

A FIRST NATIONS' PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: ARE WE THERE YET? (A POST-COLONIAL DEBATE)

Barbara Harris

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada, V6T 1Z4
barbara.harris@ubc.ca

Abstract / Résumé

A review of curriculum in social work education, of literature on social work education for First Nations, and of a survey of twenty-three articles on social work with First Nations, as well as analysis of the traditional orientations guiding social work education indicate the failure of social work programs to adequately promote social justice, or to meet the needs of First Nations students. This research adds to existing literature by providing an overview of dominant approaches guiding curriculum in undergraduate social work education; an analysis of the degree to which social work education reflects Aboriginal community's experiences and needs; and, recommendations for changes in curriculum to better meet the needs of First Nations people. Ultimately, social justice in social work education requires a post-colonial foundation, and incorporates decolonization, Aboriginal worldviews, and self-determination.

Un examen des programmes en enseignement du service social, de la documentation sur l'enseignement du service social chez les Premières nations et d'un survol de vingt-trois articles sur le service social et les Premières nations, ainsi qu'une analyse des orientations traditionnelles de l'enseignement du service social, indiquent l'échec des programmes de service social dans la promotion de la justice sociale ou dans la satisfaction des besoins des étudiants des Premières nations. La recherche présentée dans l'article s'ajoute à la documentation existante en offrant un aperçu général des approches dominantes des programmes d'études en service social au premier cycle universitaire, une analyse de la mesure dans laquelle l'enseignement du service social reflète les expériences et les besoins de la collectivité autochtone et des recommandations visant les modifications à apporter aux programmes d'études pour mieux combler les besoins des Premières nations. La justice sociale dans le secteur du service social exige ultimement des fondations post-coloniales et elle doit intégrer la décolonisation, la vision du monde autochtone et l'autodétermination.

Introduction

First Nations communities are striving to regain/maintain control over their lives politically, socially, economically and culturally, and there is a need to increase the capacity to do so. This movement is a response to the injustices of colonialism which have undermined every aspect of Aboriginal life in Canada. In this context, a stronger social justice framework in social work education is needed to meet community needs. Controversies regarding approaches to practice reified in baccalaureate social work education indicate that the status quo is counter-intuitive to the promotion of social justice, and that a social justice orientation is a more relevant organizing principle in developing First Nations Social Work education.

This article will add to the existing literature by addressing gaps in social work education, as these pertain to the lived experience of Aboriginal people. Specifically, current ideological orientations dominant in baccalaureate social work education will be measured against the curriculum needs in First Nations Bachelor of Social Work (FNBSW) education. The term 'ideological orientations' came about as a result of my own confusion regarding "the eclectic theory base of social work...the jumble of confusion...[and]of its present non-unified theory base...[which has yet to attain any] sense of order" (Mullaly,1997, p.18).

In contextualizing the need for curricular changes, the tenor of generalist social work education, of perspectives on First Nations Social Work education, and, of a sample of literature on First Nations Social Work will be considered. Then, the continuum between traditional social work education, and social work education oriented towards social justice will be analyzed: an examination of traditional social work (as exemplified by medical and problem solving models) will precede attention to empowerment, structural, and strengths based approaches – as manifestations of an ecological/structural orientation, and, to cultural competence and anti-racist social work. Unfortunately, these models/orientations fail to adequately represent First Nations' worldviews, experiences or perspectives, and, a social justice orientation will be presented as the most appropriate direction for social work education; influenced by post-colonialism, self-determination, decolonization, and Aboriginal worldviews are forwarded as critical to curriculum changes.

A few disclaimers are in order. First, given the heterogeneity of Aboriginal people, the views expressed here are not necessarily representative of all First Nations. Second, the terms Native, Aboriginal, First Nations, tribal people and Indigenous are used interchangeably. Third, the perspective taken here is more global – an in depth review of the different orientations/perspectives is sacrificed in favor of an understanding

of the overall flavor of generalist social work, as a precursor to the argument for social justice as the necessary primary orientation, versus its current status as rhetorical idealism. Lastly, the ideas here are not meant to discredit the efforts of those individuals who are out there working for meaningful change.

Cross-Continuums: Traditional Versus Progressive Ideas

Debates in education loosely parallel debates in social work education. Walker and Soltis (2004) elaborate on the traditional and/or progressive aims of education—stemming most prominently from Plato, Rousseau, and Dewey—as being either subject/knowledge centered, student centered, or society centered, and note that “the issue seems to be one of priorities and balance among goals and perspectives all of which have something to contribute” (p. 37). This is in contrast to Egan’s (1997) view that such aims are irreconcilable. Nonetheless, these varying aims are reflected in debates on every aspect of education, generally, and in social work, specifically, where what is considered traditional and/or progressive is primarily rooted in two streams; the classic educational debates regarding subject/student/society centered approaches, and the polarized orientations related to maladjustment versus addressing social ills. The degree to which social work education is subject centered, student centered or society centered is indicative of the reified orientations/practices: the dominance of mainstream curriculum limits the possibility of paying attention to societal constraints which deter real social justice.

Scoping the Terrain

Historically, social work evolved during three eras (Hick, 2006): the first era was one of ‘moral’ reform which saw the rise of charity organizations and settlement houses; the second era—‘social’ reform—influenced the rise of scientific philanthropy and public welfare, as well as “the birth of social work as a profession” (p.50); and finally, the era of applied social science—during the post-war period—involved the expansion of social work, of professional regulatory bodies and of Schools of Social Work.

Charity organizations and the settlement house movement reflect the continuum of perspectives in social work today. Charity organizations, having a religious foundation, were influenced by the belief “that it is better to help (treat) people...than to banish, punish or ostracize them” (Heinonen and Spearman, 2001). The settlement movement – influenced by Marxism, however, took a more systemic approach, focusing on poverty, working conditions and “unhealthy living environments in industrial

[areas] as products of the capitalistic industrial system” (ibid p.13). Currently, traditional social work, most prominently manifested in the medical and problem solving models – focuses on diagnosis/treatment, prevention/cure, and delinquency/maladjustment.

Alternatively, systems and ecological theories suggest an inclination towards social justice, which is described as “fairness and equity in the protection of civil and human rights, the treatment of individuals, the distribution of opportunity, and the assurance of personal and economic opportunity” (Ambrosino et al, 2001, p.562). Although this definition appears to be an adequate extension of the sentiments of the settlement movement – in terms of social justice, the reality of Aboriginal peoples’ lives has yet to be appropriately reflected/encompassed within this apparent ideal.

When you examine at close quarters the colonial context, it is evident that what parcels out the world is to begin with the fact of belonging to a given race, a given species. In the colonies, the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are White, you are White because you are rich. This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem.” (Fanon, 1963, p.40)

Furthermore, the dominance of a Eurocentric curriculum disallows much needed change.

Curriculum Content in Baccalaureate Programs

A review of core undergraduate generalist social work texts show a limited focus on theory, or on social justice (Johnson, 1995; Hepworth et al, 1997; Compton and Galloway, 1979, Kirst-Ashman and Hull Jr., 1997; Hick, 2006; Ambrosino et al, 2001; Turner and Turner, 2001; Chappell, 2001; Bolaria, 2000; Lightman, 2003; Armitage, 2003). The texts do delineate targeted groups such as children, youth, women, elderly, families, minorities, Aboriginal people, and, areas of practice such as child welfare, justice, health, rural, community, and international social work. Regardless, the dominance of traditional approaches is evident, and a survey of these texts indicates both the privileging of Eurocentric worldviews, and the failure to adequately incorporate social justice perspectives.

Social justice imperatives are found in the growing body of literature on culture and/or oppression (Gil, 1998; Mullaly, 2002; Sue and Sue, 1990; Fong and Furito, 2001; James, 1996; Dei, 1996; Lum, 2000; Bishop, 1994; Nakhaie, 1999), although there are issues specific to First Nations that

are not adequately represented within such literature and, the extremely limited focus on either multicultural, anti-racist or Aboriginal perspectives—in curriculum—is problematic. For example, while there is an improvement from when Aboriginal input in baccalaureate social work education amounted to a fifteen minute guest speaker during one course (Demerais, 2003), there is still a long way to go.

Particularly disturbing is the fact that although students often have such minimal awareness or knowledge of First Nations issues, they will work with a disproportionate number of Aboriginal people. The sordid history of Canadian/First Nations relations – residential schools, and the 60s scoop, as well as the prevalence of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice and child welfare systems are well documented (Fournier and Crey, 1997; Miller, 2000; Milloy, 1999; Neu and Therrien, 2003; Adams, 1995, Frideres and Gadacz, 1999); 40% of all children in care are Aboriginal, 20% of all inmates are Aboriginal. As well, of all people living within Canada's boundaries, Aboriginal people are the poorest, most under-employed and under-educated; they have the highest rates of suicide, HIV/AIDS and deaths due to violence; and they have the shortest life span.

In spite of the prevalence of First Nations people requiring social services, social work curriculum does not reflect that reality. Out of seven Canadian universities, a survey of curriculum (Harris, 2001) shows that six of the programs have only one three credit course that focuses on First Nations, and that is required. Only one program has a First Nations child welfare specialization. One other program has a strong First Nations focus, as a result of extensive collaboration with the Aboriginal communities in that area.

Additionally, students are ill prepared to address the challenges of working in communities where suicide, addictions, and violence are major issues. Needed skills to cope with a crisis in front line social work may not be provided, as also evidenced by the curriculum review, which showed that only one program provided a course on family violence, and one program provided a course on victims of abuse. None of the programs reviewed had a course on crisis intervention.

When I graduated from my Master's (MSW) in social work, which I entered immediately after I finished my bachelor's degree, I went to work at an Aboriginal agency. One day, I came out of my office when I heard a big commotion. A young man was screaming wildly, and nobody knew what to do. I invited him to come and talk about what was happening, and we went to an office down the hall. I foolishly followed him in and closed the door. Then, as I was sitting at the desk,

trying to find out what was going on, he flung his arm upwards, and I noticed his hand was cupped, and that he had a home-made knife with a six inch blade protruding from his sleeve. I immediately froze, and then felt scared to say anything. I didn't know what to do, but I wanted to get out of from behind that closed door, so I asked him if he would like a smoke. He said he would, so I opened the door and said we needed to go outside. He followed me out the back door and crumpled down on the porch. I gave him a cigarette and a light, and he slowly started to calm down, mumbling under his breath. We chatted for a while, and eventually he got up and left. Then, I began to breathe again. (anonymous)

This individual was definitely not prepared to work with the realities of front line social work which is the normal route for undergraduates (never mind the fact that he also had completed a Masters' degree).

That such a focus is needed is indicative of the difficult and crisis oriented nature of front line social work settings with people who are often marginalized, and, in many cases, angry. The Aboriginal community involved in the needs assessment also spoke to the need for crisis intervention training. Also pertinent are the seminal works of Memmi (1965) and Fanon (1963) who have analyzed the effects of colonization. Fanon presented psychiatric cases wherein the obscurity of events leading to 'reactional psychosis' led him to conclude that many cases constitute a generalized response to the violence of a Manichean colonial world. Within the context of colonialism, social work practice with First Nations requires both an understanding of the history of First Nations/ European relations, and an ability to handle crisis situations in a sensitive and helpful manner that does not simply pathologize the individual, thus perpetuating the colonial mentality.

Perspectives on First Nations Social Work Education: The Need For Change

Efforts to affect meaningful change in Canadian social work programs have been slow, as evidenced by the continuing call for change over the last 25 years. Regardless, current leanings in social work education are being challenged both nationally, and internationally.

One significant event occurred in 1982, when Audrey McLaughlin prepared a report on Native content in curriculum, forwarding two possible avenues for change – incorporation of First Nations content into all courses, or development of new courses. New courses would incorporate history and current trends/issues; cultural traditions and the social/political/economic forces relating to policies/practices for Native peo-

ple; and skills related to living in a multi-cultural environment.

As well, in a landmark event in 1986, the University of Regina hosted a curriculum review of Native Social Work education in Canada (Stalwick, 1986), the culmination of which led to extensive recommendations for changes to curriculum and to teaching in an Aboriginal context. Among these recommendations were (not exclusively) the need to challenge Eurocentrism in curriculum; to incorporate Aboriginal worldviews and realities; to support self determination; to draw on kinship and community strengths; and, to move beyond the social control functions of social work.

Additionally, Christensen's (1994) comprehensive study notes that Eurocentric biases in theoretical frameworks and practice models are perceived when they "a) do not fit the realities of the lives of Aboriginal people, and b) fail to recognize specific Aboriginal social work policies, skills, practices, and experiences" (p.18). Importantly, acceptance of Aboriginal worldviews is beginning (Pace and Smith, 1990; Castellano et al, 1986), however, tendencies to assume superiority of mainstream programs over innovative initiatives geared to meet community needs are problematic.

To fast forward this discussion, a Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work Task Force (1991) identified institutional racism in course content; Westhues et al (2001) conducted an analysis of Canadian Social Work education, calling for culturally relevant education; and, more recently, Sinclair (2004) spoke to the deficiencies of cross-cultural education in meeting First Nations community needs, calling for a decolonizing approach which incorporates Aboriginal epistemology.

This brief review demonstrates the failure to adequately address curriculum needs in Aboriginal social work education, and is echoed by efforts among Indigenous groups in other parts of the world. In Australia, for example, the priority of addressing Eurocentrism in social work curriculum led to an action research project focused on indigenizing the curriculum (Gair, et al, 2005). As well, Voss et al (2005) discuss the efforts to alter social work education in American Tribal colleges, and make reference to China's efforts to indigenize curriculum. Evident is the inadequacy of Social Work curriculum in a variety of contexts, where Aboriginal people are concerned. Having generally considered mainstream curriculum and perspectives on First Nations Social Work education, a survey of articles is also useful.

First Nations Social Work Practice: A Review of Published Research

A survey of twenty-three journal articles on First Nations Social Work

practice indicate that non-Native entry level social work programs are the primary target, that the literature is generally practice oriented rather than theory oriented, and there is a repetitive reiteration of the contrasting values of tribal people versus mainstream society. Promising is the call for value-based changes (points 1 and 2), yet, there is still a lack of focus on social justice. On one hand, the articles show

- 1) the importance of cultural traditions and spirituality (15/23)
- 2) importance of kinship/communal ties (16/23)
- 3) explicit discussions of contrary values (11/23)
- 4) the need for cultural competence (12/23) versus simple awareness (3/23)

but, there is

- 5) minimal call for meaningful structural change (4/23)
- 6) limited support for social justice (4/23) or decolonization (6/23)
- 7) limited explicit theoretical discourse (4/24)

While it is not assumed that this is a representative sample of academic literature, other research validates the claim being made here. In another survey of social work research on care-giving, a review of 102 research articles led to similar conclusions about the limited focus on theoretical foundations, or on social justice (Dow and McDonald, 2003, p. 206), and only 8/102 articles could be linked with radical social change.

As well, the authors note that social workers may be less inclined to conduct empirical research; that the research reviewed comes from scholarly journals that “subscribe to the dominant paradigms of positivism and interpretivism” (ibid, p.206); and that the politics of research funding may influence what gets published- eg. empirically based research which does not challenge the status quo. Grande (2000) argues that for Aboriginal intellectuals “the game is rigged...conscripted by academic colonialism” (p.349). However, the need to engage in and publish research incorporating critical perspectives in an Aboriginal context is necessary to the struggle for social justice.

This short review indicates the need to engage in further analysis of social work theory and for development of “transcendent theories of liberation” (Grande, 2000, p.354). Accordingly, consideration of the continuum between dominant orientations currently guiding social work education will precede further elaboration of a paradigm which fosters social justice.

Social Work: Dominant Orientations

Heinonen and Spearman (2001) review the broad theoretical base of social work, and specify focused assessment as including:

- a) micro level: individuals and families – draws from cognitive theory,

ego psychology, crisis theory, psychiatry – DSM IV, knowledge about family dynamics/processes

- b) mezzo level: groups – theories about groups
- c) macro level: large systems – structural approaches

From a systemic perspective, these authors include theories about culture, ecosystems, role theory, labeling theory, strengths perspectives, and, Aboriginal and feminist perspectives.

An arbitrarily constructed visual conceptualization of the continuum between traditional social work and social justice will help frame the following discussion.

First, traditional social work, as manifested in the medical and problem solving approaches will be discussed. Then, discussion of systems/ecological approaches – including empowerment, structuralism and strengths based social work will precede attention to perspectives on multi-cultural and anti-racist approaches. Lastly, a social justice orientation will be presented, incorporating self-determination, decolonization, and Aboriginal worldviews.

Traditional Biopsychosocial theories	Systems/ecological theories	Social justice Postcolonialism
medical model: individual change problem solving -deficit based	empowerment structuralism strengths based	self-determination decolonization Aboriginal worldviews
cross-cultural	cultural competence	(anti-racist?)

This continuum is useful in analyzing the relationship between stated intentions and reality in undergraduate social work education. Although this rendering might indicate that social work education is relatively balanced, the review of foundation texts in social work, of perspectives on First Nations Social Work education, and of the survey of articles, indicate that social work education clearly fails to adequately reflect aspirations towards social justice. Social work education does try to balance traditional and systems/ecological approaches, but falls short in its attempts to promote social justice.

Traditional Social Work: Bio-Psycho-Social Approaches

Traditional social work involves location of problems within the biological, psychological or social functioning of the individual, family, group, community or culture. Developmental theories, biological theories, cog-

nitive and behavioral theories, and ego psychology are examples of theories guiding traditional social work. Two prominent approaches derived from this theoretical base include the medical and problem solving approaches, both of which are indicative of a “pathology framework” (Heinonen and Spearman, 2001, p.168).

Each of these approaches does have value. In the medical model, for example, a social worker faced with a client experiencing psychosis, or suicidal ideation, benefits from the ability to be able to—at the very least—identify what’s happening.

Alternatively, the problem solving approach involves identification and analysis of the problem, determining possible solutions, setting goals, acting on goals, and evaluating the outcome, a process which is helpful if social workers are willing to collaborate with clients in the formulation of a problem, and the possible solutions/outcomes, as well as the process in determining both.

However, both approaches garner criticism. First, the medical approach is criticized for its roots in science; psychologist Eduardo Duran (Apache/Tewa) and Bonnie Duran (1995) provide a scathing critique of science: “Objectification of science is nothing but ongoing social control and hegemony...[and] a post-colonial diagnosis for such objective scientists would perhaps be ‘chronic and/or acute Cartesian anxiety disorder’” (p.7).

Secondly, Vedan (2003) notes the role of early medical social workers, who relied on policing and enforcement to force adherence to health regulations. Blatant is the control function equated with medical social work, a model which seeks to address pathological functioning. Barnes and Hugman (2002) point to current debates on the function of social work as social change or social regulation, and on the ensuing focus on micro or macro level change.

As well, the problem solving approach is also a “traditional model of social work practice” (Heinonen and Spearman 2001, p.147), being primarily “restorative in nature” (ibid, p.170). Hart (2001) points out that in an Aboriginal approach, restoration of harmony and balance is the goal. Problem solving is only one part of the journey. Alternatively, Castellano et al (1986) point out that “social workers pursuing a time regulated, task oriented schedule, relying on goal- centered interviews with identified [Aboriginal] clients, have been repeatedly frustrated in their attempts to establish communication and engage clients actively in problem solving” (p.172).

Saleeby (1997) also addresses the concerns related to traditional social work and its theoretical underpinnings

our culture is obsessed with, and fascinated by, psychopa-

thology, victimization, abnormality, and moral and interpersonal aberrations...[and] social work...has not been immune to the contagion of disease- and disorder-based thinking (pp.4-5).

Saleeby goes on to discuss diagnostic labels, relations of power and control, individualizing problems, cynicism towards clients, and fixation on cures. Importantly, Saleeby does not negate the realities of pain and suffering in approaching these topics.

Lastly, Chrisjohn (nd) vehemently objects to the ongoing colonialism epitomized by the genocidal acts of the Canadian government and by continual efforts to pathologize First Nations clients' 'symptoms.'

Present day symptomology found in Aboriginal peoples and societies does not constitute a distinct psychological condition, but is the well-known and long studied response of human beings living under conditions of severe and prolonged oppression...pathologizing these individuals...must be seen as another rhetorical maneuver designed to obscure...the moral and financial accountability of Euro-Canadian society in a continuing record of crimes against humanity. (p. 1 of 4, online)

Chrisjohn echoes the sentiments of Franz Fanon, who described the impact of colonialism in Algeria:

In the period of colonization when it is not contested by armed resistance, when the sum total of harmful nervous stimuli overstep a certain threshold, the defensive attitudes of the natives give way and they then find themselves crowding the mental hospitals. There is thus during this calm period of successful colonization a regular and important mental pathology which is the direct product of oppression.

Chrisjohn also acknowledges the ramifications of residential schools, challenging the tendency to locate problems within the individual at the expense of facing the political realities of colonialism; there is a dire need to politicize that which has been rendered personal. This sentiment leads further along the continuum in the discussion on social work, with the shift towards recognition of external influences which affect clients' well-being. An ecological/systems approach, however, is still overly-influenced by traditional social work.

Ecological/Systems Approach

Representing a move away from the traditional orientation, an ecological/systems approach reflects the beginning steps towards a more holistic orientation, but is still not enough. Nonetheless, this approach,

and the focus on empowerment, structural and strengths based social work will be briefly reviewed.

Systems theory is a derivative of biology, in which the body was recognized as a system that included subsystems – such as the circulatory and nervous systems. “The contribution from biology to systems theory is emphasis on the concept that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” (Ambrosino et al, 2001, p.59). The transference of systems theory to social work led to emphasis on “person/situation transactions...the social work practitioner must strive for a full understanding of the complex interactions between the client and all levels of the social and physical system as well as the meaning that the client assigns to each of these interactions” (Andreae, 1996, p.605). Systems theory’s conceptualization of micro (individual and family), mezzo (groups) and macro (institutions/structures, etc.) areas of practice could indicate leanings towards social justice, although there is more of a focus on adequate functioning within current systems.

The ecological approach is also rooted in biology and involves attention to ‘goodness of fit’ (Mullaly, 1997; Greene, 1994). “The emphasis is in active participation...[While] systems theory...assumes a broader perspective...[and] can be used to refer to inanimate, mechanical operations,...it can also be used to describe the functioning of a human family” (Kirst-Ashman and Hull, 1997, p.12); an ecological approach is viewed as more limited in its focus on “transactions in between individuals and the environment at the interface...at which [they] meet... [while] systems theory addresses boundaries of subsystems and the maintenance of homeostasis or equilibrium within a system” (ibid, p.12).

Although ecological/systems perspectives are seen as more liberal than a traditional orientation, in attending to societal issues affecting the client, Mullaly (1997) notes that “the personal deficiency view is not dropped completely” (p.57). The liberal view does not necessarily challenge the status quo. In fact, the focus is on restoring equilibrium, and reducing social disorganization. With this in mind, empowerment, structural and strengths based social work models will be considered.

First, empowerment is seen as a desirable goal in social work (Kirst-Ashman and Hull, 1997), aimed at helping “clients achieve appropriate power” (Northen, 1995, p.10), which begs the question: what is meant by ‘appropriate power?’ And, who decides? Heinonen and Spearman admit that “empowerment is now a murky concept” (p.216), and there is still the tendency to place responsibility back on the client – negatively speaking. It is not to say that clients should not/will not be willing to take responsibility, but that the structures/institutions become relieved of their culpability in the current order of things. This sentiment is re-

flected in the models' support for self-help and mutual aid.

Resistance to the model has to do with one major issue: most of the time, empowering clients does not mean providing the necessary resources, or structural changes needed. Does society provide First Nations with what they need (money, resources, land, etc – having stolen what land and resources they did have) to be/feel empowered and to assume control over their lives? No. Yet, First Nations are expected to take responsibility for their own lives. Bit of a conundrum here. Taking it to the micro level, clients are rarely asked to participate in prioritizing, planning, designing, evaluating services, and even if they are, are the resources they may need to participate—such child care, and bus fare—supplied? Do enquirers give them a sense of being heard by following through on their recommendations? Pertinent is Carr's (2003) claim that “most theorists have described empowerment primarily as a process ...personal transformation...is at the foundation of the process” (p.8); Carr concludes that social workers need to recognize issues of power and find “creative ways to share and cede power toward the common goal of political change” (p.19). Further, Boehm and Staples (2002) conducted research with consumers and practitioners, and determined that in comparison to consumers' expectations for tangible results, social workers “stressed processes over outcomes” (p.458).

The second approach subsumed under the ecological/systems framework is that of structural social work which incorporates empowerment within the micro and macro arenas. Deemed as more closely aligned with radical social work and critical theory, the focus is on social systems, not individuals; the goals are to “alleviate the negative effects on people of an exploitive and alienating social order; and...to transform the conditions and social structures that cause these negative effects” (Mullaly,1997, p.133). However, in order to realize the inclination towards a transformative practice, it is “imperative that structural social work develop theory and a praxis for its commitment to socialist principles” (ibid. p.137).

While the direction of structural social work is promising, with its roots in radical social work, critiques focus on the tendency to view power as static; to facilitate increased understanding and collective action, while failing to attend to, and at the expense of, the personal context of peoples' lives; and, to fail to provide guidance on how to facilitate meaningful change (Hart, 2001). In an Aboriginal context, the complex dynamics of power play a major role, and the idea of power as static limits the ability to confront those dynamics.

Third, strengths based social work seeks to draw on individual, family, community and cultural strengths, which is significant to an Aborigi-

nal context, given the communal nature of tribal societies. Heinonen and Spearman note the emphasis on individual growth, improving quality of life, increasing problem solving abilities, and handling stress and adversity. Hart sees this approach as congruent with Aboriginal perspectives, although Voss et al (1999) suggest that the strengths based approach “resonates closely, although incompletely, with the orienting values of tribalism” (p.238). Regardless, strengths based social work is predicated on the principles of empowerment, and again suggests a tendency towards pushing for self-reliance without providing needed resources, and a lack of willingness to participate in change.

Having reviewed the ecological/systems orientation, and the associated approaches—empowerment, structural and strengths based—one finds limitations, in spite of seemingly good intentions. Essentially, this orientation (and, approaches stemming from it) doesn’t necessarily challenge the status quo. Moving on, the next step is to consider antiracist social work.

Cultural Competence Versus Anti-Racist Social Work

As noted earlier, the survey of articles on social work practice with First Nations showed a greater emphasis on the need for cultural competence versus cultural awareness. Recognizing the minimalist approach of simply increasing awareness, the dialogue here will move directly to the topic of cultural competence, and then, to anti-racist social work. In the charted continuum presented earlier, the term ‘anti-racist’ is presented in brackets because none of the 23 articles surveyed addressed the issue head on, although data analysis from the local First Nations community needs assessment stressed the importance of dealing with racism. Importantly, while anti-racist social work is a critical step forward, the orientation also has its limits, in relation to First Nations’ realities and experiences.

First, cultural competence does require social workers to make more of an effort than to just become aware of differences. Seen as an “ethical imperative...[it] is an area that is receiving increasing attention” (Weaver, 2004, p.20). Weaver, however, argued that cultural competence has not been adequately defined, and that a stronger social justice approach is required. Research on Native Americans involved in helping professions led to conclusions that to provide culturally competent services, the following are needed:

- a) knowledge: culture, diversity, history and contemporary realities,
- b) skills: generic helping skills, containment/listening skills, culture specific skills,

- c) values and attitudes: non-judgmental/open, valuing diversity, helper wellness, willingness to learn, social justice and caring (p.24).

These suggestions do encourage a more active engagement in activities aimed at decreasing the cultural divide between workers and clients, but other issues must be considered.

Significant also is that racializing equity shifts attention away from the socio-economic/political realities facing First Nations. Ultimately, do culturally competent social workers engage in political action aimed at reconciling the injustices of colonialism? Do they sufficiently assist in accessing resources to enhance community visions and goals? Do they venture into addressing the problematic of personalizing race? Generally, the answer is 'no,' which is why there has been a shift from cross-cultural to anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work.

Furthermore, while anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches constitute a further step towards social justice, anti-racist discourse is largely a reaction to the science based approach to race—to biological determinism—and the assumed justifications for exploitation and subjugation based on race. Race is recognized as critical to political discourse, and Dei (1999) expresses his concerns regarding

the denial of the significance of race in academic discourse and practices; the open renunciation of racial differences in social practices and action; the trend towards the use of strictly class-based criteria in formulating social policy for equity and justice; the call for a transracial coalition praxis devoid of any symptoms of politics of identity; and the majority's embrace of the argument that race-specific practices should receive less attention in progressive political agendas and causes...these concerns come under what may be termed 'the politics of denying race and difference.' (p.18)

Dei further alludes to the importance of connecting race and difference with power and domination, to the perpetuation of power relations and inequality within education, and, to the need to facilitate changes in education. Grande, for example, describes the institutional racism associated with "having to defend American Indian history as an integral part of 'American' history" (p.346).

Significantly, however, social work texts on anti-racism (Dei, 1996) and anti-oppression (Gil, 1998; Mullaly, 2002) fail to address First Nations' issues or colonization. The exception is James' (1996) collection of articles, which contains 12/266 (<5%) pages of text devoted to colonization and racism as these pertain to First Nations.

Third, Lynn et al (1998) also argue that, in the case of Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islanders, current approaches are insufficient because:

The ethnic sensitive approach treats culture as fixed and static, tending to stereotype whole cultures. Both 'ethnic sensitive' and 'anti-racist' practice reflect a monocultural view of society...[and]operate from a reductive and deficit notion...[ignoring] the complexity of class, gender, ability, and sexuality for the black person. (p.6)

These authors also mention that an appropriate social justice framework requires inclusion of: decolonization, community reconstructions and revitalization, and spiritual liberation.

Additionally, a study of 117 social work practice articles, focusing on minority groups and Aboriginals, found that "the social work profession [is] naïve and superficial in its anti-racist practice" (McMahon and Allen-Meares, 1992, p.537). These authors suggest that proposing simple awareness constitutes a racist attitude which perpetuates the normalization of oppression, and that a far more proactive stance is required in social work.

One final note regards the importance of addressing racism in social work education. A needs assessment conducted in a local First Nations community stressed the need to develop skills for dealing with racism in their community (Harris, 2003). Racist federal legislation of Aboriginal identity—wherein the federal government dictates who is/is not legally 'Indian'—led to complex and divisive internal conflicts and racism within Aboriginal communities, although the development of skills to address such issues is extremely limited in undergraduate coursework. Thus, anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches still fall short in attending to the realities of Tribal people.

Preliminary Conclusions: Are We There Yet?

At this juncture, it is easy to see that there is little in the record that unequivocally demonstrates a significant social justice orientation in social work OR in social work education. Overall, this review indicates that

- a) social work is burdened with struggles relevant to traditional or progressive educational aims, and with an unjustifiable favoritism for traditional orientations in social work versus social justice orientations,
- b) the traditional orientation is one that: locates problems within the individual, family, community or culture; is focused on fixing whatever is wrong with them; and seeks to increase functioning within established norms, but may not provide needed skills for dealing with the realities of frontline social work.

- c) seemingly middle of the road social work guided by systems/ecological theories purport to seek change external to the client, but inherently reflect traditional social work orientations in the failure to challenge the status quo,
- d) cultural competence is favored among some authors, and although anti-racism and oppression are a more positive step towards social justice, none of these are sufficient to an understanding of, and preparation for working in, a First Nations' context,
- e) cohesive theoretical discourse is lacking,
- f) students are not adequately prepared to work with First Nations,
- g) First Nations students' needs cannot be met within the current milieu,
- h) there is an absence of attention to meaningful structural change, and limited support for social justice orientations and decolonization,
- i) spirituality and culture, and kinship/communal ties, are relevant to First Nations social work practice, and to curriculum in social work education.

Spirituality and culture; kinship/ communal ties; and decolonization, are also relevant to a social justice framework that would better reflect the needs of First Nations communities, as will be evident in the discussion of social justice.

Shifting Orientations: From Rhetoric to Reality

The answers lie in facing up to the colonial past, in taking responsibility for it, and in collective commitment to restitution and to a new non-colonial, mutual and negotiated relationship between Aboriginal and immigrant peoples. Facing up to the past means owning all of our history, rather than perpetuating the myth of White settlers creating civilization in uncharted wilderness. (Green, 1996, online)

So far, what is evident is that the rhetoric of 'social justice' has yet to become a significant reality in social work education and practice. Articulation of social justice imperatives need to be further developed within social work education, and such efforts need to incorporate perspectives which reflect the experiences and realities of First Nations, although Castellano et al (1986) noted the difficulty educators have in acknowledging "the inadequacy of current theory and teaching resources to educate First Nations students...[and in committing] to develop the personnel, materials, and theoretical underpinnings of a challenging new specialty" (p.175).

Currently, however, a social justice orientation rooted in post-colonial discourse is critical. Social justice in an Aboriginal context can be viewed as

awakening in a house with an adequate water supply, cooking facilities and sanitation. It is the ability to nourish your children and send them to a school where their education not only equips them for employment but reinforces their knowledge and appreciation of their cultural inheritance. It is the prospect of genuine employment and good health; a life of choices and opportunity, free from discrimination. (Lynn et al, 1998, pp.85-86)

This rendering of social justice, in the Canadian context, would be expanded to include decolonization from the ideologies/institutions/policies which perpetuate colonial domination, privileging Aboriginal worldviews, and enhancing self-determination. There must also be reasonable restitution/redress for all that was taken/stolen from First Nations people. 'Reasonable' in this instance partially includes compensatory efforts that would truly elevate the current status of Aboriginal people to, at the barest minimum, that of Canadians – in terms of social, health, economy, and resources, etc.

Importantly, because the colonial relationship between Europeans and colonized countries is at the root of the current plight of Aboriginal people around the world, post-colonialism must be the paradigm upon which a social justice orientation is built. In effect, post-colonial perspectives get to the heart of the matter and are viewed as the appropriate reference point for social work education. Post-colonialism does not represent a time after colonialism; Battiste (2004) describes post-colonialism as:

an aspiration, a hope not yet achieved,...a strategy that responds to experiences of colonization and imperialism. As a critique it is about rethinking the conceptual, institutional, cultural, legal and other boundaries that are taken for granted and assumed universal, but act as structural barriers.... (p.1)

Ashcroft et al (2002) see it as a way of addressing the impact of colonialism, thus we begin at the beginning, and consider decolonization.

Decolonization

Decolonization is a process which everyone needs to engage in. Alfred (1999) agrees, pointing out that

challenging mainstream society to question its own structures, its acquisitive individualistic value system, and the false premises of colonialism is essential if we are to move be-

yond the problems plaguing all our societies, Native and White, and rebuild relations between our peoples. (p.21)

Native American social workers and social work students have also argued for social justice, and decolonization “which involves recognizing, then shedding, the mindset associated with colonial processes by which one culture subjugates another and defines it as inferior” (Weaver, 1999, p.222). Decolonization means uprooting the internalized hegemony and Euro-centrism—permeating our societies—that dominates our minds/our spirits/our actions/our relationships; ‘our’ in this sense, refers to everyone.

Displacing systemic discrimination against Indigenous peoples created and legitimized by the cognitive frameworks of imperialism and colonialism remains the single most crucial cultural challenge facing humanity. (Battiste, 2002, p.89)

Battiste also speaks to the healing that can occur through facing the realities of colonialism, and through taking corrective action.

What’s important is that it is not about throwing the baby out with the bath water; we must be able to draw on the strengths of each life world, on what they have to bring to the table, and on what can facilitate harmony and just relations. This is in keeping with a traditional Aboriginal belief that everyone has important contributions to make within the ‘circle of life’. Shifting from the domination of Western world-views—through incorporation of traditional Aboriginal perspectives—will have an enormous impact in finding the balance needed to set things right.

Lastly, Alfred speaks to a level of accountability extended to all of humanity, and further suggests that the

value of the Indigenous critique of the Western worldview lies not in the creation of false dichotomies but in the insight that the colonial attitudes and structures imposed on the world by Europeans are not manifestations of an inherent evil: they are merely reflections of White society’s understanding of its own power and relationship with nature. (p.21)

Schools of Social Work are a natural site for engaging in the decolonization process, given their spoken interest in social justice, and a willingness/commitment to engage in challenging the dominant order can be transformative; hooks (1994) and Joseph, et al, (2000) speak to the fears/challenges associated with going down this road, but such efforts are needed, and can open the way for different ways of being/doing/thinking/ feeling. Thus the importance of incorporating Aboriginal worldviews in curriculum.

Privileging Aboriginal Worldviews in Social Work Education

Given that the need to decenter Western epistemology (in favor of Aboriginal worldviews/epistemology) has been previously discussed (Harris, 2006) a brief discussion relevant to curriculum will be the focus here. Significant is the need to incorporate Aboriginal epistemology as reflected in the spiritual/ecological worldview. That such an education can benefit both mainstream and First Nations students has been explored, with positive findings.

Aboriginal epistemology is rooted in a spiritual/ecological framework. As mentioned earlier, close to 2/3's of the articles surveyed supported ceremonial healing practices, and the need for including spirituality in social work. Dei (2002) and Baskin (2005) also argue for spirituality and spiritual learning in education. Although tribal medicine is the foundation of current medicine (Weatherford, 1988), healing practices among tribal peoples are undervalued by mainstream, and efforts to incorporate knowledge of ceremony and traditional healing are also hindered by issues of power and of differing perspectives on health and healing. Letendre (2002) argues that Aboriginal medicine is integral to Aboriginal culture, society, spirituality, ceremony, and philosophy; that Aboriginal people's conception of health and healing are more holistic – versus the fragmented approach of Western medicine; and that the power dynamic epitomized within the doctor/patient relationship is absent in Aboriginal cultures, where healers call upon the Creator for healing. Finding ways to centralize such understandings will have a positive impact as Western social work moves away from its characteristic fragmentation, and from elevating the professional to the typically authoritarian role in health and healing.

Also important is that Aboriginal perspectives on ecology exceed the understanding of ecological social work, which focuses only on relationships between people – tribal understanding extends to all of creation, and involves the need for respect, and for right action (Harris, 2006). Social work educators will benefit society as whole by fostering this understanding about the relationship between people and all aspects of the world they live in by acknowledging the dire impact of illusions about controlling the environment; and by teaching skills for proactive approaches to environmental issues.

Fundamental as well is the importance of kinship/communal networks, which contrasts the individualism of Western society. Embracing such an orientation would lead to increased possibilities to enter into collaborative relationships steered by community visions and goals,

culture and worldviews, and, to draw on community strengths in ways that can lead to social change, versus simply helping them to cope with/adjust to the dominant society. Accordingly, models of community development need to be incorporated in social work education more prominently. This sentiment was also expressed in the local community needs assessment, as was the need to facilitate skills and approaches which are more family/extended family oriented.

Incorporation of Aboriginal epistemology requires a dynamic approach to curriculum, given the diversity of First Nations communities. Each community must provide its own cultural foundation, as Aboriginal epistemology is place-based – the intimate relationship with the land requires that educators be willing to engage in curriculum development that is ever evolving, and transforms itself in relation to the community being served. Zapf (n/d) points out that mainstream “may slowly be coming to terms with the neglected concept of space” (p. 149) and, that the inclusion of Elders and tribal knowledge are a largely untapped resource. Restructuring curriculum in this context requires flexibility, open mindedness, and the willingness to suspend judgment/ authority in favor of reciprocal learning/teaching relationships.

Lastly, research into students' perspectives on the incorporation of Aboriginal epistemology show favorable results. Baskin (2005) sought feedback from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students on the incorporation of Aboriginal worldviews in social work education. Aboriginal students felt that what was beneficial was

- a) learning more about the worldviews - which were not passed on to them
- b) increased interest in their own identities
- c) the sense of belonging, and increased motivation
- d) the relevance to their lives/future work
- e) recognition of the validity of these worldviews
- f) exposure to Aboriginal role models/leaders/educators
- g) that such learning is necessary in regaining autonomy

Non-Aboriginal students felt that incorporating Aboriginal worldviews is essential because

- a) over-representation of Aboriginal people in many areas of practice
- b) concentrations of Aboriginal people in urban areas
- c) better understanding of importance of identity
- d) relevant to purpose of healing
- e) facilitates inclusiveness, understanding of interconnectedness
- f) facilitates proper understanding of history
- g) can facilitate healing in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations

That culture and spirituality are important is also evidenced by the results of the community needs assessment – wherein culture constituted one of the main theme areas, and by inclusion in the Apache training - which incorporates all of the factors mentioned in this section. Furthermore, such efforts need to be positively linked with Aboriginal self-determination.

Self-Determination

Self-determination, within an individualistic mainstream context, hints at the traditional social work orientation, in that there may be more of a focus on self-responsibility, while relieving those in power of their fiduciary obligations to First Nations. Thus, an Aboriginal perspective of self-determination is important. “The collective struggle for Indigenous self-determination is truly a fight for freedom and justice...[and] there is more to justice than equity” (Alfred, 1999, pp.xi & xv). Alfred mentions the right to the same standard of living as Canadians have, but further adds the importance of acknowledging the Nation to Nation relationship between Aboriginal People and Canada; “to deny their nationhood is to accept the European genocide of 500 years” (Alfred, p.xv).

Additionally, the Assembly of First Nations (n/d, online) argues that not only have First Nations right to self-government largely been denied, but the federal government has failed to provide comparable services, or to fulfill their legal fiduciary obligations. In this regard, Human Rights legislation (Chrisjohn, 1994) and the inherent rights of Aboriginal people, as well as the rights enshrined in the Constitution Acts, in treaties, and in areas where treaties have not been concluded, are fundamental to a relevant curriculum. Contextualizing these issues requires knowledge of the historical relations between the colonists and First Nations.

Secondly, the political context of working in Aboriginal communities that are achieving (or have achieved) self-government, or, are working towards self-determination should be more prominent in curriculum. Castellano, Stalwick and Wein (1986) note that Aboriginal students are centrally involved in effecting structural change... Preparation to work effectively in the organizational, political, and cultural context of Native social work requires an educational experience substantially different from that offered in standard programs. (p.173)

The White Cloud Apache Child Protection Service Training Curriculum (Gonzales-Santin, 1992), for example, incorporates tribal and federal legislation and legal issues, tribal protocols, and tribal community practice in policing, government, case management, supervision and adminis-

tration. In the Canadian context, this is barely, if at all addressed in social work education, and students are ill-prepared for the complexities of such an environment.

It is also important to recognize that Aboriginal students often come into social work education with extensive experience in their field, unlike mainstream undergraduates. So there are two issues: one is the need to draw on that expertise, and the other, is that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students will likely ascend to greater levels of authority much more quickly if they are working for First Nations communities, and entry level social work programs may not be providing the skills for working in contexts where their authority may accelerate at such rates, although the First Nations students are already working in that context. This was reflected in the local needs assessment, and the extensive elaboration on the need for a multitude of administrative skills.

Thirdly, that self-determination is fundamental is evident in Chandler and Lalonde's (n/d, online) comprehensive and ongoing research on suicide in British Columbia's almost 200 First Nations communities.

Communities that have achieved a measure of self-government, that were quick off the mark to litigate for Aboriginal title to traditional lands, that promote women in positions of leadership, that have supported the construction of facilities for the preservation of culture, and that have worked to gain control over their own civic lives (i.e., control over health, education, policing, and child welfare services) have no youth suicides, and low to absent adult suicide rates. (n/d, online)

This is in comparison to communities where rates of youth suicide are at least five times higher than in mainstream. Conclusions of these findings include support for lateral knowledge sharing between Aboriginal communities, versus the top down approach found in mainstream policy, practice and education, and, the need to recognize the diversity of Aboriginal people, wherein there can be no 'one size fits all approach.' Reflection on these remarks suggests that while students are not adequately prepared to deal with suicide, violence, or other crises, any effort to effect change must be linked with a social justice framework that facilitates self-determination, reflects diversity, and institutionalizes non-European worldviews, while deconstructing the hegemonic knowledge base which deters progress.

Fourth, the dependency derived from the paternalistic relationship between First Nations and the federal government needs to be seriously considered. Government control over Aboriginal people, and their lands, resources, as well as the policies and practices in the social service sectors, undermines and essentially denies Aboriginal people their right

to self determination – while at the same time, granting it to the dominant society (Alfred, 1999). And again, we find a contradiction: mainstream wants Aboriginal people to take responsibility for their lives, but denies self-determination. Further to this issue, it is important to remember the comment made at the beginning of the section on social justice; restitution is critical, and substantial efforts are required to return enough of what was taken to actually achieve self-determination. The band-aid attempts to resolve the current situation have failed, in practically every arena of Aboriginal life.

Last, but not least, “usurping the right to self-definition is a fundamental aspect of usurping the power of the group from whom this right has been removed” (Harris, 2004, p.11), and Alfred speaks to the link between identity and power, as do Mullaly (2002) and Dei (1999 and 1996); the legislation of Aboriginal identity is another form of denying self-determination, and must be addressed.

Conclusion

The intention here was to evaluate the relevance of undergraduate social work curriculum, a process which leads to recognition of a) the failure to ‘walk the talk’ and demonstrate congruence between stated goals and reality in social work education, b) the definite need to develop theories/foundations which more adequately reflect social justice, and the experience of tribal peoples, c) the need to centre social justice education in a post-colonial paradigm, d) the importance of these factors in preparing non-Aboriginal students to work with First Nations, and e) the importance of these changes in meeting the requirements of First Nations students seeking social work degrees.

Significantly, the structure of and curriculum in undergraduate social work programs fails to reflect a strong focus on social justice, which summarily amounts to mere rhetoric, as there is extremely limited coursework on issues pertaining to culture, race, or the First Nations context, and even more limited focus (if any) on challenging the status quo, let alone addressing colonialism. The issues discussed are a result of surveying core undergraduate social work texts, and literature on social work, social work education, or social work with First Nations.

Secondly, Aboriginal people are under-represented in higher education, in employment, in politics, in the economy, and in decision making regarding services for their communities, but are over-represented in jails, and child welfare, in addition to facing the lowest levels of health and well being (Frideres and Gadasz, 1999), yet there is a lack of commitment to ensuring that the social work curriculum represents the population being served. One could argue that First Nations constitute only a

small percentage of people living on the land called Canada, but people relying on services of social workers are not a representative group of this larger population. As well, the social, political, and economic realities of working with this group are only minimally addressed.

The discussion is preliminary at best, and there are many issues/ ideas that have not been addressed, or that need to be further developed. As an example, the discussion of process versus outcomes has been attended to in feminist literature, which attributes outcomes based perspectives as consistent with traditional modes of helping in social work at the expense of attention to process (Van den Berg and Cooper, 1986), and, in Aboriginal social work, it's all about relations (Harris, 2006). Nevertheless, we need to balance outcomes and processes in ways that facilitate meaningful change. Another pertinent element is the role of ethical standards, as these pertain to working in the 'best interests of the client' both in social work and social work education. Failing to make the kinds of changes proposed here indicates, minimally, a failure to meet ethical standards.

Regardless of such limitations in this work, a number of recommendations can be derived from the above review. In summary,

- a) social work education must shift towards progressive aims in taking more subject/society centered approaches to educating both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal social workers, and withdraw from the hegemonic subject/knowledge centered approach,
- b) social work with First Nations and social work education need to become more congruent with stated intentions of social justice and to more appropriately reflect an ecological foundation that expands beyond the current person-in-environment perspective,
- c) course materials need to be developed that forward social justice as a central foundation (versus an add-on topic) predicated on a post-colonial paradigm,
- d) social work education needs to reflect stated aims in the actual structure of programs,
- e) the balance between traditional social work and social justice orientations must better prepare students for the realities of the populations to be served, and balance the specific needed skills to address immediate concerns of clients with skills to promote/enhance social justice, linking the two in education, and in everyday practice,
- f) anti-racist social work must be more proactive and inclusive of the political realities of identity politics, and of federal policy, regarding Aboriginal identity, but must also prepare students to

- deal with the complex and destructive dynamics of racism
- g) a social justice framework requires a willingness to challenge the status quo, and to address the hegemony that predominates, by participating in and fostering decolonization,
 - h) a social justice framework requires the incorporation of Aboriginal worldviews, of the spiritual/ecological approach to life, and of (not exclusively) cultural traditions/beliefs/practices, as reflected in the inclusion of spirituality, family/community approaches to practice,
 - i) a social justice framework requires incorporating the social, historical and political context of Aboriginal self determination, and proactive skills for supporting and enhancing such goals,
 - j) restitution is critical, and any transformative efforts must be inclusive and supportive of such issues
 - k) social work educators must be willing to engage in further development of the ideas being proposed here, both in dialogue and in research.

The ideas here are by no means meant to render a utopian vision of social work education, which would be naïve at best. Instead, it is a call to educators, and to Schools of Social Work, to commit to a process aimed at real social justice.

References

- Adams, Howard
1995 *A Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization*. Penticton: Theytus Books, Ltd.
- Alfred, T.
1999 *Peace, Power and Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Ambrosino, R. and J Hefferman, G. Shuttlesworth and R. Ambrosino
2001 *Social Work and Social Welfare: An Introduction*. 4th Ed., Belmont, CA: Wadsworth
- Andreae, D.
1996 Systems Theory and Social Work Treatment. *Social Work Treatment: Interlocking Theoretical Approaches*, Ch. 25. F. Turner ed. New York: Free Press. 601-616.
- Armitage, A.
2003 *Social Welfare in Canada*. 4th Edition, Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press.

- Ashcroft, B., G. Griffiths and H. Tiffin
2002 *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge.
- Assembly of First Nations
n/d Federal Government, Funding to First Nations: The Facts, the Myths, and the Way Forward. (online at www.afn.ca)
- Barnes, D. and R. Hugman
2002 Portrait of Social Work. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*. 16/, 277-88.
- Barman, J., ed., Hebert, Y., ed., & McCaskill, D., ed.
1986 The Legacy of the Past: An Overview. *Indian Education in Canada: Volume 1: The Legacy*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.
- Baskin, C.
2005 Centering Aboriginal worldviews in education. Retrieved Feb. 5, 2006 From <http://www.turning-point.ca/article/articleprint/682/-1/25/>
- Battiste, M.
2004 Animating Sites of Post-Colonial Education: Indigenous Knowledge and the Humanities. Manitoba: CSSE Plenary Address. May 29.
2002 Decolonizing Education in Canadian Universities: An Interdisciplinary, International, Indigenous Research Project. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*. 26/2: 82-?
- Bishop, Anne
1994 *Becoming an Ally: Breaking the Cycle of Oppression*. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing.
- Boehm, Amnon and L. H. Staples
2002 The Functions of the Social Worker in Empowering: The Voices of Consumers and Professionals. *Social Work*, 47/4: 449-460, October.
- Bolara, B. S.
2000 *Social Issues and Contradictions in Canadian Society*. 3rd Edition, Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd.
- Braswell, Ellen, M., and H. D. Wong
1994 Perceptions of Rehabilitation Counselors Regarding Native American Healing Practices. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 33-37, April/May/June.

- Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work
2001 *In Critical Demand: Social Work in Canada: Overview of Findings and Strategic Directions*. Retrieved February 10, 2004 from http://www.socialworkincanada.org/pdf/casswoverview_en.pdf
- Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work
1991 *Social Work Education at the Crossroads: The Challenge of Diversity*. Unpublished task force report. May.
- Carr, Summerson E.
2003 Rethinking Empowerment Theory Using a Feminist Lens: The Importance of Process. *Affilia*, 18/1, 8-20. Spring.
- Castellano, M.B., Stalwick, H. & Wien F.
1986 Native Social Work Education in Canada: Issues and Adaptations. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 166-84.
- Chandler, M. and C. Lalonde
n/d Cultural Continuity as a Moderator of Suicide Risk Among Canada's First Nations. Online at: <http://web.uvic.ca/~lalonde/manuscripts/2004Transformations.pdf>
- Chappell, R.
2001 *Social Welfare in Canadian Society*. 2nd Edition, Scarborough: Nelson Thompson Learning.
- Chrisjohn R.
1994 *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada*. (draft document)
n/d Excerpts of Speech Delivered in Edmonton, Alberta, Retrieved February 25, 2006 from <http://sisis.nativeweb.org/resschool/chrisjohn.html>
- Christensen, Carole Piglar
1994 *Linking Schools of Social Work to Aboriginal Students and Communities: Exploring the Issues*. Vancouver, BC: B & B Printing.
- Compton, B. and B. Galaway
1979 *Social Work Processes*, Revised Ed., Georgetown: The Dorsey Press.
- Dei, G.
2002 Spiritual Knowing and Transformative Learning. NALL Working Paper #59
1999 The Denial of Difference: Reframing Anti-Racist Praxis. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 2/1.
1996 *Anti-Racism Education, Theory and Practice*, Fernwood Publishing: Halifax, Nova Scotia.

- DeLugach, S. P.
1999 Indigenous Models of Healing and Sexuality: Restoring Sexual Balance. *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity*, 6, 137-150.
- Demerais, L.
2003 Presentation to Social Work 425. Vancouver: UBC School of Social Work and Family Studies.
- Dow, B. and J. McDonald
2003 Social Support or Structural Change? Social Work Theory and Research on Care-Giving. *Australian Social Work*, 56/3: 197-208, September.
- Duran, E. and B. Duran
1995 *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*, Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Duran, B. and K. L. Walters
2004 HIV/AIDS Prevention in "Indian Country": Current Practice, Indigenist Etiology Models, and Postcolonial Approaches to Change. *AIDS Education and Prevention*, 16(3), pp. 187-201.
- Dykeman, Cass, R. J. Nelson, and V. Appleton
1995 Building Strong Working Alliances with American Indian Families. *Social Work in Education*, 17/3: 148-158, July.
- Egan, K.
1997 *The Educated Mind: How Cognitive Tools Shape Our Understanding*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Fanon, F.
1963 *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fong, R. and S. Furito
2001 *Culturally Competent Practice: Skills, Interventions and Evaluations*. Needham Heights : Allyn and Bacon.
- Fournier, Suzanne & Crey, Ernie
1997 *Stolen From Our Embrace: The Abduction of First Nations Children and the Restoration of Aboriginal Communities*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre.
- France, H.
1997 First Nations: Helping and Learning in the Aboriginal Community. *Guidance and Counseling*, 12/2.
- Frideres, J.S.
1999 *Aboriginal Peoples of Canada: Contemporary Conflicts*. 5th ed. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall.

- Gair, S. and D. Miles, and J. Thomson
2005 Reconciling Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Knowledges in Social Work Education: Action and Legitimacy. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 41/2: 179-189.
- Garrett, M. T.
1999 Understanding the 'Medicine' of Native American Traditional Values: An Integrative Review. *Counseling & Values*, 43/2, Jan. Garrett, J. T., and M.
- Garrett
1994 The Path of Good Medicine: Understanding and Counseling Native American Indians. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development*, 22/3, July.
- Gil, David G.
1998 *Confronting Injustice and Oppression: Concepts and Strategies for Social Workers*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Giroux, Henry A.
1992 Paulo Freire and the Politics of Postcolonialism. Retrieved January 20, 2004 from: <http://jac.gsu.edu/jac/12.1/Articles/2.htm>
- Gonzales-Santin, E.
1992 The White Mountain Apache Child Protection Training Curriculum. *Nohwii Chaghashe Baa da gontzaa (Protect our Apache Children)*. Arizona: Arizona State University.
- Grande, S.
2000 American Indian Identity and Intellectualism: The Quest For a New Red Pedagogy. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13/4: 343-59
- Green, J.
1996 Towards a Détente With History: Confronting Canada's Colonial Legacy. *International Journal of Canadian Studies*. Retrieved March 7, 2006 at: <http://www.nisto.com/cree/lubicon/19960620.html>.
- Greene, R.
1994 *Human Behavior Theory: A Diversity Framework*. Aldine De Gruyter: Hawthorne.
- Gross, E.
1995 Deconstructing Politically Correct Practice Literature: The American Indian Case. *Social Work*, 40(2):206-213.
- Hanson, Wynne
1978 Grief Counseling with Native Americans, *White Cloud Journal*, 1:19-21.

- Harris, B.
2006 Aboriginal Epistemology and the Creation of a Transformative Pedagogy. Burnaby: Simon Fraser University (unpublished COMPREHENSIVE EXAM #1)
2004 Power and Identity: A New Look at First Nations in Canadian Society. Burnaby: Simon Fraser University (unpublished paper)
2003 A Community Based Approach to the Development of a First Nations BSW Program: Community Needs Assessment and Proposed Model. *Native Social Work Journal*, 5: 64-86.
2001 Curriculum Review Package. Prepared for Curriculum Workshop at Vancouver: UBC School of Social Work and Family Studies (unpublished)
- Hart, Michael
2001 An Aboriginal Approach to Social Work Practice. *Social Work Practice: Problem Solving and Beyond*. T. Heinonen & L. Spearman (Eds), Toronto: Irwin Publishing.
- Heinonen, T. and L. Spearman
2001 *Social Work Practice: Problem Solving and Beyond*. Toronto: Irwin.
- Heinrich, R., J. L. Corbine, and K. R. Thomas
1990 Counseling Native Americans. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 69: 128-133, November/December.
- Hepworth, D., R. H. Rooney and J. Larsen
1997 *Direct Social Work Practice: Theory and Skills*, 5th ed. Pacific Grove: Brooks Cole Publishing Company.
- Hick, S.
2006 *Social Work in Canada: An Introduction*. 2nd Edition, Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc.
- Hooks, B.
1994 *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- James, C, ed.
1996 *Perspectives on Racism and the Human Services Sector*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Johnson, L..
1995 *Social Work Practice: A Generalist Approach*. 5th ed., Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon.
- Kirst-Ashman, K., and G. Hull, Jr.
Understanding Generalist Practice. Chicago: Nelson-Hall Inc.

- Letendre, A.
2002 Aboriginal Traditional Medicine: Where Does it Fit? *Crossing Boundaries - An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 1/2: 78-87.
- Lewis, Ronald G. and M. K. Ho
1975 Social Work with Native Americans. *Social Work*, 379-382. September.
- Lightman, E.
2003 *Social Policy in Canada*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Lum, D.
2000 Social Work Practice and People of Color: A Process-Stage Approach. 4th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Lynn, R., R. Thorpe, D. Miles, with C. Cults, A. Butcher and L. Ford
1998 Murri Way! Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Reconstruct Social Welfare Practice. Townsville: James Cook University.
- Manson, S.
2000 Mental Health Services for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Need, Use, and Barriers to Effective Care. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 45/7. September. Retrieved February 13, from: [Http://weblinks3.epnet.com/citation.asp?tb=1&ug=dbs+aph%2Crh%2Ceric%2Cpsych%2...](http://weblinks3.epnet.com/citation.asp?tb=1&ug=dbs+aph%2Crh%2Ceric%2Cpsych%2...)
- Matheson, L.
1996 Valuing Spirituality Among Native American Populations. *Counseling & Values*, 41/1. October. Retrieved February 10, 2004 from <http://weblinks2.epnet.com/citation.asp?tb=1&ug=dbs+aph+sid+999E202B%2DB2CC%...>
- McKenzie, B., & V. Morrissette
2003 Social Work Practice with Canadians of Aboriginal Background: Guidelines for Respectful Social Work. *Envision: The Manitoba Journal of Child Welfare*, 2/1, pp.13-39, April.
- McLaughlin, Audrey
1982 *Native Content in the Social Work Curriculum*. Victoria, BC: University of Victoria School of Social Work and Donner Foundation.
- McMahon, A. and P. Allen-Meares
1992 Is Social Work Racist? A Content Analysis of Recent Literature. *Social Work*, 37/6: 533-539.

- Memmi, A.
1965 *The Colonizer and Colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Miller, J.R.
2000 *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*. 3rd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
1996 *Shiingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Milloy, J.
1986 *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986*. Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press.
- Morrisette, V., L. Morissete, L. and B. McKenzie
1993 Towards an Aboriginal Model of Social Work Practice: Cultural Knowledge and Traditional Practice. *Canadian Social Work Review*. 10/1: 91-109.
- Mullaly, Bob
2002 *Challenging Oppression: A Critical Social Work Approach*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
1996 *Structural Social Work: Ideology, Theory, and Practice*. 2nd ed. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Nakhaie, M.
1999 *Debates on Social Inequality in Canada*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd.
- Nelson, C., M. L. Kelley, and D. H. McPherson
1985 Rediscovering Support in Social Work Practice: Lessons from Indian Indigenous Human Service Workers. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 231-247.
- Neu, D., & R. Therrien
2003 *Accounting for Genocide: Canada's Bureaucratic Assault on Aboriginal People*. Black point: Fernwood Publishing.
- Northern, H.
1995 *Clinical Social Work Knowledge and Skills*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Pace, J.M. & Smith A.F.V.
1990 Native Social Work Education: Struggling to Meet the Need. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 7/1: 109-119. Winter.
- Saleebey, D.
1997 *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice*. 2nd ed. New York: Longman Publishers.

- Sinclair, R.
2004 Aboriginal Social Work Education in Canada: Decolonizing Pedagogy for the Seventh Generation. *First Peoples Child and Family Review*, 1/1: 49-61.
- Stalwick, H.
1986 *Demonstration of Strategies for Change: A Review of Indian and Native Social Work Education in Canada; What Was Said?* Regina: University of Regina.
- Sue, D. and D. Sue
1990 Counseling the Culturally Different: Theory & Practice. 2nd ed. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Thomason, T.
1991 Counseling Native Americans: An Introduction for Non-Native American Counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 69 321-327, March/April.
- Turner, J., and F. Turner, ed.
2001 *Canadian Social Welfare*. Toronto: Free Press.
- Van Den Berg, N. and L. Cooper (eds)
1986 *Feminist Vision for Social Work*. Maryland: National Association of Social Workers.
- Van Uchelen, C., S. Davidson, C. Brasfield, S. Quressette, L. Demerais
1997 What Makes Us Strong: Urban Aboriginal Perspectives on Wellness and Strength. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*, 116/2: 37-49.
- Vedan, R.
2002 How Shall We Forgive Our Fathers: Angry/Violent First Nations/Aboriginal Men's Experiences with Social Workers. Burnaby: Simon Fraser University, unpublished dissertation.
- Voss, R., V. Douville, A. Little Soldier, and G. Twiss
1999 Tribal and Shamanic-Based Social Work Practice: A Lakota Perspective. *Social Work*, 44/3: 228-241.
- Voss, R., A. White Hat, Sr., J. Bates, M. Lunderman, and A. Lunderman, Jr.
2005 Social Work Education in the Homeland: Wo'Lakota Unglu'Su'Tapi.I Epas or Impasse? Operationalizing Accreditation Standard 6.0. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 41/2: 209-227, Spring/Summer.
- Walker, D., and J. Soltis
2004 *Curriculum and Aims*. 4th ed. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Weatherford, J.
1988 *Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World*. New York: Ballantine.
- Weaver, H.
2004 The Elements of Cultural Competence: Applications with Native Clients. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 13/1: 19-35.
2002 Perspectives on Wellness: Journeys on the Red Road. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 39/1: 5-15.
1999 Indigenous People and the Social Work Profession: Defining Culturally Competent Services. *Social Work*, 44(3): 217-225.
1998 Indigenous People in a Multicultural Society: Unique Issues for Human Services. *Social Work*, 43/3: 203-211.
- Westhues, A., J. LaFrance and G. Schmidt
2001 A SWOT analysis of Social Work Education in Canada. *Social Work Education*, 20/1: 36-56.
- Zapf, K.
n/d Location and Knowledge Building: Exploring the Fit of Western Social Work with Traditional Knowledge. *Native Social Work Journal*, 2(1): 138-52.

Authors Note

Of Dene heritage, I am a lecturer at UBC School of Social Work and Family Studies and the coordinator of an off-campus BSW program being piloted in a local First Nations community. I also maintain a private practice working with First Nations people who have experienced childhood trauma. I would like to acknowledge and thank the BC ACADRE for supporting my research.

