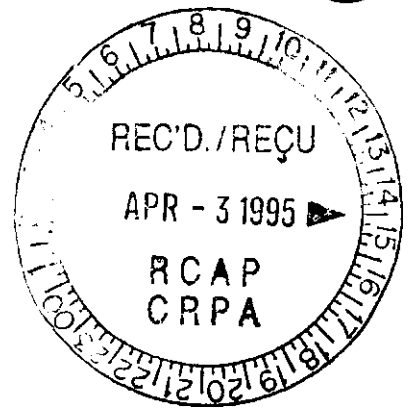


ABORIGINAL CULTURAL IDENTITY

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the Aboriginal Cultural Identity Project is to understand various aspects of cultural identity (including how one sees oneself, how important one's identity is, the self esteem attached to one's identity, the wish to maintain or change it, the behavioural expression of one's identity, and whether it is confused, conflicted or consolidated), and to search out the numerous events and experiences in the lives of individuals that have given rise to their cultural identity. A set of 10 Learning Circles (discussion or focus groups) was held in six locations (Victoria, Inuvik, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Québec City and Halifax), with a variety of participants (Metis, Inuit, Treaty; Artists, Youth, Inmates, Elders, Women), involving a total of 114 individuals.

A study design was developed that structured the discussions into a number of exercises. These included activities that encouraged participants to speak of how they felt about themselves in relation to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies, and to discuss those events and experiences that had enhanced or diminished their cultural identity. A group facilitator guided the discussions through the exercises. All sessions were videotaped with the permission of participants. An interpretative framework was developed to guide the analyses of the information obtained. Two persons independently rated the material, and transcribed these ratings and observations into a standard format. These written materials were then analyzed by another researcher, who produced an overall analysis in textual and tabular form.

Results show that the vast majority of participants view themselves as "Aboriginal"; this was somewhat less so in their pasts, and there is a desire to be more so in the future. Having, and maintaining, an Aboriginal identity was considered to be an extremely important part of their lives, indeed to be at the core of their existence. Most participants enjoyed having such an identity, and gained substantial self-esteem from being Aboriginal; however, some participants reported that this was not the case earlier in their lives. There was also evidence of identity confusion among about one third of the

participants; however, this was considered to be a more serious problem for some of them earlier in their lives, and a more consolidated identity is anticipated by most in the future. Overall, the picture is a mixed one: on the positive side there is some evidence of a positive Aboriginal Cultural identity at the present time, and of a perceived improvement over the course of their lives. While this picture is valid for the relatively secure environment of the Learning Circles, and for this limited sample, it is unclear whether such a positive sense of oneself can be carried over to the less supportive context of daily life. On the negative side, many participants carry a substantial burden of hurt and doubt that has undermined their cultural identity.

Twelve major groups of factors were identified as having influenced Aboriginal cultural identity. Some of these factors are key aspects of Aboriginal societies (including traditional culture, family, land and environment, and social relationships) and some are features of non-Aboriginal society (residential schools, education, prejudice, addictions, economy, government institutions, church, and mass media).

Perceptions of how these various experiences affected their cultural identity were clear, and were supported by a high degree of consensus. Non-Aboriginal experiences (particularly: government institutions such as DIAND, welfare, foster homes, police and prisons; residential schools; addictions; and prejudice) were seen as having severely deprived or diminished the attainment and expression of a positive Aboriginal cultural identity; also negative in their impact (but less severe) were education, the media and the church. Aboriginal experiences, in great contrast, were perceived to have been largely positive, enhancing and strengthening one's Aboriginal cultural identity. These included one's traditional culture (particularly the role of elders, of spirituality, community life, and aboriginal languages), one's family (particularly grandparents, and the extended family), the land and the environment (including the experience of bush life, nature, and rights to land), and a variety of social relationships (friends, clubs, sports).

The general pattern is very clear: non-Aboriginal experiences and events were perceived to have had a substantial negative impact on the development of an Aboriginal cultural identity (with some positive outcome attributed to education); Aboriginal experiences were perceived to have had a predominantly positive impact (with some negative outcome from family problems and community conflicts).

Given this pattern of joint influences on cultural identity from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies, the concept of acculturation was adopted as an explanatory framework. The consequences of the contact between two societies is usually the experience of acculturative stress by individual members of the non-dominant society. Such stress appears when pressures to assimilate fail, and result in the marginalization of Aboriginal peoples, with the accompanying social and psychological problems of cultural identity loss and confusion, addiction, abuse and incarceration. Alternatives to assimilation and marginalization can have more positive outcomes, particularly when sought and controlled by non-dominant groups. Many participants expressed a preference for a bi-cultural outcome to acculturation in which they are able to maintain the integrity of their Aboriginal culture, and as Aboriginal peoples are accepted as an integral part of the larger society. Research generally shows that this bicultural strategy enables acculturating individuals to avoid the experience of acculturative stress, and the more difficult social and psychological problems that usually follow.

This analysis suggests that Aboriginal cultural identity can best be understood when the impact of both societies are examined: the current situation can be seen as a result of the interaction (both historically, and at the present time) between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples (rather than being inherent in one or the other groups). In other words, since the present situation has resulted from a particular set of relationships, future improvements are likely to be possible only when the character of these relationships is changed. And since these relationships are largely characterized by domination (on the part of non-Aboriginal society) and

resistance (on the part of Aboriginal peoples), there is joint responsibility for changing both of these features. Non-Aboriginal society needs to recognize that it must draw back from this pervasive domination, and provide a context (political, economic, social and cultural) in which Aboriginal peoples can begin to recover. Aboriginal peoples have the responsibility for their own healing, within this new context, and with the opportunity to participate in these new relationships on their own cultural terms.

1. Introduction

This research project is designed to help understand a problem that is clear and evident among Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. In the words of the first discussion paper (RCAP, Framing the Issues, 1992):

"A common thread ran through the Aboriginal presentations. At every hearing, Aboriginal presenters spoke of the pre-eminent value that they place on sustaining their culture, identity and language. Historical experiences that undermined cultural values were recounted with grief and anger. Poverty, racism and insensitive government policies were decried as threats to Aboriginal identity and threats to human dignity. Aboriginal people in the hearings consistently voiced the hope and the expectation that a re-valuing of their cultures can provide the basis for designing institutions and services that will revitalize their communities, as well as provide the foundation for a new or renewed relationship with other Canadians." (p. 3)

Of particular interest to this project is the large range of life events and experiences of Aboriginal Peoples that have diminished their cultural identity. Foremost among these has been the EuroCanadian educational system; the central experience here has been the residential school:

"Absorbing Aboriginal people into Canadian society and erasing Aboriginal identity were openly stated objectives of government policy for many generations. Education has been a principal instrument of this policy. While many Aboriginal people wanted access to formal education they did not consent to the often brutal policy of residential schooling. Under this policy Aboriginal children were forcibly separated from their families not only for the duration of the school year but also, in some cases, for periods of years. They were punished for speaking their languages, and they were often physically or sexually abused." (pp. 17-18)

Other experiences were also identified in the hearings, including the effects of numerous Government policies that encouraged dependency and enforced cultural loss, exposure to EuroCanadian health and justice systems and the media, and the widespread presence of racism.

In the second round of hearings, four "touchstones for change" were identified. Three of these (self-determination, self-sufficiency and personal and collective healing) can be viewed as being intimately related to the presence of a positive cultural identity. The fourth (a new relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people) can be a possibility only when a positive Aboriginal Cultural identity is widely achieved among Aboriginal Peoples: "The Commission was told that there will be no fundamental change in these conditions unless and until cultural identity, cultural wholeness, is restored to Aboriginal people" (RCAP, Focusing the Dialogue, p. 53).

Among the various ways to achieve these "touchstones for change", three are specifically linked to cultural identity:

First, "There is widespread concern for the survival of Aboriginal culture, languages and spirituality as the basis for Aboriginal identity; this should be reflected in the future development of education, health, justice, and other services and should be accepted by the non-Aboriginal community."

Second, "Residential schools have had a traumatic impact on Aboriginal children and family life and account for many of today's problems of violence, addiction, loss of culture and loss of self-esteem among Aboriginal people. This experience must be acknowledged and resolved through a process of healing."

And third, "There is concern in every community that services for Aboriginal people should be culturally appropriate, controlled by Aboriginal people, and be adequately funded. The areas of particular concern include education, housing, justice, health, social services, and Aboriginal communications." (RCAP, Overview, p.3)

These are the issues, problems and goals as identified by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. The present project is one component of the

research that will assist in the understanding of these problems, and perhaps contribute to their solution. The specific goals of the study are to understand the various aspects of Aboriginal cultural identity (including self-perception, self-esteem and identity consolidation), and how these have been affected by various events and experiences in the lives of Aboriginal peoples (including those that derive from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies).

This report contains six sections. First is a selective review of what previous social science research tells us about the concept of cultural identity. Here we are concerned with its definition and its constituent elements, as presented in the formal social science research literature. The second is a selective presentation of mainly social psychological research findings with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. These presentations are not comprehensive, since other approaches lie outside the author's competence¹.

The third section describes in more concrete terms the purpose of the Aboriginal Cultural Identity research project, and an outline of how we carried it out. This includes an account of the development of the project, of the specific activities that were used to collect the data, and of how the data were analysed.

Fourth is a presentation of the findings of the project, in both statistical and narrative form. The fifth section offers an interpretation of the results followed by a critical evaluation of them. Finally, there is a set of possible policy initiatives that follow from the project results and interpretations.

2. The Concept of Identity

Cultural identity is a concept that has deep roots in social science research. As early as the 1960s, a summary volume on "The Self Concept" was prepared (Wylie, 1961) in which almost a thousand studies, spanning a century of research, were outlined and evaluated. Since that time, research has continued at a high level, with the result that there has been a proliferation

of concepts and terms, resulting in virtual chaos in the field (see eg. Rosenberg & Kaplan, 1982; Knight & Bernal, 1992; Breakwell, 1992). Following is an attempt to sort out the various concepts and terms, and to indicate how the concept of cultural identity is used in this project.

To begin, self-concept is a term with two components. The first (self) has two possible meanings: one is the self as subject or agent (ie. the "knower"), and the second is the self as object (ie. the "known") (Taylor & Dubé, 1986). The other component (concept) refers to one's knowledge or beliefs. Altogether, then, the term self-concept means what an individual knows or believes about oneself (Wylie, 1961, p. 1).

Such knowledge can range widely over a variety of topics; however, it is possible to distinguish knowledge that a person has about oneself as an individual (eg. one's abilities, attitudes and personality traits), and knowledge a person has about oneself in relation to other individuals or groups (ie. social aspects, such as gender, class, ethnicity, nationality)².

The notion of identity is closely linked to self-concept. Basically, it is the way in which one identifies oneself, for example in response to questions such as "Who are you?", or "How would you describe yourself?". Responses can usually be placed in two categories, similar to the individual/social distinction noted for self-concept. Statements such as "I am honest, I am bright, I am physically active" would be components of one's personal identity; statements such as "I am Canadian, I am Albertan, I am Cree", would be components of one's social identity (Wong-Rieger & Taylor, 1981).

However, the notion of identity is usually considered to go beyond the belief or knowledge that is emphasized in the notion of self-concept. Identity usually implies a sense of attachment (Aboud, 1981; Keefe, 1992). Attachment is particularly important for social identity, less so for personal identity. In the view of a major thinker on this topic (Tajfel, 1982), social identity is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from one's knowledge of one's membership in a social group (or groups), together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership". That is, there

are both knowledge (perceptual) and evaluation (affective) aspects of social identity.

There are many social groups that can serve as means of achieving a social identity. Some are related to social class, others to political parties or clubs and associations. Perhaps the most important form of social identity is one that links an individual to some large collectivity such as nation, culture or ethnic group. There is now a large literature on national, cultural and ethnic identity, one that serves as a basis for this study (see UNESCO, 1985).

In principle, it does not matter from a social science point of view which of these three terms is most appropriate for understanding Aboriginal identity. The choice of cultural identity as the appropriate concept signals the view that Aboriginal peoples in Canada share many cultural attributes, and frequently a common history in relation to the larger society, even though there are many specific cultures in the strict sense of the term. The alternative of ethnic identity might signal the view that Aboriginal peoples are an ethnic group like any other ethnic group, while the alternative of national identity might possibly signal certain political aspirations that are not part of the contemporary agenda, and might be confused with the larger nation state (Canada), rather than being taken to refer to First Nations.

In this study, the term cultural identity will be used to refer to a complex set of features that together indicate how one thinks of oneself in relation to Aboriginal peoples. First, it includes the knowledge aspect: one's perception or belief that one is Aboriginal³. Second, it refers to the sense of importance or attachment that one has to an Aboriginal group or groups, in effect indicating whether being Aboriginal is an important aspect of one's social identity. Third, it involves positive or negative feelings about being Aboriginal, indicating whether the person gains positive or negative self-esteem by seeing oneself as Aboriginal⁴. And fourth, it refers to the degree of identity maintenance that a person wants; indicating whether one wants to

keep and display one's Aboriginal identity, or conversely to change or hide it. Figure 1 illustrates these distinctions.

These four features are conceptually independent of each other, but they exist in a logical and psychological sequence: for example, unless one perceives oneself as Aboriginal, the next three features are irrelevant; and unless being Aboriginal is important, it probably doesn't matter if one likes or dislikes being Aboriginal, or whether one intends to maintain or change it.

Insert Figure 1 here

Although the Figure shows alternative choices (eg. "No" vs "Yes"), in reality each choice is the end of a dimension along which people's responses can vary, from "strongly no" through to "strongly yes", or "very little" through to "very much" etc.

In this study all four features are of interest, and attempts have been made to assess each of them. Although it is assumed that all participants who were recruited to participate in the project saw themselves as Aboriginal to some extent (that is, no participant is likely to give response No. 1), it is possible that some participants may be close to such a response, and so this possibility is entertained in the data analysis. And of course, response No. 7 can easily lead a person to deny an Aboriginal identity, and lead back to response No. 1, where perception of oneself as Aboriginal is rejected.

Another important distinction in the identity literature is between symbolic and behavioural identity (Gans, 1979). In the case of symbolic identity, there may be a clear perception of high importance and positive esteem about one's identity, and probably a desire to maintain it; however, what one actually does to express it may not be much in evidence. There are many possible reasons for persons not to behave in ways that are consistent with their inner feelings. These include abiding by laws or rules (eg. prohibitions against speaking one's language, or practising one's religion), fear of ridicule or discrimination (eg. in social, housing or employment

situations), and a sense of shame (eg. from having internalized the negative views about one's culture that may predominate in the larger society). The first four features of Figure 1 may be considered to be in the realm of symbolic cultural identity.

Behavioural identity involves the expression of these underlying beliefs and feelings about one's identity in one's daily life. Speaking one's language, practising one's religion, dressing and eating, and engaging in social relations with children and adults in culturally-appropriate ways, are all examples of the behavioural expression of one's cultural identity. We may now add a behavioural expression feature to Figure 1 to represent one's behavioural cultural identity. Those who wish to maintain their identity may or may not express it (for the reasons given above), while those who are not motivated to maintain it are unlikely to exhibit an Aboriginal cultural identity. However, under some circumstances (eg. community or family pressures, or for commercial or employment opportunities), individuals may be induced to behave superficially as an Aboriginal person (represented by the dotted line in Figure 1), without the presence of the underlying (symbolic) identity as an Aboriginal person. These possible relationships between symbolic identity and behavioural identity are illustrated at the bottom of Figure 1.

Beyond these five components of cultural identity, is a sixth aspect that is concerned with relationships among components: this is known as identity consolidation vs identity confusion. Not all identities are consolidated in the sense that they are clear or consistent; many are "conflicted" or inconsistent in the sense that individuals don't know who they really are, or they have incompatible ideas and feelings about themselves. In terms of Figure 1, where a "positive Aboriginal Cultural Identity" exists, this is evidence of a consolidated identity. However, a confused identity is indicated when there is a negative orientation to any of the five components of identity, or when there is inconsistency among, or uncertainty about, one's orientations to the five components.

In summary, Aboriginal cultural identity is viewed in this project as an internal (symbolic) state (made up of cognitive, affective and motivational components) and external (behavioural) expression of being an Aboriginal person (individual emphasis), and a member of an Aboriginal community (social emphasis). A positive Aboriginal cultural identity is comprised of a number of interrelated features, including the perception of oneself as Aboriginal, considering this to be important, having positive feelings about being Aboriginal, wanting to remain an Aboriginal person, and expressing these in one's daily behaviour. Various degrees of a negative Aboriginal cultural identity are comprised of: not seeing oneself as Aboriginal; but if so, not considering it to be important; but if important, not liking or enjoying it; but if so, not wanting to maintain it; but if so, not being able to express it in daily life. A consolidated cultural identity exists when there is consistency among components; a confused identity is present when there is inconsistency or uncertainty.

3. Review of Empirical Studies

Having considered what we mean by Aboriginal cultural identity in this project, we can turn to the empirical literature: what have previous studies told us about cultural identity generally, and Aboriginal cultural identity specifically? Recent reviews (Berry, 1992b; Keefe, 1992; and Phinney, 1990) indicate that studies of cultural identity are continuing but scattered. In terms of Figure 1, some studies assess perceptual aspects of cultural identity (mainly through self-categorization), while others assess affective or emotional aspects (mainly through attitudes); a few assess behavioural identity (but mainly through self-report of one's behaviour, rather than by direct observation of a person's behaviour).

With respect to self-categorization, two national studies have been carried out in Canada (Berry et al 1977; Kalin & Berry, 1993) in which survey respondents are asked first to indicate their cultural (ancestral) origins, followed by a request to indicate how they "usually think of themselves". Responses are scored in one of four categories: "Canadian"; "Provincial" (eg.

"Albertan"); culture or ethnic-Canadian (eg. "Greek-Canadian"); and culture of origin (eg. "Greek"). Results of the most recent survey (Kalin & Berry, 1993) indicate that in the total sample (N=3275), 64% indicate "Canadian/Canadien", 19% indicate a Provincial identity (mainly "Québécois" among Francophone residents of Québec), 13% indicate a hyphenated identity (made up of 2% British-Canadian, 4% French-Canadian and 7% other ethnic, including Aboriginal, Canadian), and 4% indicate the identity of their culture of origin (including Aboriginal). Of course these overall percentages vary according to respondents' ancestral origin. Although Aboriginal Canadians were not an identifiable category of participants in these national surveys, these studies illustrate a common method for studying cultural identity, and the range of responses that are obtained.

Another perceptual approach has been through the use of a card-sorting task. In the earlier national survey (Berry et al, 1977), respondents were given 25 cards with names of ethnic groups on them (and one with "Me"), and asked to sort cards into piles on the basis of the perceived similarity of ethnic groups. Analyses were done separately for those who took interview in English and those who took the interview in French, and revealed a similar picture for each sub-sample. Around the "Me" card were placed "English-Canadian", "French-Canadian", "Québécois", "Indian", "Eskimo", and "Metis" in a fairly tight cluster. Somewhat removed from this first cluster were other clusters, for more recently settled Eurocanadians (eg. "Italian-Canadians" and "Immigrants in General"), for religio-ethnic groups (eg. Mennonites, Doukhobors), and for Canadians not of European background (eg. "Blacks", "Chinese"). This study tells us that Canadians generally identify Aboriginal Peoples as belonging to the same cluster as themselves, and with the two dominant groups (English and French); in contrast, all other groups are identified as forming quite distinct clusters that are removed from the self-identity ("Me") cluster.

A similar technique was employed by Berry, Wintrob, Sindell and Mawhinney (1982; see also Berry, 1992). Québec Cree in three communities were

asked to sort cards on which were written "Me" and the names of various groups of Cree (eg. Chisasibi), non-Cree Aboriginal Peoples (eg. Algonquins, Inuit, Metis), and non-Aboriginal Peoples (eg. French-Canadians, Italian-Canadians). Analyses revealed that a core Cree identity had become established by 1979, even though there had been little interaction among the Cree communities up until a decade earlier. The picture revealed that all eight Cree groups were closely clustered together around "Me", with other Aboriginal groups forming another distinct cluster, and non-Aboriginal groups forming a third cluster. Of some interest was the placement of "Metis" between the other-Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clusters, and the placement of "Inuit" closer to the core Cree cluster than those in the "other Aboriginal" cluster.

To assess the importance aspect of cultural identity (see Figure 1), a question was posed in the most recent national survey (Kalin & Berry, 1993): "How strongly do you identify with being a . . . ?" followed by options representing a "Canadian", "Provincial", "Ethnic-Canadian", or "culture of origin" identity. Strength of identity was provided by respondents on a 7-point scale, with a high score representing strong identification. Results indicated a strong "Canadian" identity (with a mean of 6.3 on the 7-point scale), a somewhat less strong "Provincial" identity (5.3) and a neutral "Ethnic or cultural" identity (4.1) (which combined the "Ethnic-Canadian" and culture of origin response categories). Again, Aboriginal peoples were not available as a separate category for data analyses, and so we don't know if their identity is strong, intermediate or neutral on the basis of this study. However, this approach is an important one to consider in future studies of Aboriginal cultural identity.

Emotional or affective aspects of identity (see Figure 1) have been assessed usually by asking about peoples' attitudes towards their own and towards other groups. There are two research traditions from which to draw here. One is on "acculturation attitudes" and the other is on "ethnic attitudes".

To understand acculturation attitudes it is necessary to define the concept of acculturation. Acculturation was first identified as a cultural level phenomenon by anthropologists (e.g. Redfield et al, 1936) who defined it as culture change resulting from contact between two autonomous cultural groups. Acculturation is also an individual-level phenomenon, requiring individual members of both the larger society and the various non-dominant groups to work out new forms of relationships in their daily lives. This idea was introduced by Graves (1967), who has proposed the notion of "psychological acculturation" to refer to these new behaviours and strategies that individuals use in these culture contact situations. One of the findings of subsequent research in this area is that there are vast individual differences in how people attempt to deal with acculturative change (termed "acculturation strategies"). These strategies have three aspects: their preferences, or how they would like to acculturate ("acculturation attitudes"; see Berry et al., 1989); how much change they actually undergo ("behavioural shifts"; see Berry, 1980); and how much of a problem these changes are for them (the phenomenon of "acculturative stress"; see Berry et al., 1987).

Perhaps the most useful way to identify the various orientations individuals may have toward acculturation is to note that two issues usually predominate in the daily life of most acculturating individuals. One pertains to the maintenance and development of one's ethnic distinctiveness in society, deciding whether or not one's own cultural identity and customs are of value and should be retained. The other issue involves the desirability of intercultural contact, deciding whether relations with other groups in the larger society are of value and should be sought. These two issues are essentially questions of values, and may be responded to on a continuous scale, from positive to negative, (with a "Yes" response indicating agreement, and a "No" response indicating disagreement with the question). In Figure 2 is a framework showing four general acculturation strategies that are available to individuals and to groups living in culturally diverse societies, towards

which individuals may hold attitudes; these are Assimilation, Integration, Separation, and Marginalization.

Insert Figure 2 here

When the first question is answered negatively ("no"), and the second is answered positively ("yes") the Assimilation option is defined, namely, relinquishing one's cultural identity and moving into, and becoming part of, the larger society. This can take place by way of absorption of a nondominant group into an established dominant group; or it can be by way of the merging of many groups to form a new society, as in the "melting pot" concept.

The Integration⁵ or bicultural option implies a positive orientation toward the maintenance of the cultural integrity of the non-dominant group, as well as the movement by the group to become an integral part of a larger societal framework. When integration occurs, there is a large number of distinguishable cultural groups, all cooperating within a larger social system, resulting in the "mosaic" that is promoted in Canada. This mosaic is usually considered to be an ideal, one that is often challenged by reality. However, research evidence clearly demonstrates that those who prefer, and are able to achieve integration are generally those with relatively good mental health and a positive cultural identity (see e.g. Berry et al, 1987; LaFramboise et al, 1993; Trimble & Medicine, 1984). This bicultural strategy thus appears to be the one most suited to the needs and well-being of acculturating peoples.

When there are no relations with the larger society, and this is accompanied by a maintenance of cultural identity and traditions, another option is defined. Depending upon which group (the dominant or nondominant) controls the situation, this option may take the form either of Segregation or Separation. When the pattern is imposed by the dominant group, classic Segregation to "keep people in their place" appears. On the other hand, the maintenance of a traditional way of life outside full participation in the

larger society (ie. Separation) may derive from a cultural group's desire to lead an independent cultural existence. In these terms, Segregation and Separation differ primarily with respect to which group or groups have the power to determine the outcome.

Finally, there is an option that is difficult to define precisely, possibly because it is accompanied by a good deal of collective and individual confusion and anxiety. It is characterized by striking out against the larger society and by feelings of alienation, loss of self and cultural identity, and by acculturative stress. This option is Marginalization, in which groups lose cultural and psychological contact with both their traditional culture and the larger society. When imposed by the larger society, it can lead to the total destruction of the non-dominant group. When it becomes relatively permanent, it constitutes the classical situation of marginality (Stonequist, 1935). Identity problems are most likely to occur among marginalized individuals and groups, and is evidenced by the presence of identity confusion (as defined earlier).

Attitudes towards these various ways of dealing with acculturation have been assessed in many cultural groups. In most studies, individuals have a general preference for one of these strategies over the other three (Berry, et al., 1989); however, there are also variations in this general preference depending on two factors. First, individuals explore their various options during the course of development, trying out one strategy at a particular age, then trying another. For example, children entering a school where they are culturally isolated may seek first to assimilate, but when rebuffed they may try separation, and perhaps become marginalized as a result. Second, differing strategies may be used in different daily contexts: individuals may prefer separation in family and community life, assimilation in work settings, and integration in education.

The attitudes that individuals hold toward these four acculturation alternatives⁶ can be taken as an indication of their identity (Clark et al, 1976). Those who favour Integration usually are comfortable with a joint or

dual cultural identity (eg. "Greek-Canadian"); those who favour Assimilation usually adopt a "national" identity (eg. "Canadian"); those who favour Separation usually adopt a single cultural identity (eg. "Greek"); and those who score high on Marginalization usually are uncertain about who they are (ie. experience "identity confusion").

Studies with a variety of Aboriginal peoples in Canada over the period 1970-1988 using this approach (Berry et al., 1989) have revealed a strong general preference for the Integration or bicultural strategy of acculturation (as defined in Figure 2 and elaborated in Footnote 5), along with a dual identity (eg. "Cree-Canadian"), signifying a sense of attachment to both Aboriginal and the larger societies. Next in preference has been the Separation strategy, along with a particular cultural identity (eg. "Cree"), signifying a predominant sense of attachment to a particular Aboriginal culture, and little (if any) attachment to Canadian society. Far behind in preference are Assimilation and Marginalization, both of which signify a rejection (or non-availability) of an Aboriginal cultural identity. These studies clearly demonstrate that most adult Aboriginal peoples in Canada know very well who they are, at least in the sense of labelling themselves as Aboriginal persons.

This research-based conclusion does not mean, however, that all is well. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples initially, and on the basis of early consultations, concluded that threats to the cultural identity of Aboriginal Peoples was a problem area that required examination. The present project is an attempt to carry out that examination.

4. Project Design and Method

The Aboriginal Cultural Identity Project is intended to explore and understand all six aspects of identity: perception, importance, esteem, maintenance, behavioral expression, and consolidation. In addition, a number of other relevant aspects of cultural identity arose during discussions within the research team both during the development of the Design Format (prior to data collection) and of the Interpretive Framework (after data collection).

These new aspects generally relate to the process, and to the social interactions that took place during the Learning Circles.

The research team worked in an interactive and consensual manner throughout, and has represented both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal points of view. Following initial identification of the research area by the Commission, the project consultant (John Berry) worked closely with RCAP staff and field staff to bring social science and Aboriginal concepts and insights together in a coherent approach to the issues.

Two means of data collection were adopted: The Learning Circles; and the Case Studies. Generally the two approaches covered the same issues; however, the former used group discussion to elicit the information, while the latter employed personal engagement to probe the issues more deeply.

The present report deals only with findings from the use of Learning Circles. These were earlier called Focus Groups, but were renamed to make a more culturally-appropriate presentation of the activity. These Learning Circles (LC) took place in 10 community settings and involved between 10 and 12 persons in each community setting. Participants were selected by RCAP field staff. Nine of the LC's were facilitated by Kim Hathaway (in English, for all except Québec) and Rock Matte (in French in Québec). Occasionally other members of the team were also present. The places, dates and number of participants in each LC are presented in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 here

The general goal was to seek relative homogeneity within each LC (to provide a focus, and for consensus building), but to obtain heterogeneity across LCs (to yield some diversity of views about cultural identity). While, no claim for representativeness can be made for these data, they are an important source of information on the diversity of views regarding Aboriginal cultural identity.

A set of Learning Objectives was developed into an initial Design Format by the research team, culminating in Version 5 (Feb. 22, 1993). It was employed

with a Pilot LC (in Ottawa) and slightly modified for use as a standard research instrument with all LCs. The final design included six main activities: Dream/ Community Activity; Important Life Events and Experiences; Factors that Diminished or Strengthened One's Cultural Identity; Factors That Deprived or Denied One's Cultural Identity; Kinships/ Relationships Activity; and Recommendations Activity. In addition, there were other activities, such as introductions, greeting, discussion of group rules, presentation of RCAP, and day-end wind-up discussions; these also provide some data. See Appendix A for this Design Format.

Each LC was videotaped, with permission of the participants. This record provides the main source of information from the LCs. Flip charts were also used to record various discussions, and these provide further information. Finally, one activity (Kinships/ Relationships) resulted in written records for each participant which were also used in the analysis.

The Interpretive Framework was developed by the research team following the intentions of the initial Learning Objectives and the Final Design Format, and following an initial viewing of a sample of the videotapes, and flip chart records. The Interpretive Framework was checked on three of the LC records, and some modifications made. The final version had 15 sections, one each for: 1. Introduction to My Story; 2. Greeting Activity; 3. Group Rules Discussion; 4. Introduction to RCAP; 5. Dream/ Community Activity; 6. Life Events and Experiences; 7. Diminish/ Strengthen; 8. First Day Wind-Up; 9. Deprived/ Denied; 10A. Kinship/ Relationships (Group); 10B. Kinship/ Relationships (Individual); 11. Recommendations; 12. Elders; 13. Distinct Issues raised; 14. Overview of LC (individual). See Appendix B for this Interpretive Framework.

Scoring of each LC record was carried out independently by two members of the research team (Kim Hathaway, Brenda Restoule) for LC's outside Québec, but by only one researcher (Rock Matte) inside Québec, using the Interpretive Framework. For each activity, ratings were made of the extent to which members of the LC's exhibited a particular aspect of cultural identity, using 7 point scales (with "7" being the highest rating). In addition, raters wrote down all

statements that they judged to be particularly revealing of the participants' cultural identity; these are referred to as "significant quotes" in this report. These scoring sheets were supplied, along with the flip chart and the quotations to John Berry for analysis and interpretation. Scores provided by the two raters were averaged; in general there was good agreement between raters in the scores they assigned. For the "significant quotes", these were placed into categories corresponding to the component of cultural identity that they reflected: perception, importance, esteem, maintenance, behavioural expression and consolidation/confusion.

5. Project Findings

In this section an overview of the main findings of this project is presented, based on evidence from the Learning Circles. Some important background information, however, derives from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey, since it establishes a very clear national context within which to view the data from the Cultural Identity Project. Since these national findings are evidence for the behavioural expression aspect of cultural identity, this results section begins with this most concrete feature.

Behavioural Expression. The expression of one's cultural identity depends upon a variety of factors that were discussed earlier. Among the behavioural indicators that are frequently used to determine if a cultural identity is being expressed, are language use and daily activities related to one's culture (eg. language, social relations, dress, food, music, arts and crafts). Questions about these two activities were included in the Aboriginal Peoples Survey.

Evidence (A. Siggner memo to Research Management Team, August 12, 1993) indicates that there is far from 100% behavioural expression of Aboriginal identity. For language use, in the total adult population (aged 15 years and over), 65.4% of North American Indians (NAI) on Reserve, 23.1% of NAI off Reserve, and 17.5% of Metis were able to use their Aboriginal language; 74.6% of Inuit were able to do so. There is a similar results for children (aged 5 to 14 years), but with even lower levels: 44.3%, 9.0%, 4.9% and 67.0%

respectively. For "participation in traditional Aboriginal activities", the pattern is repeated. For adults, the participation rates were 65.2%, 44.8%, 39.8% and 74.1%; and for children, they were 57.5%, 39.5%, 28.7% and 70.2%. Figure 3 portrays these findings from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey.

Insert Figure 3 here

Even without statistical analyses, it is clear that there are important variations in behavioural expressions of cultural identity across the four groups of Aboriginal peoples, between adults and children and between domains (language vs participation in traditional activities). With respect to group, Inuit are always highest and Metis lowest, with on-and off-Reserve North American Indians placed in between. With respect to age, adults are always higher than their children. And with respect to domains, traditional activities usually are higher than language; this is more true for the off-Reserve and Metis groups, and minimally so for on-Reserve and Inuit groups.

These data can be interpreted as showing major behavioural cultural identity loss (or perhaps identity denied) with degree of EuroCanadian contact. This is the most plausible explanation for the variation across the first three groups, and possibly for the Inuit. It is also the most likely explanation for differences between adults and children, assuming higher participation of children in EuroCanadian life through school and media exposure. Evidence from other studies (eg. Berry & Bennett, 1991) indicates that higher levels of EuroCanadian schooling are associated with lower levels of Aboriginal language and Syllabic script knowledge and use. Differences between language use and traditional activity participation may reflect differential loss or may reflect partial recovery.

Other evidence of Behavioural Expression was obtained from three sources: Activity 1 "Links to Aboriginal Community"; Sheet 15, "Attachment" (Degree of Links to Aboriginal Community); and from analyzing the frequency

and content of quotes recorded by the two raters that express one's identity as an Aboriginal person.

First (see Table 2), during the "Introduction to My Story" (Activity 1, "Links" rating) there was a moderate level of identity expression (mean of 4.8 on 7-point scale), with least among Inuvik Youth (3.1) and most among Inuvik Adults (5.9). This finding with adults corresponds to the results noted from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey (highest expression for Inuit), but the finding with youth stands in sharp contrast to it. Possible reasons for the low Inuvik Youth expression of cultural identity are that they knew very well who they were (and hence felt no need to express it during their self-introduction), and that they likely knew each other prior to the Learning Circle, (and hence felt no reason to tell the others what they already knew).

Second (see Table 2), the summary made by raters of each participant's claims for "Attachment" or "Links" (sheet 15) showed a substantial increase over the Introduction (5.98 compared to 4.80) suggesting that either their Aboriginal identity was reinforced by the experience of the Learning Circle, or that they felt more at ease or empowered in expressing it once they got to know each other. Greatest expression of identity was among the Winnipeg Metis (6.2). (Québec Adults were rated 7.0, but because a different rater was used, this rating may not be comparable). All ratings increased between the Introduction, and the Summary rating (with the exception of Inuvik Adults, who were highest to begin with). Inuvik Youth increased from lowest score to the mean of the groups (5.9), suggesting that their cultural identity may have become more relevant to them over the course of the Learning Circle.

Ratings made on the basis of the significant quotes (see Table 3) indicate great variation across Learning Circles: most quotes relating to behavioural expression of cultural identity occurred for the Winnipeg Inmates and Halifax Women, followed by Halifax Elders and Saskatchewan Treaty; fewest (none) were made by Inuvik Youth and Québec Adults.

Overall, the rank order (last column of Table 2) of the behavioural expression of cultural Identity was highest for Winnipeg Inmates and least for

Inuvik Youth, with the other Learning Circles generally clustered in the middle range.

Through the behavioural expression of their cultural identity some participants attempted to educate the larger society as well as maintain their own culture. One participant indicated that: "In the mainstream society I do positive things. I facilitate Metis cultural workshops. I go into schools and do lectures. And through my music, I perform in the Metis community, but also the mainstream society. I'm promoting the Metis Nation all the time." Other participants have always expressed their cultural identity throughout their lives: "I have not changed. No matter where I live, I've always taken my Nativeness with me." And for others, their future includes continued traditional practices: "To me, spirituality is first, and everything comes from that." In addition to declaring unequivocal support for the ongoing behavioural expression of cultural identity, many acknowledged its importance in their past. "I will not, as long as I have breath in me, give up my principles of the Native way, or sacrifice that. The Native Way has carried me to this point."

Importance. The importance of cultural identity may be estimated generally by the overall number of significant statements made about identity that were noted by the two raters. All quotations were categorized into six groups, according to their content: Perception, Importance, Esteem, Maintenance, Behavioural Expression and Consolidation/Confusion. The number of quotes in each category are listed for each Learning Circle in Table 3. Overall, there are many quotes, indicating a significant level of concern for cultural identity. More specifically, the number of quotes dealing directly with the Importance of cultural identity (47) supports this view.

Insert Table 3 here

However, there was very wide variation in numbers of quotes, with the largest number coming from Winnipeg Inmates and Saskatchewan Treaty, and the fewest from Inuvik Youth.

Some participants expressed bitterness towards those who limited the importance of their culture and identity: "It's not right that an individual or group of people try to limit an individual's right to exercise his own unique background. One should be proud of who they are and where they come from." Others noted how little their true identity had meant for them in the past and how much they valued it now: "At one time being Native and this culture meant nothing to me. Now I have a different view. It is the most important thing in my life and I want to keep it."

The belief that their culture was not only important to them but to the wider community was stated by many: "White man is now coming to Native people to learn how to heal. It might be late, but not too late. It is important that Native people share their experience and knowledge to try to keep a balance right now before we destroy ourselves within the global context or even the universe." And for others, it was important not only for them but for their families: "It wasn't until the 80s that I started to learn about my Native ancestry. When I started to do some research, I found out who I really was. And it was so important to me. And I could show my parents how important it was to them as well as me."

Perception. The self-perception or self-categorization of each participant can be seen in two activities. First, in Activity 5 ("Dream/Community") explicit identity statements were rated during analysis as representing "Aboriginal", "Non-Aboriginal", "Both", and "Neither", for each participant's "Past", "Present" and "Future". Second, in the individual summary (sheet 15) terms used by individuals to identify themselves were noted by the two raters.

Insert Table 4 here

For Activity 5, frequencies of self-categorization were summed across the two raters in each of the four identity categories, for each of the three time periods. Hence the maximum possible number for each identity is double the number of participants in each Learning Circle. However, in some cases ratings were not possible for all participants, and so the numbers are always less than the maximum possible. In the case of three Learning Circles (Inuvik Youth, Winnipeg Metis, and Québec Adults) only one rater provided scores; hence the numbers have been doubled to make more or less comparable to those reported for the other LC's. In Table 4, the number of self-perceptions are presented for each of the four possible cultural identities at each of the three time periods (from Activity 5); the total number of self-perceptions (over the three time periods) are then presented. In the last column, similar data are shown from the Summary sheet (15). At the bottom of Table 4 are the totals, summing across all 10 Learning Circles; both the total number and the percentages are given.

There was substantial variation across Learning Circles in self-perception of an "Aboriginal" identity, from highs for Inuvik Youth (64 mentions) and Victoria Artists (56) to lows for Victoria Metis, Saskatchewan Treaty and Halifax Elders (34 each). Despite this variation an "Aboriginal" identity was by far the vast majority of self-perceptions: 86% compared to 4 or 5% for the other three identity choices ("non-Aboriginal", "Both", "Neither"). Over the three time periods, "Aboriginal" choices increased from 75% in the past to 88% in the present and 96% in the future implying an increasing Aboriginal identity over the course of participants' lives. There was, naturally, a corresponding decline in the other three identity choices: "Non-Aboriginal" went from 9% in the past, to 2% at present to zero in the future; "Both" went from 7% in the past to 6% at present to 5% in the future (really a minimal change); and "Neither" went from 9% in the past to 4% at present to 1% in the future.

With respect to the terms used to self-identity on the Summary sheet 15, codings were made of statements that revealed the four identity choices. In some cases more than one perception was coded (eg. "I'm Metis, but I don't really belong anywhere" was coded as both "Aboriginal" and "Neither"); hence the numbers are variable across Learning Circles. The relative frequencies (percentages), however, give much the same picture as Activity 5 ("Dream/Community" activity): "Aboriginal" identity is by far the most common (74%), with the other three identities much less frequent ("Non-Aboriginal", 2%, "Both", 11%; "Neither" 13). In this analysis, though, the "Both" and "Neither" identities appear to be higher (about double) than in the former analysis, but remain rather low in comparison to an "Aboriginal" cultural identity choice. Overall, there appears to be a clear perception by the majority of participants of themselves as "Aboriginal."

Evidence for this is particularly present in the quotes. Many participants had very clear perceptions about who they were and are: "I was born a Native person, I will die a Native person. I don't need a white card with a number to tell me who I am - I know who I am. I am an Indian person, an Indian human being." Others knew who they were but felt intimidated by the larger society: "I know who I am and what my culture is but I am an angry person. I am angry because I am trapped in a white man's world." Still others tried to change who they were and found only unhappiness until they accepted their cultural identity. "I wanted to be white all my life. They had money, they had nice cars. Every time I tried to be white, I fell short. I got really frustrated and real angry until I learned I can be myself. I am proud to be who I am." Some rejected beliefs that had been superimposed on their traditional beliefs: "My heart says I am part of the Aboriginal people. I found it appropriate to study the ceremonial traditions. I found it inappropriate to study the Bible. I belong here with the Aboriginal people".

Maintenance. An overall rating of the degree to which participants expressed a desire to retain and/or to regain some aspect of their Aboriginal heritage was made by one rater; these ratings were supplemented by ratings

made during data analysis. These mean ratings are presented in Table 5 for each Learning Circle. Overall, there is a substantial desire for Aboriginal Cultural Identity Maintenance (mean of 6.42 out of a possible 7). However, there is some variation across groups, with Halifax Elders scoring highest (7.0) followed closely by Victoria Artists (6.9); lowest were Victoria Metis (5.9).

Insert Table 5 here

Supporting this variation, Table 3 earlier showed that most significant quotes regarding Maintenance were made by Victoria Artists (15) and Halifax Elders (11); but fewest were made by Inuvik Youth and Québec Adults (none).

Some participants had found a balance between the Aboriginal and the larger society: "I have adjusted to the European way of doing things in terms of working for them. Even though it's difficult, living in an urban setting I can't practise the ceremonies, that part of our heritage. My job helps me to get back home to do that." Others felt that the way in which they will maintain their cultural heritage is to respect themselves and each other: "We have to begin to respect ourselves, respect our culture, our spirituality, respect others cultures. We must respect each other." Some participants felt the urgency of immediate action: "What's the matter with this society? We have to wake up. Even some of our own leaders. We all got to learn. That's where it's got to start, educating our young people." Others noted the importance of culture maintenance in their own lives: "I started to learn about my culture. This is something I can believe in. This is something I can grab on to. This is something I can feel proud of."

Esteem. An overall rating of self-esteem was made of each individual participant by the two raters. The means of these ratings are presented in the second column of Table 5. Generally, they are very positive (with an overall mean of 6.42 out of a possible 7), but there is some variation: Saskatchewan Treaty showed the lowest (5.8) with Victoria Artists and Winnipeg Metis

showing the highest (6.7), along with Québec Adults (at 7.0, but for methodological reasons, this mean may not be comparable).

Some participants expressed how successful they had been in being able to feel comfortable in the Aboriginal and larger society: "I feel very good about both societies. My work-related activities allow me to share my Aboriginal side with non-Aboriginal very positively." Others noted how fortunate they had been to grow up in loving, sharing families and how they wished to help others: "I have given my whole being to Native people. I was lucky to have the childhood that I was given." Those who experienced doubt and fear found a solution through their own strengths: "I am not afraid of anything. I would think that the Spirit would be there to help me to know who I am. The Spirit says to be proud of who you are." And others whose self-esteem had suffered greatly found the courage to change: "I grew up very much ashamed of who I was . It's only in the last four years that I have started to be proud of who I am as an Indian person."

Identity Consolidation/Confusion. Wherever relationships among the five components of cultural identity were inconsistent or conflicted, or when there was uncertainty about them , identity confusion was noted during data analysis. For 37 participants some degree of identity confusion was found; 35 of these revealed confusion between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Identities, while 2 were because of confusion between two Aboriginal cultural groups. The degree of identity confusion was also rated (on a 7 point scale) during data analysis; the mean level for these 37 individuals was 3.3.

In some cases, it was possible to rate changes over time where participants referred to an earlier confusion about their identity but more recent consolidation; 9 of the 37 participants indicated that this was the case, while none indicated any change toward greater confusion.

While the existence of 37 participants with identity confusion (out of a total of 114) is serious cause for concern, it is evident that most participants (77) revealed no such confusion. However, where identity

confusion was revealed, the range and depth of feelings were clear, and negative.

Children who grew up in Aboriginal communities (both Reserves and elsewhere) with strong links to their culture, through language, traditional activities and spirituality suffered both extreme cultural loss and identity confusion when they were removed to residential schools or foster care. Most participants expressed great discomfort in their new surroundings but often they did not fully understand the effects of this action until recently. One participant noted: "I now realize how devastating the residential schools were for our people. It moulded them and made them embarrassed of who they are."

Psychological conflicts and contradictions between Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and organized religious beliefs (such as Roman Catholicism) were also responsible for much of the identity confusion that was expressed. Another participant stated; "I was brought up in the reserve with a strong Catholic religion. I left at a very young age, because I was confused about who I was and what I was doing."

Children who found themselves placed in foster care with no valid or legitimate explanations as to why this happened were equally confused: "I was taken away from my family at an early age. I was placed in Foster Care - 14 different homes. I was beaten, and I dealt with it by learning how to fight and later how to run." Though some children found physical stability in their new surroundings, often they felt abandoned by their own people. One participant lamented: "I used to have a lot of resentment towards my own people. Why was I put in homes? Why did no one come and get me? I felt like an outcast throughout my life." Another participant recognized that she too was missing an important part of her self: "In my foster home, I had the basics - food, shelter, warmth, but no emotional love at all. I felt that I didn't belong anywhere."

Some participants expressed the need to hide their connections to their Aboriginal communities even from their partners because of discrimination in the larger society. One noted: " When I was growing up, there was so much

discrimination, you didn't dare mention the word Micmac. I never told a soul. My husband died and he didn't even know who I was. I even changed my name so nobody would know."

Others found that their parents had hidden their Aboriginal ancestry from them, because they believed that by denying their roots they had a better future: "My mother didn't tell us about our heritage when I was small because of the shame she experienced in her life." Others expressed anger with their parents for refusing them the right to know who they were. Their parents felt that by "acting white" they had a better chance for success in their lives. In some cases this has caused not only confusion for individuals but also for their communities: "I still have a lot of anger inside of me. It is the same old story, the white man looks at you as an Indian. And you go to your Indian brothers and they look at you as a white man because your attitudes, beliefs and values are constructed in that area. It's a real struggle for me."

Some participants growing up in both cultures were confused as to where they wanted to go. "I grew up with my grandparents but was forced to go to school in the white world. Coming out of both was hard for me. I learned to adjust to the white man's way, but that's not what I wanted. I wanted to go back but I knew my family wasn't there. So I had to learn on my own. I had to struggle, there is a lot of conflict for me."

Another said: "It is like I belong everywhere, but nowhere, I keep going. I feel like I'm searching all the time." This orientation is the well-known sense of Marginalization, outlined earlier in this Report.

Others felt that racism and prejudice within the Aboriginal community itself caused identity confusion for them: "For myself, my father is Metis and my mother is Treaty. I like to think of myself as a Metis and Treaty. My Treaty people say we don't have a problem with you being Metis and we accept you as Treaty. My Metis part says you can't be a Metis person because you got a Treaty number. That's not right."

Some spoke of the results of identity confusion and how it has affected their future and their children's future: "One of the greatest needs I have is

to belong. Another need I have is to be accepted as a Native person. I was ashamed of it growing up. I didn't teach my children to be proud. Now my oldest son won't admit his Native ancestry. I lost that."

Leaving Aboriginal communities for the larger society and seeing themselves reflected by the attitudes of others was frequently mentioned as a source of confusion: "When you live off the Reserve, you know what it is to be an Indian. That's when I really had an identity crisis. On the Reserve I was protected. Once I left, it was a slap in the face."

Some participants noted that how one's identity is defined by others impacts heavily on who you feel you are: "When you start listening to these people in society telling us we are a bunch of losers, drunks, alcoholics or less than anybody else in society...that's when people start to get confused. And that's when your connection to the spirit becomes damaged."

The Media was also mentioned as a source of identity confusion: "The biggest influence was the T.V; that's what made me ashamed to be Indian. In western movies the Indians were always being killed - never accepted anywhere."

Factors Influencing Identity. In addition to obtaining information about the various components of Aboriginal cultural identity, the Learning Circles included four activities designed to obtain information to better understand what factors had influenced a person's identity. There were activities 6 and 7 ("History, Ancestral, Personal Background" that Diminished or Strengthened Cultural Identity"), activity 9 ("Events and Experiences that Deprived or Denied" one's cultural identity), and Activity 10 ("Kinships/Relationships Circles"). All four activities provided a massive amount of information that was initially categorized by the two raters, and further categorized during data analysis. The final list of 12 categories used in this report is given in Table 6, along with the specific events and experiences that were included in each category. To some extent, this classification is subjective; others may have assigned the events and experiences to different categories, or indeed have established different categories.

Insert Table 6 here

The results of the analysis of activity 6/7 are presented in Table 7. In this activity, participants recalled and discussed important events and experiences in their lives that diminished or strengthened their sense of Aboriginal cultural identity. In the first column are the rank order of how often factors in each category were mentioned (low number representing high rank frequency). In the second column are the estimated percentages that "diminished" or "strengthened" cultural identity (estimated, because this information was only partially available).

Insert Table 7 here

Results of Activity 9 are also presented in Table 7. In this activity, participants were asked to indicate what events and experiences in their lives had the effect of denying or depriving them of an Aboriginal cultural identity. Once again, the rank order of how often factors in each category were mentioned is given first, followed by the estimated percentage influence each factor "deprived" or "enhanced" the participants' cultural identity.

Comparing the results of these two Activities reveals some similarities and some differences in relative frequencies. For both activities, Traditional Culture, Family and Land are of major importance, while Social Relations, Church and the Media are of lesser importance. Of course, the range of factors that were included in these categories may have influenced these rankings, since the number of specific factors that were placed in each category varied across categories. Marked differences are present for Education (relatively more important in Activity 9), and Government Institutions (more important in Activity 6/7).

In activity 10, participants were asked to draw two circles (side by side), with the sizes representing the relative importance of Aboriginal and

non-Aboriginal influences on their cultural identity. As shown in Table 8 (circle size ratio), there is only a slightly greater influence of Aboriginal factors (a size ratio of 1.16 between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal circles). However, 40 Aboriginal circles were larger than the respective non-Aboriginal circles, while the reverse was true in 25 cases; for 14 participants the two circles were much the same size. There is a great deal of variation across Learning Circles in these results: Aboriginal circles were relatively much larger for Inuvik Youth (1.52), Québec Adults (1.50) and Winnipeg Metis (1.41.), while Aboriginal circles were somewhat smaller for Victoria Metis (.83) and Saskatchewan Treaty (.91) participants.

Insert Table 8 here

In activity 10, participants were also asked to draw two more circles, one representing Aboriginal, and the other representing non-Aboriginal influences on their cultural identity. Each circle was divided into sectors of various sizes representing the relative importance of these various factors; and for each factor the degree of positive and negative influence was indicated by participants. These circle drawings were analysed (Table 9) and the results (in the first column) provide a picture that is similar to those obtained with Activities 6/7 and 9. Traditional Culture, Family and Land are the most important "Aboriginal" influences (both with respect to the frequency with which they are mentioned, and the percentage of the circle they represent), while Government Institutions are the most important "Non-Aboriginal" influences. The second column of Table 9 presents the percentage negative vs positive impact of each factor on Aboriginal cultural identity. Most negative are Prejudice, Addictions and Residential School; most positive are the Land and Traditional Culture.

Insert Table 9 here

Taking these last three exercises together (6/7, 9, 10) and considering the positive or negative impact on cultural identity of these various factors, the picture is very clear: experiences with the Land, Traditional Culture, Social Relations and Family are the most positive influences; experiences with Addictions, Prejudice, Residential Schools and Government Institutions are the most negative influences. This overall picture is presented in Table 10, where the rank importance of each factor, and the rank positive influence are brought together in summary form across Activities 6/7, 9 and 10. Clearly these four most positive factors have been within the Aboriginal sphere, while the four most negative factors have been in the non-Aboriginal sphere of influence. However, two of these negative factors (the impact of Government Institutions and experiencing Addictions) are relatively important sources of influence (rank 3 and 5), and have to be considered to be a serious impediment to the attainment of a positive, and consolidated Aboriginal cultural identity.

Insert Table 10 here

Many important statements were made by participants regarding various factors affecting their cultural identity:

Traditional Culture. Large numbers of participants expressed the underlying importance of a return to their traditional values and culture including language, elders, spirituality, arts and community. Those who had never lost their connection to their cultures felt enriched by that contact and sustained by it during difficult periods of their lives. One participant stated: "I can remember my past from my grandparents. I always had that traditional perspective. It's been one of my saving graces - remembering what they taught me." Others spoke of their lack of knowledge and understanding of who they were and where they belonged. One expressed it like this: "Once I moved back into a Micmac community it was comforting. It's like I found home. I wanted to go home. I'm home. It's good to be home."

For many, a new awareness of themselves and their need is surfacing and they are now taking steps to connect with their own traditions. As one participant noted: "I'm Cree. It just gives me a starting point to say this is where my heritage began. It's a truth. And I am quite proud of it."

One frequently mentioned key element of traditional culture was the role of the elders in their communities. Many participants noted how central they were to their own understanding of themselves. One stated: "Today when I live my life, I see reflections of what these old people told me. It clicks. They were right. And it reinforces me." Many return to their communities for continued guidance. As one participant expressed it: "One value of my tradition is to listen to the elders for the teachings of how to live, and the importance of extended families."

An overwhelming majority of participants declared that knowing their language was central to their cultural identity. Those who had maintained their language were very happy and proud to have it. A large percentage of those who had lost it were adamant that regaining their language was a top priority for them and their children. One participant declared: "One value of my culture is language. This is the most important thing to deal with for the next several generations."

Many felt that by previously having to suppress their language, they were pressured to deny who they were and to try and be somebody they were not. One participant lamented: "The language was the first thing I learned. I lost that when I went to Residential School. Today my children ask me where can they learn Micmac. I am sad that I can't teach them myself."

The belief that their spirituality will provide the formation for a sense of who they are, and a feeling of security within themselves, is a constant theme throughout these discussions. After years of denying who they were this process will evolve over time, but many participants have already begun that process. Two have expressed their progress like this: "Some people are learning just like me. The spiritual side is slowly coming to the

surface", and, "I'm dealing with my issues. I found I needed my spiritual side to heal."

This reconnection with their communities is the first step for many, and a hopeful one. As one participant remarked: "While searching for my identity, the comfort of the culture takes away the confusion. You feel like you are more at home."

Family. For many participants the presence, or lack, of a loving, sharing family (including the extended family) was a crucial influencing factor in their cultural identity. Their sense of belonging stemmed from a secure place within the family and from shared goals within the community. Many participants stressed the large impact that family members have made on their ability to cope in the larger society. "Often when I'm having a hard time, I have those people (my grandmothers) to turn to. They are always with me. It has made living a lot easier, especially in the urban area."

Many kinds of deprivation were highlighted by participants. People generally were deprived of their extended family, and family history: parents deprived of their children, children deprived of their parents; and elders deprived of their grandchildren, of their rightful role to teach from experience and of the respect that comes with their age. All were considered to be important factors that diminished their sense of cultural identity.

Many stated that they wished to heal themselves in order to provide for a new generation that would be happy and well-adjusted. That was the specific goal of numerous participants who were also prepared to work towards that end.

Land and Environment. Living on the land and feeling the close connection to their traditional cultural activities were articulated by many participants as central to their cultural identity. They lamented that being forced to live away from their home environment caused many of them to lose touch with themselves and with their culture. Being able to hunt, trap, fish and go berry picking were mentioned as traditional activities that were important to them. As one participant noted: " The lands, birds, people. We know what they can give us."

Living away from the land, many had lost their traditional skills. One elder commented: "The kids went to Residential School for 2-3 years. Boat was the only mode of transportation and they couldn't get back home. They lost everything. They forgot what they learned about living off the land and they couldn't speak their language."

Government. A large majority of participants felt that Government, mainly Institutions and Agencies had influenced their cultural identity in a very powerful way, largely negative but some positive.

Institutions such as Prisons were blamed for ignoring the cultural needs of prisoners. One participant stated: "Institutions need to recognize our culture. That's where the frustration comes here - the lack of opportunity to participate in our culture".

Government Agencies such as Social Services, Welfare and Housing were largely negative factors in influencing cultural identity. Comments such as: "Social Services changed me completely by taking me away. No one was lazy until the welfare system came into our communities", and "Government is a real negative for me because of the lack of independence we are born into", reflect the frustration that many participants felt with the lack of power they experienced in their own lives due to Government policies.

Addictions. Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, cigarettes) and gambling were often referred to by participants as an attempt to escape from or deny their cultural identity. The experience of repeated acts of discrimination and prejudice had diminished the pride they felt in themselves and replaced it with shame. Substance abuse, in particular, provided a means to obliterating these feelings of shame and low self-esteem. One participant shared: "It's really hard to talk about. I came from a family of 17 before residential school. We are now a family of 8 after residential school, through the alcohol, drugs, suicides and suicide attempts. I even tried it and almost succeeded because I didn't know who I was."

Others have made a real effort to come to terms with their hurt and anger. It has not been easy but they have found the strength through

reconnections to their traditional culture. One participant said: "It's been only 7 years since I sobered up and got away from drugs. My Indian spirituality has helped me out quite a bit. It's helped me to grow, to keep stable. To me it's very important."

Some participants still felt caught in limbo: "So we bring up our children. We are not really teaching them the Native ways, Native values. Now we see our kids as drug addicts, suicidals and alcoholics, in jails because they don't know their ways of life, their histories. We just aren't teaching them that."

Residential School. A major traumatizing factor influencing cultural identity was the experience of residential school. Children who grew up in happy families spoke of loss and confusion when removed from their communities to these Residential Schools for 10-11 months of the year. One participant recalled: "The first thing they did was to cut off my braids and throw them to the floor. Then they used a fine-tooth comb to find lice, but I didn't have any. Then they took away all my clothes."

In the schools, the children experienced discrimination. They were told that they were stupid, lazy and parasites on society. They learned that being Indians they belonged to the Devil and that they would burn in Hell. One participant lamented: "All those things that I had learned at home, respect, sharing, caring were all taken away from me by those "so-called" men and women of God. I began to hate my people because they were the reason I was here at Residential School."

Although the children were at school to get an education, many felt that they had received the minimal amount. They were often used to clean and maintain the buildings instead of attending classes.

Many spoke of the abuse they suffered, emotional, physical and sexual. The rules were extremely harsh. They couldn't speak their language and for many participants this was one of their biggest losses - the ability to communicate in their own tongue. They couldn't wave or say hello to their siblings in the school and they seemed to be hungry most of the time. They

learned to listen, to forget their own language and to learn to speak the language used in the schools.

Physical and sexual abuse were widespread. The children were not allowed to disclose what happened in the schools. One participant described her situation. "One of the rules was that we were never ever supposed to talk about the nuns, brothers and priests. And I think that is why our people are so silent about what happened there. They told us we would all burn in hell forever and ever. It took me so long to even talk about it. Participants reported being beaten with a strap that had 7 strips of leather tied with knots. And if they weren't being beaten, they had to watch those who were. One remembered: "They used to give a hell of a licking, not a spanking for the pleasure of it. Or for speaking my language. That's where I learned to hate."

These early experiences marked many of these children for a long period of time, and even today, many find the memories extremely painful to recall. As one participant expressed it: "Residential School is superimposed on everything else in my life."

Racism/Prejudice/Discrimination. Many participants expressed the view that acts of racism, prejudice and discrimination against them as people had extremely negative effects on their cultural identity. Often while growing up in their traditional communities they felt secure and content, but when leaving these communities they experienced hurt and confusion. One participant noted: "The biggest thing that impacts and triggers me off and gets me raging is institutional racism (University, Social Services, Hospital). But I didn't know what to do about it."

But other participants felt discriminated against within their own communities. As one participant recalled: "We were not welcome on the Reserve because I was married to a non-Native. We moved to the city and never tried to go back to the Reserve. I would love to live there but I don't know if I would be welcome."

One participant expressed the view that not only had she suffered a loss of cultural identity because of discrimination but so had her children: "I

suffered terrible consequences as a child that caused me to deny I was a Micmac. I feel sorrow that this had happen because my children don't have a sense of who they are."

Church. Part of the confusion surrounding cultural identity can be traced to the introduction of Church-based religion into the lives of the participants; these new religions often conflicted with and sometimes displaced traditional beliefs. Children leaving their families and communities to enter the residential schools were exposed to a new religious belief system which often derogated the one that they had been taught at home. Many participants today still carry the anger and hurt they experienced in the Residential schools. As one noted: "I can't get over the Catholic (influence)..... Where is the outrage? How can they call me savage when I have perfectly related to my spiritual side?"

Many participants discovered that they didn't feel comfortable with this new religion and quietly found their own solutions. One participant stated: "The Roman Catholic Church was beaten into me. The fear of God was pounded into me. After a while I started to see that I didn't need these beliefs. I started to learn about my culture. In my culture I didn't have anything to fear."

Others dismissed the imposed system of beliefs. As one commented: "I don't want to have anything to do with the Catholic Church. I don't need the Catholic Church. What is important to me is that I have that oneness with the Spiritual side."

But for many others, the conflict and confusion is still unresolved. One participant shared: "The conflict comes from the fact that I'm angry at the Church, but I can't connect with my anger without upsetting my family who are firm believers in the Catholic Church."

Social Relations. Relationships amongst family and friends were extremely important to the preservation of cultural identity. The extended family and other members of their Aboriginal communities provided an understanding of what it was to belong. Those participants who were removed

from this community or who felt alienated from it because of family break-up or discrimination felt a loss of cultural identity.

Traditional activities such as story-telling, dancing, singing, sweats, feasts and sport days brought communities together and reinforced the value of their culture. Many participants felt that there was real need to provide opportunities for these activities again in order to reestablish strong cultural identities.

Media. Many participants felt that Aboriginal peoples had been portrayed very negatively in the press, in films and on T.V. Some grew up to be ashamed of their ancestry and to deny their own cultural identity. Expressions such as "savages", "half-breeds" and "drunken Indians" diminished them as people and prevented them from feeling a sense of pride in themselves.

Education. A majority of participants lamented the fact that their formal education had not recognized their cultural needs and had subsequently impacted very negatively on their cultural identity. Specifically lacking were: A culturally relevant curriculum, including traditional activities, historically accurate information as part of this curriculum and a knowledge of other Aboriginal communities in the different regions of Canada. Also noted were acts of discrimination in the school system, a lack of Native teachers and the fact that many students had dropped out of school because they missed their home communities. One participant articulated a feeling of helplessness: "The system wants to keep us down. It cuts post-secondary education funds because so many of our young people want the education to try and make it better for Indian people."

Economy. The opportunities for employment in the cities compelled many Aboriginal peoples to leave their communities to look for work. Living in the larger society caused many to lose their cultural identity. As a result they experienced many conflicts within themselves. One explained: "Learning to survive in the urban wilderness.... put me into situations where I had to compromise the morals and values I was taught. It took away a lot of self-respect and dignity." Some expressed their disappointment with the fact that

they couldn't return to live in their communities: "When I go back to the Reserve, there is nothing there. No job. No economic development." Many participants feared unemployment, resulting poverty and unsuitable housing in addition to a loss of their cultural identity.

Social Process Analysis. Seven dimensions of the social processes taking place within the Learning Circles were rated in order to monitor the quality of human relationships within them. Three of these ratings were repeated over time in order to obtain a sense of the social dynamics of the group from early in their interactions until late in their activities. These repeated measures were: Group Cohesion (Activities 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11);, Social Interaction (Activities 2, 10) and Trust Within Group (Activities 1, 2, 3, 8). Tables 11, 12 and 13 (in Appendix C) show these ratings over the activities noted, and provide a mean for each Learning Circle, and at each time. In all three cases, the quality of social relationships improved as the interactions continued within the group. However, there were wide variations across groups; these are displayed in Table 14 in Appendix C (by rank, along with other social process variables that were rated at one time only).

These other ("one time") variables are presented in Table 15 in Appendix C: Self-Disclosure (Activity 1); Physical Contact (Activity 2), Trust in System (Activity 4) and Belief in Positive Impact (Activity 4). Large variations appear across these variables as well, (see Table 14 for ranks). These means suggest that social relationships were only moderately established in the Learning Circles.

To obtain an overall impression of the quality of social relationships in the Learning Circles, the three repeatedly-rated variables and Self-disclosure were taken together to yield an overall rank (see first column of Table 14): Victoria Metis and Halifax Elders had the highest ranks, while Winnipeg Metis and Inuvik Youth had the lowest ranks. This variation was fairly consistent across dimensions being rated, suggesting a good degree of reliability in these ratings.

6. Project Evaluation and Interpretation.

Evaluation. To evaluate this project as a research activity, it is useful to be reminded of both the limitations and possibilities of the work that was done. First, the large variety of Aboriginal peoples, experiences and views in Canada cannot possibly be adequately sampled, not to mention sampled in a representative way, in a project such as this. There were only 114 participants, in six geographical locations, drawn from a few cultural backgrounds. It is thus impossible to generalize from these findings to the Canadian Aboriginal population as a whole. However, the results obtained reveal substantial variation, suggesting that the larger variation in the population as a whole is possibly being revealed in these data. Moreover, within this variation, there are a number of common themes and findings, suggesting that the project was able to uncover some widely shared and fundamental issues and experiences affecting Aboriginal peoples.

Second, of the whole array of contemporary Aboriginal concerns, only one has been the focus of this project. However, the Commission noted that cultural identity was a concern of major importance during its initial rounds of consultations. Indeed our findings suggest that cultural identity plays a central role in many lives, serving as the interface between the individual and the community: an individual's cultural identity is the result of previous influences that occurred in a variety of contexts; and it now serves as the lens through which individuals view themselves and their relationships with other people and with communities.

Interpretation. With these preliminary evaluative observations in mind, let us review and consider the main findings in detail. First, cultural identity issues are clearly important to participants; they spoke openly and frequently about their feelings and experiences, despite low initial levels of trust and cohesiveness, and despite low belief in any positive impact of their discussions on Government, or of Government action on their lives.

Second, at the level of self-perception, participants have a very clear view of themselves as Aboriginal persons: the vast majority of participants identified as "Aboriginal", and expressed this in a variety of ways within the

secure environment of the Learning Circles. This finding corresponds with results reported (earlier in this Report) from other research studies that provided evidence that Aboriginal people know very well who they are. However, in less secure environments, particularly those where prejudice or cultural prohibition have dominated their lives, many participants spoke of hiding their cultural identity, to the point where it became confused, and even denied by them.

Denial, however, was not evident within the Learning Circles. Rather, many indicated their desire to regain, not just maintain, important aspects of their cultural identity. In particular, acquiring their language, regaining their spirituality, and generally learning as much as possible from Elders, was the central goal in the lives of many participants. Again, these expressions, however genuine within the context of the Learning Circles, may not be realistic possibilities under present circumstances, where many features of their lives have been negatively affected by non-Aboriginal experiences in the past, and remain controlled by non-Aboriginal institutions and agencies in the present. Healing the past, and changing the present to provide future possibilities thus appears to be the only appropriate course.

The past has terrorized the lives of many of the participants: residential schools, foster homes, abuse, prejudice and discrimination, prison and addictions have taken their psychological and cultural toll. Unfortunately, the past is also the present for many; the current reality will likely strike with force as soon as they leave the Learning Circle.

This overall pattern of findings and observations can be interpreted in a number of ways; this report interprets them in relation to process of acculturation.⁸ A general framework for understanding this process has been presented by Berry (1990; see Figure 4). As noted earlier in this Report, acculturation is a term which has been defined as culture change that results from continuous, first hand contact between two distinct cultural groups (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits, 1936). Changes at the level of the group are usually widespread, in such areas as demography, nutrition, economics,

political control and social relationships (see below). Acculturation is now also widely recognized as an individual-level phenomenon, and is termed psychological acculturation (Graves, 1967). At this second level, acculturation refers to changes in an individual whose cultural group is collectively experiencing acculturation. It is important to note that, while mutual changes are implied in the definition, in fact most changes occur in the non-dominant group (culture B) as a result of influence from the dominant group (culture A).

Insert Figure 4 here

Not all changes at the group level are "cultural" in the narrow sense of the term. There are other changes in the group resulting from contact and the resulting acculturation (see e.g. Berger, 1977). First, there are physical changes: a new place to live, a new type of housing, increasing population density, urbanization, more pollution etc. Second, biological changes may occur: new nutritional status, and new diseases (often devastating in force). Third, political changes occur, usually bringing the non-dominant groups under some degree of political control, and usually involving some loss of autonomy. Fourth, economic changes occur, moving away from traditional pursuits toward new forms of employment. Fifth, cultural changes (which are at the heart of the definition of acculturation) necessarily occur: original linguistic, religious, educational and technical institutions become altered, or imported ones take their place. Sixth, social relationships become altered, including intergroup and inter-personal relations.

At the individual level, numerous psychological changes occur. Changes in behaviour are well-documented in the literature (see Berry, 1980 for a review); these include values, attitudes, abilities and motives. Stress phenomena, and related problems, both appear during acculturation (see Berry, Kim, Minde & Mok, 1987) including the psychological, social and physical health consequences of acculturation. While these negative and largely

unwanted consequences of acculturation are not inevitable, and while there are also opportunities to be encountered during acculturation, it is nevertheless the case that serious problems usually do appear in relation to acculturation (Berry and Kim, 1988). It is our view that these problems reside in the interaction between the two groups in contact, and that they can be managed and ameliorated by identifying their specific source in the interaction.

Cultural identity, as we have seen, is an issue that comes to the fore during acculturation (Clark, et al. 1976). Existing identities change and new ones develop: personal identity and ethnic identity often shift away from those held prior to contact, and views about how one should participate in the process of acculturation emerge (see Berry, Kim, Power, Young & Bujaki, 1989); other attitudes (such as intergroup attitudes and lifestyle preferences) also change and develop during acculturation.

Finally, individuals may adapt psychologically in a variety of ways. Four of these were described earlier, using the concepts of assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization. Previous research has clearly shown that the most positive adaptations are achieved by those pursuing integration (as defined in figure 2 and footnote 5), while the most negative outcomes are present among those individuals who have become marginalized, particularly when this has resulted from forced cultural loss (Berry, 1992a; Berry & Hart Hansen, 1985; Kurtness, 1987; O'Neil, 1986).

Specifically with respect to the experience of Aboriginal peoples in Canada in their relationships with the larger society, many group level features of this general framework have been identified in this project: physical changes have included forced reservation and institutional living, as well as an increase in urbanization; biological changes have included the process of mixing for Metis and other groups, an increase in substance abuse, and changes in diet and disease patterns; political changes have taken place mainly at the hands of government institutions, including DIAND, police, courts, and welfare institutions; economic changes have involved shifts away from a land base to wage employment and unemployment; cultural changes have

been widespread, and have included the loss of traditional culture and language, the imposition of residential schools, disruption of the family, and the influence of the church and media; and social changes have involved prejudice and a variety of new social relationships with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

At the individual level, massive changes in their daily behaviour were noted by many participants, including dress, eating, addictions, language, beliefs, work and recreation. Acculturative stress has resulted from these acculturative changes in their group and individual lives (see Berry, 1992a for a review and analysis of this concept in relation to Aboriginal peoples). The concept of acculturative stress refers to a form of stress in which the stressors (ie. the problems giving rise to stress) are identified as having their source in the process of acculturation. There is often a particular set of stress behaviours, which occur during acculturation, such as lowered mental health status (specifically anxiety and depression), feelings of marginality and alienation, substance abuse, loss of self-esteem and identity loss and confusion (Timble & Medicine, 1984). Thus, acculturative stress is a phenomenon that may underlie many of the social and psychological problems of individuals that often accompany culture contact and change. To qualify as acculturative stress, these problems should be related in a systematic way to known features of the acculturation process.

Cultural identity, the core of this project, includes all those features that were outlined earlier and sketched in Figure 1; they need not be elaborated again here. However, it is important to note that the notion of "Aboriginal cultural identity" implies both that such an identity is actually a part of an Aboriginal person's current self-perception, and that it has its roots in Aboriginal experiences. While the first implication is probably correct (given the selection process for participants, and the high level of perception of participants as "Aboriginal" found in this study), the second implication is probably not completely correct. Contemporary Aboriginal cultural identity has been forged over the centuries, and in the course of

individual lives, in a foundry with two blacksmiths: the evidence presented earlier (Table 6) shows clearly that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures have had profound impacts on the shape and substance of Aboriginal cultural identity as we have glimpsed it in this project. The finding that Aboriginal influences have been largely (but not entirely) positive, while non-Aboriginal influences have been largely (but not entirely) negative, points clearly to the importance of the Commission's key goal of establishing a new relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. It is likely that only if and when the two sets of cultural influences are able to work in concert and in harmony will Aboriginal peoples be in a position to reestablish a consolidated and positive cultural identity.

Insert Figure 5 here

With this general acculturation framework as background, we can now consider the question of how best to place the findings of this project into a meaningful framework of their own. In Figure 5 an attempt is made to portray the background factors (events and experiences in the two societies) that have led to Aboriginal cultural identity as uncovered in this project. As in the general acculturation framework (Figure 4), Figure 5 begins with the contact and interaction of the two originally independent and autonomous cultural groups. Clearly this interaction has not been egalitarian, and has been characterized by attempts at complete domination of Aboriginal peoples by non-Aboriginal society. While some aspects of non-Aboriginal society did change, the vast majority of the cultural changes took place among Aboriginal peoples. Simultaneously, there has been substantial and prolonged resistance by Aboriginal peoples to this attempted domination, leading to many features of contemporary Aboriginal society and a number of related negative and positive social and psychological consequences shown in Figure 5.

The long term outcome of this historical sequence and contemporary situation can take one of three courses: one would be for Aboriginal peoples

to remain suspended in the present social and psychological turmoil; a second would be to be for Aboriginal peoples to be destroyed and to disappear; and a third would involve their healing and recovery. All three possible outcomes are jointly in the hands of both the non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal societies. Under present arrangements, the first is likely to continue, but with increasingly severe consequences for both groups. If non-Aboriginal society increases the domination by employing more fully all those (mainly negative) practices noted in Figure 5 (upper left box), then Aboriginal peoples will likely approach destruction and eventual disappearance. However, if the domination is reduced or is removed, then those (mainly positive) influences residing and remaining in Aboriginal society (upper right box) may permit healing to begin and recovery of cultural identity to be attained.

7. Policy Implications

The main findings of this study are consistent with conclusions based upon other examinations of contemporary issues facing Aboriginal peoples (eg. Berry & Hart Hansen, 1985): contact and the resultant acculturation and domination have led to both substantial social and psychological problems among Aboriginal peoples as well as to numerous positive responses. The only solution that does not involve Aboriginal peoples remaining suspended in such a state, or their destruction and disappearance, is to eliminate the current domination and to heal the wounds of past domination.

Both of these changes involve Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples alike; since the problems have come about through interaction, their solution likewise can probably best be achieved through interaction (see Health and Welfare Canada, 1990). However, former interactions were largely conflictual and controlled by non-Aboriginal peoples, while to be effective in achieving these changes, future interactions should be cooperative and be largely controlled by Aboriginal peoples. Having asserted that these changes should involve both peoples, it should be noted that the first required change (the elimination of domination) is primarily the responsibility of the non-Aboriginal society, for it is from here that the most serious negative

influences are perceived to flow. In contrast, it is also clear that the second change (healing and recovery) is primarily the responsibility of Aboriginal peoples, for it is among them that most of the positive influences and resources are perceived to be available.

Neither change, however, can take place without understanding, acceptance and support by both communities. That there is a strong desire for these changes among Aboriginal peoples is clear from Commission hearings, from the results of this project, and from most other contemporary statements by Aboriginal peoples (e.g. Erasmus, 1989). That there is sufficient support for such change among non-Aboriginal peoples is less clear. However, a recent review of non-Aboriginal attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples (Berry & Wells, 1994) suggests that there may well be enough goodwill in the larger society for joint action to succeed.

Such a programme of change has, at its core, the four "touchstones for change" called for by the Royal Commission (1993): a new relationship, self-determination, self-sufficiency, and healing. That the main policy implication to flow from this research project coincides with the views of the Commission, and with most informed contemporary views, should be taken as concurrent validation. Indeed it would have been a substantial inconsistency had the results of this study been otherwise.

The goal and the course are both clear; however, the means of attaining them are not. In my view, a strategy for change requires three components: committed leadership (from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies); active and forceful populations that demand change; and massive institutional and bureaucratic changes in the way relationships are structured between the two societies. The first of these three components (leadership) depends to a large extent upon choices made by the two populations, and upon demands emanating from them. The third (structural changes) requires replacing the old notion of domination from sea to sea, by the new vision of diversity as a fundamental characteristic of Canada. In essence it requires respect by the

pyramid for the circle, as the central image guiding human relationships in Canada.

8. Notes

1. The author should state explicitly the limits to his competence. First, as a person who is not of Aboriginal background, my knowledge is obviously limited, and my first-hand experience of Aboriginal cultural identity is non-existent. Second, as a psychologist, I have only partial knowledge of, and access to, the other social science literatures that are clearly relevant (particularly anthropology and sociology). Third, literatures outside the social sciences (particularly the areas of autobiography and fiction) are not covered. I thus make no attempt to speak for Aboriginal peoples; I merely try to convey the sense of their views, as expressed in the evidence gathered by this project, through the medium of social science research concepts and methods.
2. This distinction between individual and social aspects of the self-concept has been challenged recently by the claim that the non-social person, with purely individual characteristics is a construction of Western Euroamerican psychology. It may be a valid conceptualization in such "individualistic" societies, but not for more "collectivistic" societies. In the latter case, the notion of the person as an isolated entity, bounded by one's skin, is a fiction: individual persons exist only in relation to others, and their psychological qualities are constantly changing as they enter into various social relationships throughout their lives.

It is not known which (or, indeed if either) view of the self is more relevant to understanding Aboriginal peoples in Canada. On the one hand, autonomy and independence are well-documented values, and on the other, so are respect and mutual concern. However, since this project focuses on cultural identity (ie. on the social aspect of identity), this issue does not have to be solved in order to proceed with this Report. Future research should be devoted to this issue, since it affects a number of contemporary policy issues, such as the balance between individual and collective rights.

3. In this Project, there is no attempt to define Aboriginal. The Royal Commission undoubtedly has struggled with the meaning of this term, who is included and who is not. For practical purposes, we assume that it includes all people who self identify with Aboriginal culture, and who have some reasonable historical basis (either through the generations, or in their own lifetime) to claim such an identity.

4. The importance of self-esteem has been highlighted by the Royal Commission:

"The concept of self-esteem has become something of a buzz word in recent times. Such sudden, intense popularity for a word or phrase suggests that it reflects a new understanding of something that matters to a society. Self-esteem refers to a person's fundamental trust in, and positive regard for, his or her self- the sum total of who he or she is. The Commission was told that low self-esteem is one of the consequences of the colonial experience of Aboriginal people and that high self-esteem is a major goal of the healing process." (RCAP, Focusing the Discussion, p. 55)

5. The history of the use of the term Integration among Aboriginal peoples is a complex one. For most of the past two decades it has signified a policy of enforced cultural loss, and absorption into the larger Canadian society. The term has really meant what is termed Assimilation in Figure 2. To be clear, Integration in our terms refers to substantial cultural maintenance and development as Aboriginal people (i.e. maintaining the integrity of Aboriginal cultures), combined with the opportunity to participate as Aboriginal peoples in the larger society (i.e. becoming accepted as an integral part of the larger social framework). In some other literatures, this strategy has been termed "bicultural" (e.g. LaFramboise, et al, 1993).

6. These various acculturation options have been recognized by the Royal Commission (RCAP, Focusing the Dialogue, pp. 19-20). They note that: "Aboriginal peoples have resisted assimilation, but they have found themselves pushed unwillingly to the margins of Canadian society as well. According to many presenters, they had only two choices: to come to terms with the "white" culture, which both sucks them in and spits them out at the same time, or to disappear from sight. The mandate of the Commission is to seek more positive options- options that offer genuine opportunities to Aboriginal people to negotiate how they will participate in the broader Canadian society without sacrificing what gives them their specific identity as Aboriginal people."

In the terms used in this Report, there appears to be a clear rejection by presenters to the Commission of both the Assimilation and Marginalization that have taken place over the history of relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. "Disappearing from sight" probably implies the Separation option; this appears not to be supported, given the goal of "establishing a new relationship". The phrasing of the "more positive option" corresponds closely to the Integration alternative, in which Aboriginal peoples can participate in the larger society on their own terms, and without loss of their cultural identity. In other words, the price of equitable participation should not be cultural disappearance. This option, of course, depends upon the willingness of non-Aboriginal people in Canada to accommodate Aboriginal people on their own terms. A recent review of the evidence (Berry & Wells, 1994; Berry & Kalin, 1994), suggests that there is a moderate degree of goodwill towards Aboriginal peoples among non-Aboriginal Canadians, a level that may be sufficiently positive to permit "establishing a new relationship".

7. The results presented for Learning Circles in this report are primarily quantitative, based on the ratings made by the two raters. However,

narrative descriptions of the components of cultural identity, and of the factors that have affected it, are provided based upon a reading of the quotations and comments provided by the raters.

8. The adoption of an acculturation framework for interpreting the results of this project is based upon three factors. First, the Learning Circle activities were developed in such a way that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal influences could be identified separately, and their different roles in the development of cultural identity could be assessed; acculturation is the most common concept used to understand the influences of two cultures that are in contact, and that jointly influence individual members of those cultures (see Clark, Kaufman & Pierce, 1976; LaFramboise, 1993). Second, the Royal Commission's "touchstones for change" includes a restructuring of relationships between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal peoples as a major goal; the choice of the acculturation framework in this report makes the analysis and interpretation more accessible, and possibly more useful, in achieving this goal. Third, the acculturation framework incorporates many factors that are the focus of alternative interpretive frameworks, such as those based on power and racism; indeed, the present report incorporates these factors (see the discussion of the power of government and church institutions, and of the impact of prejudice, discrimination and racism on cultural identity).

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Long Term Outcomes

TABLE 1: LEARNING CIRCLES: LOCATIONS, NUMBERS, AND DATES

LEARNING CIRCLE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	DATES HELD
1 Victoria Artists	12	March 15-16, 1993
2 Victoria Metis	11	March 18-19, 1993
3 Inuvik Youth	12	April 26-27, 1993
4 Inuvik Adults	12	April 29-30, 1993
5 Saskatchewan Treaty	12	May 26-27, 1993
6 Winnipeg Metis	12	March 29-30, 1993
7 Winnipeg Inmates	12	April 1-2, 1993
8 Québec Adults	10	April 7-8, 1993
9 Halifax Elders	11	May 20-21, 1993
10 Halifax Women	12	May 17-18, 1993

TABLE 2: MEAN BEHAVIOURAL EXPRESSION OF IDENTITY

LEARNING CIRCLE	1.INTRODUCTION ¹	15. SUMMARY ²	FREQUENCY OF QUOTES	RANKS ⁵
1 Victoria Artists	5.2	6.1	3	2
2 Victoria Metis	4.9	6.0	0	8
3 Inuvik Youth	3.1	5.9	0	10
4 Inuvik Adults	5.9	5.8	2	4
5 Saskatchewan Treaty	4.2	5.4	7	9
6 Winnipeg Metis	NR ⁴	6.2	1	5
7 Winnipeg Inmates	NR ⁴	6.4	9	1
8 Québec Adults ³	5.6	7.0	0	3
9 Halifax Elders	5.1	5.2	8	7
10 Halifax Women	4.4	5.8	9	6
MEAN	4.80	5.98	3.9	

NOTES:

1. INTRODUCTION. ACTIVITY #1, LINKS TO ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY.
2. SUMMARY: SHEET #15, ATTACHMENT (CLAIMED LINKS)
3. QUEBEC ADULTS WERE RATED ONLY ONCE, AND BY A DIFFERENT RATER; HENCE RATING MAY NOT BE COMPARABLE.
4. NR = NOT RATED
5. LOW NUMBER = HIGH RANK (i.e. 1 = MOST BEHAVIOURAL EXPRESSION)

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT QUOTES RELATING TO SIX ASPECTS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

LEARNING CIRCLE	<u>ASPECTS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY</u>						TOTAL
	PERCEPTION	IMPORTANCE	ESTEEM	MAINTENANCE	BEHAVIOURAL EXPRESSION	CONSOLIDATION CONFUSION	
1 Victoria Artists	9	3	0	15	3	1	42
2 Victoria Metis	6	3	2	7	0	8	26
3 Inuvik Youth	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
4 Inuvik Adults	7	2	0	5	2	2	18
5 Saskatchewan Treaty	13	10	6	12	7	4	52
6 Winnipeg Metis	3	1	1	1	1	2	9
7 Winnipeg Inmates	14	10	6	10	9	3	52
8 Quebec Adults	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
9 Halifax Elders	14	8	8	11	8	2	51
10 Halifax Women	11	9	2	12	9	4	47
TOTAL	81	47	25	73	39	37	302

LEARNING CIRCLE	IDENTITY CATEGORY	5. TIME PERIOD			5. TOTAL N %		15. SUMMARY N %	
		PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE				
1 VICTORIA ARTISTS	Aboriginal	18	21	17	56	89	10	38
	Non-aboriginal	2	0	0	2	3	3	12
	Both	1	0	0	1	2	2	8
	Neither	2	1	1	4	6	11	42
2 VICTORIA METIS	Aboriginal	12	14	8	34	55	14	42
	Non-aboriginal	10	2	0	12	19	2	6
	Both	4	5	2	11	18	9	26
	Neither	3	2	0	5	8	9	26
3 INUVIK YOUTH	Aboriginal	20	24	20	64	100	20	91
	Non-aboriginal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Both	0	0	0	0	0	2	9
	Neither	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4 INUVIK ADULTS	Aboriginal	17	13	6	36	84	25	81
	Non-aboriginal	1	1	0	2	4	0	0
	Both	0	3	0	3	7	4	13
	Neither	1	1	0	2	4	2	6
5 SASKATCHEWAN TREATY	Aboriginal	8	19	7	34	83	23	82
	Non-aboriginal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Both	0	0	0	0	0	3	11
	Neither	6	1	0	7	17	2	7
6 WINNIPEG METIS	Aboriginal	16	16	10	42	95	21	95
	Non-aboriginal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Both	2	0	0	2	5	0	0
	Neither	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
7 WINNIPEG INMATES	Aboriginal	13	19	5	37	93	20	80
	Non-aboriginal	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
	Both	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Neither	1	1	0	2	5	5	20
8 QUEBEC ADULTS	Aboriginal	16	18	9	43	81	20	100
	Non-aboriginal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Both	6	2	2	10	19	0	0
	Neither	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 HALIFAX ELDERS	Aboriginal	15	17	12	34	83	17	81
	Non-aboriginal	1	0	0	1	3	0	0
	Both	0	1	0	1	3	4	19
	Neither	4	1	0	5	12	0	0
10 HALIFAX WOMEN	Aboriginal	13	16	10	39	89	21	68
	Non-aboriginal	2	1	0	3	7	0	0
	Both	0	0	0	0	0	5	16
	Neither	1	1	0	2	4	5	16
TOTAL N and %	Aboriginal	148 75	177 88	104 96	429	86	191	74
	Non-aboriginal	17 9	4 2	0 0	21	4	5	12
	Both	13 7	11 6	4 3	24	5	29	11
	Neither	18 9	8 4	1 1	27	5	35	13

**TABLE 5: MEAN RATINGS OF DESIRE FOR IDENTITY MAINTENANCE
AND SELF-ESTEEM**

LEARNING CIRCLE	15 MAINTENANCE	15 SELF-ESTEEM
1 Victoria Artists	6.9	6.7
2 Victoria Metis	5.9	6.2
3 Inuvik Youth	6.6	6.4
4 Inuvik Adults	6.4	6.2
5 Saskatchewan Treaty	6.2	5.8
6 Winnipeg Metis	6.4	6.7
7 Winnipeg Inmates	6.1	6.5
8 Quebec Adults	NR	7.0
9 Halifax Elders	7.0	6.5
10 Halifax Women	6.3	6.2
TOTAL	6.42	6.42

NR = NOT RATED

TABLE 6: EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES INFLUENCING CULTURAL IDENTITY.

CATEGORY	FACTORS INCLUDED IN CATEGORY
1. TRADITIONAL CULTURE	Language, Elders, Spirituality, Arts, Community
2. FAMILY	Parents, Siblings, Children, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Abuse (Sexual, Physical, Emotional)
3. LAND AND ENVIRONMENT	Bush, Hunting, Trapping, Fishing, Nature, Land Rights
4. SOCIAL RELATIONS	Friends, Clubs, Recreation, Sports, Fights
5. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL	Abuse, Discrimination, Lack of Education, Forced Religion, Forced Work
6. EDUCATION	Schooling (non-residential), Teachers, Curriculum
7. PREJUDICE	Discrimination, Racism, Stereotyping
8. ADDICTIONS	Alcohol, Drugs, Cigarettes, Gambling, Bingo
9. ECONOMY	Employment, Unemployment, Poverty
10. GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS	Police, Courts, Prisons, DIAND, Social/Welfare Services, Foster Homes, Health
11. CHURCH	Conversion, Priests/Ministers
12. MEDIA	T.V., Radio, Magazines, Films

TABLE 7: EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES INFLUENCING CULTURAL IDENTITY

EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES	ACTIVITY 6/7		ACTIVITY 9	
	RANK FREQUENCY ¹	PERCENTAGES ² DIM/STR	RANK ¹	PERCENTAGES ³ DEP/ENH
1. TRADITIONAL CULTURE	1	2/98	1	5/95
2. FAMILY	3	5/95	3	10/90
3. LAND	4	0/100	5	0/100
4. SOCIAL RELATIONS	9	10/90	10	8/92
5. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL	10	97/3	7	95/5
6. EDUCATION	7	40/60	2	20/80
7. PREJUDICE	5	100/0	8	100/0
8. ADDICTIONS	6	100/0	4	100/0
9. ECONOMY	8	55/45	6	50/50
10. GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS	2	85/15	9	95/5
11. CHURCH	11	60/40	11	65/35
12. MEDIA	12	80/20	12	85/15

NOTES: ¹RANK 1 = HIGH FREQUENCY

²DIM = DIMINISHED; STR = STRENGTHENED

³DEP = DEPRIVED; ENH = ENHANCED

**TABLE 8: CULTURAL IDENTITY COMPARISON CIRCLE: RELATIVE INFLUENCE
(ACTIVITY 10)**

LEARNING CIRCLE	CIRCLE SIZE RATIO	NUMBER A > NA	NUMBER NA > A	NUMBER EQUAL
1 Victoria Artists	NR	NR	NR	NR
2 Victoria Metis	.83	3	5	3
3 Inuvik Youth	1.52	11	1	0
4 Inuvik Adults	.98	5	5	1
5 Saskatchewan Treaty	.91	2	2	2
6 Winnipeg Metis	1.41	8	3	2
7 Winnipeg Inmates	NR	NR	NR	NR
8 Québec Adults	1.50	4	0	1
9 Halifax Elders	.97	3	4	3
10 Halifax Women	1.15	4	5	2
TOTAL	1.16	40	25	14

NOTES:

NR = NOT RATED (NO CIRCLES DRAWN)

A = ABORIGINAL

NA = NON-ABORIGINAL

> = LARGER THAN

**TABLE 9: EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES INFLUENCING CULTURAL IDENTITY
(ACTIVITY 10)**

EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES	RANK IMPORTANCE	PERCENTAGES -/+ IMPACT
1. TRADITIONAL CULTURE	1	5/95
2. FAMILY	2	20/80
3. LAND	5	0/100
4. SOCIAL RELATIONS	6	10/90
5. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL	7	95/5
6. EDUCATION	9	20/80
7. PREJUDICE	10	100/0
8. ADDICTIONS	4	100/0
9. ECONOMY	8	50/50
10. GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS	3	95/5
11. CHURCH	11	50/50
12. MEDIA	12	60/40

NOTE: RANK 1 = HIGH

TABLE 10: SUMMARY OF IMPORANCE AND RELATIVE POSIVIVE INFLUENCE OF FACTORS ON CULTURAL IDENTITY (ACTIVITIES 6/7, 9, 10)

EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES	RANK IMPORTANCE	RANK POSITIVE INFLUENCE
1. TRADITIONAL CULTURE	1	2
2. FAMILY	2	4
3. LAND	4	1
4. SOCIAL RELATIONS	10	3
5. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL	9	10
6. EDUCATION	6	5
7. PREDJUDICE	8	11
8. ADDICTIONS	5	12
9. ECONOMY	7	6
10. GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS	3	9
11. CHURCH	11	7
12. MEDIA	12	8

NOTE: RANK 1 = HIGH

TABLE 11: MEAN GROUP COHESION OVER TIME

LEARNING CIRCLE	ACTIVITY NUMBER						MEAN
	1	2	3	8	10	11	
1. Victoria Artists	2.5	5.0	5.0	6.5	7.0	7.0	5.5
2. Victoria Metis	5.5	7.0	6.5	7.0	7.0	7.0	6.7
3. Inuvik Youth	2.5	3.0	4.0	6.0	5.0	7.0	4.6
4. Inuvik Adults	4.5	5.0	5.0	6.0	6.5	7.0	5.7
5. Saskatchewan Treaty	3.5	5.5	4.5	6.5	5.0	4.0	4.8
6. Winnipeg Metis	2.0	4.0	2.0	3.0	6.0	7.0	4.0
7. Winnipeg Inmates	1.0	NR	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.0	5.5
8. Quebec Adults	5.5	NR	7.0	6.0	6.0	7.0	6.3
9. Halifax Elders	5.5	6.5	6.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	6.5
10. Halifax Women	4.5	6.0	6.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	6.3
MEAN	3.9	5.3	5.3	6.3	6.4	6.7	5.65

NOTES: NR = NOT RATED

ACTIVITIES: 1. Introduction
 2. Greeting
 3. Group Rules
 8. Windup
 10. Kinships/Relationships
 11. Recommendations

TABLE 12: M A N S O I A L T T T

LEARNING CIRCLE	ACTIVITY		MEAN
	1	10	
1. Victoria Artists	5.5	7.0	6.3
2. Victoria Metis	7.0	7.0	7.0
3. Inuvick Youth	2.5	4.0	3.3
4. Inuvick Adults	4.5	7.0	5.8
5. Saskatchewan Treaty	4.5	3.5	4.0
6. Winnipeg Metis	4.0	6.0	5.3
7. Winnipeg Inmates	NR	6.5	6.5
8. Quebec Adults	NR	5.0	5.0
9. Halifax Elders	7.0	6.0	6.5
10. Halifax Women	6.5	6.0	6.3
MEAN	5.3	5.8	5.55

NOTES:

Activities: 1. Introduction
10. Kinship/Relationship

TABLE 13: MEAN TRUST WITHIN GROUP OVER TIME

LEARNING CIRCLE	ACTIVITY NUMBER				MEAN
	1	2	3	8	
1. Victoria Artists	2.5	5.0	7.0	6.5	5.3
2. Victoria Metis	5.5	7.0	7.0	7.0	6.6
3. Inuvik Youth	2.5	3.0	3.5	5.0	3.3
4. Inuvik Adults	4.5	3.5	4.0	6.5	4.4
5. Saskatchewan Treaty	3.0	4.5	4.5	6.5	4.6
6. Winnipeg Metis	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.3
7. Winnipeg Inmates	1.0	NR	6.0	6.0	5.0
8. Quebec Adults	6.0	NR	NR	6.0	6.0
9. Halifax Elders	5.5	5.5	6.0	7.0	6.0
10. Halifax Women	3.5	4.5	5.5	7.0	5.1
MEAN	3.6	3.8	5.1	6.2	4.67

NOTES:

Activities: 1. Introduction
 2. Greeting
 3. Group rules
 8. Windup

TABLE 14: SUMMARY OF PROCESS VARIABLES: RANKS

LEARNING CIRCLE	OVERALL RANK	GROUP COHESIVENESS	SOCIAL INTERACTION	TRUST WITHIN GROUP	SELF DISCLOSURE	PHYSICAL CONTRACT	TRUST IN SYSTEM	BELIEF IN IMPACT
1. Victoria Artists	6	6.5	4.5	4	9	4.5	5	3.5
2. Victoria Metis	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3.5
3. Inuvik Youth	10	9	10	9	8	9	NR	NR
4. Inuvik Adults	5	5	6	8	4	8	5	6
5. Saskatchewan Treaty	8	8	9	7	6.5	2	5	6
6. Winnipeg Metis	9	10	7	10	6.5	7	NR	NR
7. Winnipeg Inmates	7	6.5	2.5	6	10	4.5	NR	8
8. Quebec Adults	3	3.5	8	2.5	3	NR	5	2
9. Halifax Elders	2	2	2.5	2.5	2	2	1	1
10. Halifax Women	4	3.5	4.5	5	5	6	5	6

OVERALL RANK CALCULATED ON FIRST FOUR VARIABLES ONLY

**Figure 1: Features of Symbolic and Behavioural
Aboriginal Cultural Identity**

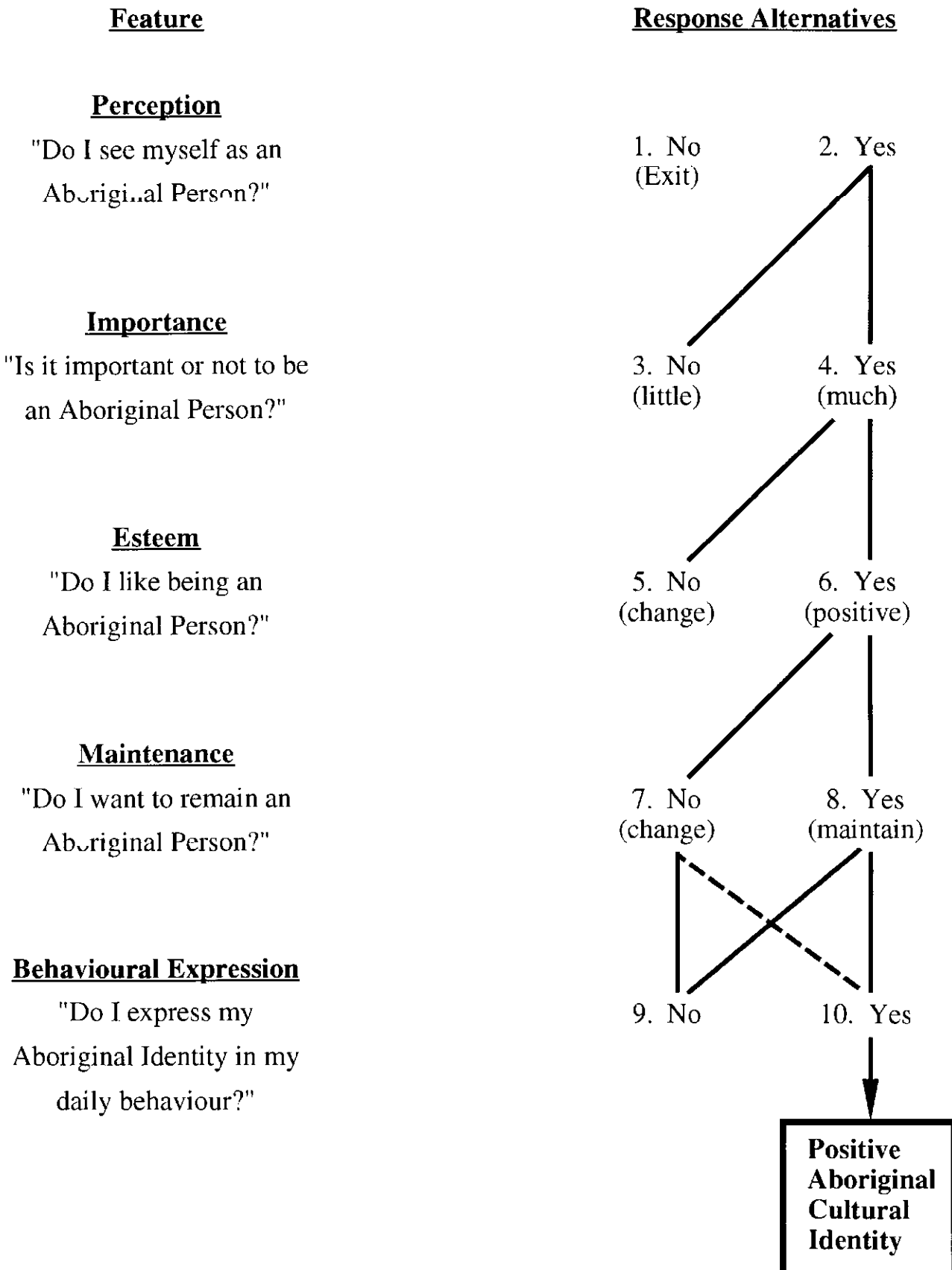


Figure 2. Four Acculturation strategies

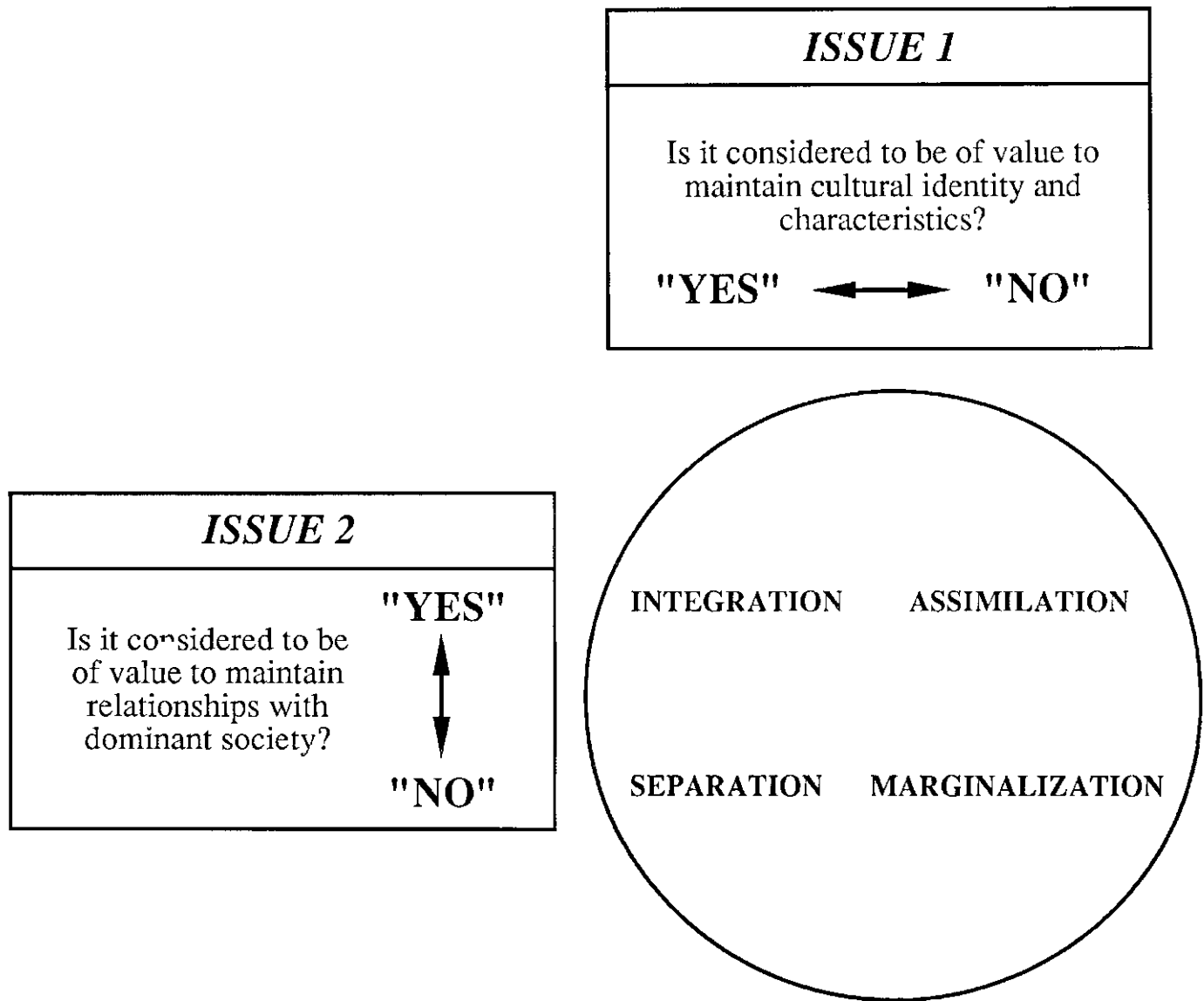


Figure 3: Behavioural Expression of Cultural Identity (From A.P.S., 1993)

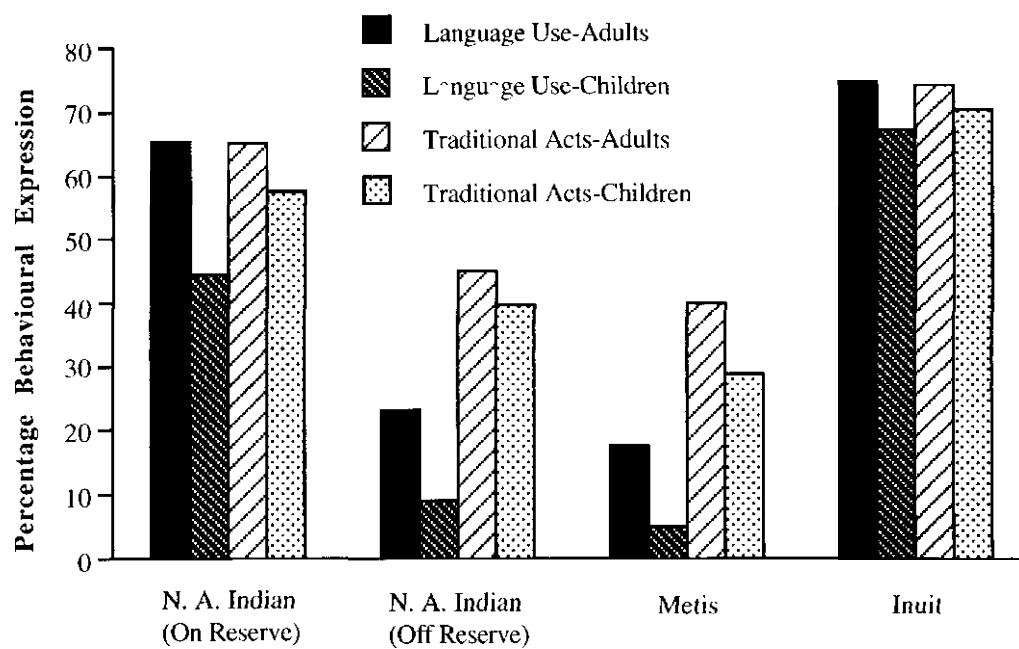
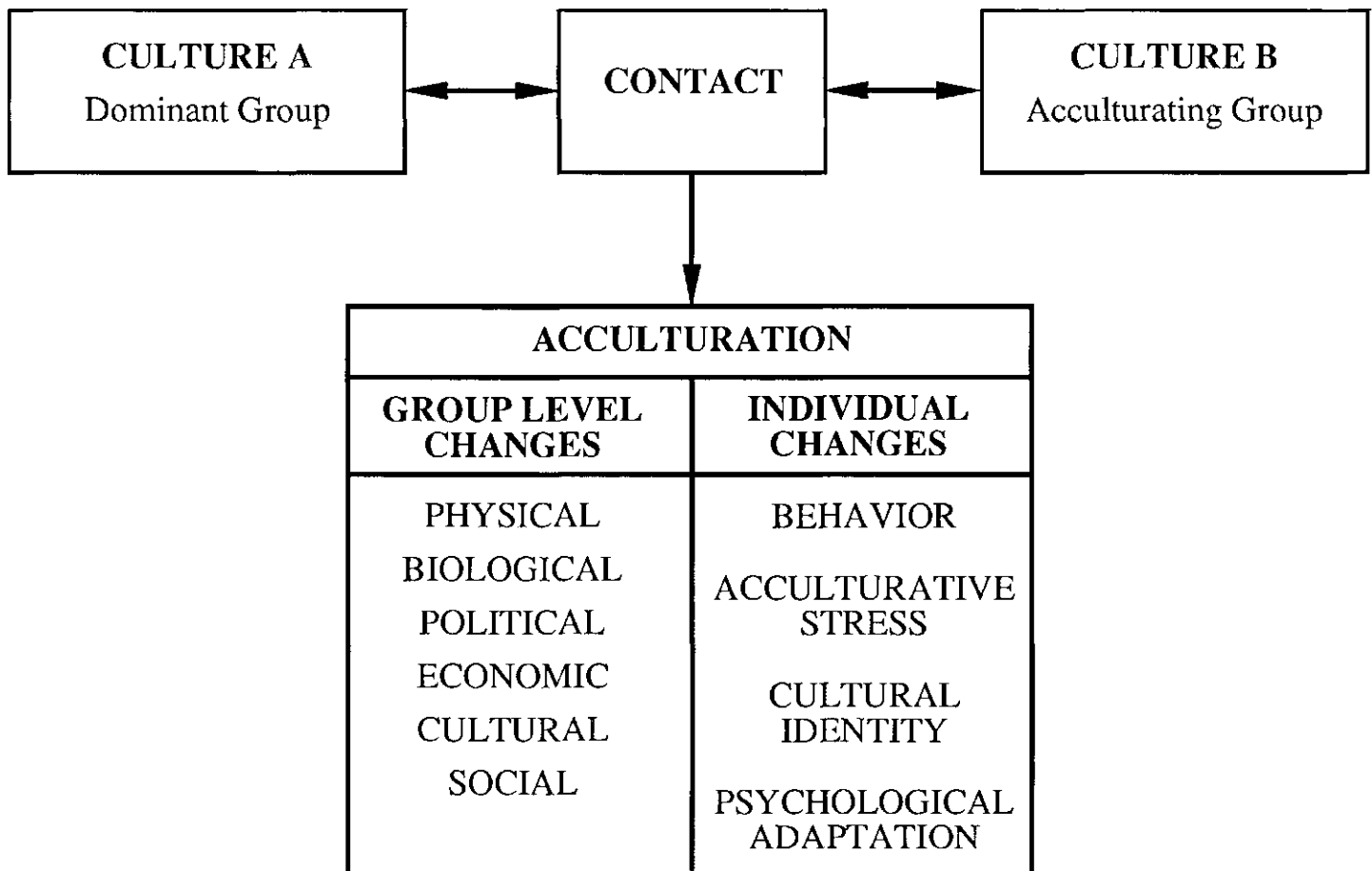
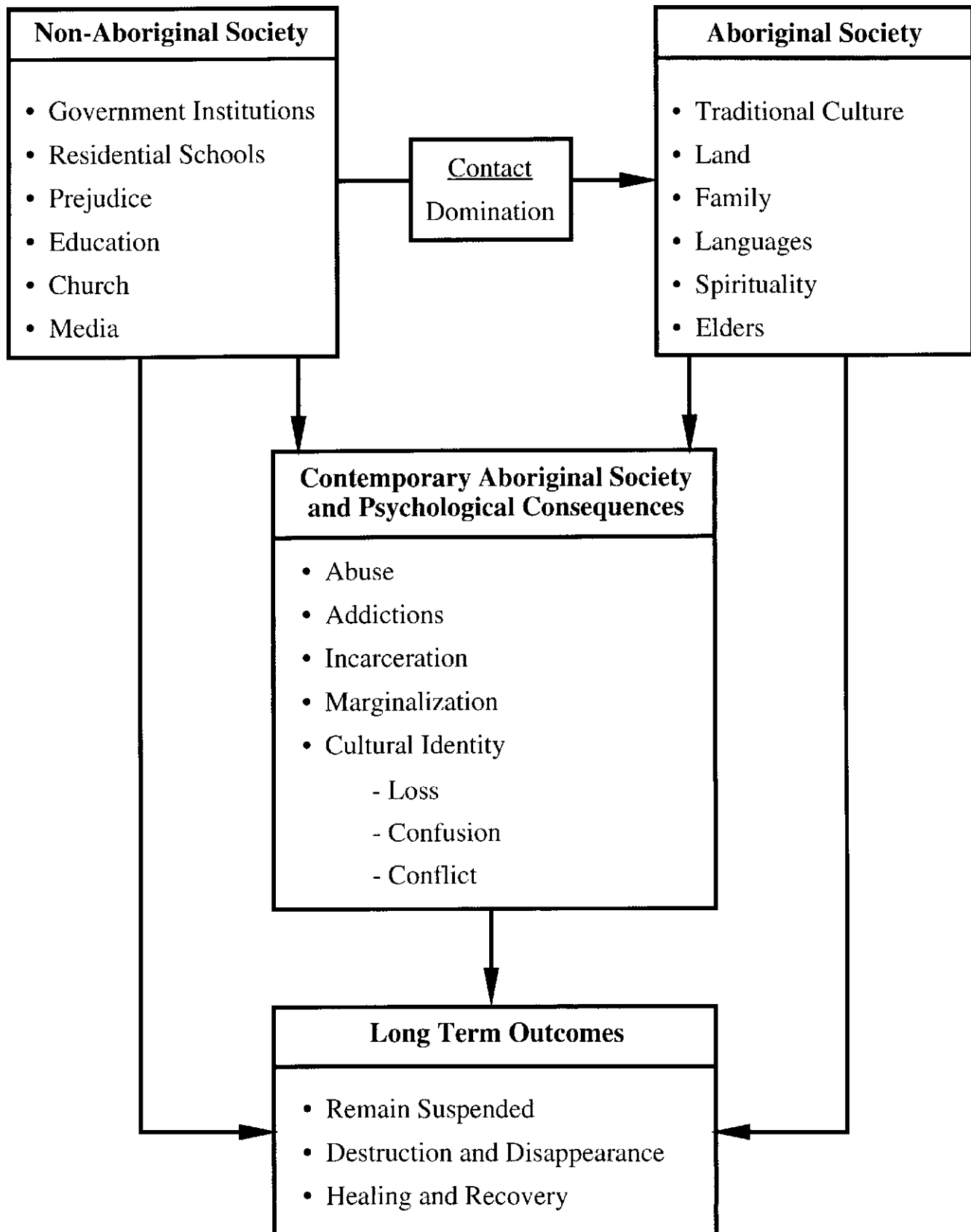


Figure 4. The Process of Acculturation and Adaptation



**Figure 5. Acculturation of Aboriginal Peoples:
Origins, Consequences and Outcomes**



APPENDIX "A"

Design Format

Day 1

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
8:15 - 8:30	L0 #1	Trainer arrives early to check room for necessary resources and to ensure seating arrangement is set in a circle.	Flip Chart, Tape, Markers, Note Pads, Pens	
8:30 - 8:45	L0 #1	Reflection time for trainer to focus on positive thoughts for the day's activities.		
8:45 - 9:00	L0 #1	Trainer greets participants as they arrive. Trainer invites participants to come in and make themselves comfortable.	Trainer, Group, Chairs	Trainer observes for verbal and non-verbal clues by participants to determine atmosphere that is being established.
9:00 - 9:10	L0 #1	Grace time for late arrivals.		Encourage friendly atmosphere through social interaction.
9:10 - 9:30	L0 #1	Opening ceremony and prayer as deemed appropriate for local area. Community Coordinator to assist with pre-arrangements, e.g. smudging.	As required.	Community guests, trainer, group members.

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
9:30 - 9:40	L0 #1	Trainer introduces himself (and guests) to participants and thanks everyone for taking part in this gathering. I have been told by an elder that we have Keepers of The Words, The Stories, The History, The Spirit World, The Sciences and The Medicine. All of us are Keepers of the Land, Keepers of the Kinship Lines and Keepers of our Story. We hope you care enough to share your story with us today. Let's learn together and from one another in the next two days. Participants are asked to introduce themselves.	Trainer, group, guests (Community Coordinator, Rosalee and Donavon).	Trainer's observations.
9:40 - 10:00	L0 #1	"Greeting One Another" Activity. This is an opportunity to give and receive a greeting. One volunteer starts the circle, and moves clockwise, greeting each person in the circle. Once around the circle, the volunteer will be back at the starting position, and will then have an opportunity to receive a greeting from others moving around the circle.	Trainer, Group, Members	Trainer's observations
10:00 - 10:15	L0 #1	Allow group to establish rules for comfort and confidentiality. Trainer offers suggestions: 1. One speaker at a time while others listen. 2. Who and what is shared here, remains here. Ask group for suggestions. All suggestions recorded on flip chart as agreed to.	Flip Chart, Markets, Tape	Post on wall.

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
10:15 - 10:30	L0 #1	Short Introduction to project. Allow participants to ask questions related to RCAP and the project. Review agenda, if possible.	Agenda posted on wall throughout gathering.	Trainer and guests respond to questions as accurately as possible.
10:30 - 10:45	BREAK			
10:45 - 11:20	L0 #1	<p>"Dream Activity".</p> <p>Trainer sets up scenario. Let's say you had a dream last night. A Spirit of an Elder came to you in this dream. The spirit said "I am here with you. I know you are hurting right now. Are you confused in this society? Do you know who you are? Tell me now ... Who are you?</p> <p>Key questions used for discussion: How would you respond? How would you express your cultural identity to the Elder in your dream?</p> <p>Optional activity for some groups as an opening exercise. Ask group to answer the question Who Am I? by listing twenty (20) characteristics on paper. Group will share answers within group as a form of discussion.</p>	Trainer, Group	

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
11:20 - 11:45	L0 #1	Membership Exercise Activity: Group is divided in two. Trainer gives instructions to each group to act as committed responsible decision-makers who are concerned about the welfare of seven generations yet to come to their community. They are to determine eligibility requirements for membership into their Aboriginal group. Sub-groups of 5-6 participants will 1) identify and discuss, and 2) outline and record answers to the following questions: 1. What are the core elements of cultural identity as it relates to an Aboriginal group; 2. What is the basis of membership within the group as it is linked to citizenship; 3. How do we preserve the social and cultural bond of the community to maintain its cultural identity?	Group, flip chart, markers and tape.	Each sub-group posts outlines on the wall. If time allows, trainer will ask participants the following: What happened? What did you learn? How will you apply what you have learned to your every day life?
11:45 - 12:00	L0 #1	Group reconvenes for discussion. Each sub-group will report action and decisions from the morning's exercise.		Trainer asks: What happened? What did you learn? How will you apply what you have learned to your every day life?
12:00 - 1:00	LUNCH			
1:00 - 1:10	L0 #1	Trainer begins afternoon session by reviewing morning activities. Gentle reminder of "We are the Keepers of our Story".		

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
1:10 - 2:10	L0 #2	General discussion of core elements of cultural identity: i.e. background, historical and/or ancestral significance. Using key questions such as: 1. How is your background linked to your cultural identity. 2. What historical events(s) have been connected to your cultural identity. 3. What is the ancestral significance of your cultural identity?	Group, Trainer	Summary to be linked in relation to cultural identity and how important a particular attachment is shared by the participant.
2:10 - 2:30	L0 #2	Trainer leads wrap up session.		During this activity I felt... I learned... I would apply what I learned in my everyday life by...
2:30 - 2:45	Break			
2:45 - 3:40	L0 #3	Large Group Discussion. What urban life experiences have diminished your cultural identity?	Group, Trainer	Trainer Observations
3:40 - 4:35	L0 #3	Large Group Discussion. What urban life experiences have strengthened your cultural identity?	Group, Trainer	Trainer Observations
4:35 - 4:45	L0 #3	Wrap Up Session Trainer has flip chart divided into two columns: Plus's and Minus's		Plus's and Minus's
4:50 - 5:00	L0 #1	Closing Prayer as arranged.	To be determined.	
5:00 - 5:30	L0 #1	Trainer/Community Coordinator available to individuals who may want to speak privately.	Community Resource List	

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
DAY 2				
8:15 - 8:30	L0 #1	Trainer checks room for necessary resources, lighting, chairs are placed in a circle.	Trainer, Chairs, Flip Chart, Tape, Markers	
8:30 - 8:45	L0 #1	Reflection time for trainer to focus on positive thoughts for the day's activities.		
8:45 - 9:00	L0 #1	Trainer greets participants as they arrive.		
9:00 - 9:10	L0 #1	Grace time for late arrivals.		Encourage friendly atmosphere through social interaction.
9:10 : 9:30	L0 #1	Opening Ceremony pre-arranged with Community Coordinator. Sweet Grass, Smudge (If time permits, Greet One Another Activity).	To be determined.	
9:30 - 9:45	L0 #1	Trainer reviews today's agenda. Gentle reminder of the sharing that has already occurred. "Keepers of our Story"; "Care enough...to share."		
9:45 - 10:30	L0 #4	Large group discussion of grieving process. Use key questions: Do you feel a sense of grief or mourning in relation to your culture, cultural identity or any aspect of it. What are those aspects? Tell us what you are grieving or mourning?		
10:30 - 10:45	BREAK			

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
10:45 - 11:15	L0 #4	Large group discussion of healing process. Use key questions: Do you feel you are in a healing process in relation to your culture, cultural identity or any aspect of it? What aspects? Tell us what healing means for you?		
11:15 - 12:00	L0 #5	"Kinships Are My Life" Activity. Trainer presents Life Experiences Circle. Are there any other kinships that need to be added to the circle? Discussion. Use key questions: What occurs within each circle for you? What has been your experience in the pursuit of a life choice within each circle? What are the problems and difficulties that you encountered? What are the benefits that you have received.	Trainer, Group, Circle Poster, Flip Chart, Markers, Tape.	Trainers and Guests observations.
12:00 - 1:00	LUNCH			
1:00 - 2:30	L0 #5	Trainer recaps the morning session. Trainer repeats the key questions for those who did not get a chance to respond earlier.	Trainer, Group	
2:30 - 2:45	BREAK			
2:45 - 4:15	L0 #6	Trainer asks group for recommendations. Two lists will be developed as follows: 1. What needs to be changed that has diminished by cultural identity? 2. What would strengthen my cultural identity.	Trainer, Group Flip Chart, Markers, Tape	

Time	Content	Process/Method	Resources	Evaluation
4:15 - 4:30	L0 #1	Group participants asked to fill out Social Demographics sheet. Trainer thanks everyone for their participation and contribution to the learning circle. Trainer discusses validation process for the draft report.		Community Services Resources List to be available to participants. Follow up activity for interested participants who wish to continue to work in this area. Consists of 3-4 questions to be left with Community Coordinator within the next week.
4:30 - 4:45	L0 #1	Presentation of gifts to participants, Community Coordinator and community guests.		
4:45 - 5:00	L0 #1	Closing Prayer		
5:00 - 5:10		Finance Housekeeping		
5:00 - 5:30		Trainer/Community Coordinator available to individuals who may want to speak privately.		

APPENDIX "B"

Cultural Identity Project Interpretive Framework for Data Analysis

Scale from 1 to 7 with 1 being the least and 7 being the greatest amount.

1. Introduction to My Story

Person	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Self Disclosure (Depth)												
Links to Aboriginal Community (Amount)												
Social Interaction												
Group Cohesiveness (Amount)												
Level of Trust Within Group (Amount)												

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

2. Greeting Activity

Physical Contact (Amount)	
Group Cohesiveness (Amount)	
Level of Trust Within Group (Amount)	
Social Interaction	

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

3. Group Rules

Acceptance of Rule 1 (Yes or No)	
Acceptance of Rule 2 (Yes or No)	
Number of Rules Established (Number)	
Group Cohesiveness Established (Number)	
Level of Trust Within Group (Amount)	

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

4. Introduction to RCAP and Project

Social Interaction (Amount)													
Level of Trust in System (Amount)													
Belief in Positive Impact (Amount)													
Decision to Participate (Strength)													

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

5. Dream Activity/Community Activity: One Sheet Per Individual

Identity: Explicit	Past	Present	Future
Aboriginal			
Non-Aboriginal			
Both			
Neither			

Identity: Implicit	Past	Present	Future
Aboriginal			
Non-Aboriginal			
Both			
Neither			

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

6. History/Ancestral/Personal Background
7. Diminishing/Strengthening of Cultural Identity

Events/Experiences	Frequency	Importance	Diminish	Strengthen	Both

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

8. First Day +'s and -'s

Group Cohesiveness (Amount)	
Level of Trust Within Group (Amount)	
List +'s (Frequency)	
List -'s (Frequency)	

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

9. Cultural Identity Deprived/Denied/Enhanced

List of Events/Experiences	Deprived/Denied	Enhanced	Both

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

10. Kinships/Relationships

Video Record	
Degree of Acceptance of Task	
Social Interaction	
Group Cohesiveness	
Degree of Consensus within Aboriginal Circles	
Degree of Consensus within Mainstream Society Circles	
Degree of Consensus on Balance/Conflict - Comparison between both Circles	

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

11. Recommendations												
Video Record												
Social Interaction	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Group Cohesiveness												
Sense of Empowerment Ownership and Commitment												
Flip Chart Records												
Recommendations List within each Learning Circle												
Categories of Themes												
RCAP Mandate Categories												
Later Themes Across Groups												

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

12. Elders	
Was an Elder present? Yes or No	
Degree of Verbal Involvement	

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____

13. Overview/Summary For Each Person												
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Degree of Participation												
Verbal Interaction												
Group Cohesiveness												

Observations: _____

Interpretations: _____

Quotes: _____
