the following additional categories: Aboriginals as children, or wards of the government, and as environmentalists or earth keepers.

In any study of citizenship or Aboriginality terminology becomes particularly problematic. The following terms are used within the study and should be clarified here in terms of the intention of their use. The purpose of using the following terms and names is to align the language of the study to the language used within social studies programs and academic historical theory. “Aboriginal” encompasses all of Canada’s First Peoples, including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis groups of the past and present. Within the evidence analysis chapters, terminology used within various time periods may be used to identify Aboriginal peoples (i.e. “Indian”, “Native”, “tribes”). “Aboriginality” is used to define the state of being Aboriginal or as a descriptor of a collective Aboriginal culture. Matthew Dorrell maintains that “Aboriginality” defined by the Canadian government, groups Aboriginal nations altogether as an “undifferentiated” and

⁵ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People.” 85.

“homogenous” group.⁶ Therefore, within the study “Aboriginality” is used to explore the representation or portrayal of Canada’s Aboriginal people as a large group. The postcolonial use of “Other” is intended to represent the binary between Aboriginal and the Canadian mainstream. Theorist Edward Said argues that modern nation states are founded on the basis of “us” and “them” or “European” and “natives” dichotomies. While Western modern identity is presented as “settled”, Said argues that this is an imposition of imperial power that ignores the interdependence and co-existence of minorities and Westerners as well as the realities and desires of minority groups.⁷ The use of “Other” in this study therefore, does not necessarily represent the reality of minority groups, but is intended to present the perceptions of them by mainstream society. “Mainstream” is meant to describe non-Aboriginal society within Canada. Furthermore, “mainstream” denotes the dominant historical metanarrative of Canada founded on Western “progress” manifested in European exploration, settlement, and development. The progressive, mainstream, Canadian metanarrative is defined as the singular, chronological, coherent, story of the nation past. “Progress” in Canadian history is defined in the belief in the linear movement in time, in the notion that reason and technology are the best way of accessing knowledge, and in that “Western” cultural norms are superior to all others. Finally, the use of “ideal citizenship” is defined by what provincial learning outcomes determine as essential for the development of young people. “Ideal citizenship” is communicated to young Canadians through the mainstream Canadian historical metanarrative.

⁶ Matthew Dorrell, “From Reconciling to Reconciliation: Reading What “We Now Recognize” in the Government of Canada’s 2008 Residential Schools Apology,” *ESC* 35 (2009): 35.

⁷ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1994), xxiii, xxii, xx.

Within B.C. social studies education, Canadian “history” has functioned as a source of authority to control and determine the role of individuals and groups within the nation. Likewise, history within social studies programs functions as a source of authority that legitimizes the dominant role of the mainstream and marginalized position of Aboriginals. Canadian philosopher George Grant argues that while modern history claims to communicate objective truth and actuality of the past, what it actually perpetuates are modern values and a contemporary desire for freedom from issues and responsibilities of the past.⁸ While the “history” within social studies education claims to represent the actuality of First Nations-Canadian relations, it has instead led learners to believe there are no issues in the relationship. The ongoing presentation of peaceful relations within the Canadian metanarrative not only alienates the mainstream from any responsibility to Aboriginal nations, but also provides for them a sense of security. There is a fear that a contested or unstable past, which is arguably closer to reality, would introduce both chaos and uncertainty into the past and present, both of which are seen as unacceptable and too risky within the modern history project. Michel Foucault shows that presenting a past founded on the projection of certain ideologies of the present, “provides shelter”, or a sense of protection and security into the future.⁹ Likewise, Charles Taylor contends that modernity can be defined by the “rule of reason” and “vision of order”, both of which have provided the Western world with a sense of control and a belief that progress is a desirable and achievable goal.¹⁰ The narrative present in B.C. social studies programs is both chronological and coherent and has, though positioning Aboriginal peoples as mere secondary players to Western exploration,

⁸ George Grant, *Time as History* (Toronto, ON: CBC Learning Systems, 1969), 16, 36.

⁹ Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1972), 13.

¹⁰ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 124.

expansion, and technological advancements, legitimized the values and goals of the mainstream. Through the presentation of a progressive narrative, mainstream Canadians are able to, as Michel de Certeau shows, promote ideologies or national doctrines in order to legitimize a certain present and future, or in other words writing the Canadian past to “make people believe”.¹¹

Essentially the role of modern history within education is to dictate to citizens their place and their role within the Canadian nation. Benedict Anderson argues that “imagined political communities” are created through the perpetuation of authorized national accounts that while not based in reality, are incredibly powerful tools in making people believe and follow.¹² Canadian historian Daniel Francis contends that the Canadian nation is one such “imagined community” that is communicated through the stories we tell ourselves, often through public education. The repetition of certain memories, dreams, and myths give the Canadian community ideals, continuity, and purpose, or as he shows, a sense of “who we are”. The function of history in the creation of a national unified community, Francis argues, is to recreate and reinforce a “consensual hallucination”.¹³ The role of modern education in the endeavor is to present a state authorized history that will regulate, construct, standardize, and subordinate students.¹⁴ Sharon Anne Cook maintains that through curriculum, specifically social studies objectives concerning citizenship, students are given their place and told what to believe about Canada, its past, its people, and their interactions.¹⁵

¹¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 183.

¹² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, NY: Verso, 1983), 4, 6, 114.

¹³ Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997), 10-11.

¹⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 169.

¹⁵ Sharon Anne Cook, “‘Patriotism Eh?’ The Canadian Version,” *Phi Delta Kappan* 87 (2006): 589.

The function of authorized “history” has been very powerful within Canada and its citizenship development, however, has been based upon inaccuracy and exclusion of Aboriginal nations. Various scholars argue that the way national narratives are communicated must be reconsidered in order to see the ethical implications that modern tellings have had on peoples, particularly on minorities, or those on the margins. Philosopher Paul Ricoeur maintains that “authorized history” can exploit memory or that the choice to present certain memories over others is harmful and in no way represents “truth”.¹⁶ Likewise, Francis shows that the master Canadian narrative has excluded or spoken falsely about many minority groups, particularly Aboriginals.¹⁷ Theorist Homi Bhabha argues that a significant concern over the presentation of modern narratives is the way they have silenced colonial realities, hiding negotiations of power to place the colonized as victims with no voice or ability to act.¹⁸ A silencing of colonialism is apparent within the Canadian narrative found in learning outcomes and resource materials. Over the past sixty years, social studies education has contained little to no information surrounding Aboriginal “issues” such as residential schooling, assimilative policy, land concerns, the Indian Act, or reservations. Furthermore, Dipesh Chakrabarty demonstrates that the histories of minorities, which are full of contradictions, have been largely ignored in the authorized presentation of third world histories.¹⁹ The “history” available in social studies education, which has been developed by the mainstream, cannot represent the complexities apparent within minority societies.

¹⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 86.

¹⁷ Francis, *National Dreams*, 172.

¹⁸ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge Classic Paperbacks, 1994), 175, 138.

¹⁹ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 10-11, 27, 37-38.

The “imagined Canada” presented in British Columbian social studies education has silenced colonialism and the realities of Aboriginal peoples in the nations past and present. Amelia Kalant shows that Aboriginal peoples are controlled through the retelling of Canadian myths located within an authorized narrative. Through schools, museums, and popular culture perceptions of the “Native” are communicated, and while presented as authentic and “true”;²⁰ are filled with what Francis determines as, “racism, fear, and misunderstanding”.²¹ Although Walter Werner, Bryan Connors, Ted Aoki, and Jorgen Dahlie were analyzing Canadian society of the 1970s, their argument that the presentation of Aboriginal peoples within the Canadian narrative is misguided may still be accurate. The authors suggest that the metanarrative assumes homogeneity as the norm, it focuses on superficial material and museum objects to explain life and culture, and, finally, it proclaims that Canadian society is derived from European traditions,²² all elements that continue to be included within the story of Canada communicated at present. Other scholars, such as, Martin Keavy, argue that colonial realities are hidden within Canadian “history” because Aboriginality and its relationship to the mainstream do not fit “tidily into the plot” of the Canadian national narrative. Rather, colonial realities of the Canadian past and present prevent the possibility of Canada being represented as accepting, tolerant of difference, and peaceful. Keavy stresses that colonial realities dash pride in the nation and are therefore often left out of the story of Canada, or if presented, are sought to be reconciled quickly so that they can be left out of

²⁰ Amelia Kalant, *National Identity and the Conflict at Oka: Native Belonging and Myths of Postcolonial Nationhood in Canada* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 13, 240, 158.

²¹ Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), 221.

²² Walter Werner, Bryan Connors, Ted Aoki, and Jorgen Dahlie, *Whose Culture? Whose Heritage? Ethnicity within Canadian Social Studies Curricula* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, 1977), 58, 15, 14.

stories in the future.²³ Furthermore, Kalant demonstrates that myths of the Canadian nation perpetuated in social studies education are founded on the creation and maintenance of the Aboriginal “Other”.²⁴ As Richard Kearney shows the purpose of creating “Others” is to project fears that people have over difference.²⁵

Revising the social studies metanarrative would include Canadians acknowledging and taking responsibility for tense, uncomfortable, and unsolvable colonial realities, all of which are incredibly difficult to accept in a country that has tolerance as one of the main pillars of its nationalism. While it may be challenging to recognize colonial realities and accept tense relations, it is important to realize that Aboriginal peoples, their concerns, and their rights, will not go away. Michel de Certeau believes that it is the “absent other” that haunts modern meta-narratives and disrupts the possibility of “truth” within homogenous and totalizing narratives.²⁶ Instead of seeking a coherent and “true” narrative of Canada’s past, historians could, Bhabha argues, explore discontinuities in the past that are present within symbol, myth, memory, ancestry, and history.²⁷ Social studies education could be transformed to include a historical narrative that moves beyond seeking closure and resolution between the mainstream and Aboriginal nations in order to work towards open-ended, positive, and equitable relations for the future. A transformed Canadian narrative could be presented that allows for discontinuity, complexity, and on-going negotiated relations. Chakrabarty maintains that a historical telling can be conducted without the need for it to be “complete”.

Furthermore, he suggests that history can be seen as translated and negotiated in relation

²³ Martin Keavy, “Truth, Reconciliation, and Amnesia: *Porcupines and China Dolls* and the Canadian Conscience.” *ESC* 25 (2009): 51, 53.

²⁴ Kalant, *National Identity and the Conflict at Oka*, 4.

²⁵ Richard Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters: Interpreting Otherness* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 5.

²⁶ de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 154.

²⁷ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 218, 310, 354.

to the “Other” and in this way room can be made for the possibility of more than one way of telling, or even for more than one way of being, that goes beyond the modern and political.²⁸

Different, more positive, relationships can be forged, Francis maintains, if Canadians are able to recognize the ways in which Aboriginals have been and are being perceived.²⁹ Dennis Sumara, Brent Davis, and Linda Laidlaw state that Canadians need not imagine a “quintessential identity”, but that they should embrace the complexity of human interaction to see identity as negotiated, compromised, and never fully able to be represented.³⁰ To “unlearn [modern] history” Canadians must re-examine the national dreams that preoccupy the narrative³¹, which have served to exclude and misrepresent Canada’s Aboriginal peoples. Within public education this entails rethinking stereotypes present within national history and seeing the ways particular representations of Aboriginal peoples have affected relationships between them and the mainstream over time.³² Keavy shows that if positive relationships are the goal for the future of Canada, reconciliation must be conceived as open-ended rather than “fixed” and solved.³³ History could evolve, Hayden White demonstrates, from being founded on reconstruction and explanation, toward interpretation³⁴ or as Kearney describes, myths and memories of the national past could be reinterpreted in light of a more mindful and compassionate view of the “Other” that could lead to a more hopeful future.³⁵

²⁸ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 40, 112, 71.

²⁹ Francis, *The Imaginary Indian*, 224.

³⁰ Dennis Sumara, Brent Davis, and Linda Laidlaw, “Canadian Identity and Curriculum Theory: An Ecological, Postmodern Perspective,” *Canadian Journal of Education* 26 (2001): 146, 150-151.

³¹ Francis, *National Dreams*, 14.

³² Francis, *The Imaginary Indian*, 6.

³³ Keavy, “Truth, Reconciliation, and Amnesia,” 51, 201.

³⁴ Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1987). 188.

³⁵ Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters*, 19.

The scope of this study is limited in that it only offers an analysis of what the province requires or recommends for social studies education. It is not an exploration of how learning outcomes and resources unfold and are used within the classroom. How teachers and students react to provincial standards and the presentation of them, for instance their thoughts and feelings about content and methods, is not included within this analysis. Perceptions of learning outcomes and materials are based upon personal experience with material, conversations with educators, observations of social studies practice, and finally within scholarship surrounding Canadian social studies education. Future analysis could be conducted on the ways in which teachers and students perceive prescribed outcomes and interpret learning resources. Having an understanding of the ways in which Canadian citizenship identity and Aboriginality are perceived and understood by British Columbian learners may assist in deeper understandings about the way “history” functions within social studies education in ways that impacts Canadian-First Nations relationships.

CHAPTER ONE: Citizenship and Pedagogy

“Learning social studies is, to no small extent... learning to be stupid.” Jules Henry³⁶

Educational philosopher Kieran Egan argues the primary aim of Canadian social studies for over half a century has been the making of competent democratic citizens, students who can “understand” democracy and then embody it in their future lives.³⁷ Additionally, Penney Clark concludes that despite the changing definition of Canadian citizenship since the 1950s, establishing civic loyalty remains a central goal of the British Columbian curriculum.³⁸ The curricular goal of the social studies program in B.C. has been consistently articulated as the development of *active* Canadian citizens. Not only are students to acquire appropriate skills and basic knowledge for citizenship, they are also *to become* individual socially responsible citizens through their participation in this program. Commenting on the social studies program of the 1980s, Egan demonstrated that the social studies program had been intended to socialize the nation’s young people into a Canadian norm.³⁹ Arguably, socialization of Canadian citizens continues to be a primary purpose of social studies education today.

Academic historians have generally maintained that committing to active citizenship within social studies education is problematic, as it tends to take away from the possibility of historical understanding. Historian Ken Osborne demonstrates that social studies programs that favor content cohesion, focus on contemporary problems,

³⁶ Jules Henry, *Culture Against Man* (New York, NY: Random House, 1963).

³⁷ Kieran Egan, "Social Studies and the Erosion of Education," *Curriculum Inquiry* 13 (1983): 207.

³⁸ Penney Clark, ““Take it away Youth!” Visions of Canadian Identity in British Columbia Social Studies Text Books, 1925-1989,” (Vancouver, BC: The Faculty of Graduate Studies, Department of Education Studies, University of British Columbia, 1995), 271.

³⁹ Egan, "Social Studies and the Erosion of Education," 201.

and seek national unity above all else have not paid attention to historical thinking that is founded upon more broad and complex interpretations of the past.⁴⁰ Author James Loewen argues that the history presented in schools is “boring” and “predictable”, has every problem solved, and leaves out any sort of controversy that would reflect badly on the nation.⁴¹ When primary attention is paid to the development of the Canadian individual, or as educational psychologists Ann-Marie McLellan and Jack Martin advance, “a process of self-actualization” students do not gain a nuanced understanding of their nation’s past, but rather learn to assume the legitimacy of progressive and democratic national ideologies⁴²

While there have been changes to Canada’s historical narrative since the 1950s, what has remained consistent in both learning outcomes and textbooks is a foundational story, or myth, that has provided Canadians with a sense of “who they are” in an attempt to establish some sort of national unity.⁴³ Middle Eastern scholar Elie Podeh states that the accepted historical narrative of a nation constructs collective memory, providing a sense of continuity between the past and the present. Clark has identified the Canadian national narrative as one of progress, of taming the wilderness and people, of establishing systems of law, and efficient networks of trade, communication, and transportation.⁴⁴ Canadian historian Daniel Francis shows that it is within these myths that what Canadians hold most dearly are located. Myths, he states, are not necessarily falsehoods and the point of examining them is not to decide whether they are true or false, rather,

⁴⁰ Ken Osborne, “History and Social Studies: Partners or Rivals?” in *Challenges and Prospects for Canadian Social Studies*, eds. Alan Sears and Ian Wright (Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 74.

⁴¹ James W Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 2007), 5.

⁴² Ann-Marie McLellan and Jack Martin, “Psychology and the Education of Persons in British Columbia: A Critical Interpretive Investigation,” *Canadian Journal of Education* 28 (2005): 85.

⁴³ Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997), 10.

⁴⁴ Penney Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People in English Canadian History Textbooks: Towards Reconciliation,” in *Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation*, ed. Elizabeth A. Cole (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield and Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, 2007), 93, 111.

myths reveal what people groups idealize and seek to achieve. The Canadian narrative, Francis maintains, is founded on creating a sense of cultural unity because Canada lacks a common ethnicity, language, and religion, and a physical unity because the country is so vast and diverse. Canada's "imagined" community, he concludes, is created and kept alive through the stories that Canadians tell themselves over time.⁴⁵

The repetition of the central thematic in social studies curricular outcomes and textbooks has provided students with a basis for a common ideal and purpose.⁴⁶ The discourse of Canadian identity that is shaped by themes of the progress of the West, the conquest of nature, and the application of reason through technology, has continually been promoted within learning outcomes and curricular resources in B.C.'s schools and positioned as the reality of the past. The purpose of the Canadian metanarrative in social studies education is for individual students to acquire ideal citizenship in order that they be empowered to better the nation. However, what remains absent from the presentation of the narrative is the process of decision-making involved in its creation. The Canadian narrative, though believed to present the reality of the nation's past, is really a product of its 19th-century founding time. As Clark shows the narrative is a "cultural artifact" that is written and rewritten to suite contemporary needs and desires, transmit national ideology, and aid in nation-building goals.⁴⁷

Within British Columbian social studies education, Canada's Aboriginal peoples and their history have been understood through the established mythical mainstream version of Canadian history. Up until the 1970s Aboriginal peoples were generally

⁴⁵ Francis, *National Dreams*, 10-11.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁷ Clark, "Representations of Aboriginal People," 93.

excluded from Canadian citizenship, seen as a separate, and, often disappearing group.⁴⁸ Recently, particularly with the declaration of Canada as a multicultural nation, Aboriginal peoples have been included under a more diverse and tolerant understanding of citizenship within the curriculum. However, the arguments of Walter Werner, Bryan Connors, Ted Aoki, and Jorgen Dahlie remain accurate in that Aboriginals continue to play a minor role within the wider narrative as mere “contributors” to dominant society.⁴⁹ While the presence of Aboriginal peoples in learning outcomes and resources is currently more abundant and positive, the overarching narrative representing Aboriginal peoples has produced misunderstanding and marginalization.⁵⁰ Francis contends that the master national narrative has and continues to exclude many people in its quest to seek unity above all else. The myth of Canadian unity is founded on forgetting a past full of exclusion and abuse rather than on deep connections that may transcend race, culture, and values.⁵¹ Overall, B.C.’s department of education has not identified or remedied the “two solitudes”⁵² that exist within social studies education between Aboriginal nations and the mainstream. The problem with Canada’s past being communicated in a singular master narrative is that it inaccurately portrays Canada’s Aboriginal peoples. The mainstream narrative, centered on Western exploration, settlement, and development conceals Aboriginal histories and the long and complex history of relations between them and the Canadian government.

Era One (1945-1960)

⁴⁸ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 272.

⁴⁹ Walter Werner, Bryan Connors, Ted Aoki, and Jorgen Dahlie, *Whose Culture? Whose Heritage? Ethnicity within Canadian Social Studies Curricula* (Vancouver, BC: Center for the Study of Curriculum and Instruction, University of British Columbia, 1977), 19.

⁵⁰ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 85.

⁵¹ Francis, *National Dreams*, 172, 11.

⁵² Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 85.

After World War Two, the social studies education program in B.C. began to include active citizenship acquisition as its central goal. Historian Jean Barman argues that the post war climate in British Columbia was relatively economically stable, allowing those in provincial authority to seek reform.⁵³ Loewen states that due to this stability, a desire for national progress, or a belief that life could be better, dominated North American culture in the 1950s.⁵⁴ McLellan and Martin maintain that during the mid twentieth century, public education shifted toward character development of individuals, which they argue manifested itself in a desire for self-improvement in order to achieve national progress. Within Canada, desires for progress were communicated through social studies education, which during the post war era sought to develop “proper” citizens who displayed appropriate morals, civic obligations, and pride in their country.⁵⁵

Within B.C., aims of individual and civic improvement were achieved through the development of virtues and through the presentation of a romanticized national story. The metanarrative of the country’s past was founded on a singular European perspective and was full of predetermined assumptions.⁵⁶ The curriculum presented the Canadian narrative during the post era in “story form only”⁵⁷ and was developed around the desire for national progress that could be attained through the effort of individuals.⁵⁸ The 1950 *Junior and High School Social Studies* program, also used in 1956, under the section “Man’s Progress in the Modern Age”, had students learning about the “struggle for

⁵³ Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 270, 295.

⁵⁴ Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, 283.

⁵⁵ McLellan and Martin, “Psychology and the Education of Persons in British Columbia”, 74, 79.

⁵⁶ Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 151.

⁵⁷ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Programme of Studies for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1956), 241.

⁵⁸ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 120.

democracy” and also about the “peaceful progress” the nation was supposedly working towards.⁵⁹ The textbook *This New Canada* claimed that, “Canadians can, through enlightened self interest make Canada a better and better country” and that, “We are on our way in Canada to making something new”.⁶⁰ To achieve its goal of convincing students of the need for progress and civic pride, the narrative highlighted heroes in the past that displayed desirable virtues in the present, such as independence and courage. For example, within the 1954 *Programme for the Intermediate Grades*, “every effort [was to] be made to introduce respect for the courage and hardiness [of] these early Canadians [Champlain, Talon, Frontenac], and for their contribution to making a country.” Canadian history was founded on, “Colorful stories of the past, showing how man has been affected by the physical environment and how he has mastered it.”⁶¹

During the post war era national progress and unity were to be achieved through understanding what was “great” in the past, but also through the acquisition of ideal citizenship, which was defined by self-actualization and the development of key virtues. The educational philosophy of social efficacy and the “expanding horizons” methodology introduced first by educational philosopher John Dewey but also furthered by many subsequent educators and philosophers, were incredibly influential on the development of social studies education in the province.⁶² The 1957 *Primary* program established “expanding horizons” methodology by introducing themes and skills in the primary grades, including acceptable behavior, cooperation, responsibility, problem solving, knowledge and pride in Canada, and especially preparation of citizenship, stressing that

⁵⁹ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1950), 63.

⁶⁰ Margaret McWilliams, *This New Canada* (Vancouver, BC: J.M. Dent & Sons Limited, 1948), 52, 71.

⁶¹ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1954), 159, 156.

⁶² Egan, "Social Studies and the Erosion of Education," 197.

these should be followed continuously through into secondary education.⁶³ The expanding horizons method allowed the progressive and romantic narrative of Canada and citizenship ideals to be presented in early grades and followed through until the end of a child's education. The development of the self took on new meaning as it became the students' individual responsibility to develop "standards of value" and of "what [was] right".⁶⁴ In the *Junior and Senior* program, virtuous qualities included: "neatness, industry, courtesy, promptness, accuracy, co-operation, economy of time, [and] studied use of leisure."⁶⁵ Within the *Intermediate* guide, "willing obedience to rules... loyalty, tolerance... orderliness... [and] good sportsmanship" were ideal.⁶⁶ The main textbook resource *This New Canada* emphasized the need for students to develop these traits in order that any sort of progress be achieved: "Until each Canadian realize that unless he plays his part...the nation as a whole will not be as wise or as efficient as it might be, Canada will not reach as rich a development as it might attain had all her citizens been striving to that progress."⁶⁷

⁶³ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Programme for the Primary Grades* (Victoria, BC: Programme for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, 1957), 8, 130.

⁶⁴ Province of B.C., *Programme for the Intermediate Grades: 1954*, 131.

⁶⁵ Province B.C., *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies: 1950*, 11.

⁶⁶ Province of B.C., *Programme for the Intermediate Grades: 1954*, 116.

⁶⁷ McWilliams, *This New Canada*, 293.



Figure 1.1. The virtues of a citizen of Canada⁶⁸

The decision to portray the Canadian past as heroic and its citizenship as a moral virtue allowed for an incomplete and exclusive narrative. Citizenship in the post war era, Penney Clark argues, was intended for mainstream Canadians only.⁶⁹ Aboriginal peoples in particular were essentially invisible within the narrative, and thus, excluded from the possibility of becoming virtuous and moral citizens. Barman identifies four main misconceptions of Aboriginal peoples and lifestyles that influenced the national narrative from the mid nineteenth century up until the post war period which led to their exclusion: Social Darwinism or white superiority, a belief that Aboriginal peoples did not have a notion of land ownership, seeing Aboriginal ways of life as detrimental to their

⁶⁸ H.A. Tanzer and D. Paed, *Citizens of Canada: You and Your Community* (Toronto, ON: Thomas Nelson and Sons Limited, 1955), 5.

⁶⁹ Clark, "Representations of Aboriginal People," 119.

own well being, and finally the assumption that Aboriginals would eventually disappear altogether.⁷⁰ Within social studies programs white superiority was seen in almost a complete absence of Aboriginal life and culture within learning outcomes. For instance, the only mention of Aboriginal peoples within the 1950 *Junior and Senior* program was as “prehistoric migrants”.⁷¹ Within textbooks, a disregard for Aboriginal peoples and the maintenance of traditional lifestyles could also be seen. In her elementary social studies text *This New Canada* Margaret McWilliams proclaimed that within Canada something “new” was being made, a “country British in ideals, in law, and in democratic government.”⁷² Kenneth Kidd in his *Canadians of Long Ago: The Story of the Canadian Indian* suggested “the old life is almost gone now.”⁷³ Finally, within the high school social studies text *Native Tribes of Canada* Douglas Leechman maintained that few Aboriginals “now live like they used to”, that, “In another generation or two, the change from native ways to ours may almost be complete.”⁷⁴

Era Two (1960s-1970s)

Ideal citizenship in the second era of social studies development was less focused on morality and virtues as it had been in previous era, and more on investigation and mastery of facts in order to find appropriate solutions to societal problems. Clark shows that societal reform within British Columbia during the early 1960s manifested itself within public education through a renewed commitment to distinct disciplines and “hard education”, which was centered around the development of the mind, rather than of the

⁷⁰ Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 154-155.

⁷¹ Province B.C., *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies: 1950*, 78.

⁷² McWilliams, *This New Canada*, 71.

⁷³ Kenneth Kidd, *Canadians of Long Ago: The Story of the Canadian Indian* (Toronto, ON: Longmans, Green and Company, 1951), 172.

⁷⁴ Douglas Leechman, *Native Tribes of Canada* (Toronto, ON: WJ Gage and Company Limited, 1956), 257, 323.

whole child.⁷⁵ However, while methodology and ideals shifted toward a “love of truth and understanding of the rule of law”⁷⁶, the progressive, mainstream narrative used to promote national ideologies remained essentially identical to the previous era. The maintenance of the narrative was displayed in the 1968 *Secondary Social Studies Curriculum Guide* within the statement: “we are not beginning, but continuing”.⁷⁷

Likewise, the 1968 *Intermediate* program stressed the importance of students being able to determine “whatsoever things are true” and to see “clearly” and as a “whole” Canada’s history, and in the same fashion, informed educators to communicate the nation’s past in a “chronological” and “straightforward and business like singleness of purpose” as to not guide students into a “maze” which would only serve to “confuse”.⁷⁸ Continuity as a historical concept ensured that students would understand the importance of progress and the possibility of change.⁷⁹

Social studies assumed increased priority in this era and was placed at second level importance after English and mathematics.⁸⁰ The Chant Report was a foundational document for altering the program’s emphasis from one of virtues to one of scientific investigation. There had been no significant research conducted on school operation since 1925, so Leslie Peterson, B.C.’s Minister of Education in 1959, commissioned a study that would eventually lead to the creation of The Report.⁸¹ After thorough research and planning, The Report offered one hundred and fifty eight recommendations for the B.C. public school system. Influenced by the thinking of American psychologist Jerome

⁷⁵ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 196, 123-124.

⁷⁶ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Secondary Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1960), 8.

⁷⁷ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Secondary School Curriculum Guide, Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1968), 12.

⁷⁸ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* (Victoria, BC: Programme of Studies for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, 1968), 7-9.

⁷⁹ Province of B.C., *Secondary School Curriculum Guide*: 1968, 12.

⁸⁰ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 123.

⁸¹ Leslie Peterson, Minister of Education, “Press Release, January 17, 1959.”

Bruner, The Report upheld no nonsense academics over the teaching of moral virtue within social studies education. In Bruner's opinion, structured and distinct historical and geographical subjects founded in inductive thinking were essential in developing competent individual citizens. A return to what was considered "hard education" was thought to better prepare students to deal with the increasingly complex world in which they were living. The Report gave special attention to the social studies for its ability to promote "better citizenship".⁸²

While the Chant Report continued to focus on an expanding horizons method of social studies, it revised ideal citizenship acquisition to be focused on social scientific inquiry. Students were to *participate* in social studies education as scientific and skilled investigators, using "evidence" of the past in order to make judgments, come to conclusions, and decide the direction in which the country should move.⁸³ The conception of ideal citizenship was adjusted to include, both within secondary and intermediate programs, knowledge, love of truth, humanitarian sentiments, and an understanding of the rule of law.⁸⁴ Under the revised version of citizenship, evidence, facts, and generalizations were of utmost importance, and not to be neglected.⁸⁵ For instance, the 1968 *Intermediate* program stated that understanding came through "substantial content of meaningful facts, well-documented generalizations... [and] significant dates". The "humanitarian sentiments" section of the program upheld the importance of "the power for improvement".⁸⁶ Good methodology included orderliness, unity, purpose, and technique, all falling in line with the central goals of The Chant

⁸² Clark, "Take it away Youth!", 122, 125, 124, 131.

⁸³ Clark, "Take it away Youth!", 196.

⁸⁴ Province of B.C., *Programme for the Intermediate Grades: 1968*, 7-8 & Province of B.C., *Secondary Social Studies: 1960*, 7-8.

⁸⁵ Clark, "Take it away Youth!", 131.

⁸⁶ Province of B.C., *Programme for the Intermediate Grades: 1968*, 7, 8-9.

Report.⁸⁷ The 1968 *Secondary School Curriculum Guide* positioned students as historians, determining truth through the scientific principles of, “virtues of patience, objectivity, [and] exactitude”.⁸⁸ A textbook example of revised methods was found in Neil Sutherland and Edith Deyell’s *Making Canadian History* which informed students that, “Like the detective, the historian looks for clues-for evidence...From pictures, letters, diaries...he is able to piece together a reliable account of life... In his fascinating work of reconstruction he bases his conclusions upon what seems more probable in the light of the evidence examined.” Students were expected within the era to, “read the evidence,” and to draw [their] own conclusions.”⁸⁹

Positioning students as practitioners of historical study was important as it allowed students to make decisions concerning their own citizenship. The problem with the altered conception of ideal citizenship, with its strict commitment to truth, evidence, reason, and logic, was that it placed a great responsibility on students to make judgments and decisions about the future of the nation without providing for them accurate information to do so.⁹⁰ The history presented to students was founded on a singular narrative of a seamless Western timeline of “man’s progress.”⁹¹ Students in the era were still led to believe that the past presented within social studies instruction was “truth”, rather than a creation by the developers of learning outcomes. Students could be trusted to come to their own conclusion because educators had unwavering confidence that “history” inevitably led to the development of a Western, British civilization. Students

⁸⁷ Province of B.C., *Secondary Social Studies: 1960*, 14.

⁸⁸ Province of B.C., *Secondary School Curriculum Guide: 1968*, 8.

⁸⁹ Neil Sutherland and Edith Deyell, *Book 1: Making Canadian History: A Source-Guide Book in Canadian History* (Vancouver, BC: WJ Gage Limited, 1966), vi.

⁹⁰ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 129.

⁹¹ Province of B.C., *Secondary School Curriculum Guide: 1968*, 8-10.

would remain unaware that the narrative they were presented with was the creation of people in the present, and not the actuality of the past.

During the 1970s there was a shift in how active citizenship was defined in B.C. social studies programs. The shift could be attributed to what Barman entitled the “equality revolution”, or increased awareness by the mainstream of minority group rights. Widespread social protest calling for what Barman determined as, “equality of treatment, of opportunity, of access, of acceptance, [and] of experience” all brought “credibility [to] the ways things ought to be.” Perhaps most significant for this study was social protest of Aboriginal peoples and groups themselves. Barman shows that despite the devastating consequences of residential schooling, the experience, “brought students together and forced on them a realization of their dependence and subordination.”⁹² The creation of the North American Indian Brotherhood, later renamed the Assembly of First Nations, provided a national platform for Aboriginal groups to make known their opinions about education and social equality. Aboriginal protest, seen most clearly in the outcry against the 1969 proposed White Paper, was far more unified than it ever had been in the past. These developments, as well as the Calder case that determined Aboriginal title did exist prior to European colonization, brought increased attention to Aboriginal peoples, their desires, and key issues concerning land, treaty rights, control of education, status, and the historical relationship with the British Crown.⁹³

Social protest and outcry nearing the end of the era led to texts being highly scrutinized for their representations of social minorities. Fourteen major studies were conducted in Canada at this time, all of which found, “errors of fact, glaring omissions,

⁹² Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 297, 307.

⁹³ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 89, 88.

and negative stereotyping in Aboriginal representation.”⁹⁴ Two commissioned surveys by Harry Hawthorn in the 1950s and 1960s on Native peoples and their situations revealed the “plight” of these groups.⁹⁵ These surveys brought increased awareness to a group of people often “hidden” from the mainstream. In 1971 Garnet McDiarmid and David Pratt conducted the most significant of these studies for Studies in Education through the Ontario Institute, and in their examination of one hundred and forty three texts concluded that:

Indians emerge as the least favored of all groups. An overwhelming number were portrayed as primitive and unskilled; not infrequently they were shown as aggressive and hostile as well. Although most have worn western dress for generations, 95 percent were shown in tribal dress or only partly clothed. In 86 percent of the illustrations, one or more Indian males were shown wearing feathers or a feathered headdress... *none* were shown in skilled or professional occupations.⁹⁶

After the early 1970s, Barman demonstrates, those in provincial authority, and it can be argued those responsible for revising social studies programs, were forced to reconsider the national narrative based upon a singular and progressive foundation. Racial assumptions and clichés, for the most part, could no longer be held as “truth” within a narrative used to communicate social and individual responsibilities to the country’s young people.⁹⁷

Era Three (1970s-Mid 1990s)

Prime Minister Trudeau’s 1971 declaration that Canada would adopt a multicultural policy altered the way active citizenship would be presented and acquired

⁹⁴ Ibid., 94-95, 99.

⁹⁵ Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 308-309.

⁹⁶ Garnet McDiarmid and David Pratt, *Teaching Prejudice: A Content Analysis for Social Studies Textbooks Authorized for Use in Ontario* (Toronto, ON: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1971), 51.

⁹⁷ Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 321.

within public education during the third era by making tolerance and inclusion central factors in citizenship development. Within his declaration Trudeau stated that, “the government would support and encourage the various cultures and ethnic groups that give structure and vitality to our society.” Support and encouragement included recognition of Aboriginal rights, cultural expression, and equality. Not only did Trudeau uphold minority cultural expression, but encouraged ethnic groups to share their cultures and values with others as it would provide a “richer life for us all.”⁹⁸ Ideal citizenship presented within social studies programs would now include multiple facets of human identity and focus on social and culture diversity.⁹⁹ For instance, the 1986 *Social Studies Resource Manual* stated that being a member of the “multicultural community” meant, “not just tolerance, but acceptance and respect for other people and cultures”.¹⁰⁰ The 1972 *Elementary* program in years four and five explored the “cultures of North America” and the “Growth of a Nation-Canada” through “changes in social organization”, the formation of “social units”, the “diverse characteristics that combine to produce distinctive lifestyles” and Canadian “cultural change” that contributed to the “cultural diversity” in present day Canada.¹⁰¹

Multiculturalism within public education was demonstrated through a greater emphasis being placed on celebrating Canadian cultural diversity. In 1970 the Canadian Studies Foundation formed and signaled a turning point for B.C. social studies curriculum development. Following the creation of the Foundation, curriculum revision boards concluded that greater attention should be placed on the factors shaping Canadian

⁹⁸ Pierre Trudeau, “House of Commons Debates,” October 8, 1971.

⁹⁹ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 235.

¹⁰⁰ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, *Social Studies Resource Manual Grades 4-7* (Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education, 1986), 9.

¹⁰¹ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Instructional Services Curriculum Development Branch, *Elementary Social Studies Years 4, 5, 6* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1972), 13, 4, 9.

society and on students understanding clearly their roles, rights, and responsibilities as individual members of Canadian society.¹⁰² Within the third era, “citizenship” became uniquely Canadian in that while British ideals and norms were considered, they were not the basis of defining ideal “citizenship”. Furthermore, “citizenship” was reconceptualized to become more positive and inclusive. The distinction between “uncivilized” and “civilized” was less apparent. The 1986 *Manual* stated that from grades four to seven students should be examining, “Canada’s social and cultural diversity” in terms of how it had and continued to develop.¹⁰³ Within revised outcomes, students were not only to know about the nation in which they lived in, but also participate directly in its destiny.¹⁰⁴ For instance, the 1977 *Core Curriculum K-7* guide suggested students in the intermediate grades, “gather, classify, and interpret relevant data in order to *solve* problems”.¹⁰⁵ The proposed 1980 *Curriculum Guide* for social studies proclaimed that, “knowledge of Canada’s cultural groups may help *resolve issues* involving the future of Canada as a multi-cultural society.”¹⁰⁶ Finally, the *Explorations* teacher resource book included the following statement about the active participation required of students: “Social studies is something children do and use, not just something they are expected to know.”¹⁰⁷

In order to understand the diversity of peoples and beliefs in the past students were to examine how they acquired and held onto beliefs and values. The 1974 *Elementary Social Studies Years 1-7* guide stated that the purpose of social studies was

¹⁰² Clark, ““Take it away Youth!”, 199, 215, 217.

¹⁰³ Province of B.C., *Social Studies Resource Manual Grades 4-7: 1986*, 9.

¹⁰⁴ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!”, 200.

¹⁰⁵ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Instructional Services Curriculum Development Branch, *Core Curriculum* (Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education, 1977), 30.
My emphasis added in italics.

¹⁰⁶ Province of British Columbia, Division of Public Instruction, Curriculum Development Branch, *Proposed Curriculum Guide: Social Studies, K-11* (Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education, 1980), 90.
My emphasis added in italics.

¹⁰⁷ Vicki Mulligan and Pamela Thomas, *Explorations Teacher Book* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984).

for students to deal with, “today’s rapidly changing world”.¹⁰⁸ Objectives in the 1972 *Elementary Social Studies Years 4, 5, 6* program continued to follow traditional social studies methodology stressing basic knowledge, skill development, values and feelings, however, the way they were defined changed.¹⁰⁹ Students were to “examine critically and perhaps change [their] point of view”, to be open to modification in order that they be increasingly sensitive to difference. A “concept inquiry approach” was introduced in hopes it would “lead pupils to understand and relate new information” to “retain and extend understandings” in order to “bring together a number of concepts and related understandings to form an *overall view* of culture or society”.¹¹⁰ Students were to be aware of “human activities, social arrangements, and beliefs”, or cultural elements of human life, in order to see the nation as a “complex social unit”. From a revised understanding of society, students were to evaluate their own points of views and give reasons for why they valued certain things in order to see where they might have bias’ and discover commonalities between their beliefs and others in hopes of cooperation and unity.¹¹¹

The ideal citizen within the era, while being aware and tolerant of the cultural diversity of the nation in which they lived and their beliefs concerning this, were also to display certain “interpersonal skills” including “concern for the self, respect, self-control, fair play, inclusion, encouragement, compromise, [and the ability to discuss]”.¹¹² The 1986 *Resource Manual* focused on citizenship skills that would prepare students to interact with diversity including “recogniz[ing] that difference between oneself and

¹⁰⁸ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Instructional Services Curriculum Development Branch, *Elementary Social Studies Years 1-7* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1974), 2.

¹⁰⁹ Province of B.C., *Elementary Social Studies Years 4, 5, 6: 1972*, 2.

¹¹⁰ Province of B.C., *Elementary Social Studies Years 1-7: 1974*, 2-3.

My emphasis added in italics.

¹¹¹ Province of B.C., *Elementary Social Studies Years 4, 5, 6: 1972*, 2-3, 14.

¹¹² Province of B.C., *Proposed Curriculum Guide: 1980*, 55.

others... [as differences] contribute to each individual's uniqueness".¹¹³ The *Explorations* teacher book, taking cues from provincial outcomes, stated that citizenship ought to include self-confidence, interpersonal relations, recognition of rights, cooperation, empathy, and community participation.¹¹⁴

However, while accepting and celebrating cultural diversity was central in this era, social studies outcomes continued to inadequately represent difference. The reason for a superficial presentation of difference within the program was that in order for progressive change to occur within the nation, what was common amongst all Canadians had to be upheld. Trudeau proclaimed that "national unity", despite now recognizing and tolerating difference, was to be founded upon, "confidence in one's own individual identity", not within group affiliation.¹¹⁵ As Bruce Carrington and Alastair Bonnett show posters for Canadian nation building used in the province during the era displayed the conviction that diverse Canadians should be striving for connection through statements such as "multiculturalism is a united Canada", "mutual respect unites Canada", and "working together brings prosperity and strong social programs".¹¹⁶ The ideal citizen in this era was an individual who could belong to a diverse cultural group, but was ultimately Canadian despite diversity. The shift from an exclusive to inclusive model of citizenship contained the possibility of multiple identities, but sought similarities, which was clearly stated in the 1972 intermediate document in the declaration, "the elementary programme encourages children to view objectively his behaviors as a member of various social groups." The decision to overlook cultural difference in favor of focusing on

¹¹³ Province of B.C., *Social Studies Resource Manual Grades 4-7: 1986*, 89-90.

¹¹⁴ Mulligan and Thomas, *Explorations Teacher Book*, 20-21.

¹¹⁵ Trudeau, "House of Commons Debates."

¹¹⁶ Bruce Carrington and Alastair Bonnett, "The Other Canadian 'Mosaic'-'Race' Equity Education in Ontario and British Columbia," *Comparative Education* 33 (1997): 414.

similarities to unite Canadians was most evident in the elementary program of 1972 under “Major Understandings” proclaiming, “A nation may unite people of diverse cultures.” Inclusion was seen within grade five outcomes that focused on the uniting of distinct cultures in order to establish that “national bonds”.¹¹⁷ While differences were tolerated, perhaps in some instances celebrated, in order to establish inclusion as an ideal, differences had to be overlooked and cooperation emphasized in order to move the nation forward.¹¹⁸ Societal unity was achieved within education by focusing on cooperation in the past. For example, the grade four recommended text, *The Explorers: Charting the Wilderness* gave credit to Aboriginal peoples for their assistance to Europeans and focused on cooperation by stating that, “the explorers could not have gone very far without help from Indians.”¹¹⁹

Canadian political philosopher Will Kymlicka argues the concept of an individualized multicultural Canada overlooked group rights, or the decisions that individuals make and live by based on group interests and belonging. Individuals, most often members of minority groups, often desired to retain their ethnic identities, yet individualized rights within a multicultural society discouraged them from practicing their difference when it limited their ability to function properly within Canadian society.¹²⁰ Werner, Connors, Aoki, and Dahlie showed during the late 1970s that due to a commitment to unity, minorities might have been recognized within the narrative, but because difference could not truly be included, continued to play a minor role in Canada’s past as “contributions” to the dominant society rather than sufficient in and of

¹¹⁷ Province of B.C., *Elementary Social Studies Years 4, 5, 6: 1972*, 1, 14.

¹¹⁸ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 257.

¹¹⁹ Ernest Langford, *The Explorers: Charting the Canadian Wilderness*, Explorations Program, eds. Carol Langford and Chuck Heath (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 1984), 15.

¹²⁰ Sushila Ramaswamy, “The Incompleteness of the Multiculturalist Agenda: Overlooking the Need for a Shared Identity,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 42 (2007): 3791-2.

themselves.¹²¹ Within the Canadian narrative the decision to emphasize commonality and unity rather than recognize how human differences may have been significant historically and at present could not provide for students an accurate picture of relations between the mainstream and minorities in the past and in the present.¹²² Generally, Aboriginal people in this era continued to be defined culturally and were often presented as one-dimensional. For instance, outdated resources, such as the 1950s text *Canadians of Long Ago*, were still being prescribed for use in elementary social studies programs into the 1990s.¹²³ The 1982 text *Indian Peoples of Canada* maintained the belief that Aboriginal peoples were all the same by claiming that “Indians” wished to tell their history as the history of “one people”.¹²⁴

Despite the ongoing presentation of Aboriginality as monolithic, Aboriginal voices within the era did serve to complicate the assumption that Canadian citizenship demonstrated equality and diversity in the past and present. Significant shifts in thinking had to be accommodated due to land claim negotiations in the 1990s, which threatened the economic well-being of the province. In particular the Delgamuukw court case established that Aboriginal rights existed in B.C. and that they had not been extinguished over time. Alongside land claim negotiations significant research was conducted in the 1996 Royal Commission that maintained new relationships between Aboriginal peoples and the mainstream had to be developed in order to allow for healing in Aboriginal communities and honor the historical foundation of Aboriginal self-determination.¹²⁵

¹²¹ Werner et al., *Whose Culture? Whose Heritage?* 19.

¹²² Province of B.C., *Social Studies Resource Manual Grades 4-7: 1986*, 53.

¹²³ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Division of Public Instruction, *Prescribed and Authorized Learning Resources 1980-1990 Grades K-X11* (Victoria, B.C: Ministry of Education, 1980).

¹²⁴ Palmer Patterson, *Indian Peoples of Canada* (Toronto, ON: Grolier Limited, 1982), 5-6.

¹²⁵ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 91.

Era Four (Mid 1990s-Present)

As early as the late 1980s, Robert H. Fowler's study on curricular reform acknowledged that from the late 1970s there was a great deal of controversy involved in the development of social studies learning outcomes. The turbulence of this period may be due to the inclusion of more diverse members with different ideological views on curriculum development boards. It may also have been due to the sudden shift of focus in social studies education from science and reason to inclusion and diversity. Fowler suggests that developers of social studies programs in B.C. during the 1970s debated whether social studies should continue to be founded on historical and geographical social science methodology, or whether it should adopt an interdisciplinary and cultural focus.¹²⁶ Due to decades of debate over how social studies should be conducted, Patricia N. Shields and Douglas Ramsay demonstrate that by the mid-1990s the concept of active citizenship was recognized as problematic as it continued to lack any sort of substantial or agreed upon definition.¹²⁷ However, various assessment surveys on social studies education in the province during the era revealed that despite concerns over its definition and application, citizenship was still valued as an essential component of the program. In 1996 the British Columbian Ministry of Education conducted a survey in grades four, seven, and ten to gather information on student performance, knowledge, and attitudes involved in social studies education. Ultimately, the Ministry wanted to determine how well students could *demonstrate* prescribed learning outcomes. The survey was conducted through interviews with students, parents, teachers, and stakeholders, as well as through literature reviews, and through curricula comparisons with other provinces.

¹²⁶ Robert H. Fowler, "Curriculum Reform in Social Studies: An Analysis of the Cases of Saskatchewan and British Columbia," *Canadian Journal of Education* 13 (1989): 322, 324.

¹²⁷ Patricia N. Shields and Douglas Ramsay, "Social Studies Across English Canada" in *Challenges and Prospects for Canadian Social Studies*, eds. Alan Sears and Ian Wright (Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 39.

The identified strength of the program was its citizenship focus that was demonstrated in knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and a willingness and ability for students to participate actively in Canadian society.¹²⁸ Likewise, the 2007 *Social Studies Curriculum* assessment for grades eight to twelve concluded that a “citizenship focus” was a foundational strength of the program and should remain the central goal. However, the same assessment identified problems with the practical application of citizenship in that only twenty-two percent of teachers surveyed felt that they had the opportunity to provide students with chances to apply learned skills and values.¹²⁹

Assessment surveys revealed not only the desire for citizenship to remain the central component of the social studies program, but they also emphasized the goal to transform the concept of ideal citizenship toward *critical* practice. Students should have the knowledge of good citizenship and be able to *act* upon their understanding based on their experience within the program. Citizenship was founded on multiculturalism and self-awareness as it was in the previous eras, however, there was now an increased attempt to encourage students to take *ownership* of their own learning and of their values in order to become both thoughtful and responsible *participants* in Canadian society. The 2007 survey contended that citizenship should be related to resolving issues of “social justice” such as poverty, gender equality, racism, and human rights.¹³⁰ As McLellan and Martin demonstrate, the British Columbian Ministry of Education’s plan “A Framework

¹²⁸ Province of British Columbia, Evaluation and Accountability Branch, Skills and Training, *Social Studies in British Columbia: Results of the 1996 Provincial Learning Assessment* (Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education, 1997), 1-2.

¹²⁹ “Social Studies Curriculum (8-12): Needs Assessment, Executive Summary,”

Ministry of Education, Fall 2007, http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/pdfs/reports/ss8-12_exec_summary.pdf (accessed January 2, 2013).

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

for Teaching” promoted a desire for students to develop their own potential in order to become responsible active citizens, committed to seeking societal change.¹³¹

The 2005 creation of the *Civic Studies 11* elective demonstrated that citizenship was still a highly desired outcome of the social studies program in B.C and its outcomes revealed the need to understand more clearly what citizenship means and the ways in which it should be developed, acquired, and especially practiced. The course provided a basis for students to become *active* citizens, individuals committed to seeking justice and creating change. The rationale for the development and implementation of *Civic Studies 11* was to allow students to actively participate in society, to make, “informed decisions...for civic action”. The goals of the program included making more mindful connections as responsible Canadian citizens, to think critically with a range of information and points of view on civic issues, and to be, most importantly, responsible agents of change. “Active citizenship” included: ethical behaviour, open mindedness, respect for diversity, empathy, tolerance, remaining informed, advocating for one’s own and other’s rights, reconciliation, reassessment of beliefs, and willingness to participate.¹³²

Students within the fourth era were given the role of making a difference by striving to remedy social inequality and injustice. The current social studies guide for kindergarten to grade seven, revised in 2006, also contained the goal of making, “thoughtful, responsible, active citizens”. Its conception of citizenship included the ability to acquire information, to consider multiple perspectives, and make reasoned judgments. The narrative presented in order for students to understand the nation’s past

¹³¹ McLellan and Martin, “Psychology and the Education of Persons in British Columbia,” 84.

¹³² Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *Civic Studies 11* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 2005), 11, 12, 34.

and then act accordingly for the betterment of its future could be seen within the current grade four and ten programs. In grade four students were to understand what has and does shape Canada, to respect human equality and cultural diversity in past and present, to learn about characteristics that define the past in terms of identity, society, and culture, to examine rights and responsibilities of citizenship in past and present, and finally to create plans of action based on a selected Canadian problems.¹³³ The textbook for grade four, *Our Beginnings* solidified this point in an opening statement: “you can use this information to decide how things should be done in future”. Furthermore, students were told that, “today is another type of beginning-the beginning of the future” and “you’re part of this. It’s your job to decide what needs to be done, get out and do it!”¹³⁴ In grade ten, students were to compare points of views and assess a variety of positions from various sources. In an examination of Canada’s history from 1815-1914, students were to evaluate roles and activities of men and women, relate the status of ethnic minorities to societal attitudes of certain times, to assess the roles of Aboriginal peoples, and to understand the history of Canada’s immigration policy.¹³⁵

While the social studies program now contains more positive inclusions of minorities in the program and consideration of multiple voices and actors in the past, social studies education remains inadequate because students are still being presented with the mainstream Canadian metanarrative focused on European exploration, expansion, and technological development. For instance, while the current grade four learning outcomes included Aboriginal systems of trade and exchange, the majority of

¹³³ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *Social Studies K-7* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 2006), 11-12, 81.

“Canadian problems” are not defined within the guide.

¹³⁴ Sharon Sterling, *Our Beginnings* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1, 180.

¹³⁵ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *Social Studies 10* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 2006), 24, 25.

outcomes were concerned with “reasons for European exploration”, “technologies used for exploration”, and “knowledge of technologies used for exploration”. The timeline of British Columbia within the guide is likewise concerned with European events such as: exploration, the CPR, the RCMP, and Confederation.¹³⁶ Within the current program, students were not provided with opportunities to see how the narrative is created or how it functions as a source of power. Furthermore, they were generally not supplied with Aboriginal sources or scholarship about Aboriginal histories or contemporary life and desires. This was evidenced in the decision to prescribe one comprehensive textbook for grade four, *Our Beginnings*, rather than including various source materials developed by both mainstream Canadians and local Aboriginal groups. Finally, within current social studies programs students were not examining the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian government. Particularly at lower grades, a superficial presentation of Aboriginal peoples, cultures, and histories was present. *Our Beginnings* had students simply comparing European and Aboriginal culture in “webs” so that they may, “notice the similarities and differences between the two cultures”. Culture within the text included vaguely described cultural elements including: language, beliefs, favorite foods, stories and songs, types of home, ways of dressing, without making connections to the significance they hold for specific cultural groups.¹³⁷ A lack of historical information and analysis are also present in *Civic Studies 11* in that while the course offered information about Canadian issues surrounding rights and responsibilities, human freedoms, and power dynamics, it did not provide students with a historical framework in order to understand how narratives have been used to marginalize

¹³⁶ Province of B.C., *Social Studies K-7*, 85-86, 93.

¹³⁷ Sterling, *Our Beginnings*, 50, 113, 3.

minorities. For instance, the section titled “Informed Citizenship” did mention learning about historical and contemporary events and factors defining identity, but did not state what these are or who defined them.¹³⁸

While students are able to explore some historical issues within the social studies program outcomes and resources continue to be based upon prescribed “Canadian” understandings of the nation’s past and present, particularly in terms of the inclusion and portrayal of Aboriginal peoples. Within the current program outside of elective courses,¹³⁹ students were not given the opportunity to assess mainstream historical narratives or government structures that have and continue to negatively impact Aboriginal peoples. For instance, students were asked to seek “justice” without being provided with adequate information that would lead them to understand the historical development of injustice. Furthermore, the ongoing denial of colonialism in Canada makes it difficult to present the relationship between Aboriginal nations and the Canadian government within social studies learning outcomes. As Jennifer Henderson and Paula Wakeham show, while Prime Minister Stephen Harper has apologized for the existence and ongoing impacts of Aboriginal residential schooling in Canada, he continued to perpetuate the mythological progressive Canadian narrative at the G20 summit in 2009 by stating, “We have no history of colonialism.” A further example of the denial of Canadian colonialism is located within the 2009 citizenship guide, which contains no information about Aboriginal residential schooling. It appears that information concerning a colonial past is conveniently omitted from mainstream Canadian history, because it might serve to “blow open” a version of the Canadian past that characterizes

¹³⁸ Province of B.C., *Civic Studies 11: 2005*, 12-13.

¹³⁹ The Province of B.C.’s elective *First Nations 12: 2000* may be an expectation in that it is founded on the, “diversity, depth, and integrity of the cultures of British Columbia’s Aboriginal people”, 1-2.

the nation as tolerant, respectful, and perhaps most importantly, just. Information on Aboriginal land claims and self-determinism threaten to take the “secret of ongoing colonial oppression and turn it into an outright scandal for self-proclaimed liberal democracy.”¹⁴⁰

Conclusion

Marie Battiste argues that Ministries of Education across Canada have accepted knowledge as a necessary form of “mind liberation” as a foundation of modern public school in order to open up individual options and possibilities for the nation as a whole.¹⁴¹ Social studies knowledge from 1945 until present day has been founded on the belief in the power of individuals, through self-actualization, to better the nation. Knowledge transmitted through the perpetuation of the Canadian myths of progress, of justice, and of respect for diversity, despite being communicated as the reality of the country’s past and present, are products of their time. Amelia Kalant states that national myths are established through the process of making the “Other” and in the Canadian context the “Other” has been the “Indian”.¹⁴² Social studies learning outcomes and resources have not accurately represented Aboriginal life, culture, or agency. The picture of Aboriginal peoples within the program in British Columbia remains as it was in the 1970s, as Werner, Connors, Aoki, and Dahlie argued, “simplistic and romanticized” full of “stereotypical” and “homogenous” assumptions of Aboriginal groups and life.¹⁴³ Clark concludes that due to skewed representation of Aboriginal peoples within the

¹⁴⁰ Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, “Colonial Reckoning, National Reconciliation? Aboriginal Peoples and the Culture of Redness in Canada,” *English Studies in Canada* 35 (2009): 1, 3, 4.

¹⁴¹ Marie Battiste, “Curriculum Reform through Constitutional Reconciliation of Indigenous Knowledge,” in *Challenges and Prospects for Canadian Social Studies*, eds. Alan Sears and Ian Wright (Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 306.

¹⁴² Amelia Kalant, *National Identity and the Conflict at Oka: Native Belonging and Myths of Postcolonial Nationhood in Canada* (New York: NY: Routledge, 2004), 4.

¹⁴³ Werner et al., *Whose Culture? Whose Heritage?* 25, 27.

program, they remain marginalized and misunderstood, peoples on the outskirts of Canadian society in both a “metaphorical and concrete” sense.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 85.

CHAPTER TWO:

The Challenge of Aboriginality

The Canadian metanarrative reflected in and through social studies education in B.C. has and continues to promote representations that marginalize and misunderstand Aboriginal peoples. The Canadian past, while presented as reality, has actually been written to suit the contemporary needs of mainstream Canadians. Therefore, the potential impact that social studies education has on young Canadians is great because the mainstream narrative lies hidden in its learning outcomes and resource materials, all of which are assumed to convey timeless concepts; rarely are they understood as cultural artifacts, products of their time that contain specific decisions about what events to include, what experiences to exclude, and particular choices of how to represent minority groups. The information and understandings students gain from the social studies program are able to influence the opinions they may have concerning mainstream relationship to Aboriginal peoples. Penney Clark shows that learning resources are viewed as legitimate sources of knowledge and as places where collective national memory is stored. Although learning outcomes and resources surrounding Aboriginal peoples and culture are more abundant and positive at present, the persistence of superficial information on Aboriginal life has created what Clark deems as “two solitudes” in Canadian society between the mainstream and Aboriginal peoples. Chapter two will analyze social studies learning outcomes and resources, including teacher guides and textbooks, from 1945 until the present in order to show that social studies programs in the province have not provided accurate representations of Aboriginal identity, culture, or life. Outcomes and resources are silent on the significance of Aboriginal culture and

history and have generally not included the ongoing impacts of Canadian policy on Aboriginal groups. Considering the lack of adequate information, young Canadians are not fully able to understand the current state of relations between the mainstream and Aboriginal nations, and thus, are not prepared to participate in and offer recommendations for more a more promising future of relations between the two groups.

Era One (1945-1960)

The intent of the post war British Columbian social studies program was for young Canadians to obtain the appropriate skills, knowledge, and values they would require in order live as “proper” citizens in the nation. Idealized skills, knowledge, and values were obtained by students through becoming aware of what was deemed “great” in the Canadian past, displayed in a narrative of European heroes over coming adversary to settle the land and establish law and order.¹⁴⁵ Ideal citizenship in the post war era was founded on virtues, or, acceptable personal values and qualities such as good habits, patriotism, honesty, obedience, and self-control, all of which would properly prepare young people for the “responsibilities and privileges” of democratic life.¹⁴⁶

Aboriginal people within social studies programs were portrayed as problems, ignorant of civilization, repugnant, children in need of saving, absent or invisible and thus, had little chance of being included within mainstream definitions of a Canadian citizenship that was associated with moral virtues and a Eurocentric romanticized and heroic Canadian past. Content surrounding Aboriginal groups within the social studies program was scarce and included insignificant information about the history of

¹⁴⁵ Penney Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People in English Canadian History Textbooks: Towards Reconciliation,” in *Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation*, ed. Elizabeth A. Cole (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield and Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, 2007), 85, 93-94, 111.

¹⁴⁶ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Public Elementary and Secondary Education in British Columbia* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1955), 7.

Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian government and the subsequent contemporary realities of Aboriginal groups that came out of this relationship such as life on reserves, land claims, and further issues surrounding rights and title. Within the post war program, Aboriginal people could be described as “spectators”, a group in Canadian history in the shadows of a grand Canadian past.¹⁴⁷ Canada’s First Peoples may be *present* in the past, but were certainly not *participants* within the social studies curriculum.

Both the content and values expressed in post war social studies education reflected negative societal beliefs about Aboriginal peoples, allowing them to be established as an “Other” within the Canadian nation. Most often, Aboriginal peoples were ignored in program content. For instance, the 1954 *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* under the section “Discovering North America” made no mention of Aboriginal peoples at all.¹⁴⁸ Douglas Leechman’s *Native Tribes of Canada* did mention that “tribes” varied in some regards and were the same in others, but gave no informative description of what these similarities and differences between tribes were in the past or at present.¹⁴⁹ When Aboriginals were included in outcomes and resources, they were portrayed in derogatory ways,¹⁵⁰ labeled either as children in need of constant government care, or as repugnant savages. For example, Celesta Hamer-Jackson’s 1937 text *Discoverers and Explorers of North America* referred to Aboriginal peoples as “ignorant savages”¹⁵¹ and A.L. Burt’s *The Romance of Canada*, recommended in the province from 1937-1950, proclaimed that, “worse than traveling with the Indians was living with them. Only beasts could survive... with unclean savages... missionaries were

¹⁴⁷ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 81-82, 103-104.

¹⁴⁸ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1954), 156.

¹⁴⁹ Douglas Leechman, *Native Tribes of Canada* (Toronto, ON: WJ Gage and Company Limited, 1956), 13.

¹⁵⁰ Penney Clark, ““Take it away Youth!” Visions of Canadian Identity in British Columbia Social Studies Text Books, 1925-1989,” (Vancouver, BC: The Faculty of Graduate Studies, Department of Education Studies, University of British Columbia, 1995), 68, 274.

¹⁵¹ Celesta Hamer-Jackson, *Discoverers and Explorers of North America* (Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1937), 149.

heroic saints.”¹⁵² Texts during the era focused on protective government policy and saintly missionary activity, as seen in the above examples, in order to place Indians as ignorant and fierce savages in need of outside assistance. George W. Brown, Eleanor Harman, and Marsh Jeanneret’s *The Story of Canada* described a “brave missionary”, Father Jogues, who “went among [the Indians, and,] through cruelly treated, returned to try to help them. [Yet in] the end they murdered him.” The same text glorified the Canadian government for sending the mounted police into the Northwest Territories to, “take care of the Indians”.¹⁵³ While the majority of judgments surrounding Aboriginal humanity were directed at “tribes” in the past, the 1958 edition of H.A. Tanzer and D. Paed’s, *Citizens of Canada* commented on the modern state of Indians proclaiming that,

Indians themselves, however, do not have much belief in the white man’s economic customs of foresight and steady work and some seem to have little regard for economic advancement at all. Many have always lived in a nomadic fashion...and they want to continue living in this way...It makes it impossible for the Indians themselves to develop any ideas of foresight, and working for prosperity.¹⁵⁴

In the post war era, Aboriginal peoples had little chance of being categorized as Canadians citizens. Social studies learning outcomes and resources scarcely included information about Aboriginal life, culture, or history, and when they did, depicted each outside of mainstream citizenship ideals.

Aboriginal life and culture were vaguely described during this period and “Indians” were labeled as “prehistoric migrants” with simplistic and nomadic lifestyles. The 1950 *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies Program*, also used after 1956, contained only one learning outcome on Indians that suggested teachers make, “brief

¹⁵² A.L. Burt, *The Romance of Canada* (Toronto, ON: W. J. Gage & Co., 1937), 47.

¹⁵³ George W. Brown, Eleanor Harman, and Marsh Jeanneret, *The Story of Canada* (Toronto, ON: The Copp Clark Co. Limited, 1949), 61, 316.

¹⁵⁴ H.A. Tanzer and D. Paed, *Citizens of Canada: You and Your Community* (Toronto, ON: Thomas Nelson and Sons Limited, 1955), 49.

reference... to the theories concerning the origins and migrations of our Indian tribes”, implying that the history of Aboriginal peoples and culture were not important and should not be focused on after migration.¹⁵⁵ In outcomes and resources “Indian” culture and life were only nodded to, not identified or described. For instance, the 1957 *Programme for the Primary Grades*, on its section on early peoples of America, stated that only Indian “ways of life” should be studied but provided teachers with no information about what these were.¹⁵⁶ The recommended text for elementary school in this era was the *Big Golden Book of Indian Crafts and Lore*¹⁵⁷, a volume focused on superficial markers of culture. In the teacher’s manual for *The Story of Canada*, students were recommended to make charts to compare and contrast basic cultural features such as homes, transportation, and hunting in order to learn about Indian life.¹⁵⁸

When information concerning Indian culture was included within texts, it was done so in ways that depicted life as nomadic and laborious. *The Story of Canada* declared Indians as living in the “stone age” and informed students that, “We must not suppose, however, that Indians all had strong governments like those of France and England. Most Indian tribes were broken into small bands, which seldom met together.” Furthermore, “A band of natives might go hungry for days” and “With their crude stone tools, it often took more than a week to cut down a single large tree.”¹⁵⁹ *The Native*

¹⁵⁵ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1950), 78.

¹⁵⁶ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Programme for the Primary Grades* (Victoria, BC: Programme for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, 1957), 131.

¹⁵⁷ Recommended in: Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Programme of Studies for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1956).

¹⁵⁸ George W. Brown, Eleanor Harman, and Marsh Jeanneret, *Teacher’s Manual: The Story of Canada* (Toronto, ON: The Copp Clark Co. Limited, 1950), 7-8.

¹⁵⁹ Brown, Harman, and Jeanneret, *The Story of Canada*, 27.

Tribes of Canada also stated that, “There was very little in the way of government” and “little systematic warfare” within Indian tribes.¹⁶⁰

While learning outcomes during the post war era contained essentially nothing on modern Aboriginal life, some textbooks did mention its current state. The overarching belief during this era was that Indian life and culture were of the past, and that with ongoing government assistance, “In another generation or two, the change from the native ways to ours may be almost complete.” Leechman argued that, “even the Indians have largely forgotten what things were like in the old days and they have adopted some of our notions”. He went on to suggest that, “settled in the new ways of life that had come with the white man... things are much better.”¹⁶¹ Learning outcomes and resource materials briefly mentioned Aboriginal culture, and when they did, descriptions were superficial. Information concerning Aboriginal culture would lead students to believe that Aboriginal peoples were either prehistoric and therefore dying out by natural selection, or that they were on their way to being assimilated into a superior civilization.

While Indians may have played a role in “pre-history”, making brief appearances alongside early explorers, the passing references to their agency led to the conclusion that they were a “disappearing” people who were unable to live up to the standards of an active, individual Canadian citizen.¹⁶² An example of this is found in *The Junior and Senior Program* under an outcome that asks students to, “discuss the question “Should Native peoples be given full equality with white people in Canada?””¹⁶³ The relationship between Aboriginal groups and the mainstream was viewed as unbalanced: government care and assistance was required to take care of the country’s “wards”. *The Story of*

¹⁶⁰ Leechman, *Native Tribes of Canada*, 249.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 323, 17, 323.

¹⁶² Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 74.

¹⁶³ Province of B.C., *Junior and Senior High School Social Studies: 1950*, 88.

Canada described the relationship in the following way: “Reserves of land have been set aside for Indians in parts of the Dominion. There are many special laws to protect Indians on reservations. They are allowed to trap, hunt, and fish at times of the year when white men are forbidden to do so. In many cases, they are paid cash grants each year. They are given assistance in farming, and their education is looked after by the Dominion government.”¹⁶⁴ Within the text there was no mention of the treaty relationship between Canada and Aboriginal peoples or the historical and contemporary denial of Aboriginal land rights.

In post war social studies education Aboriginal people were almost always described as one or several large people groups without group rights or individual agency. The only possible future for Indian peoples during the post war era was assimilation into the mainstream. For example, Tanzer and Paed in *Citizens of Canada* proclaimed that, “The main problem in dealing with the Eskimoes is how to give them the material benefits of our civilization”.¹⁶⁵ Kenneth E. Kidd declared in his *Canadians of Long Ago* that, “The old life is almost gone now.”¹⁶⁶ Leechman’s belief was that, “The aim today is to help them adjust themselves to the new way of life as rapidly and painlessly as possible...the younger people show every wish to adopt white ways of living and, even more important, white ways of thinking too.”¹⁶⁷

Era Two (1960s-1970s)

¹⁶⁴ Brown, Harman, and Jeanneret, *The Story of Canada*, 36.

¹⁶⁵ Tanzer and Paed, *Citizens of Canada*, 48.

¹⁶⁶ Kenneth E. Kidd, *Canadians of Long Ago: The Story of the Canadian Indian* (Toronto, ON: Longmans, Green and Company, 1951), 172.

¹⁶⁷ Leechman, *Native Tribes of Canada*, 340.

The definition of ideal citizenship was altered within social studies programs in B.C. between 1960 and 1970 and this influenced the representation of Aboriginal peoples. British Columbian public education during the era became focused on hard academics, which manifested in the social studies as a commitment to a social scientific approach giving the appearance of “objectivity” within historical study.¹⁶⁸ During the second era, students were to exercise their citizenship by using “factual” historical evidence to discover a seamless national story in order to make decisions about the future of the country. However, students continued to be provided with scarce information about the complications of the Canadian past, as a concrete and understandable narrative remained highly desirable. For example, the 1972 *Elementary Social Studies* grade five program, “Growth of a Nation” stated that knowing the past meant understanding the “development of Canadian traditions” found with superficial and vaguely defined cultural markers such as “currency, [the] flag, arts, [and] attitudes.”¹⁶⁹

Aboriginals continued to be described in outcomes and resources as in need of government assistance.¹⁷⁰ Attention was paid to the low standard of living and poverty facing many Aboriginal communities and the necessary role that the government and public education played in alleviating these social problems.¹⁷¹ Rather than exclude Aboriginal peoples from citizenship, as had been the case in the previous era, the second era of social studies education sought to include Aboriginal peoples in order that they become integrated within wider Canadian society. However, despite the attempt to include Aboriginal people more positively and abundantly within social studies education

¹⁶⁸ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!”, 196.

¹⁶⁹ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Instructional Services Curriculum Development Branch, *Elementary Social Studies Years 4, 5, 6* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1972), 15.

¹⁷⁰ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!”, 159.

¹⁷¹ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 105-106.

they continued to be described as prehistoric people, with little cultural validity and a society with no real depth and having made no significant contributions to the Canadian nation of past or present. For instance, Edith Deyell's *Canada: A New Land* labeled Aboriginal peoples as, "happy children" and first interactions between Europeans were described as, "mak[ing] friends with a puppy."¹⁷² The ultimate goal of these new inclusions was not to provide students with information about the long and complex history of Aboriginal peoples and their relationship to the mainstream, but rather to simply "add color"¹⁷³ and diversity to the dominant discourse of the evolution and development of Canadian society within the social studies program.

While Aboriginal peoples remained largely invisible in the Canadian historical narrative told within the curricular resources, the story of their original migration was supplemented to include information on the present state of Indian communities in the 1960s and 1970s. However, the information provided led students to believe that all Indians were both problems to themselves and the Canadian government.¹⁷⁴ Representing Aboriginal people by references to their "problems" was clearly seen in the 1960 *Secondary Social Studies* program under the heading "The Peoples and Cultures of Canada", which encouraged students to explore "Indian social problems". Student exploration of "social problems" included so called "barriers in social advance" for Indian groups defined as: poverty, unemployment, problems of capital and labour, health problems, [and] lagging cultural development". Special attention in the guide was paid to problems arising in Aboriginal communities due to the "use of alcoholic beverages".¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Edith Deyell, *Canada: A New Land* (Toronto, ON: W.J. Gage Ltd., 1958), 157, 66.

¹⁷³ Clark, "Representations of Aboriginal People," 105.

¹⁷⁴ Clark, "'Take it away Youth!'", 161.

¹⁷⁵ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Secondary Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1960), 76, 80, 91.

Under a revised social studies program that had students operating as social scientists, outcomes and texts often asked students to suggest solutions for Aboriginal social problems. For instance, Neil Sutherland and Edith Deyell's *Making Canadian History* prompted students to consider, "What problems face the Canadian Indian today?" and had them determining, "What steps... would help the Indians solve some of their present problems?" In the textbook students took on an even more active role being asked to decide if there was, "anything [*they*] could do?"¹⁷⁶

Committing to a scientific approach did not allow for a nuanced interpretation of a messy past, nor did it enable the emergence of alternate narratives of the Canadian nation, the expression of the desires of Aboriginal peoples, or an understanding of the complicated relationship between Aboriginal groups and the Canadian government. "Indian" cultural content during the era was more positive, but was based on an "add on" perspective where cultural elements were simply integrated into programs without a lot of consideration for an accurate representation of Indian life. Simply adding in Aboriginality to the B.C. social studies program was seen in the 1960 *Programme for the Intermediate Grades*: "details of life and culture should be given sparingly and as matters of interest". The *Secondary Social Studies* program of the same year contained only one outcome on Indian "handicrafts" under the arts, sciences, and recreations headings.¹⁷⁷ Art was most often the focus of Aboriginal culture as it was deemed of highest interest, as seen within the 1964 *Intermediate* program that encouraged educators to use art as it

¹⁷⁶ Neil Sutherland and Edith Deyell, *Book 1: Making Canadian History: A Source-Guide Book in Canadian History* (Vancouver, BC: WJ Gage Limited, 1966), 3.

¹⁷⁷ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* (Victoria, BC: Programme of Studies for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, 1960), 246, 90-91.

would be most helpful to teach about Native culture.¹⁷⁸ Once again, students were to take a more active role in learning about these cultural features. In *Making Canadian History* students were asked to judge, “what Indian ways would you have enjoyed? What Indian ways would you not have liked? What parts of Indian life do you think would make your own life more enjoyable? What features of modern life would you most miss?”¹⁷⁹

Within the presentation of the overarching Canadian metanarrative, Aboriginal peoples and cultures remained largely absent. While they may have been included in fur trade history and mentioned as a modern people group, they remained unseen in the period of time between Confederation and the present.¹⁸⁰ Aboriginal peoples were completely absent in the 1960 *Secondary Social Studies* program outcomes on exploration, settlement, the “Genesis of Canada” and the “Path to Nationhood”. The unit, “The Peoples and Cultures of Canada” skipped over Aboriginal groups and introduced those from the British Isles as the first migrants. The only other mention of Aboriginal peoples in this guide was under a content section where students were to learn about “Indian crafts”.¹⁸¹ Likewise, within the 1964 *Intermediate* guide, the grade four social studies program, “Our Country”, while including more details about Aboriginal peoples, such as information on origins, life in local tribes, and Indian groups in Canada, still presented Aboriginal life superficially as Native peoples were essentially ignored after “discovery”: they are absent in sections on exploration, settlement, and the Hudson’s Bay Company.¹⁸² Grade ten outcomes within the 1968 program included Aboriginal peoples as well, however, like the grade four program, generally described them as pre-

¹⁷⁸ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Programme for the Intermediate Grades* (Victoria, BC: Programme of Studies for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, 1964), 284.

¹⁷⁹ Sutherland and Deyell, *Book 1: Making Canadian History*, 3.

¹⁸⁰ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!””, 164.

¹⁸¹ Province of B.C., *Secondary Social Studies: 1960*, 80-82, 89, 91.

¹⁸² Province of B.C., *Programme for the Intermediate Grades: 1964*, 280, 285.

exploration peoples, remaining unseen in sections on New France, the development of the West, and the creation of Canadian government.¹⁸³ The decision to describe Aboriginal peoples as prehistoric, or only include them when culturally vibrant, can also be seen in texts. *Making Canadian History* included limited information on the history of interaction between Aboriginal and European peoples, and instead provided cultural descriptors such as food, clothing, houses, and weapons in order to depict Indian life.¹⁸⁴ Similarly the *Teaching Program and Source Book for Canada's Centenary* focused solely on cultural markers, determining five objects to represent *all* of the nation's Indigenous peoples.¹⁸⁵

Aboriginal peoples were described as lacking the capacity for individual agency and, therefore, could only achieve citizen status with the ongoing assistance of the Canadian government. "Tribes" in the 1960 *Secondary* program were labeled with paternalistic indicators such as "ours".¹⁸⁶ The *Teaching Program and Source Book for Canada's Centenary* stated that the necessity for government aid to Eskimos was, "to provide for the maximum development of the native peoples... providing education, family welfare services, technical training, co-operatives for dealing in fishing, boat building, lumbering, arts and crafts."¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, because students were examining Native peoples as prehistoric through the use of anthropology,¹⁸⁸ they were seen as lacking the "self-awareness" required for equal participation in the nation's past, present, and future. In the 1960 *Secondary Social Studies* guide, Aboriginals are simply

¹⁸³ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Secondary School Curriculum Guide, Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1968), 32-34.

¹⁸⁴ Sutherland and Deyell, *Book 1: Making Canadian History*, 1.

¹⁸⁵ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, *Teaching Program and Source Book for Canada's Centenary* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 1966), 4.

¹⁸⁶ Province of B.C., *Secondary Social Studies: 1960*, 80.

¹⁸⁷ Province of B.C., *Teaching Program and Source Book for Canada's Centenary*, 58.

¹⁸⁸ Province of B.C., *Secondary School Curriculum Guide, Social Studies: 1968*, 32.

“prehistoric migrants” who do not appear in learning outcomes after a study of their original “origins” and “migrations”.¹⁸⁹ It was not Aboriginal peoples who were to be credited with their contributions to the development of Canada, but as Ralph R. Krueger stated in his *Canada: A New Geography*, the pioneers and first colonists who, “fought a long hard fight for a democratic way of life.”¹⁹⁰ Students were led to believe that “history” prescribed events that led to the slow consistent disappearance of Aboriginal peoples after the arrival of Europeans.

Era Three (1970s-Mid 1990s)

Within the third era of social studies education, there was a shift in the definition of ideal citizenship to recognize the human and cultural diversity present within the Canadian nation. Particularly in the 1980s there was noted improvement in both public awareness of the realities of a multicultural Canada and the recent public political activity of Aboriginal peoples and groups.¹⁹¹ The central focus of the social studies program was the power of individuals, overcoming differences and working together to affect societal change. Hope was placed in Canada’s young people to deal with the complexities of a diverse Canadian society in order to bring about positive change for the future.¹⁹² While newly developed learning outcomes and resource materials now included a celebratory presentation of difference, ideal citizenship from the mid 1970s until the mid 1990s operated under the assumption that all Canadians had common experiences that bound them together and allowed them to pursue a common future.

¹⁸⁹ Province of B.C., *Secondary Social Studies: 1960*, 80.

¹⁹⁰ Ralph R. Krueger. *Canada: A New Geography* (Toronto, ON: Holt, Reinhart and Winston of Canada, 1974), 189.

¹⁹¹ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 101.

¹⁹² Clark, ““Take it away Youth!”, 279, 201.

Aboriginal peoples in this era were included within Canadian citizenship under a new model that was far more inclusive and positive through a celebratory *cultural* presentation of Aboriginal people that recognized difference, but only difference that did not clash with mainstream Canadian society. For instance, the introduction to the text *The Haida and the Inuit*, the primary resource in the grade four program during the era, stated that, “All of us who live in Canada are part of a special family” and that Native, “lives are not much different from other Canadians’ lives.”¹⁹³ Inability to address historical and political difference, specifically the painful and long lasting relationship between Aboriginal nations and the Canadian government, can be seen in an absence of issues within learning outcomes and resources.¹⁹⁴ While Aboriginal people were incredibly active in the political scene during this time, engaged in debates and legal discussions over land claims, the Indian Act, and education¹⁹⁵ this activity was largely left out of outcomes and resources.

Within learning outcomes and resources Aboriginal peoples were often represented as “exotic”, appreciated for traditional ceremonies, art, and culture. The First Nations-Canadian legal and historical relationship was generally left out of the program.¹⁹⁶ Often culture is presented in a romanticized and unrealistic way. For example, in her introduction to *The Haida and the Inuit*, Heather Smith Siska noted that the more she learnt, the more she admired.¹⁹⁷ Since the focus of the era was on “people as cultural beings”, stated early on in the *Elementary* program of 1972, social studies outcomes and resources continued to present Aboriginal peoples in terms of their past

¹⁹³ Heather Smith Siska, *The Haida and the Inuit: People of the Seasons* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984), 6-7, 10.

¹⁹⁴ Clark, ““Take it away Youth!”, 294, 268.

¹⁹⁵ Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 307, 310-311.

¹⁹⁶ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 105.

¹⁹⁷ Smith Siska, *The Haida and the Inuit*.

cultural vibrancy. The main outcome in year four in this program was on examining, “the concept of culture”. Aboriginal “culture” was defined not by contemporary practices, but those static and traditional, seen in the decision to contain content mostly from the period of “discovery and early settlement.”¹⁹⁸ The *Explorations Teacher Guide* provided the following suggested chart in order to educate students about Native culture. Aspects of Native culture within a scientifically categorized chart were over simplified and not explained in terms of the significance of each cultural aspect.¹⁹⁹

Canada’s Native Groups

People of the...	Where they lived in Canada	Shelter they used	Food they caught or gathered	Clothing they wore	How they traveled	Other information
Northwest Coast	The islands and coast of B.C.	Wood houses	Fish	Cedar bark clothes, fur robes	Cedar canoes	They made totem poles
Plateau	The flatlands between the coast and the rocky mountains	Pit houses in the winter, teepees in the summer	Fish, animals	Deerskin clothing		
Plains	The prairies	Teepees	Buffalo	Hide clothes	On foot	They used bows & arrows
Arctic	The far north	Igloos in winter, hide tents in summer	Fish, animals	Hide clothes, fur clothes		
Subarctic	The forest area of the north	Birch-bark or hide teepees	Animals	Deerskin clothing	Birch-bark canoes	
Eastern Woodlands	North & East of the Great Lakes	Bark-covered houses	Deer, animals, food they grew on	Hide clothes, fur clothes		

¹⁹⁸ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Instructional Services Curriculum Development Branch, *Elementary Social Studies Years 4, 5, 6* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1972), 1, 9.

¹⁹⁹ Vicki Mulligan and Pamela Thomas, *Explorations Teacher Book* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984), 124.

their farms

Finally, within the 1974 *Elementary Social Studies Years 1-7* program culture is believed to change, however, major changes are focused on Euro-Canadian developments such as: “voyages of discovery”, “the growth of the fur trade and the expansion of British territory”, “development of law and order”, and “uniting Canada”.²⁰⁰ The effort to recognize and celebrate diversity could be seen in the 1986 *Resource Manual, Grades 4-7* which included an increased amount of learning resources surrounding Canada’s Aboriginal people. In this manual there were twenty-seven titles devoted to First Peoples, many of which were focused on local geographies. There was also an attempt to view Aboriginal peoples as unique and separate groups, rather than one large monolithic whole as recommended texts included separate volumes on the Plains Indians, the Haida, Northwest Coast Indians, and the Ojibwa.²⁰¹ However, as seen in *The Haida and the Inuit*, which only examined the pre contact cultures of the two groups, the focus was on those with colourful pasts and those judged by educators to have a more sophisticated culture.²⁰²

The openness to multicultural perspectives translated into Aboriginal life and culture being represented in more complex and sensitive ways beginning in the 1970s. A positive stance to cultural difference could be seen in the value objectives within the 1972 *Elementary Social Studies* document, which included a note about upholding the dignity of all people. The revised program reflected the need to take more seriously social protest for equality, which had brought attention to unfair representations of Canadian

²⁰⁰ Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Instructional Services Curriculum Development Branch, *Elementary Social Studies Years 1-7* (Victoria, BC: Minister of Education, 1974), 28.

²⁰¹ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, *Social Studies Resource Manual Grades 4-7* (Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education, 1986).

²⁰² Smith Siska, *The Haida and the Inuit*.

social minorities within public education. However, suggesting that culture was in a constant state of flux and change implied that key elements of it were superficial and not enduring. The implications were clear: Aboriginal cultures should be transformed in order to integrate into the mainstream ethos of liberal-democratic individualism. The focus on cultural change was represented in the 1972 grade four outcomes for the “Early Cultures of North America” in an outcome that suggested that culture was distinctive, but may change.²⁰³ The outcome reinforced the ideal that while differences exist, they could be overcome by identifying similarities all Canadians held. The desire for cultural unity could also be seen in textbooks, for instance, in Palmer Patterson’s *Indian Peoples of Canada* he stated that Natives now wish to, “take their place in a multi-cultural society-Canada.”²⁰⁴ *The Haida and the Inuit* constantly told its readers that Native peoples were “not much different from other Canadians”.²⁰⁵ Finally, the grade four *Explorations Teacher Book*, under outcomes on “attitudes” suggested students, “identify and demonstrate respect for religious beliefs and practices”, however, went on to suggest students understand that, “people from different cultures experience the same feelings and emotions.” The text also encouraged students to “empathize with a child of long ago.”²⁰⁶ While Aboriginal peoples may have been permitted into citizenship, it required them to meet the terms of mainstream Canada.

Perhaps for the first time, social studies education in B.C. attempted to unfold the interaction between Aboriginal peoples and Europeans of the past and depart from the standard narrative of “discovery” of Native peoples by Europeans. Aboriginal peoples were permitted their own culture, were seen as contributing to the development of

²⁰³ Province of B.C., *Elementary Social Studies: 1972*, 3, 9.

²⁰⁴ Palmer Patterson, *Indian Peoples of Canada* (Toronto, ON: Grolier Limited, 1982), 14.

²⁰⁵ Smith Siska, *The Haida and the Inuit*, 10.

²⁰⁶ Mulligan and Thomas, *Explorations Teacher Book*, 202, 219.

Canadian culture, and were credited for their offerings and assistance to Europeans, even if limited to early exploration and settlement. The *Elementary Social Studies* program of 1972 declared in its section on North America that “cultures may change” due to “diffusion (borrowing) and adaptation”.²⁰⁷ The *Proposed Curriculum Guide* of 1980 asked students to “show how explorers adapted to and interacted with” Aboriginal groups.²⁰⁸ *The Native Peoples of Canada* had a chapter entitled “The Meeting of Two Cultures”²⁰⁹ and *Indian Peoples of Canada* dedicated a section on “Partnership and Cooperation.”²¹⁰ Finally, Daniel C. G. Conner and Doreen Bethune-Johnson’s *Native Peoples and Explorers* described the relationship in the following way, “the explorers could not have gone very far without help from the Indians. The Indians lived in Canada for thousands of years. They knew how to travel through the thick forests and across wide prairies. They acted as guides for the explorers.”²¹¹ However, while Aboriginals are recognized for their contributions to exploration and settlement, it is almost always Native *men* who are accredited for their assistance to Europeans.

²⁰⁷ Province of B.C., *Elementary Social Studies: 1972*, 10.

²⁰⁸ Province of British Columbia, Division of Public Instruction, Curriculum Development Branch, *Proposed Curriculum Guide: Social Studies, K-11* (Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education, 1980), 50-51.

This proposed program never went into use.

²⁰⁹ Iain Munro, *The Native Peoples of Canada* (Toronto, ON: Nelson Canadian Studies Series, 1974).

²¹⁰ Patterson, *Indian Peoples of Canada*,

²¹¹ Daniel C. G. Conner and Doreen Bethune-Johnson, *Native People and Explorers of Canada* (Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1984), 15.



Figure 2.1. Explorer Jacques Cartier explains to Iroquois men that he built the cross as a landmark²¹²



Figure 2.2. Iroquois men present the wampum to explorers²¹³

²¹² Conner and Bethune-Johnson, *Native People and Explorers of Canada*, 91.

²¹³ Conner and Bethune-Johnson, *Native People and Explorers of Canada*, 117.

The focus on celebrating culture in the outcomes and resources avoided the sometimes difficult, complex, and painful nature of the interaction between Aboriginals and the mainstream. A façade of cooperative relations was incredibly common during this time in order to facilitate the development of positive multicultural relations in the present. The *Proposed Curriculum Guide* recommended students learn about how, “Canadians, both past and present, have interacted and co-operated in the development of the Canadian nation”.²¹⁴ Within *The Native Peoples of Canada*, author Iain Munro stated that, “The Indians received [the Europeans] with enthusiasm and kindness.”²¹⁵ While *The Haida and the Inuit* did acknowledge change due to interaction, it did so in a brief and vague way that did not explain to students the history of interactions: “The history of the native people is the foundation of our Canadian heritage. The cultures of those early people set an example for all of us. Their lives were not easy. It took great strength and courage to survive.”²¹⁶

Aboriginal people are represented as “rights” bearing citizens and fellow Canadians and their collective identity as separate and equal nations is ignored. For instance, *The Elementary Social Studies* program of 1974 continued to focus on the commonality of all Canadians, by arguing that that, “a *closeness* which has facilitated the diffusion of culture, a *sameness* of surroundings which has resulted in a *similar interaction* between people and their surroundings”.²¹⁷ The multicultural paradigm was clearly expressed: Aboriginal groups were on the way to becoming fully integrated into mainstream Canadian citizenship. In the words of *Canada Today*, “The Native Peoples

²¹⁴ Province of B.C., *Proposed Curriculum Guide: 1980*, 59.

²¹⁵ Munro, *The Native Peoples of Canada*, 24.

²¹⁶ Smith Siska, *The Haida and the Inuit*, 8.

²¹⁷ Province of B.C., *Elementary Social Studies Years 1-7: 1974*, 33.

My emphasis added in italics.

have been learning the skills and values of industrial society. A new way of life is open to them”.²¹⁸

Era Four (Mid 1990s-Present)

Tolerance and respect for cultural diversity remained central in ideal citizenship development within social studies education in the fourth era. However, cultural diversity was less celebrated than in the previous era as students were encouraged to think critically about their own values and beliefs, as well as minority rights. Students were expected to be critical thinkers and come to understand their place in the nation, but in this era they must be agents of change, individuals who speak out against inequality and pursue change, and at times seek justice, for an improved future. At the elementary level this was revealed in the current *K-7* program in that learning required “active participation” for students to be considered responsible citizens.²¹⁹ At the secondary level this was displayed most clearly in the rationale behind the civics course elective, which intended for students to become, “informed decision makers empowered in civic action”.²²⁰

The challenge with the revised goals is that outcomes continued to be defined rather vaguely, providing little interpretation for educators about how “active citizenship” and “empowered civic action” might be expressed. There remained a largely predictable representation of Aboriginal peoples focused on culture and art and a positioning of Aboriginal peoples as protestors, earth keepers, and as a self-sufficient and separate

²¹⁸ Daniel J. McDevitt, Angus L. Scully, and Carl F. Smith, *Canada Today* (Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 3.

²¹⁹ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *Social Studies K-7* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 2006), 11.

²²⁰ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *Civic Studies 11* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 2005), 11.

group from the mainstream. In the fourth era, Aboriginal people were represented as disinterested in participating within wider Canadian society. While there were outcomes in the era dedicated to Aboriginal self-government and rights, there remained a lack of information between Confederation and the present that would provide students with an understanding of the relationship between Aboriginal nations and the mainstream and subsequent issues that have arisen due to a long and complex interaction, such as land and legal rights and education and community concerns. Although more issues of Aboriginality were discussed, there was no alternative to forming more positive and equitable relationships between Aboriginal nations and the Canadian mainstream in the future. Specifically so-called critical thinking within the social studies program did not examine the historical significance of the relationship and thus students had limited ability to actively work towards a more promising future for First Nations-Canadian relations. However, there may be a general exception to this located in the added *First Nations 12* elective, which did provide students with more complex information and an issue based approach. For example, the 2006 guide's maintained that, "contemporary events have roots in history, both oral and written."²²¹ Unfortunately, this was only an elective and remained at the end of the public education system in B.C.

While Aboriginal peoples and culture were treated with dignity and accepted as a reality within current Canadian society, within this era they were defined, almost as in the first era, as separate communities wanting little to do with the mainstream. Aboriginal people were represented as distant "Others" within the Canadian nation as unique and self-governed groups. The grade four program in the current *K-7 Social Studies* guide

²²¹ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *BC First Nations 12* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 2006), 21.

expressed a commitment to focus on the separate elements of Aboriginal and European cultures through compare and contrast methodology. Students “distinguish characteristics of various Aboriginal cultures” and then “demonstrate knowledge of early European exploration”, they “compare governance in Aboriginal cultures with governance in early European settlement.”²²² The 1995 version of the *First Nations 12* course stated that First Nations’ lived in “self-sufficient societies” and most of the outcomes within the program were related to unique elements of Aboriginal culture and less on interaction.²²³ While the 2000 revision mentioned that Aboriginal culture and history do have an “integral place in the evolution of British Columbia and Canada”, the guide did not provide any further information about the place of Aboriginals within this development.²²⁴

Aboriginal peoples were described as a separate group from mainstream Canada and were often represented in social studies materials as in conflict with mainstream authority, or as “protestors” defined by their participation in legal and political battles against the mainstream.²²⁵ For example, within *Canada: Our Century, Our Story* fifteen out of the twenty visuals of Aboriginal peoples showed them engaged in political debates, campaigns, or social protest.²²⁶ Additionally, the introduction to *The Natives Peoples of Canada* included a quote by a “courageous spokesperson for his people” Chief Dan George about the difficulties of integration into mainstream society.²²⁷ Finally, the 2000

²²² Province of B.C., *Social Studies K-7: 2006*, 30.

²²³ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *BC First Nations 12* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 1995), 3.

²²⁴ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Division, *BC First Nations 12* (Victoria, BC: Integrated Resource Package, 2000), 2.

²²⁵ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 109-110.

²²⁶ John Fielding and Rosemary Evans, *Canada: Our Century, Our Story* (Scarborough, ON: Nelson Education Ltd., 2000).

²²⁷ Munro, *The Native Peoples of Canada*, 1-2.

version of the *First Nations 12* course had students analyzing “resistance” to key events such as land issues.²²⁸

However, perhaps the most common, and misleading theme, during this time was positioning of Aboriginal peoples as “uniquely spiritual”, a representation that identifies them as earth keepers and guardians or protectors of the British Columbian environment.²²⁹ While elements of these identifiers may be realistic, the significance of them was not explained and the existence of an abundance of outcomes and information about such things represented Aboriginal peoples in a skewed way. The 1996 *Integrating BC First Nations Studies: A K-10 Guide* called students to understand Aboriginal peoples’ relationship to the natural world.²³⁰ The current K-7 program asked students to “give examples of how Aboriginal cultures are closely aligned with natural environments”.²³¹ The grade four text *Our Beginning*, a volume in the comprehensive Outlooks series, allocated a lot of space to this theme, stating that we must take the example of Aboriginal peoples and not change the environment in big ways, that we must “respect nature”. Under a section on “spirits and ceremonies” the text emphasized that spirit figures display this need to respect the earth and not use more than is necessary. Finally, the text stated that this is not just a traditional practice but that Aboriginal communities continue to “respect nature”.²³² All versions of the *First Nations 12* course also included multiple outcomes on this theme. The 2000 version stated that Aboriginals have a “strong relationship with land and the natural world” and students were to relate

²²⁸ Province of B.C., *BC First Nations 12*: 2000, 16.

²²⁹ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 106-107.

²³⁰ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, *Integrating BC First Nations Studies: A K-10 Guide for Teachers, Response Draft* (Victoria, BC: Aboriginal Education Branch, 1996), 4-5.

²³¹ Province of B.C., *Social Studies K-7: 2006*, 87.

²³² Sharon Sterling, *Our Beginnings* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2000), 39, 85, 50.

concepts of land to “other spiritual dimensions”.²³³ The 2006 stated that “balance” in Aboriginal communities included “respect...for all things in the natural world”.²³⁴ While it may not be inaccurate to suggest that Aboriginal nations have a connection to the natural world, to focus on Aboriginal peoples as environmentalists is problematic. Presenting Aboriginals as “earth keepers” limits them from being seen as diverse, dynamic, and contemporary peoples with many different facets of identity.

The current programs for grades four and ten represented Aboriginal culture and life more positively than past programs, however, outcomes continued to focus on descriptive and superficially presented cultural elements. In grade four, students “compare characteristics of selected Aboriginal cultures” and use a t-chart to compare the advantages and disadvantages of Aboriginal monetary systems.²³⁵ The text *Our Beginnings*, in its section on Aboriginal peoples, told students that the way to learn about culture is to compare it to another and had students learning by making a chart comparing basic cultural elements such as food, shelter, and clothing. In another project, students simply pick an Aboriginal group that seems interesting to them and do a research project on their culture.²³⁶

The same methodology for cultural study remained: methodology describes elements of culture, but does not provide students with the significance of them. An exception to this may be found in the *First Nations 12* elective. The rationale for the original 1995 version was founded on the belief that, “numerous changes have had impacts on First Nations’ way of life... yet resistance of First Nations’ have ensured

²³³ Province of B.C., *BC First Nations 12*: 2000, 3, 10.

²³⁴ Province of B.C., *BC First Nations 12*: 2006, 4.

²³⁵ Province of B.C., *Social Studies K-7: 2006*, 83.

²³⁶ Sterling, *Our Beginnings*, 89.

survival.”²³⁷ Statements about the agency of Aboriginal peoples to both change and maintain culture up until this point were essentially invisible within outcomes and resources. The rationale for the 2006 version elaborated on this point by stating that the focus was to be on the, “diversity, depth, and integrity of B.C.’s Aboriginal peoples in terms of language, culture, and history.” The course recognized that, “Aboriginal peoples have complex, dynamic, evolving cultures”, and that, “Aboriginal peoples’ values and beliefs are diverse, durable, and relevant”.²³⁸ These statements displayed a shift away from a singular, coherent narrative to an exploration of the complications and diversity present within Aboriginal groups and thus the Canadian narrative as a whole. However, it cannot be stressed enough that this perspective on Aboriginal culture and life is not existent in earlier programs and remains isolated as an elective at the end of the public education system in B.C.

While more outcomes were dedicated to understanding Aboriginal culture and history and the interaction between these and Europeans and the mainstream in current guides, there remained scarce detailed information within outcomes and resources on enduring impacts of government policy. While outcomes and resources are getting closer to presenting a more accurate picture of Aboriginal peoples and groups, perhaps most significantly in making clear that Aboriginal nations have unique rights, there continues to be an absence of adequate information that would inform students about why Aboriginal nations maintain their demands for self-determination and their right to self-government and why they fall under specific government policy. For instance, a grade four outcome in the current program did ask students to, “identify key events and issues

²³⁷ Province of B.C., *BC First Nations 12*: 1995, 3.

²³⁸ Province of B.C., *BC First Nations 12*: 2006, 3-4.

in Aboriginal peoples' rights and interactions with early governments, i.e. the Indian Act and reserves". However, this outcome was focused on *early* interactions, rather than historical understandings of how the relationship has functioned over time into the present, for example examining the lasting impacts of residential schooling on families and communities. Furthermore, the "Identity, Society, and Culture" section contained outcomes on identifying characteristics of various Aboriginal cultures, exploring effects on Aboriginal and European societies due to contact, and examining early Aboriginal governance structures, but the information was still founded on compare and contrast methodology and a chronological narrative. Students were asked to focus on how things are the same or different and fit events into a timeline sequence. There was an opportunity for students to identify contemporary issues, however, none related to Aboriginal peoples are clearly provided within the guide.²³⁹ *Our Beginnings* vaguely informed students that the B.C. government today is making sure, "the rights of all people in the province are respected", yet does not explain why this is needed or how it is being achieved.²⁴⁰ Similarly, the grade ten program included an outcome about Aboriginal participation in the development of Canada as well as an outcome about the impact of the Indian Act, but did not provide any additional information to define just what might be characterized as "participation" and "impacts".²⁴¹

While students were supposed to be seeking "justice" within Canadian society, the complexity of the history of interaction between First Nations and the mainstream was still not recognized within the program, making it impossible for any sort of responsible future action. The grade four program asked students to describe the

²³⁹ Province of B.C., *Social Studies K-7: 2006*, 83-85, 81.

²⁴⁰ Sterling, *Our Beginnings*, 186.

²⁴¹ Province of B.C., *Social Studies 10: 2006*, 25.

importance of protecting minority rights,²⁴² yet, the vagueness of the guide did not provide students with an understanding that would lead them to comprehend why Aboriginal rights are different from the mainstream. *Our Beginnings* also called students to take on the task of “using [the] information to decide how things should be done in the future” and to suggest reasons why Aboriginal peoples had problems with European government, but again provided for students no background information.²⁴³

The revised social studies program, due to be released later in 2013 emphasizes “engaging students in deeper thinking and the development of historical...thinking concepts.” However, the proposed design for the grade four program continues to have students working with “chronological frameworks”, recognizing “causes and consequences” and defining “cultural elements” of Aboriginal groups. The program does add an outcome that explores the “effect of colonialism on self-government”, but it has yet to be seen how this will be demonstrated within expanded learning outcomes and subsequent resources.²⁴⁴

The *First Nations 12* elective, particularly in its current form, provides a good example of the direction social studies education could move so that students are better prepared to explore historical decision making and alternative narratives. The format of this program focuses less on a singular historical narrative where students simply learn to compare and contrast topical, cultural material, and more on the historical continuity of Aboriginal rights and title and the ongoing complexities present in the relationship between Aboriginal groups and the Canadian government because students are encouraged to thinking about the long lasting *significance* of historical events. For

²⁴² Province of B.C., *Social Studies K-7: 2006*, 84.

²⁴³ Sterling, *Our Beginnings*, 1, 114.

²⁴⁴ Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, *Exploring Curriculum Design: Social Studies* (Victoria, BC: Province of British Columbia, 2013), 6, 10.

instance, the 1995 version mentioned for the first time in the social studies program the impact of European contact and colonialism on Aboriginal groups. The same guide also first mentioned Aboriginal agency concerning resistance to land encroachment and to discriminatory Canadian policy and legislation. Students explored the B.C. Treaty Commission and the impacts of this process, the significance of the creation of the Assembly of First Nations, and not only the creation of the Indian Act, but its ongoing presence in Aboriginal lives.²⁴⁵ The 2006 version had students exploring contemporary legislation as related to events of the past.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, *First Nations 12* also provides students with both local and Aboriginal developed resources in which to conduct historical study. The current program contained twenty-two media, primary source, literature, and textbook resources. The variety of sources in this elective demonstrates a greater commitment to describing the variety of Aboriginal culture and life within both the past and present. A local example of a resource produced in partnership with an Aboriginal nation is the *Stó:lô-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, which is a work of “public sharing...conducted by a community of joined individuals.” The purpose of the text, Keith Thor Carlson states, is to share with non-natives the “wealth of knowledge...passed down”.²⁴⁷ However, while the course and its resources provide a better example of how students could explore and examine the relationship between citizenship and Aboriginality over time and in the present, the commitment to a historical

²⁴⁵ Province of B.C., *BC First Nations 12*: 1995, 16, 18, 32, 36, 44.

²⁴⁶ Province of B.C., *BC First Nations 12*: 2006, 27.

²⁴⁷ Keith Thor Carlson and Albert “Sonny” McHalsie, *Stó:lô-Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 2006), xv, xiv.

framework of study that includes discussion of sensitive issues,²⁴⁸ is isolated within this elective course that few B.C. students chose to take.

Conclusion

Representations of Aboriginal peoples within the British Columbian social studies program as they related to the development of ideal citizenship and the metanarrative of Canadian history from 1945 until present day have change dramatically. Within the historical narrative of Canada, Aboriginal peoples have been transformed from being scarcely included as prehistoric inhabitants, to a distinct culturally celebrated group, and finally to a people group that has maintained identity and traditions as separate nations. While there have been increasingly more positive inclusions of Aboriginal groups within social studies education, citizenship and Aboriginality continue to interact in a problematic way within the program. Over the decades, Aboriginal peoples are often portrayed in superficial and misleading ways, being placed in certain categories that will best serve the overarching progressive Canadian narrative, rather than being explained in terms of complex identity and in terms of their relationship to the Canadian government.

The narrative that is being told now is inadequate if we are to move forward and create space for dialogue about the potential future of relations between Aboriginal nations and mainstream Canadian society. The “two solitudes”²⁴⁹ within Canada still exist and social studies education plays a role in this reality. The social studies program in B.C. could function differently to allow students to interact with the process of creating and defending learning outcomes by making students aware of the complexity within the

²⁴⁸ “Sensitive topics” include: residential schooling, creating maps of traditional territories and treaty lands, and the use of traditional First Nations’ materials such as stories.

²⁴⁹ Clark, “Representations of Aboriginal People,” 85.

development and progression of the Canadian metanarrative and by helping them to hear alternate voices and stories. Having students come to understand the multitude of voices within the Canadian past may allow them to reenvision relationships between Aboriginal nations and the Canadian mainstream. As Daniel Francis states, “if we are not telling ourselves the right stories, we cannot imagine ourselves acting together to resolve our problems”.²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰ Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997), 176.

CHAPTER THREE:

Recommendations for Practicing History

“Teachers, like their students, have to learn to love the questions.” Maxine Greene²⁵¹

In *National Dreams*, Daniel Francis argues that Canadian myths of unity are hard to shake in large part because those in power have something to lose if the actuality of the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the government is revealed.²⁵² One of the central ways in which Canadian myths of inclusion, acceptance, and peace have been communicated is through educational narratives that promote an exclusive liberalism. It stands to reason, then, that the social studies curriculum could be used to promote an alternative understanding of both active citizenship and Aboriginality. A transformed conception of social studies may provide a communal space where totalizing narratives of nation, identities, and peoples are resisted in order to reveal the interaction between the citizen self and Aboriginal “Other”. Within a transformed social studies program, the past could function less as a source of authority, and more as a place for discussing what Canada was, is, and could be. A new vision for social studies is not intended to be an “add-on” to traditional historical narrative approaches, but purposes a different functionality for history that encourages dialogue and an exchange of ideas. Revised social studies education founded on interaction is important as it affects the lives of young British Columbians and their potential to develop positive relationships with “Others” in the future.

²⁵¹ Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1988), 132.

²⁵² Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997), 173.

Transformed social studies education that critiques power structures and biased representations should also explore “possibility”. Social studies education under a community of learning framework and founded on historical possibility or imagination not only criticizes the inadequacy of the current narrative, but also creates space to see possibility, by conversing with various voices in order seek relationships.²⁵³ To educational philosopher Maxine Greene “possibility” is encouraging learners to wonder, to imagine, and to pose their own questions in order to become informed and to apply learning to life. Her “consciousness of possibility” combines a desire to know and feel with the “hunger for community”.²⁵⁴ Therefore, social studies education has the potential to combine “knowing” with active involvement in questioning representations of the past and of peoples in order to see alternative ways of understanding. Peter Seixas and Carla Peck argue that good history education prompts students to ask *why?* to question narrative choices, the selection of sources, the impact of story telling, and the existence of alternative accounts.²⁵⁵

Alternative discourses recognize the inability to tell any past in full or pure form, and constantly declare the validity of identities in order to remember and mourn, and work towards more ethical relationships in the future. Educational philosopher Henry Giroux suggests that if education is to be meaningful and is to relate to living, learners must be encouraged to see how identities and subjectivities are constructed beyond homogenous and fixed definitions towards those that are multiple and contradictory.²⁵⁶ Within a community of learners, teachers and students together explore their roles as

²⁵³ Henry A Giroux, “Towards a Postmodern Pedagogy,” in *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Cahoon (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 386-387.

²⁵⁴ Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom*, 14, 23.

²⁵⁵ Peter Seixas and Carla Peck, “Teaching Historical Thinking,” in *Challenges and Prospects for Canadian Social Studies*, eds. Alan Sears and Ian Wright (Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 285.

²⁵⁶ Giroux, “Towards a Postmodern Pedagogy,” 385.

participants within the relationship between the Canadian mainstream and Aboriginal nations.

Social studies could be conceived as an “active” space where learners not only gain an understanding of Canadian difference, but practice recognition through dialogue and listening. Unlike past conceptions of B.C. social studies education, difference has been included to add colour to a predominately “Canadian” historical discourse in which Aboriginal histories and contemporary life were largely ignored, the new approach to social studies education could function as a source for the nation’s historical imagination and a well-spring that recognizes the many different ways of being Canadian. Literary critic Richard Kearney offers an alternative view of historical telling founded on remembrance, dialogue, and relationship with others.²⁵⁷ History developed around stories not only includes difference, but recognizes difference for its worth. Recognition should be seen as a fundamental element to a transformed program, because as Charles Taylor argues, recognition is not simply a courtesy we owe people; “being known” is a vital human need.²⁵⁸ An interactive social studies program is founded on a community of learning, or a space of exchange. Parker Palmer offers “circles of trust” to develop such a community. Within these “circles” learners confront and correct themselves in order to work towards relationships based on recognizing and honoring difference.²⁵⁹

Foundational for any educational discussion of citizenship and Aboriginality in British Columbia is an understanding and appreciation for the intentions of the Crown and First Nations as expressed in the wampum belt’s symbolism of a relationship based

²⁵⁷ Richard Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters: Interpreting Otherness* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 188.

²⁵⁸ Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 26.

²⁵⁹ Palmer Parker, *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life* (Mississauga ON: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 126-128.

on peace, friendship, and respect *without interference*.²⁶⁰ The basis for any historical and contemporary relationships between Aboriginal nations and the Canadian mainstream is *sui generis* Aboriginal rights and title. The historical foundation, often referred to as a nation-to-nation agreement, was firmly established in law within both the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and the lesser known Treaty of Niagara of 1764. John Borrows argues that the Royal Proclamation must be seen as a treaty agreement between Aboriginal nations and the Crown that recognized pre-existing title of First Nations and guaranteed Aboriginal self-determination. The Treaty of Niagara, negotiated the following year, reinforced the Proclamation's commitment to the nation-to-nation principle through the exchange of wampum, an Indigenous diplomatic convention that physically represented peace, honor, and respect for difference. The symbolism of the offering is captured, Borrows suggests, by academic Robert A. Williams Jr.: the two row belt represented in white beads purity and in purple beads the spirit of Aboriginal and settler ancestors, three beads separating these two rows represent two paths, or vessels, a birch bark canoe and a ship, which represented the laws, customs and ways of each group. Traveling down the same river together side by side, but each within their own boat, one would not steer the other.

When the history of Aboriginal and mainstream relations are presented through the lens of non-interference it becomes clear that all Canadians should be concerned with definitions of citizenship and representations of Aboriginality within the social studies program.²⁶¹ Social studies materials should be based upon a historical foundation of

²⁶⁰ John Borrows, "Wampum at Niagara: The Royal Proclamation, Canadian Legal History, and Self-Government," in *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equity, and Respect for Difference*, ed. Michael Asch (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1997), 1, 4-6.

²⁶¹ Ann Pohl, "Outrages too Many: Teaching Aboriginal Studies," in *Nation to Nation: Aboriginal Sovereignty and the Future of Canada*, eds. John Bird, Lorraine Land, and Murray Macadam (Toronto, ON: Irwin Publishing, 2002), 245.

enduring Aboriginal rights and title and upon the reality that Aboriginal nations are not monolithic nor fully traditional or fully modern, but rather a blend of hybrid identities.²⁶² Culture and identity should be presented as complex. Celia Haig-Brown suggests that materials should not promote one right way or the possibility of “final resolution”, but instead should include open ended and ongoing telling.²⁶³ Canadian historical narratives within a transformed social studies program could include more than simple determinations of difference. Rather “history” could explore the complexities of Aboriginality and citizenship and the interactions of these. Considering the colonial context of India, historical theorist and subaltern author, Dipesh Chakrabarty, maintains that there can be no “final resolution” within national histories because the presence of minority groups challenges the assumption that nationalism is singular and easily understood. He demonstrates that the purpose of a complicated history is not to deny reality, but to reveal the limitations with its telling and to envision alternative ways of being in the world.²⁶⁴ Likewise, social and cultural theorist Homi Bhabha shows that unified master narratives totalize national experiences and dehumanize “Others” through generalization. The importance of Bhabha’s work for this study is his argument that solidarity can be found in difference and that a national narrative of unity need not be written for positive relations to exist within it.²⁶⁵ Aboriginal nations and the mainstream may have their own histories, desires, cultures, and lifestyles, and still live and work together in relationships founded on peace, friendship, and respect.

²⁶² Jean Barman, Yvonne Herbert, and Don McCaskill, eds., *Indian Education in Canada: The Challenge* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1986), 4-5.

²⁶³ Celia Haig-Brown, “Taking Control: Contradiction and First Nations Adult Education,” in *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*, eds. Marie Battiste and Jean Barman (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1995), 277, 283.

²⁶⁴ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 149-150, 252.

²⁶⁵ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge Classic Paperbacks, 1994), 61, 196, 183, 244.

Unfortunately, Canadian teachers have often avoided presenting the controversial and contradictory history of Canadian-First Nations relations due to fear of losing intellectual control and the belief that controversial content may not be age inappropriate. Furthermore, Jeff Orr shows that educators have expressed feelings of discomfort with presenting information concerning Aboriginal cultures, identities, and histories, in part because they were not asked to examine these within their own public education.²⁶⁶ If social studies education is to be transformed to become more interactive and meaningful discomfort will occur as teaching Aboriginal history is complicated and as relations between groups are often tense.²⁶⁷

A starting point for educators taking a new approach to social studies education is to explore for themselves their own role in Canadian-First Nations relations. Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham suggest that Canadians must first undergo “reconciliation” with themselves to understand what has been done in their name.²⁶⁸ Teachers should be encouraged to examine their own place within both active citizenship ideals and about their thoughts concerning representations of Aboriginality. Dennis Sumara, Brent Davis, and Linda Laidlaw believe that understanding ones own place within the narrative involves *investigating* the presentation of Canadian self-identification, or ideals of citizenship, rather than have it be determined as reality.²⁶⁹

From there, teachers within a transformed program may provide a space where they explore identity and relationships alongside their students. If public space is made learners may be more able to explore their own place within the Canadian narrative, ask

²⁶⁶ Jeff Orr, “Teaching Social Studies for Understanding First Nations Issues,” in *Challenges and Prospects for Canadian Social Studies*, eds. Alan Sears and Ian Wright (Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 164.

²⁶⁷ Haig-Brown, “Taking Control,” 263.

²⁶⁸ Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, “Colonial Reckoning, National Reconciliation? Aboriginal Peoples and the Culture of Redness in Canada,” *English Studies in Canada* 35 (2009): 6.

²⁶⁹ Dennis Sumara, Brent Davis, and Linda Laidlaw, “Canadian Identity and Curriculum Theory: An Ecological, Postmodern Perspective,” *Canadian Journal of Education* 26 (2001): 146.

important questions, and see alternate tellings for a different future. Students and teachers within a revised social studies program not only *know* about the Canadian past, but also *understand* their place within it.

Ultimately, transformed social studies education allows learners to consider Manju Varma-Joshi's question: is a homogenous image of Canadian identity a prerequisite for national unity?²⁷⁰ Within a program that relies less on the authority of the past to determine the "reality" of national identity, learners may be opened to the possibility that different peoples, cultures, and governments may all coexist within the Canadian nation. It is more beneficial for relationship building and sharing ideas to present learners with the possibility that Canadians may have several identities that cannot be contained within a single narrative.²⁷¹

Accepting "many different ways of being Canadian" within a different conception of the social studies program has the potential to transform the way we think about "active citizenship" as a whole. An alternative foundation has students and teachers asking *why* about the creation and maintenance of the mainstream narrative, of the choice to represent culture and identity in certain ways, and of their own involvement within it. Students should be involved in understanding the many facets of their own identity within a standard definition of "citizenship". Furthermore, they could be encouraged to question how their own beliefs and actions affect how they interact with "Others" and with standard conceptions of Canadian "citizenship". "Active citizenship" within B.C. social studies education could be redefined beyond a set of prescribed norms toward a

²⁷⁰ Manju Varma-Joshi, "Understanding Multiculturalism in the Social Studies Classroom," in *Challenges and Prospects for Canadian Social Studies*, eds. Alan Sears and Ian Wright (Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 155.

²⁷¹ Giroux, "Towards a Postmodern Pedagogy," 388.

conception that recognizes difference and allows for many different ways of being Canadian.

A revised social studies program based upon recognition of many identities resists narrating the history of Canada singularly. Instead of presenting a totalizing and fixed narrative of Canada, Dennis Sumara, Brent Davis, and Linda Laidlaw propose seeing Canadian identity as fluid and the narrative as constantly being (re)described. Rather than being coherent and complete, the Canadian narrative could be presented as a product developed through ongoing conflict, cooperation, and negotiation. Through the use of metaphor, rather than logical deduction, students may come to see the various histories, memories, and geographies involved within the Canadian nation. In the process of unfolding the complexities of the Canadian past, learners should be encouraged to explore stereotypes, established histories, and popular media, rather than just being fed, and expected to accept, a totalizing story of the nation.²⁷² Students should be provided opportunities to examine and analyze sources and materials first hand in order to understand that the creation of outcomes, resources, and narratives are developed through human decision-making.

Learners should not only be provided with opportunities to assess the Canadian metanarrative, but should be questioning their own place within it. Peter Seixas and Carla Peck argue that a good social studies program moves beyond students learning about culture with superficial, celebratory, compare and contrast methodologies through a singular national narrative, to involve students asking questions about accounts of the past in terms of the choices involved in what to include and exclude and in terms of their

²⁷² Sumara, Davis, and Laidlaw, "Canadian Identity and Curriculum Theory," 146, 153, 147.

own identity.²⁷³ Learners may share their own perceptions of narratives and be encouraged to examine how their beliefs about Canadian citizenship have developed due to the information they have available. A significant aspect in students interacting with the Canadian narrative is encouraging them not only to critique past versions of Canada's history, but allowing them to offer practical and positive suggestions for equitable relations and the possibility of alternate tellings. Allowing students to put forward alternatives enhances their involvement in their own learning, and makes learning more relatable to real life. Focusing on alternatives, rather than criticism, pushes students beyond superficial learning about Canadian society and its past to truly think about and consider issues in ways that are open ended and actually relate to living within the nation.

While a transformed program may allow learners to suggest alternatives concerning the way Canadian histories and identities could be communicated it is essential that they first be made aware of the historical foundation of enduring Aboriginal rights located within the Royal Proclamation and Treaty of Niagara. Unfortunately, social studies education in British Columbia has failed to communicate the importance of the nation-to-nation framework, and continues to, as shown in chapter two, present Aboriginal cultures and identities narrowly through the use of incorrect stereotypes.²⁷⁴ James Youngblood Henderson argues that in order for transformation to occur, learners must comprehend the continuing fiduciary obligations²⁷⁵ between the Canadian and

²⁷³ Seixas and Peck, "Teaching Historical Thinking," 109.

²⁷⁴ Don McCaskill, "Revitalization of Indian Culture: Indian Cultural Survivor Schools," in *Indian Education in Canada: The Challenge*, eds. Jean Barman, Yvonne Herbert, and Don McCaskill (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1986), 155.

²⁷⁵ Mary C Hurley, *The Crown's Fiduciary Relationship with Aboriginal Peoples* (Ottawa: ON: Government of Canada, Law and Government Division, 2000).

The government of Canada defines a fiduciary obligation as following: "In broad legal terms, a "fiduciary" is "one who holds anything in trust," or "who holds a position of trust or confidence with respect to someone else." Hence, a "fiduciary relationship" is one in which someone in a position of trust has "rights and powers which he is bound to exercise for the benefit" of another."

Aboriginal nations,²⁷⁶ so that when students offer suggestions they are problem solving with a clear understanding of the relationship nation-to-nation framework that encourages living and working together in ways that do not interfere with the rights of the other. Revised social studies education must include an understanding of enduring Aboriginal rights under the law and the recognition of Aboriginal desires for self-determinism, which includes the right to make decisions about definitions of their own identity and shape their own history. Dianne Longboat's argument in 1986 concerning Aboriginal peoples believing their rights were expressed within treaties and that their claims to sovereignty were as strong as ever continues to be the reality within Canada today.²⁷⁷

Central to a transformed social studies program which presents Aboriginality in terms of self-determinism is the inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives based on recognition of historical and contemporary difference. Aboriginal peoples, both at the local and provincial level, should be making decisions about curriculum that represents them. Furthermore, educators should be using Aboriginal materials that are relevant for local geographies. Essential to understanding Aboriginal sovereignty, as Donna Young shows, is understanding that conceptions of nationhood are fundamentally different from European models. Jo-Ann Archibald provides examples of difference within her examination of Aboriginal education by demonstrating how it is founded on spiritual, physical, and emotional growth, economic and physical skills for survival, self-reliance, independence, observation, discovery, and respect.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ James Youngblood Henderson, "Treaties and Indian Education," in *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*, eds. Marie Battiste and Jean Barman (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1995), 245.

²⁷⁷ Dianne Longboat, "First Nations Control of Education: The Path to our Survival as Nations," in *Indian Education in Canada: The Challenge*, eds. Jean Barman, Yvonne Herbert, and Don McCaskill (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1986), 29.

²⁷⁸ Jo-Ann Archibald, "Locally Developed Native Studies Curriculum: A Historical and Philosophical Rationale," in *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*, eds. Marie Battiste and Jean Barman (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1995), 289.

In order for Aboriginality to be represented in a way that honors difference and the possibility of various identities, Ann Pohl suggests educators use historically and culturally appropriate support and materials.²⁷⁹ Lynn McAlpine and D.H. Poonwassie both contend that teachers need to be provided with appropriate information concerning the history of government policy on Aboriginal peoples as well as contemporary Aboriginal desires for their own nations and own education in order that a nation-to-nation foundation be set in the social studies program.²⁸⁰ Teachers should familiarize themselves with *local* materials and through the guidance of Aboriginal peoples in their communities, determine how information can best be represented within social studies education.²⁸¹

Educators within a revised social studies program must understand that Aboriginal ways of life cannot be generalized and that presenting content about Aboriginal history and culture is not enough to fully unfold the complexities apparent in a variety of Aboriginal ways of being. Anne Poonwassie and Ann Charter maintain that foundational to understanding Aboriginal nations is that their participation in Canadian society must be seen as conducted on their own terms and that this participation entails neither complete assimilation into mainstream Canada, or a return to fully traditional lifestyles.²⁸² Although Billy Diamond argued that the choice for Native peoples within Canada was not between retaining a “woodland culture” or full integration into modern

²⁷⁹ Pohl, “Outrages too Many”, 241.

²⁸⁰ Lynn McAlpine, “Teacher Training for New Wilderness: Quantum Leaps,” in *Aboriginal Education in Canada: A Study in Decolonization*, ed. K.P Binda (Mississauga, ON: Canadian Educators’ Press, 2001), 113 & D.H. Poonwassie, “Parental Involvement as Adult Education: A Microstrategy,” in *Aboriginal Education in Canada: A Study in Decolonization*, ed. K.P Binda (Mississauga, ON: Canadian Educators’ Press, 2001), 160.

²⁸¹ John Taylor, “Non-Native Teachers Teaching in Native Communities,” in *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*, eds. Marie Battiste and Jean Barman (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1995), 236.

²⁸² Anne Poonwassie and Ann Charter, “Counseling Aboriginal Students: Bridging Conflicting Worldviews,” in *Aboriginal Education in Canada: A Study in Decolonization*, ed. K.P Binda (Mississauga, ON: Canadian Educators’ Press, 2001), 123.

society was made in the 1980s, the argument continues to be relevant at present.²⁸³

While social studies education in the past and at present seeks to make clear-cut determinations about what Aboriginality is, a transformed conception could complicate the need to organize Aboriginal peoples and cultures into neat categories.

A new social studies program, through methodology focused on historical imagination and recognition of Aboriginal nations and non-interference, could work at developing relationships founded on hospitality, care, respect for difference, and solidarity. Within such a program, learners could be provided with insight into how, as Paul Ricoeur shows, history functions as a source of power and authority, which privileges certain memories or experiences over others.²⁸⁴ Learners in the program take on a more interactive role by acquiring knowledge of the Canadian past and by examining their own their own place within the relationship of Aboriginal peoples to the mainstream. Canadian “history” within social studies education could move away from a chronological and fixed narrative of “progress” to function as a space for seeing *interaction* and *negotiation* between groups over time and facilitating dialogue between groups at present. Recognizing interaction, or hybridity, within social studies education and allowing students to personally engage and dialogue may provide a better basis to establish new bonds of care and hospitality within the Canadian nation for the future. While there are significant differences between Aboriginal and mainstream desires, education, and narratives, it is possible, using the symbolism of the wampum as a foundation, to seek different kinds of relationships. As Susan Dion demonstrates in her

²⁸³ Billy Diamond, “The Cree Experience,” in *Indian Education in Canada: The Challenge*, eds. Jean Barman, Yvonne Herbert, and Don McCaskill (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1986), 87.

²⁸⁴ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 86.

Braiding Histories, a singleness of purpose may be located within the strength of diversity.²⁸⁵

A concern of the past and current social studies programs is their focus on “justice-seeking”. Notions of “justice” found within social studies programs are often founded on determining winners and losers, rather than on seeking relationships based on non-interference and open dialogue. Historical theorist Hayden White argues that seeking “justice”, which has been a primary goal of British Columbian citizenship development, is problematic because it seeks to resolve narratives and in doing so cuts off the possibility of future relationships.²⁸⁶ While seeking justice may be a misguided goal of social studies education, it is still important to see how telling impacts Aboriginal peoples ethically. As demonstrated in his *On Stories*, Kearney explains that the way we tell has incredible implications ethically.²⁸⁷ The Canadian metanarrative used within social studies programs has operated to uphold the values of the mainstream. In seeking a coherent national narrative, Aboriginality has been generalized and totalized within the Canadian story. Reliance on a “full” narrative is harmful because, as theorist Hayden White shows, it closes off the possibility of imagination or of seeing alternatives in the way we represent,²⁸⁸ and it can be argued, in the way we relate to one another. A transformed social studies program recognizes that national metanarratives have not been able to communicate minority histories or contemporary realities. Learners should be encouraged, Bhabha suggests, to question the progressive method of social cohesion that has created totalities that are supposedly representative of entire groups and their

²⁸⁵ Susan D Dion, *Braiding Histories: Learning from Aboriginal Peoples' Experiences and Perspectives* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2009).

²⁸⁶ Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1987), 20.

²⁸⁷ Richard Kearney, *On Stories* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 31.

²⁸⁸ White, *The Content of the Form*, 24.

experiences.²⁸⁹ Chakrabarty's work on examining interactions between Indian peoples and the colonial European government shows that European concepts of citizenship could not ever explain the complexities present within Indian society. It is the stories, memories, and histories of Aboriginal individuals and groups that challenge the possibility of "telling" Canadian history in full.

Creating space for Aboriginal memories and histories within social studies education may allow learners to see a different kind of identity formation. Bhabha demonstrates that counter narratives of the nation, or the stories of minorities which display different ways of being, are what disrupt the possibility of concrete national narratives because they challenge the assumption of the singularity of identity and instead present complex negotiated identity. Kearney suggests it is figures of the "Other" that subvert established categories of identity and ways of being and challenge us to rethink our assumptions about what it means to be human.²⁹⁰ Through recognition of the "Other" within social studies education, self-consciousness is interrupted and learners may become aware of the ethical issues involved in "telling" Aboriginal histories and their interaction with the mainstream.²⁹¹ A beneficial way to begin being more intentional about recognizing and interacting with Aboriginal nations is through the use of alternative narratives. Kearney proposes that narrative offers a way to both display hospitality toward the "Other" and communicate more honestly about our historical and contemporary relationships with them.²⁹² He argues that narrative is the only form in which the unrepresentable can be represented in that narrative does not seek resolution, like history often has attempted to do, but instead fosters empathetic connections.

²⁸⁹ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 204, 316.

²⁹⁰ Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters*, 3.

²⁹¹ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 279.

²⁹² Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters*, 7.

However, while recognizing counter narratives are essential to a revised social studies program based upon a nation-to-nation framework and a community of learners, it is important that historians see in between the “culture of difference” to examine the *interaction* between the self and the “Other”. Bhabha suggests that binary definitions people construct between the self and the “Other” are insufficient in and of themselves.²⁹³ By presenting Canadian identity on the basis of *interaction* between peoples of historical difference, social studies programs could position nationalism as a process of *negotiation* rather than a contest between “us” and “them”. It is interaction and negotiation between the self and the “Other”, Charles Taylor argues, that forms and reforms identity.²⁹⁴ If interactions between Aboriginal nations and mainstream Canadians are the focus rather than chronology and progress, social studies education may become more personal to learners as they become *participants* in the narrative, rather than mere observers.

Recognizing hybridity and historical difference within social studies education requires a different kind of community of learning to occur. In past social studies programs, the development of *individual* virtues of citizenship including work ethic, responsibility, and self-awareness, has been the trend. Educational philosopher Nel Noddings offers an alternative to virtues-based education by encouraging dialogue and engagement within the social studies through “care ethics”, which pushes past the development of individual virtues to include the development of the body and spirit also. Within communities of care, one individual cannot simply consult their own preferences or the interests of a charter group, but must be concerned about the well-being of others

²⁹³ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 279, 209, 72.

²⁹⁴ Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” 34.

and seek to fulfill their needs.²⁹⁵ Social studies education could function in a way that is less concerned with the needs of the citizen self and more intentional about interactions with “Others”.²⁹⁶

Additional attributes involved in communities of learners within social studies education include remembering, mourning, and forgiveness. Transformed social studies education focused on relationship resists the need to “fix” past conflicts in order to resolve and relieve the mainstream of any responsibility to Aboriginal nations. A significant element in interactive and relational social studies education is the necessity to continue to speak about past and present Canadian government abuses of Aboriginal nations. In his analysis of W.G. Sebald’s literature, Ignasi Ribo shows that while it is ethically necessary to speak in the name of, modern historical methodology has tended to collapse into totalities. However, Ribo suggests a process of remembrance through literature that allows memories to be kept open and alive. Social studies education could provide a means to encourage remembrance and mourning in this way.²⁹⁷ Likewise, Ricoeur believes that collective mourning is absolutely necessary for remembering and telling. He argues that only through mourning can the “Other” be truly recognized in public spaces. Ricoeur’s mourning is founded on his principle of “working through”, which resists seeking closure in historical narratives and instead opens up the possibility of seeing open-ended pasts and histories that are negotiated, “outstanding”, and “incomplete”.²⁹⁸ Furthermore, “working through” involves at a collective level a process

²⁹⁵ Nel Noddings, *Educating Moral People: A Caring Alternative to Character Education* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2002), 6, 17, 149.

²⁹⁶ Parker, *A Hidden Wholeness*, 74.

²⁹⁷ Ignasi Ribo, “The One-Winged Angel. History and Memory in the Literary Discourse of W.G. Sebald,” *Orbis Litterarum* (1992): 237, 240, 243.

²⁹⁸ Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 77-78, 356.

of forgiveness.²⁹⁹ Forgiveness is, and should never be, normal or expected in that as a concept it must remain exceptional and extraordinary, bringing with it joy and wisdom.³⁰⁰ Social studies may honor the past within the collective present, and through a process of mourning and remembering, enlarge the opportunity for reconciliation in the future.³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters*, 100-105.

³⁰⁰ Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 469, 467.

³⁰¹ Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters*, 181.

CONCLUSION

“The reverse of forgetting is love [and] love is as strong as death.” Paul Ricoeur³⁰²

A fundamental purpose of the British Columbian social studies program from the 1950s until present has been the development of students into virtuous and *individual* Canadian citizens. While there have been changes in how citizenship has been defined within social studies education in the past sixty years, a consistent theme has been the development of responsible citizens and their obligation to live out nationally imposed cultural norms that are associated with a liberal democratic society. Social studies programs have encouraged students to locate their identity as Canadian citizens in a historical metanarrative that celebrates tolerance, hard work, and peaceful, yet patriotic change as participants in Canada’s progressive destiny. The idealized conception of citizenship has served charter members of Canadian society well but it has not accurately communicated to students the long and complicated history of relations between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian mainstream. Aboriginal peoples, though included more frequently and positively in recent decades, are still defined in and through a narrative of citizenship created and perpetuated by the mainstream. Although the inclusion of minority histories within national narratives has done a great deal to present Aboriginal peoples more positively, the inclusion within social studies programs continues to describe Aboriginality narrowly. Aboriginality is still presented as a lump sum, rather than its members being represented as having dynamic and diverse identities. Furthermore, social history has not recognized the legal and historical relationship of

³⁰² Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 506.

Aboriginal nations and the Canadian mainstream and the particular contemporary implications of this relationship, including the persistence of Aboriginal rights and title.

Due to mainstream definitions of ideal citizenship, Aboriginal peoples are portrayed in Canadian historical metanarratives as the “Other”, as an outside group generally excluded from the possibility of attaining individual Canadian citizenship. Ideal citizenship within the social studies program in B.C. is founded on a superficial understanding of difference that concludes we all desire the same future for the Canadian nation. The Canadian metanarrative employed in the curriculum misrepresents Aboriginal nationhood and history by focusing instead on a cultural celebration of Aboriginality as it relates to the development of Canada. The exclusive focus on Aboriginal culture has led to trivial descriptions of Aboriginal-Canadian relations that ignore the history of abuse by the Canadian government toward Aboriginal nations. Government abuses that have often been “hidden” from social studies education include: residential schooling, the reservation system, the Indian Act and assimilation policies, the removal of children, and issues concerning land and treaties. Social studies education has not provided for students information concerning the diversity of Aboriginal beliefs, histories, and thoughts about future relations with the mainstream. The national narrative, under the guise of peace, justice, and reconciliation has allowed students to believe that relations are positive. Such a representation of relations has dismissed Aboriginal self-determination and the ongoing responsibility the government has to protect Aboriginal rights. The presentation of “peaceful” relations perpetuates misunderstanding and negative assumptions surrounding Aboriginality. Rather than see Aboriginality as diverse, dynamic, and historically developed, students continue to view

Aboriginal peoples as static museum peoples. Within the current social studies program Aboriginal culture is “frozen in time”, celebrated for its past vibrancy, but not recognized for its significance in contemporary Aboriginal life.

The misrepresentation of the First Nations-Canadian relationship that is perpetuated in the B.C. social studies program has the potential to negatively impact future relations. However, a transformed conception of social studies education provides an opportunity for students and teachers to understand not the “truth” of Canadian identity and history, but the process in which our understandings about “citizenship” and “Aboriginality” are defined. This study proposes a revised version of social studies education based upon a different function of history that recognizes historical difference, the possibility of many Canadian identities, and the potential for open and honest dialogue between groups. Recognition and interaction within social studies programs has the potential to transform student perceptions about the Canadian-First Nations relationship and allows them to participate in this relationship in the future. Transformation within social studies education is important as it holds the potential to impact the lives and well-being of young British Columbians.

In order for transformation to occur, students should be encouraged to examine the history of *relations* rather than facts and dates and to see in between the binary of “settler” and “Native” towards how groups *interacted* and *negotiated* over time. Introducing a different function of historical study based on historical recognition and non-interference into social studies education may allow students and teachers to envision alternate future relations. A transformed social studies curriculum could model relations based upon the principles of non-interference, partnership, respect, and

friendship, drawn from forgotten or long-ignored historic and legal principles as symbolized by the wampum of 1764. A different “Canada” can exist based upon community, dialogue, understanding, recognition, negotiation, and relationships rather than the blind pursuit of justice and the unfettered drive for individual success.

Social studies education based upon recognition of historical difference and respect resists the need to see “us” and “them” within the Canadian nation and instead upholds co-existence. Ongoing interaction and negotiation within the Canadian-First Nations relationship is central to a new model of social studies because one cannot function without the other. Healing within relations should not be defined by the ability to solve issues, but on the continuation of story telling so coming generations may hear and understand and in turn work towards more positive relations. Continuing to narrate the principles of co-existence without trying to “steer the other’s ship” opens up the possibility of creating long lasting and caring relationships.

Transforming the social studies program in British Columbia is important because as educator Dianne Longboat stressed in the 1980s, Aboriginal peoples will not simply give up their nationhood to become “Canadian”, but believe their rights are held within treaties.³⁰³ Mainstream Canadians can no longer ignore Aboriginal rights and title, nor can they continue to exclude Aboriginal peoples from Canada’s national narrative and make judgments on the suitable forms of Aboriginality. Social studies programs can help us model alternative understandings in order to develop more positive relations and communities in the future by providing space to explore an understanding that

³⁰³ Dianne Longboat, “First Nations Control of Education: The Path to our Survival as Nations,” in *Indian Education in Canada: The Challenge*, eds. Barman, Jean, Yvonne Herbert, and Don McCaskill, Editors (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1986), 29.

Aboriginality is diverse, historically different, and is to be defined by Aboriginal individuals and groups and not pre-determined by a comprehensive and uncomplicated Canadian metanarrative. Social studies education has the possibility to transform conceptions of “citizenship” and “Aboriginality” if learners are providing the opportunity to question the process of developing ideals and representations in order to understand how both have been superficially and inaccurately depicted over time. Perhaps more important than critiquing former models and representations, is allowing learners to imagine different ways of being Canadian and alternative ways of developing relationships with various Aboriginal nations based upon care, recognition, forgiveness, and open conversation.

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Fig. 2.1. *Jacques Cartier and the Iroquois*. Conner, Daniel C. G. and Doreen Bethune-Johnson. *Native People and Explorers of Canada*. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1984.

Fig. 2.2. *Explorers at an Iroquois Wampum Ceremony*. Conner, Daniel C. G. and Doreen Bethune-Johnson. *Native People and Explorers of Canada*. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1984.