Child-Targeted Assimilation:
An Oral History of Indian Day School Education in Kahnawà:ke

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ABSTRACT

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Recent studies about Indigenous education in Canada largely focus on the effects of Residential Schooling. Yet, Indigenous children in Canada attended Day Schools in greater numbers than Residential Schools and we still know little about their experiences. For many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, the loss of language, culture, and identity caused by Day Schooling are traumatic experiences that spanned several generations. The Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) community of Kahnawà:ke had several Day Schools, the earliest of which opened in the 1820s. This research seeks out the oral histories and experiences at Indian Day Schools of four Kanien'kehá:ka elders from Kahnawà:ke. The research is approached with a combination of Indigenous and qualitative research methods including oral history and narrative inquiry. Through a critical self-reflexive autobiographical narrative process, experiences and impacts of Day Schools are analyzed and interpreted as a co-creation of knowledge. The term *child-targeted assimilation* is introduced as a means of identifying a pattern of child-focused colonization that has resulted in layers of trauma in families and communities. This research demonstrates ways that multigenerational storying facilitates a deeper understanding of colonization and approaches painful issues without traumatizing or victimizing Indigenous peoples. Effects of Indian Day Schooling are understood through the lens of lived reality, set in the broader context of colonization and other facets of indigenous life. The outcome is a process of decolonizing, healing, and approaching research as story and as medicine.

Acknowledgements

In the Onkwehón:we way, I begin with Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen to offer my greetings to the people, to all life on Mother Earth, life in Sky World, and the great natural powers of creation (our Creator). Grounding myself with these words, I wish to acknowledge everyone who has given life to this project.

I would like to say niawenhkó:wa to the people who have supported and guided me throughout my journey as a student over many years (especially my elders). The stories I heard growing up in Kahnawà:ke filled me with wonder, admiration, and also at times frustration. I have a deep sense of respect for our people and especially the elders who were willing to share their stories with me (Joe, Frank, Kaia'titáhkhe, and Grandma Millie).

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Dedication

With all of my heart I dedicate this work to my grandmother, Mildred Iakotehraiénthon Ida Cross. Grandma Millie, you taught me to have respect and humility and you raised me to be good. Your unconditional love provided a strong foundation for me throughout my life. Your stories are the inspiration for this work. I promise to pass your knowledge and stories on to future generations. É:so tsi Konnorónhkhwa.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

INTRODUCTION

Wahéhshon niwakhsennò:ten, wakathahión:ni niwaki'taró:ten tánon Kahnawà:ke nitewaké:non. My name is Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean, I am a traditional Wolf Clan woman born and raised in Kahnawà:ke, Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) Territory. Both of my parents are from Kahnawà:ke where the majority of my large family still lives, including myself, my partner, and our three children. My motivations in undertaking this research on Indian Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke are the same as my reasons for engaging in higher education, to help rebuild and revitalize our language, culture, and ways of living for the sake of our future generations ("the faces yet to come"), *á:se tehatikonhsontóntie raotirihwá:ke*.

I learned about Day Schools in the same way that most of us from Kahnawà:ke do, through stories. These narratives were voiced within the Longhouse and as oral history through shared personal stories and experiences.[1] These practices are common in the tradition of Onkwehón:we (Indigenous) oral history and culture.[2] By listening to these stories, I learned that my family and community are carrying pain and shame from the Day School era due to what is understood as "historic trauma" (Aguiar & Halseth, 2015). Beyond Kahnawà:ke, Indigenous peoples that were once Indian Day School students are fighting for recognition and reparations through Canada's court system (Galloway, 2018). Uncovering and sharing knowledge of what occurred will provide us with a sense of truth and justice and help us all to heal while continuing to cope with ongoing colonization. I anticipate that this research will help us to understand our past in a clearer way which will make our path moving forward that much easier. As a community and as Onkwehón:we we will be better equipped to ensure that our future generations have access to all of the tools they need to lead fulfilling lives, particularly *our* histories, knowledges, languages, and ways of living.

This research prioritizes and privileges Indigenous storytelling, knowledges, and methods. It supports narrative or story as the primary means of passing on our collective memory and knowledge on to future generations as Indigenous peoples (Hill, 2017; Kovach, 2009, p. 14).

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[1] Rotinonhsión:ni (Longhouse people, also known as "Iroquois") lived in Longhouses with matrilineal clan families. Today, the Longhouse is a place that people gather for various traditional social, political, and spiritual activities.
[2] Onkwehón:we in Kanien'kéha/Onkwehonwehnéha (Mohawk language) translates to, "the real/original people". This is our word for the peoples Indigenous to Turtle Island. I continue to use this word throughout my writing in place of "Indigenous".

The experiences of former day school students are the core sources of knowledge around which the historical data, literature, analysis, and reflections are built. The result is an examination and analysis of Day School experiences as contributing factors to intergenerational or multi-generational trauma in Kahnawà:ke (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 3). I argue that through Indigenous storytelling and the Rotinonhsión:ni tradition of oral history and culture, it is possible to examine and interpret calamitous experiences and impacts of colonization without re-traumatizing Indigenous peoples. This is demonstrated through a critical self-reflective process of storying that brings together many contributors to this research as a method of co-creating knowledge (Kovach, 2009, p. 100). My processes of introspection and interpretation demonstrate decolonizing and healing within a multigenerational family structure as "self-in-relation" or storying-in-relationship (Kovach, 2009, p. 33; Varley, 2016). In many subtle and direct ways, this research contests, resists, and refuses conventional ways of pursuing knowledge and understanding history in the academy. It challenges assumptions about Indian Day School stories, how colonialism impacts Indigenous lived realities, and confronts issues of identity, shame, and healing. At the same time, the sincerity and thoroughness in my research generates understandings in both Indigenous and Western processes of knowledge production and demonstrates how research is medicine.

Chapter one begins with an overview of the project, the research focus and research questions, and includes my background, motivations, and preparations as an Indigenous researcher. Chapter two outlines the Indigenous research framework from within Rotinonhsión:ni worldview, Indigenous research methodologies, and qualitative mixed-methods used in this research. I detail community participation, research process with storytellers, and the lenses through which story meaning is analyzed. A review of the literature relevant to this study and a historical background of Kahnawà:ke is then provided in chapter three. Next, I present and analyze the narratives of Kahnawa'kehró:non (people of Kahnawà:ke) who were former Day School students. The final chapter summarizes the findings of the research and its significance, my final reflection of the research process, future areas of research, and closing words.

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH FOCUS & MY BACKGROUND

In this first chapter, I present the research focus and objectives as well as the research questions. I then situate myself in this research by briefly discussing my personal and family background in Kahnawà:ke, my recent work and community experience, and my various roles in the research process. The chapter ends with a description of my initial research preparations.

Research Focus & Objectives

Recent studies on Indigenous Education in Canada and the United States have largely focused on the effects of Residential Schooling. It should be noted, however, that Indigenous children attended Day Schools in greater numbers than Residential Schools and we still know little about their experiences (Raptis, 2016). For many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, the language, culture, and identity losses caused by Day Schooling were traumatic experiences that spanned several generations (White, 2015; Stacey, 2016).

Indigenous children in what is currently known as Quebec were subjects of attempted assimilation through education, schooling, and apprehension for a long period of time. Some of the earliest recorded Catholic missionary efforts in New France were conducted by the Récollets, Jesuits, and Ursulines in the early 1600s (Miller, 1996; Peace, 2017). The community of Kahnawà:ke (previously known as Kentá:ke or Caughnawaga) was established in 1667 (Divine, 1922; Blanchard, 1982). This research provides a background on the policies and practices of education and schooling in Kahnawà:ke starting from the first attempt to operate a formal school in 1826 (Osgood, 1829; Divine, 1922). Indian Day Schools continued to operate unabated well into the twentieth century until 1968 when Kahnawà:ke began to shift to a community-controlled education system (Deering & Beauvais, 1977).[3] The historical background of the community emphasizing colonial policies of education and assimilation provide a broader context that help illustrate the complexities of Indigenous educational experiences in colonial institutions.

In Kahnawà:ke, there were both Catholic and Protestant Day Schools but the majority of children attended Catholic Day Schools (Reid, 2004). Roman Catholic missionaries had a strong

[3] According to archival records and the list of eligible Day Schools in the Federal Indian Day School settlement, Indian Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke ceased to exist after 1988. For more information, visit: https://indiandayschools.com/en/wp-content/uploads/Schedule-K-List-of-Day-Schools-002.pdf

presence and influence in Kahnawà:ke since its founding which resulted in a high number of converts to Catholicism (Blanchard, 1982; Reid, 2004). Dr. Gerald Reid, an academic of settler ancestry, conducted research on the Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke in the broader context of the social, political, and cultural history of the community (Reid, 2004). However, the focus of his research was not the stories and experiences of Day School students. I am unaware of any study of this kind that focuses on Day Schooling experiences in Kahnawà:ke. At the core of this research are the stories and oral histories of four Kahnawà:ke elders who attended Catholic Indian Day Schools within the community as children and/or adolescents.

This "storywork" project is not meant to be a revisionist history, it is collective memory and history-making in which "stories and storytelling are taken seriously" (Archibald, 2008, p. 2). The experiences of those who may have enjoyed their school days, had positive memories, or value what they learned are as valid as those who did not. After all, it may be difficult to face these stories of our past especially for those who carry pain and anger when they recall their memories of Day School due to the abuse and violence they suffered. These stories do not portray Day School experiences isolated from other aspects of life, frozen in time. Rather, they provide a view into the lives of Kahnawa'kehró:non at the time that they were children in Day School and how they reflect on those experiences today. Through story we see how these experiences have impacted their lives and were part of shaping their identities. These accounts reveal a mix of feelings ranging from pain, anger, joy and at times, an indifferent acceptance of Day Schooling as a part of childhood. Yet, they also demonstrate the strength, determination, and resilience of Onkwehón:we children who are now elders.

The effects of education and Day Schooling experiences have yet to be fully examined and understood within the broader context of colonization and Indigenous life overall. There is a long and deep-rooted colonial history in present-day Canada of child-focused colonization that began several centuries ago. In this study, I introduce the term "Child-Targeted Assimilation" (CTA) to describe the historic and ongoing pattern of targeting Indigenous children primarily through education and apprehension, with the intention or result of colonizing, assimilating, or integrating Indigenous Peoples into the larger Euro-Western dominant society. This term manifested during my undergraduate studies and was an influence in my decision to undertake research on this topic. The former Day School students share their memories of school days in their childhood while also interpreting and making meaning of their experiences and the effects

throughout their lives. I also take a critical self-reflective approach in my analysis of story meaning and research outcomes while simultaneously assessing how I have been affected by this work as a community member and researcher (Archibald, 2008; Clandinin, 2013; Kovach, 2009).

Research Questions

The main research question is:

What were the experiences of Indian Day School students in the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) community of Kahnawà:ke and in what ways did their experiences affect their lives overall?

Secondary research questions emerged as the study progressed:

How did Day Schooling affect language, culture, and identity in Kahnawà:ke?

In what ways can Day School experiences be examined without re-traumatizing former students, their families and communities?

How can storytelling and oral history be approached from the Rotinonhsión:ni worldview and oral tradition?

My Roots and Situating Myself

As a Kanien'kehá:ka woman from Kahnawà:ke, I was raised within multigenerational families in several households. I quickly formed a strong bond with my paternal grandparents, Mildred Cross (Grandma Millie) and Stephen Roberts (Bubba Stephen). Not long after my younger sister was born, my parents moved out of Grandma Millie's house but I would regularly return to stay there. I spent weekends, some school days, holidays, and summers at Grandma Millie's. Most of the time, my younger sister would come with me too.

My childhood was divided between life with my parents and five younger siblings (wherever they were living at the time), and living at Grandma Millie's with Bubba Stephen, my

aunts, and my uncle. I also spent time, both visits and sleepovers, with my maternal grandparents (Linda and Mason), my great-grandparents (Grandma Linda's father "Baba Pete", Baba Mason's mother "Tóta Beans") and many other extended family members who lived in Kahnawà:ke. My parents moved around a lot within Kahnawà:ke, in Tiohtià:ke (Montréal), and in Mercier, a farm town 15 minutes outside of Kahnawà:ke. During those years, Grandma Millie convinced my parents to keep all six of us enrolled in school at Kahnawà:ke so that we would have a strong foundation at home. When I was a teenager, my parents moved back home to Kahnawà:ke where they have since remained. My friends who were raised in conventional nuclear families living in one place thought that my home experience seemed odd and scattered. However, I always felt grounded and loved by a lot of people.

My understanding of "home" as a child was different than most of my friends' perspectives, since I moved about within our traditional Kanien'kehá:ka territory in several places and homes within my family. My experience is more aligned with traditional Kanien'kehá:ka living and it contradicts the notion that mobility and flexibility in caregiving are harmful to a child's development. Today I feel very thankful and privileged to have had this experience. When I became a mother, I realized that fewer and fewer people raise children in the same traditional way today, in multigenerational family settings. Of all of these experiences and the many people that were a part of raising me, I am closest to Grandma Millie, my father's mother.

Why I Chose to Research Indian Day Schools

My mother's side of our family is entirely of Kanien'kehá:ka ancestry originating from both Kahnawà:ke and Ahkwesáhsne. My father is of mixed-ancestry, with Kanien'kehá:ka, Irish and Scottish lineage. While our ancestry and community ties are somewhat complicated, the result is that all four of my grandparents and both of my parents are from Kahnawà:ke and were raised in the community.

Like most people in Kahnawà:ke her age, my Grandma Millie was raised Catholic, living most of her life in her family home beside the Catholic Church in Kahnawà:ke. Starting in the early 1940s, she attended the Catholic Day School across from the Catholic church that was primarily run by the Sisters of Saint Anne (SSA). By this point, there had already been several generations of Kanien'kehá:ka children attending Residential or Indian Day Schools. Through

struggles in her life, grandma's spark to reclaim her identity was reignited. Her involvement in highly intense political movements would eventually fuel her desire to learn our language and our traditional ceremonies. When I was about eight or nine years old, she began to take me and my sister to the Longhouse with her on a regular basis to learn our language and culture. Sometimes, our four younger brothers would come along too.

Over the years, my grandmother told me many stories about her life, including her school days. Since I was always with my grandparents, I spent a lot of time around adults and elders. I heard other stories about Day Schools and I could sense the mix of emotions that were part of community members' memories of them. It was obvious to me that these experiences had powerful effects on our people. As an undergraduate student, it was a shock for me to learn that there are few sources on Indian Day School experiences in the literature. I examine several of these sources in the literature review. My interest in the topic is to learn more about this important piece of our history and the impact it had/has on our community. A community-focused goal of this research is to help community members share their stories with new generations of Kahnawa'kehró:non so that we may all have a better understanding of how this affected us and how we can continue to thrive as a community.

Grandma Millie's sacrifices and determination started me on a path to reclaim my language and identity. We call this process, "retracing your roots" in the Longhouse. The term refers to the Great White Roots that lead back to the Tree of Peace.[4] This process is our way of re-searching or gathering knowledge, a path made for us by our ancestors that leads us back to who we are as Onkwehón:we. This philosophy originates from our story of "the Formation of the League", the founding of Kaianerehkó:wa (The Great Law of Peace) and the Five Nations Confederacy. I have been retracing my roots to that source, to take shelter beneath the tree.

The Longhouse I grew up in ("up the hill") was very politically active and as a result, I participated in countless political actions and community movements to reinstitute our traditional Longhouse governance structure under the Great Law of Peace. By the time I was in my thirties and a mother of three, I started to feel that there were other ways I could make a difference. I am still politically and socially active today, yet my efforts have shifted to the revitalization, promotion, and protection of Onkwehón:we knowledges, cultures, and languages. These interests

[4] The Tree of Peace is a symbol of the Great Law of Peace & Five Nations Confederacy. The weapons of war were buried beneath it when the first Grand Council was held between the Five Nations.

drew me to the university where I sought out ways to further understand and challenge the colonial thought that has fueled a global assault on Indigeneity and our Mother Earth.

Re-Searching at Home with Family & Community

Maintaining a relationship and working in collaboration with my community is integral to Indigenous research framework that grounds my approach in Rotinonhsión:ni worldview.[5] The foundation for this study is built on my roots at home in Kahnawà:ke, and its core focus is on our collective history, memory, and knowledge. I am personally invested in this topic as a community member, therefore respect, humility, and accountability are essential to my research process. Throughout my writing and presentations, I remain conscious of the fact that Kahnawa'kehró:non are the most important contributors, benefactors, and audience of this research (Kovach, 2009).

There are both obstacles and benefits to conducting research within your community and working with family. The clearest way to unpack these issues is by examining the 'insider/outsider' roles in research (Innes, 2009). As a member of the community conducting research from an Indigenous research paradigm, I am able to analyze and interpret the experiences of storytellers and understand their realities due to our shared backgrounds (Wilson, 2008). Conducting academic research by its very nature privileges Western thought and colonial-dominant ideology, what Kovach refers to as the "Western gaze" (Kovach, 2018, p. 216; Smith, 2012). The tone and focus of 'outsider' research reflect this worldview and leads to comparisons between cultures that ultimately misconstrue, misunderstand and create bias against Indigenous worldviews and knowledges (Wilson, 2008). Researchers, as knowledge interpreters, are storytellers and for that reason become inseparably entangled with the focus of their research (Wilson, 2008).

Based on my experience working on this topic, being a community insider meant that I worked with community elders who know me. This may be considered bias in the research, which is addressed in a transparent way through critical self-reflexivity and autobiographical narrative (Clandinin, 2013; Kovach, 2009, p. 43). My "relationship capital" provided a considerable research advantage in that the elders and I already had a foundation of trust to build on while we negotiated and navigated our new research relationships (Kovach, 2018, p. 223).

[5] Rotinonhsión:ni worldview is further explained in chapter two.

When I describe my roles as an 'insider' and 'outsider', I also make internal associations with my responsibilities as the researcher, storyteller, granddaughter, community member, listener, and writer. These roles or 'identities' are not fixed but are fluid: "in the sense that being 'storied' by others…involves a process of ongoing negotiation that is actively pursued during the research process and which may shift in a continuous series of interactive moments that unfold over time with different actors" (Davis, 2004, p.7).

Conversely, entering into a research partnership complicates relationships, both to research partners and to the community (Smith, Tuck & Yang, 2019). Reaching out to community members to discuss my research and approaching elders with tobacco to request their time went smoothly. Sitting together, sharing tea and having conversations was natural. However, turning on a recording device, discussing honorariums, ethics, and consent forms was often awkward for everyone involved. I quickly came to the realization that conducting research 'at home' positions the researcher as both an insider and outsider, regardless of the topic of the research (Innes, 2009; Smith, Tuck & Yang, 2019). There are external interests and influences in research such as academic institutions, funding organizations, committees, ethics boards, and the 'audiences' that the research outcome is shaped for (Kovach, 2009). Research is largely produced for colonial institutions in their dominant languages. I agree with Indigenous author Linda Tuhiwai Smith, who points out that there is no 'fast track' to becoming an 'insider' because there is no true "inside" if you are conducting research (Smith, Tuck, & Yang, 2019). Of course, being placed somewhat 'outside' of my community as an academic researcher, also confers an advantage in terms of the broader perspective that I can access.

I recognize the ways that my age and lack of first-hand experience place me outside of our circle of community participants who are elders and former Indian Day School students. Therefore, I try to balance my 'insider' and 'outsider' roles in this research through the special connection I have with my grandmother. Our relationship forms an opening for me in conversation with Day School students and elders on this topic. Our connection weaves the 'threads' of these stories together into a multigenerational narrative that will transmit knowledge to future generations (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132). In chapter four, I discuss the process and methods I used to work with the elders.

Research Preparations

There were several works by Indigenous authors that helped me to prepare to undertake this research. In particular, I found the work by Dr. Margaret Kovach (2009; 2018) to be informative and helpful. Dr. Kovach breaks down differences between what is broadly considered Indigenous research, and what may be understood as Indigenous research methodologies (Kovach, 2018).

I had the privilege of taking an Indigenous research methodology workshop with Dr. Margaret Kovach in the summer of 2017 at Concordia University in Montréal. I was to begin coursework and research for my master's degree that fall. My hope was to pinpoint which Indigenous research methodologies were most appropriate for my work. During our conversations about my research, Dr. Kovach told me that it sounded like I needed to formulate my own unique methodology. The idea tended to frighten and overwhelm me. I continued reading Indigenous research looking for the "right methodology". It took awhile but eventually, I accepted that I had to find my own way to do this research, even if doing so required more of my time and energy and overcoming my fear of "doing this wrong". My experience piecing together research methods exemplifies how Indigenous methodologies ask more of Indigenous researchers than typical academic studies (Kovach, 2018, p. 217). I followed a multidisciplinary and individualized path into this graduate program and it is reflected throughout every aspect of my research. I have pieced together a unique Indigenous research framework and methods to perform this research and tell this story as a co-creation of knowledge with elder storytellers (Archibald, 2008). I discuss the research framework and methods in greater detail in chapter two.

When I reflect on the process of preparing to do this research, I recall how much I second-guessed myself. I had to situate myself and then acknowledge who I am, where I am coming from, and what my true motivations are to have undertaken such research (Absolon, 2011). I also read the "preparations for research and researchers" that Dr. Kovach provided in her book (Kovach, 2009, pp. 49-54). My research preparations began about six years ago as an undergraduate student. I wrote papers on various Indigenous topics, trying to find an issue I could work on that could have a positive impact on the health and social issues we are facing as Indigenous peoples. My research and interests quickly centered on Indigenous education, apprehension, language and culture revitalization. My first paper on Indian Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke was difficult to write due to the lack of sources on the experiences of former

students (Whitebean, 2015). I was encouraged by my professors to consider doing graduate research on this topic to help fill this gap.

At many points during my research process, I struggled with self-doubt, uncertainty, and hesitations. This is the first time I am doing research and academic writing that will be shared with a wide audience. I have to hold myself accountable as a Rotinonhsión:ni researcher; that means having self-awareness in the research process and as an Indigenous community member. Indigenous scholar Shawn Wilson refers to this as "checking your heart" (Wilson, 2008, p. 60). At times, my mind would get clouded with self-doubt but I reminded myself of why I am doing this and that my heart is truly in it. This practice helped me to stay grounded as a person and focused as a researcher. I further discuss the next steps that I took that are described in chapter two, the research framework and methodologies which guide this research.

CHAPTER 2 – INDIGENOUS RESEARCH FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

> *"Perhaps the closest one can get to describing unity in Indigenous knowledge is that knowledge is the expression of the vibrant relationships between the people, their ecosystems, and the other living beings and spirits that share their lands. These multilayered relationships are the basis for maintaining social, economic, and diplomatic relationships—through sharing—with other peoples. All aspects of this knowledge are interrelated and cannot be separated from the traditional territories of the people concerned." – M. Battiste and J. Youngblood (2000, p. 42)*

I am fortunate to have begun my path as an Indigenous researcher and aspiring scholar at a time when Indigenous research paradigms and methodologies are taking root and beginning to flourish in academia (Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008). I would like to acknowledge the many elders, knowledge holders, and teachers among our peoples that have embodied and passed on our knowledges through the generations. Indigenous research methodologies provide pathways to knowledge gathering based on our ancient ways of knowledge mobilization and transmission. They also provide Indigenous researchers a means of processing the lived experiences and thoughts we encounter within colonial dominated environments, languages, and Western worldviews (Smith, 2012). As is necessary when working with Indigenous approaches, I spent significant time on the Indigenous research framework and methodological aspects of this study. A self-reflective research process contextualizes my role in community and in this research (Kovach, 2009). It describes my journey and transformation as an Indigenous researcher which is an important aspect of the research outcome.

It was difficult to decide how to commence forming the Indigenous research framework for this work. At the center of this project is my family and people rooted in Rotinonhsión:ni worldview, from which my identity and sense of self is derived. I felt grounded starting my research from this place. I moved forward connecting with as many people as I could to discuss this project including elders, mentors, community members, traditional knowledge holders, family, and Indigenous researchers and scholars. This was part of the process of community validation for my topic and research. Along the way I discovered the methodological tools needed to ensure that this research was approached in the Onkwehón:we way.

This project explicitly employs story approaches, a combination of Indigenous and qualitative research methods. The research methods utilized must perform on many levels, to respect community protocols and Rotinonhsión:ni worldview while conducting research in a way

that demonstrates rigorous scholarship (Smith, 2012). I keep in mind that the role of Indigenous researchers is to challenge the legacy of colonizing knowledge and reconnecting with our roots (Absolon, 2011, p. 27). In preparation for this study, I reviewed a diverse collection of qualitative research methods. At one point, I considered a mixed methods approach, combining Indigenous research methods with those used in oral history research (i.e.: Allen & Montoya, 2019; High 2014; Sommer & Quinlan, 2018; Zembrycki, 2014). The methods I have chosen are congruent with my identity as an Indigenous person and the ways that Onkwehón:we go about searching and gathering knowledge (Stacey, 2016).

In the next section, I describe our Rotinonhsión:ni worldview in the context of an Indigenous research paradigm (Wilson, 2008). I include a small section on the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke. I follow this by explaining the Indigenous research methodologies and qualitative methods that I have used to help navigate the aspects of research that are outside of traditional ways of 're-searching' or 'retracing our roots' (Absolon, 2011). I end this chapter introducing Child-Targeted Assimilation as a lens through which I interpret story meaning, followed by a detailed explanation of how I interacted with the storytellers who are co-creators of this research.

Rotinonhsión:ni: Tsi Ní:ioht Tsi Tewaka'én:ions Tsi Ionhontsá:te

Longhouse people: Our Worldview

> *"One cannot be truly Haudenosaunee without a historical consciousness of the collective experiences of our ancestors. The very core of our existence is formed around the historic inheritance passed down through the generations. The inheritance was meant to guide the Haudenosaunee for all time, as established at the time of creation. The lessons contained within our historical consciousness constitute the roadmap for a sustainable, balanced life for the current generation and the "coming faces" of our future." – S. Hill (2017, pp. 1-2)*

At the heart of this research is our Rotinonhsión:ni (Haudenosaunee) worldview, *tsi ní:ioht tsi tewaka'én:ions tsi ionhontsá:te*, the way that we as people of the Longhouse view/examine the world (Whitebean & Stacey, 2018).[6] Of course our people's ideas, experiences, and perspectives are complex and varied. My approach in this research is from within my own understanding of Rotinonhsión:ni worldview based on the teachings I have

[6] Kanien'kéha word for "worldview" provided by Kaia'titáhkhe Annette Jacobs' in the Kanien'kéha translation of "Skatne Enionkwaió'ten Five-Year Community Language Plan", Jacobs et al., 2018.

received through the Longhouse and community oral history, and my personal experience. Pertinent to understanding experiences of Day Schools in community, I also include a brief summary of Kanien'kehá:ka perspectives and life in Kahnawà:ke following this section.

The Rotinonhsión:ni Five Nations Confederacy (known today as Six Nations) include Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora.[7] They form one large family with birthrights and citizenship determined by matrilineal Clans (McCarthy, 2010). The Rotinonhsión:ni languages spoken belong to what is known as the "Iroquoian language family", that in addition to the Six Nations, includes other North American Indigenous peoples such as the Cherokee, Huron-Wendat, Wenro, Erie, and Petun/Tionontati (Kahnawà:ke Longhouse website, 2019). The common foundation of our languages indicates shared ancestry, history, and culture, therefore these Nations in some ways may be considered extended relatives of the Rotinonhsión:ni.

The opening quote from Susan Hill (2017) illustrates the origins of Rotinonhsión:ni worldview, rooted in our historic consciousness. Our ancestors showed us a way of being and living in the world that is understood as a cyclical weaving together of time and space. As this research will demonstrate, acts of colonialism have disrupted our collective consciousness and interfered in the transmission of the lessons meant to guide us through life (Hill, 2017). For this study to truly be situated within an "Indigenous research paradigm", the deeper beliefs and traditions that ground the research, it is necessary to explain specific aspects of Rotinonhsión:ni consciousness (Wilson, 2008). The facets of an Indigenous Research Paradigm according to Shawn Wilson (2008), are: the core ontology, *the nature of existence and reality*; the epistemology, that is, "*the study of the nature of thinking and knowing*"; the methodology or, - *how we gather and gain knowledge*; and finally the axiology, *the ethics, morals, or values that guide our search for knowledge* (Wilson, 2008, pp. 33-34). The Indigenous research paradigm is bound together by "relationality"; our collective relations to each other, place, time, and all living things (Wilson, 2008, pp. 80-81).

The complex concepts of the Rotinonhsión:ni worldview are integrated into story, philosophy, and practices such as the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, Creation Story, Formation of the League (Peacemaker's journey), Kaianerehkó:wa (Great Law of Peace), Two Row Wampum,

[7] In the Longhouse I grew up in, it was said that we have "Five Nations for all time". It was recognized that the Tuscarora were taken "under the wing" of the Confederacy.

Seven Generations philosophy, Naming, Clans, language(s), sacred ceremonies, songs, dances, and other cultural practices (Hill, 2017; Phillips, 2010). We keep our collective memory alive by passing on these lessons through stories and symbolism in our daily lives. Examples include the wampum belts, the cycle of ceremonies, the Tree of Peace, and the Clan systems. While, it is not possible to share these stories and provide a full explanation here, I can provide is some insight into Rotinonhsión:ni worldview and aspects of life that inform the Onkwehón:we research paradigm.[8] Worldviews are internalized as identity, belonging, thoughts, life purpose, and culture. I have chosen to use the example of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen to help illustrate Rotinonhsión:ni worldview.

Traditionally, Rotinonhsión:ni begin and end each day as well as all gatherings with the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, which means: *the words that stand before all else* (Stacey, 2016). In the words of Kanien'kehá:ka elder Tom Sakokweniónkwas Porter, Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is "what we say before we do anything that's important, a skeleton key" (2008, p. 8). When the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen thanksgiving and welcoming is conducted, the speaker generally acknowledges all of our life supporters and living things, starting with the people. The smallest life forms that exist below the surface are given thanks, moving up through the levels of life on the earth's surface. While the length and words spoken vary depending on the speaker, the main elements are similar. We acknowledge and thank our Mother Earth, the roots and life in the earth, the waters (lifeblood of Mother Earth), fish life, plants, trees, medicines, and life sustainers (including the three sisters, corn bean and squash); the animals, and insects. Then, we acknowledge elements of sky-world, the insects, the four winds, Grandfathers the Thunders, Grandmother Moon, Elder Brother Sun, our cousins the stars, and the Creator or Great Natural Powers. The speaker concludes the opening with words such as these, "*Eh káti niiohtónhak ne onwka'nikòn:ra. Tho niiowèn:nake*" (KORLCC, 2006). This loosely translates as, "And now we are all of one mind. These are (the end) of the words."

Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen gathers the minds of the people, to bring everyone together so that we are of one mind, *onkwa'nikòn:ra*. These words remind us that as human beings we are connected with every living organism in this earth-world, and beyond in the sky-world (Phillips, 2010). We are dependent on Mother Earth and many elements in creation for survival. This

[8] For further reading on Rotinonhsión:ni/Haudenosaunee and Kanien'kehá:ka, see: Alfred, 2009; Hill, 2017; Horn-Miller, 2009; McCarthy, 2010; Phillips, 2010; Porter, 2008; Simpson, 2014; Stacey, 2017; Sunseri, 2011.

practice is a foundation of our knowledge and collective memory as a people, including ecological knowledge, language, and history (Stacey, 2016). Built into Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen are the values of humility and gratitude for all life, a reminder of the lessons of our ancestors from our ancient past and our origin story from sky-world. Onkwehón:we as "true beings" are the embodiment of earth and sky (Mann, 2000). Through the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen we open a door to our ancestors and to all of creation, inviting them into gatherings, ceremony, and our daily lives. This is our way of acknowledging our role in creation, honouring connections to past, present, and future, and maintaining relationalities to all of the elements that factor into our ongoing existence (Stacey, 2016).

Kanien'kehá:ka author Susan Hill (2017) explains Rotinonhsión:ni "circles of influence" or "spheres of existence and temporal boundaries" that explicate, "terms of identity and understanding of one's place in the world" (p. 80). At the center is oneself, the unique spirit or spark that we are born with. We have an identity and role in the world that our names in Rotinonhsión:ni languages are meant to represent and foster throughout our lives. Hill describes Rotinonhsión:ni life in the Longhouse before contact and the many realms representing, "Haudenosaunee view of spatial relationships and the connotation of shared spaces" (p. 80). These realms are of family, family units of Clan houses (called "fires"), the "clearing in the woods" or village, gardens, "edge of the woods", hunting and fishing territory, shared Confederacy territory, and so on (p. 81). The word for 'family' is *Kahwátsire* in Rotinonhsión:ni languages sharing a root from the word for fire (pp. 80 – 81).

Many of my childhood memories have resurfaced while conducting this research. Reflecting on the 'fires' of Rotinonhsión:ni existence reminds me of an experience I had with my Grandma Millie as a child. I will share this personal story to give context to how Rotinonhsión:ni worldview and knowledge is internalized and passed down through generations.

My Tobacco Pouch

When I was young, Grandma Millie and I started to grow tobacco in her backyard. She gave me a very small pouch with tobacco in it. She told me that as I learned to care for the pouch and sacred tobacco, I would get a bigger pouch and even more tobacco. Finally, when I was twelve years old and started on my path to womanhood, she beaded

> *me a large four-sided tobacco pouch. She said the design for it came from within our family. On two sides there was a beaded flower, one with three petals and one with five petals. When she gave me the pouch, she traced her fingers over the petals and the beads in the center that she said were "fires". She said the three-petaled flower could represent each of the three Clan fires that together, make up the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation. It could also represent me, my family, and clan. The center of the three-petal flower spanned out, showing how my fire was growing bigger. Grandma said that the five-petal flower represented the Five Nations of our confederacy, the inside line of beads were the Clan families of the Nation, and the center beads represented each family. She repeated to me stories we had heard in the Longhouse many times. Each time I reach for my tobacco, I think of these fires.*

Grandma often burned tobacco in the house and taught me to give thanks. 'Giving thanks' is something that I continue to do as a natural daily part of my life. Through Grandma Millie's gift, I was reminded of our history as Rotinonhsión:ni through which we understand our existence, and my personal connection to it all. Since that time, I have used the same tobacco pouch although, I know that nothing material lasts forever. The time will come when I remake a pouch for myself, my children, or grandchildren and pass on Grandma Millie's stories. Rotinonhsión:ni worldview and knowledge are meant to be lived, practiced in our daily lives and passed on, otherwise our fires will go out.

Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke

> *"The Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke are nationals of a precontact Indigenous polity that simply refuse to stop being themselves. In other words, they insist on being and acting as peoples who belong to a nation other than the United States or Canada...As Indigenous peoples they have survived a great, transformative process of settler occupation, and they continue to live under the conditions of this occupation, its disavowal, and its ongoing life, which has required and still requires that they give up their lands and give up themselves." – A. Simpson (2014, p. 2).*

The previous section discussed the broad philosophies, knowledge, and stories that together help illustrate Rotinonhsión:ni worldview. I would like to add a few words explaining Kanien'kehá:ka perspective and our territory known as "Kahnawà:ke" (on the rapids). For Many

Indigenous peoples, community and territory are the central tenets of identity and not individuality, as is the case in the dominant society. Weaver (2001) explains the ways that Indigeneity connects people through traditions, history, homelands, and "peoplehood": "A person must be integrated into a society… to be fully human…The sense of membership in a community is so integrally linked to a sense of identity that Native people often identify themselves by their reservations or tribal communities" (Weaver, 2001, p. 245).

The word Kanien'kehá:ka means "the people of the flint/spark". I have heard elders say, Onkwehón:we grow out of the land and that we have an ancient relationship with the land we belong to. Our Nation belongs to the land of the flint, we are the people of the "spark" (Hill, 2017). Our vast traditional territory is known as "Kanièn:keh, "the land of the flint" (Kahnawà:ke Longhouse, 2019). We are the founding Nation of the Five Nations Confederacy, sparking the Council fires of Kaianerehkó:wa, "Great Law of Peace".

The bloodlines and ancestry of Kahnawa'kehró:non are mixed with Kanien'kehá:ka, other Rotinonhsión:ni Nations, First Nations from surrounding areas, and a multiethnic settler population. The ancient practice of intermarriage and adoption has helped the Kanien'kehá:ka maintain relationships with Onkwehón:we and other peoples across Turtle Island (Simpson, 2014).[9] Kanien'kehá:ka language and culture (known to us as "Kanien'kéha" or "Onkwehonwehnéha") have remained dominant as the identity of the people in the community. Kahnawà:ke was founded out of a need for survival, for the Kanien'kehá:ka and other Onkwehón:we in the Saint Lawrence valley to adapt to a changing world, or perish. I discuss the history of the community further in chapter three. Life in Kahnawà:ke today means navigating a multifaceted web of social, political, and spiritual structures (Simpson, 2014). It is a struggle with and against many internal and external forces. The lived reality of the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke are brought to the forefront in this research through stories of trauma, resilience, identity, and a sense of "home".

In the re-storying and interpretation process of the research, the "Indigenous theory principles" or teachings emerge through story, namely the philosophies, values, and practices of the people of Kahnawà:ke (Kovach, 2018, p. 222). At times, the lines between epistemology and theory are blurred, as Kovach (2018) explains that "attempts to succinctly define Indigenous

[9] Turtle Island is a reference to the Indigenous homelands and territories of the American continents derived from the Rotinonhsión:ni Creation Story.

theory-principles will lead to frustration" (p. 223). In the next section of this chapter, I discuss the Indigenous research methodologies that are guiding protocols in this research. Before proceeding with these methodologies, Kovach reiterates the lessons of staying grounded and focused as an Indigenous researcher:

> One must travel back on the epistemological roadway to clarify the presumptions upon which one is basing research practices. It is necessary to respect Indigenous knowledges and peoples. It is necessary to value one's own story. Researchers need to be capable and confident in their comprehension of Indigeneity, demonstrate a decolonizing consciousness mindful of the gaze, and honor relationships Indigenous research methodologies will demand. (Kovach, 2018, pp. 231-232).

Indigenous Research Methodology (IRM)

> *"Story as methodology is decolonizing research. Stories of resistance inspire generations about the strength of the culture." – Margaret Kovach (2009, p. 103)*

The broader storytelling aspects of the study were influenced by Jo-ann Archibald's (2008) book *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*. Archibald explores oral history and storytelling experiences with a circle of Stó:lo Nation elders who meet with her regularly over a long period of time while she learns and records story principles, values, and teachings that she then weaves into a "Storywork" methodology (Archibald 2008, pp. 59-60). Oral tradition and storytelling carry forward Indigenous worldviews and value systems (Absolon, 2011). An emphasis on the Western schooling system grounded in literacy and colonial values displaces and threatens these methods of transmitting knowledge and identity (Archibald, 2008, p. 15). Personal stories about life experience convey culture and teachings about the natural world, history, politics, leadership, family, spirituality, and cultural knowledge (Archibald, 2008). Sharing stories requires building a relationship based on trust, treating the storyteller with respect, and asking permission to share someone's stories (Archibald, 2008). Starting with Archibald's (2008) "storywork" methodology as a base, I needed to bring in additional methodological tools to navigate different types of storytelling practices.

I have previously discussed Dr. Margaret Kovach's work and further draw from it for story methods (2009; 2018). Sharing stories is a means of knowing, and conversation is a method

of gathering knowledge through reflection, story, and dialogue (Kovach, 2009, p. 99). This differs from conventional interview processes in academia, which are generally too structured and do not capture the full essence of this method of gathering information (Kovach, 2009, p. 51). Maintaining relationships with interviewees before, during, and after the research requires several visits and a longer dedication of time by the researcher. Less-structured research tools are used in qualitative methods and important to an Indigenous research process to give the storyteller the flexibility and personal agency to tell their story in the most natural way possible (Kovach, 2009).

Qualitative Methods

After much study and reflection, I settled on Indigenous Research Methodologies (IRM) and aspects of the qualitative methods of oral history research and Narrative Inquiry (Clandinin, 2013). These methods require including my own story in the research process, as well as centralizing Rotinonhsión:ni worldview and culture through a self-reflexive process (Kovach, 2009). The methodologies that I decided to work with, to me, are the best way to answer my specific research questions and to share this story about Kanien'kehá:ka experiences at Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke. Kovach (2009) identifies the association between qualitative research methods and Indigenous approaches. As an Indigenous researcher, I encountered obstacles while conducting research that was both grounded in community, and simultaneously working out of a colonial institution. I inevitably had to accept that part of my research and my own process must take place in a colonial-dominant atmosphere, within an institution founded on Western beliefs and practices.

Oral History Methods

Through my relationship at the Center for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS), I was introduced to oral history approaches in research (i.e.: Allen & Montoya, 2019; High 2014; Sommer & Quinlan, 2018; Zembrycki, 2014). I had initially planned to do video interviews and later construct a digital story of Day Schools. Due to time constraints, it was not possible to acquire the necessary skills to record and edit video. I realize in retrospect, that having a camera present would have made interviews about sensitive topics much more difficult.

This was the first time I had ever recorded and transcribed interviews. I drew from a few sources on oral history to inform my interview process, specifically how to navigate using audio recording equipment during my sessions with community members (Allen & Montoya, 2019; Sommer & Quinlan, 2018). I consulted *The Oral History Manual* by Barbara W. Sommer and Mary Kay Quinlan (2018) to write and edit interview transcriptions. I paid special attention to the oral history concept of "sharing authority" as well as the power dynamics of community-university collaborative research but ultimately, I relied on Indigenous approaches to inform these areas of the research (High, 2014; Kovach, 2009).

Narrative Inquiry

> *"Narrative inquiry is an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honoring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding.*
> *- D. Jean Clandinin, (2013, p. 17).*

To assist me with communicating research outcomes and articulating results of the study, I brought in aspects of the qualitative method called "Narrative Inquiry" (Clandininin, 2013). I acknowledge that this is not an Indigenous method but as a researcher, I am not limited to strictly using certain methodological and theoretical tools (Smith, 2012). Recognizing and identifying these outside tools is part of the decolonial work that I must undertake. By interpreting narrative through an Indigenous lens, I broaden the concept of narrative itself and its application in research as a methodology (Chase, 2018, pp. 546-547). I use narrative inquiry in this research as an analytical tool to understand and communicate the themes and 'threads' that form a patterned meaning in the stories and lived experiences of Kahnawa'kehró:non (Clandinin, 2013). The 'boundaries' or guidelines in this overarching narrative are set by Indigenous story protocols and 'coherence' or adhering to the "meaningful whole" (Chase, 2018, p. 549). The combination of approaches I undertook helped me to synthesize meaning in both Indigenous and Western forms of thought. I do this primary through a critical self-reflective process, a blending of Indigenous story methodologies and autobiographical narrative, consistent throughout my research and writing (Clandinin, 2013).

The method of Narrative Inquiry "begins and ends with a respect for ordinary lived experience" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 18). The simplicity of learning from practical experiences is further justified by articulating the personal, practical, and social purposes of the research

(Clandinin, 2013, p. 35). This facet of the research required an unavoidable honesty and vulnerability as I am a deeply embedded in the "story landscapes" and relationships that are being storied (Clandinin, 2013, p. 24). Narrative inquiry has been particularly useful in navigating my roles in this research as a researcher, listener, storyteller, and co-creator of knowledge. In narrative inquiry, the *narrative meaning* is the focus in the self-reflexive process of storying and re-storying between the storyteller and myself as the researcher (Clandinin, 2013; Horn-Miller, 2009). Storytellers think in backward and forward motions, internalizing and externalizing memories and interpretations "with attentiveness to place(s)", which creates a "metaphorical three-dimensional space" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 41). The most difficult lesson for any listener or reader outside of these spaces is that there are no final answers: "our hope is to create research texts that allow audiences to engage in resonant remembering as they lay their experiences alongside the inquiry experiences, to wonder alongside participants and researchers who were part of the inquiry" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 51).

Thinking about the role of "places", this study explores the many stories that we live by and within: personal stories, origin and cultural stories, institutional stories (of schools), and familial intergenerational stories (Clandinin, 2013, p. 22). Clandinin (2013) re-storied a metaphor for narrative as a "shattered mirror" examining the pattern of the broken shards to reassemble a new understanding of lived experience in the context of specific times and places (p. 204). Oral histories of Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke also speak to our strong connections to place and to "the land" as Rotinonhsión:ni and Onkwehón:we peoples (Hill, 2017). I instantly knew when reading this passage that the metaphor for this specific research narrative and for the territory of Kahnawà:ke, is the river (kania'taratátie in our language).

Kahnawà:ke was founded on the banks of the river, known today at the Saint Lawrence River and Seaway. On clear days, you can see your own face reflected in the river. Sometimes the water is dark and cold, other times it is quite clear. There are times when the river is flowing so fast, you do not want to get into the water. Of course, the rapids are the most dangerous parts. The currents may take you in different directions, there are tidepools, waves, and obstacles but the river is always flowing in a certain direction, with purpose. Even when it seems still and calm, the river is in constant motion. The waters of the world are known to Rotinonhsión:ni as the lifeblood of Mother Earth; water has spirit and is life. To survive in these waters, you must go with the current.

At times, working with narrative is a lot like navigating perilous waters; the narrative has a spirit of its own. It takes a significant amount of trust: trusting your instincts, trusting the storytellers, and trusting that by following the *current of the story* the meaning and purpose will be conveyed. By pulling together Indigenous research and qualitative methods, I was able to conduct this research "the Onkwehón:we way" grounded in Rotinonhsión:ni worldview and protocol (Stacey, 2016). In the next chapter, I provide a historical background of my home community and the people of the river and territory known as "Kahnawà:ke" which means "on the rapids".

Child-Targeted Assimilation (CTA)

As an undergraduate student, I began researching Residential Schools, Day Schools, the "Sixties Scoop" (Johnston, 1983), and the ongoing overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the Canadian child welfare system (Blackstock, 2007). Rather than naming a sequence of major colonial practices of child-focused colonization, I used the term "Child-Targeted Assimilation" (CTA). The first time I used the term in an undergraduate paper was to describe the *overarching colonial pattern* of directly targeting Indigenous children as subjects of assimilation (Whitebean, 2015). I had reflected on the fact that my family has been affected by all of the aforementioned practices of CTA. As an Indigenous person, I spent most of my life trying to unpack these layers of confusion, shame, and pain. It seemed natural to name the pattern of child-focused policies and practices that is obvious to Indigenous peoples and communities. The links between Residential School, Day School, education, and child apprehension are made by the elders in their stories as well. I am sure that many Indigenous researchers and scholars before me have reflected on and discussed this pattern but to my knowledge it has not been named in the same way. In this study I present my understanding of the term I am naming and describing in my own way (Whitebean, 2017). The self-reflective process I undertook to bring forward CTA is referred to by Kathleen Absolon (2011) as "organic methodology" (p.87), emerging from my inner knowing in a natural way as I continue to search for knowledge and make-meaning.

Lomawaima and McCarty (2006) describe the colonial use of educational institutions in America as: "laboratories for a grand experiment in cultural cleansing, Christian conversion, and assimilation of laborers and domestic workers into the workforce" (p. 4). By examining the pattern of "Indian" educational policy, practice, and experience, it is apparent that colonial

governments have systematically actualized, "[A] notion of a safety zone, an area where dangerously different cultural expressions might be safely domesticated and thus neutralized" (Lomawaima & McCarty, p. xxii). Indigenous children are at the center of the struggle between colonial governments and Indigenous Peoples, "the war has been waged through and about children" (Lomawaima & McCarty, p. 5). I call this battle CTA, in order to clearly emphasize an ongoing pattern of targeting Indigenous children through education and apprehension, for the purpose of colonizing, assimilating, or integrating Indigenous cultures into the dominant euro-Western society. The closest similar term I have been able to locate is a statement by Charlie Angus in a media interview given when he criticized the Canadian government's lack of action on the First Nations child welfare crisis and described it as a, "child-focused system of apartheid" (Kirkup, 2017). While the development of CTA is at an introductory stage in this research, I consider its implications in the research outcomes as one of the lenses now available both to me and other researchers to examine the impacts of colonization.

Kahnawa'kehró:non & Community Participation

Before settling on this topic, I had many conversations with family and community members about Indian Day Schools and my potential research at home. Many community members expressed interest in this project and encouraged me to proceed. Some offered to share their stories and work with me in the future. If there was no interest and support for this research at that early stage, I would not have proceeded. During visits to the library and archives, I had numerous discussions about the project with the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC) staff in Kahnawà:ke. Teyowisonte Thomas Deer was particularly helpful during my visits and offered me his insights on our history and research strategies. Vernon Goodleaf recently took on the arduous task of digitizing the KORLCC archives and was also very helpful. The KORLCC Executive Director Reaghan Tarbell provided me with a letter of support for my Concordia University ethics application. To include broader community input and ensure accountability, I also extended an invitation in writing to the KORLCC board and staff members to review my final thesis draft.

Storage and access of stories were arranged in accordance with the OCAP principles of ethical Indigenous research: ownership, control, access, and possession (FNIGC, 2019). With permission from the participants, I made arrangements with KORLCC to store audio recordings,

transcripts, and the final manuscript on site, in order to facilitate community access and control in the future. Terms of access will be determined by the KORLCC Board of Directors and staff with community input. This was discussed with all participants and they are in full agreement with this arrangement.

In chapter four, my methods of working with the storytellers are explained in detail. The broader messages in this overall story required reevaluating the methods and sources I brought in at every step of the research development. In a typical Western academic research process, the literature and historical sources are often the footing of the knowledge and the theoretical framework. Davis (2004) discussed the differences between Eurocentric and Indigenous knowledge traditions: Eurocentric research is understood as a particular "truth telling"…. As part of decolonizing efforts, Indigenous scholars… [explore] Indigenous traditions of knowledge creation [which] embody research methodologies that have their own protocols, methods, and validation processes (Davis, 2004, p. 3). In total, I listened to the stories of four elders from Kahnawà:ke who were once Day School students which forms the core of this research:

> Mildred Iakotehraiénthon Ida Cross – Catholic Girls School (Kateri)
> Joe Aniataraken McGregor – "St. Isidore Road" & Catholic Boys School (Kateri)
> Frank – Catholic Boys School (Kateri)[10]
> Kaia'titáhkhe Annette Jacobs – Catholic Girls School (Kateri)

In this research, life experiences stories are the foundation, the theoretical framework is built up and interpreted from beginning to end through story meaning and reflection by the storytellers, myself included (Davis, 2004). In the next chapter, I review the literature and provide a historical background of Kahnawà:ke. Briefly reviewing histories of the community prepares the minds of listeners and readers for the multiple truths, as told and interpreted by the storytellers themselves (Archibald, 2008).

[10] This participant wishes to be included in the research by first name only.

CHAPTER 3 – LITERATURE REVIEW AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In chapter one and two, I provided my personal and family background, explained Rotinonhsión:ni worldview from my perspective, and thoroughly unpacked my methods. An oral history of Indian Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke centralizes the stories of community members who are former students of the schools. Layers of story form the core of this research around which the literature and archival documentation set a broader historical context to assist listeners and readers in understanding the narratives. I begin this chapter with some information about how I approached archival data in this research. I follow with a literature review, and finally a historical background of Kahnawà:ke. I also created a chronology of Day Schooling in Kahnawà:ke based on the archival sources and literature I reviewed (Appendix E).

Archival Research

To provide a background and contextualize stories, I conducted archival research. This included a review of literature and searching for primary sources in several libraries and web databases.[11] I visited the KORLCC archives and went the Sisters of Saint Anne (SSA) archives at the Mother House in Lachine, Quebec. I also contacted the Jesuit archival center in Montréal but did not discover any information pertinent to this study. During a visit to Kahnawà:ke, Dr. Gerald Reid and I met and briefly discussed my research. He previously conducted research on the broad social, political, and cultural history of Kahnawà:ke (Reid, 2004). Dr. Reid shared a recorded interview with a Sister of Saint Anne, "Sister George Edmond", who was once a teacher at Kateri Tekakwitha Indian Day School in Kahnawà:ke. I had the cassette interview digitized, and transcribed. It is included among the archival data presented in this study (Reid, 2004; Sr. George Edmond, 1995). I have reviewed hundreds of primary and secondary materials on Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke including correspondence, photographs, publications, and reports. The sum of these sources is impossible to represent here and requires further study and inquiry.

I chose to centralize the conversations, memories, and personal experiences of community members to bring a complexity to this research through firsthand accounts and interpretations that archival documentation alone lacks. By prioritizing stories of former Day

[11] For example, Library & Archives Canada as well as INAC RG-10 records and annual reports.

School students, this research contests the typical ways that colonial thought and philosophy have comprised the dominant viewpoint on Indigenous history (Smith, 2012). Western history of Indigenous peoples in North American strips the lands of cultural context and history, ignoring the relationality of Indigenous peoples and place, land, or waters, and to each other (Hill, 2017). Indigenous peoples have generally had little voice in our own histories. Caution must be taken when consulting archival sources such as missionary records, travel journals, and settler accounts. The historical data and information presented is meant to complement the stories and help set context in the time period but should not be considered *complete truths*. Historical research is a form of storytelling, to braid stories and information together in a way that they form a narrative, and interpret meaning in what is or what is not directly evident. Taking a "contested history" approach is one of the ways I am applying a decolonizing lens to my research while simultaneously demonstrating that Indigenous oral history and tradition make valid and vital contributions to historical research (Hill, 2017; Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012).

Literature Review

In addition to the literature reviewed in this chapter, sources are introduced and integrated where relevant throughout the text. A study of this nature involves examining a body of literature on a variety of different topics including oral history, storytelling, Child-Targeted Assimilation in the context of education, "Indian" education, and Day School case studies. Each aforementioned body of sources has been grouped into a corresponding unit below. I also integrate many of the major works I reviewed in the second segment of this chapter, the historical background of Kahnawà:ke, which provides a brief history of education and Day Schooling in the community. As the research progressed, some of the sources discussed in this chapter were not selected as major references but did help structure (or restructure) the research.

Oral History & Storytelling

This section explores oral history and storytelling sources from Indigenous Research Methodologies (IRM) and other qualitative approaches in oral history research. Oral history, oral tradition, and storytelling form vital foundational aspects of many Indigenous cultures and communities. There are differences between Indigenous and other sociocultural oral history

processes, particularly in terms of how stories are contextualized (Miller 2011, pp. 25-26). I examine some of those differences here and compare them to the approach taken in this research.

I found the work of oral historians Stephen High (2014) and Stacey Zembrycki (2014) most informative. In *Oral History at the Crossroads* (2014), Stephen High presented a complete reference for oral history research from beginning to end, in the setting of life stories. He covers practical issues such as navigating ethics, preparing for interviews, conducting interviews, recording and storage, and sharing stories (High, 2014). This book brought into view the complexity of engaging with memory, experience and story in the context of research. According to High (2014), oral historians are trying to understand, "the ways in which people define themselves" (p. 20). Oral history plays an important role in educating people not just on the experiences of the past, but on the long-term repercussions in the future of our actions today (High 2014, p. 7). The oral history principles of "sharing authority" between oral historians, interviewees, and community brought forward questions about how to navigate the power dynamics of interviewing and research (High 2014, p. 10). As an Indigenous researcher working from home, I felt that a typical oral history research approach would not adequately capture the meaning of this narrative.

What is categorized in oral history as an "unconventional and reflective oral history approach" may be considered customary within Indigenous oral history and oral tradition (Zembrycki, 2014, p. 3). Zembrycki (2014) explores the concept of "shared authority", briefly interpreted as the process of "making history a more democratic and cultural practice" (p. 8). Zembrycki (2014) worked closely with her grandmother "Baba", visiting members of their local Ukrainian community to invite them to record and share their life stories (p. 11). Zembrycki's research aligns with this Indigenous oral history project, particularly how her relationship with her grandmother inspired her work. She shares her process of researching, sharing, listening, and recording oral histories which includes self-reflection, missteps, and insecurities as a graduate student (p. 4). Her study exemplifies the need for flexibility when working within community to accommodate the needs of community members who are participants in research. There are similarities to oral history research in my approach, particularly in how I navigated ethics and interview logistics. The protocols, practices, and contexts in the ancient traditions of Indigenous oral histories and cultures are diverse and very different from oral history practice. Indigenous storytelling methods generally involve multigenerational or intergenerational storytelling that

binds past, present, and future stories while oral history focuses on experiences and accounts of people living in the present time.

The search through oral history ventures led to anthropologist Julie Cruikshank's, *Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination* (2005). Cruikshank (2005) conducted research on the home territories of the Tlingit and Athapaskan peoples, in the region currently known as the Saint Elias Mountains of Yukon (p. 8). The oral histories of three women elders, who are indigenous to the area largely emphasize glaciers as important social spaces and figures in Tlingit relationships between people and nature (Cruikshank, 2005). Cruikshank describes narrative tradition as follows: "Oral transmission of stories is a panhuman activity, probably the oldest form of history-making, and in many parts of the world it has a continuing role in the production and reproduction of history." (p. 60). When approaching Indigenous oral narratives, Cruikshank examines "enlightenment categories" such as "nature" and "culture" through a critical post-colonial lens, since these concepts originate from Euro-centric knowledge and Western tradition (p. 245). Both the dualism and disconnection between "nature" and "culture", or between people and the natural world, contrast sharply with many Indigenous worldviews and oral traditions including the Tlingit and Athapaskan stories (p. 245).

Oral tradition is grounded in place, intertwined with the people, time, and connections established with the non-human world. On this point, Cruikshank writes, "storytelling may be a universal human activity, but understanding what one hears requires close attention to local metaphor and local narrative conventions" (p. 66). In other words, story comprehension is founded in a core knowledge held by local people and communities that the storyteller assumes "everybody knows" (p. 66). This is true of the elders' stories in the next chapter, where my local knowledge, shared history and relationship to place are vital assets in connecting with storytellers and comprehending the layers of meaning in their stories. The work of oral historians High (2014), Zembrycki (2014), and the anthropologist Cruikshank (2005) helped me to differentiate a general appreciation of oral history, and that of storytelling from Indigenous oral history-making traditions.

Taking into consideration such research by Indigenous authors (with and for Indigenous peoples) highlights *how* and *why* I have approached this research in the specific ways that are congruent with my background and place-based knowledge and experience. In *Oral History on*

Trial, Bruce Granville Miller (2011) discusses the importance of oral tradition and oral history and their application as a valid means of relating history to a place, transmitting knowledge, and communicating layers of meaning through various forms and mediums of narratives over lifetimes (pp. 91-92). Oral narratives take on a life of their own; stories may be mapped onto each other to form a larger narrative of people, place, and time (Miller, 2011, p. 28). The fluidity and complexity of oral history may result in conflicting narratives or various versions of the same events. These variations of experiences, perspectives, and oral memory should not be viewed in opposition to each other, but rather demonstrate community validation of knowledge which supports collective knowledge from multiple individuals or families with their own versions of these stories (Miller, 2011).

The theories, methodologies, and practices of Indigenous scholars, who are essentially storytellers, are integrated throughout this text. In the first two chapters, I discuss a number of works by Indigenous authors that exemplify how Indigenous research paradigms and methodologies are grounded in identity, culture, and story (Absolon, 2011; Archibald, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). In the next section of the literature review, I integrate a number of sources that serve as a basis of understanding Child-Targeted Assimilation in the context of education and schooling.

Child-Targeted Assimilation in the Context of Education

Child-Targeted Assimilation (CTA) took root on Turtle Island in the early years post-contact, under the guise of the education and socialization of children, but with the true intention of acculturation, religious conversion, and assimilation of Indigenous peoples. In many Indigenous cultures including Rotinonhsión:ni communities, child-rearing practices and transference of knowledge and skills were achieved through collective processes founded on complex intergenerational and kinship family systems, such as Clans (McCarthy, 2010; Miller, 1996). Indigenous peoples were accustomed to sharing the responsibilities of caring for children with many other individuals and groups, not only to expose the child to a diversity of perspectives, skills, and expertise but in addition to intermarriage, as a practice of relationship building (Simpson, 2014). In the absence of schooling, Indigenous children were largely socialized and trained through both formal and informal practices, which centered on a "look, listen, learn" philosophy and land-based methods (Miller, 1996, p. 24).

Acts of child-focused colonization undermined customary child-rearing practices by introducing Euro-centric models of education and child-rearing that destabilized Indigenous family and kinship structures (Miller, 1996). The sweeping effects of CTA can still be felt today across North America and elsewhere. These policies and practices were introduced by both French and British colonialists. This section also provides an overview of early British policies in the Canadian Provinces that lead to Canadian legislation that still fuels practices of CTA in present-day Canada.

In New France, colonial expansion occurred at a slower pace as the focus of French authorities was on the gradual settlement and occupation of Indigenous lands as opposed to prioritizing formal schooling (Peace, 2017). The history of missionary efforts to education and evangelizing Indigenous peoples in the Saint Lawrence valley are revisited in the historical background of Kahnawà:ke. After the British conquest of New France in the late 1700s, patterns of colonial schooling continued (Peace, 2017). In the 1790s, formal schools for Indigenous children have existed in what was known then as the Provinces of Upper and lower Canada (Axelrod 1997, p. 71). Religious institutions and colonial governments have long held the view that policies and practices of child-focused colonization would lead to the assimilation of Indigenous Peoples (Axelrod, 1997, pp. 70-71). According to Raptis (2011), "by the time Canada became a nation in 1867, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian religious had established an extensive infrastructure of missions and schools for Indian peoples." (p.527).

The Indian Act that was passed in 1876 consolidated several pre-confederate policies and became the primary legislative instrument used by the Government of Canada to control "Indians" (Axelrod, 1997; INAC, 2010). In the 1876 Indian Act, funds from sales of Indian lands, property held in trust, and timber would be used for investment, payment or assistance with a number of things including "contributions to schools frequented by such Indians" (INAC, 2010). Chief and Council on reserves were granted the ability to make decisions on certain matters (subject to approval of the Governor in Council) including the construction and maintenance of school buildings (INAC, 2010). In 1879, Nicholas Flood Davin's report on the industrial and boarding schools in the United States, which were based on a model of "aggressive civilization", inspired a wave of corresponding policy and legislature in the Canadian Government (Smith, 2014, pp. 153-162). The Indian Act amendments of 1880 state that Chief & Council may decide whom could teach at the on-reserve schools, from a religious denomination

that the majority of the reserve belonged to (Catholic or Protestant), and that separate denominational schools may be established (INAC, 2010). From the late 1880s onwards, the strategies and efforts to assimilate Indigenous people into Euro-Western Canadian society have largely focused on Indigenous children, and have used methods of both education and apprehension, or CTA.

The *Indian Advancement Act* of 1884 established regulations for the Band Council electoral systems, placing a significant amount of power in the hands of Indian agents on reserves (Hinge, 1978).[12] Band Council administrative powers were extended in a number of areas in the 1886 amendments, including creating bylaws on school attendance for children between the ages of six and fifteen years old (Hinge, 1978). In 1894, Indian Act amendments were enacted to grant the Governor in Council the authority to make regulations for compulsory school attendance of Indigenous children under the age of sixteen registered to any Band (Hinge, 1978).[13] The 1894 amendments provided measures for 'enforcement' of compulsory school attendance:

> Such regulations, in addition to any other provisions deemed expedient, may provide for the arrest and conveyance to school, and detention there, of truant children and of children who are prevented by their parents or guardians from attending: and such regulations may provide for the punishment, upon summary conviction, by fine or imprisonment, or both, of parents and guardians, or persons having the charge of children, who fail, refuse or neglect to cause such children to attend school.
> (1894 Indian Act Amendment in Hinge, 1978, p. 164)

Until this time, there was little differentiation in the Indian Act on the definition of schooling, merely that Indian children had to attend a school. The 1884 amendments added provisions for Industrial and Boarding Schools for Indigenous children. The band annuities, interest, and/or monies of Indigenous children under the age of eighteen committed to an

[12] Indian Advancement Act original text can be found on pages 102-106. These amendments also outlawed Indigenous cultural and ceremonial practices such as the "Potlatch", See Smith, 2014 for more information.
[13] 1894 Indian Act Amendment chapter 32, section 11. See Hinge, 1978, p. 164.

Industrial or Boarding School were directly remitted to the schools (Band funds also covered Day School expenses):

> The Governor in Council may establish an industrial school or a boarding school for Indians, or may declare any existing Indian school to be such industrial school or boarding school for the purposes of this section….The Governor in Council may make regulations, which shall have the force of law, for the committal by justices or Indian agents of children of Indian blood under the age of sixteen years, to such industrial school or boarding school, there to be kept, cared for and educated for a period not extending beyond the time at which such children shall reach the age of eighteen years.
> (1894 Indian Act Amendment in Hinge, 1978, p. 164)

While it is important not to conflate voluntary with compulsory school attendance, I consider both equally within the scope of this research (and CTA) due to the religious, political, social, and economic pressures that are factors in parent and/or child compliance with educational policy. Many non-Indigenous children were also subjected to similar educational policies; yet that was done overall without the brutal practices of assimilation to "civilize the savage" coupled with cultural genocide and indoctrination into a foreign belief system (Coleman, 1999, p. 90; Miller, 1996). These practices were coupled with invasion of Indigenous homelands, dispossession of land and resources, erasure of language and cultural identity, and extreme poverty (Lomawaima and McCarty 2006; Miller, 1996).

In addition to the aforementioned policies on schooling and teachers in the Indian Act, the changes in the early 1900s detailed school regulations and policies. The amendments of 1906 and 1919 grant power of the Governor in Council to create schools specified as either Indian Day Schools, Boarding Schools, or Industrial Schools (Hinge, 1978). The Superintendent General had the authority over transportation to and from school and setting regulations and standards for school buildings, supplies, teaching, discipline, and inspection of the schools (Hinge, 1978, p. 178). Band Council representatives had the right to inspect the schools but only if the school Principal and Indian Agent were in agreement (Hinge, 1978). School attendance was mandatory for all Indigenous children, "Every Indian child between the ages of seven and fifteen years who is physically able shall attend such day, industrial or boarding school as may be designated by

the Superintendent General for the full periods during which such school is open each year" (Hinge, 1978, p. 178). The position of Truant Officer was created to enforce compulsory school attendance, including the right to enter any premises to apprehend 'Indian' children without a warrant (Hinge, 1978). Parents or guardians who did not comply with attendance requirements of children would face fines and imprisonment (Hinge, 1978). In the twentieth century, Indigenous education shifted towards assimilation through integration.

It was believed that education would ultimately resolve the 'Indian Problem' and achieve the goal of colonization, assimilation, and integration of Indigenous peoples into Canadian society. According to Cairns et al. (1966) in part one of the Hawthorn Report (a study funded by the Indian Affairs Branch in Ottawa), Indigenous peoples in Canada face severe inequalities, discrimination, and a plethora of health and social issues. To address these issues, the recommendation in the Hawthorn Report was to acculturate Indigenous peoples into Canadian society as "Citizens Plus", defined as follows: "In addition to the normal rights and duties of citizenship, Indians possess certain additional rights as charter members of the Canadian community" (Cairns et al, 1966, p. 13). A primary area of focus of the federal government based on this report was to improve the socioeconomic status of Indigenous populations via educational attainment (Cairns et al, 1966). Part two of the Hawthorn Report written by Tremblay et al. (1967), heavily emphasizes school integration to 'close the gap' between Indigenous and Canadian children. Consequently, integrated schooling would mean shifting fiduciary responsibility for Indigenous education onto provincial governments. Acculturation and integration of Indigenous peoples through education was viewed as the principle means of achieving the goal of complete social integration of both Indigenous children and adults:

> School integration, which allows Indian children to attend the same schools as non-Indians is being encouraged as the principal means of achieving complete social integration. The new policy tends then to encourage as much as possible the attendance at joint schools by Indian children. Curricula are also being planned on an integrationist basis. Finally, there is the attempt to increase the participation of Indian adults in the process of education through the Indian School Committees, which are actually the embryos of future school boards. In the opinion of the federal government, the success of

> social integration depends to a large extent on the success of the education and school integration programs. (Tremblay et al, 1967, p. 41).

Parental involvement and positive attitudes about schooling are key to integration so that Indigenous children do not feel alienated in school environments (Tremblay et al, 1967). Language as a barrier to communication in schools was also discussed in the Hawthorn Report which proposed strategies to improving the written and verbal communication skills of Indigenous children in both their ancestral languages, and English or French (Tremblay et al, 1967). Tremblay et al, (1967) found that religious authorities were opposed to school integration as it challenged their supremacy. The recommendation was to close federally funded denominational schools, particularly Residential Schools (Tremblay et al, 1967). School integration was expected to ultimately dissolve reserve lands as "the first step toward the dissolution of most reserves, because education makes it possible for the Indians to adapt themselves to the White Canadian's way of life" (Tremblay et al, 1967, p. 88). Integration of Indians is defined in the Hawthorn Report as follows: "full participation in the economic and social life of Canada, together with the retention of some of their cultural characteristics such as pride of origin, knowledge of their history, passing on of their traditions and preservation of their language" (Tremblay et al, 1967, p. 28). Indigenous education was viewed as the "instrument of integration" (Tremblay et al, 1967, p. 30). Integration is ultimately assimilation into Euro-Western Canadian society, particularly due to erasure of Indigenous languages and knowledge systems: "The question then arises as to whether integration does not thus become actual assimilation. The loss of a people's language leads almost inevitably to the loss of their own ethnic identity and cultural traditions" (Tremblay et al, 1967, p. 37).

Situating Indian Day Schools within the broader pattern of CTA creates opportunities for new discussions and analyses. As such, I consider the implications of Day Schooling through the lens of CTA as an ongoing colonial pattern of policies, strategies, intentions, and activities of child-focused colonization. These are not isolated occurrences or historic events but rather a continuous cycle of oppression that endures today, most notably through the continued apprehension and separation of Indigenous children from their families and communities (Blackstock, 2007).

"Indian education" and Day Schools

There is a long history of dispossession, assimilation, and acculturation via systems of education carried out through policies of colonial governments with the support of religious authorities (TRC, 2015). In the period from 1800 to 1914 in Canada, colonial interest in the future of Indigenous Peoples becomes apparent in terms of making way for a growing settler population (Axelrod, 1997). The British policies and practices of Indigenous settlement on reserves and formal schooling began in the late nineteenth century in Upper Canada and would eventually serve as the foundation of Indigenous education throughout Canada (Axelrod, 1997). Kahnawà:ke has no living former students that attended school before 1920 yet memories and impacts from those early generations have been passed on to new generations through genetics, culture, and oral histories (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004). Some fragments of these early schooling experiences resurface in the stories of living former Day School students, to be discussed in the next chapter.

All forms of schooling for Indigenous children in Canada were notoriously underfunded and poorly staffed and did not provide an adequate education by any standard (Raptis, 2016, p. 136). Day Schools became the primary educational institution for Indigenous children in both Canada and the United States because they were "cheaper educational programs" (Reyhner & Eder, 2017, p. 249). According to Raptis (2011), "The main argument in favor of such establishments was that in addition to educating individual learners, they could positively influence entire communities to adopt 'western ways'" (p. 521; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2010). In Canada, Day Schools existed over a longer period of time and in greater numbers than Residential Schools (since the early 1600s) and operated with the same colonial intent of erasure of identity and assimilation into Western society as the Residential Schools (Axelrod 1997; Miller, 1996; Raptis 2016). Miller (1996) found that after the year 1900 there were far more Day Schools than Residential Schools, 241 Day Schools "for which Indian Affairs was responsible served 6784 students, while the boarding schools were home to 2229 and the industrial institutions a further 1612" (pp. 141-142). At the time, there were 19,528 status Indians between the ages of six and fifteen but only about half were registered in "Indian schools" (Miller, 1996, p. 141). By 1927, the number of Day Schools under Indian Affairs supervision increased to 250 for Indian and Inuit children (Miller, 1996, p. 142).

Helen Raptis' (2016) recently published study on Tsimshian Day Schools in Port Essington British Columbia is based on the personal accounts of two generations of Tsimshian students who attended Indian Day School in the 1940s and 1950s. In the archival record, Tsimshian students featured more as "objects" in colonial narratives rather than as "subjects" or students which prompted Raptis to interview former students (2016, p. 13). Language and culture loss affected at least two generations of Tsimshian students as a result of replacing traditional education based on language, culture, and activities 'on the land' with formal Western-style schooling (Raptis, 2016, pp. 54-55). For the first generation of students, education was a broad concept that incorporated learning from elders in the "Tsimshian way" and did not focus solely on formal schooling (Raptis, 2016, 100-101). Tsimshian elders that were schooled in this time period (until the 1940s) described a "bi-cultural" environment that allowed for more of a balance between their Tsimshian life and schooling (Raptis, 2016, 133).

The second generation of Tsimshian students (that began attending Day School in the 1950s) described education almost entirely in terms of the formal schooling they had received (Raptis, 2016, p. 127). After the transition into public schooling in the late 1950s, Tsimshian students developed a form of resiliency in terms of overcoming discrimination and language and culture loss which progressed into a lasting and remarkable ability to adapt to a changing world (p. 146). Cultural loss is associated with well-being and has been a continued obstruction for Indigenous children throughout the many generations of Canada's colonial history (p. 144). I anticipated that the oral history of Indian Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke would reveal similar outcomes to Raptis' study but with broader educational and cultural implications.

Adrea Lawrence (2011) conducted research on a Pueblo Indian Day School in Santa Clara in the Rio Grande New Mexico. The archival research study was largely based on a number of documentary sources most notably letters of correspondence between the Day School teacher Clara D. True, and the Office of Indian Affairs Superintendent, Clinton J. Crandall from 1902 to 1907 (Lawrence, 2011, p. 8). The focus of Lawrence's research was not the Day School but rather to seek out "lessons of colonization and racialization" of the times in that locale, in order to illustrate the various ways that assimilation manifested (2011, p. 1).

Lawrence (2011) and Raptis (2016) are the two most recently published comprehensive studies on Day Schools that I have located. Dueck (1986) studied Methodist Day Schools and Indigenous communities in the time period of 1890 to 1925 in Northern Manitoba. Dueck also

argued for the necessity of examining Day Schooling in the broader contexts of community life and not merely administrative aspects: “It is also essential to study the Indian community in which a particular school was situated, the effects of Euro-Canadian educational attempts on community families and institutions and the consequent relationship between two confronting cultures” (Dueck, 1986, p. 1). Dueck continued research on Day Schooling and Manitoba history, with several articles and books published under the name Gray (2009). In an article on four Indian Day Schools in Berens River, Cross Lake, Oxford House, and Nelson House, Gray (2009) found that to varying extents the communities understood that education would be critical for their survival in the future. Although, the archival information uncovered seriously lacked the voices of parents and children.

One indicator of community and parental attitudes about schooling is attendance. Low attendance was a common issue at the Day Schools, including those studied by Gray (2009), which may have been a result of the buildings being in a state of disrepair and the low quality of teaching. Prior to compulsory attendance policies, teachers and school administrators of Day Schools were highly motivated to ensure regular attendance and high enrollment which impacted federal funding (Hinge, 1978). Another factor in Day School attendance is the extent to which families actively engaged in traditional or land-based activities for survival. This may explain why there was a push to close Day Schools in favour of Boarding Schools in the Indigenous communities Gray (2009) studied, as the parents and families could not prioritize schooling over making a living. It was also difficult for Day School teachers to earn a living within these small isolated communities. Similar to Raptis (2016), Gray (2009) found that there was a high turnover rate of teachers and staff at the Day Schools.

Teachers at Day Schools had the task of appeasing school administrators, federal officials, parents and community without many of the rigid control measures used in Residential Schools (Smith, 2004). Colonial schools are the frontlines of assimilation, acculturation, and integration where teachers have the “practical responsibility of enforcing plans, inculcating attitudes, and communicating knowledge and values to students. It was teachers who dealt with people and problems in the schools and community and who were mediators between Euro-Canadian values and ideals” (Gray, 2009). Lisa-Marie Smith (2004) conducted research on the Inkameep Indian Day School founded in the Okanagan Valley, BC in 1916, focusing on the time

period of 1932-1942. Smith (2004) found that teachers at the Inkameep Day School had experiences similar to their counterparts in rural schools.

A teacher at the Inkameep Indian Day School named Anthony Walsh incorporated Nk'Mip cultural activities into school lessons and encouraged pride in identity in the classroom (Smith, 2004). Similar to many Day School and Residential School cases I discuss in my research, Walsh used music, dance, and language in the classroom as approaches that the children would enjoy. Walsh promoted Indigenous knowledge at school by working with community elders. Smith (2004) describes Walsh as a person that challenged the social perceptions of Indigenous children at the time and became an advocate for Indigenous artists as well as an influential social figure. Yet Walsh's approach to Indigenous education was not enough to circumvent the overall agenda of colonial schooling.

Smith (2004) described Day Schools as "a hybrid of the two existing educational models: the residential school and the rural school" (p. 27).[14] The Chief at Inkameep supported opening the Methodist Day School on the reserve to avoid having to send children from the community to Residential School (Smith, 2004). The Inkameep Indian Day School was founded for a number of reasons but primarily after Nk'Mip children were repeatedly excluded from provincial schools due to the racist attitudes of non-Indigenous parents who objected to them being schooled alongside white children (Smith, 2004). The attitudes and perceptions that colonial officials and white settlers had of local Indigenous peoples in specific places and times, were determining factors in the Indigenous schooling models used.

In the early 1900s, money-conscious federal authorities began to critically examine the utility of various methods of Indigenous schooling and acculturation models (Coates, 1986). Rather than continuing with a national sweeping approach to education through Day Schools, Industrial and Boarding Schools, the government opted to focus on desired results in specific localities (Coates, 1986). Coates (1986) found that in areas such as the Yukon, educational programs were not characteristic of national experiences, and were plagued by irregularities in funding, staffing, and attendance. The persistence of Anglican missionaries resulted in the operation of several Day Schools in the Yukon at Moosehide, Carcross, Selkirk, and after 1910, new schools in Champagne, Teslin, and Whitehorse (Coates, 1986). The "nomadic nature of the Indian population before the 1950s" in this region in addition to parent resistance to schooling,

[14] According to Smith (2004), BC had the highest number of Day Schools across the Dominion of Canada (p. 28).

made it difficult to enroll students (Coates, 1986, p. 140). Day Schooling in the Yukon was widely considered a failure by church and government authorities. When the Family Allowance Act of 1944 came into effect, school enrollments drastically increased (at Day School and Territorial Schools in the Yukon) as subsidies were only granted to mothers whose children regularly attended school, requirements that were rigidly enforced (Coates, 1986). Family Allowance was not only an effective incentive but necessary for the survival of many Indigenous families across Canada. The resulting effect in the Yukon was parent compliance with educational programs that "forced difficult choices between Native mobility and the sedentary lifestyle necessary to collect the sizable monthly payments" (Coates, 1986, p. 145). In areas where Indigenous peoples practiced ways of living with less mobility than the Yukon, schooling and Child-Targeted Assimilation were more effective earlier on.

Day Schools were specifically implemented in Quebec and parts of Ontario because many of the Indigenous groups in these areas had a "better reputation…according to the criteria and mentality of the authorities of the time", particularly the more sedentary groups with a longer history of contact with colonial settlers and the Indian Department (Morissette, 2016, p. 129).[15] Morissette (2016) studied the multiple Day Schools that were established in Kitigan Zibi (Quebec) from 1853 to 1958. The Day Schools in Quebec faced similar issues to what has been discussed by Raptis (2016) and Lawrence (2011), low attendance and lack of interest and support from parents (Morissette, 2016). Anishinaabe experiences in Day Schools are quite different from those in Kahnawà:ke as there was Indigenous language taught in the schools at Kitigan Zibi and the administrators adapted the school calendar to follow cultural activities based on the seasons (Morissette, 2016, pp. 140-141). In Kahnawà:ke, children were primarily instructed in English (by the Sisters of Saint Anne) and heavily indoctrinated into practices of Roman Catechism (Reid, 2004).

Day Schools are also mentioned in literature on Residential Schools including first-hand accounts. These Day School references are integrated into works that have examined Residential Schooling through a documentary lens such as that used by Haig-Brown (1988), Miller (1996), Milloy (1999) and the TRC (2015). In addition, several first-hand accounts published by former Residential School students mention Day Schooling (Johnston 1995; Sellars 2013). It is beyond the scope of this research to fully examine the history and effects of Residential Schooling, nor

[15] The original text is in French language which I self-translated.

to conduct a thorough comparison of the similarities and potential differences between Residential Schooling and Day Schooling. However, there is an obvious connection between the two having originated from the same colonial policies and practices. Survivors of CTA have been pursuing justice and compensation through the Canadian justice system.

In addition to the Residential School Survivor settlement agreements, there are currently ongoing litigations and settlements for Day Scholars, Day School students, and survivors of the '60s Scoop'.[16] The Day Scholar lawsuit was launched in 2012 by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and Shíshálh First Nations seeking compensation for Indigenous people who attended Residential Schools but did not sleep there, as they were excluded from the Residential School Agreement.[17] A Day School class action lawsuit was launched in 2009 by lead plaintiff Garry McLean and a group of former Day School students, seeking compensation for damages and abuses that occurred nationally at Day Schools.[18] In December 2018, an agreement in principle was reached to settle the class action lawsuit which includes individual compensation, legal fees, and two-hundred-million dollars for "healing and wellness" (Barrera, 2018). In August of 2018, the "60s Scoop" agreement in principle was reached to compensate status Indians who were placed in the care of non-Indigenous foster or adoptive homes from 1952 to 1991.[19] Clearly there is a legal precedent for addressing abuse and trauma resulting from colonial practices of CTA.

The lawsuits are not a focus of this study and were not a topic that the storytellers chose to discuss. However, the connections between Residential Schools and Indigenous child apprehension come through in discussions about CTA and are mentioned in the oral histories of Kahnawa'kehró:non. In the next section, I trace the historical background of Kahnawà:ke followed by the history of education and schooling in the community.

A Historical Background of Kahnawà:ke

Kahnawà:ke has a long history as a formally established Roman Catholic Mission village, refuge, and present-day reserve that was founded in 1667 (Devine, 1922). Considering that this research focuses on Indian Day School Education in Kahnawà:ke, it is necessary to begin with a

[16] For more information on the Residential School Survivor settlement, visit: http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/english.html.
[17] For more information on the Day Scholar lawsuit, visit: http://justicefordayscholars.com/.
[18] For more information on this Day School lawsuit, visit: http://www.indiandayschools.com/
[19] For more information on the 60s Scoop settlement, visit: https://www.sixtiesscoopsettlement.info/Main.htm

brief history on the founding of the community. That history is rooted in both the missionary and colonial agenda of assimilation as well as the resiliency and refusal of Rotinonhsión:ni (Haudenosaunee) to simply comply with colonial authority (Simpson, 2014).

The current and former village sites and surrounding area we know as "Kahnawà:ke" today was formerly referred to by many names when the village was moved four times in the past (Simpson, 2014). These include "Kentake", "Caughnawaga", the Francis Xavier Mission, and the Seigneury of Sault Saint-Louis (Blanchard, 1982; Divine, 1922; Katzer, 1972; Simpson, 2014). Kahnawà:ke has functioned as a Roman Catholic Mission, a refuge, a French military fort, the home of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha[20], a reservation or reserve, as well as a village and community predominantly of the Kanien'kehá:ka or Mohawk (Alfred, 2009; Blanchard, 1982; Simpson, 2014). The place we know as Kahnawà:ke today has deep roots that trace back to a hunting ground and ancient travel route of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation of the Five Nations Confederacy that originated in the Mohawk Valley, present-day New York State (Simpson, 2014).

The Rotinonhsión:ni (Longhouse people), although more sedentary than many other Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island, regularly moved about within their vast territory (Simpson, 2014). According to the stories I heard through Longhouse oral tradition, as Keepers of the Eastern Door, the Kanien'kehá:ka had a long-standing interest and presence in the area as the Saint Lawrence River provided access to the heart of Confederacy territory in the Great Lakes region. Many peoples Indigenous to the area relied on water-travel to go great distances. The Kanien'kehá:ka (particularly of Kahnawà:ke) were expert river navigators, once regarded as some of the best in the world (Benn, 2009).

In Kanien'kehá:ka oral tradition, Tiohtiá:ke (Montréal) is understood a special place with importance to many local Indigenous peoples. It is described as somewhat of a neutral place with many purposes including trade, ceremony, and diplomacy. Our ancestors seldom travelled or pushed further north than the Island of Montréal as this was the northernmost tip of our

[20] Kateri Tekakwitha ("She moves things") was born of an Algonquin mother and Kanien'kehá:ka father. She lost both parents in a Spanish Influenza outbreak. She survived with near blindness and severe scars. Kateri met Jesuits in the New York valley who converted her to Catholicism and baptized her. She came to Kahnawà:ke in 1677. The Catholic school was later named in her honour. Kateri was canonized in Rome, Italy as Saint Kateri Tekakwitha in October of 2012. Visit: http://kateritekakwitha.net/ for more information.

territory.[21] Further North, corn and other crops did not have adequate growing conditions which made it difficult to support large settlements. The areas to the north of the island were home to many Indigenous peoples, some with whom the Rotinonhsión:ni historically had conflict.[22]

Gretchen Lynn Green's (1991) Doctoral dissertation entitled, *A new people in an age of war: The Kahnawake Iroquois 1667-1760* traced the beginnings of the community from the early 1600s up to 1760. The lives of those living in Kahnawà:ke at that time were tense with struggles for survival, which included navigating social, political, and economic challenges while maintaining traditional kinship and autonomy (Green, 1991). The people of Kahnawà:ke were caught between competing interests of French and English imperial powers, missionary motivations of conversion, other First Nations in the region, and the interests of the Five (also known as Six) Nations Confederacy (Green, 1991).

The years between 1609 to 1666 were rife with conflict during what is known as the "Iroquois Wars" or "Beaver Wars" between the Rotinonhsión:ni (Haudenosaunee) Five Nations Confederacy, Algonquin Nations, the Huron-Wendat, and European invaders interested in the fur trade (Blanchard, 1982). The conflict was largely sparked by the political and economic pressures for survival in the rapidly changing political and economic landscape. In 1648, the Huron-Wendat, who sided with the French during the conflict, were defeated by the Rotinonhsión:ni in a series of violent and deadly battles (Blanchard, 1982). Many (but not all) Huron-Wendat survivors were subsequently absorbed into the Five Nations Confederacy (Blanchard, 1982). By that point, the Huron-Wendat had contact with the French for some time and had long-standing relationships with French missionaries (Blanchard, 1982). Among the Huron-Wendat adoptees were Christian converts, therefore their adoption into Rotinonhsión:ni settlements came with their Catholic beliefs and perspectives of the Jesuits that ministered them (Blanchard, 1982).[23] Over time, the Rotinonhsión:ni began to adopt Christian beliefs and practices largely due to the tireless efforts of Jesuit missionaries together with the internal influence of the Huron-Wendat converts (Blanchard, 1982). The growing number of Kanien'kehá:ka converts in the Saint Lawrence River Valley required a place to openly practice Catholicism (Devine, 1922; Blanchard, 1982). Considering the fact that relationships with

[21] See Trigger, 1987.
[22] The information in this section has been passed through Longhouse oral history.
[23] See Sioui, 1999 for a details on the history of Indigenous peoples in Quebec, specifically the history and culture of the Huron-Wendat.

missionaries and officials were very advantageous in those times, “the religious sincerity of many of these conversions is questionable” (Richter, 1985, p. 5).

The Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk) had several motives for establishing a village within their northern hunting territory which ran along the shores of the Saint Lawrence River south of Tiohtiá:ke commonly known today as the Island of Montréal (Blanchard, 1982; Simpson, 2014). These motives were complex and included religious, political, social, and economical needs. Richter (1985) explained the tensions in Confederacy territory caused by French and British quarreling which the Jesuits played a major role:

> In the late 1680s people of the Five Nations, with apparent political unity, resumed war with New France and its Indian allies. The triumph of anti-French traditionalists, however, was only temporary; Christian factions had been silenced, not eliminated. In the 1690s, as the fortunes of war turned against the Iroquois, many Christian factionalists resurfaced at the core of new francophile parties whose struggles with anglophile and neutralist groups would dominate politics in the Five Nations for decades to come. The new struggles were waged primarily in the councils of the confederacy, but the contending factions were deeply rooted in village quarrels that French missions had spawned years earlier. (Richter, 1985, p. 12).

Between the years 1648 and 1666, the Kanien’kehá:ka initiated the process of negotiating peace in the region which would eventually lead to formal peace agreements in 1701, albeit that was a temporary resolution (Blanchard, 1982). They sought to re-establish peaceful trade partnerships with other Indigenous groups, French, and English caused by the Beaver Wars (Blanchard, 1982). The banks of the Saint-Lawrence River where Kahnawà:ke was eventually founded was well positioned to allow the Kanien’kehá:ka to control the fur trade (Blanchard, 1982, Divine, 1922). Indigenous populations had significantly decreased post-contact due to warfare, disease, and famine and while the establishment of a village did not put an end to these issues, it allowed Indigenous peoples to settle in the area and stabilize as a group (Blanchard, 1982). In the 1600s, both the Kanien’kehá:ka and Jesuit missionaries began to recognize that alcohol consumption was a growing problem, and both the Jesuits and Kanien’kehá:ka had

interests in addressing this issue. Alcohol consumption was prohibited when the village was founded but remained a contentious issue for years to come (Blanchard, 1982).

Conversion to Roman Catholic religion began to slowly occur after missionaries refocused their efforts on more sedentary groups in New France including the Huron-Wendat and Rotinonhsión:ni in the late 1600s (Blanchard, 1982).[24] The people of Kahnawà:ke were known as "praying Indians" or "Onkwehonwe tehatiisontha", which translates to, "the real people who make the sign of the cross" (Blanchard, 1982).[25] It should be noted, however, that neither the Huron-Wendat nor the Rotinonhsión:ni peoples as a whole had converted to Christianity nor assimilated into French culture (Blanchard, 1982; Divine, 1922, Sioui, 1999). Despite the view that the community was comprised of "Catholic Indians", the people of Kahnawà:ke practiced ceremonies, spoke Kanien'kéha (Mohawk language), lived in Longhouses, continued with traditional Clan and naming practices, and followed the Great Law of Peace including appointing Clan Mothers and Chiefs (Blanchard, 1982).

In the eighteenth century, Kahnawà:ke or the "Sault Indians" were yet again caught between French and British military conflicts and attempted to remain neutral in order to maintain trade relations with both sides (Green, 1991, pp. 196-197). Green's (1991) study of Kahnawà:ke's history in the 1700s exposes the strategy and cunning used to navigate these rough waters, particularly between efforts to seduce Kanien'kehá:ka loyalty by British authorities in New York, and French authorities in Quebec. It was during this period that the Rotinonhsión:ni were highly practicing adoption through captivity in what was referred to as the "mourning wars" (Green, 1991, p. 188). Many refugees of warfare and disease throughout Confederacy territory came North to Five Nations communities such as Kahnawà:ke, "the community at the Sault continued to be a mosaic of cultural origins, with the periodic influx of native as well as European captives, integrated into the seamless web of families and clans" (Green, 1991, p. 189). Relationships with local settler populations and French officials deteriorated and were particularly tense at times, such as in 1744 when the Governor of Montreal "decreed that no Kahnawakes [*sic*] should enter that city" (Green, 1991, p. 205). As a result, Kahnwa'kehró:non were angered by this limiting of their freedom in their traditional territory, "some rebelled

[24] For details on French activities in the Saint Lawrence region in the 1500s, see Trigger, 1987.
[25] Modern spelling: "Onkwehón:we Tehatiiahsóntha" which means "the real/true people who make the sign of the cross" (Catholics).

completely against the growing intrusion of French imperial control on life at the Sault by leaving the village and heading west to escape the restrictions" (Green, 1991, p. 206).

Relations with other Kanien'kehá:ka and the Rotinonhsión:ni Confederacy were also complicated by warfare and the imposition of colonial borders. Nation identity was maintained and respected through kinship with the most significant determining factor being language, whether one was of Indigenous or white ancestry in the case of adoptees (Green, 1991). Kanien'kehá:ka who spoke the same language would avoid killing each other in warfare, regardless of whom they sided with (Green, 1991).[26]

Warfare, religion, trade, and diplomacy feature heavily in the history of Kahnawà:ke. Despite many hardships, Onkwehonwehnéha was still the primary language spoken in the village into the early twentieth century. Traditional Rotinonhsión:ni cultural and spiritual practices and beliefs were still being observed to varying degrees alongside Catholicism (Blanchard, 1982). More drastic shifts in language and religion occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, after the passing of the Indian Act in 1876 and the legislation that followed concerning the apprehension and education of Indigenous children in Canada, or CTA. As this oral history research project will demonstrate, the introduction of formal schooling had dire effects on the language, culture, and identity of Kahnawa'kehró:non. Educational policies, Residential Schooling, and Day Schooling in Kahnawà:ke are explored further in the next segments of this literature review.

Education and Schooling in Kahnawà:ke

Children from Kahnawà:ke have been sent to schools outside of the community since the early 1800s. Children from Kahnawà:ke attended English school at Saint John in 1831, where they were instructed by C.W. Forest (Divine, 1922).[27] According to Reid (2004), some children from Kahnawà:ke were sent to Mount Elgin Industrial School (p. 108).[28] Wikwemikong school on Manitoulin Island operated as a Day School since 1840 but gained government support to transition to Residential Schooling in 1887 (Miller, 1996, p. 123). Kahnawà:ke children were

[26] Although it would require further research, Green's (1991) study suggests that maintaining loyalty with distant communities and groups of Kanien'kehá:ka through language is a motivator of language erasure in Kahnawà:ke.
[27] Divine (1922) does not mention the location of the school but I assume it is Saint John Newfoundland.
[28] Mount Elgin Industrial School also known as the Muncey Institute was located at the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation 20 miles southwest of London, Ontario. For more information, visit: https://thechildrenremembered.ca/school-locations/mount-elgin/.

sent to school at Wikwemikong in limited numbers throughout this period. There was both a boys' and a girls' school on Manitoulin Island; the boys' school was operated by the Roman Catholic Jesuit order, and the girls' school by the Daughters of the Heart of Mary (Miller, 1996). In 1910, there were total of 37 children from Kahnawà:ke registered at Wikwemikong (p. 108). In 1911, the girls' school was destroyed by a fire and the Ojibwa workers who were meant to rebuild it went on strike (Miller, 1996). As a result of the fire as well as disputes between the locals and the missionaries, the school was relocated to the "mainland at Spanish Ontario" (Miller, 1996, p. 356).[29]

According to Jesuit records, at some points in the school's history, a quarter of the children enrolled at Spanish were from Kahnawà:ke (Shanahan, 2004). The government and missionaries used Residential Schools as child welfare institutions, places for Indigenous children who, from a Euro-Western viewpoint, were abandoned, orphaned, and destitute. Most of the Kanien'kehá:ka children sent to Wikwemikong or Spanish were the "orphaned and destitute" from Kahnawà:ke, Ahkwesáhsne, and Kanehsatá:ke (Shanahan, 2004, p. 75).[30] After the deadly Quebec Bridge disaster of 1907, 35 families in Kahnawà:ke were left devastated and struggled to survive financially (Fleming, 2007, p. 54).[31] The government provided minimal financial support but offered to assist suffering families by placing their children in Residential Schools (Fleming, 2007). After 1912, children were sent to boarding schools less often than before due to the increase in enrollment at the Day Schools (Katzer, 1972, p. 149). A Band Council document dated October 17, 1919 "page 144 of the Council Book, Resolution No. 52" lists 22 children from Kahnawà:ke recommended for placement at schools in Ottawa or Spanish, signed by Mayor P.J. Delisle and Indian Agent J.M. Brosseau (KORLCC archives).[32] Due to widespread poverty and social issues within the community, Residential School enrollments continued well into the mid 1900s. Spanish Residential School closed in 1958 (Miller, 1996, p. 392). Today, Kahnawà:ke still has living Residential School Survivors within the community. While

[29] See the Chronology of Day Schooling in Kahnawà:ke, Appendix E for more information.
[30] There was also poverty in Spanish and other Jesuit-run schools and institutions. In 1835, the Jesuits at Spanish complain that have of their remittance for the school is taken by the Jesuit Order. See Miller, 1996, p. 514.
[31] The Quebec Bridge is a historical engineering marvel in Quebec City. During the first attempt to construct the bridge, it collapsed on August 29, 1907 resulting in the deaths of 75-76 men. Between 33 and 35 men were ironworkers from Kahnawà:ke. For more information and a list of the deceased, visit: https://historicbridges.org/bridges/browser/?bridgebrowser=quebec/quebec/.
[32] Widespread poverty in Caughnawaga/Kahnawà:ke is mentioned by several authors, in the interview with Sister Georges Edmond, and in the Day School oral histories. It is likely that Residential Schools were the only option in some situations.

Residential Schooling is not the primary focus of this research, these experiences do factor into the intergenerational effects of schooling and CTA in the community.

Gerald F. Reid (2004) published a study titled, *Kahnawà:ke: Factionalism, Traditionalism, and Nationalism in a Mohawk Community,* which offers a concise history and assessment of the political atmosphere in Kahnawà:ke beginning in the late 1800s up to about 1950. Reid's (2004) book is the only recently published comprehensive study on Kahnawà:ke that includes the introduction of formal schooling in the community. There were two basic types of institutions established to educate Indigenous children: Day Schools where children attended during the day and returned home each evening, and residential/boarding schools where children resided for several years at a time.[33] Kahnawà:ke had its first Day Schools in 1826 (Osgood, 1829). Thaddeus Osgood, a Methodist "Minister of the Gospel" wrote a personal account in 1829 outlining his involvement in the process of opening a Methodist Day School based in English instruction in Kahnawà:ke. According to Reverend Osgood, permission from a Chief's Council was granted to open separate boys' and girls' schools in 1826 (Osgood, 1829). The school closed and was reopened in neighboring Chateauguay in 1829 where children from Kahnawà:ke continued to be enrolled with opposition from the Jesuit priests (Divine, 1922, p. 371). These early schools were unsuccessful due to a combination of factors such as parent resistance to schooling with the encouragement of the Jesuit missionaries, who had a long-standing presence in the community and did not want local children educated by Protestant missionaries (Divine, 1922; Osgood, 1829).[34]

The Canadian Government (Government of the United Canadas) had begun collaborating with a number of religious missions to open and operate Day Schools on reserve across Canada. In 1843, The Roman Catholic Church re-established separate Day Schools for girls and boys within the community located in close proximity to the Francis Xavier Mission in the main village area of the reserve (Reid, 2004).[35] There were additional schools opened including a Protestant school, as well as a Catholic school in the southern area of the reserve (Reid, 2004, p.

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[33] There are also children who attended residential schools in Canada as "day scholars", returning home each day.
[34] There are multiple Indian Day Schools noted in the Library & Archives Canada database RG-10 records: Roman Catholic Indian Day School Mission (Kateri School), Methodist Day School Mission, United Church Day School, the Bush School, and the Saint Isidore Road School.
[35] Kahnawà:ke (or Caughnawaga as it was known at the time) has a main village area where the majority of the population was concentrated, as well as several outlaying wooded and farming areas.

108).[36] In 1868, Louis Taweiakenra Jackson of Kahnawà:ke sent a letter of complaint to Indian Affairs regarding the manner that R.A. Fletcher was conducting the Indian Day School in Caughnawaga (Jackson, 1868).

There were several attempts to bring in the Sisters of Saint Anne to teach in Kahnawà:ke (Caughnawaga) both in 1864 and 1888 but no agreement could be reached between the congregation and government officials (Roy, 1994, p. 210). The request was made again in 1913, and finally in 1914 the Congregation subsequently agreed to teach at the Kateri Indian Day School for girls, and the "Eastern School" for boys (Roy, 1994, p. 210). Both were documented at Ottawa as Roman Catholic Indian Day Schools (Roy, 1994). Archival records trace the staffing, curriculum, and administration of the schools. The voices of Kahnawa'kehró:non are largely absent from these accounts. Nonetheless, parents and community opposition to the Indian Act and to the Day Schools were documented. Reid (2004) discusses the community tensions sparked by the arrival of the Sisters of Saint Anne in 1915: "a change that intensified nationalist impulses within the community and strengthened its ties to other Rotinonhsiónni communities" (p. 106).[37]

Figure 1. Listed as a boys' Day School in the archives, year unknown. Either Kateri Boys' Day School or the Eastern School. Photo Courtesy of KORLCC.

[36]Considering a recent surge of interest in Day Schools, I have decided not to provide a map of Kahnawà:ke with the locations of the schools to avoid drawing non-locals to these areas. Many of the former buildings are located in residential areas or currently house community schools or organizations. Visits from outsiders may be perceived as a violation of privacy or a nuisance by community members.

[37] Locals including Peter J. Delisle, Peter Williams and others were teaching in the schools but Onkwehonwehnéha was part of the curriculum. Bringing in SSA displaced the teachers and brought in English as the primary language of instruction (Reid, 2004).

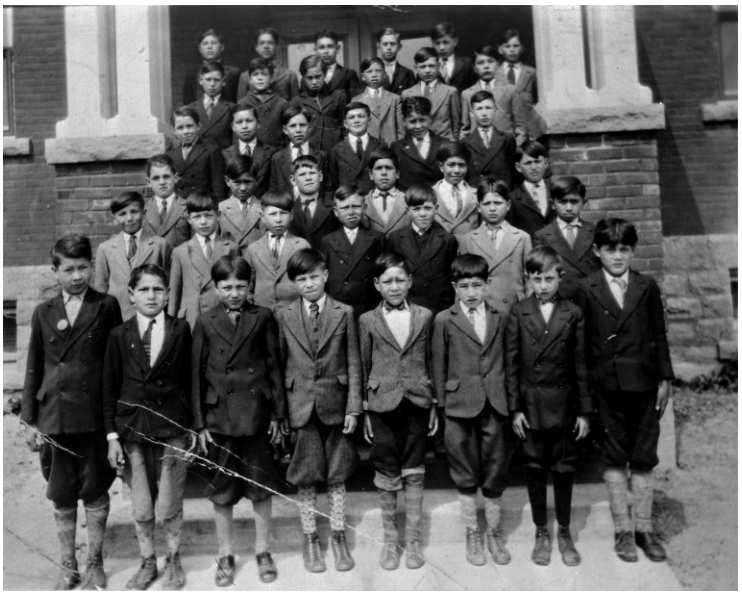

Figure 2. Boys group photo, Indian Day School, year unknown. (Possibly the Eastern School) Photo courtesy of KORLCC.

Roy (1994) goes into greater detail about the reception of the SSA in Kahnawà:ke at the time which displaced local teachers from the schools. The Sisters "were on constant alert" due to "loud threats' and what is described as harassment from "malcontents" (Roy, 1994, p. 210). The Band Council representatives had to intervene to diffuse matters which were sparked by locals, "their defiance against Whites, especially the French, was deep-rooted in the hearts of the people who had so often been exploited by the invaders" (Roy, 1994, p. 210).

Another major obstacle were the language barriers, as all of the children spoke "Iroquois" and the nuns spoke English, which Roy (1994) describes as a "Tower of Babel experience" (p. 211). The SSA managed with help from the local Jesuit priests who were impressed with their results (Roy, 1994). Correspondence obtained from the SSA archive indicate that Deputy Superintendent General Duncan Campbell Scott[38], the "architect of the Indian Residential School system" (FN Caring Society, 2016), paid special attention to the 'oppositions' to schooling in Caughnawaga at the time. He goes as far as intervening in the SSA's decision to replace the Principal of Kateri School:

[38]Duncan Campbell Scott was an author and poet who began working for the federal department of Indian Affairs in 1879. He was appointed Deputy Superintendent in 1913 and served until 1932. He was the highest-ranking member of the cabinet that made decisions concerning Indian Affairs and instrumental in the signing of Treaty 9.

> I have a note from Sister Mary Edward, Principal of the Caughnawaga Indian Schools, bidding farewell to the work there and informing me that she is being transferred to another field of usefulness. As you are aware Sister Mary Edward has been in charge of these schools since the change of management in January 1915, and during the time that has elapsed she has apparently been most successful.…As you are no doubt aware there has been certain opposition to the policy of the Department and you will agree that it is hardly prudent to change the administrative head at the present before the system has been firmly established…I had the pleasure of visiting the Caughnawaga schools a couple of months ago and I was very much pleased to see the effect of the efforts of the Principal and her assistants in their work among the Indian children of this village…
> (SSA Archives, B46/13, 18).

In a second correspondence dated August 30, 1917, D.C. Scott confirms salary increases and that a living quarter will be built for the nuns "it has been decided to rent the Jacobs property on the river bank and fit it up to meet their needs" (SSA Archives, B46/13, 20).[39] Scott continues and gives directives about the treatment of the "Indians" in light of the "obstacles" in 1915:

> I hope that the Sisters will have a successful year. Last year was rather troubled, and their path was not as free from obstacles as I could have wished, but I trust that the new principal will take up her task with a most conciliatory spirit. Indians cannot be driven, they must be influenced and led, and it is most important that the teachers should not evince the slightest partiality for any group of Indians. I trust that the devoted Sisters will have a very successful year. (SSA Archives, B46/13, 20).

On 15 November 1918, Sister Mary Gabriel the Principal of Kateri School wrote to D. C. Scott informing him that Kahnawà:ke was struck by an epidemic of Spanish influenza that resulted in the closure of the schools for one month, from October 10, 1918 until November 12,

[39] Due to documented opposition from the community, a permanent nuns' residence was not built, several properties were rented until a house and land was purchased by the Indian Department. Two thirds of local males participated in a referendum in June 1917 voting against a permanent residence (Reid, 2004, p. 118).

1918 (SSA Archives, B46/13, 26). In the same letter, she expressed a subtle dissatisfaction with his decision to appoint an "English speaking" Inspector who "is not a Roman Catholic" (SSA Archives, B46/13, 26).

In 1920, the Department opened additional schools outside in the "country areas" of Kahnawà:ke, the Saint Isidore Highway School (207), and Bush School, one east and one west with about 20 students enrolled in each schoolhouse (Roy, 1994, p. 211). Commercial classes for office training were also opened that year for both girls and boys but discontinued when the Sisters realized that the diplomas from those schools were not recognized by employers (Roy, 1994, 211). On 20 March 1923, A. Luther Gilman, School Inspector for Indian Affairs writes to Sister Superior of Indian Schools in Caughnawaga after his inspection, "I believe the Schools of Caughnawaga rank first among the Indian Schools of North America and perhaps compare very favorably with our very modern and up-to-date Schools of the white races" (SSA Archives, B46/13, 37).

Figure 3. Kateri Tekakwitha (Indian Day School) 1928. Photo courtesy of KORLCC.[40]

From 1932 until 1946, Sister George Edmond (1995) lived with SSA in Kahnawà:ke while she taught at Kateri Tekakwitha Indian Day School. In her interview from 1995 at her

[40] There is little information and no names of students documented for the photographs at the KORLCC archives.

retirement home, she spoke with Dr. Gerald Reid (2004) and provided a view of how the SSA regarded Kahnawà:ke, 'Indians', and the children. She explained that the first nuns were 'afraid' to work in Kahnawà:ke, especially after the opposition from the community and the language barrier: "[They] very often came in and said they were hungry, and stand [there], and they were very, very demanding and so forth" (Sr. George Edmond Interview, 1995). Initially, their mission work was about gaining trust: "They were very good people, they have to learn to trust you and then after, you can do what you want with them. That was my experience. And the Jesuits were extremely kind to them" (Sr. George Edmond, 1995). Sister George Edmond shares a story about a time she and another nun were cleaning linens and walking back from the convent, the nun she was with did not have much contact with "Indians" prior to this experience:

> Suddenly she was shaking like this, I said what's the matter? She says to me, "See that man coming up that path?' that was the police chief, that was a big husky man, coming up the path, I recognized him. "I think he's the one that brought me to my mother." You know what the French Canadians always say, an Indian brings the babies. She hadn't made enough contact with them. So, poor sister. (Sr. George Edmond, 1995).

Sister George Edmond (1995) describes how it did not take much effort to "win the children over" and that she did show them compassion. She describes the people in Caughnawaga at the time as "very open to outsiders".[41] Sister George Edmond says that she enjoyed teaching, especially the singing, plays, and dressing up the children when busses of tourists and visitors would come to Caughnawaga to see the 'Indians'.[42] Several times she brings up poverty and hunger in Kahnawà:ke at the time, many children went to school without having food to eat for breakfast. The Sisters helped out by "making little sandwiches… we'd ask them… 'Did you have your breakfast this morning?' And many would say they had no breakfast, and sister would go down with her little sandwiches and so forth" (Sr. George Edmond, 1995).

The Sister also got involved in other ways, convincing the girls in the community to study at schools on the outside after graduating, and converting them into teachers in the

[41] There are several references in the INAC annual reports of non-natives renting land or homes in Caughnawaga. Rents were collected by the Indian Agent and were meant to be dispersed among band members annually.
[42] I read scripts and narrations from several plays and presentations in the SSA archives.

community as they got older (Sr. George Edmond, 1995). Many young Kanien'kehá:ka women would go on to study in institutions outside of Kahnawà:ke and several became teachers within the community (Sr. George Edmond, 1995). A young woman from Kahnawà:ke named "Annie" comes to mind, "She could equal any of my Sisters in teaching, she really had a gift…When she got stuck on anything she would come and ask and we'd do our best…we helped her out that way" (Sr. George Edmond, 1995).

Sister George Edmond states that she can remember names of students, "I'd been working with 4000 Indians in Caughnawaga since then… so I'm a bit of an Indian myself" (1995). She says that most of the children spoke Mohawk at the time and so the nuns used "different tricks" such as singing and entertaining visitors to get the children to work hard at speaking new languages (French): "I'd say the 'buses are coming in'…. from their families most of them [spoke Mohawk]. I guess their mothers taught them amongst themselves because the grandmothers and grandfathers didn't know anything else" (Sr. George Edmond, 1995). According to what she remembered, the people in the community were proud of their identity as Kanien'kehá:ka. She explains that the children were still excited to celebrate traditional ceremonies. She tells a story of hearing a lot of noise and music one day: "[The children said] *today's a big holiday!* …What holiday? *It's that person's feast day today!* I think their parents very much wanted them to be proud to be Mohawk…they had great respect for their parents, and each other… they still have it" (Sr. George Edmond, 1995).

The government was not always easy to work with or open to suggestions from the nuns but sometimes the police (RCMP) would ask the nuns for help to 'keep the peace' (Sr. George Edmond, 1995). The Sister also speaks about the people being hard working, fearless ironworkers, their "pride for being Indians" (not liking things that were "too white" in the church) and efforts to re-establish Longhouse traditions: "I remember the children weren't sympathetic to the group. They'd say, Oh that's Longhouse.… All of a sudden on some sidewalks and you'd hear feet coming along, and you knew some of the Indians were calling for a meeting" (Sister George Edmond, 1995). The end of Sister George Edmond's interview is more difficult to hear (due to background noise) but she describes what sounds like a Longhouse or regular meeting space, "they have a place" on the main road near the convent where the people are "very cheerful amongst themselves" (1995). After the arrival of SSA sparked political

and social tension in Kahnawà:ke, in the 1920s and 1930s, there is a resurgence of Longhouse tradition (Reid, 2004).

Despite community opposition, the schools continued to operate for many more years thereafter, and Sister George Edmond (1995) moved on to new missions in 1946. In 1941, the Senior School burned down and the children were housed at two other schools and private homes until 1949 when the new Kateri Tekakwitha School was built (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4). The new building centralized all the Catholic children (384 students at the time) into one building in the main village (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).

Figure 4. Kateri Tekakwitha School (young girls' classroom, year unknown) Photo courtesy of KORLCC.

In June 1947, Matthew Lazare of Kahnawà:ke was sent with a delegation on behalf of "the council and the hereditary chiefs" to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons Appointed to Examine and Consider the Indian Act (Smith, 2014, p. 248). The statement addresses a number of issues including honoring the treaties, which would be understood today as exercising a right to self-determination. The delegation directly denounced the Indian Act:

> We demand the restoration of our primordial rights, the respection [*sic*] and fulfilment of treaty obligations, the recognition as a sovereign nation….We have no desire to be governed in the future by the "Indian Act", or any form of government….You have

> violated our treaties by making compulsory laws for us Indians.…The "Indian Act" tends to divide then destroy the red man. The elected council came into being by fraud and treachery…We therefore insist that treaties, as made by our great forefathers were in the form of agreements between two equal sovereign nations, but that you the whites took the attitude that we, the Indians, were not your equal… (Smith, 2014, pp. 252-252).

The brief read aloud by Lazare goes on to specifically address education and the issues the community has with Sisters of Saint Anne. This portion of the statement demonstrates that Kahnawa'kehró:non also had a clear understanding of the role of education as a vital tool required for gainful economic success in the "world of to-morrow" and why some parents and community members wanted their children to be educated:

> The operation of Indian day or residential schools is not approved by this band, if it will be operated by any religious denomination. We do not approve the Nuns or Sisters of Saint Anne's to teach our children as they do not teach our children enough, the only thing they learn is praying and singing and marching to church during school hours….We do not approve the rebuilding of our burnt school unless it becomes a public school which takes children of all religion and teaches them…we demand these things because our children deserve the best form of education this country can give, to be prepared to meet and conquer the industrial and professional world of to-morrow. We also complain and object to the behaviour and activities of the Jesuit Society, who are in control of our church. They are meddling in the affairs of this band when all they have a right to do is be spiritual advisers. We are capable of handling our own affairs without interference from outsiders. (Smith, 2014, p. 252).

The schools continue to be funded by Indian Affairs and staffed by the SSA. From the 13 to 16 of March 1961, Sister Marie Anne Eva (Prefect of Studies) indicates that the children in Kahnawà:ke have gradually been acculturated into a school environment, and goes on to emphasize the importance of rigid religious instruction:

> The religion lesson must not be only theoretical. In this school more than anywhere else, practical applications are necessary and an appeal to the emotions should follow every lesson. Pupils must be encouraged in every possible way to make public manifestations of their faith by pious practices…after an explanation of SIN, the whole class could receive a fervent Act of Contrition; and acts of Love and Thanksgiving could follow a lesson on the Eucharist. In order to impress the children in a lasting way, the teachers must resort to many pious practices of this nature. (SSA Archives, LQ2/9. 11).

At a follow-up visit from the 11 to 16 December 1961, Sister Mary Anne Eva stresses the necessity of "firm control" over the grades four and five boys (SSA Archives, LQ2/9, 13). She reiterates that the priority of the school is moral and religious education to indoctrinate children into the Christian faith (SSA Archives, LQ2/9, 13). The staff is encouraged to "further intensify [their] apostolic spirit in order to inculcate lasting religious principles in the hearts of their pupils" (SSA Archives, LQ2/9, 13).

What We Learn from This History

The archival information illustrates the primary goals to anglicize, convert, and assimilate Indigenous children into Euro-Canadian society through child-focused colonization. While the earliest Indigenous educational models in New France were ultimately failures, these initial efforts set off a pattern of assimilation through education and apprehension that continues in present-day Canada. Of course, residential schools were preferred by missionaries and government officials as an ideal educational model as they provided highly controlled settings for assimilation away from families and communities. Indian Day Schools outlasted the residential school system for a number of reasons, most notably due to their cost-effectiveness; assimilation had to happen as quickly and cheaply as possible. Day School teachers were the frontline workers, mediators, and agents of conversion and integration, an onerous responsibility that caused a high-turnover in school staff. Christian missionaries with moral and religious motivations were usually the best suited for these roles.

Over time, practices and policies for the aggressive assimilation of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples were gradually replaced with subtler approaches. The language of federal policies put forward by the 'Indian Department' shifted from overt plans to 'civilize the savage'

into a language of 'integration' and self-sufficiency.[43] Notwithstanding the shift to disingenuous inclusive policy language and methods, the practices of education and apprehension, erasure of Indigenous languages and knowledge systems and layers of generational traumas continue to yield disastrous effects for Indigenous youth.

The history of Kahnawà:ke indicates the fact that Indigenous peoples understood the utility of western education for the survival of future generations and were not passive recipients of colonial propaganda. The schools in Kahnawà:ke (Caughnawaga) were important to the Indian Department and Christian missionaries as a demonstration of both the success of assimilation through CTA and the containment and control of Indigeneity. Authority figures such as D.C. Scott took special interest in the operation of the schools in Kahnawà:ke. Day Schooling continued in Kahnawà:ke for many years until the Joint Unification Agreement of 1968 and the formal changeover to community schooling in 1988 (Deering & Beauvais, 1977).[44] The Kateri Indian Day Schools on the reserve morphed into a community-controlled school that continues to be funded by the Canadian government. Other than a few limited documented objections to the schools, the voices of Kahnawa'kehró:non are largely absent from the historical record. The next chapter centralizes the voices, experiences, and opinions of people who lived through Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke.[45] I end this chapter with a quote from the history of the SSA Congregation which sums up their views after their mission in Kahnawà:ke came to an end:

> Several factors contributed to the success story that was the education of Indians at Caughnawaga. The sisters respected the dignity of their pupils, children of a proud race. They were supported by the apostolic zeal and brotherly spirit of the Jesuit Fathers, who were always attentive to their feminine collaborators and their work, joys, and problems. They were encouraged by the kindness of the Indian chief and his counsel, as well as by the government agents whose reports kept finding new ways of expressing their satisfaction: Good pupil control, success in various parts of the program, notable progress in the mastery of English, the teachers' untiring devotedness and competence. (Roy, 1994, p. 212).

[43] On June 11, 2008 Prime Minister of Canada Stephen Harper apologized to former Residential School students on behalf of the government of Canada (INAC, 2010).
[44] The Catholic and Protestant school boards united in 1968. Federal Day Schooling ends in 1988.
[45] The former Day School students never identify as "survivors" therefore I never use that term to refer to them.

CHAPTER 4 – KAHNAWA'KEHRÓ:NON SHARE THEIR STORIES

> *"Some stories remind us about being whole and healthy and remind us of traditional teachings that have relevance in our lives. Stories have the power to make our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits work together. When we lose part of ourselves, we lose balance and harmony…Only when our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits work together do we truly have Indigenous education."* – Jo-ann Archibald (2008, pp. 11-12).

Our elders hold traditional knowledge that they pass on through stories that convey many things including values, responsibilities, history, cultural practices, language, and identity (Archibald, 2008). These teachings reaffirm our connection to land and "place": time, space, waters, sky, ancestry (Hill, 2017). Onkwehón:we elders and storytellers are the caretakers of that knowledge, yet it is a collective responsibility that is intergenerationally shared (Porter, 2008). One does not simply arrive at a certain age and receive all of the knowledge and stories of their people, nor the protocols and wisdom to understand how to care for them. Collective memory and knowledge are built over lifetimes and transmitted through relationships. People are socialized into the practice of maintaining it and their subjective experiences and understandings become integrated into it (Hill, 2017). Stories in the traditions of Rotinonhsión:ni oral culture and history serve many purposes, they transmit and regenerate our collective consciousness (Hill, 2017). Meanings or messages, content, and the settings in which stories are told situate them as either personal experience, private (or forbidden), Longhouse, historical, land, sacred, or often a combination of contexts (Archibald, 2008, p. 71).

The narratives related in this chapter are personal experiences, oral histories, and private stories that are shifting form and purpose for communal and public knowledge (Davis, 2004). Davis (2004) termed these "risky stories": "The telling of risky stories is potentially hazardous for Indigenous communities and individuals, as well as for the researcher whose credibility is at stake both inside and outside the community." (Davis, 2004, p. 10). These oral histories were shared in the comforts of home, in warm kitchens and sitting rooms in Kahnawà:ke. Each of the elder storytellers I worked with mentioned that this was their first time telling their Day School stories, so wholly and completely to anyone.

Relationships are important in storytelling, between storyteller, listener, and pre-existing relationships will change during a research process (Archibald, 2008, p. 32; Smith, Tuck & Yang, 2019). My relationship with the elders were complicated by moral and ethical

responsibilities due to the nature of the stories being shared: “Ethical practice in relation to risky stories has a high degree of contextuality, which means that the research terrain is constantly in negotiation.” (Davis, 2004, p. 11). As Archibald (2008) found, one must be culturally ‘worthy’ and ready to do ‘storywork’, particularly to work alongside elders (p. 88). Thanks to my foundation in a multigeneration family, my personal education and Longhouse background that includes experience working with elders, I felt I ready to do this work.

I entered into research relationships prepared with my Indigenous research toolkit, the collection of stories, methodologies, and knowledges I pieced together to undertake this research. Part of that toolkit was Archibald’s (2008), “Seven principles related to using First Nations stories and storytelling for educational purposes…” (p. ix). These principles have been woven into this research, they include “respect, reverence, responsibility, reciprocity, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy” (Archibald, 2008, p. 2). Rotinonhsión:ni cultural values of humility, honesty, and gentleness when working alongside elders are a strong guiding aspect of my approach. There are various features of Rotinonhsión:ni storytelling that cannot be captured in writing or by technology, the “gestures, tones, rhythm and personality” of the storyteller which brings the story to life (Archibald, 2008, p. 17). In the sessions and conversations when these stories were told, each storyteller and I were there in person, engaged in a process of exchanging knowledge, emotion and energy. Archibald (2008) calls this a “critical interactive relationship”, further described as the “interrelatedness and synergy between story and listener and between text and reader” (p. 32).

Storytellers & Interview Process

Community members who participated in this project were treated with respect and kindness and were not viewed as “research subjects” (Kovach, 2009). Their stories represent a “co-construction of knowledge” which is presented in the words of the storyteller and is also analyzed through an interpretive lens (Kovach, 2009, p. 100). The elders that participated in this study were largely from the Catholic Day Schools, the boys’ and girls’ schools known as Kateri Tekakwitha in Kahnawà:ke. Narrowing the focus of the research to Catholic Indian Day Schools and excluding interviews with Protestant Day School students, helped to construct a broader narrative. Interviewing Catholic Day School students was the logical choice, providing a larger

pool of potential storytellers and coincidentally, that the first three people I contacted and planned to interview attended Catholic Day Schools.

After an initial discussion with participants about the project (by phone or in passing), I delivered the consent form and interview guide in person (Appendix A). One-on-one sessions were scheduled thereafter in which their stories were recorded, honorariums and gifts were presented, and each participant was debriefed. In addition, I made an offering of tobacco to each storyteller to respect Kanien'kehá:ka cultural protocols, an acknowledgement for their time and knowledge (Whitebean, 2019). My interactions with my Grandma Millie were unique and did not follow the methods I describe here. I discuss my research process with my grandmother in the next section of this chapter.

At the one-on-one sessions, each storyteller and I had a conversation that began with me sharing who I was, what family I came from, and where I lived in the community. This included mentioning my Grandma Millie, growing up at her home beside the church, and the fact that she told me stories about Day School. I answered any questions that came up about my background. I explained why I was doing this research and how I saw it being useful and important to our community. We would then move into discussing the Day Schools and what life was like in Kahnawà:ke when they were children. These conversations lasted for thirty to sixty minutes in each case. The initial conversation was not recorded. When the storyteller was ready, the recorder was turned on. The storyteller understood that all of our interactions and conversations were a part of the research, unless they specified otherwise. I explained that the recorded portions of our sessions were meant to capture their "Day School story", or the bulk of their memories and first-hand experiences they were choosing to share in the research and directly with the community, based on their choice to be "identifiable".

Following Rotinonhsión:ni storytelling protocols, a back-and-forth conversation is not always appropriate when working with elders or traditional knowledge holders. Interrupting someone while speaking is highly disrespectful. I listened intently and did not interrupt the elder who was speaking, making eye contact and using subtle nonverbal cues to show that I was fully engaged as a listener. Flexibility with storytelling is also important, and storytellers do not always stick to one method of storying; or they may go back and forth between methods. I did not take notes or leave during any part of our session. Towards the end of each story, I asked a

few lingering questions that I had before closing the recording. When the recording was finished, the storyteller and I went back into conversation for several hours.

Working with Grandma Millie

I struggled with both a personal and ethical dilemma for a long period, trying to decide how to work with my Grandma Millie. My Grandmother's stories were the reason I chose to research Day Schools in the first place, but I had difficulty determining *if* and *how* she could be a part of this project for two main reasons. First, she told me many stories throughout my life but in the natural way that Kanien'kehá:ka grandmothers do, while cooking, sewing, beading, planting, and sharing meals. Stories were part of our daily life and told in a typical Rotinonhsión:ni way, in bits and pieces over time. Changing this natural storytelling process felt like a violation of our personal relationship. Recordings of her may have led to unnecessary stress, as my grandmother is very private and humble. Second, Grandma Millie is eighty-five years old at the time I write this and has significant health issues that prevent her from carrying out an active role in this research. Having conversations takes a lot of her energy and at times her voice is strained. As is typical for many people at her age, she has days when her memories do not come to her as easily or quickly as before.

Struggling with this dilemma I knew that moving forward without Grandma Millie felt wrong. One of the reasons I am in a position to undertake such research today is that she mustered the courage to fight for herself and her children, to ensure that her grandchildren and great-grandchildren knew their identity as Kanien'kehá:ka. I know my grandmother very well and I would never do anything that would cause her harm in any way. After discussing my thesis with her, she agreed to re-tell her Day School stories to me for the purpose of my research. We co-created her story, similar to the process of working with recordings and transcripts (Martin, 2018). It took a lot of time, patience, and many visits over the period of a year. The end result is that I have included Grandma Millie's stories (with her permission) as they have been recalled in a co-reflective process of our past and recent conversations.

How to Approach the Elder's Stories

Each story in this chapter begins with a brief background of the storyteller based on my knowledge of their lives and roles in community. I add whole sections and shorter quotes taken

directly from transcripts (lightly edited) to keep the stories and experiences in the words of the storyteller whenever possible. Each storyteller has a section of this chapter, I respect this space as their viewpoint from which to make meaning and engage in a critical self-reflexive storying of their lives. It should be noted that 'living through' something and what can later be remembered, recalled, or retold are very different things (Zembrzycki, 2014). First and foremost, their self-interpretation is their "truth", the sources and analysis I bring in supports their experiences and assists me in articulating my own interpretation as the researcher, insider, and listener.

The objective of this research is not to appropriate their stories to interpret or understand them "through non-Indigenous eyes and prisms" (Davis, 2004, p. 10). I avoid making observations or analytical statements in storyteller "spaces" to limit my interference in how the experiences of the storyteller may be perceived. I do this is by strictly introducing topics or quotes in story segments and mirroring the language and terminology used by the storyteller. Considerations and steps must be consciously taken to regulate power dynamics in research relationships in use of story, voice, and knowledge in research: "The issue of controlling what will be collected and whose interests will be served is at the core of antagonisms over research. Issues of control are also intertwined in current debates related to self-representation, voice, and appropriation" (Davis, 2004, pp. 4-5).

Some of the information in the storyteller biographies and overall stories such as specific places in Kahnawà:ke, names and ages of community members are not explained the same way for each storyteller nor in great detail. This was done intentionally to respect the privacy of storytellers, their families, and community members as per our research negotiations. In any story, one must have intimate knowledge of the "local metaphor and narrative conventions" to fully understand what is said or read (Cruikshank, 2005, pp. 66-67). The stories are shared in English but do include words in Onkwehonwehnéha and references to Rotinonhsión:ni teachings and philosophy understood by those who regularly interact within Kahnawà:ke's social, cultural, and spiritual environment. Some of the messages or details in the stories are best understood by people from Kahnawà:ke.

After the stories are shared, I reflect on the elders' experiences and our conversations that occurred afterwards. These conversations further illuminate oral histories of Day School and illustrate how the elders view my roles and responsibilities to share their stories. This demonstrates how the exchange and gathering of knowledge through re-searching alters my role

in community now and in the future. Each storyteller section is concluded by exploring some of the lessons or points that one may take away from specific experiences, to be discussed and linked together to form a collective story. I end this chapter with an analysis and discussion of the many themes, meanings, and lessons that the elders have gifted us through these stories.[46]

Joe's Stories

At the time we met for our storytelling session, Joe Aniataraken McGregor was 77 years old (J. McGregor, Personal Communication, November 21, 2018).[47] He is a husband, father, and grandfather. Joe and his wife, Amelia Tekwatonti McGregor, are both highly respected community elders in Kahnawà:ke. Joe is a first language Onkwehonwehnéha speaker from a family of multigenerational healers. For many years, Joe has worked both internally and externally to Kahnawà:ke doing various types of healing work for individuals and families. Many years ago, Joe began to attend Longhouse ceremonies and today, he is a respected holder of traditional knowledge and Faith Keeper in the Longhouse. He is called on for openings, "raising names"[48], weddings, funeral rites, and other ceremonies but mainly performs these duties within the community. Joe and his relatives still live on his family farmland, known in Kahnawà:ke as "McGregor's Farm", where he continues to raise animals and plant. I have known Joe, Amelia, their daughters and grandchildren, for many years. Their daughter Kawisente is one of my closest friends. I have visited and called Joe and Amelia many times over the years.

I have heard Joe speak publicly countless times during my life. During several of these public events, he had briefly mentioned Day School. He was one of the first people I thought about working with on this project. Joe's interview was the first I recorded while the two of us sat talking in his kitchen. After explaining the consent forms (which Joe agreed to sign), and a brief discussion on the research purpose and my intentions, Joe wanted to get right into his story. Our recorded conversation lasted just under forty-seven minutes.

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[46] In chapter two I discuss access and storage of full interview audio and transcripts according to OCAP principles. I share long quotes from storyteller transcripts in this chapter, with background information to help contextualize details of the stories for the reader since the complete stories may only be accessed with permission.

[47] To limit the number of Personal Communication references in-text from this source, repeated references in this subsection are simply listed as "Joe".

[48] "Raising names" refers to a formal naming ceremony in the Longhouse.

Joe was six or seven years old when he started attending school on "the farm", which was quite a walking distance from his home. He shares this memory: "I was six years old – that I remember clear – when ah I started [at the] one-room school on the 207 road.[49] It's still there the building and the home is still there… I enjoyed going to school there". The 'one-room school' Joe speaks about was located in the farming area where he lived (Saint Isidore Road, also known as Route 207). Joe describes it as a 'public school', where children from the farm of various religious backgrounds attended.[50] There was another 'one-room school' (called the "Bush School") in a different area of Kahnawà:ke farmland that his family members attended, previous to the opening of the Saint Isidore schoolhouse off of route 207.[51] The Bush School was too far for children walking through the woods in high snow so the St. Isidore/route 207 school was opened. He says the 'laws' were different back then according to what his father and uncles told him. Children were 'strapped' for speaking the language (Onkwehonwehnéha) at Day School:

> The one-room ["Bush"] school they had no choice of being a public school, because there was [*sic*] so many different faiths over there…. They [my uncles] …went to school there, near Sonny's there ["South Texas"].… when that law was still in there that you can't speak your language in the yard… they had the strap for that and they also had to stay after school or something like that... And this woman [the teacher] …she was Native and her husband was the caretaker there... I was told.

Later, when I asked Joe if he had similar experiences in Day School to what his uncles and father described to him (children being "disciplined" for speaking the language) he had this to say:

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[49]Joe does not estimate the years that he attended day school. Based on his age, I estimate that he attended the Saint Isidore school from 1947 until about 1949 when he was transferred to Kateri School in the village. He would have attended school there from about 1949 to 1955. The RG10 files for the Caughnawaga Bush School are currently being digitized but records of the school begin in 1899 and end in 1949.

[50] Joe refers to the "one-room school on the farm" that was located near his family residence. This school is called the "Saint Isidore School" in the archival record, located near route 207 in present-day Kahnawà:ke, a Quebec highway that connects at the junction of route 132 and the Mercier Bridge.

[51] Archival records indicate that the "Bush School" was a on-room schoolhouse further away from Joe's family land (McGregor's farm) in the area known as "South Texas", not far off of highway 132, in present-day Kahnawà:ke.

> No, because I think the people were already standing up and saying *hey, this is this is not gonna be tolerated* you know. The nuns that taught us, some of them had bad tempers. Just like anybody else, they're people. But we never had anybody locked in a room or something like that…at least I never saw it.

Joe's teacher at the Saint Isidore School on route 207 was a French woman from a nearby town, either Beauharnois or Valleyfield. He shared fond memories of her and of that 'farm-like' school:

> She taught us to pray [in] French…I can still say prayers in French…we used to kneel down…those days the benches were long…This school we went to it was just like the farm. It was a big place we walk around at recess, we play in the bush and everything like that and the teacher had a lot of patience…. the only time anybody got the strap was…because they [were] acting up… I myself there, was never ["disciplined"] …She was nice to us she was good to us. She had her own problems just like anybody else. But she took care of us and she never abused us. If you were bad she has to do something…because this [is] a woman and these are big-big boys…I never had a problem with the teacher or anything like that. I listen to what they tell me…

The children at the Saint Isidore/Route 207 school were from nearby farms and Joe and his sister Grace had many friends, "I had a lot of friends. Some of them would challenge me to fight—okay we're boys, but nothing else took place.…". Joe remembers the children from the Saint Isidore/Route 207 school visiting the village area of Caughnawaga to practice for their first communion:

> The very first time I went to the village.…there was another building later on was used as a woodwork right across the Catholic church, that's where they took us, the ones who were making our first communion. They used to take us from this one-room school [Saint Isidore/Route 207] to the village to go there which the Priest would come in because we wanna make our first communion – all of us that's gonna make it.

Caughnawaga was sectioned into the main village area, and other outlying areas, mostly farmland.[52] The people living in the farming areas had very limited contact with people, with the exception of their family and neighbors. Joe and his sister attend the Saint Isidore/Route 207 schoolhouse for a few years until they and other children are transferred to the newly rebuilt Kateri School, which opened in 1949 (see Appendix E). After a few years A federal school inspector visits and Joe and the other children from the farm were transferred to Kateri School (Kateri Tekakwitha School, Roman Catholic Mission Indian Day School) in the Caughnawaga village:

> One day…there was a man from Ottawa, he was… [an] Inspector that…was in charge of …the law, you know the school. Then one day he got there. [The teacher] was really terrified I remember and her voice was shaking and everything.… So anyway, that took a few days and then we were told that we're transferred to the Kateri School, in the village…I guess he [the inspector] made a report that we weren't learning enough. It wasn't abuse or anything like that…

Joe and the other children from the farm areas of Kahnawà:ke were shocked and displaced by the change to 'village schools', the Kateri Tekakwitha girls' and boys' schools.[53] This seems to be compounded by the fact that the majority of children from the farm were first-language Kanien'kéha speakers, learning French at the 'one-room school', with little or no English-speaking ability. The children from the farm area stuck together. Joe explains:

> First thing I know that we were transferred over there. At that time, they had just finished the Kateri School. There was another building… [it] caught fire a long time [ago].... I seen [*sic*] the new building which is now, which is added quite a few times [existing Kateri School with additions]. They took us there and I tell you it was big… it was a shock into us farm… children because when we got to the village it was like a foreign land. They didn't speak Mohawk at all…in the village. So, we all gathered like poor

[52] Present-day Kahnawà:ke does not have house numbers or formal street names. Describing locations depends on knowledge of local landmarks, common routes, organizations and businesses, and residences.
[53] The Saint Isidore/Route 207 school had low enrollment numbers (approximately 20 children at a time) compared to the Catholic Day Schools (Kateri).

> children in a place. All the people from the farms both sides—all directions now where the seaway is there was farms so we all stand together recess time, and dinner [lunch] time, we used to only spend together with us because we know what we're talking about [those able to speak Onkwehonwehnéha]. I wasn't very great in English either… because our people spoke French here. They spoke French and Mohawk and very little English. This happened after that we learned English.

Joe "respected everybody" and did not have issues with the nuns that taught in the school or religion as he was brought up Catholic (he says later that his mother was from a Protestant family):

> We were all praying in French…and only when we went to school the Kateri School is when we were praying in English…. I was brought up in ah in a Catholic church way so I didn't find anything different over there…. I respected everybody, I respected the nuns and the nuns were good to me. I never…had argument[s]... I heard of this with…some people with mis-misbehaving they have to you know, be told what to do… But we had our fun times and difficult times. But as far as… treatment, for myself in the school I have nothing to complain about. I thought the teachers did their best the best of their ability the priest did the same way, they were not abusive what I seen.

Many times, Joe talks about how different the community was when he was growing up. Walking long distances was possible when Joe attended the one-room school in the farm area. After transferring to Kateri Tekakwitha Day School, children from the farm and outlying areas had to get driven to school. Joe talks about school buses and a funny story that remembered him of excitement he had as kid: "All of a sudden, the driver he says, *everybody get out, everybody get out!* He says *there's smoke coming outta the motor*....". The bus could not be restarted so the kids got out of school that day, "we walked home, we were galloping, we were laughing and everything, anything to get out of school at that time you know, it was fun. And so, kids are kids eh".

Joe did not describe many of his school experiences as 'fun'. His outlook on education and schooling would forever change due to his experiences at Kateri Tekakwitha Day School and his struggle with schooling overall. He described being held back several times in grade three:

> I don't remember if it was, the first grade that they put us in there [at Kateri School] because I remember the next room it was… the baby class…that's what they called the beginners…And then second grade, third grade I had a problem. Not a problem with the teachers or anything but I don't know what happened … they passed me. I was so proud when came home to show my mom and dad I passed, I'm gonna be in fourth grade next year! And when I started back, they put me back in third grade…I remember, my dear, I cried all day. Because… what am I gonna tell my mother and father? They were so proud of me. And then now I'm gonna come back, they put me back. I didn't care no more. After that, that time, I didn't care if I learned anything or not... The next year, they put me back again…at the end of the summer, the nun used to take us for walks…she was very very good to me, this nun. She was talking to me and telling me stories and I told her stories about our ways and things like that. So anyway, all of a sudden she says to me… *I just found out that you were three years in third grade*. I said *yeah*. She says, *nobody's supposed to stay back three years*. Now, I find this out and all my friends are now in seventh grade. See how much I lost? I lost interest in school and I never really cared for school after that…

Joe further described why he disliked school and how homework interfered in his chores and life as a 'farm boy'. He reiterates how 'being put back' in third grade three times hurt him and how he used to enjoy school more before this happened:

> When I say I don't like school no more and these homeworks [*sic*] were getting to me. I always wanted to kill the guy who invented homework. Because I thought it was the most useless thing! Because it…affects you. I don't know about the people in the village boys but as a farm boy. I enjoyed working on the farm and I'd rather work than then study. Not before, before this happened to me, I was greatly hurt when they put me back the first year, and worst the second, and third. I mean, everything fell apart for me. But I never

> said anything I just went on going to school…But after that, I never really wanted to, to learn anything like this.

After struggling in school and being held back, Joe started to cheat to get by. The teacher he speaks about below, was a woman from the community that he respected. He laughs today when he shares this story:

> One boy, he asked me he says, *you never study* he says, *and you always get good marks*…. *How do you do that*? Big mistake! I told one guy. I says, *I write it on the desk*… anyway this time…we're all supposed to be doing the exam… I looked around. *Every boy was writing on his desk*! They were all doing it. And now, she [the teacher] was coming row for row, lifting the papers, lifting the papers. But I got another thing up my sleeve. I just roll my sleeve up to my skin, and those kinda tables if you remember those? I pass my arm. I erased everything... Ah I remember her so well. She says, *when you think you're cheating* she says, *you're cheating yourself*… I remember her today, that woman. And I told that story on her grave. And my wife she says*, you told that story of how you cheated, you lied and you were*—I was standing near a priest [laughs].

After the move to Kateri School, Joe struggled with what he describes as "bullying" by the village boys. Joe explains that these experiences 'bothered' him most when he reflects on his school days. He says that eventually he let go of those issues and made peace with those boys, helping with their burials later on:

> But, later on at the Kateri School I suffered some abuse from the boys because like I says, I'm from the farm and I used to get a tan—so I was "black". So, they would beat me up for that. And that's almost every day, you know, these big guys. I still gotta problem with a big guy. 'Cause it never goes away that, you know. …I've been thinking about it lately when I heard you, you wanna do this [research] and because I was awful, how you say, bothered by this bullying that happened to me. But, you know my dear, me I love everybody and…what was done to me, I just put that aside... And I buried a few of the boys already myself that did this to me. But I…[do] not hold grudges. I did the best I can

for them and when their time comes, and I hope when *my* time comes you'll be there too to see me.

During Joe's time at Indian Day School in Kahnawà:ke, he made observations about his life and identity as a "natural person" and the choices he made after experiencing Day School:

> I made up my mind one day, I was gonna be a natural person. And, our people were natural people, Onkwehón:we people. They had -- they didn't learn anywheres [*sic*]. They learned through life. The way it goes. They had all the…people they told them things. They taught them things. They told them stories about how they got here and all these things. I learned all my history by mouth, from the elders, not by a book…I finally went to… fourth and a fifth grade, I finally made it. But by then I was not into it at all. I made up my mind like I says I was gonna be a natural person and that means Shaoié:ra ["natural"]. And what that word means is something that's rolled off the mountain and fell on a ground. Whether that be a rock or something and it stays there. That means nobody touched it. That's Shaoié:ra! It's, it's a natural thing and that's what our people are, Onkwehónwe. I don't think a lot of people realize that's what we are. Shaonkwaié:ra! ["We should be natural people again!"].

Joe goes on to talk about what it means to be Onkwehón:we and the place education has in our lives:

> Anyway I'm not against school but it's not, we don't really have to do this as Onkwehón:we people. And, well it hurts us sometimes, but nevertheless I've got nothing too much bad to say about it…. our mind is…it's only a mind and it's everywhere. It can be everywhere, we can get confused. We could easily be driven and go over there. But our hearts, that's who we are. As Onkwehón:we people, we're only here in our hearts Onkwehón:we [puts his hand over his heart]. Look at our bodies, look at our clothes. Is this…leather clothing? No eh? So, where are we Onkwehón:we, only in our hearts. As I said too one time, even if we all died, we're gonna go, go into the ground, be Onkwehón:we. We took our hearts with us.

Joe described what school was like for him after making the decision to be "a natural person", and where that decision led him over his lifetime:

> I started not to pay attention to the teachers what she's reading to us, whatever she's gonna tell us a story or, or whatever we have to do. I used to hear her like far away. I'm looking out the window, at the school upstairs. I'm studying how why the clouds are, how, why the birds do this, why this, why that, why it rains, why this. That's why today I got to be able to teach a lot of people myself about natural things… Shaonkwaié:ra. And for quite a few years I even…in Weseskun House[54] I was there for ah a little while there talking to people that are in trouble and things like that… like I says, instead of, getting educated, I leave that to my wife and everything and we help each other… Some of us are singers, some of us are speakers. So, we all have a place in this world. But I have nothing bad to say about the school…itself.

He goes on to talk about how issues from childhood affect people for the rest of their lives, based on his personal experiences and his healing work:

> The thing is what I also learned because I started to look after people for quite a few years later on. People got a problem from childhood and it gonna-leaves [*sic*] a scar in your chest area and your mind. And that's where I learned, that when you're not happy, I started to be terrified of going to school. It has nothing to do with the teachers or anything. It just…gets [into you] …in you that you're scared now.

As an adult, Joe would relive his feelings and memories when he visited Kateri School:

> I remember a few years ago when I started to do these traditional things and the Kateri School used to invite me sometimes to tell stories. And…I'm walking down the hallway and I'm going to the same class where I was, I wanted to throw up. That's how sick—

[54] Waseskun House is a non-profit program that facilitates holistic healing for Aboriginal offenders. For more information visit their website: http://waseskunnet.wixsite.com/waseskun.

> that's how if you suffer any kind, abuse or something when you're a kid, that thing you it's gonna stay with you for the rest of your life. So, I learned that 'cause I used to go to the prisons and talk to them and they'd tell me stories… the hurt. It never goes away.

Joe shares how his views have changed and the roles he fills as an elder in the community today:

> What I learned like for myself, I'm a Faithkeeper in the Longhouse. I do a lot of speaking, I bury people… I raise names, I help with weddings and something like that... I did a lotta [*sic*] things but me I don't hold a grudge so, I'm not on anybody's side, I love everybody equally. I don't care who beat me up, I don't care, I love'em anyway. Ah so, so that's where I am my dear.

During our session, Joe would often begin to say names of local people but was reluctant to "mention names". I believe he did this out of consideration for the privacy of other community members. His consideration of how others would be affected by his story influenced me to take careful steps to respect privacy in the research.

Reflecting on Joe's Stories

Joe's stories and our talks included many lessons such as histories of more than one Day School in Kahnawà:ke, religious differences, languages, bullying, discipline at the schools, factions in the community (village vs. farm), learning from elders, story protocol, forgiveness, healing, and identity. Joe did not complete elementary school in Kahnawà:ke and he never returned to school. He said he was waiting to turn sixteen years old so that he could quit school. When he was in grade five, his father took him out of school. He reflected on this moment, "*I was the happiest man in the world*!".

Joe's experiences at Day School reveal how deeply education and schooling have affected him. I was taken aback when he made such a direct connection between his present-day roles as an elder, Faithkeeper, and Healer to his Day School experiences. When I reflected on Joe's stories later on, there were a few things that stood out in my mind. He consistently said he did not witness or experience 'abuse' as he accepted what he described as 'strapping' or 'hitting'

as a normal part of school. At the same time, he admits that some of the nuns had ‘bad tempers’ and that the community had taken action to put a stop to ‘laws’ requiring strapping kids at the Bush School for speaking the language. His two conflicting views may have something to do with the residual internal conflict that he also expressed. There is a sense of resolve in his story not to hold specific people or places to blame for things that have happened: the schools, the nuns, the teachers, people in the ‘village’, the church (Catholicism), the children who bullied him. He understands these things in relation to larger more powerful issues happening in the community and to Onkwehón:we overall. Many Onkwehón:we find the strength to resist allowing the pain and negative thoughts consume their lives and their hearts (Sunseri, 2008).

Joe clearly had very strong emotions and an aversion to schooling as a child and when revisiting his memories of Day School as an adult. When describing his intense feelings of ‘sickness’ at school as a child, he states that he relives those feelings when going to the school today. In trying to comprehend these experiences from outside, I reached the understanding that these reactions are often caused by traumatic stressors and are not uncommon after psychologically upsetting events occurred in one’s life (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004). The worst pain and hurt Joe experienced came from other children in the community, ‘bullying’ him for being dark-skinned, living on the farm, and for speaking the language. Joe never specifies if he was also bullied or ostracized after being held back in grade three several times. Part of moving forward for Joe was learning to forgive the boys that bullied him as a child. Yet, forgiveness does not erase the bad memories or emotional scars of the events. Joe talked a lot about his experience doing healing work and the ways that people come for healing but continue to hurt others because they are in pain, including the healers. As an elder reflecting on his life, he continues to rely on the coping skills he developed as a child in Day School to help people confront their pain.

After the interview, Joe and I talked for another hour and he said he felt good about what he shared. New memories came to him of fun times as a child and he revisited his recollections of school with less apprehension than before. As I packed up to leave, Joe proceeded with what I would call a “reading”. elders and medicine people have their own ways of seeing into the heart of a person. Traditional ways of healing and helping have been displaced by colonial institutions but are slowly being reclaimed (Phillips, 2010). These roles are important to the health and well-being of Indigenous communities, particularly to assist Indigenous peoples with the task of

healing in holistic ways that are not possible through Euro-Western healthcare practices alone (Phillips, 2010). An ability to help and heal is considered a gift to the people. In addition to this natural gift, Joe acquired skills and knowledge orally and practically from elders and family members, through both formal and informal teachings in traditional physical, mental, and spiritual health work. The sum of what Joe told me was about my role in our community, 'I don't see you just teaching in those schools' but living as an Onkwehón:we person *Shaonkwaié:ra*, helping others heal in a role as a community elder one day.

Day School education was interfering and preventing Joe's life as a 'natural person' and his evolution as a healer and elder later in life. He contrasts formal schooling with natural healing and knowledge transmission, making conscious decisions to reject formal education throughout his life. Joe's stories demonstrate that he understands his experiences in Day Schools in a broader way than simply events of the past. He connects them to differences of worldview and an attempt to change Onkwehón:we from "natural beings" to something else through education, schooling, and other forms of colonization. These attempts did not just occur in childhood but continue throughout his lifetime, and mine.

As an Onkwehón:we elder, Joe tells me his story this way to show me the path to what could have been for our community if the Day Schools did not exist, and what is still possible for us moving forward. I followed up with Joe a few weeks after our interview and brought him a copy of the transcript. Every time since the interview that I bring up the research, Joe tells me the same thing, "I told you the story, I trust you, so do what you need to do with it my dear." I will end Joe's part of the chapter with one of the stories he told me about how healing work can be done in the community:

> I just didn't like school at all after my experience… I never recovered from that. But I think it's for a reason because I don't need to do this [education] because I go everywheres [*sic*] and I talk to people now. I used to even have a patient here that was a lawyer. Doctors, police officers, teachers, they come and see me. I work on them, I do readings for them. So, education is what you do with it my dear. It doesn't matter how high you go. If you wanna…devote yourself on something, and believe in it an everything, and…be good to people, they gonna come for you. If you help people, it's not

> the person that you help that might come back, it's other people…it's other ways. They say the Creator… what goes around will come back. So it's very important.

Frank's Stories

This storyteller has asked to simply be known as Frank (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018).[55] Frank is nearly seventy years old at the time of our meeting. He is a husband, father, and grandfather. Frank still lives in Kahnawà:ke with his family. At his age, he still exemplifies the strong work ethic from his youth, as an ironworker, veteran, hunter, and fisherman. Frank has many years of experience working with Indigenous parolees, Residential School Survivors, and doing culturally-based support work with Indigenous adults and youth. He is an elder and mentor in the community and continues to do healing work with people on his own time. I first met Frank over ten years ago at a community event.

For several years, Frank worked very closely with one of my family members and they still remain in touch today. When he heard about my research, he said he had many things to say about the Day Schools. Frank is the youngest of the four storytellers that contributed to this research. This was the second interview, and the longest recording at nearly two hours. Frank and I met at his home in Kahnawà:ke, we sat and talked in his kitchen. This interview was the most emotionally difficult due to the extent of abuse and violence that Frank experienced and witnessed at Day School.

Frank started school at Kateri Tekakwitha boys' school in 1958.[56] He attended school in Kahnawà:ke from grades one to grade seven.[57] The community was known as Caughnawaga at the time. Frank describes the nuns who taught in the Day School, "There was nuns with…wooden beads around their waist and … a large wooden cross hung at the end. …only their face showed and their hands." Frank remembers many of the schoolteachers by name that taught in the boys' school, in several sections of his story below and his interview recording, names are mentioned. After elementary school, Frank attended Bishop Whalen High School in Lachine, Quebec, where the "Black Robes" were teaching. To prepare for our interview, Frank

[55] To limit the number of Personal Communication references in-text from this source, repeated references in this subsection are simply listed as "Frank".
[56] Kateri School was also known as "Roman Catholic Indian Day School Mission" in the archival records, which is the name that Frank uses.
[57] Based on his story, I estimate that Frank attended Day School in Kahnawà:ke from 1958 to 1964 (grades 1 to 7).

said he sat and thought a lot about his school days. He decided to write part of his story, which he read aloud to me during his interview. Frank said, "I'm digging up memories, digging up bones… so there's no, no pre-order to what I'm talking about." The segments of Frank's story shared in this section of the chapter are from his written account and oral history, both read or recounted by him directly in the interview recording.

Frank began by describing the layout of the Kateri boys' and girls' school. The school was divided into two sections, one side for girls and one for boys. Frank talked about his earliest memories of Day School. In grade one, he had a teacher from Kahnawà:ke. For the first time in his life at about six years old, Frank learned about the association between written words and speech:

> Grade one I had a teacher, Annie Lahache [wife of Tom Lahache, an RCMP officer] …everybody spoke Mohawk when I was young and I was learning it [at home] and then when I got to her class it was learning how to say "enska" and write it as "one". And then not even knowing that enska was a written word it was just, you know you just say the word and it means "one". But only later when they teach you how to write 1, 2, 3, 4 and a, b, c…and there was no spelling in the language [Kanien'kéha] either, it was just the words.

Frank identifies English as the primary language of the children in the community that he attended Day School with but for many, Kanien'kéha was still used at home:

> I can't say that we all came in there speaking [Onkwehonwehnéha]. English we seemed to be the dominant language amongst us kids. It was the adults, spoke the language…in a sense to me, it seemed reserved to the adults. 'Cause we know, they would tell us stuff in Mohawk, we'd know, we'd just do it. … *Hawas Koha*, and then we'd *go get it*. That was it… It was just a statement and [an] action… And when we were in school, we all talked English us kids. You know…I can't even think right now if there was somebody that just spoke Mohawk in the class. [It] was like we were conformists, so as the rules went along and changed, wherever you were, this is what you did.

The dominance of English being spoken seemed to center around the Day School as Frank says there were three languages being used in the community, Kanien'kéha, English, and French: "My grandparents spoke. Well the people here spoke three languages, spoke English, French and Mohawk…many French people come and sell vegetables you know. I remember my grandfather would be talking broken French to some of them that just spoke French."

In terms of what was taught in Day School, Frank said the children learned to read, write, spell, math, and other subjects. He could not recall if other languages (such as French or Latin) were taught. There was also Roman Catechism "some kinda prayer in the morning. Seems like you had to pray all the time. Pray before you eat, pray after you eat, pray before you go walk, pray to come home and you know always praying." Frank described a club for boys that taught them to be "Christian soldiers" but the children did other activities in the church, "we made those rosaries, we made cut-outs you know to make baskets like Easter baskets. They cut the paper and you staple it, and that's how we learned how to make baskets the first time." The boys also had to go to confession several times a week. Frank reflects on those times and how he viewed religion as a child:

> Go tell the preacher your sins this week 'cause you were bad this week and all this. Tell you to do fifty hail Mary's and six our fathers', and you know so. It was like after a while, it's like you can't think. Everything you think of is wrong…you look at all those pictures that had in the church on the wall, they're beating this man. With, with whips, you know it's making cuts and everybody's poor. It's like these people pick on the poor. And they beat you to death, you're down they beat you some more. Now they want you to follow that?!

Frank connects the history of violence he saw depicted in the church with his experiences at the school. He said that the boys would frequently be hit with "whippy branches" in the schoolyard:

> So, some of the teachers…used to walk around the yard with these whips from an elm tree, they had a whippy branches and they used to hit on their leg and walk around. And if they catch you doing something they didn't like, they would whip you on the back of

> the legs and the calf or on the hands, where it stung the most it seems to me. …guys would get it. You know…the soccer ball would go here or there [on the girls' side], they'd do whatever the teacher didn't want you to do and you'd get whipped. Ah, outside but then inside too later, you stayed after school…

There was also abuse in the classroom by the teachers. Frank talked about how the teachers would often hide in the cloakroom to avoid having witnesses to the abuse:

> For the most part, in the classes there, this cloakroom seemed to be a place they would drag you in there smack you around to hide so nobody could see it. That's what we came to know, in the classes the cloakroom was for. And it's one thing to get hit, and sometimes it was hard to figure out for what, you know. Somebody else would be laughing then three of us would get hit and, and… it makes you swallow that pain. You don't want to cry in front of the other boys, cause it's all boys. …sometimes we got to the point where you know it hurt but…we'd tolerate it, and we made the teachers mad too by pulling our hands away because we had to show them that they're not gonna get us.

During Frank's interview, he read aloud several accounts of abuse from the written statement he prepared. These accounts included students being hit with objects at the front of the classroom in view of other students, or in "the cloakroom". Here is one example that Frank read aloud to me:

> This other teacher I had, his name was John Brisbois we always knew him as the Indian Agent's son. This teacher was known as the one who man-handles his students. He would grab us on, by the shirt collar, pull us close to him and say, *you're a complete buffoon* and place us in the cloak room, kneeling facing the wall till I get tired as he would say. Other times he would get this board and hit us on the hand till he got the reaction he wanted. Sometimes it would hurt so bad I would pull my hand away real quick and he'd get mad. Pull my shirt and make, make me turn my knuckles up and hit me a few times more, as was his usual practice with everyone. A few times he got in a man-type fist fight

> with older students, where he would push them in the cloak room so no one would see what he was doing. That caused the crying and screaming of the student.

Frank also read aloud about other instances in which the teachers or the nuns would ridicule or hit students, shaming them in front of others, "If one of us got caught chewing gum or candy, we would have to put it on our nose and sit in the front of the class facing everyone, only to be made fun of or other students". Sometimes Frank had to stay after school, "I would have to write a hundred to five hundred times on the blackboard *I will not chew gum in class* or anything else the nun wanted". Frank shared some good memories at Day School as well. On rare occasions, the boys were taken down where the door was that linked the two schools and given toffee that the girls made in their cooking class. Frank says that there were other positive experiences, "there was some good things—you know…they weren't always beating you up…some would play ball with you-baseball or something like that".

To Frank, at least "half of the time" it seemed to be a common "teachers' practice" to hit the boys. The 'friendly' teachers also hit the students at times:

> During recess he [Mr. Morris, "the Englishman"] would play kick ball…with us boys and then sometimes he would be whipping one of us for crossing that imaginary line separating the boys' side from the girls' side or getting into something with one of the other boys. It seemed the teachers' practice…was yell and hit, hit you then send you to the Mother Superior's office for more of the same hitting with straps. You always get a double bonus...

Sometimes, the entire class would be "punished". Frank read aloud his memory of a teacher named "McCulsky", nicknamed "the Russian" by the boys:

> He was mean, carried a pointer or a whippy branch from the tree outside. He always hit us on the back of our legs, hands, back and front, it seems he knew where it hurt the most. At times he would grab us by the ear and lead us to the corner to kneel and or to get a whipping in front of the class and to show other students what to expect. Sometimes he

> got raging mad and would punish the whole class by kneeling, whipping, or he would grab you and shake…shake you while yelling at you.

Frank personally experienced a lot of abuse and violence. He emotionally described what was "worst of all" for him at the Day School:

> I didn't realize the impact it had, even on myself, even now I'm feelings things as I'm talking. Just because, I never really talked about these things. It makes me think about all these other kids that, were treated really bad too. We all were, like I said it's just different when it's me that's getting it or I'm watching someone else… Which hurt more, or which was more scary [*sic*]? I think it was watching other kids you know, sometimes two, three of them in a row.

Some parents interceded on their children's behalf, resulting in violent encounters at the Day School in front of the children:

> I remember one time a dad came in the grade six I think it was, and he grabbed one of the teachers and threw him around and took him in the cloakroom and all I heard was [imitating sounds of hitting]. And he came out and he yelled at the teacher *if you touch any of these god damn students again*… he said, *I'll beat the shit out of you again!* and he left. And the teacher walked out of the classroom and we don't know where he went but another teacher came in later on… I only saw that once but…in other classes… somebody's dad came in and, did the teachers in to some degree.

Oftentimes, children did not disclose abuse or feelings about Day School to their parents and just "swallowed their pain" out of fear of mistrust, punishment, and shame at home. From his view, after generations of Day Schooling in the community, the home environment was affected, particularly by developing "emotional hardness". He also explains differences in the behaviour and treatment of boys and girls at Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke:

> There was a lot of hitting at yelling and then your parents get letters or somehow they're told that we're no good in school and… I don't know if it's cause they'd believe them or they were embarrassed or they had these expectations how we're supposed to be …I'm sure it didn't happen to every kid or every kid doesn't have the same kind of experiences but, you know, being a boy on the boys' side it's not the same as the on the girls' side. Seems the girls are more conformed… I mean, I know some of my sisters talked about getting hit in school by certain woman teachers that were mean or the nuns…only when I got home, my sisters might say something or they won't because of fear of you know, we were bad kids or something like that. They always told you, *'I'm gonna tell your parents* and… yeah I think even my grandparents might have been strict back then too because of what they went through here you know… There's a thing of… emotional hardness that went on... [It] doesn't make sense to have somebody swallow all their pain and not try to express and get rid of it, like if you're emotionally constipated. Get rid of it by means necessary…

Frank's parents also went to Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke. His father told him about his own experiences at the "Eastern School" directly across from the Catholic Church, and Industrial School that taught carpentry. He did learn some useful skills there that helped him later in life. Frank described it as a "red brick giant", he remembers seeing the saws and tools through the windows and the teacher named "Richard" from a white family that lived in the community.

There were different issues and challenges faced in Kahnawà:ke (Caughnawaga) during Frank's childhood but he said that the people supported each other, in simple ways (without "signing" or asking for things). One topic that comes up several times is his father's background as a World War II veteran and the effects of war that the veterans struggled with after returning home:

> We come from the heart, we know people that are hungry, we just bring it to them. You don't have to sign this or do this and do that you know…I remember my dad used to do that. …some of his veterans friends that'd be like hard, they had a hard time after they got back from the war 'cause of how much horror they say so he'd say go bring that over there, go feed them. Or he'd bring them to the house. Come on in! And they'd cry, grown

> men from the second World War sitting at the table and cry. I remember seeing them as a kid. They're so happy, and we'd call them "Uncle" and they'd cry some more 'cause they had no family. So they'd sit there and eat.

During his oral history of Day School, Frank also recalled time that he spent hospitalized in the community as a child. He describes from his perspective then seeing other Onkwehón:we, the Inuit, for the first time:

> I was sent to the hospital here in town. It was three floors high. I remember being on the top floor there where there was [*sic*] all those steel beds, individuals beds like you see in Residential School, those same kinda beds there. …the rest of the guys that were in there were all [Inuit]. They wore ah mukluks, they had sealskin pants. They had, sealskin jacket and they all had like umm the look of a seal, their like walrus hair, their whiskers were like that…And it smelled like oil in there…I looked down the stairs and I seen all the [Inuit] women looking, and they had these big hoods on and all of a sudden there was a baby in it, in the back…And that's the way that-that hospital was.

When Frank talked about the "girls" at Day School or in the community, it is often with uncertainty about what their experiences were like do to gender separation. Women and girls also faced unique issues shrouded in secrecy, such as "disappearing" or hidden pregnancies. At these points in his oral history, Frank brings up the topic of sexual violence and abuse that many of the children suffered at Day School, in the church, and as an issue in the community-at-large:

> It's happened here, I heard stories of sexual abuse in the school here. …when I'm in the school six, seven, eight, nine years-old I'm not hearing it. After I'm not in school, people are older now they're talking about it. But I know through my work here in this community for all the years I worked here I've learned of the sexual abuse that priest have put on people and the different employees at that school you know… In my generations and a little but older…what's going on with them from the R.C.M.P., the priests and some of those ahh foreigners. Like the Englishman, the Russian and so on… There'd be stories about girls disappearing. Like they'd get pregnant…

When Frank was a child, the Indian Agents and RCMP had a strong presence in Kahnawà:ke from his view, to make sure that the people were behaving and "abiding by the rules" like "good Indians". He tells me later on that the church-controlled poverty relief (similar to welfare) and later on in the late 1940s, families can only access government family allowances if they comply and their children attend school. There was also the threat of "disappearing" at Residential Schools, or institutions such as "Shawbridge", a boys' reform school and farm in the Montreal area. He describes the atmosphere in the community at the time as one of "martial law" and the people were subject to a nine o'clock curfew:

> There would be a church bell and everybody had to be off the street. Then you had the R.C.M.P. they would ride around and pick you up, and there always was the threat of Shawbridge; a reform school. …if you weren't a good Indian and you didn't abide by all the rules that these nuns and priests and the Indian agent had they send you to Shawbridge and some people were sent to Shawbridge for... reasons we don't know, only hear.… There wasn't even any no drinking allowed here I think…. But it seemed like the four-footers we'd call them, the R.C.M.P.'s with boots to their knees and had four-foot sticks. And they used to beat some of the older people…I'd see them going to people's house, you know they didn't like Indians getting together so they would always wanna, seem to like the girls, but they didn't like the guys. …so it was like, there was a law around here that you couldn't go anywhere without some police….

The Day Schools within the community, Residential Schools, and the schools on the "outside" of were similar, 'one in the same' from Frank's perspective, including Bishop Whelan high school in Lachine (Frank). Frank remembers his time there, and how the people were treated "the black robes…they weren't nice to us Indians. Neither were the people, 'cause there was *woo woo woo* [mock war cry] you know that kinda thing" (Frank). "Indians" were not seen as human, Frank was four or five years old when he had the realization that he himself was an "Indian":

> The world around us, we weren't human to them. I don't know what we were… I didn't know I was an Indian until grade four or five I think when we were studying the development of New France. New France I found out later was Montreal when the French soldiers stuck a spear or a sword in the ground and said *this is our land* on behalf of the King of France. And they was [*sic*] talking about Mohawks, Algonquin's and all kinds of savages and killing people and I said *yay*! I told my dad that. *Look at this, those savages*! I said, *they killed all those people*. He said, *sit down*, *Kanonkwa Satien*. *I'm gonna tell you something* he said, and then he starts to tell me that these Mohawks were us. *That's your people*, *that you're talking about* he says, *and that's not true what they say*. *They didn't …it wasn't them, it was those soldiers that came here that did that to us*. As like that Lachine Massacre monument on the other side, that's one side of the story and it's still sitting there today in 2018. People who are moving to this country looking at that now they already got like a picture painted of us over here…Not often you'll hear the other side of the story, what did they do to us… before?

The talk with his father left Frank questioning who he was and set him on a path to figure out "who are we?". He met some older boys who had spent time at Shawbridge reform school, they taught him to do tattooing with "Indian Ink". Frank learned more about being Mohawk, "I didn't like '*Frank'* no more. I didn't want that name. Then I found out my Mohawk name so I wrote that on my arm in, before I finished grade 7 with the Indian ink".

Past experiences in school are sometimes related to recent experiences of Frank's children or grandchildren. Frank sees the current issues in community schools as a continuation and direct result of "those kinds of schools" from the past:

> When I look back now with all the experiences I have… if I had kids now, I wouldn't send them to school like that. I have a grandson that goes to school there [Kateri School] right now but the only problem that see right now is all the teachers that were my age or went to those kinds of schools, are still abusing kids in school. They're still yelling at them. They're not hitting them 'cause they don't want to go to jail and lose their job, but they're still abusing them. They're always yelling and I see my grandson sometime affected by [it], he gets scared of the teachers 'cause she's yelling at somebody else. So

> there's a lot of unresolved issues around you know, the things that they grew up with. Not only from family, but I think it has to do a lot with these schools when they you know would beat you at five, six, seven, eight years old.

Frank tells me a story about being expelled from Bishop Whelan as a teenager, when he resisted being hit by a "Black Robe". Despite the abuse he suffered in Day School and at Bishop Whelan, Frank says his expulsion from school was difficult and had a big impact on his life. He walked all the way home to Kahnawà:ke that day, at fourteen or fifteen years old.[58] "My dad said *what happened* and I told him and he says *well you have a choice, you go to work or you go back to school, 'cause this is not a hotel*" and Frank had to look for ways to earn money. He says it was difficult "to look in the world how big it is…to get a job and do what? You know, it's, not a nice feeling when you're thrown away from a school or part of the group…".

Frank is critical of education, schooling, and "institutions" overall and contrasts them with the "natural people" in Kahnawà:ke. He says we all need to learn the "ability" of "what they call medicine":

> That comes again, institutional you know, you don't have to be like school… I guess I'm just saying that school had an impact on a lot of us. All the guys I went to school with and then the girls I went to school with. You never get to know the girls from grade one to seven hardly because you can't talk to them in the school yard…Kahnawake, or Caughnawaga at the time was very big when you're only seven, eight years-old…we still have that system amongst ourselves you can look at the schools. They way they treat each other. I mean the school system just had a big argument not long ago you know…So there again, and we're never good enough 'cause we're always getting non-native people to come here and tell us how we should [be]…we have our own people who get, you know degrees and tell us we're ignorant, we don't know anything and you know… Oh the degree should be the same [as the outside], but we have natural people here…what

[58] Lachine, Quebec is across from Kahnawà:ke on the western edge of the Island of Montreal, separated by the Saint Lawrence River. It is approximately 11.5 kilometers away from Kahnawà:ke, crossing must be by car on the Mercier Bridge or dangerously crossing on foot by the train bridge.

they call medicine, I think is more of an ability. We all have it, it's just that we haven't all learned it yet, and probably never will.

Frank goes into detail about how he sees pain, anger, guilt, and shame being passed from generation to generation, "that's what the Day Schools give you":

> The companion to pain, emotional pain is anger. You can't have one without the other. We use anger as an antidote, a guardian! … it crosses over, when we learn how to get beat and so on and so forth, we are trained in that way and then we turn around and we do it. 'Cause that's how we learned how to deal with things so we hurt people. By saying things, we hurt them emotionally. In all kind of ways, if we're physical, we hurt them physically and then we gotta deal with shame and guilt. And there's no way you get away from it. You can not have guilt without having shame. And that's the Day Schools what they give you… They give you pain and anger, 'cause your angry when they're beating you or yelling at you and then you go home or somewhere and it happens again. You learn that in those influential years of grade one to seven or more and then you do it. I think that's the way it is.

To overcome many of his Day School experiences and issues from childhood, Frank had to "go through the shame". He said that some people are not ready to do this:

> And it's hollering and screaming [that] is still going on today in the schools. They can deny it, just the fact that they're denying it, is a symptom of that. They should talk about it, stop doing that. So, to clean it up is scary for people. I had to go through that. I had to look at everything that ever happened to me that caused me emotional, physical pain or something and the anger. And then what *I* did. The hardest thing is to go through the shame. To admit to someone *yeah I did*. *I slapped her, I kicked her, or I stole this, I did that* or you know and… And empty out any secret that I ever held… Can all these people, all these generations? Yes, I believe they can change, but I can tell these stories more and more. Like if there's other people here, we're gonna remember with each other… But some they can't talk about it because it riles them up too much. 'Cause I don't know what

> it is in those times in the sixties, and the seventies, but it was like parents were a beating community. Where did we all learn how to beat our kids physically?

For Kahnawa'kehró:non to overcome the pain in our history, Frank said that we must rely on each other and think about future generations. He spoke about modelling good behaviour and addressing issues so that they are not passed on to our children: "Will it change? I think doing stuff like this will bringing it out and talking about it, and getting it filtered out of people is very important" (Frank). Frank's mother has only recently started speaking about her experiences at the Day School, "I look at…my mother, there's a certain point you know she's kinda talked a little bit about it, now [she talks] about that lawsuit for Day Schools".

In Frank's childhood, he said that people lived in a more natural way but the "big Indian view of Indian in that way" changed this. It "pulls you out and changes your view of yourself":

> There wasn't a big Indian view of Indian in that way back when I was growing up. You know, you live by the seasons and you just do the things you normally do… it wasn't a big deal, it just is. Even the language today, they make so much about it, but back then it wasn't…that's the way it was. It's one thing to live this stuff, you know every day your living and fishing and all that sort of thing and then somebody pulls you out and says 'look this is who you are' and changes your view of yourself because now you're an Indian. You're catalogued…you're not the same no more… you're different 'cause you didn't know anything else.

To help other people in the community, Frank did healing and helping work. He talked about children today reciting the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, yet never understanding how to actually live it:

> So giving kids a chance to experience these things that we talk about; Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, people can say that - fast, but they don't really participate in all the parts of it. They don't get deer. They don't get fish you know. They complain when it rains. So, they don't hunt, and the plants and you know we give thanks for all that stuff,

> [they] say that every day. …And it has…no meaning… put kids through a ritual, after awhile it become second nature. Then later on you realize, now how do I get rid of this second nature? By giving all these kids a chance to hunt and fish and not talk about it but to experience and do it.

Towards the end of the interview, Frank expresses relief after sharing his Day School stories for the first time:

> You know I'm glad for this interview too, because I feel like - empty. I never really told anybody… But to be past that… There's no religion that can talk about it… to empty that stuff. Talking about it [is] one thing. Getting rid of the emotional constipation from those things… Then people can answer *who am I and how well do I know myself*?

After our sessions, Frank and I talked for several hours. Staying true to relieving what he calls "emotional constipation", he unpacked many of the difficult issues that he brought up in the recorded interview. He asked me a lot of questions about my life, my feelings, and who I am as a person. At this point, I hesitated but then I recalled his vulnerability and openness during our interview. Following Frank's lead and line of questioning, I answered everything he asked as honestly as possible. Our conversation eventually led to me making some tearful realizations about my childhood. Frank helped me to understand some of my own underlying reasons for pursuing this research. When I started writing up the outcome of the research, I went back and added more details of my life and upbringing. I felt that I had a responsibility to do so, to offer more insight into who I am and why I am doing this work.

Reflecting on Frank's Stories

Frank went into great detail during his interview and at some points, came to new realizations about his day school experiences and how his life was impacted. What stands out most in Frank's account is how prevalent violence and abuse was in his life as a child. From his perspective as an adult and support worker today, he views what he described as "strictness, hardness, yelling, hitting, abuse, hurt" as a direct result of the schools. His stories trace the pattern of behavior through the generations from his grandparents' time, to the present time

when his grandson is in school. Another point he brings up is that 'Indians' were not viewed as humans, so much so that he was in disbelief as a child that he was an 'Indian'. Another lesson he relates to that topic is 'being outside of yourself', the damage of Indian Day Schools, Residential Schools, and institutions that disrupt and de-naturalize identity formation and transmission. Language is part of our identity, which Frank said we make a 'big deal' out of today but was just naturally spoken by elders when he was a child. In his story, the schools were the hub for English in the community. There were three languages being spoken: English, French, and Kanien'kéha. Yet, he and the other children were all speaking English at school and from his understanding, Kanien'kéha was 'for the adults'.

Frank's response to trauma seems to be to confront issues directly and to purge (Linklater, 2014). He went through a great deal of pain in his childhood and spent years dealing with those issues and acknowledges the ways he was impacted as an adult. His years of resisting and defying attempts to punish him for being "an Indian" taught him valuable tools for survival (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004). He later went on to study in university where he learned about counselling and trauma work. In our conversation after the interview, Frank said that you learn how to heal others by going through the healing yourself. The times he has spent fishing, hunting, and doing 'natural' activities with children in the community is his way of showing them that their identities have to be practiced in everyday life.

I realized by the end of that day we spent together for his interview that Frank kept me there until he was sure I was not "emotionally constipated", or carrying lingering pain caused by his impactful story. I learned from Frank the powerful healing effects stories have and how to do this work without victimizing or traumatizing people. Furthermore, he helped me see that research is medicine too. In the final section of this chapter, I will further unpack and analyze lessons from Frank and other storytellers.

Kaia'titáhkhe's Stories

Kaia'titáhkhe Annette Jacobs was born in the late 1930s. She has many children, grandchildren, and some great-grandchildren. I first met Kaia'titáhkhe in 2018 while working as the Skátne Enionkwaió'ten Language Plan Coordinator at the Kahnawà:ke Education Center. Kaia'titáhkhe was one of our keynote speakers at our community language planning sessions in Kahnawà:ke. I worked closely with both Kaia'titáhkhe as our translator and Akwiratékha Martin

to type and edit the language plan into a Kanien'kéha version. Kaia'titáhkhe's bio in the language plan was written by our Project Leader, Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey, a Kanien'kehá:ka Curriculum Developer at the Kahnawà:ke Education Center. Kahtehrón:ni's words are the best to describe Kaia'titáhkhe's significant leadership roles as an elder and community role model:

> "Kaia'titáhkhe's passion for Kanien'kéha has always been apparent through her many years as a teacher, curriculum writer, principal, researcher, a McGill University adjunct professor, and much more behind the scenes work to strengthen our language. Her knowledge is rooted in first-hand experiences, overcoming many challenges and finding much laughter and camaraderie along the way. We acknowledge her for her dedication and love of the language, as well as for her continuous work to ensure our language will be everlasting." (Whitebean & Stacey, 2018, p. 8).

A new relationship was formed through our work to revitalize and strengthen Onkwehonwehnéha. During our time working together, Kaia'titáhkhe and I had many conversations and at some point, I brought up my graduate studies and research. This is how I learned that Kaia'titáhkhe attended Indian Day School in Ahkwesáhsne for a short time, before relocating with her family to Kahnawà:ke where she attended Kateri Tekakwitha School (K. A. Jacobs, Personal Communication, December 13, 2018).[59] I have had many discussions and meetings with Kaia'titáhkhe as a collaborator in this study. Of all four storytellers, she has been the most actively involved in the project. Kaia'titáhkhe's recorded interview is the shortest, at under thirty minutes. In addition to our conversations and a recorded interview, Kaia'titáhkhe provided a written chronology of her school years (Appendix B), a written account of a story she told me in conversation after the interview (Appendix C), and several photographs and diplomas from her school days.

My interview with Kaia'titáhkhe began with her explaining how she and her family relocated to Kahnawà:ke when she was a child (see appendix B for a chronology of Kaia'titáhkhe's school years). The portions in parenthesis were added by her later for clarity. From the very beginning of her story, she distinctly states her perception of day school:

[59] To limit the number of Personal Communication references in-text from this source, repeated references in this subsection are simply listed as "Kaia'titáhkhe".

> I don't have any traumatic stories to tell. It was a pretty good experience when I think back on it. Well I got here when I was in grade six because my father used to take us around (with him) wherever he had a job so I went to school in different cities…sometimes we'd go back to Ahkwesáhsne and I would go to school there (at) the day school. It was kinda a little bit chaotic in my early (elementary) years 'cause we were always moving until my father finally got a job in Lachine at Dominion Bridge and he brought us to live (here) in Kahnawà:ke.

Later on, Kaia'titáhkhe shares a few experiences at the Day School in Ahkwesáhsne. Most of her interview is focused on her experiences in Caughnawaga/Kahnawà:ke. After starting grade six at Kateri Tekakwitha School, Kaia'titáhkhe had difficulty catching up to the other children:

> I was certainly not up to par in what the girls were doing at grade six. So, I had to really *really* work hard and, I memorized a lot [Laughs]. I never really understood everything but I just memorized it. They were doing something called 'diagramming' and 'parsing'. Parsing English words, *is it a noun or a verb*? (Even though I spoke English) I didn't know the difference between noun, verb, adjective or anything like that. So, I just memorized everything (the definitions) and I would (just) stick one of the definitions onto the word that I'm supposed to [be] parsing, if it was a noun, I would be giving the definition of an adjective because (I did not understand it) I just memorized it. So… half the time I got it right! [Laughs] so anyway that's how I got through grade six. I just memorized everything. Which was not bad because that was the way of learning at the time, everything was rote. Eventually, I was able to get it straightened out in my head. And I went on, grade six was fine.

Kaia'titáhkhe shares the subjects that were taught in the Day School:

> I had a nice teacher that liked me. Sister Mary Rosalind was her name. She was a good woman, I remember her being kind. She used to tell stories, you know, along with her

> teaching. …we learned…grammar, writing, spelling… well anything that had to do with the English language is what they taught. Then we had math of course (and) religion of course (and geography). I think they did not teach very well because I never (learned) geography too (well). That was the first time I heard about Canadian geography anyway when (I) arrived here in grade six. Even, you know, something like the provinces, I didn't know.

Kaia'titáhkhe spent four years at Kateri Tekakwitha School, from grade six to nine. She had the same friends all the way through school, and they graduated together in June 1953. She has many good memories of those days but acknowledges that some of the nuns were not very kind:

> I had a good time with the girls I mean I (made) friends right away… Grade seven was another good year. The teacher was a little older and a little sterner but also a kind woman. They, were pretty good. The only one that was not too kind and very stern was the Mother Superior, the Sister Superior [Sister Mediatrix]. She had to keep everybody in line I guess, not only us but the nuns. Anyway, I say that facetiously. Anyway… (they were) very good years for me. The years that I spent here. I had four years here: grade six, grade seven, grade eight, and grade nine. And then, I graduated with these girls that I mentioned.

Figure 5. Kateri Tekakwitha School, June 1953. Photo courtesy of Kaia'titáhkhe Annette Jacobs. Top left to right: Theresa McGregor, Carole Snow Taylor, Annette Kaia'titáhkhe Peters Jacobs, Margaret Deer Hill, Betty Kakaionstha Deer. Bottom Row, left to right: Irene Leclaire, Binnie Barns, June Walker Lazare.

Kaia'titáhkhe shared her Kateri Tekakwitha School diploma. It reads:

"The Tekakwitha school, Caughnawaga, Que. This is to certify that Annette Peters has completed with Honors the ninth year programme prescribed for Roman Catholic Indian Day Schools. In witness whereof this DIPLOMA is awarded on the 20th of June, 1953. [Signed by: Sister Mary Mediatrix, SSA Vice-Principal and Georges Brodeur, S1 Pastor.]"

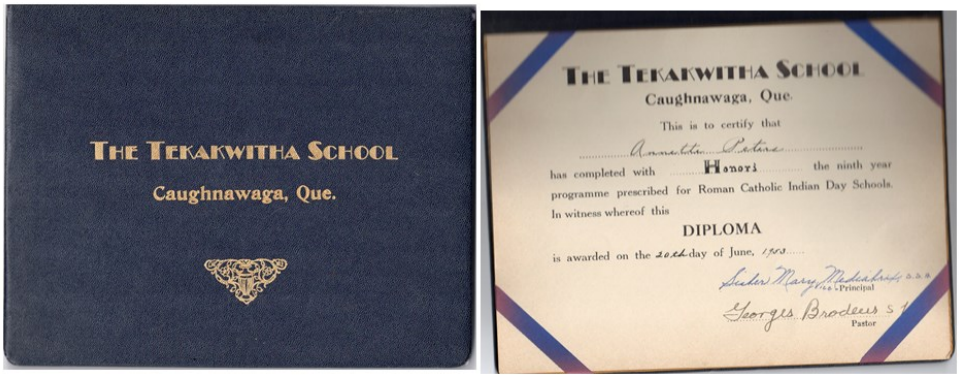

Figure 6. Kateri Tekakwitha School Diploma, 1953.
Photo by Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean.

After completing ninth grade and graduating from Kateri Tekakwitha School, Kaiatitáhkhe and some of her friends went to high school at Queen of Angels Academy in Montréal for grades ten and eleven. Kaia'titáhkhe admits it was difficult to live with the nuns for two years, away from home:

> We graduated and some of us went on to the high school in Montréal, Queen of Angels Academy (it was run by some of the nuns that taught here in Kahnawà:ke). That was completely, completely Catholic (At the time, it was a renowned English Catholic girl boarding school). I lived with the nuns for two years. We used to come home on the weekends. That was also kind of…I mean, nobody likes to be away from home but…we all made the best of it. The girls that went to the school came from all over. They came from (Montréal), New York, they came from (Cuba), it was a real mixture of nationalities (I look back on those years fondly).

Kaia'titáhkhe shares her high school graduation photo from Queen of Angels Academy in Montreal. The graduate ceremony was in June, 1955.

Figure 7. Queen of Angels Graduation photo. June 1955, Kaia'titáhkhe Annette (Peters) Jacobs. Photo courtesy of Kaia'titáhkhe Annette Jacobs.

During her time at Queen of Angels, Kaia'titáhkhe had a deeply upsetting experience in class. She explains:

> [A] nun, was telling the story about (Saint Kateri and that) my ancestors were cannibals (you could hear the class gasp) which made me feel terrible because I had no recourse at that time at all, at all. I had never heard of this before! …I felt terrible (humiliated)—I felt like falling through the floor. Anyway, but I got over it… I handled it in my own way by going to see the priest and asking *well you know what's this you know I'm talking about, how come she's telling me this*? And he explained it in a way that I could understand… (I went to see the priest and asked him if this was true. He explained this way: "Every nation in the world has done terrible things in their history that they would prefer to not come up." I got over it. I did some research. It happened. It was not a common occurrence as some would have you believe. I'm no longer embarrassed, nor do I apologize for it).

Kaia'titáhkhe also shared her Queen of Angels diploma. It reads:

"The Sisters of Saint Ann, Lachine Quebec. This is to certify that Annette Peters a student of Queen of Angels Academy has completed the bilingual studies of the Commercial Course prescribed for our Academies and by reason of her attainments is entitled to this DIPLOMA. Given at Lachine, June 19, 1955. [Signed by: Sr. Mary Agnes Cecilia, Principal. Sister Marie Anne Eve, Supervisor of Studies]."

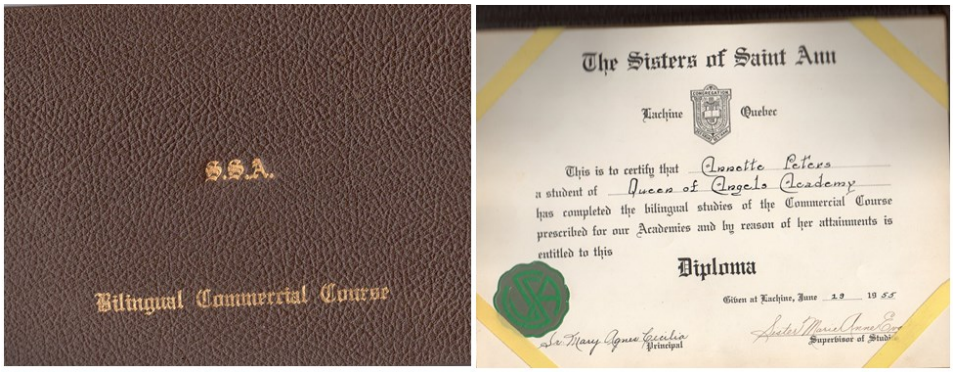

Figure 8. Queen of Angels Diploma, 1955.
Photo by Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean.

At this point, Kaia'titáhkhe switched discussion style from storytelling, to a conversation method that resembles semi-structured interviews. We previously discussed her discomfort with the audio recorder, and I sense her difficulty to stay in the flow of telling the story. I follow her lead and ease into a question and answer interview. The questions I ask are not predetermined, I simply continue to go with the flow of conversation. Considering Kaia'titáhkhe's background in education and language revitalization, I brought up language use at home and at school. I ask Kaia'titáhkhe about something she mentioned during our conversation earlier, speaking English and school and switching to Kanien'kéha at home:

> Yeah, oh yeah. That was in my— (earlier years, when my father took us to different cities in the U.S.A) …even here that's the way it was. I got to school and it was all English. Even the girls…all of them spoke mostly English so the Mohawk was only at my house when I got home. I was very lucky that way too because I was very very grounded in the language, and it kinda helped me in my career…of course when I went on to a formal education to become a teacher is when I started learning the linguistics of the language.

I follow up with a question about Kaia'titáhkhe's friends in school as to whether or not they were speaking Kanien'kéha:

> Nope, none of them. Their parents spoke, but they didn't speak. Carol Taylor, well Carol Snow at the time, her parents spoke completely. But she didn't speak. The other one… no, Betty went to residential school I don't know, maybe age six or something like that. So that was the age when people were kinda not speaking to their children in Mohawk anymore, they would just speak among themselves. So…the kids grew up not knowing their language.

I ask if the children in the schoolyard at Kateri Tekakwitha School were speaking Kanien'kéha:

> I didn't use the Mohawk, even in the school yard…because everybody was speaking English. And this was '49 and '50. We were on the precipice at that time I think of completely going downhill, in terms of language retention. I think that was the time that people were telling their children, *you don't really need to learn Mohawk, you're not gonna need it to get a job, what are you gonna use it for*…. A lot, a lot of them just took that in.

I ask Kaia'titáhkhe if she was taught French at Kateri Tekakwitha School. She confirms that there was a French class and that she remembers learning to sing a song. After singing part of the song for me, she mentions that Sister Rosalind taught her that song. Singing and other activities were a regular part of Kaia'titáhkhe's school days. She explains a typical day:

> Oh, well, we'd come in and we'd pray – of course. We would put on a play, I mean they always had a singing group. So, we always had a choral group so there was a lot of singing. … I'm such a ham anyway that I used to love that part of it [laughing]. I remember in high school grade eight and nine, the teacher then taught us public speaking. So, we would have to choose anything we wanted to and prepare ourselves enough to just

> speak to the class about a certain thing or person or. I would consider-I know that some people have really bad… experiences, you know, and I don't doubt it, I don't doubt it at all. But I didn't have that. I enjoyed school…

Since Kaia'titáhkhe mentions other people having different experiences from her, I ask if she witnessed any issues the other children had or heard stories about the boys' school:

> I don't know what kind of teachers they had (on the boys' side of the school) …they weren't all priests. They used to have lay teachers…we were completely separated so we seldom saw the boys [laughs]. Even though we were in the same school, one side of the school was the boys' side and the girls' side, we seldom got together. Once in a while they, they organize something, we'd go and watch a film on the boys' side and that was exciting of course. I heard bits and pieces of one of the teachers…used to like to slam the boys around if they weren't behaving. I never saw this, I heard, you know I heard this stuff. So… I can't really say for sure what went on, on the boys' side.

We continue to dialogue in an interview style, until Kaia'titáhkhe changes the topic:

> I had pleasant experiences in school. I liked school and I was a good student…I did everything I was supposed to do. I only realized now, how indoctrinated I was becoming or I became, in the way I was educated. Of course, that was the only thing we had though there was no other education to go to at the time so… and everybody, you know, encouraged you to continue on this way. Sometimes I'm just *amazed* that things are changing now, because we were dangerously close to becoming completely… assimilated.

After she introduces this topic, I ask Kaia'titáhkhe a follow up question about how her parents or grandparents viewed the Day School.

> I never heard my mother or father say anything negative about school. The only thing I ever heard was my grandmother saying that it changes you. And that's what she was

> probably trying to warn me about, you know, that it is it's gonna change the way you think about things. But not my mother and father didn't do that. I don't remember them saying anything negative about it. They, in fact, they encouraged me. I graduated high school, first one ever in my family. They were proud of that.

Kaia'titáhkhe connects her childhood experiences at school with her employment experience as an educator and her post-secondary studies.

> I am also very aware of ah what happened to me. I mean I have good memories but along with those good memories was the, this whole thing of you know, what the government wanted to do, and is still doing. –It's still happening. How do I see it now? Oh my goodness, we are in a state of flux. It's changing… I know there's… two ways of thinking about it. Some people want to throw out everything and start from scratch… I don't know if that's the way to go. I said, *everything you learned is not bad, you learned some good stuff—use it! You don't have to reinvent the whole wheel!* That's, that's the way I look at it.

At this point, Kaia'titáhkhe concludes her story and we end the recording. We sit and comfortably have a conversation for another two hours (that we do not record). During that time, Kaia'titáhkhe shares some memories with me about the time she spent at the Akwesáhsne Day School in Snye Quebec.[60] She later provided a written account of her experience (Appendix C):

> We moved in with my grandmother in Snye. Ahkwesáhsne was a large reserve that was broken up into sections. Snye was one of the sections, a rural community with a one-room school house. I enrolled there in the middle of the school year, and continued grade three. Since I had been to schools in the cities my father had moved us [to], I became perfectly bilingual, English & Kanien'kéha. Mohawk was our language at home and I learned English with my friends and at school. However, at this school in Snye, the kids

[60] Ahkwesáhsne is a sister Kanien'kehá:ka community to Kahnawà:ke, founded by people from Kahnawà:ke around 1755. It is located in an area that over laps New York state, Ontario, and Quebec. It is approximately 107 kilometers from Kahnawà:ke, near present-day Cornwall, Ontario. Ahkwesáhsne Day Schools should be examined in a future study.

> only spoke Kanien'kéha. I thought it was the thing to do, so I followed suit. The teacher was from the community, and the only one speaking English. When she asked me a question and I answered in Kanien'kéha, she got angry and slapped my face. I was shocked. I think she thought I was being defiant, when I just wanted to be like everyone else. I told my father, and shortly after we moved to the village, and I began school at the Saint Regis Village School. This experience, I realize now, was intended to undermine my usage of Kanien'kéha and my identity which was largely rooted in my language. I was able to let it pass mostly because of my solid grounding with my parents and grandparents. I continued on to become a Kanien'kéha language teacher, principal, of Karonhianónhnha Immersion School, and today still able to contribute as a language consultant.

After listening to Kaia'titáhkhe's stories, my first observation was how unique our sessions were compared to the other storytellers. Kaia'titáhkhe and I are both very uncomfortable with recording devices which was a challenge. Our session most resembled conversation methods or broad open-ended interviews (Kovach, 2009). The story style switched back and forth while in dialogue. Kaia'titáhkhe was at ease when the recorder was off and had more to say as new memories resurfaced (High, 2014). Kaia'titáhkhe and I spoke about what is going on within the education system today and how much things have changed. We talk about her work in language and culture revitalization. She tells me that she is happy and impressed with many of the changes she sees happening in the school system today.

Reflecting on Kaia'titáhkhe's Stories

Due to her background in academia, Kaia'titáhkhe has a well-rounded understanding of the process and impacts of research. I had many short visits with her discussing transcript editing and her other contributions to the research such as photographs, copies of her diplomas, her chronology, and her written short story. As we continued our research negotiations throughout the process of transcribing and writing, I learned from her that respecting the voice and perspective of the storyteller is important throughout the research. Her story is different from the other Day School and Residential School narratives that are part of common discourse today but it is still full of meaningful lessons.

It is evident through Kaia'titáhkhe's most impactful statements about her childhood and schooling that her worldview and identity are strongly tied to her knowledge of the language (Stacey, 2016). Her determination to continue speaking and strengthening the language came from a strong foundation at home, with her parents and grandmother. She enjoyed school and has mainly happy memories of her time there but she was still directly confronted with obstacles to retaining her knowledge of the language.

The gaps in her cultural experiences and teachings (e.g. Longhouse ceremonies and oral tradition) she filled later in life as an adult. She spent a considerable amount of time studying to become an educator. She was instrumental in bringing language and cultural curriculum into community schools in Kahnawà:ke. Many children learned the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, traditional social songs, stories, and our language at school for the first time, many of whom did not have access to these things at home. Education was a way for children in our community to start retracing their roots. She is also one of the best translators and assets to language revitalization. Kaia'titáhkhe was right not to "throw everything out and start from scratch" as she has used education to help heal losses of language and culture in Kahnawà:ke.

During one short visit, I asked Kaia'titáhkhe if we had words in the language for "story medicine" or concepts that explain how stories heal (Anderson, 2011). She shared with me her memories of her grandmother caring for medicines. She reminded me that in our way, there are many forms of medicine, but the people in our life are particularly "good medicine".

In our many follow-up conversations, Kaia'titáhkhe wanted to ensure that the overall message of her story came through. Although she enjoyed school and came from a Catholic family, she realized later in her life how she was "being indoctrinated" through the ways she was being educated, even the children that enjoyed school and appreciated what they learned eventually suffered as a result of their experiences. The intent of these schools to assimilate and indoctrinate Indigenous children and the fact they existed at all, was wrong.[61] She recognizes that what happened to her is still going on today. Listening to Kaia'titáhkhe's stories brought to light the less obvious and underlying ways that colonization and assimilation happen, both internally and externally.

[61] If there was more time available for follow up interviews, I believe that Kaia'titáhkhe would have further unpacked and interpreted these issues.

Grandma Millie's Stories

My life, my family, and our roots in Kahnawà:ke are intermingled in Grandma Millie's stories. For that reason, I share more background details of our family histories integrated throughout the text. Most of this information and all of the quotes provided below are from the document Grandma Millie and I co-created to retell some of her stories about her school days, as discussed in chapter two (Appendix D). The quotes below are in the first person, congruent with her most recent retellings. The experiences shared within her 'story space' are what she and I have discussed specifically for this purpose (M. Cross, Personal Communication, January 23, 2019).[62] She put thought and consideration into it and had the final say on what is shared.

About Grandma Millie

Mildred (Millie) Ida Cross was born in Brooklyn, New York in November 1933 (and later in life given the name Iakotehraiénthon in the Longhouse when she was adopted into the Bear Clan). Her mother's name was Mae (May) Gibson, she was adopted from an orphanage in New York City and primarily raised by her adoptive family (The Gibson's). May was never able to fully trace her lineage or reconnect with her family (except finding a sister who was also adopted) but she later made new roots in Kahnawà:ke. Grandma Millie's father was Frank Tehonietathe Cross, son of Peter Nikaienta'a Cross (Cross-the-river) and Agathe Konwaronhiawi (Monick) Cross, both from Kahnawà:ke. She is the last living person from her immediate family, her parents and five siblings have all passed on.

Grandma Millie mainly grew up in Kahnawà:ke (and Brooklyn at times) and still has her family home beside the Catholic Church in the village area of Kahnawà:ke. She attended the Roman Catholic Indian Day School (Kateri Tekakwitha School) across from the Catholic Church as a child. She married John Stephen Roberts (Bubba Stephen), a man from an Irish/Scottish family who grew up in Kahnawà:ke (from about five or six years old) and spent most of his life living here. One of the results of Kahnawà:ke's ongoing encounters with settler colonialism is a "crisis of membership", the consequences of which were most felt by families of mixed-ancestry who resided in the community (Simpson, 2014, p. 48). Marrying my Bubba Stephen mean that due to gender-bias in the Indian Act, my grandmother lost her Indian status when she married my

[62] To limit the number of Personal Communication references in-text from this source, repeated references in this subsection are simply listed as "Grandma Millie".

grandfather. Together they had four children (Frankie, Debbie, my father Brian, & Judell). She spent many years fighting for the rights of her and her children and eventually, they did regain status through "Bill C-31" (Smith, 2014, pp. 315-316). Bubba Stephen passed away over twenty years ago and she never remarried. Grandma Millie is the eldest of four living generations of my father's family, with many nieces and nephews, ten grandchildren, and twice as many great-grandchildren.

Grandma's Millie's School Days

> My father always said I was a "depression baby" and that's why I liked to eat so much [she laughs]. Those times were hard, people went hungry. When I was young, we went back and forth living on my grandparents' farm by the river [the Cross-the-river family homestead, shortened to "Cross"] and Brooklyn where we lived and where my father worked. My older siblings lived with us too but one by one they got married and moved away…. and [then] it was just the three of us, me Melvina and Margie [her two younger sisters]. Sometimes we lived at the farm for the summers and we loved it there, we always loved to come home [to her grandparents' farm].

Growing up listening to Grandma Millie's stories of her school days, they have always been mixed with her memories of travel between Brooklyn and Kahnawà:ke,

> In Brooklyn, we lived by Prospect Park. I don't know why we lived there everybody lived at Fulton. My father worked at the shipyard building ships. My mother worked in the munitions factory, you know, for the war. They were hard workers. My father didn't have to get sent in the draft because he was an Indian. Indians didn't have to go…

In her memories, Kahnawà:ke appears as a place that Grandma Millie and her family came back to when times were tough, in what was the "Great Depression" period. Her nostalgic memories of life by the river connects to the loss of many acres of Kahnawà:ke land that was appropriated during the Saint Lawrence Seaway project that began in the early 1950s. Her grandparents lost their farm as a result:

> One time when there was no work [in New York], my father took the train down to the end and walked all the way back looking for work. For a long time, he couldn't find anything. My grandfather said to 'come home to the farm' [Cross-the-River homestead] and they did. They had lots of gardens and animals there by the river. My grandma washed clothes in the river and they would dry in the wind on all the lines. There was [*sic*] lots to pick and do and it was nice to swim in the river. I hated picking the bugs off the potatoes, these stinky bugs. When the seaway came, my grandparents didn't wanna leave their home. When they knocked the houses down, they had to live with their daughter, my Aunt Rosie, in the village. How could the old people sign things or fight back if they can't read and write, only speak Mohawk? It still makes me sad. Even back here, we used to swim in the river [before the seaway], it was nice…

Grandma said her early school days in Brooklyn, New York were difficult and it was sometimes hard to grow up as an "Indian" away from home:

> I had only one friend in kindergarten, she was a little black girl. My mother was so good to her and her mother was so good to me. I can't remember her name…. The kids at school said a lot of hateful things to me. I guess their parents told them things… they would say, 'don't play with her, the Indian, she will… steal your boyfriend'… *those types of things.* As if we children we were thinking that way. It was hard, there were no other Indians where we were living or in my class…where we lived we [Millie, Margie, & Melvina] got beat up every day because we didn't belong.

When her family moved back to Kahnawà:ke for good, Grandma Millie was relieved to be going to school with other "Indian" kids:

> I think I was about nine years old when we came back and I started school here in the village. We were so happy to come home. I was happy, I had so many friends in the school! Oh, I can't remember their names now. The nuns, they were the teachers there. If you had trouble, she would sit you beside her desk and work with you until you got it. I had some trouble but they worked with me until I got it. Some of them played with us

> kids outside. …I started school about nine years old, I can't remember what grade… I went up to grade nine and then I graduated. I didn't go to high school because I wanted to go to work.

When asked about the subjects taught in school, Grandma responded that she was taught things like math, history, geography, Roman Catechism, Latin, and practicing cursive. She says she never had much trouble with the nuns at Kateri School but other children did, likely due to tensions in the community:

> Sometimes the kids would act up. They were sort of looked at as troublemakers. Some of them would say mean things to the nuns. I guess their parents told them things what was going on. I didn't cause trouble and my parents never said anything bad about the school or the church –or the nuns. Only a few times they got mad because I reached for things or used my left hand. They want us to use our right hand…They used to come over and smack my hand. They made me use my right. But now I can write both hands, I won't say it's perfect but I can. That's the only thing they did that made me not like them. Other than that, they were good to us, the Sisters of Saint Anne.

Grandma would often connect her experiences in childhood to her marriage to my Bubba Stephen as well as issues her children had growing up:

> People always said hateful things to my kids because of who their father was. He grew up here, moved here about five or six years old, something like that. His family was Irish-Scottish but he was raised here, so *I didn't marry out*. (Mildred Iakotehraíenthon Cross)

Grandma also talks about the things that she *did not learn in school*, like the language. The children were instructed in English and taught Latin but there was no Kanien'kéha language or cultural teachings at the school of any kind, except in the concerts and plays. "They should have had a teacher that spoke Mohawk to help us if we were goin' to learn another language…" (Cross, Personal Communication, 2019). Grandma's memories of the language relate to her father, grandparents, and extended family:

> My dad spoke Mohawk, he was a very good speaker. When I was young, I understood a lot, heard it from my grandparents… but he didn't really teach us to speak it that much because he said my mother didn't understand and it wasn't right. Only time he spoke it at home was when his brothers come to the house [Paul, George, Jack, Andrew, & Angus]. They would sit there and talk Mohawk, or if it was daytime, they send us outside to play. It was one of those things…I can't speak it now but I wish I did…

Her grandparents often come up in her stories of her childhood and how they lived "the old way" by the river. Whenever we talk about her childhood and school days, she brings up things she learned and saw at her grandparents' farm by the river, which today is separated from Kahnawà:ke by the Seaway:

> I remember my grandfather sitting on the porch, smoking his pipe. He would sit there and sort of mutter to himself for a long time. I think he prayed or gave thanks that way. He grew his own tobacco, how I remember it... My grandfather would milk the cows and he would call me over to squirt milk in my face [she laughs]. I remember my grandmother had beautiful long black hair when I was young... They only spoke Mohawk. They used to tell me to read them the funnies [newspaper comics]. They didn't say "Millie", they called me "Milda" [she says it with an accent]. After we moved to our house—my house now, I would walk back and forth from home to my grandparents' farm by the river. When it was getting dark, my grandma would watch me go and my mother would be on the porch watching for me to come back. One time, it was dark and I fell right into a cow pie! You had to watch for the cow pies [she laughs].

My grandmother was also close to her father, Frank Cross. She said that he was a Band Councillor in Kahnawà:ke at some point in his life. He was well known and respected in the community. His wife (Great-Grandma May) organized a lot of fundraisers to send men out as community representatives. She started reading and writing Kanien'kéha to assist him with these affairs. I found a drawing while looking through the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na

Raotitióhkhwa digital archives. The caption reads: “Mrs. Frank Cross-the-River”. It may be a depiction of Grandma Millie’s mother May at one of their family homes.

Figure 9. Mrs. Frank Cross (Drawing). Photo courtesy of the KORLCC.

Reflecting on Grandma’s Stories

Grandma never liked to discuss painful or “private” things when I was young, especially in great detail. She would sometimes repeat stories she heard about abuse at the boys’ school or sexual abuse in the community. Most of the time, she changed the subject. Looking back, I think she did this to protect my mind as a child from the knowledge of these terrible things. It was a little over a year ago, the first time I ever heard the story about grandma’s only friend in kindergarten. The issues my Grandma Millie and her sisters faced as Indigenous children at public schools and the neighborhood in Brooklyn, was worse in her mind than the Day Schools. It seems that from grandma’s perspective, attending Day Schools at home offered her the sense of relief and belonging that she craved in her childhood.

However, that relief was short-lived due to her and her family’s mixed ancestry. After she married Bubba Stephen and they settled back into Kahnawà:ke again, their family faced new difficulties of belonging, identity, and ‘membership’. Grandma Millie told me many emotional stories about threats of eviction and violence because she had ‘married out’. Her children were

not allowed to attend Day School in Kahnawà:ke because they did not have Indian status.[63] After doing this research, I understand why she convinced my parents to keep my siblings and I enrolled in school in the community, and why she never complained about the Day Schools. Attending school in Kahnawà:ke is a privilege that some children are denied. She links these struggles over generations of her family to her early experiences and the broader issues from which there was no escape: education, religion, racism, identity, Indian Act, language, land, and colonialism.

The Grandma Millie I knew at home was a very different person than the woman that others knew in the community. People tell me all the time how quiet, gentle, and sensitive she is, which is true. She was much louder, critical, and outspoken at home and with family. She was very interested in politics and took my sister and I on many adventures to other Indigenous communities, courtrooms, and protests. Her greatest pain has always been being denied her identity or feeling punished for who she was, first in public schools in Brooklyn, then at the Day Schools where she wanted to learn language and traditional ways, and continuously in Kahnawà:ke.

Working with my grandmother, I had many realizations about my roles in this story that are intertwined in Grandma Millie's childhood, school days, and home. What struck me the most was how difficult it was for her to re-tell these stories that used to come so fluidly in the past. The stories she shares here are limited in quantity and less detailed than what she has told me over the years, due to loss of memory and lack of energy. This research and Grandma Millie's mentorship prepared me to take on the responsibility of passing on her stories to future generations. If new generations do not take up the responsibility to continue telling stories and building collective memory, our knowledge will not be transmitted to future generations. At the end of the chapter, I take on the responsibility to begin filling in some of these gaps.

What Have Our Elders' Oral Histories Taught Us?

The participants in this research share a common background as Kanien'kehá:ka from Kahnawà:ke who attended Indian Day School in the community as children. Their Day School

[63] Indian Status as determined by the Indian Act. Due to gender bias in the Indian Act, Native women who married non-Native men lost their status and their children were not granted status. Community membership is determined by the Kahnawà:ke Band Council, the blood and ancestry requirements of which have been revised many times, resulting in widespread conflict, debate, and evictions. See Smith, 2014 and Simpson, 2014 for more information.

narratives and childhood memories take us back and forth through time, showing us some of the ways that they and their families have been and continue to be affected. Now that these elders' stories about Day Schooling have been shared, I respectfully analyze and further integrate them with academic literature and archival research. This section of the chapter synthesizes the information, stories, and theoretical perspectives into the main arguments and the research outcome which is a collective story. I organize this analysis into several main areas of discussion drawn from the elders' stories: Ratikaratónnions ("They Tell Stories"), Day Schools and Child-Targeted Assimilation, Shaonkwaié:ra ("We Should be Natural People Again"), and retracing the roots.

Ratikaratónnions, "They Tell Stories"

Story methodologies, protocols, and theory have been integrated throughout this text. In Onkwehonwehnéha, there is a specific verb for storytelling, "kká:ratons" which means "I tell stories". New information on story methods emerged during interviews which enriched my understanding of Rotinonhsión:ni storytelling in the context of sharing personal stories or life histories. The four elder storytellers all had unique means of storytelling, often switching between methods. Joe and Frank's storytelling were similar to traditional Rotinonhsión:ni oral tradition in style and form; the storyteller leads the story and the listener follows. This manner of storytelling generates a powerful synergy between storyteller and listener, and is highly engaging (Archibald, 2008).

Joe's storytelling style demonstrated his extensive experience in different storytelling contexts. It was most reminiscent of listening to elders speak in the Longhouse. He had a specific message and details to share in his story, it flowed freely and came to him naturally. With this method, the listener simply gets the story, with little room to ask questions. The story has a message and a purpose, when it fulfills that purpose, it ends. Joe also made a direct statement at the end of his interview about story protocols:

> One thing I wanna add with [these] stories…but this is only my feelings. When you tell a story, supposen [*sic*] you tell a story you told me a story and it's written someplace…I want people to be able to know who you are. Who's the storyteller because this doesn't happen when they write a book. It becomes someone else's story, that's wrong, in my

> point of view. If it's your story, whether it's good or not or exciting or not, it's your story. Your name should be there. That's how I feel. Because there's a lot of people here that taught a lot of people and they were never mentioned. Stories become another person's name in the book. (J. McGregor, Personal Communication, November 21, 2018)

Of course, my relationship with my grandmother was the strongest continual one I have had with an elder or storyteller. I am very fortunate to have had an upbringing that included so many aspects of oral history and culture in my daily life: "Stories cement together generations of collective memory, embodying the historical, spiritual, social, and spatial…Stories are containers of Indigenous knowledge and thought, just as Indigenous languages are their fibre" (Davis, 2004, p. 3). Similar to oral historian Stacey Zembrycki and her grandmother "Baba", Grandma Millie's oral history was not shared in a predictable manner, rather it was a highly interpersonal reflective process (2014, p. 3). In the concluding chapter, I summarize the story teachings and realizations that I had as a result of working closely with my grandmother and the other storytellers. In the next section of this chapter, I discuss themes and points from the stories that directly relate to Day Schools, Education, and Child-Targeted Assimilation.

Day Schooling & Child-Targeted Assimilation

Figure 10. Indian Day School in Kahnawà:ke (year unknown). Likely taken in the early 1900s. Photo courtesy of KORLCC.

What the oral histories of Kahnawa'kehró:non tell about Day Schools are mixed memories of fun, learning, family, friendship, hardship, pain, anger, and shame. Despite the enjoyable experiences and happy memories, all four elders expressed feelings that Day Schooling wronged them in a deep way. The elders coped with their feelings and grappled with the impacts in a variety of ways as they grew into the next stages of their lives. When examining these issues of the past, it is important to be respectful of the perspectives of the people who lived through these events. Kahnawa'kehró:non survived these intense acts of CTA and lived a different reality than the political, economic, and social environment that we have in the community today. From the perspectives of the storytellers, I further discuss several of these incidents and what some of the resulting effects of Day School education are in Kahnawà:ke.

Frank's oral history strongly resembles stories from Residential School Survivors (Miller, 1996, Milloy, 1999). He describes various forms of abuse and violence, particularly the physical and emotional abuse that permeated the school, homes, and community (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018). I have heard many similar stories in our community before, particularly from men around Frank's age. His story is reminiscent of a passage from Milloy (1999) about what constitutes abuse when examining the past. This statement was made in the context of Residential Schools:

> There can be no doubt that abuse was a persistent phenomenon. Head office, Regional, school, and church files are replete with incidents. Of course, it could be argued that abuse can be recognized as such only within the context of community standards of the period. According to such a position, characterizing incidents of punishment as abuse can be, at any time, a difficult process complicated further when such judgements have to be made across time and from documents only. Fortunately, in the case of the schools, staff and Departmental employees of that time, who were individuals with that period's sensibilities, have already identified many incidents as abusive. They isolated them from the normal course of discipline and reported them as unacceptable treatment… [some] went so far as to make an explicit comparison with standards of treatment in non-Aboriginal Schools. (Milloy, 1999, p. 140).

The abuse and mistreatment of Indigenous children cannot and should not be characterized from within the understanding of Western "sensibilities", whether or not they are documented at the time they occurred (Milloy, 1999). Comparing such occurrences ignores differences of worldviews and cultures and reinforces the dominant ideology and philosophy that Western educational frameworks and institutions *set the standard* (Milloy, 1999; Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004). Violence and corporal punishment from adults and staff in schools and other institutions occurred at much higher rates for Indigenous youth (Miller, 1996), which exhibits that racism is a factor in this behaviour. Furthermore, whether or not these practices were or are standard in Western schools does not mean they are not harmful and immoral. Of course, such outlooks and practices of comparison between Indigenous and other children are a common practice in schooling environments (Smith, Tuck, & Yang, 2019). Witnessing and experiencing violence in the home and/or community is a powerful traumatic stressor that generates historic trauma which is then intergenerationally transmitted (Aguiar & Halseth, 2015).

Frank states clearly that what he has experienced and witnessed at the Day Schools is abuse (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018). The details in Frank's story were difficult to take in yet at the same time, his thoroughness with raw honesty is very compelling. According to Frank, parents in Kahnawà:ke also knew that the children were being mistreated and they had violent altercations in the 'cloakroom', where much of the abuse occurred. Frank described Kahnawà:ke at that time as a "beating community" after he witnessed and experienced violence in the Day School, at home, and elsewhere. He links this behaviour to the legacy of "those schools" and the normalizing of abuse after generations of children from Kahnawà:ke attended Residential Schools and Day Schools.

Not all of the storytellers recounted physical 'discipline' or things like 'strapping' as abuse. According to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation's document, *Historic Trauma and Aboriginal Healing*, the normalization of abuse and the feelings associated with it are a result of "psychogenic trauma", or "generational, intergenerational or multigeneration grief" (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 2). The document further explains how this process occurs: "Over time, the experience of repeated traumatic stressors become normalized and incorporated into the cultural expression and expectations of successive generations, while trauma manifesting as culturally endemic will not be necessarily and readily identifiable as a specific or individual

disorder" (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 3). Overtime, witnessing and experiencing abuse becomes a 'normal' part of life for Indigenous children.

How is it possible that some Kanien'kehá:ka children understand these incidences as abuse and others do not? In short, these understandings and reflections of their past indicate differences in how they processed these events and made sense out of them, possibly as a self-protective measure (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004). Many children who suffer abuse remained silent about it at the time, and some do not discuss it as adults. It is not uncommon for people to disassociate from violence experiences, form trauma bonds with abusers, or block out painful memories and focus on the fun they had (Aguiar & Halseth, 2015).

What do the situations where silence was chosen as a coping mechanism of Indigenous children tell us? In *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, editors Smith, Tuck, and Yang (2019) gather a collection of primarily Indigenous-authored texts that explore various ways that education can be approached from within Indigenous perspectives and worldviews, through a decolonial lens. In a chapter the book titled *River as Lifeblood, River as Border: The Irreconcilable Discrepancies of Colonial Occupation from/with/on/of the Frontera*, Xicana Tejana Marissa Muñoz (2019) challenges the notion of "borderlands" and Eurocentric understandings of land, water, and river. Muñoz (2019) argues for a shift in understanding of the concept of "silence" as refusal, defiance, and resistance, "If we re-orient our thinking to ask how Indigenous peoples, knowledge, and cultural practices have survived in such a contested and fraught territory, we can start to understand how silence protects" (p. 77). For many Indigenous children, silence is a necessary protection of their young minds, enabling their survival into adulthood (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004).

Silence can also be the result of oppression and must be broken, as was the case when the extreme abuse in Residential Schools was exposed starting in the 1990s (Miller, 1996, p. 328). An oral history on Day School education in Kahnawà:ke breaks the silence of those experiences so that the people may begin discussing and interpreting the impacts. As Frank said during his interview, he waited a long time to tell his story and let go of the heaviness of it (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018). There are still countless stories of Day School and CTA that must be told by Indigenous peoples, from multiple perspectives and to many audiences. Silence on these matters impacts our collective memory of these experiences as Indigenous peoples while the effects are still felt in full force. The non-Indigenous societies have one-sided

perspective, viewing Indigenous reality, "only from biased western movies and text books; and government institutions who still have the power to decide on the fate of Indigenous people" (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 82). Stories of CTA, colonialism, and Indigenous life must be told and retold in many forums, similar to the Indigenous traditions of oral history and culture.

The history of colonization on Turtle Island makes known the deep-rooted physical, cultural, social, and psychological historic trauma that existed before the Day Schools (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 6). The history of the Kanien'kehá:ka and Rotinonhsión:ni Nations and the founding of Kahnawà:ke (discussed in chapter three) exemplify this traumatic history. Day Schools and CTA simply added layers to the "residue of unresolved, historic, traumatic experiences and generational or unresolved grief" (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 3). This pattern of calamities that I refer to as CTA may also be contextualized as follows:

> Intervening disasters, such as residential school, theft of Indian children for outside adoption, posttraumatic stress disorder and rampant alcoholism, have blocked historical memory and inhibited a deeper understanding of higher obstacles to Indigenous cultural survival, health and well-being. Through deliberate particularization of Aboriginal people's experiences, the "world outside" pushed Indigenous people into the margins of denial and forgetting, and into the depths of a grieving whose causes has been lost in antiquity. (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 27)

During our sessions, elders stories related to patterns and common knowledge about past and present experiences of Kahnawa'kehró:non at many places and times in our history: Day School, Residential School or other forms of assimilative institutions and sources of trauma. Each storyteller had a unique understanding and interpretation of their experiences in Day School, as well as the wide-ranging impacts of colonialism within their lives. Each unique approach shows us the intricate ways that silence, speaking out, survival, resistance, and resilience are decisions, actions, and reactions that take many forms. Respecting when and how they tell their stories is important to convey the meaning and message of the story (Archibald, 2008). The elder participants in this research are not passively or reluctantly sharing their stories,

they are actively making meaning out of their experiences with the objective of helping future generations to remember and to heal.

Through the lens of CTA, oral histories of Day Schools illustrate more clearly the ways that assimilation and the ripple effects of colonization, become imbedded into our families, communities, and our minds. In Day School stories, the fact that children returned home each day and lived in community did not spare them nor their offspring suffering caused by abuse or violence, trauma, language or cultural identity losses. After researching Methodist Indian Day Schools in Northern Manitoba, Dueck (1986) found that Day Schools: "provide the most poignant setting for the observation of interactions between Indian and white society since children daily divided their time between their parents' homes and the day schools which attempted to immerse their student in Euro-Canadian culture" (p. 1). Some Day School students enjoyed their time in school and willingly embraced Christian religion yet still came to an understanding, that something profoundly terrible happened to them (K.A. Jacobs, Personal Communication, December 13, 2018).

The effects of Indian Day Schools and CTA were felt everywhere in Kahnawà:ke, and are still being lived and realized today by former students and their descendants. Frank sees "going back" as a way for our Kahnawa'kehró:non to move forward:

> So, to the system they way I understand it, Residential School, the Day Schools, get that guy Duncan Campbell I think his name, Indian agents say *get the Indian out of here*…you know, it worked…for the most part! Now why are we having to fight so hard to go back to where we started from? Because our families too, you know our aunts or uncles, our grandparents, our neighbors you know we all went into something else…the problem that education… [is] having right now is a direct result of the schools they went to and the disciplinary stuff, they're still hard, they haven't changed that. (Frank)

The messages from the elders are not simply that they eventually accepted, healed, and moved on from these things. Rather, they share details in their encounters with colonialism and historic trauma and how they continue to cope and struggle with those issues in many ways. One is never too elderly or experienced to encounter trauma and pain nor is it ever too late to release shame and retrace one's roots. While this research merely scratches the surface, the struggles and

pain of Day Schooling and CTA still have to be discussed and fully examined. To fully understand how Indigenous children have been impacted by CTA requires examining lived experiences from within subjective understandings, an "inside out instead of top down" approach (Barman, 2017, p. 5). Indigenous stories of educational experiences act as a "powerful reminder that the history of Indigenous schooling has been far more wide-ranging and eventful than was the residential school evoked as a blanket descriptor" (Barman, 2017, p. 5).

Shaonkwaié:ra, "We should be Natural People Again"

All of the storytellers in this research contested, critiqued, and interpreted education, schooling, and learning in their own way. Connections between language and identity are strongly expressed in their stories. Language shift (from Onkwehonwehnéha to English) in Kahnawà:ke was the result of many factors but largely due to Day School education which centered on English as the language of instruction in the schools for many generations (Hoover, 1992; Stacey, 2016; Whitebean & Stacey, 2018). As a shift to English began through Day Schooling, there was a breakdown of communication within generations of family in the home, particularly between the grandparents and youngest generation (Fleming, 2007). This yields similar outcomes to language erasure in Residential Schools, targeting Rotinonhsión:ni Clan and family connections through the schooling of children. In addition, Day School authorities were actively indoctrinating Indigenous children into Christianity and to Euro-Western centered belief and value systems. The outcome is "the elimination of traditional spirituality and Native languages, two aspects of Haudenosaunee culture that animated, supported, and reinforced the continuity of clan relationships" (McCarthy, 2010, p. 91).

Ancestral Indigenous languages transmit identities and traditional knowledges (Sunseri, 2008). Specifically, language transmission from parents and family to child is not merely a mode of communication but a means of knowledge creation and inheritance, "the structure of a language determines the mental categories and thought processes…no one will dispute the fact that the spoken and written word is an essential instrument in the process of transmitting and absorbing knowledge" (Tremblay et al, 1967, p. 36). Battiste and Henderson (2000) found that the links between Indigenous languages and oral traditions, "sacred knowledge", and human experience are critical to Indigenous survival (p. 48). When Indigenous languages are strong and spoken through multiple generations, knowledge and identity are successfully transmitted.

Kanien'kehá:ka Scholar Kahtehrón:ni Stacey (2016) has conducted the most recent research on Onkwehonwehnéha language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke. Kahtehrón:ni stated the following with regard to the relationship between re-learning ancestral language and re-discovering traditional knowledge:

> For many adult language learners, when searching for our language we uncover a knowledge system, built over centuries, a vessel which holds the knowledge of our ancestors. It leads us back to our traditional medicines, our stories, arts, ceremony and strengthened spirituality – and becomes an exploration of one's identity through language learning. Regaining our language as adults is a source of strength, creating a path to healing by reclaiming, rebuilding and recovering what we were once denied.
> (Stacey, 2016, pp. 66-67)

Kahnawakehró:non continue to focus efforts on reversing language shift with a commitment of nearly fifty years of consistent language revitalization efforts (Stacey, 2016; Whitebean & Stacey, 2018).

On a global scale, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated the year 2019 as the "International Year of Indigenous Languages", dedicated to the promotion and protection of Indigenous languages worldwide (UNESCO, 2018). According to UNESCO (2018), Indigenous languages contain local knowledge and culture developed for thousands of years, "their disappearance would amount to losing a kind of cultural treasure. It would deprive us of the rich diversity they add to our world and the ecological, economic and sociocultural contribution they make". UNESCO (2018) points out that choosing to speak one's ancestral language is a human right: "a prerequisite for freedom of thought, opinion and expression, access to education and information, employment, building inclusive societies, and other values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". The right to learn and speak one's ancestral language has been denied to generations of Indigenous peoples throughout the world, particularly in Canada and the United States through acts of Child-Targeted Assimilation such as Residential Schools, and Day Schools.

In Kahnawà:ke, missionaries, governments, and other outsiders pursued their own agendas, using education and "religious propagandism" as a means "to wean the Indians in the

village from the teachings which had been handed down to them by their forefathers from the seventeenth century" (Divine, 1922, p. 369). To regain lost knowledge and identity, the storytellers who I spoke with discussed ways of learning in addition to or outside of formal education, such as learning history and cultural practices from their elders through oral tradition, learning to live off of the land, and practicing ceremony and spirituality. These teachings were not merely opinions or philosophies of the storytellers but also practiced and applied in their own lives. Joe made a decision to be a 'natural person' after he was 'hurt' by education (J. McGregor, Personal Communication, November 21, 2018). Frank teaches children in Kahnawà:ke such things as identity and 'culture' in practical ways and not externalized "outside of ourselves" (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018). Kaia'titáhkhe has spent her career to strengthen and promote our ancestral language, her source of identity and strength (Jacobs, 1998; K.A. Jacobs, Personal Communication, December 13, 2018). Grandma Millie's stories of her school days feature her time with her grandparents by the river, demonstrating her foundation of learning within a multigenerational family which fueled her desire to retrace her roots (M. Cross, Personal Communication, January 23, 2019).

The emphasis in the experiences in multigenerational families relates to cultural family structures and upbringing of Onkwehón:we children. Some Rotinonhsión:ni are honoring these teachings today, raising children within multigenerational families and reclaiming language, culture, and identity. Perhaps the lack of storytelling in Kahnawà:ke about Day Schooling and CTA is a due to the fact that there are less family members around to share and process 'private stories' with in a healthy way. One of the major losses to Rotinonhsión:ni life due to colonization was the systematic break down of our Clan systems which was both the tether and generator of our knowledge base and collective conscious (Hill, 2017). Our Clan system came into being with purpose to bind us as Rotinonhsión:ni peoples:

> Clan responsibilities establish a connectedness among the people that can repair their personal and interpersonal detachment by the anguish of loss and grief.… Through the Great Law, clan responsibilities are also considerably magnified in their capacity to establish connectedness among the people that can transcend their separation across the vast geographical space of the homeland territories. (McCarthy, 2010, p. 87)

It is time to re-story the land and remember that Kahnawà:ke as a "place name story" (Kovach, 2009, p. 61). There are many separations to be healed: in individuals, families, relationships with the river, Clans, communities, the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) Nation and all Rotinonhsión:ni peoples. Onkwehón:we are seeking to be original and true beings once again. Seeking out and reclaiming ancestral knowledge and embodying it in their daily lives is a true natural education. The Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen and Rotinonhsión:ni Creation Story teach us that education is about survival and conveys values of humility, which are "contrary to the teachings of Christianity, humans did not hold dominion over the earth but must live in harmony with it" (Reyhner & Eder, 2017, p. 17).

Euro-Canadian values and Rotinonhsión:ni worldview are divergent in many areas, most pointedly on how we view our roles in creation and in relation to the land and other living things. It is particularly cruel that the institutions, policies, and people employed to enforce colonialism on Indigenous peoples are primarily funded through federal trusts established by the assets and sales of our homelands and resources (Hinge, 1978). In chapter three, I discussed the history of education and schooling in Canada including the policies and legislation that was systematically created to support the erasure of Indigenous knowledges, languages, and identities. In part one of the Hawthorn Report by Cairns et al. (1966), the emphasis on education to resolve Indigenous poverty and socio-economic issues was meant to acculturate Indigenous peoples into capitalist society. Indigenous children raised within their families and communities were not taught to aspire to a white middle-class trajectory in life or to make sacrifices for material wealth and social status (Cairns et al, 1966). Educational attainment is encouraged for Indigenous youth to inculcate desires for increased personal wealth and economic success. Cairns et al, (1966) maintained:

> Advanced industrial nations have achieved this status in large part only through a long period of education, indoctrination, training and conditioning of their people, to respond to motivations or goals that will induce them to put forth the effort, and submit to various disciplines, restrictions and hardships, of the kinds necessary to achieve substantial economic growth. Our modern economy is characterized by an elaborate structure of status and prestige positions, and a wealth of goods, services and activities that provide satisfaction or escape by way of compensations generated by

> the types of work that have to be done. The rewards offered require money, and people are motivated to work, to varying degrees, largely by the money to be earned. (Cairns et al., 1966, p. 58)

The irony of the reserve system is that it provided an environment in which ancestral languages and cultural values continued to be practiced for many generations, cultivating family, kinship, and community relationships that are not congruent with the lifestyle and value system described above. The result was that Indigenous peoples living on reserves or isolated from settler-occupied villages and cities and maintain to varying degrees, a primary culture and identity that differs from the outside world:

> Life has meaning in many Indian communities in terms of a recurring cycle of interrelated economic, social and religious activities and this cycle is geared to the different seasons of the year. Members of the group work intensively and participate strenuously in certain related activities for weeks at a time during one season, and then turn to other types of work for relaxation during the next season. By contrast, in our modern economy, the seasonal cycle has been all but eliminated, except in such fields as sports and fashion. The round of activities, of work and relaxation, eating and resting is geared to the daily and weekly cycle rather than to the seasons. That, perhaps, is the feature of industrial life that many Indians find difficult to accept, regardless of the rewards in money or status, for it deprives life of meaning in terms of their traditions and values.

Many decades have passed since the Hawthorn Reports of 1966 and 1967. These documents sparked the White Paper of 1969 which in addition to a number of initiatives, proposed the abolition of the Indian Act (First Nations & Indigenous Studies UBC, 2009). The 'White Paper' was met with widespread controversy and was ultimately withdrawn yet it is ironic that the political atmosphere it fostered would lead to policies for "Indian Control of Indian Education" only a decade later. Education and schooling are the primary means of educating, training, conditioning, and indoctrinating people into a value system and society. Schooling occupies the majority of children's lives as students in the process of becoming

workers. Education can be a powerful tool of change and prosperity but schooling is founded on Euro-Western values and the risks of assimilation or integration are still very real today. Indigenizing school administrators, staff, and curriculum are not enough to heal the harms that colonial schooling has and continues to inflict on Indigenous youth.

If we approach learning and education from a Rotinonhsión:ni worldview, colonial models of education through schooling teach our children the opposite of who we are. They are taught by a handful of adults, usually one or two at a time at an institution, not within a multigenerational family or Longhouse setting. Children and school staff are discouraged from forming strong bonds or making physical contact in ways that one does with family members. Grandparents and elders are not part of school on a daily basis and when present, it is outside of core curriculum as special activities or visits. Curriculum is mainly literacy-based as opposed to emphasizing practical learning and oral methods, or an equal balance of both. Children are evaluated according to standards set by western models of learning, not according to their gifts and roles in community. Authority figures do not make decisions in consensus as equal members of society. Onkwehonwehnéha is both directly and indirectly devalued while English and French provide improved employment and economic gains. Regardless of what children are *told* about Indigenous knowledges, languages, and culture, the system as a whole is oppressive of Onkwehón:we existence. I could continue with examples of the differences between upholding Rotinonhsión:ni consciousness (Hill, 2017) and transmitting colonial values but the fact is that for many generations, Indigenous peoples have grown accustomed to this way of living. Colonial schooling for Indigenous youth whether Industrial, Boarding, Residential, or Day Schools are no longer needed if the people internalize the same values and goals as the dominant society.

The solution is not as simple as removing children from schools which deprives them of tools for survival and relationships within their social group. The objective of community-controlled schooling (or parent governed education) is not assimilation or integration but rather education and empowerment. As Kaia'titáhkhe pointed out, there are many beneficial things learned in school and educational approaches have been gradually changing through hard work and dedication (K.A. Jacobs, Personal Communication, December 13, 2018). Rotinonhsión:ni languages, cultures, and knowledge must be centralized and practiced in daily life, calling for a comprehensive approach to educating Onkwehón:we children. Second language Kanien'kéha learners in Kahnawà:ke are reliant on literate and oral methods of learning. This historical

research project has contemporary applications for Indigenous learners. Education and knowledge comes in many forms and our children must have diverse experiences and exposure to Onkwehón:we knowledge and practice both inside and outside of schools. All schooling is colonial schooling and must be continuously approached from a critical decolonial mindset if we are to truly take hold of the transformational power of education to secure and build prosperous and vibrant Indigenous futures (Smith, Tuck, & Yang, 2019).

Retracing the Roots

In Kahnawà:ke, some people talk about Indian Day Schools but as families and a community, we are not doing enough to address the issues that the schools have left behind. The lessons the storytellers have gifted in this research are from the vantage point they have as elders after many years of processing their experiences. What were they like as teenagers, young adults, and parents when they were still raw from their experiences, *before* they retraced their roots and found their paths? This is why multigenerational or Clan family structures are important for our health and healing as Onkwehón:we, to have someone at every stage of life willing to sit and talk things through in our everyday lives (Sunseri, 2008).

The elders' stories also give us teachings about healing, being whole, and being Onkwehón:we. Our minds and emotions can mislead us but as Joe said, "it's only in our hearts that we're Onkwehón:we" (J. McGregor, Personal Communication, November 21, 2018). Spirituality is a strong part of Indigeneity and it is the heart where spirit lives (Absolon, 2011; Sunseri, 2008). Retracing our roots is a method to make people whole again, to heal what some would call "soul wounds" (Lambert, 2014, p. 45). If we continue to perpetuate cycles of trauma, we cannot see the path our ancestors left to retrace our roots to find our way to be whole again as people. Frank provided an example drawn from his experiences with healing and support work:

> I had the privilege of working [with someone] …to help support that person changed some of the belly aches they had in their life…and they're not the same no more. They say *I can breathe*! That's payday! That's payday for everybody! You can only talk so much about it, the suffering. Well what is being done to help individual people get past that pain? Get their spirits home, because their spirit's stuck over there [where trauma happened] …I think this, there's some good that come out of all my misery. And my dad

> was like that too. He'd, he'd always help kids. … I'm a grandfather, now that they say that, I'm a grandfather to all kids. I'm everybody's grandfather and everybody's uncle … (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018)

Following the lead of the elder storytellers, I have taken an unconventional path in this research, embraced transparency and openness in my storying, and engaged in a critical self-reflexive process of decolonizing. This collaborative research story tells how colonial traumas are part of our consciousness, as they are normalized and internalized becoming ingrained in our beings in complex and intricate ways (Styres, 2019, p. 32). In particular, the story of Day School education in Kahnawà:ke and Child-Targeted Assimilation teaches us how identity is intertwined in our education, whether through schooling or the 'natural ways' as lived and retold by the storytellers (Kovach, 2009, p. 5).

"She Had Planted The Roots"

Mildred Iakotehraiénthon Ida Cross's story has a happy ending. She mustered her courage and fought for her family and identity throughout her life. Grandma Millie had retraced her roots, found her way back to the Longhouse and brought her grandchildren and great-grandchildren back with her. Finally, in her 70s her name was raised up[64] "Iakotehraiénthon, *she had planted the roots*". Her name and new identity remind us all of who she is and what she has overcome in her life. My family, my children and I are the next generations that have been handed down ancestral knowledge through our mixed-ancestry, our heritage, and her stories. We have been raised in the Longhouse way and are second language speakers. In both overt and subtle ways, we have refused to perpetuate the 'metanarrative' of colonialism and instead, honour our ancestors and the people who give us medicine through their stories and their work (Cruikshank, 2005). The bravery and strength of Grandma Millie and many others over their lifetimes gave our people love and a path to heal through story medicine.

Grandma Millie is likely the last living person to have experienced life as a child at the Cross-the-river family homestead, by the river in Kahnawà:ke. Through her stories, she took me back to the farm and the river where she was happiest in her childhood, as "Milda". She brought to life an image of my great-great Grandparents, Konwaronhiawi and Nikaienta'a and the way

[64] She was named through ceremony in the Longhouse.

they once lived. I learned from this process that storying-in-relationship enables connections through multiple generations (Varley, 2016). We *can* go back in time and heal traumas of the past and co-create new stories for our futures. Every ability we have as humans fades over time, while story and knowledge are the last gifts of medicine that many elders have when they near the end of their lives. Nearing the end of her life story, I realized that the roots of this knowledge were planted many years ago on the Cross-the-river family homestead at the river, by a little girl from Kahnawà:ke called “Milda” Iakotehraiénthon, *she had planted these roots*.

CHAPTER 5 – FINAL REFLECTIONS, CONCLUSION & CLOSING

Joe, Frank, Kaia'titáhkhe, and Grandma Millie's oral histories reveal the determination and resilience of our ancestors and the people of Kahnawà:ke to overcome complex issues both in our history and our reality as Onkwehón:we. If we examine Indian Day Schools, Residential Schools, and practices of Child-targeted assimilation or colonization from a distance, or accept a single narrative of these events, we lose sight of the intricate ways our lives continue to be impacted as Indigenous peoples. The lived realities of the storytellers depict their Day School experiences intermingled with the other struggles and joys of Indigenous life. Reflecting on this research, I realize that how we become who we are is a very complicated process, with bits and pieces of ancestry, family, memories, and experiences woven into our life stories. When the elders and I talked about the Day Schools, it was never just about the schools but rather, the places they have been, relationships, wide-ranging education, and their own philosophical interpretations of Indigeneity and colonialism. To fully understand Indian Day School experiences and the effects requires comprehensive assessment and analysis.

Living Through Child-Targeted Assimilation

In this section of the final chapter, I offer the last of my realizations and interpretations of the research outcomes. I reflect on the collective meaning of the elders' stories and how my own growth as a community member and Indigenous researcher became a part of the final story/research meaning. I begin by relaying a dream I had while struggling with the task of writing down oral histories.

Including Voices of My Ancestors in the Research

In December 2018, I started to feel the pressure of writing this story into a thesis. I questioned if it was academic enough and if I had truly respected it as a collective knowledge creation. Many Onkwehón:we question if our paths to becoming Indigenous scholars and researchers bring us closer or farther away from our identities (White, 2015). I had a dream that changed my view of the project and help me find the flow of the research once again.

There was a very long table in the center of the room, bigger than any I have ever seen. People were sitting closely all around it. The room was full of people. I sat towards the middle of the table, sensing many others close to me. I didn't recognize anyone there but I knew many of them were Onkwehón:we too and I felt comfortable. An elderly man with long dark hair was to my right and was speaking in English to another man across the table. The man across the table was older, with shorter thinning hair and dark wrinkled skin. I knew he was a veteran warrior but he was wearing plain clothes. The man to my right said something about how much work would have to be done and how difficult it will be. I blurted out, "But it's my home, I can do this work!" People turned and looked at me in surprise. "I don't know if it was the right time for me to speak," I said timidly. I sat back down, humbling myself. The two elderly men continued in debate and I realized they were discussing my thesis! Other people around the table joined in the discussion, switching between Onkwehonwehnéha and English. They often used intellectual terms and vocabulary that I could not understand. The man across the table seemed to be defending my position. Suddenly, the debate ended and the room became quiet. The man across the table looked at me and his voice grew gentler. I cannot recall his exact words, but felt their meaning in my heart. He said I am doing well and there is a simple but beautiful eloquence to my story and people will learn from it. He said that I should be proud of my work.

After this dream, I followed the current of the story meaning in the research, wherever it would lead me. I did not recognize any individuals in the dream but I somehow knew them, like family. My ancestors had come together to debate and discuss my thesis. They used vocabulary far beyond my comprehension (in English). I was reminded that many generations of Rotinonhsión:ni before me have been educated and have gone through formal schooling and not just as subjects of assimilation, but to use all of the tools they could to help their people.[65] Education is also a useful tool to re-story our futures, as Indigenous scholar Eve Tuck (2019) explains:

[65] See Peace (2017) for more information on historical Indigenous engagement in education and writing in the Saint Lawrence Valley since the 1600s.

> Education also attracts Indigenous scholars because of the role of compulsory schooling in colonization, the necessary future-building work that must take place to interrupt practices of assimilation/eradication in schools, and the space made by generations of Indigenous educators for us to meet and forward Indigenous futures. …Indigenous educators carry forward Indigenous teachings and carry forward the relations—circling back to the teaching-as-relation and self-as-relation—that is the heart of Indigenous futurity. (Smith, Tuck, & Yang, 2019, p. 10)

Education does change people and some lose themselves in the new ways it colonizes your mind. If you stay grounded and have a strong foundation, you can enter the rough waters of academia and add new layers to your identity. Through a critical self-reflective process and autobiographical narrative, this research has become a story of transformation and co-creation of knowledge (Archibald, 2008). The message in my dream was loud and clear, *the story meaning is what is most important in this work, tell the story from your heart*. My ancestors support my work and they showed me that they have been part of this research from the beginning.

Research is Story and Medicine

After almost seven years as a full-time university student, I have finally come to understand what *research* is. Research as storytelling and re-storying, a way of weaving together ideas, words, and the knowledge of others with our own interpretations and understandings. I came to university believing that what I would confront was the foundation of the ideas, philosophies, and Western knowledge systems that are the source of so much Indigenous suffering. I was not disappointed. I found all of that and more. However, my path to decolonize people and institutions within our traditional territory would always lead right back to home, to Kahnawà:ke, my family, and to me. I did not expect my own life, history and experiences to be so present in this story but I understand now that it was meant to be told this way. Healing and decolonizing must happen from the inside out. As we say in the Longhouse, I am "combing the snakes" from my own hair.

Reflecting on this first experience doing research at home in Kahnawà:ke, I have new realizations about the true purpose and the implications of Child-Targeted Assimilation. My family has been directly impacted by CTA through Residential Schools, Day Schools, practices

of child apprehension, and we live with the effects of colonization every day. Despite having a unique and beautiful childhood, I also had many painful and difficult experiences. My love and understanding of the complex things my family has struggled with has grown. I personally relate to something Frank said to me, "I had an abused life, but it was a good life" (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018). What made a difference for me was having many people around to tell me stories, to talk through issues and ideas with, and to learn from. Most of all, I saw how my role in my family and community has to evolve in the future so that one day when I am a grandmother, it will be to model how a 'natural person' lives, caring for *all children*. Reflecting on my relationships with the elders, I was not only the "listener" but the "grandchild" in our story relationships. They treated me with great care and kindness. I also helped them reach new understandings of Day Schooling and their life; "pay day for everybody" (Frank, Personal Communication, December 3, 2018).

CTA has been useful to braid many complex issues together so that I can focus on them directly. The elders' stories and our connection helped me visualize their worlds as children. Sharing stories and experiences also helped them heal and relieve things *the child inside them* was still burdened with. Assimilation and colonization did the most harm when it targeted the hearts of our children. As Joe said, our hearts are what make us Onkwehón:we, the place where spirit lives and our spark as people (J. McGregor, Personal Communication, November 21, 2018). From this perspective, the decolonizing and healing work must also target the hearts of children, in the past and the present.

At the Sisters of Saint Anne archive office, I came across a document which appears to have been written by students from Marguerite Bourgeois College in Montreal after visiting Caughnawaga. When I re-read it at the end of the writing process, I garnered new understandings of CTA from its contents. I share excerpts from the two-page document which enlightens us to the perceptions young white people had of "Indians" (dated June 9, 1931):

> "Caughnawaga". We had never heard the name until a cordial invitation came from most cordial Sisters of St. Anne asking us to visit one of the oldest Indian reservation [*sic*] in Canada…. As we looked upon the young actors, we felt as if in a strange land. All were dressed in Twentieth-Century style, but their dark skin, high cheek bones, deep-set brown eyes [and] black, black hair, gave them an appearance far different from that of any boys

> or girls we had ever seen. The program included dances, songs, and recitations in English, French, and Iroquois. It was the first time we had heard the glutteral [*sic*] sounds of the Indian tongue…. Our thoughts went back to the early heroic missionaries who, by sheer will and prayer, had mastered such lingual difficulties in order to save the souls of the brave children of the forest. They had been scholars as well as saints! The most fascinating number presented was a dance performed by girls in full national costume, painted faces, leather robes, wampums, belts, beads, leggings, moccasins and tambourines. He [an old "Iroquois man" then reminded the young folks, in their own mother-tongue, of the daring and noble ambitions of their ancestors, calling on them to imitate such sterling qualities even now, [by] being leaders in their classrooms… [Signed by Eleanore Monahan]. (SSA Archives, LQ 2/1, 2)

There are many lessons and supporting points of the research arguments that can be drawn out of this quote. What was most impactful, is reading this detailed account *after* processing the full history, stories, and teachings shared in the research. As much as Indigenous peoples have been dehumanized and objectified, people are still drawn to our fires. Although it was not done purposefully, I realized that the 'colonizers' and 'outsiders' are vilified in a way within this story. They should be held accountable and there should be justice to help heal these wounds. However, one cannot help but see *the child in them* as well. There are links in the text above to views expressed in Sister George Edmond's (1995) interview shared in chapter three, the fears of the nuns about "Indians" and the myths some of them were told as children that "Indians bring the babies" to their mothers.[66]

How have the sparks of young white (or Western) children been kindled and stoked for generations? They continue to be schooled and storied into roles of colonizers, outsiders, and settlers from early childhood, generation after generation. That is why colonization continues to this day, it takes root in the hearts of children who become adults with "a fragmentary self-world view", a need to objectify and demean other people (Ermine, 1995, p. 110). As innocent children, they are assimilated into these roles. If child-rearing and schooling have educated the humanity out of people, perhaps colonialism could be gradually unlearned and unschooled out of

[66] In Sister George Edmond's interview, she recounts this story and says that French children are told that Indians bring babies similar to myths about storks delivering babies to parents.

them as well. This story about Child-Targeted Assimilation can help to reveal the root of colonialism itself. Re-storying our past and futures from Indigenous worldviews also means re-storying our relationships with other peoples. The elders have taught us in this research story that part of healing is about learning to forgive those who have hurt us, and teaching others the ability to heal themselves. Many see our responsibility as Indigenous peoples to honour the work of our ancestors and "uphold a world-view based on recognizing and affirming wholeness and to disseminate the benefits to all humanity" (Ermine, 1995, p. 110).

This research has been a great medicine for me and the story of how it unfolded is meant to spark healing in others as well. It will take time for our fires to burn as brightly as they once did. I was the first born in a new generation of descendants within both my mother's and father's multigenerational families. One side of my family had the language, the other did not. One side had mixed ancestry, one side did not. Both sides gave me something many children do not have, Kanien'kehá:ka role models who were strong caring men and powerful loving Kanien'kehá:ka women (Sunseri, 2008).

I refuse to view my mixed ancestry as a blight in our family tree, there is strength in beauty in those roots as well. I hope that all of the people who now live on Turtle Island will reach the understanding that our blood or race are not the sole basis of our identity, our families (or Clans) are what keep our fires burning. My arrival and life in my maternal and paternal families are an intersection of so many histories and stories. I lived something profound and beautiful within two multigenerational families, a way of life that is on the precipice of ending for my family and many others. I have also worked very hard to retrace my roots and left paths for others to follow. This thesis is not merely the next step in a career move or path to a doctoral degree, it reflects my decision to be a natural person, to *never let these fires go out*.

I end this section with a portion of my valedictory address from Spring convocation at Concordia University in 2017 (Whitebean, 2018). I explained how knowledge connects us to all of creation and my wish for all of humanity to learn from our ancestors:

> I am fortunate to have grown up in Kahnawà:ke surrounded by strong and resilient people. Drawing on these roots I can say with humility that despite any personal accomplishments, I am not the smartest person in the room… My elders and community have taught me that no matter your grade point average, your education, or your age, you

> are never the smartest. Knowledge is not something that you own or hold over people. If you do, it isolates you. Knowledge is meant to connect you to the experiences of others throughout time, so that we can collectively evolve… Haudenosaunee people have traditionally made decisions by coming together so as to act with one mind in consideration of all of our relations. We are connected to the past through our elders and ancestors—and to the future through our children and descendants. My wish for you is to have this kind of timeless knowledge and fulfilling life. (Waháhshon Shiann Whitebean)

Conclusion

True to following the current in this "Individualized" path of research storying, I travel between start and finish to write out the outcome of this research. I trusted this story as a teacher and followed its current without knowing exactly what *all* of the arguments were or how this story would come to a close (Archibald, 2008). In the introduction I name the various arguments, refusals, and realizations made while following the story current. In the conclusion, I finish by re-telling the story meaning in my own words.

The collective meaning of Joe, Frank, Kaiatitáhkhe, and Grandma Millie's stories of their lives and their oral histories of Day School, illuminate how colonization and assimilation are perpetuated through generations of families and communities. Each of their stories reveal the range of experiences and impacts that Day Schools, Child-Targeted Assimilation, and colonization have had on their lives overall. Through their stories, they have helped me and others gently pull back some of those layers. This research approaches stories as a source of Indigenous knowledge, while storytellers are not viewed through the lens of "objective others" (Archibald, 2008, pp. 32-33). I story along with them in an equally honest and vulnerable way, respecting the Rotinonhsión:ni principle of sha'tetionkwáhte ("we are all the same height"). Through our evolving relationships, their stories teach us that many parents and grandparents heal by giving children and grandchildren a better life and more opportunities than they themselves had, to be natural people. The people in our lives are often our greatest medicine.

Autobiographical storying and oral histories demonstrate the practical ways that story and life experience teach humanity how to build collective memory and knowledge that is timeless and leads to a fulfilling life. Together with elders I experienced knowing-in-practice and

storying-in-relationship as a means of confronting Day Schooling, education, colonization, and painful experiences without being retraumatized as their literal and symbolic descendent. In the past, I focused on Indigenous struggles believing that what we have overcome is what made us strong, but it also hardened us. Hardness is not strength and Onkwehón:we have always been strong peoples without the pain of colonialism. Our strength and resilience are transmitted through stories and our family fires.

While undertaking this research, I grasped a true understanding of how far reaching our knowledge is as Onkwehón:we, especially our matrilineal identities which are grounded in our families. Our families are not only sources of love, comfort, and support but teach us resilience and resistance to colonization whereas "home and family are spaces where our identity is affirmed and valued, and where healthy lives are constructed" (Sunseri, 2008, p. 23).

This story teaches how our people continue to nurture our spark and our fires; *á:se tehatikonhsontóntie raotirihwá:ke* ("the faces yet to come"). Our lives as Onkwehón:we, Rotinonhsión:ni, and Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke are paradoxically a metaphorical entanglement of both fire and water.[67] The most difficult aspect of healing is seeing one's own reflection in the story, to confront the ways that one is harmed or has prolonged historic trauma through actions, words, thoughts, and behaviour. From a broad perspective, the story of colonization is not one of our existence and should not be given the power to perpetuate itself by re-storying our futures (Alfred, 2009). Day Schools and other ideologies and practices of CTA have harmed Indigenous peoples but after hundreds of years, they have ultimately failed in their mission:

> The final battleground existed in the lives of the native children caught between the influence of the teacher and the pull of their own community and families. Euro-Canadian lifestyles were pushing in around them, their parents were often at the mercy of white men for aid or employment, and white teachers were pounding the merits of their "superior" culture into them whenever possible. On this battleground, however, the school often lost out. (Dueck, 1986, pp. 128-129).

[67] In chapter two, I describe the river as a metaphor for the people of Kahnawà:ke and for Rotinonhsión:ni storytelling. I previously describe how Kanien'kehá:ka identity relates to our origins in the land of the spark/flint. Fire is also a Rotinonhsión:ni metaphor for social and relational spheres such as spirit/self, family, Clan, and Nation.

As Clandinin (2013) states, “there is never a final story” (p. 203). This story is meant to rock the boat, to remind people to follow the current of the river once again, and lean into our paddles. I close with a message from Kaia’titáhkhe that beautifully explains who we are in Kahnawà:ke and why we will continue to thrive as a people in these rough waters:

> So…I think, we’re on our way but… we still like to rock the boat. We’re not happy unless we’re rocking some boat! But I guess that’s who we are. That’s…why we’re still here…and we’re still fighting and…we’re a force to be reckoned with!
> (K. A. Jacobs, Personal Communication, December 13, 2018)

This painting was commissioned by KSCS Kahnawà:ke on behalf of the community. It is meant to honour Indian Residential School Survivors in Kahnawà:ke, to encourage people to share their stories. The painting captures the “Resilience” of Kahnawa’kehró:non. I think that this beautiful message is exemplified by this research story, that we are “Not Just Surviving”.

Figure 11. “Not Just Surviving”, original painting by Owisokon P. Lahache, 2016. Image used with permission from the artist.

Future Work & Giveaways from the Stories

My responsibility moving forward is to help disseminate the information and knowledge gathered in this research in accessible ways in Kahnawà:ke (and beyond). I will share the research process and how this story continues to evolve on my blog.[68] In the future, I hope to find ways to maintain the orality of stories in the context of my research. There are so many more stories I wanted to tell but this research had a specific purpose and I had to respect that. The ideas, topics, and other areas of research are giveaways from the stories about Indian Day School that the elders and I weaved together.

There are many avenues for future research that specifically explores Day Schooling or education in Kahnawà:ke. The elders stories reveal a number of potential topics and gaps in the research: generational differences in educational and schooling experiences, Protestant and other religious schooling experiences (may also be compared to Catholic schooling), impacts of gender separation, gender differences in schooling treatment and impacts, children's experiences in public or outside schools, boys sent to Shawbridge or reform schools, girls sent to convents in Montreal, Residential School experiences, and children of mixed ancestry (or non-status) who were denied the right to attend school in Kahnawà:ke. It is also necessary to compare the differences and similarities of experiences across time and space, both within and external to Kahnawà:ke.

There are important topics revealed through this research that impacted our community that do not directly relate to education. For example, the struggles of men who returned to Kahnawà:ke after the wars; the Great Depression of the 1930s; multigenerational impacts of the Saint Lawrence Seaway project; people affected by the Indian Act and membership; and effects of prevalent poverty and hunger in the community. It is a higher priority to conduct research that rebuilds, revitalizes, strengthens the people and teaches how to heal in practical ways without retraumatizing or victimizing. I do not approach my work or these stories as a binary of "positive" or "negative" topics, but choose instead to focus on how to go about telling these stories in a good way. People who are good medicine help us find the ability to heal ourselves.

[68] My personal website: shewalksabout.com.

Closing Words…

In the Rotinonhsión:ni way, opening this research story with Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen calls for a closing as well. In closing, I would like to thank Joe, Frank, Kaia'titáhkhe, and Grandma Millie for trusting me with their stories. This research gave me a true sense of the obstacles our community has had to overcome just to have a say in our own education. I admire the strength and determination of all those who are retracing their roots. I have also thought about the many Onkwehón:we who came before me who studied, wrote, and tried to tell their stories but had their voices silenced (niá:wen Konwatsitsawi). Their sacrifices also made this research possible. Niawenhkó:wa sewakwé:kon.

Niawenhkó:wa to my parents for giving me life and opening their hearts to many generations of our families to help raise me. I realize now as a mother while nurturing the fires of three "new faces" how much sacrifice and love it takes. I am also thankful for my five siblings who gave me the opportunity to be a good big sister and auntie.

This story is not meant to hurt anyone or leave heaviness in the mind or the heart. For those who need to talk about it, my door is always open. I will keep doing this work with our ancestors, as long as the river flows.

Ó:nen káti tho niió:re ia'tetewawennihárho. Tóka' thé:nen saionkwa'nikónhren í:se ki' né: ó:nen sasewawakwatakohá:ton. Eh káti' niiohtónhak ne onkwa'nikòn:ra.
Tho niiowèn:nake.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS/GUIDE

Child-Targeted Assimilation: Indian Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke

INTERVIEWEE
Please see written consent form for more information about the study.

INTERVIEWER
Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean is Wolf Clan from Kahnawà:ke and currently resides in the community with her family.
Contact info:
shiannw@hotmail.com. P.O. Box 1888 Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory J0L 1B0
Cell: (514) 434 – 1796
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Primary Interview Question (broad)
What was your experience at day school in Kahnawà:ke like?
Sub Questions *What schools in Kahnawà:ke did you attend and when?* *What year(s) did you attend?* *What was your age?* *Did you have siblings or family members there?* *What subjects were you taught in school?* *Do you remember any of the teachers? What were they like?* *Do you remember the principal and other staff? What were they like?* *What language(s) were you taught?* *During your time in school, did you learn/speak/study Kanien'kéha (language) at school or at home?* *Did you learn or participate in any cultural or ceremonial practices at school or at home?* *Were there any particularly memorable events or activities that happened at day school?*

Niawenhkó:wa!

Appendix B: Kaia'titáhkhe's Chronology

Note: The information in the chronology was added in-text but is listed here for clarity. Chronology hand-written by Kaia'titáhkhe, typed by Wahéhshon.

School Years

Prior to 1949 – a variety of schools

1949-50 Grade 6 Kateri Tekakwitha School

1950-51 Grade 7 Kateri Tekakwitha School

1951-52 Grade 8 Kateri Tekakwitha School

1952-53 Grade 9 Kateri Tekakwitha School

June 1953 Graduated from grade 9, Kateri Tekakwitha School

1953-54 Began grade 10 at Queen of Angels Academy in Montréal

1954-55 Grade 11 Queen of Angels Academy

June 1955 Graduated from high school, Queen of Angels Academy

July 1955 Began work as a stenographer at Bell Telephone Company in Montréal

1956 Got married and had a family

1972 Enrolled in University of Quebec Amerindian Teacher Training Program

1981 Bachelor of Education degree

1982 Teaching certificate from the Ministry of Quebec

Appendix C: Kaia'tiáhkhe' About Ahkwesáhsne Indian Day School

Note: This short story was provided (typed) by Kaia'titáhkhe. She told me this story after our recorded interview, during a long conversation. I wanted to confirm with her that I had her permission to include this story in the research and she agreed to provide it in her own words.

The Story in Kaia'titáhkhe's Words…

As I mentioned earlier, my father would take us with him to wherever he had a job, then move us back to Ahkwesáhsne in-between jobs. One of the times he took us home, we moved in with my grandmother in Snye. Ahkwesáhsne was a large reserve that was broken up into sections. Snye was one of the sections, a rural community with a one room school house. I enrolled there in the middle of the school year, and continued grade three.

Since I had been to schools in the cities my father had moved us [to], I became perfectly bilingual, English & Kanien'kéha. Mohawk was our language at home and I learned English with my friends and at school. However, at this school in Snye, the kids only spoke Kanien'kéha. I thought it was the thing to do, so I followed suit. The teacher was from the community, and the only one speaking English. When she asked me a question and I answered in Kanien'kéha, she got angry and slapped my face. I was shocked. I think she thought I was being defiant, when I just wanted to be like everyone else. I told my father, and shortly after we moved to the village, and I began school at the Saint Regis Village School.

This experience, I realize now, was intended to undermine my usage of Kanien'kéha and my identity which was largely rooted in my language. I was able to let it pass mostly because of my solid grounding with my parents and grandparents. I continued on to become a Kanien'kéha language teacher, principal, of Karonhianónhnha Immersion School, and today still able to contribute as a language consultant.

Appendix D: Grandma Millie's Stories

Stories of Mildred Iakotehraiénthon Ida Cross
Stories told at her home and at the Kateri Memorial Hospital Center
Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory
Final Edited Version – January 23, 2019

Child-Targeted Assimilation: An Oral History of Indian Day School Education in Kahnawà:ke

Stories co-created and retold by: Mildred Cross and Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean

Mildred Iakotehraiénthon Ida Cross – (Grandma) Millie
Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean – WSW

Background

These stories were not recorded using audio or visual equipment. At the time that this written account was finalized, my grandmother was eighty-five years old. She occasionally experiences mild age-associated memory impairment. She resides in a health care facility for Kahnawà:ke elders, due to significant health issues that require daily medical care. For these reasons, I talked with her the same way we have for many years, without recording equipment. The subjects of our discussions depended on her mood and energy level and many times, we did not discuss my research or day schools at all but other things. Only the last conversation we had (to review and finalize this document) was recorded for verification purposes and will not be transcribed or shared outside of our family. This practice aligns with our traditional oral history and culture as Rotinonhsión:ni and Kanien'kehá:ka people.

These stories were told to me by my Grandma Millie in bits in pieces over the duration of my life with her. On many occasions over the past three years, I explained my research and she understood and agreed to share her stories for this purpose. Over the period of about a year (2018 into January 2019), I sat with Grandma Millie during our usual visits and we would discuss her stories about day school. Often times, she would only say a few sentences about day school and her life during those days. I recall more of her stories from previous accounts but this document largely reflects *what she retold recently and agreed to include in the research*. I read this account

aloud to her no less than three times to ensure that it accurately represents her memory and what she would like to share about her life. Here, her memories and retellings are in the order that they came out over the past year, jumping back and forth through time. Any corrections, additions, or changes were added during my visits with her leading up to this final version. Addition information in brackets is added by me.

About Grandma Millie

Mildred (Millie) Ida Cross was born in Brooklyn in November 1933 (and later in life given the name Iakotehraiénthon in the Longhouse when she was adopted into the Bear Clan). Her mother's name was Mae (May) Gibson, she was adopted from an orphanage in New York. Grandma May was never able to fully trace her lineage or reconnect with her family, except a younger sister who was also put into an orphanage whom she took into her care at one point. Grandma Millie always said "I believe my mother was an Indian". Grandma Millie's father was Frank Tehonietathe Cross, son of Peter Nikaienta'a Cross (Cross-the-river) and Agathe Konwaronhiawi (Monick) Cross, both from Kahnawà:ke. She is the last living person from her immediate family, her parents and five siblings have all passed on to sky world.

She mainly grew up in Kahnawà:ke (and Brooklyn at times) and still has her family home beside the Catholic Church. She attended the Roman Catholic Indian Day School (Kateri Tekakwitha School) across from the Catholic church as a child. She married my Grandfather John Stephen Roberts (Bubba Stephen), a man from an Irish/Scottish family who grew up in Kahnawà:ke and spent most of his life living here. Together they had four children (Frankie, Debbie, my father Brian, & Judell). Grandma Millie is the eldest in four living generations of my father's family, with ten grandchildren, and twice as many great-grandchildren.

Grandma Millie's School Days

My father always said I was a "depression baby" and that's why I liked to eat so much [she laughs]. Those times were hard, people went hungry. When I was young, we went back and forth living on my grandparents' farm by the river [the Cross-the-river family homestead, shortened to "Cross"] and Brooklyn where we lived and where my father worked. My older siblings lived with us too but one by one they got married and moved away [her mother had three children from a previous marriage]. They had a different father but they're not my half-siblings

because we come from the same mother. They're just my brother and sisters. Then they moved away and it was just the three of us, me Melvina and Margie [the three that share the same father, Frank Cross]. Sometimes we lived at the farm for the summers and we loved it there, we always loved to come home [to her grandparents' farm].

My grandfather would milk the cows and he would call me over to squirt milk in my face [she laughs]. I remember my grandmother had beautiful long black hair when I was young and she would tie it up or braid it. They only spoke Mohawk. They used to tell me to read them the funnies [newspaper comics]. They didn't say "Millie", they called me "Milda" [she says it with an accent]. After we moved to our house—my house now, I would walk back and forth from home to my grandparents' farm by the river. When it was getting dark, my grandma would watch me go and my mother would be on the porch watching for me to come back. One time, it was dark and I fell right into a cow pie! You had to watch for the cow pies [she laughs].

I remember my grandfather sitting on the porch, smoking his pipe. He would sit there and sort of mutter to himself for a long time. I think he prayed or gave thanks that way. He grew his own tobacco, how I remember it...

I think I was about nine years old when we came back and I started school here in the village. We were so happy to come home. I was happy, I had so many friends in the school! Oh, I can't remember their names now. The nuns, they were the teachers there. If you had trouble, she would sit you beside her desk and work with you until you got it. I had some trouble but they worked with me until I got it. Some of them played with us kids outside.

People always said hateful things to my kids because of who their father was. He grew up here, moved here about five or six years old, something like that. His family was Irish-Scottish but he was raised here, so *I didn't marry out*.

In Brooklyn, we lived by Prospect Park. I don't know why we lived there everybody lived at Fulton. My father worked at the shipyard building ships. My mother worked in the munitions factory, you know, for the war. They were hard workers. My father didn't have to get sent in the draft because he was an Indian. Indians didn't have to go. Boy, are you taking me back…

I had only one friend in kindergarten, she was a little black girl. My mother was so good to her and her mother was so good to me. I can't remember her name…. The kids at school said a lot of hateful things to me. I guess their parents told them things… they would say, 'don't play

with her, the Indian, she will… steal your boyfriend'… *those types of things.* As if we children we were thinking that way. It was hard, there were no other Indians where we were living or in my class. It was mostly a black neighborhood where we lived and we got beat up every day because we didn't belong.

One time when there was no work, my father took the train down to the end and walked all the way back looking for work. For a long time he couldn't find anything. My grandfather said to 'come home to the farm' and they did. They had lots of gardens and animals there by the river. My grandma washed clothes in the river and they would dry in the wind on all the lines. There was lots to pick and do and it was nice to swim in the river. I hated picking the bugs off the potatoes, these stinky bugs. When the seaway came, my grandparents didn't wanna leave their home. When they knocked the houses down, they had to live with their daughter, my Aunt Rosie, in the village. They died soon after. It broke their hearts to lose the farm. How could the old people sign things or fight back they can't read and write, only speak Mohawk? It still makes me sad. Even back here, we used to swim in the river, it was nice. You know your grandfather pulled a young boy out of the river once? He heard the mother screaming. Think he was about two. He jumped in the ice to pull him out. That mother was grabbing your grandfather, had to push her out the way. He brought him back to life. It was *so cold*. Your grandfather got pneumonia after that. Many times that boy has come around to thank him for saving his life. Wasn't the only one either, there was a fire down the road once too. Bubba ran in and pulled the kids out. I can't remember the family name now…maybe Montour…

Sometimes the kids would act up. They were sort of looked at as troublemakers. Some of them would say mean things to the nuns. I guess their parents told them things what was going on. I didn't cause trouble and my parents never said anything bad about the school or the church --or the nuns. Only a few times they got mad because I reached for things or used my left hand. They want us to use our right hand. Today I can use both, now because of that. They used to come over and smack my hand. They made me use my right. But now I can write both hands, I won't say it's perfect but I can. That's the only thing they did that made me not like them. Other than that, they were good to us, the Sisters of Saint Anne.

I started school about nine years old, I can't remember what grade… I went up to grade nine and then I graduated. I didn't go to high school because I wanted to go to work.

My dad spoke Mohawk, he was a very good speaker. When I was young, I understood a lot, heard it from my grandparents… but he didn't really teach us to speak it that much because he said my mother didn't understand and it wasn't right. Only time he spoke it at home was when his brothers come to the house. They would sit there and talk Mohawk, or if it was daytime, they send us outside to play. It was one of those things…I can't speak it now but I wish I did. Can you help me say my Indian name again…

I married your grandfather – twice! We got married by JP when we were young but then they wouldn't let Frankie [her first born son] into the Catholic school in New York. We had to get married again, by priest. I don't know why. After that, we came back here to live.

We learned like any other school, young grades. Only they drew in Latin instead of teaching Indian. They should have had a teacher that spoke Mohawk to help us if we were goin' to learn another language. I used to know a lot of Latin. I forgot it all.

My mother used to make us blonda, you know like I make it, with the gravy. I liked it before school, what's left with milk and sugar. It's a good breakfast, leftover cornmeal for breakfast.

Appendix E: Chronology of Day Schooling in Kahnawà:ke

Year(s)	Information & References
1826	First formal Day School opens in Kahnawà:ke, English school, Methodist (Divine, 1922; Osgood, 1829)
1829	Methodist school closes in Caughnawaga, reopens in Chateauguay with "continued opposition from Romish priests" (Divine, 1922, p. 371; Osgood, 1829)
1831	Some children from Caughnawaga sent to school in Saint John, taught by C.W Forest (Divine, 1922, pp. 368-369)
1835	Lord Aylmer appointed to open Roman Catholic English village school, teacher withdrawn in 1838 due to Rev. Marcoux's "prejudice against English" (Divine, 1922, p. 366)
1837	Report of the executive council of Indian Affairs, "little being done for the education of the Indians" (Divine 1922, p. 373).
1840s - 1958	Children from Caughnawaga sent to Wikwemikong and Spanish Residential Schools run by Roman Catholic missionaries (Divine, 1922, pp. 426-427).
1864	Sisters of Saint Ann approached for the first time to teach in Caughnawaga, again in 1888 and 1913. (Roy, 1994)
1887	A school is built next to the Catholic church. 100 students enrolled (Katzer, 1972, pp. 179-180).
1907	QC Bridge disaster, government offers to take effected children into boarding or Residential Schools (Fleming, 2007, p. 54).
1910	Trilingual teachers from Caughnawaga teaching in schools with missionaries, see Katzer (1972) for student statistics from 1910 (pp. 179-180). 1910: "37 Kahnawà:ke children in Wikwemikong (22 boys, 15 girls) and 15 at Anglican Mt. Elgin Industrial School (Reid, 2004, p. 108).
1912	After this period, less common for children from Caughnawaga to be sent to boarding schools but it still occurred until the 1950s (Katzer, 1972, p. 149).
1915	Sisters of Saint Anne: 1st convent on the main road "Mr. Jacco's home". Girls' school (3 classes) opens, boys' school (4 classes). Pastor Rev. Father Joseph Gras, S.J. Personnel: 5 Religious, 2 lay teachers. Students: 121 boys, 127 girls. Classes: "Kindergarten, Forms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6". (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1917 (Oct)	SSA: Convent moves to "Mr. Julian Jacobs' house on the river road, first convent too small with increase to 8 personnel. (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1918	Schools closed from October 10, 1918 to November 12, 1918 due to Spanish influenza outbreak in Caughnawaga (SSA Archives, B46/13, 26).

1919	Letter from Duncan Campbell Scott dated July 15, 1919 to SSA to stop using "Indian girls to give instruction to the pupils in the Caughnawaga schools (SSA Archives, B46/13, 32).
1919	Letter (page 144 of the Council Book), 22 children being sent to Ottawa or Spanish Ontario institutes. Signed by Mayor P.J. Delisle, and Indian Agent J. M. Brosseau (KORLCC Archives).
1921 (Feb)	SSA: convent moved to Dr. Tom Patton's home on the new Malone highway, property acquired after his death. Personnel now up to 11 teachers. They live there until 1950 (Roy, 1994; SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1923	Supervision of Saint Isidore Road School (207) given to Sr. Superior. "One lay teacher with 21 pupils" (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1928	Senior School built: 5 Religious personnel, 92 pupils. Kateri School: 4 Religious personnel, 123 pupils. Eastern School: 3 Religious personnel, 1 lay teacher, 131 pupils (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1931	Supervision of the Bush School: 1 teacher, 27 pupils (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1938	Manual training assumed by Rev. Brother Gauthier, S.J. to equip the boys with concepts of craftsmanship.
1941	Senior School burns, students lodged in glass-partitioned classes in other two schools and two classes in private homes until 1949. Diplomas: 24 academic diplomas and 226 from grade IX. Vocations: 1 priest, Rev. Father Michael Jacobs, S.J. (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1949	New Kateri Tekakwitha School (12 classes, centralizes all the Catholic children of the reserve): 9 Religious personnel, 7 lay teachers, 309 or 384 pupils, 55 Handmaids and Knights of the Blessed Sac. 25 Crusaders, 58 Cadette aspirants (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4).
1950	"Visit of Mis Eminence Eugene Cardinal Tisserand of Rome, who blesses the new Kateri School on the occasion of the Centennial celebration of the Community of the Sisters of Saint Ann" (SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4)
1951	Effective September 1, 1951 Reverend Father Bechard recognized as Principal of the Caughnawaga R.C. Indian Day School, and Sister Mediatrix as Vice-Principal (SSA Archives, B46/13, 48).
1952	Inspection of Kateri School by Sister Mary Anne Eva, Prefect of Studies from November 12 and 13, 1952. Total children registered: 225, in attendance: 204 (SSA Archives, LQ2/9, 1).

Notes: This chronology has been assembled based on the initial research conducted for the Master's thesis and should be considered "in-progress".

SSA Archives, LQ2/1, 4: "History of The Mission of the Sisters of Saint Ann at Caughnawaga, Laprairie County, 41 years".