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**PATTERNS AND SIMILARITIES IN THE CAREER PATHS
OF NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN ELEMENTARY TEACHERS**

by
Caroline Carlson

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
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As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Caroline Carlson entitled Patterns and Similiarities in the Career Paths of Native American Women Elementary Teachers

and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Education

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STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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SIGNED: *Candice Carbon*

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DEDICATION

**Dedicated to the Native American women teachers
who are out there teaching children on a daily basis,
and to Alicia, Alexandra, and Joshua
for reminding me to
always look at life through a child's eyes.**

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ABSTRACT

A significant number of American Indian women have taught and still teach children in both public and government Indian schools. Yet there is very little written about these Native American women teachers, how they view themselves, and their relationship to their professional teaching careers throughout history. In addition, historical accounts on Native education are often inaccurate, disrespectful, and biased.

To address issues about Native American women teachers, a qualitative study was conducted to determine the elements in their lives that influenced them to select elementary school teaching as a career choice, and to identify and examine the common patterns and similarities within those elements. The research documented key elements of success as a Native American female teachers including (a) a supportive family, (b) mentoring and positive role models for young Native American girls in elementary and secondary school is vital to their continuing onto higher education, and (c) a strong sense of cultural identity.

Five Native American women elementary public school teachers in a large southwestern city, representing four different tribes, participated in individual in-depth interviews to gather information regarding what elements in their lives lead them to select teaching as a career choice. Two had taught in the public school system for more than 20 years, the other three had been in the classroom for less than five years.

The research revealed that Native American mothers today are the most influential family members in terms of their daughters educational

success in elementary and secondary school, along with being a the primary factor in providing moral support during their college years. Mentors and positive role models for young Native American girls in elementary and secondary school are vital to their continuing on the road to higher education. All participants felt that their strong sense of cultural identity helped them as adults to deal with cultural conflict in the workplace.

Recommendations for further study, based on participant comments include: increase the number of teachers involved in the study, and interview these same teachers five years from now to see if their reflections changed.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

We survived manifest destiny; we survived White men's diseases; we survived the Trail of Tears which was trod by the foremothers of many of us. . . . We survived corrupt Indian agents and insensitive White school teachers. We've survived poverty and pestilence and federal bureaucracy. . . . We shall prevail as Indian women. . . . We will be a force to be reckoned with.

**Owanah Anderson, 1981
Choctaw**

Chapter 1 will be divided into two sections designed to familiarize the reader with the components of this study as to why Native American women choose education as a profession.

Section 1 will include background; historical to present time.

Section 2 will include the statement of the problem, significance, question, limitations, assumptions and definitions of terms.

Section 1: Historic Background

Education is not the invention of the white man, nor is it his sole possession. A traditional function of women in all societies has been the nurturing and instruction of the young. Every society devises means for socializing their young and transmitting its culture. Henrietta Whiteman, an American Indian woman, stated that, "Education is as native to this continent as its Native People. We have educated our youth through a rich

oral tradition transmitted by the elders of the tribe" (Whiteman, 1978, p. 105), a task which is shared equally between male and female.

Until the coming of the white man and the advent of compulsory education for Native American girls, the cycle of life moved most Native American women from daughter to mother to grandmother in an unbroken circle, surrounded by her extended family and community. "Being a mother and rearing a healthy family were the ultimate achievements for a woman in the North American Indian societies (Niethammer, 1977, p. 1), from birth to adulthood.

As long as a Native American girl was still a baby, she would be cuddled and cared for and allowed to do as she pleased, although at an early age, girls began to learn skills that would be required of them as women. There were no special educational buildings, the whole village and tribal territory was her school.

Often lessons were not formal or structured, but went on all day long, encompassing not only economic pursuits, such as crafts, food gathering, housework and agriculture, but also the customs, etiquette, social obligations and legends of her tribe" (Niethammer, 1977, p. 23). Zitkala-Sa recalls as a girl of seven that she, ". . . was as free as the wind that blew my hair, and no less spirited than a bounding deer" (1900, p. 37).

Regarding other lessons of life, C. J. Brafford, a Lakota Sioux reports,

Stories were told by the older generation to the younger, teaching creation, beliefs, values and morals. Grandmothers assumed most of the responsibility of caring for and instructing the female child. Girls were taught practical skills such as cooking, sewing, tanning

hides, decorating with porcupine quills and sewing buffalo hides together to make tipis. Girls were also taught the spiritual and moral responsibilities of life. (1992, p. 23)

Mothers and grandmothers remained close to their daughters, instructing them through modeling, stories and advice. Girls received toys that prepared them for adult life, made in traditional tribal styles. They played with miniature tipis, dolls dressed in traditional clothing, miniature cradleboards and household goods. Zitala-Sa recollects that after many confining lessons of bead and quillwork, she and her friends would take off into the hills and imitate their mothers, grandmothers and other tribal women. "We delighted in impersonating our own mothers. We talked of things we had heard them say in conversations. We imitated their various manners, even down to the inflections in their voices" (Zitala-Sa, 1900, p. 41).

Tribal education systems remained the same for many, many generations until compulsory education for American Indians was thrust upon them by the white man. This began when missionaries accompanied explorers across the ocean to both the North and South American continents. The Franciscans, who were mostly Spanish, were involved in the Southwest--California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, along with the Jesuits in Florida and other southern states. Roman Catholic missionaries were also active throughout the midwest states and the Northwest area. Protestants established schools and colleges under the direction of the English king on the East Coast.

The League of Women Voters, in a 1976 report on Indian Education, summed up the missionary efforts in this way,

School has been the primary tool for *civilizing* Indians ever since the French Jesuits established a mission in Florida in 1568. Jesuit priests were instructed to educate the children in the French manner. Other religious groups soon followed the lead, setting up mission schools for Indian youth, and to begin a practice of separating Indian children from their families in order to educate them and also of removing them from their native environment in the belief that this would lead to assimilation. (1976, p. 60)

As part of the assimilation movement, the Virginia Company, in 1606, initiated charters stressing conversion of Indians and providing a "ten pound note for each Indian instructed in a colonist home" (Bannen, 1979, p. 3). Settlers complained of being unable to get enough boys in a peaceable manner because Indian parents didn't seem to want their sons taken from them (Marshall, 1985). "Three years later, the company gave Sir Thomas Gates specific instructions on how to educate Indian children in the Virginia Colony" (Szasz, 1988, pp. 53-54). Missionaries continued their efforts to ". . . create Indians who would be English in their language, civilized in their habits and Christian in their religion" (Cremin, 1980, p. 234). They believed that schools were the most useful tools to accomplish this assimilation. NACIE reports,

Some settlers established schools for the American Indians. However under the guise of Christianizing and civilizing the Indian, the so called *Indian Schools* were used by the early settlers to raise monies for their own education. The education obtained was one which was used as a means of christianizing and civilizing *the heathen*. (NACIE, 1992, p. 39)

These missionary efforts to *civilize the Indian* continued through the American Revolution. Afterward the administration of Indian affairs was turned over to the War Department, and "education of the tribes was

deemed essential in keeping them friendly" (Adams, 1946, p. 29). The War Department left most tribal education matters up to the missionaries.

To support the efforts of the churches, Congress began to appropriate monies for tribal education in the early 1800s. In 1803 it appropriated \$15,000 annually for Indian vocational education. Thomas Jefferson commented, "Humanity enjoins us to teach them [Indians] agriculture and the domestic arts" (Marshall, 1985, p. 9). This call for vocational education went unheeded by missionaries as they continued to try to *christianize and civilize* a people who for a large part resisted their efforts. In 1819, Congress passed the Civilization Act which authorized the expenditure of \$10,000 annually for Indian education. It resulted in the building of coeducational schools for male and female Native American students. In 1820 the first such school west of the Mississippi was constructed, and, "By March, 1824, there were 24 schools with an enrollment of about 800 students" (Adams, 1946, p. 35). By 1842, \$214,000 in federal funds had been directed to missionary organizations from the fund to help maintain 37 schools employing 85 teachers and serving 1,283 students (Tyler, 1973, p. 45).

Only 10 years later the federal government would step up their educational efforts. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was created in 1834 in part to meet this effort. The BIA introduced the Indian Education Program which called for government and missionary cooperation to provide practical training in manual labor activities and the creation of selected tribal schools to be operated by Indian people themselves, with no

additional money provided. These manual training schools were located among tribes and taught basic agricultural techniques and domestic arts.

Although some tribes like the Choctow and Cherokee began to prosper under their own rule, yet others were not so fortunate. During this same time period, wave after wave of western expansion was spurred on by the California Gold Rush of 1849 and the completion of the transcontinental railroad among other things. These two events dealt a near fatal blow to the American Indian who lived west of the Mississippi, especially California tribes, who almost totally disappeared. White encroachment across the land resulted in resistance, starvation, disease and the transformation of a once self-sustaining group of people into "wards of the federal government" (Marshell, 1985, p. 11).

The federal government forced custodial care upon the Native American people, thus increasing the number of Native Americans to be forced onto welfare dependency. Later the government viewed it as an ever increasing financial burden. The government had, however, assumed full responsibility for Indian education. As such, the emphasis turned from *civilizing* children, to forced *assimilation* of them into the mainstream American society. Thompson (1978) describes the objective as being, "Total absorption of Indian youth into the mainstream of American life" (p. 5).

This forced assimilation came in the form of off-reservation boarding schools. "Federal educators assumed they could erase tribal identity by separating Indian children from Indian adults" (Lomawaima, 1994, p. xiii). Richard Pratt opened the first boarding school in Carlisle,

Pennsylvania (Thompson, 1978, p. 5). Indian children were schooled there on Pratt's theory that,

I suppose the end to be gained is the complete civilization of the Indian and his absorption into our national life . . . the sooner all tribal relations are broken up, the sooner the Indian loses all his Indian ways, even his language, the better it will be for him and for the government and the greater will be the economy to both. (Utley, 1964, p. 266)

Soon other boarding schools began to spring forth following in Carlisle's footsteps and by 1899, 24 off-reservation boarding schools were in operation (Lomawaima, 1994, p. 6).

As an effort to provide some sort of consistency to the various Indian schools, the BIA established a standard curriculum for all federal boarding schools. This curriculum stressed systematic habits: punctuality, regular attendance and learning the English language.

In addition to the assimilation focus of the curriculum, other acts were levied against the children to banish them from their tribal cultures and traditions. Upon arrival at the BIA schools, children were given pronounceable English names, baths in sheep dip, haircuts, and Anglo uniforms. Creek anthropologist Tsianina Lomowaima, in her book about the history of Chilocco, points out that there was an overt irony in trying to create homogeneous students through uniforms (1994, p. 94). She felt that this policy limited educational opportunities and what they called assimilation. Instead young girls were quickly learning to take their place as servants within the dominant society.

“Proper training for young Indian women, and the emphasis on 'proper' clothes for boarding school girls, were examples of the federal

practice of organizing the obedient individual, while the policy aimed to disorganize the sovereign tribe" (Lomawaina, 1994, p. 91). Students from different tribes were grouped together to discourage and ultimately destroy conversation skills in their native tongues, those caught doing so were severely punished. As a result of these brutal acts runaways were frequent, and in some schools, a sizable part of the education budget was spent on retrieving them (Marshall, 1985, p. 13).

None of the schools could function with a low enrollment, so maintaining a student population through retrieving runaways and new recruits was crucial. The acts of retrieval and recruitment were also cruel. In order to obtain students for the boarding school system, many children were forcibly taken from their mother's arms. Most Native American mothers resisted the capture of their children. "It is not the Hopi way of caring for children, this tearing them from their homes and their mother's arms" (Qoyawayma, 1964, p. 18). Some mothers pleaded that they needed the help of an only daughter; others hid their children under blankets or in storage bins, but eventually most were caught; a few, consumed by curiosity, went voluntarily (Qoyawayma, 1964, pp. 24-25). Zitkala-Sa's mother was probably typical of many mothers when she gave her reluctant permission for her daughter to leave, "She will need an education when she is grown, for then there will be fewer real Dakotas, and many more palefaces. But I know my daughter will suffer keenly in this experiment" (Zitkala-Sa, 1976, p. 44).

Other reports of such incidents are reported in the writing of Wilma Mankiller. She reports in her book, Mankiller.

Back in the bad old days, the BIA representatives who maintained boarding schools such as Sequoyah [still operating in Oklahoma, now by the Cherokee tribe] would go hundreds of miles and return with native children. The philosophy, reflecting an errant missionary zeal, was to get native children away from their families, their elders, their tribes, their language, their heritage. They isolated native children so they would forget their culture. The boarding school concept was simply another way for the federal government to deal with what its officials always called "the Indian problem." After first trying to wipe all of us off the face of the earth with violence, they attempted to isolate us on reservations. . . . So the federal government rounded up Indian youngsters and forced them to attend boarding schools whether they wanted to or not. (1993, p. 7)

Though the attempt of BIA schools was to strip Indian children of their culture and assimilate them into white society, they, on the most part, did not meet this objective. Boarding schools actually failed in their objective of Indian assimilation even though there were often overly brutal attempts to strip Native American children of their tribal ancestry. Mankiller (1993) goes on to say,

The whole idea behind those boarding schools, whether they be government operated like Sequoyah or a religious operation, was to acculturate native people into the mainstream white society and, at the same time destroy their sense of self. The boarding school officials hoped to make the "little Indians" into "ladies and gentleman." So they cut their hair short and did not allow them to utter one word in their native language. Oftentimes all visits to family and friends back home were denied. The idea was to "civilize" the children. (pp. 7-8)

Because of the strictness of BIA schools, many children returned to their reservations unable to fit back in with their own people, nor did they fit into the white culture. The female child who rejoined her people was

unable to employ her learned education. When Polingasi Qoyawayma returned to her Hopi village after four years at Sherman Institute in Riverside, California, she found that the old village life was not for her. She had experienced too much of the white world and had liked it. She told her mother, "I have gone too far. I have set my course. As you told me the first day I went to school, there is no turning back" (Qoyawayma, 1964, p. 72). David Adams adds, "In the last analysis the boarding school contributed as much to the disintegration of Indian culture as it did to its transformation" (1974, p. 248). As such, often Native American mothers painfully welcomed home their daughters from boarding schools after many years. "The distance between mothers and daughters had been multiplied by the length of their separation, and the magnitude of the cultural differences between boarding school and reservation" (Barmon, 1979, p. 10). After 13 years away at school, Helen Sekaquaptewa's mother, ". . . was glad I was home. If I would stay there, she would not urge me to change my ways" (Sekaquaptewa, 1969, p.145).

Although there was an air of despair on the part of mothers and daughters because of the BIA schools, the schools continued to grow. Boarding schools crested in popularity around the turn of the century, and continued to remain as a focal point of the federal school system through the mid-1930s. The 1930s were a time of high enrollment for boarding schools due to the economic conditions resulting from the Depression. The Meriam Report in the 1920s and New Deal federal programs of the 1930s did much to force change on the course of Indian education. Community day schools began to develop within Indian communities where cross

cultural education programs would allow Indian children to learn their culture and to become aware of non-Indian cultural values through the medium of their own cultural curriculum. John Beatty, a Director of Indian Education, felt that education should not make the student, ". . . unfit to return to tribal life, while failing to fit (prepare) him for making a living anywhere else" (Szasz, 1977, p. 55).

Most of Beatty's progressive policies came under relentless attack. Many Congressmen felt that Indian people should be adapting to the dominant culture in an effort to become good citizens. They felt these progressive ideas would lead to the prolonging of the reservation system, as they actually wanted to get out the the business of Indians. This fear eventually led to a Congressional plan of termination where the reservation system ultimately would be dismantled. Wilma Mankiller remembers being part of the termination policy and relocation process when she was growing up. She, along with most of her family were relocated from Oklahoma to California in 1956.

Our poverty prompted the move. In 1955, my father first started talking with the BIA officials about the various forms of assistance to the Cherokees. Relocation was a possibility. I recall hearing at that time the the relocation program was being offered as a wonderful opportunity for Indian families to get great jobs, obtain good educations for their kids and, once and for all leave the poverty behind. The government methods had softened since the nineteenth century, but the end result was the same for native people. Instead of guns and bayonets, the BIA used promotional brochures showing staged photographs of smiling Indians in "happy homes" in the big cities. (Mankiller, 1993, p. 69)

Mankiller further states,

For my family and other native people whom we befriended in San Francisco, the federal termination and relocation program . . . had failed. Termination certainly never even came close to liberating anyone. If anything, those policies had only increased the misfortune and despair among native people. although thousands of American Indians had been relocated, the relocation act's goal of abolishing ties to tribal lands was never realized--thank goodness. (1993, p. 161)

Marshall also talks about the effects of termination:

Termination [has] had a lasting effect on Indian education because it promoted a philosophical return to the values of forced assimilation. Indian peoples viewed termination as an attempt to separate them from their tribal lands . . . the termination policy resulted in the permanent distrust, by Native Americans, of all future governmental policies directed toward their well being, despite the fact that termination was officially abandoned in 1958. (1985, p. 17)

The 1950s was a period which produced small changes in Indian education. The federal government was beginning to shut down boarding schools, and public school attendance would now be emphasized. The 1960s saw a slight philosophical shift by Congress recognizing the rights of Native people to participate in and control their own educational systems. Self-determination became the growing commitment among Indian people.

Since that time, and especially over the last 20 years, Indian controlled schools have grown in popularity both on and off the reservations. Public schools continue to struggle to meet the needs and improve the achievement of their Native students. In some areas of the country the concept of tribally controlled schools has become so popular that keeping schools staffed has become a problem.

The shortage of Native education professionals has been identified as an important inhibitor of achievement for Indian children (Noley, 1992, p. 23). The 1974 U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

notes that, "The percentage of Native teachers in schools was low and declining" (Noley, 1992, p. 23).

Native American educators have served as teachers and administrators to their own people since the 1820s when Adin C. Gibbs of Delaware taught in the mission schools. Additionally, many other Native people have served as teachers in schools established by tribes, missionaries, and the BIA.

In some boarding schools the curriculum included a two-year teacher training course especially for female students because the majority of educators at the time felt that *teaching was essentially women's work*. Female students who had completed the eighth grade could enroll to teach domestic science.

Although native people are employed as educators, the majority of Native American students have always been, and continue to be, educated for the most part by non-Natives Americans. The impact of this phenomenon seems to be that very few Native Americans finish high school, let alone go on to college. In 1988, the high school dropout rates across the country for Native American high school students stood at approximately 36%, compared to 28.8% for all students (O'Brien, 1992, p. 1). In 1990, a total of 103,000 Native American students enrolled in higher education, an increase of 11% over 1988. "American Indians still account for less than 1% of all higher education students" (O'Brien, 1992, p. 1). O'Brien goes on to say, "A 1989 survey of those institutions serving almost 75% of American Indian students found more than half of those students (53%) left after the first year and three out of four did not

complete their degrees" (1992, p. 2). Less than 25% of those few high school graduates who do go on to college graduate with an undergraduate degree. Consequently, there were very few Native teachers to fill the teaching void, thus thrusting the former pattern back into existence where Native children up through the second half of this century do not have the benefits of a Native teacher.

According to the 1996 Digest of Educational Statistics, less than 1% of American teachers today are Native American. Wright (1992) says that higher education, in general, has never had but a few Native American students. Early Native American students studied the same subjects as white students. However, as the federal government came to dominate Indian education, higher education gave way to vocational education. The federal boarding school system, which began in 1879, would continue as the model for Indian education for the next 50 years. Its methods required the removal of the students from their homes and tribes, strict military discipline, infusion of the Protestant work ethic and an emphasis on agricultural and domestic arts. Consequently by 1900 only a few Native Americans attended colleges or universities, the figure dwindled to 385 in 1932, with only 52 college graduates identified (Wright, 1992, p. 92). Small numbers of college graduates would continue until after the end of World War II.

Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s and the post World War II GI bill brought governmental support to Native Americans seeking a higher education, especially males. Native American higher education enrollment

increased dramatically, but still was only about 1% of the total American Indian population by 1966, as such reform was desperately needed.

Higher educational reform for the benefit of minority students began to slowly move forward in the late 1960s. Stronger recruitment activities, improved admission policies and new programs of study helped Native American student enrollment to increase through the 1970s and 1980s. Government legislation in the 1970s also addressed educational reform through a shift to more Native control of education. Tribally controlled community colleges challenged the paternalistic governmental policies of the past. Almost two dozen tribes have now established their own community colleges focusing on integrating tribal language and history into traditional college curriculum. Today these colleges are serving more than 10,000 students.

In 1990, a total of 103,000 American Indian students enrolled in higher education, an 11% increase from the 93,000 enrolled in 1988, and a 36% increase from the 76,000 enrolled in 1976 (Carter & Wilson, 1992).

Even though the efforts of tribally controlled educational programs are noble, on the whole, as a proportion of the entire higher education population, American Indian enrollment is declining. Considering the current rapid growth in the college age Native American population, this is an alarming statistic. Native Americans remain among the least educated of the other ethnic groups in this country. Only 6% of the Native population has earned an undergraduate college degree, compared to 23% for whites (Astin, 1982). The proportion of enrolled Native American

students attending fulltime at colleges and universities was down, from 62% in 1976 to 48% in 1984 (Indian Nations at Risk, 1991, p. 94).

There are actually several causes for this decline. They can be summarized as: (a) a national tendency of indifference, (b) a governmental departure from affirmative action, and (c) a nationwide tolerance of institutional racism. Other things contributing to this decline include poor secondary school preparation, lack of adequate scholarships, the inability to bridge the gap from high school to college, very few mentors in both secondary and college for students and insensitive institutional climates. Although this is a dismal picture, women in general, and specifically Native women, have and continue to enter the teaching profession.

When Native American women, like other women, entered the field of education in the 1800s, they did so because they needed the money and there were few other respectable paid occupations for women of that time. Often they had been educated in the white world and found their new skills didn't fit into their old way of life. In some areas, such as the Cherokee reservation in Oklahoma, the tribe had taken the job of educating their youth seriously, and created their own education department. "By the 1880s, the Cherokee Nation education department had advanced to a point where teachers were receiving their teacher training within the nation" (Watt, in Seller, 1994, p. 408).

Today, the education field parallels these early tribal education systems in concept and has given Native American women opportunities to aspire to as they grow. In 1990, almost 6 of 10 (58%) American Indian students attending college were women. This is a 13% increase over 1980

when women represented only 45% of all American Indian students in 1980 (U.S. Dept. of Education, 1989). This increase has allowed Native American women who are also professional educators to become the needed mentors and role models for girls in their communities. Native girls are beginning to see their teachers not just as women who work to supplement the family income. They are now often visualizing the education field as a way to better their own life situations .

Young Native women may gain an understanding that education has benefited women in many different ways. Institutions of higher learning have given women opportunities to pursue careers and professions in the field of education, as teachers, counselors, nurses and administrators. The education field, in turn, has become a stepping stone leading to other career choices.

Section 2:

Statement of the Problem

This study will explore the elements that influenced Native American women to choose elementary school teaching as a career choice, and to identify and examine the common patterns and similarities within those elements.

Significance

This study will prove to be significant in the following ways by adding to the general body of literature as:

- 1. There is very little written about twentieth century Native American women's career selections.**
- 2. There is very little written about Native American elementary teachers and their perceptions of the educational process.**
- 3. The results of this study may be useful to schools which have a significant number of female Native American students selecting teaching as career choice.**
- 4. The results of this study may be useful to schools with Native American teachers because they will have a positive influence on all students in the school.**

Question

The Primary Research Question is:

What elements in their lives influence twentieth century Native American women to select elementary school teaching as a career choice ?

Limitations

For the purpose of this study the following limitations are listed:

- 1. Due to the nature of this population, the results may only be generalized only to like populations.**
- 2. Due to the small number of the sample of the study, the results may not be representative of the larger number of the total population.**

Assumptions

1. Teacher respondents will be honest and candid with the interviewer. The interviewer will gather data and remain unbiased during the teacher interviews.

2. Teacher respondents will be representative of the subset of American Indian elementary teachers.

Definitions of Terms

Native American	Person who is a member of an Indian tribe (Code of Federal Regulations, Ch.25 April 1, 1962 Sec. J.). As defined by Public Law 93-638, the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act (1978), an Indian means a person who is an enrolled member of an Indian tribe, and, nation or other organized group or community which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services by the United States.
Elementary Teacher	Person who is certified by the state to teach K-8 grades.
Data	Information, numbers or measurements which are collected as a result of interviews with Native American female, elementary teachers.

Participant	A Native American female who is currently teaching in an elementary school.
Respondent	A Native American female who is currently teaching in an elementary school

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Know your past. It is the foundation of your
present, and the path to your future.**

**Pualani Kanahele,
Native Hawaiian**

This chapter will be divided into three sections. The first is designed to familiarize the reader with an overview of the education of women in American society, historically through present day. It will also review how the education field opened doors for women in general.

The second section will provide the reader with a historical perspective of American Indian education and how it relates to Native women. This section will provide historical background of American Indian women, their roles and education within their societies prior to and after contact with the white man.

The third section will provide the reader with background specifically related to American Indian women teachers. Very few articles or books relating specifically to American Indian public school, government or private school teachers, male or female have been written that suggest reasons as to why American Indian women chose teaching as a career. There is very little written to suggest how Native women view themselves, and their relationship to their professional teaching careers throughout history.

Most of what has been written is very generic in terms of tribal identity. Even though each tribal group has its own unique history, most authors use a *pan Indian* contextual view when writing about Native Americans.

Medicine, 1988; Bowker, 1992; and Allen, 1989, all agree that the study of American Indian women written from a Native American woman's perspective is virtually nonexistent. Beatrice Medicine states, "There is virtually no research in this area and no research agenda for the future" (Medicine, 1988, p. 86). Early historical accounts on Indian women and culture emanates from a white, patriarchal male point of view. Indian women were often seen throughout United States history as the stereotypical *Indian Princess* or *squaw*. Bea Medicine continues, "Published material on North American native females is bound inextricably within male produced ethnographic accounts. Such accounts usually portray native women in one of two stereotypical ways: as the dismal drudge exemplified in the male dominant society."

Over the last few decades authors have challenged these myths and legends with autobiographical works such as Me and Mine by Louise Udall and Anna Shaw about her Pima experiences, and the scholarly works on Plains Indian women such as The Hidden Half by Patricia Albers and Bea Medicine. These types of works have helped to bring forth the true situations in the lives of American Indian women, yet there is very little written about Indian women as teachers.

Section 1:

Overview of Women's Education

The education of women in colonial America was modeled on the English system. Women were trained at home for domestic work or they entered apprenticeships with a master and his family. The master of the house was responsible for the education of everyone, including his apprentices.

Laws adopted at the time made it possible for courts to take children away from their parents who couldn't educate them, and place them in apprenticeships. Massachusetts even required the teaching of the laws of the colony and the codes of Puritanism in addition to reading and math.

This was a heavy load for the heads of the family households, and women began to take on the role of family educator in addition to her other duties. Most of these women were not well educated themselves. Fewer than 40% of women who signed legal documents in New England in the first half of the 18th century could write their own names. Sixty percent could only make a mark (Sexton, p. 42).

Early in the 18th century, some Dame Schools had been set up in the homes of local women to offer girls a couple years of basic instruction, usually reading, writing and arithmetic. Some Dame schools offered girls additional subjects like dancing, painting, drawing, writing and French, often thought of as impractical subjects for frontier women.

By the middle of the 18th century, society was changing its view on women's education. In 1769, on the eve of the Revolution, girls were finally admitted to Boston's public schools. After the Revolution,

coeducational primary schools became quite common throughout the colonies. By 1800, it was thought that women performed a significant social role and schooling would help them better perform their duties.

In 1824, the first public high school, for girls only, was opened in Worcester, Massachusetts. Separate schools for girls were expensive and the first coeducational public high school opened in 1826 in Connecticut. Other coeducational schools quickly followed and by the mid 1800s, the coeducational high school was firmly established. After the Civil War, high schools grew rapidly and by 1890, almost twice as many girls as boys were graduating.

About the same time seminaries, modeled on the English finishing schools, were established for women. They were chartered by the state and often privately endowed with available funds. The first one was established at Troy, New York in 1821 by Emma Willard. A second was founded on Hartford, Connecticut in 1824 by Catharine Beecher. In the beginning their purpose was to teach religious, moral, literary, domestic and ornamental education (Sexton, 1976, p. 45). Slowly these seminaries added more substantive academic subjects including math, philosophy and science.

Sexton also reports that Frederick Marryat, a British writer, had an interesting perception while traveling through America in 1837. He wrote:

Under a certain age girls are certainly much quicker than boys and I presume would retain what they learnt if it were not for their subsequent duties in making pudding and nursing babies. Yet there are affairs which must be performed by one sex or the other, and of what use can algebra and other abstruse matters be to a woman in her present state of domestic thralldom. (Sexton, 1976, p. 46)

These seminaries helped to train a pool of teachers for the common [public] schools that were expanding at a rapid pace. In 1837 Catharine Beecher left the seminary she had founded and became a full-time advocate for normal schools for women [to teach teachers] and public schools for both sexes. With help from Horace Mann, a leading educator of the time and others, Beecher campaigned to open the teaching profession to women. The National Board of Popular Education, which Beecher helped establish, placed over 400 Eastern women as teachers in the new Western schools. Teaching legitimized women's entry into the world of higher education.

During the last half of the 19th century, the United States was slowly adopting the Prussian system of universal education in its public schools. Prussians believed that universal education provided a base for literacy, discipline, cultural integration and nationalism. The United States wanted to see an educated work force for both sexes. The coeducational school, where women were more equal than subordinate became the prototype of American education. Women were entering the job world as teachers, a giant step toward occupational liberation.

The feminization of teaching reflects the need for employment of women outside of their homes and the significant lack of other employment opportunities.(Cordier, 1992, p. 295). Cordier goes on to point out that

. . . As men rejected teaching for better paying occupations, women were expected to accept the low salaries because it was their duty to help others, especially children. Thus the feminization of teaching emphasizes the persistent influence of domesticity by specifically identifying women as the care givers and the carriers of the culture. (p. 294)

The seminary movement laid the groundwork for major changes in teacher education requirements. Mere literacy as the criterion for employment as a teacher made way toward teaching certificates that required exams, institutes and higher levels of instruction. The first normal school, for women only, opened in 1839. The movement grew slowly and there were 14 established by the time the Civil War started in 1861. The War stimulated rapid interest in education and by 1872 more than 100 coeducational normal schools had been established. By 1917 there were 234 public normal schools (Cordier, 1980, p. 115). Women outnumbered men by 10 to 1 in these institutions.

By 1890, about two out of every three teachers were women. By in large, women teachers made less than their male counterparts. Diane Ravitch writes about women teachers in New York,

School officials preferred having female teachers, because they could save money by paying women less than men. Women were glad to have teaching jobs because it was one of the few respectable occupations open to them. And women were blatantly discriminated against by the school system. They were paid less than half of what men received for the same job. (Ravitch, 1984, p. 28)

The opening of the teaching profession to women virtually transformed the education of women. Prior to the mid-1800s professions and the colleges that trained men for those professions had been closed to women. Women could only receive a higher education through private tutoring. Attendance at normal schools helped women to look beyond the teaching profession into other areas.

In 1833, Oberlin became the first college to go coeducational. Antioch was the second, in 1853, and Utah was the first state to admit

women to their state universities. [In England, Oxford did not grant degrees to women until 1920, and women could not practice law until then.]

Women at Oberlin didn't follow the same course of study as males. The school was founded in the spirit of abolitionism and reform, yet in fact, it reinforced the idea that educated women were to be helpmates, responsible for the mental health and moral balance of men doing evangelical work in the west. A "Ladies Course" was offered for those who wanted an education, but did not wish to graduate. Women were segregated at all times other than when they were in the classroom. Often they had to wash male students clothes, wait on them at meals and clean their rooms. The attitude at the college was that, ". . . women's highest calling was to be the mothers of the race, and that they should stay within that special sphere in order that future generations should not suffer from the want of devoted and undistracted mother care" (Greene, 1984, p. 27).

In 1861, Vassar, the first women's college was founded. Its standard curriculum included daily Bible study, along with scientific and classical courses. Many other women's institutions followed, such as Smith, Bryn Mawr, and Mt. Holyoke.

Strong public sentiment still existed for the exclusion of women from institutions of higher education. In 1873, Edward Clark, a former Harvard professor, argued publicly that education would strain the minds of women beyond their capacities and make them unfit for household duties. Yet he was only one of many. In a speech in Baltimore in 1895, a Dr. Hutchinson said,

The woman who works outside of the home or school pays a fearful penalty either physical, mental, or moral, or often all three. She commits a biologic crime against herself and against the community, and woman labor ought to be forbidden for the same reason that child labor is. Any nation that works women is damned, and belongs at heart to the Huron-Iroquois confederacy. (Greene, 1984, p. 31)

Although this limited opinion was expressed openly, more and more colleges were becoming coeducational and admitting women to various fields of study originally dominated by men. By 1880 half of all colleges in the United States were admitting women.

Women had opened the schoolhouse door a crack and were now marching in and taking over. Through teaching, women had an appropriate, accessible occupation through which they could obtain public approval and self-esteem for their expressions of idealism, while coping with their own economic and family needs. Being a teacher was part of a woman's public identity and self-image that involved them in the "greater opportunities for doing good, preventing crime, increasing wealth, protecting property, elevating morals and promoting general happiness" (Cordier, 1992, p. 296).

By 1920, there were many reasons to see a promising future for women in the field of education. The percentage of women among college students had risen from 21% in 1870 to 47.3%, and women were a quarter of college faculty and 86% of classroom teachers (Seller, 1994, p. 21). Yet only a very small minority of these women were American Indian. A backlash to women's progress in many areas of public life, including education continued throughout the late 1800s and into the first half of the 20th century. Leading physicians, social scientists and male educators

argued that women had less intellectual and leadership abilities than men. Some warned that higher education and careers would prevent women from becoming wives and mothers.

From the passage of the 19th amendment to the rise of feminism in the 1960s, the number of women educators continued to grow, but the gap between women and men educators, which had been narrowing for a century, widened in many areas. Between 1920 and 1950 the percentage of women holding bachelors degrees dropped from 34% to 24%. Between 1930 and 1950 women's share of doctorates fell from 18% to 10%. Their share of positions as college faculty and presidents fell from 32% to 23%. The number of female elementary school principals fell from 55% in 1928 to 22% in 1968 (Seller, 1994, p. 22).

One reason for these losses was the decline in organized feminism after the suffrage victory in 1919, but probably a more important reason was the fact that men were given preference in higher education and employment during the Great Depression of the 1930s because they were seen as the primary breadwinners of the family. Again, after World War II, men received special treatment because they were veterans. During this same time, psychiatrists, social scientists and the expanding media urged women to seek fulfillment in marriage and motherhood rather than in "selfish" careers (Seller, 1994, p. 23).

The 1960s and 1970s, with the Civil Rights movement, Title IX, and the revitalized feminist movement resulted in the opening of new educational and career opportunities for women of all backgrounds. Late

20th century women became the creators as well as the beneficiaries of educational change.

It wasn't until the 1980s women's participation in higher education at the bachelor's and master's levels equaled or exceeded that of men. Women were making dramatic inroads into law and medicine, and women college faculty and administrative positions were beginning to grow. Minority women however, remained disproportionately concentrated in community colleges and other less prestigious institutions. They also remain disproportionately concentrated in lower paid, stereotypically female fields such as teaching, library science, and fine arts rather than engineering, physical sciences and mathematics.

Today there are more than 2.5 million teachers in the United States. Two-thirds, or 1.8 million, are women, 87% are Anglo, 7.5% are African-American, 4.2% are Hispanic, 1% are Asian, and less than 1% are American Indian (U. S. Department of Education, 1996).

Section 2:

Historical Background of American Indian Women

Every society has provided a way of preparing its young to live within the culture of that society, to understand and live by its values, to become a socialized member of that society. This process begins before birth, continues through infancy and early childhood, following successive stages into the age of adulthood as determined by that particular societal group. Systems of socialization having ranged from comparatively simple to extremely complex, utilizing a variety of individuals, institutions and organizations. The socialization process itself has not remained static throughout time but has gradually, sometimes explosively, undergone change to fit

the setting in which the group finds itself. (Reeves, Pensika, & Heemstra, 1977, p. 87)

Prior to non Indian contact, American Indian women were taught within their tribes by parents, elders and extended family members. Thompson (1978) states, " Before the advent of the white man, Indian education rested in the hands of ancestral tribal cultures" (p. 2). Henrietta Whiteman (1978) observes in her essay, "Contrary to popular belief, education--the transmission and acquisition of knowledge and skills--did not come to the North American continent on the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria" (p. 105).

In most tribes, prior to the contact with the white man, there were no special educational houses, the whole village and tribal area was a girl's school. "The cycle of life moved most Native American women from daughter to mother to grandmother in an unbroken line, surrounded by family and community, living in and with the native homeland" (Bannen, 1979, p. 5). Often lessons were not formal or structured, but encompassed the learning of a variety of useful skills and habits all day long. "A girl's training was not always exclusively in the hands of her mother. In many tribes all the women in the family group collaborated in the raising of their children" (Niethammer, 1977 p. 23). She goes on to say,

In various matriarchal tribes, such as Navajo and Hopi, close family ties bound a girl with not only her mother but her mother's sisters. "Hopi children used the same word for their mother and their aunts, and the women called all the children by the same kinship term. (Niethammer, 1977, p. 24)

In many tribes children were raised by their grandmothers while their mothers were busy with other responsibilities. Often girls in these

situations felt closer to their grandmothers than their own mothers. This method of childrearing within the extended family made for happy childhoods, and left no feelings of abandonment and frustration that many children feel today. C. J . Brafford (1992) reports that in the Sioux tradition, the birth of a child was a happy event, one to be celebrated. "A child is born, and life begins within the circle of the family" (p. 25).

Often young girls learned the roles they were to use later in life through play. Many families provided them with miniature sets of household equipment. In some Plains tribes girls even had their own skin tents for playhouses. When it came time to move, the girls would pack up their own households and move. Mary CrowDog, in her book, Lakota Woman, says:

In the old days, nature was our people's only school and they needed no other. Girls had their toy tipis and dolls, boys had their toy bows and arrows. Both rode and swam and played the rough Indian games together. Kids watched their peers and elders and naturally grew from children into adults. Life in the tipi circle was harmonious. (1990, p. 30)

Girls were led gradually from playing with dolls to fulltime adulthood. They were often asked to baby-sit younger siblings and other women's children. They accompanied their mothers throughout the day cooking, cleaning, gathering food, water and wood. As they grew older more was expected of them, and household jobs were turned over to them on a permanent basis. Maria Chona, a traditional Tohono O'odham woman reported, " A daughter should be able to take over the work and let her mother sit down and make baskets" (Chona, 1936, p. 8).

Indian girls also became acquainted with tribal values through family and tribal storytelling. It was around the fire that young children learned lessons that would stay with them for life.

It was there [around the fires within the family] that the young ones heard all the stories of the tribe—how their people came to be on earth, where their food came from and how their early ancestors learned all they knew. The story tellers were usually grandfathers and old men, but many old women were good story tellers, too. The long myths and legends they told served to illustrate practical lessons and point out what might happen if a child was disobedient (Niethammer, 1977, p. 31)

Linda Zuni, a Zuni traditionalist who lived with her daughter and grandchildren, said, " Everyday I tell my children stories. Perhaps they listen to me. Perhaps that is why we live together nicely" (Zuni, 1933, p. 58).

Girls in many tribes married young, often as soon as they went through puberty. As young girls they had learned much from their mothers and extended families.

Gatherer, planter, harvester, cook, tanner, potter, weaver and home builder--the early American Indian woman filled all these roles. . . . While the man was the hunter and the warrior, an essentially destructive orientation, an Indian woman's activities were turned to the conservation of life. (Niethammer, 1977, p. 105)

When they married they often became the economic breadwinners for their families, thus starting the traditional cycle of tribal education for their own children.

Contact with the non-Indian slowly changed these traditional educational practices for all Native children. This educational change for

boys progressed at a more rapid rate. Boys were taken from their tribal homes and put into homes and schools of the early settlers. Often they were sent to Europe to study the *whiteman's ways*. Formal education was not a priority for non Indian girls in early colonial times, so it was definitely not important for Native American girls. In fact information on education in for American Indian girls during colonial times is basically non-existent.

Most early colonial education was done by missionaries or by the government. Brewton Berry writes,

If a specific date is to be chosen for the beginnings of white man's efforts to bestow, or impose, upon the Indians of the present United States the benefits of his formal educational system, it would be the year 1568, when the Jesuits established in Havana a school for the instruction of the Florida Indians. (1968, p. 7)

By the early 1600s mission schools were being established throughout the eastern United States. Berry reports,

John Elliot's work with Indians was carried forward by the Rev. John Sergeant, who established at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, a day school, a boarding school and an experimental "outing system" whereby Indian pupils were placed in Puritan homes during the vacation periods. (1968, p. 12)

By the mid-1600s free common schools were established for Indians in the New England area by John Winthrop. By 1655 an Indian college was opened in connection with Harvard. Indian parents were not interested in sending their children to these schools. Only eight boys ever attended Harvard and only one ever graduated.

Some tribes did see benefits in these formal educational methods brought by the white man. The Mohawk tribe built their own schools, and by 1711 many of their children had learned to read.

With the arrival of more non-Indians to the continent, a more formalized governmental system and the Revolutionary War, federal policy largely neglected the education of its Native People. During the Revolutionary War, colonial leaders tried to win tribal support, "Ministers and teachers maintained by congressional funds were stationed among the Indians as diplomatic agents" (Adams, 1946, p. 27). The Continental Congress appropriated \$500 for the education of Indian students at Dartmouth in 1775. This sum was increased to \$5,000 five years later.

Most tribal groups continued to resist missionary and governmental efforts toward formal education. In 1774 the U.S. treaty commissioners from Virginia and Maryland invited the Iroquois to send their sons to the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. The Iroquois leaders responded, " We must let you know we love our Children too well to send them so great a way and the Indians are not inclined to give their Children learning. We allow it to be good, and we thank you for your invitation: but our customs differing from yours, you will be so good as to excuse us" (Van Doren, 1938, p. 36).

After the Revolutionary War, the administration of Indian affairs was placed under the War Department. There was also a change in federal policy from an emphasis on higher learning to vocational training. George Washington voiced this shift in policy when he said,

This mode of education which has hitherto been pursued with respect to these young Indians who have been sent to our colleges is not such as can be productive of any good to their nations. It is perhaps productive of evil. Humanity and good policy make it the wish of every good citizen of the United States that husbandry, and consequently civilization, should be introduced among the Indians. (Berry, 1969, p. 88)

Around this same time the Reverend Eleazer Wheelcock founded the Moor's Charity School for Indians in Connecticut. Wheelcock believed that Indian children should be taught in boarding schools far away from their tribal homelands. "Boys were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, English, Greek and Latin. Girls lived in neighborhood homes where they learned domestic arts and attended school one day a week to study reading and writing" (Bannen, 1979, p. 7).

In 1778 the first of 389 treaties between the United States government and Native American tribes was negotiated with the Delaware tribe. At the signing of the treaty, President Washington remarked, "We are greatly gratified with the opportunity of imparting to you all the blessings of civilization" (Forbes, 1964, p. 99). The first treaty to mention education specifically was the 1794 treaty with the Oneida, Tuscarora, and Stockbridge Indians. It promised that, "Teachers would be hired to instruct some young men of the three nations in the arts of the miller and the sawer" (Forbes, 1964, p. 100). Another treaty with the Kaskaskia in 1803 provided for the annual contribution by the U.S. government of \$100. for seven years to support a priest who would instruct the children in literature. Some tribal leaders supported this type of education and others didn't. A Seneca elder in the Iroquois Federation, Handsome Lake, proposed that each tribe send a delegation of two students to white schools

to become experts in reading and writing, then return to their tribe and teach others. On the other hand, Tecumseh, urged his people to, "resist everything European." Most tribes continued to quietly resist all educational efforts.

Congress continued to raise the appropriations for Indian education. In 1802 Congress approved appropriations not to exceed \$15,000 annually to provide civilization among the aborigines. Thomas Jefferson said at the time, "Humanity enjoins us to teach them [Indians] agriculture and the domestic art" (Bannen, 1978, p. 9).

In 1819, Congress passed the Civilization Act for the purpose of "providing against the further decline of the Indian tribes and for introducing among them the habits and arts of civilization" (Hagan, 1972, p. 98). It authorized the spending of \$10,000 annually for Indian education. These funds started the process of hiring teachers and maintaining schools just for Native Americans. Yet these funds did not provide for the operation of the schools, so the monies were used to subsidize church groups who already had established programs with tribes. By 1825, there were 38 church schools being aided with an enrollment of close to 800 students. One tribe might have several schools, perhaps due to its willingness to cooperate with missionaries, among other factors, yet many tribes had none.

Of slightly over \$200,000 spent on these schools in 1825, 7.5% came from the government, 6% from the tribes, and the rest, 87% from the churches. As late as the Civil War, the United States was still putting in

only the \$10,000 a year from the civilization fund (Hagan, 1972, p. 98). The rest came from other government agencies.

Around this time non-Indians were moving westward and encroaching on tribal lands. More and more of the treaties being signed were taking away lands and rights, and the government was becoming more involved in tribal life. Manifest Destiny was the government's policy and assimilation was their answer to the Indian problem.

Education was thought to be the government's solution, to be achieved by forced assimilation. Through the formal education process, Indian children were not allowed to speak their Native languages, Christianity was the heart of their lessons, and the parents were pressured to give up their traditional ways of living and adopt Christianity. The English language and to "Succeed in an industrial-agarian economy" (Olson, 1984, p. 51).

In 1834 the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was created and over the next few years its Indian Education program was established. The program called for: (1) government and missionary cooperation in adult, practical training, (2) creation of selected tribal schools by the Indian people themselves, and (3) introduction of the manual labor school (Bannen, 1978, p. 10). There was no additional Congressional appropriation provided for these programs.

The tribally operated school program was the most successful of the three. By 1841 the Choctaw in Mississippi and the Cherokee in Oklahoma had designed bilingual schools. "The literacy rate of Western Oklahoma Cherokee at this time was higher than the surrounding white population of

either Texas or Arkansas" (Thompson, 1978, p. 142). The Choctaws were teaching both children and adults in seven community schools. During this period in Native American history, some tribes reached a 90% literacy rate (Bannen, 1978, p. 10).

At first most of the teachers in these tribally operated schools were male missionaries, often times aided by their wives who had often been teachers before marriage. However, a few American Indian teachers, mostly male, had begun to serve as educators of their own tribes as well as others.

Among the Cherokee tribe of Oklahoma, more Native teachers began entering the teaching field. According to Meyer,

By 1873 of the 60 teachers employed by the Cherokee Nation, 34 were Cherokee. In 1870 in the Choctaw tribal school system, two-thirds of the teachers were native, educated mostly in eastern schools. By 1883 most of the Choctaw day schools were taught by Native teachers. (p. 371)

Most of these teachers among these two tribal school systems were still male, few Indian women teachers existed at this time.

The Bureau continued to operate schools in a Day School program. Children went to school six hours a day and returned to their homes at night. Schools were located close to or on reservation land. Attendance in the day school programs was extremely poor. Children drifted in all morning long, left early in the afternoon and were absent weeks at a time to accompany their families as they left on hunting trips or to visit relatives. The government felt the system wasn't working. In 1867, the Indian Peace Commission, a body appointed by Congress, made

recommendations for the permanent removal of the causes of Indian hostilities. The use of the English language in the schools for Native youth was the first suggestion. The report in 1868 stated, ". . . In the difference of language today lies two-thirds of our trouble. Schools should be established which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialects would be blotted out and the English language substituted" (Indian Peace Commission, 1868, p. 1643).

This report sparked a heated controversy in Indian education. Missionary groups who had been given the responsibility of educating Native youth throughout the first half of the 19th century, mostly supported a bilingual instructional policy.

In 1870, President Grant harshly criticized the practices of the missionaries, denouncing their insistence on using Native languages in their schools. In 1879, two missionary societies were threatened with the withdrawal of federal funds unless they complied with government regulations on language. The missionaries won a minor victory in 1888, however, when the government approved the use of the Bible translated into the Native languages for schools. (Bowker, 1993, p. 15)

In the First Annual Report to the Congress of the United States in 1874, the Senate and House Indian Affairs committees furthered the idea that Indians should be assimilated into mainstream society. The report stated,

The goal of Indian Education should be to make the Indian child a better American rather than to equip him simply to be a better Indian. The goal of our whole Indian program should be, in the opinion of our committee, to develop better Indian Americans rather than to perpetuate and develop better American Indians. The present Indian education program tends to operate too much in the direction

of perpetuating the Indian as a special-status individual rather than preparing him for independent citizenship. (U.S. Senate and House Indian Affairs Committee Report, 1874, p. 104)

A major result of forced assimilation of Native people was the development of the federal boarding school system. In 1870 Congress appropriated \$100,000 for the operation of federal boarding schools, and in 1879, Richard Pratt, a former military commander, established the first off reservation boarding school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Indian children were schooled there on the theory that, "To civilize an Indian we must put him in the midst of society. Everything Native has to be destroyed, even if the process sometimes meant destroying the Indian himself" (Forbes, 1964, p. 113).

Mary Crow Dog reports, "The schools were intended as an alternative to the outright extermination seriously advocated by Generals Sherman and Sheridan, as well as by most settlers and prospectors overrunning our lands" (1990, p. 30). Yet, many other boarding schools followed around the country, with Carlisle becoming ". . . for better or probably worse the model for a century of Indian education" (Burnette & Koster, 1964, p. 42). The off-reservation boarding school became the dominant force in Native education until the 1930s.

The BIA established a standard curriculum for all federal boarding schools which stressed systematic habits, punctuality, regular attendance and the English language. Students from different tribes were grouped together to discourage conversation in their native tongue and those caught were punished. Anna Moore Shaw attended Phoenix Indian School and remembers, "We were not allowed to speak the Pima tongue at school.

Some students would report on those who spoke Indian, and as punishment our mouths would be taped" (1974, p. 127). Girls and boys lived and studied separately in a military-like atmosphere. Children marched everywhere, and had daily inspections. Home economics was the standard curriculum for girls. They also made all the clothing for the students, did the laundry, worked in the kitchens and served the food.

Runaways were frequent, and in some schools, sizable parts of the education budget was spent on retrieving them. Helen Sekaquaptewa reported at the Phoenix Indian School,

Sometimes boys and even girls would run away, even though they were locked in at night. . . . They would usually start to go home. Older boys with records of dependability would be sent to find and bring them back. Punishment for the girls might be cleaning the yards, even cutting grass with scissors while wearing a card that said, "I ran away." (1978, p. 137)

Mary Crow Dog reported about her grandmother's days in an off reservation school,

Grandma told me about the bad times she had experienced. In those days they let students go home only for one week every year. Two days were used for transportation, which meant spending just five days out of three hundred and sixty-five with her family, and that was an improvement. Before grandma's time, on many reservations, they did not let students go home at all until they had finished school. Anyone who disobeyed was severely punished. One time grandma ran away with three other girls. They were found and brought back, they used a horse whip on my grandma. (1990, pp. 31-32)

The off-reservation boarding school became a similar situation for parents to that of a mission school. Eggan writes, "Children disappeared into government schools for a time often against their own and their

parents' wishes. Here white teachers were given the task of civilizing and Christianizing their wards of the government" (1974, p. 315).

Most Native American mothers resisted the governmental intrusion into their children's lives. Often mothers hid their children under blankets or in storage bins to prevent them from being taken away. Sara Winnemucca's mother buried her in sand to prevent her capture rushing across the Paiute's Nevada homeland on their way to California. Other Paiute mothers ". . . were afraid to have children for fear they shall have daughters, who are not safe even in their mother's presence" (Hopkins, 1969, p. 48). Some mothers pleaded that they needed the help of their only daughters. Others resigned themselves to the inevitable and sent their daughters voluntarily.

When girls were taken from their families they were often not allowed to return for many years. Most were very homesick like Helen Sekaquaptewa. "Evenings we would gather in a corner and cry softly so the matron would not hear and scold or spank us. I can still hear the plaintive little voices saying, 'I want to go home. I want my mother'" (Sekaquaptewa, 1969, p. 93).

Time dried their tears and the girls accommodated themselves to the boarding school routine. They accepted the harsh discipline, hard work in the school shops and kitchens, the English language and the schoolwork. Some began to aspire to success in terms that their teachers would approve. Helen Sekaquaptewa stated, "I had lived at the school so long it seemed like home" (Sekaquaptewa, 1969, p. 193).

Many students had problems returning home and feeling a part of the life they left behind. Many communities pressured boarding school students to conform to traditional ways. Helen Sekaquaptewa learned to speak and read English and developed the leadership skills that the Anglo teachers stressed but when she returned home after 13 years away she found that,

I didn't feel at ease in the home of my parents now. My father and my mother, my sister and my older brother told me to take off those clothes and wear Hopi attire. My brother gave me two complete Hopi costumes that he had woven especially for me, nice and fine and warm and scratchy. I didn't wear them. . . . My mother said she was glad I was home. If I would stay there, she would not urge me to change my ways, I could wear any kind of clothes that I wanted to wear if I would just stay at home with her. (Sekaquaptewa, 1969, pp. 144-145)

Helen goes on to say that she faced, "A household that looked to the elders, not children, for guidance (and) to tradition, not change, for stability" (Sekaquaptewa, 1969, p. 146).

Many mothers did not know how to help their daughters readjust, they didn't know how to reach them. In some cases the daughter was taken away at such a young age, and had been away for such a long time, that she had forgotten her native language and couldn't communicate with her family.

In many cases it was as hard for the daughter as the mother. Zitkala-Sa said, "My mother had never gone inside a schoolhouse, and so she was not capable of comforting her daughter who could read and write" (Zitkala-Sa, 1900, p. 47). Many daughters could not endure the continuing conflict between themselves and their families. Their desires to avoid

hurting their parents and becoming "good daughters" in the traditional way, and their newly acquired values and educational aspirations, were in constraint conflict. Polingaysi, a Hopi girl who had attended Riverside returned to the reservation and found the life was not for her.

Polingaysi looked at the little house and the windswept yard where chickens pecked at bits of grain. The poverty of the scene made her heartsick. This life was not of her. She would never again be happy in the old pattern. She had gone too far along the path of the white man. (Qoyawayma, 1969, p. 69)

She scolded her parents, "When I was a little girl, I did not mind sleeping of the floor and eating from a single bowl into which everyone dipped. But I am used to another way of living now, and I do not intend to do these things" (Qoyawayma, 1964, p. 69).

Some chose to resolve these conflicts by moving toward traditional teachings, others including Helen Sekaquaptewa and Zitkala-Sa chose to live and work elsewhere until they felt sure enough of themselves to return (Sekaquaptewa, 1977, p. 198; Zitkala-Sa, 1976, pp. 96-98). Helen married a Hopi man she had met at the Phoenix Indian School and helped established a cattle ranch below the traditional mesas. She and her family were often considered as "marginal" Hopis. Sekaquaptewa sums up the family's attitude: "We chose the good from both ways of living" (Sekaquaptewa, 1977, p. 178). David Adams put it, "In the last analysis the boarding schools contributed as much to the disintegration of Indian culture as it did to its transformation" (1975, p. 248)

In 1887, the Dawes Act, also known as the Allotment Act, was passed in Congress. It became the framework for white settlement of

reservation lands and was a further step toward assimilation. Reservation lands were broken up into 160 acre allotments, and Native Americans were required to farm their plots. It also brought public school systems to the reservations. Education during this period was targeted toward industrial, agricultural and domestic arts to help fulfill the government's new allotment policy. The government wanted relief from its Indian problem, and specifically wanted to be free of its educational responsibilities. Public school attendance was encouraged to relieve the BIA system.

Government policies of the late 19th century shaped Native American education virtually through the second half of the 20th century. By 1900, the boarding school had reached the crest of its popularity. "It began to wane in favor and the bitterest criticism was directed at it, yet it continued to be the main emphasis of the federal school system until 1930" (Iverson, 1978, p. 163). Reservation boarding schools were no more effective educationally than their off reservation counterparts, yet the government was spending more than three million dollars annually. Neither education or assimilation seemed to be taking place.

As the 20th century unfolded, interest in Indian education diminished among philanthropic groups, Congress, and just about everyone outside the BIA. Until the 1930s, "Education for citizenship and vocations remain basic BIA policy" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, p. 9). The BIA educational bureaucracy resisted change and reform was slow in coming. The quality of the education was poor and the way students were treated remained cruel. "Most of us spent two years in each grade in order to master the difficult English language along with the subject matter. Indian students

most often would be from 18 to 22 when they graduated from the eighth grade" (Shaw, 1974, p. 137).

In the 1920s, Indian rights advocates became vocal again. Margaret Szasz reports, "In the 1920s federal Indian policy was a notorious example of bureaucratic ineffectiveness . . . the time was right for reform" (1977, pp. 12-13). Finally the Secretary of the Interior charged the Brookings Institute with investigating the existing state of Indian education. The final report became known as the Meriam Report in 1928.

The Meriam Report found such common occurrences as kidnapping of students, institutional drudge work, physical and emotional abuse, poor educational curriculum and little health care services for students. The report condemned off-reservation boarding schools and accepted the ultimate goal of Indian students attending public schools near their homes. The report recommended that adequate secondary schools be established, a loan program for higher education and that specialists rather than administrators run the education programs for the BIA. It also recommended that boarding schools be eliminated for elementary school students and increasing the number of day schools.

The philosophy underlying the establishment of Indian boarding schools, that the way to civilize the Indian is to take Indian children, even very young children, as completely as possible away from their home and family life, is at variance with modern views on education and social work, which regard home and family as essential social institutions from which it is generally undesirable to uproot children. (Meriam, 1928, p. 403)

Despite these major concerns, the objectives of Indian education remained the same. "Although sympathetic to Indian participation in the direction of school, its recommendations did not depart from the traditional goal of assimilation of Indians" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, pp. 10-11).

The 1930s brought major change to national Indian policy. John Collier was appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He implemented his Indian New Deal. First came the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 which put an end to the Allotment Act and, "Departed from the forced assimilation policies of the past and provided for the recognition of civil and cultural freedom, and opportunity for the Indians" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1978, p. 12). This Act confirmed the rights of Indian self-government and made Natives eligible to hold BIA posts, which enabled the hiring of Natives in Native schools and it authorized student loan programs.

Collier pushed for a community day school program to be tribally managed. The curriculum included, "Land and livestock management, community family health and native arts and literacy" (Iverson, 1978, p. 171). He also appointed two Progressive Education leaders, W. Carlson Ryan and Willard Beatty, to share the newly created position of Director of Indian Education. Beatty introduced the first cross-cultural program where Indian children would learn to become aware of non-Indian cultural values through the medium of their own culture. He believed that the school experience for Indian children should teach them to walk in and out of different cultural situations. He decreased the number of boarding schools from 76 in 1928 to 59 by July of 1933 (Lomawaima, 1994, p. 7).

These programs ran into opposition from Congress, BIA administrators, and teaching personnel who didn't want to change. It was also the time prior to and including World War II, and the country needed additional military personnel and financial resources. Due to this opposition and the war, many of Collier's experimental and innovated programs ended up being shelved.

One of the most significant educational pieces of legislation that did pass in the 1930s was the Johnson O'Malley Act. This Act authorized federal contracts with the states for the improvement of the general welfare and education of Indian children living on or near the reservations. It held the individual states responsible for the education of Indian people living within their borders and provided funding for that specific purpose (Bannen, 1979, p. 16).

Following World War II, the government wanted to end its commitment to the tribes, to force an end to the reservation system. This plan was known as termination. Termination's lasting effect on Indian education included a philosophical return to forced assimilation. Indian people viewed the policy as an attempt to separate Native people from their land and they resisted it. Termination resulted in promoting a permanent mistrust of Native Americans of all governmental policies directed toward their well being. Termination was officially abandoned, as a governmental policy, toward the end of the Eisenhower administration, yet 61 tribes had been terminated.

BIA schools in areas where tribes were terminated, were closed and those children were sent to public schools. The government continued to

push for public school attendance for Indian children. Nevertheless, government boarding schools continued to operate, and in some areas expanded to meet the increasing numbers of students. During this time, there was little educational reform.

During the early 1960s self determination became the policy when there was a shift toward recognizing the rights of Native peoples to participate in and eventually control their own destinies, including education. Progress was slow due to the bureaucratic nature of the BIA as well as Indian mistrust of federal government intentions.

By the mid-sixties there was growing commitment among Indian people for self determination in Indian education. This movement was strengthened by the Kennedy Report, started by Robert Kennedy in 1968, and finished by his brother Ted, on the atrocities in Indian education. The report issued the following statement on the state of education for the native child,

The dominant policy of the federal government toward the American Indian has been one of coercive assimilation resulting in the destruction and disorganization of Indian communities and individuals. The coercive assimilation policy has had disastrous effects in the education of Indian children which resulted in the classroom and the school becoming a battleground where the Indian child attempts to protect his integrity and identity as an individual by defeating the purposes of the school; schools which fail to understand or adapt to, and in fact often denigrate cultural differences; which blame their own failures on the Indian student and reinforce his defensiveness; schools which fail to recognize the importance and validity of the Indian community--the community and the child retaliate by treating the school as an alien institution; a dismal record of absenteeism, dropouts, negative self image, low achievement, and ultimately academic failure for many Indian children; a perpetuation

of the cycle of poverty which undermines the success of all other Federal programs. (U. S. Congress, 1969, p. 143)

Bilingual education also became a big issue in the 1960s for Indian children. Testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives during the passage of the Bilingual Education Act pointed out that,

When it comes to the Indian child, given what seems to be the fact that he cherishes his Indian status to a remarkable extent, and given the fact that his cultural patterns are markedly different from those of the dominant American group, he is not simply cheated out of a language that does not matter internationally anyway, he is not just damaged in school; he is almost destroyed. As a matter of fact, historically, that is what we tried to do with them: destroy them. All you have to do is read the accounts to know that. (Gardner, 1967, p. 18)

The Bilingual Education Act, which became Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act became law in 1968.

In response, Congress passed the Indian Education Act of 1972 (Title IV which became Title V in 1988) which was a major victory for Native Americans. This act provided funds to school districts for the "special needs of Indian children". The Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act of 1975 allowed Indian organization to be able to contract with the BIA for any services the bureau provided including education.

Things changed again when Ronald Reagan became president in 1980. Major social budget cuts affected many American Indian programs, including Indian education. By 1990, the Senate was again investigating the BIA and other Indian programs. They found there was still corruption in federal contracts, child abuse in the BIA schools, poor curriculum, high dropout rates and things had not basically changed for 100 years. In 1992, at the White House Conference on Indian Education, a report was

submitted on the status of Indian education in American. President Bush did not address the conference or comment on the report.

Indian education has not been a priority of presidential administrations for the past two decades. At a time when Indian student population continues to grow, the Congressional Research Service reports that, "Federal funding for Indian education has suffered from a steady decline since 1975" (Bowker, 1993, p. 28).

Despite changes in government policy from the Colonial times to the nineties, American Indian tribal groups have maintained their diversity, culture and language. Today many tribal groups have control over their schools, and given time they will make the necessary changes to the education of their youth that four centuries of government policies hasn't provided. Havighurst and Fuch summarize the current situation in Indian education as:

The experiences of the Indian people in recent decades have encouraged dynamic change. The increasing number of Indian children in school, the growing enrollment of Indian youth in institutions of higher education, the impact of shattering events such as World War II and the more recent wars in Asia, urbanization, improved communication and transportation, the civil rights movement of the 60's and the accompanying federal programs of the 1960s and 1970s--all of these have contributed to the growth and concerns among Indians for education. (Fuch & Havighurst, 1983, p. 23)

Section 3:

Historical Overview of American Indian Women's Teachers

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (1990), a significant number of American Indian women have taught and still teach children in both public schools and government Indian schools. Yet there is very little written about American Indian teachers, male or female.

Native people have served other Native people as teachers in formal institutions of learning at least since Adin C. Gibbs, a Delaware, taught in the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions' school in the Choctaw Nation during the 1820s, and as school administrators at least since Peter P. Pitchlynn, a Choctaw, was appointed Superintendent of the Choctaw Academy in 1841 (Meyer, 1932, p. 372). Many other Native people have served as teachers in schools established by tribes, missionary groups, the federal government and other entities, perhaps even before the two mentioned above.

Most teachers of Native children in the 1700s and early 1800s were male, missionaries and white. They were often aided by their wives who were often teachers before marriage. These wives were often role models for young Native girls, and by the mid-19th century, a few American Indian teachers, male and female began teaching their own people.

Education for Native women seldom went beyond teaching the role of the traditional role of homemaker. Native girls in colonial times were schooled in the domestic arts while boarding at white settlers homes. Girls in off-reservation boarding schools from the mid 1800s to the mid 1900s were separated from their male classmates and taught reading, writing and

home economics principles while cooking, sewing, washing and cleaning for their classmates and the surrounding community. Native education-- although still preserving the centuries old purpose of civilizing the *savages*, seldom exceeded the high school level (Indian Nations at Risk, 1992, Chpt. 19, p. 5).

Teacher education throughout the 18th and 19th century did not always require a college education. Often students who graduated from high school, and some even only from the eighth grade, were employed as teachers in small, rural communities. These teachers were also employed in the missionary and government schools of the time.

As early as the 1830s, the Cherokee and Choctaw tribes in Oklahoma were among the first tribes to open and operate their own tribal schools. These students were often sent east to white colleges and universities. They returned to their native homes and were employed in their own schools and academics. Tryena Wall became one of the first native teachers of the Choctaw tribe, after receiving a bachelor's degree from an eastern college.

Caroline Elizabeth Bushyhead Quarles, educated in the Cherokee Female Academy, became one of the first Cherokees to teach her own people. The Cherokees built up their own education department so much that they produced bilingual textbooks, and trained their own teachers, and out of 103 teachers employed, 89 were designated "native" (Watt, in Seller, 1994, p. 408).

Over the 200 years of their existence, the missionary and boarding school systems did little to further the education of their students beyond a

range of occupational futures in farming, mechanics and the home. The impact of this neglect is reflected in the college enrollment figures of Native Americans. As late as 1932, only 385 American Indians and Alaska Natives were enrolled in college and only 52 college graduates could be identified (McNamara, 1984, p. 52). At that time, too, American Indian and Alaska Native scholarships were being offered at only five colleges and universities (Indian Nations at Risk, 1992, Chpt. 19, p. 5).

The New Deal of the 1930s brought a period of reform in federal Indian policy. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, authorized \$250,000 in loans for college expenses. By 1935, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, reported 515 Native students in college. The BIA, in 1948, established the higher education scholarship grant program. American Indian veterans returning from World War II and eligible for the GI Bill added to the growing number of college students. By the last half of the 1950s more than 2,000 Native students were enrolled in some form of post-secondary education program. College enrollment grew to 7,000 by 1965, yet this accounted for only 1% of the native population. In 1961, 66 American Indians graduated from four-year institutions, and by 1968 this figure had tripled to more than 120 (McNamara, 1984, p. 52).

During the 1970s, a series of federal reports called attention to the academic, financial, social and cultural problems Native students encountered when pursuing a college education. These reports helped increase federal appropriations. The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 and the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978, also helped to shift the control of Native

education to its own people. Tribally controlled colleges evolved from this legislation in response to unsuccessful experiences of Native students in mainstream colleges. Today there are 24 tribally controlled colleges in eleven states from California to Michigan and from Arizona to the Dakotas. These institutions serve about ten thousand Native students (Indian Nations at Risk, Chpt. 19, p. 6).

These pieces of legislation have further pushed the cause of higher education. In 1965, 7,000 Native students were attending post-secondary institutions. One decade later, the enrollment increased ten-fold to 76,367 students (McNamara, 1984). Today there are over 103,000 Native students attending post secondary institutions (U. S. Dept. of Education, 1993). Yet American Indians and Alaska Native remain among the least educated ethnic groups in the nation. Only 6% of Native people have college degrees, compared with 23% of whites, 12% of African Americans and 7% of the Hispanic population (Astin, 1982).

Studies reveal that colleges and universities need to take a more serious look at elementary and secondary educational practices. Only 55 to 65% of Native students graduate from high school. O'Brien reports that,

In 1988, the high school dropout rate for American Indians was 36% compared to 28.8% for all students. These high dropout rates indicate that colleges and university should collaborate with elementary and secondary schools to encourage more Indian students to complete high school and plan for postsecondary education. (p. 4)

Between 21 to 40% of those American Indians completing high school enter college, according to the American Council on Education, the lowest rate of any major ethnic group (American Council on Education,

1988). This compares to 91% of Asian, 67% of African American and 61% of Hispanic students enter college (Hodgkinson, 1990). College dropout rates for Native American students range from 65% to 85% (ACE Report, 1988). Native American women outnumber their male counterparts on college campuses by about 20% today.

Various factors associated with family background (single parent households, educational levels of parents and socioeconomic status) are attributed to the success or lack of success among Native female students. Researchers report that there is a correlation between staying in school and the socioeconomic status of the family. They also suggest that the cultural differences between home and school often place Native girls at risk. Other researchers suggest that the parents' educational levels and single parent families are deciding factors in whether a girl leaves school early or not. O'Brien (1992) reports,

American Indians were more likely to be considered *at risk* students, as measured by the following indicators; single parent family, low parent education, LEP (Limited English Proficient), low family income, sibling dropout, and being home alone more than three hours on weekdays. (p. 4)

Many Native women who have succeeded in finishing a degree at the university level report that their families' attitudes toward education was an important part of their success. Bowker, in her study on Native American women high school and college dropouts, reports that,

A majority of college graduates reported that their families, and often their extended families, assisted them in staying in college. Although the support ranged from money to food supplies, the assistance also carried with it an implied moral obligation to be successful in school. (Bowker, 1993, p. 142)

One woman in Bowker's study explained how family support not only encouraged her to stay in school, but enabled her to help others today,

Everyone in my family helped me go to school--my parents, my grandparents, uncles and aunts. I'd come home from college and they'd give me money, take me shopping, buy me food, even send me a bus ticket to come home. My whole family wanted me to graduate. Now when they need something, I can help them. That's what it is all about . . . being Indian. I wouldn't have graduated without them. I can help them out now. (Bowker, 1993, p. 139)

Researchers maintain that the educational levels of parents are often very influential on whether a Native girl stays in school. throughout the literature, girls whose mothers dropped out of school are shown to be more at risk than those whose mothers graduated from high school. In Bowker's study, she found that 17% of the girls who graduated from college, had mothers who had dropped out compared with 24% of those girls who had dropped out of high school. Of the college graduates in her study,

. . . 74% indicated that their mothers were critical to their decision to remain in high school and go to college. Thirty percent of those women, however, reported that their mothers, even though they had dropped out, had at some point continued their education, either by obtaining a GED or by pursuing vocational training; 2% reported mothers who had returned to school and graduated from college. (Bowker, 1993, p. 143)

One college graduate in Bowker's study related a story often told by other women about their mother's influence, "My mother went to boarding school. She completed the eighth grade, but refused to go to high school. She wanted me to get an education. It was important to her, even though she never went to school" (Bowker, 1993, p. 143). Other family members

also influenced young Native girls to do better things with their lives than their parents and grandparents had done. One college graduate reported that her father's expectations were critical to her success.

My dad dropped out of school and went to the service. He wanted us to go to school; that was important to him. My sister and I used to sit on his lap when we were little girls. He'd call me his *little schoolteacher* and my sister his *little nurse*. It's all what is expected. (Bowker, 1993, p. 145)

There is evidence in the research that if a native girls is to be successful that she must have a caring adult during her adolescence. It did not necessarily have to be a parent or an immediate family member. Often teachers and other community members provided the modeling necessary for her to succeed. One women in Bowkar's study remembers a teacher that changed her life.

In sixth grade, my teacher asked me to read out loud in class and I couldn't--everyone in class thought I couldn't read. Later the teacher asked me to come in after school and read to her. She told me that I could be anything I wanted to be as long as I could read. I believed her. I might have dropped out of school if it wasn't for her. (Bowkar, 1993, p. 178)

Native women have to overcome many obstacles in order finish college and become teachers. Yet one factor seems to stand above the rest in the lives of Native women who have succeeded; they have had tremendous support from their families, especially their mothers and grandmothers. Those elders have helped to create a new cycle in the lives of their daughters and granddaughters and future generations of Native women still yet to come.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

We are survivors of a battle to gain control of our own lives and create our own paths instead of following someone else's.

**Wilma Mankiller, 1993
Cherokee**

This study will investigate the elements that influence Native American women to choose elementary education as a career choice. Chapter 3 will be divided into two sections to familiarize the reader with the qualitative design of the study. Section 1 will provide the reader with the nature of the research design. Section 2 will provide the reader with the methodology, including procedure, description of the interviewer, description of the subjects, description of the data collection instrument and treatment of the data.

Section 1:

Qualitative Research Design

"Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 300).

This qualitative study uses an ethnomethodological approach to address the issue of patterns and similarities in the career choices of Native American women. Tesch defines qualitative research as ". . . all research not concerned with variables and their measurements" (p. 46, 1990). It is

often used as an umbrella term to refer to various research strategies. Qualitative methods have gained popularity in education over the last few decades. Its methods represent an effective approach to researching educational issues, "because those involved are often so caught up in the immediate situation that they cannot step back and sort out differences in how problems are perceived by others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 215). Oftentimes educators have a hard time separating themselves from situations to see the whole picture. One major characteristic of qualitative research design is that it allows the study of the meaning of how people describe events and life experiences in other words, the focus of research is on the participants perspective of the issue being studied.

In education, qualitative research is also called naturalistic inquiry because the research is conducted in places, settings, and among people where the events naturally occur (e. g. classrooms, homes, schools) (Guba, 1978, p. 11). Qualitative research provides descriptive data that is richer than any other type of research. Quantitative statistical research doesn't provide as rich of a picture on educational issues as does qualitative research. One of the major characteristics of qualitative research design is that it allows the study of the "meaning" of how people describe life experiences and events that shape their lives. The focus of the qualitative research is on "participant perspectives" (Bogdan & Bilken, 1992).

Naturalistic inquiry research is grounded in ethnographic philosophy. Ethnography can be defined as "analytic descriptions or reconstructions of intact cultural scenes and groups" (Spradley & McCurdy, 1972, p. 106). Goetz and LeCompte expand on that definition

by saying, "Ethnographies recreate for the reader the shared beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge and behaviors of some group of people" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 2). They go on to define the ethnographic design as a process that

... is a way of studying human life. Ethnographic design mandates investigatory strategies conducive to cultural reconstruction. First, the strategies used elicit phenomenological data: they represent the world view of the participants being studied. ... Second, ethnographic research strategies are empirical and naturalistic. ... Third, ethnographic research is holistic. ... Finally ethnography is multimodal or eclectic. (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, pp. 3-4)

Basically, first-hand knowledge is acquired in real life situations, and descriptions of the complex interrelationships of cause and effect are examined.

Ethnography is an investigative model that is rooted in anthropology. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century anthropologists developed the process to discover what the non-western European world was really like. During the early twentieth century, educators picked up the techniques to study educators, school systems and children. Today the purpose of educational ethnography is to "provide rich, descriptive data about the contexts, activities and beliefs of participants in educational settings" (Goetz & Lecompte, 1984, p. 17). This data represents educational processes as they occur and the results are considered within the whole phenomenon. Oftentimes the data is a description and explanation of the "culture, life ways and social structure of the group under investigation" (Wolcott, 1980, p. 56).

Educational ethnographies have been used for descriptive research, evaluation and theoretical inquiry. Studies have varied widely in scope and methods. They have been defined as, "Investigations of a small, relatively homogeneous and geographical bounded study site" (Goetz & Hansen, 1974, p. 87). Bogdan and Bilken add that they can create, "A data base consisting primarily of field notes" (1982, p. 215).

Out of educational ethnographies have come phenomenological studies. Phenomenology approaches research with more of an emphasis on studying the individual and his/her experiences. Phenomenology was chosen for this study because it advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value and attempts to understand the meaning of events and reactions of ordinary people in particular situations.

There is now only the beginnings of an emerging theory base on American Indian women, and virtually none on American Indian women teachers. Another major problem is with the quality of the literature that is available on Indian women. A large amount of what is written has been biased from the beginning. Indian women's stories as a whole are rarely told, and those whose narratives were sought out were redefined and edited by white, male scholars of the times. Paula Gunn Allen (1989) a Laguna Pueblo/Sioux and a professor of American Indian Studies, says that the majority of the

. . . "as told to narratives" were collected primarily by white males: Indian agents, missionaries, folklorists and anthropologists well into the twentieth century. She points out, "White students of Native cultures viewed Native women as the drudges of men and Native men as hardly distinguishable from lower animals. As a result, only

the rare, singular individual--a chieftain or medicine man or woman bore listening to. (Allen, 1989, p. 19)

This study will begin to fill the void by examining native American Indian women as public school teachers living in Tucson, Arizona. According to the 1990 United States Census, Arizona has one of the largest American Indian populations in the United States (United States Census Bureau, 1990).

The focus of this study was to explore the patterns and similarities in the career paths of twentieth century American Indian women who have chosen public school teaching as a profession.

Procedure

This study identified Native American Indian women elementary teachers who were willing to be interviewed regarding their career choice from a pool of Native American women teachers in a large southwestern city. An in-depth questionnaire was developed and used for data collection. Questions involved describing their lives growing up, why they chose teaching, who influenced their lives, how they were involved in teaching today, and how they see themselves today as a teacher and a Native American woman. Two pilot interviews with two American Indian women public school teacher volunteers, were conducted to check the validity of the questions. Five other Native American women teachers were then used in the study.

Transcription of the data were analyzed to show patterns and similarities in the lives of the teachers involved in this study. Fundamental to this study was discovering elements in their lives that contributed to them making a career choice to teach elementary school.

Interviewer/Researcher

In an educational ethnography research, the researcher is also a participant, and therefore her/his background is an important part of the study. Often times she/he "must be able to detect implied knowledge embedded within the data" (Lincoln, 1985, p. 187). In this study the researcher was an elementary teacher with an extensive background in early childhood education and has worked with a number of American Indian women teachers in schools. The researcher has also worked in tribal and other educational programs with significant numbers of Native children for over 20 years.

Setting

The American Indian teachers involved in this study all live in a large metropolitan city in the southwestern United States. The American Indian population is approximately 4% of the city population. There are six major school districts within this metropolitan area. The teachers in the study are drawn from two of these school districts.

Participants

The data for this study was collected through oral interviews with five American Indian women elementary teachers who live and teach in two large metropolitan school districts in the southwestern United States. Due to the small pool of teachers from one specific tribe and because there are women from different tribal backgrounds living in the city area, participants from different tribes were selected. Each of these participants

is a certified teacher, currently teaching in an elementary public within the city. All participants are enrolled tribal members of their respective tribal nations.

American Indian women, in general, have not often been given the opportunity to share their own life experiences. Historically, those whose stories have been told were structured and editorialized by white American male anthropologists and scholars. Over the last two decades more women's stories have begun to be published, like Lomawaima's (1994) book about women boarding school students.

Data Collection Procedure

The main data sources for this study was the in-depth interviews, along with the field jottings and notes done by the researcher at the time of the interview. This is a common method of data collection in qualitative research, specifically ethnographic research, due to the richness of the information. An interview is a purposeful conversation between two individuals that is directed to obtain information in the participants own words, guided by the researcher's questions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The purpose of interviewing was to understand the experiences of people and the meanings they make of those experiences. Patton (1980) discusses three types of interviews which vary in the structure of the interview process: informal conversational interviews, interview guide approach and standardized open-ended interviews. In this study the interview guide approach was used. Data was obtained by conducting semi-structured, in-depth interviewing of each participant.

In this study, the interview was based on the elements in an ethnographic interview. "The three most important ethnographic elements are its explicit purpose, ethnographic explanations and ethnographic questions" (Spradley, 1979, p. 59). The specific purpose of the ethnographic interview in this study was to elicit information concerning American Indian women teachers career choices. The interview questions were developed by the researcher based on the review of literature about Native American women, teaching as a career, and the researcher's own interest in the subject. Interview questions were open-ended, using prompts and probes such as, "Could you expand on what you just said?", and "Could you give an example?", in order to obtain adequate information to provide more depth to the responses of the questions. Demographic information such as name, age, date and place of birth, tribal affiliation and current teaching assignment were obtained during the interview for the purpose of describing each participant. Pseudonyms were used to protect the individual participants' privacy and their anonymity and that of their school.

The in-depth interviews were conducted in a comfortable environment. Each participant selected their own homes or classrooms as the site for the interview. All the questions were used but not always in the same order. This allowed for flexibility in the interview process, so that it often flowed in a stream of consciousness fashion (Goetz, 1984, p. 119). The questions were designed to obtain each woman's perceptions of what it meant to be an Indian woman today, how she related to her tribe and why she chose teaching as a career. The researcher inquired about any conflict

that had occurred due to friction between tribal and other cultures. The interviews lasted about one to two hours and were tape recorded and transcribed. The informant was informed that a tape recorder was being used during the interview and about the interviewing process.

A pilot process was used to determine the best type of questions to elicit the most thorough information from the informant. A potential list of questions were developed specifically for the pilot study. The questions were reviewed and changes made after the pilot interviews had taken place and the data analyzed.

Questionnaire

The following questions were asked of each participant:

1. Describe your current teaching position and what was needed to obtain that position.
2. Give a brief personal history. Describe your life as you were growing up.
3. Did any one individual or individuals influence you to go into teaching? Who influenced you the most when you were growing up and how?
4. What made you choose teaching as a career? Did you face any obstacles while in school? Please explain. Discuss any successes?.
5. Did you have to make any sacrifices to complete your education? Please explain.
6. Do you think you have been a role model for American Indian girls today? Please explain.

7. Describe yourself as a Native American woman today.
8. Describe if any, your conflict between your culture and your work?
9. If you could do it over again, would you choose teaching as a career? Please explain.

Data Management

Member checking and reliable field data were used in the collection and management of the qualitative data and analysis to make the study more robust.

Member checking is an effective way to increase the validity of data (Vockell & Asher, 1995). The member check involves asking participants if "they think your interpretation is valid" (p. 206). The researcher restates the participant's comments at regular intervals to clarify meaning and provide assurance that the researcher understood the participant's interpretations of life events.

Field notes are one of the four types of field data described by Vockell and Asher (1995). Other types of field data include field jottings, field diary and analytical notes (p. 210). Field jottings are notes taken during an interview and field notes are compiled immediately after the interview and chronicle the interview process. The field diary can be described as, "chronicle of how the participant feels about the social situation that he/she is in" (Vockell & Asher, 1995, p. 210). The analytical notes are the direct results of the field jottings, field notes and the field diary. They are, "essentially the results of the qualitative researcher's conceptualizations" (Vockell & Asher, 1995, p. 203). The researcher took

notes and recorded information during and after each interview. Informal discussion with the participants also helped to verify the information.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a systematic process of searching and organizing the interview transcripts and other materials that was collected to increase the researcher's understanding and presenting the discovery of the findings to others (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). While searching through descriptive data, common phrases, words, participant's ideas and views stand out will be reported. The sorting of these phrases and words is referred as coding categories. "Codes are labels of assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). Coding involves different levels. Major codes are more general statements. Subcodes are used to break the information into smaller units of analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this study, categories were determined before the interviews took place.

For the data analysis in this study, the audiotaped interviews of the participants were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The interview transcriptions were sent to each individual who agreed to participate in the study for review. The transcriptions and the field notes were used for analysis. "Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important, and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 152). Wolcott (1994) suggests that the first step should be to read over the materials and

highlight ideas that stand out. In this study the method of data analysis is based on the procedures developed by Vaughn, Schumm and Sinagub (1996). These authors have adapted their procedures from the constant comparative method (Glaser & Stauss, 1967) and natural inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). All the interviews transcripts followed a line and page number. A running heading included the name of the interviewee. After a computer reading of each interview, emerging themes, common phrases and ideas were recorded and printed out identifying both major codes and subcodes.

After the interviews have been read several times, certain words, phrases and themes referred to as the "Big ideas" (Vaughn et al., 1996, p. 105) were identified. Then the interview transcripts were reviewed again for smaller units of information, the size of the unit can be a word, phrase, sentence or a paragraph. The break down of the units depend on the research questions. Lastly, the identified unit was sorted according to major themes that had developed. As such, the themes were defined and the criteria for organizing the information under the respective themes was described. The purpose of the theme definition was for intersorter reliability which occurred during the first three steps which were independently conducted by the researcher.

The fourth step, following the initial analysis, the researcher will looked for agreements and checked for similarities between the interviews. Once all the major themes had been clearly defined, the next step was to identify these common themes in all five participant interviews. In other

words, cross analysis will be conducted on all interviews. The findings will then be written and interpreted.

Validity

Validity in qualitative research is concerned with whether the observations, interviews or content analysis really contains the information that the researcher thinks they contain (Vockell & Asher, 1995).

Qualitative research is subjective in nature, therefore, suggests careful analysis on the part of the researcher to help control that subjectivity.

Wolcott (1990) suggests that there are nine points to help a researcher address validity in a study: (1) talk little, listen a lot; (2) record accurately; (3) begin writing early; (4) let the readers "see" for themselves; (5) report fully; (6) be candid; (7) seek feedback; (8) try to achieve a balance; (9) write accurately (pp. 127-135). Vockell and Asher suggest that "an effective strategy to increase validity is to do a member check, that is, ask participants if they think that your interpretation is valid" (p. 206). Each participant was given a copy to check the validity of their statements.

It can be noted here that although there are many problems with both reliability and validity in qualitative research, these methods do reveal that there is an underlying beliefs surrounding the issue of career choices of American Indian women teachers "rather than measure an artificial entity created by a data collection process in quantitative research" (Vockell & Asher, 1995).

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

**Native people must pursue, acquire, and own
knowledge to achieve freedom; we are mere slaves.
Janine Pease-Pretty on Top
Crow**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the study. The findings and the related discussion will be presented in two sections. Section 1 will present the life stories conducted with each of the participants. Section 2 will present an analysis describing the patterns and similarities in the responses of the participants.

Section 1: Life Stories

Five Native American women each participated in an individual, in-depth interview with the researcher. The tribes of these women are Hopi, Yaqui, Lumbee and Acoma. All are currently teaching in Arizona public schools in kindergarten through fifth grades. Three of the women are teaching kindergarten, one is teaching fourth grade, and the other is a special education teacher for third to fifth graders. Two of the participants have taught or participated in related activities in the education field over the last twenty years, and are currently in the classroom. Each of the other three have been teaching in the classroom from one to three years.

Four of these Native American women were full blooded tribal members and the other one has parents and grandparents with tribal

affiliations. Collectively, their stories produced the following major themes: education, family, cultural conflict, and a perception of themselves as Native American educators today. Each of these theme will be discussed in Section 2.

Each participant was honest and forthright in telling her story. Collectively, they were proud of their heritage as well as their teaching careers. They were happy to share their stories and were hopeful that the information they volunteered would benefit other young Native American women.

Maria's Story

Maria is currently a kindergarten teacher in her first year of teaching in a school adjacent to the Yaqui reservation. Maria is Yaqui, and lives on the reservation west of the city. She graduated from college with a degree in elementary education.

I was born in Merced, California in 1972. My parents worked as migrant workers as well as my grandparents. They worked there on and off, seasonally, and we moved back and forth to Yuma, Arizona, which is where I was raised. I grew up there. I spent most of my elementary school years there, up through the seventh grade. My father is from there. My father is Hispanic and my mom is half Yaqui. My grandmother on my mother's side is full blooded Yaqui. Most of my childhood years were spent there. I didn't come from a good home. I think it would be labeled dysfunctional. My father always drank. My mother went through a depressed stage, when she lost my youngest brother. I am the oldest. My sister is 22 and my younger brother is 17.

I moved here in eighth grade and went to school. We lived in the city area--downtown, in an older home. We had a teacher there who loved to dance with us, but she wasn't really there. I feel like I didn't learn much. Then I went to high school.

I remember going through a period in my life when I was tired of being the oldest and being responsible for my brother and my sister. The situation I grew up in was one where I saw people drinking and doing drugs. I didn't want that for myself. Yet I did end up doing what everyone else was doing, but not to the same extent. When I was 16 or 17 I left home. Then I came back and ran away from home again when I was 17 and stayed away until I turned 18. I was working and going to school.

I was involved in high school in Indian Club. The lady we had for an advisor was so out of it that she didn't even know if we were coming or going. She would give us a pass for anything. It was a free thing. I would just hang out there all day.

I was kicked out of school for cussing. I had a bad attendance record. The principal didn't really care for me. He told me I shouldn't have a mouth like that and not to come back on campus. I did have a very supportive counselor. She was very supportive and wanted me to graduate from high school. But at that time socializing was more important. I did take her seriously. I didn't have a lot of people saying to stay in school. But at that time everything else was more important than school. I did have parents who told me that if I wanted to get anywhere in life that I did need to go to school, and graduate from high school. I didn't go back to high school because I was kicked out and so I found myself very depressed.

Then doctors found that I had a blood disease and they didn't know if could be cured. But I was healed and shortly afterward, in 1991 I became a Christian. I had been raised a Catholic, but we weren't devout. That was my turnaround in life. I reevaluated my life, because I felt I needed to live with biblical principals. It wasn't something that anyone taught me, I had to learn it on my own.

I felt like I needed to go back to school so I got my GED in April, 1991. Then I felt like I needed to go to college so I just applied to one. I had seen an ad for it in a magazine. I was accepted. It was challenging, mostly because I was never taught how to study. My freshman year was kind of rocky because some of things that the other students knew around me, I didn't. I didn't apply myself in high school. The most I learned was up to the 8th grade. In high school it was pretty much a social gathering. I didn't learn anything there.

When I got to college, it was challenging to me. Financially and academically I was struggling, but I made myself do it. I isolated myself, and made myself do it. I didn't do anything else there but study and go to church. I did have to work very hard academically. My previous years didn't prepare me for college, but I had help from other friends and tutors. I also worked throughout school. I had to work very hard, physically and emotionally, in every area. I worked both at school and off campus to meet the financial need. I did receive funding from outside sources. Financial matters were always an obstacle. I always worried if I would have enough money to come back the next semester. The tribe did help to a certain extent but I think it could do more. I had scholarships and Pell

grants. But I still had to work. Also I missed my family and had to live away from home. Time was a big issue I couldn't go back and forth a lot. But my mom became a Christian around that time and it kind of healed a lot of things in my immediate family.

I graduated in elementary education in April, 1996. Two weeks later I was introduced to the director of Native American Studies in the district. She helped put me into a tutor advisor position where I worked with children and had exposure to administrators in the district. I was hired on in a school near the reservation which worked out great because I could work with my own people. Working with them and some other teachers helped me to become familiar with the routine and what was expected. But it was nothing like I am doing now. I was barely getting my feet wet and then I jumped in to a full time teaching job. I am currently a bilingual kindergarten teacher. It's like learning how to swim. Now I'm getting the hang of it. For the most part, I worked really hard. But it seems like no matter how much you work, it seems like you are not on top of things in teaching. It keeps piling up and piling up. The good thing is that there are good teachers here that I have gotten a lot of support. They know where I am coming from and sympathizing with me as being a new teacher and helping me out.

In college I was a dorm devotion leader, then a residence assistant and then senior class president. I never thought I would obtain or reach those kinds of goals. I never even set those kinds of goals, but that's where I found myself. It took time and prayer to get through. Sometimes when I look back, I thank God because I have come along long way. Especially

when I see other kids my age. It brings tears to my eyes, because they don't even know what they are capable of to get past all it. That is why I became a teacher, I need to give back to the children to the community.

I live on the reservation. I'm involved in the local church, and I teach Sunday School and work with the Yaqui children. Teaching here has been a great experience. I regret not having more Native American children in my class. I started with 4 out of 20 and now I have only two. When I was hired on I was hired in a position that was supposed to have more Native children, and not as a bilingual teacher, but that is what I ended up being. That was the whole purpose of me teaching in this area. I still get a chance to be around them.

I am engaged to be married. He is a full-blooded Navajo. He is 29. I met him at school, in my freshman year, but I was too focused, nothing was going to get in my way. We started dating in my sophomore year and have been together since then. He graduated in 1994, and is now working with the Quinalt nation in Washington. He is a youth pastor and a teacher aide with seventh and eighth graders. He also does the basketball team. We are getting married this summer. I will probably go up to Washington, but he will probably want to eventually go back to the Navajo reservation.

My mother would always tell me I was a dominate child. Growing up I was always the teacher and everyone else was the student. Being the oldest child plays a role in it. You get used to being in charge. I was always putting on little plays or talent shows in the backyard and charging a dollar to see our little shows. My mom always told me that I would make a good teacher. I never took it seriously. When I started college, my

major was Christian education, but I thought why limit myself and thought I would be more effective in a public school. If you live a good moral life, as a role model you influence more people being in a public school. I also had friends who told me I would be a good teacher. They had seen me come up with my own themes for Sunday School.

My mom and my uncle influenced me the most when I was growing up. He is a teacher. He graduated from the university here and teaches in California. He wasn't like everyone else. He would come home during his breaks. He never married. He would always tell me, "Don't limit yourself. You could do better, you have a lot of potential. Don't be like everyone else. Go to school, get a job. Put yourself through school, no one else was going to do it for you." We were brought up very independently. I didn't grow up on the reservation but moving here you see a lot of kids on their own and fending for themselves.

I felt like I needed to give back to the community what was instilled in me. I did have good teachers growing up. I had a very strict fifth grade teacher. He was one of the few male teachers that really influenced me. He made us learn how to use our time wisely, and if we didn't we had to use our own time, which was recess. At home, nobody asked did you do your homework. They were too busy partying to worry about it.

Monday morning would roll around and you didn't even know if you had clean clothes. You may have to wash. That teacher made us do our homework at school if we didn't do it at home. He gave us a lot of hands-on stuff. We did our own videotaping and made a Pepsi commercial. The things that I remember as a teacher now are all the field trips and hands-on

activities, like chopsticks with our Chinese units. I try to do that in my own classroom now. I see that the children don't apply themselves because they are not taught to apply themselves.

I think I rose above my circumstances. I wasn't handed things. I wasn't pushed a lot and told to go this way or that. I had to find my way through some weeds and feel my own way. I've been asked to speak in front of some youth groups and at the junior college here about my experiences and share how they can rise above their situation, mostly to high school and junior high kids.

I see myself labeled. They ask me what tribe I am and I say I'm Native American and Hispanic. I see a lot of conflict between the two. It may not be focused but I sense it.

I don't consider myself a racist person. In my family there is a lot of interracial marriage. I've never been taught to be a racist. I have black and white uncles and Yaqui ones. When I moved here my eyes were more opened. I started finding out more about my own culture and being Native American. In high school I was labeled Native American, but I was really both Native American and Hispanic. I couldn't say I was one or the other. Now I see myself as Native American because I see more support there.

I haven't been here long enough to be real involved in the culture. When I first moved to the reservation I did attend the ceremonies. I wanted to see where I came from, because it was suppose to be part of me. I felt it was very unfortunate that I didn't grow up knowing what my culture was or my background was. I was told that I was Indian. I think it was because my grandmother was never taught. Her father pulled her away

from her home when she was five or six and she grew up in Yuma. We knew we were Yaqui but that was all. But we didn't know who we were. Moving here I started to go to some of the ceremonies, but I never really participated, except for being an observer. When I asked the people around me why they did it, they said it was because my dad did it or my grandfather did it but it wasn't clarified. I couldn't get a straight answer. So I had to research it. When I was in college I started to reading books and finding out for myself. The tribal education director on the reservation at the time did play an important role. When I moved to reservation he always told me, like my uncle, to go to school. He was never down on me, he always encouraged me. He bent over backwards to help me.

I have a lot of friends that are from various tribes and I've had the opportunity to visit lots of reservations which are different from ours. I guess all of them are different. The Yaqui tribe is very new and unique. I've been exposed to different cultures and foods and attending college has helped me to appreciate different cultures. I have been able to speak to young ladies and young men and to encourage them to finish their education. I've had the opportunity to share who I am and they share with me. It help you appreciate the various tribes and cultures.

I see conflict between my culture and my work. I see it in the leadership, it might not all be spoken, but I can sense it. It all goes back to me being Hispanic and Native American. It is where I see the major division. I know that they try to cover it up but I know it is there and I try to keep harmony. It goes back to racial barriers. You can put all the

community together but some things don't work. They have tried to mix the two. The bilingual program here--it is Spanish and English, yet the Native people here speak some Spanish, but not all. If you are going to use that term bilingual here in this community it should also incorporate Yoeme and English. There are some who are Yaqui who might not speak it but do understand it. Bilingual people push the bilingual Spanish and English programs only. I'm not against it, but I am not all for it either. When I was hired I made it very clear what I wanted to do, which was teach my own native children, and yet I ended up doing a bilingual class because I do speak Spanish. I was asked what I wanted to do, but I didn't get to do it. Oh well, I still have a job.

I would choose teaching again because I enjoy working with kids and I love what I do. If you don't love your job, you are not going to be happy in anything you do. If you love children and can do it, go for it. I had teachers like that. If you are not happy in the schools with kids, then don't teach. They don't always come out and tell you they aren't happy, but you sense it, your co-workers--you always know it. I'm still learning.

Marsha's Story

Marsha is a fifth grade teacher in the Tucson area. She is Hopi and has a B.S. and M.Ed. in education and American Indian Studies. She is married to an Anglo and has three children.

I was born in Keams Canyon, Arizona. It is sort of the federal agency spot on the Hopi reservation. My mom and my maternal aunt made sort of an arrangement that my aunt would take me and raise me. My

mom was having problems and there were already five other children in the family and to add to that, I was not healthy baby when I was born. According to the stories I was told, I had to stay in the hospital for a week and my maternal aunt came and got me and raised me. I never even knew I had brothers and sisters until I was 11 years old. I didn't even know that my maternal aunt was not my birth mother. The contact we had with my birth parents and family was minimal. Everything was fine.

I was raised on the reservation for the first nine years in New Oribai with my maternal aunt and my uncle. It was my aunt's second husband and the connection was real remote to his family. His family was from there. I went to a Mennonite mission school. I didn't go to kindergarten., I went to first grade. They had multigrade, a first-second grade and I ended up transferred into the second grade portion of the school. I was about seven years of age, so I caught up to where I was supposed to be. I stayed there until the beginning of my third grade year and then I moved to Winslow. I really didn't want to move.

I have good memories of our life on the reservation. My dad would firelight in the summer. My mom didn't work. I walked to school. I was barefoot all the time. School was another world. It was across the highway to go to the school grounds. It was like you closed the door on your Hopi life there. School was OK. I remember the teacher. My first-second grade teacher was full of life, a very happy person. I don't remember academics at all, just playing on the playground. There were religious ceremonies every morning, like church. They moved to Winslow

because my dad got a job with a bottling company in Winslow so we moved there. We stayed there until I graduated from high school.

Life in Winslow was pretty good. Everything was stable. I went to public schools. I was always in a classroom where I was like one of two Native Americans there. Eventually my mom worked at the bottling company and then she got hired on at a dormitory for Indian students that wanted to go to public school. I knew that there were a lot of Native students in the public schools there, but I didn't see them. I think they had particular schools that they went to and I didn't. You didn't see very many minority students in my school. There was a south side of town where all the Hispanic students stayed until sixth grade. All the Indian kids went to another school. I didn't go there.

When I was 10 or 11 our family had kind of a big blowout and I found out about my birth family. It was very traumatic and emotional and I ended up moving back with my birth parents for about three or four months. They lived in Winslow, too. I ended up going to the school where all the Indian kids were for that time. That is where my brothers and sisters went to school. Finally in sixth grade the Hispanic kids came north across the railroad tracks and I realized there were lots of Hispanic and Black kids in town. We all went to a school called Wilson School that was strictly sixth grade. The whole building was sixth grade. There were very few white kids there, they were in the suburbs. Then in junior high the whole town mixed together. During that sixth grade year I made a lot of Hispanic and Black friends because I was with my birth family. Then I

ended up going back with my adopted family for junior high and high school.

It was a good experience as an only child. My aunt had a son that had died as an infant. I had a lot of different opportunities that my brothers and sisters didn't. I do know my family now. I made the effort when I was in college. It was not good to do that during junior high and high school, but I do know them now. We are very close now.

When I was in junior high, I decided what I was going to do in 10 years. I decided I was going to go to high school, then join the Peace Corps and then go to college. That was the order. I knew that I was going to go to college so I made a decision to go on the college prep track. It was plain and simple. I set myself up to be independent. I took cooking classes so I could cook. I took sewing classes so I could sew for myself. I took all the secretarial classes that I needed in case I needed to work my way through school. I was very directed in high school. I did candy striping in case I was going into nursing. I didn't date much. I made friends in sixth grade who were Hispanic and very high achievers. I hung out with them. I had to work harder than they did. They just got things easier. I don't think I had the strategy of learning, but I liked to learn. I never could psych out the teachers. I was a good student, but it would have been a lot easier if I had the skills and strategies for studying.

I graduated from high school in 1969 and went to the university and graduated from there in 1973. I graduated in the top 10% of the school and got a scholarship. I didn't apply for any scholarships because I didn't know anything about scholarships. We had a counselor who I never saw

until I was a senior in high school. He ran me into his office and said, "Do you realize that you could apply for some scholarships?" and I said, "No." So I applied for the general Indian scholarship and I got it. It came in late in the year and my home room teacher, who was very prejudiced against Indians, announced in class that I had gotten an award and she didn't understand how I got it. She hoped that I would work a whole lot harder in college than I had in her class. I graduated in the top 10% of my class and so I didn't know what she was talking about. Actually, as awful as she was, she was my challenge. I thought, I'm going to show her. She told us we were bumps on a log in class. Little comments like that. There were only six of us Indians in her class. One she really liked because her sister was a cheerleader. The rest of us were really quiet.

When I graduated from high school, I applied for the Peace Corps and didn't get it. They told me you needed a college education. I worked all that summer. I had started at 14 working as a bus girl at a local restaurant; after that I waited on tables. I worked every chance I had and went to school, worked and went to school.

The kids ask me all the time, why did I want to become a teacher. I didn't. It wasn't my goal. My goal was to be a physical therapist. My family was connected to the BIA institutions in numerous ways. Their jobs were primarily in the kitchen making food for patients or dealing with agencies. Hospitals were always in my family because it was the career to have. It was doctor, lawyer nurse or secretary, that's it. So I thought the nurse thing was the best choice. My mom was working in the kitchen of the town hospital. I enrolled to be a candy striper during high school.

You had two choices of hospitals, PHS which was government and the public hospital. I went to the Memorial Hospital in Winslow and I wasn't accepted. I didn't know why because a lot of them were classmates or girls I knew from the high school. They weren't friends because I didn't really have friends who weren't Indian at the time. My mom got a little upset. She knew the sponsor of the candy strippers and a head nurse at the hospital and she complained to the head nurse. The next thing I knew I was accepted. I don't know what happened except that my mom talked to that head nurse. I ended up being a candy stripper all through out the high school years. I liked working with the children, feeding them and whatever they needed to be done. That is where I made my decision and I geared myself that way to go to college.

They didn't have a physical therapy program at the university here, but I wanted to get as far away from home as possible so I decided to come here. I only applied here. It was liberal arts for the first two years and then I starting looking at what I needed for physical therapy. I was always told that they didn't have a program there, but they did have one in California, in San Francisco. I was told if you take the courses in Special Ed, specifically MR I would have some of the requirements. So that's what I did. I started taking special ed classes which really wasn't geared to physical therapy, but it didn't dawn on me that I wasn't going to be a physical therapist . I ended up with a degree in Special Ed and realized when I looked into the physical therapy program that I couldn't afford it and that I had no background in it, so I ended up teaching. It was sort of

like, that was what I was suppose to be I guess. I don't having regrets or any desire to change course now.

When I got to college it was totally different. It was really difficult. But I knew that I had to manage to get through so I could join the Peace Corps. I didn't realize what it took to get through college. I just saw it as the next step. In high school I had my family and my friends were there to study together. But in college that was all gone. I had made plans with my friends to go to college together, but I was the only one that went. That was one thing that I was always in shock about. We had all made plans together. We were all on the honor roll and in honor society together. Two of them got married right out of high school. One of the others didn't do anything for a while and then she went to school. That was really a disappointment to me. My best, best friend didn't even tell me she was going to get married until half way through our senior year. It was like desertion by your best friend. I left everything, my family , my friends, so there was no familiar support system in college whatsoever.

I didn't find a support system in college, at least not until my junior year. I found it in the dorm. I was involved in nothing. I was like a little mouse who poked her head out once and a while. I went to classes and did everything right. I didn't know what was going on, I was lost. The Indian advisor called us in once in a while, but I didn't take to her. I saw her as another mother and I wanted to be left alone. I was on my own. I stayed to myself. I heard about Indian clubs and I went a couple of times, but I just didn't think the same way they did. I was never active in a lot of clubs. I was in a lot of clubs in high school, but I wasn't active. I was in chorus

and thespian club. That was one of the teachers who saw a lot of potential in me and he wasn't quiet about it. A lot of teachers were real quiet about potential, but he was really loud. He really pulled me out of myself. I never participated in the meets, but I went to the meetings. I was also in Nurses of Tomorrow.

I had one roommate who I drove crazy. She was really loud and I was quiet. She went her own way after Christmas of our freshman year. She moved out and I got another roommate. By the end of my sophomore year, the beginning of my junior year, some girls in that dorm, about three or four of them got me in my room one time and asked me why I was prejudiced. I didn't think I was at all. They said that they wanted to be friends with me and I didn't seem interested. I had thought that I was staying out of their way. They let me have it and they become my core of friends there. I did much better my junior year because I had a support system. I never talked about my grades my freshman and sophomore years, they weren't good. But finally one of these girls showed me how to make it better. I turned everything around. I moved out the end of my junior year with a roommate. She was an excellent student. She helped me a lot and I made it through. I graduated in spring, 1973.

I had applied to the Peace Corps during my senior year, and was accepted in April of that year. I went to Jamaica. I was there for two years teaching the new math, a subject that I struggled with in school. I had to take an eight-week intensive training in it. I was an overseer, checking the schools on how they were teaching the classes. It was a very good experience.

When I came back I slept for about six months and then I was hired by the County Special Services Coop in 1976. I spent that semester in Topawa, on the Tohono O'odham reservation.

I was then hired at a high school as part of the special education department teaching alternative kinds of classes. They then they were switching teachers around at the high school, and they put me in the TMR (trainable) classroom. I didn't feel that I wanted to do that. That summer I went to school and picked up classes for LD and was hired that fall for LD resource. I stayed in that for three years and they discontinued the program and they eliminated that position there and I had to move. I wanted to do the alternative first grade, and I wanted a full class experience. So I did that for five years and developed the curriculum and criteria for entering and exiting. They eliminated that program, and changed it to a reading program based on the Reading Recovery program and I had a hard time with that so I asked to do a regular classroom. I have been in the regular classroom ever since. I am currently a fifth grade teacher. The primary objective is to meet the curriculum objectives which are pretty well correlated with the state ASAP and essential skills objectives. In the classroom I create lesson plans to meet those objectives.

I met my husband here. He was traveling through on his way to Mexico. It was a very chance meeting. He's not Indian. It was kind of strange. I wanted to have a family and I felt I needed to start a family. I was about 24 and not having any luck. I just decided to quit and then I met him. He was not someone I thought I would be interested in, but we had so many of the same experiences. I never expected it to go anywhere. But he

called and went out of his way to come back, and then he left again and he came back again. I never expected it. It was like I was in awe of the relationship, it was a dream. He fit the image. I wasn't the one who pursued it, he did. He has made a lot of changes. His aspirations and his way of living were different than mine. We now have three children.

I took a year off before I was married. After six years of knowing each other we were trying to decide if this was going to work. It wasn't working when I was working so I took time off.

I weathered a lot of personal tragedies when I was first with him and he dealt with it and he was there for me. He stayed. I did take maternity leave, but that was it. When I had my first daughter, we made the decision that one of us was going to stay home. We weighed the pros and cons of each of us staying home and it turned out that he could stay home and be productive. He has rental property and refinishes furniture and is a carpenter, He is a jack of all trades. He is really motivated about having an income. I would of stayed home and done nothing. It has really made him a dad. He is really involved. My oldest daughter is in high school and I have a son in fourth grade and a daughter who is five.

My husband has me in my own category. He puts me in my own category, and his children also. He is very different and his door opens and closes. It has been a real different experience for him to have children who have pain that he doesn't understand. He wants to get mad for them, but he doesn't understand that he won't be there for them always. His family is very open to us on the surface, but that is it.

My parents probably influenced me the most growing up. They never questions any desires or wants that I had. We spent a lot of time traveling in state, and I would want to draw and my dad would always come out with a piece of paper to draw on. One Christmas I wanted a chalkboard and I got a chalkboard. If I didn't understand things at school, they always told me I could do it. There was a lot of strong moral teachings. I grew up believing that any difficulty I had was a test. Every difficulty was a test and if I passed the test I was better for it. If someone treated you mean you were not to become the same way. You were supposed to convince them that you were a nice person to know. Those all come back to me now. You never treat a person the way you are treated, you turn it around. They use to tell me that a lot of people were jealous or unhappy. Those were the teachings that they gave me. I saw them go through a lot of that and I would ask them why they just didn't get mad and they would tell me "mad doesn't accomplish anything." My dad was an alcoholic. He was very well known in town because he was the Coke salesman. Everyone knew him. He traveled on the reservation. He was clean healthy, strong man during that time. He never had any other children. He could add things up quickly in his head. He would exercise like crazy. My mom would drive him out every morning at 4 a.m. and he would run back. It was perfect modeling during crucial times. When he died, he was just the opposite. He never got angry. I don't know what he had to deal with on the trips across the reservation. He never talked about it. He didn't get the credit he deserved from the company. He was the top salesman. But they never did anything to appreciate him. He gave them

everything. He worked overtime a lot and on weekends a lot. I don't remember any special recognition for that. My mom was the same way. They never talked about it or were bitter about it. That's where I learned it, to not be bitter. They are more of a help now that I have my own family.

I had a few teachers who influenced me. Unfortunately I used to think that teaching was an easy job. In high school those teachers would just sit behind the desk and not be involved with us at all. They gave us an assignment and they expected us to do it. My English teacher enjoyed working with kids and showed me a different version. He was really into literature and poetry. He made me appreciate poetry. The images of the teachers I had were like challenges that I could do something.

My cooperating teacher during student teaching was great. She had some tough kids that year. The classroom was in the basement. The kids covered the windows. She just flat out said you will teach these two classes. She put me in some strange situation, but they were real learning situations. She taught me how to talk to tough kids. She made me understand that if a kid gives you a problem, they really like you. Another teacher at the University said, "If you give them a threat, make sure you carry it out."

I made a decision when I graduated from high school that I could have a career where I could be successful financially and personally satisfied or I could get into an occupation where I was helping other people. I made the choice of helping other people. I wanted to be an artist, some sort of art. I decided there was not much I could do for

anybody if I became an artist. I would have to depend on people to like my style or change my style so people would buy it and then it wouldn't be my art anyway. My parents weren't happy with my decision, especially to join the Peace Corps. They said, "After all this work and you aren't even getting paid." I said that wasn't the important thing.

Obstacles in college included recognition that I was a capable person. Some teachers recognized that I was capable. They made comments that I was shy. In high school there was a lot of prejudice among the teachers, and a lot of them were there just to do a job. One teacher was very verbal about assessing everyone. In college I didn't have a support system. I didn't have short term goals. I just wanted to finish and go to the Peace Corps. The teachers were disinterested unless you made the effort to show them who you were. I did do that with one teacher, a physics teacher. I thought I was going to fail the class. Someone told me to go talk to the teacher. I was in his room three or four times a week and he noticed. He knew me.

A special ed teacher was another one. I didn't like her. She was too loud, too assertive, too blunt, not my style. I used to pick people out to mold myself into. If you practice it often enough, it becomes you. I tried to study with this girl next to me. I studied and studied and I got a D on the test. She told everyone in the class. I went to her and she invited me to her house and I told her I had studied very hard. The whole atmosphere changed when I was there and she told me that there were some people that were not good test takers and she showed me how to write papers and answer the questions. She taught me how to write. I did well in the class

after that. She realized that I had cared. She is another teacher that influenced me. No one shows any interest in you unless you look for the help. It is up to you to be successful, no one else is going to do it for you.

I worked all the time. It was the main obstacle and sacrifice. That is why my grades suffered. I only had the general Indian scholarship which took care of the fees and tuition. Every semester I had to go in and requalify for the grant from the BIA. I didn't qualify for any more grants because both my parents worked and I was an only child. I never saw money from my family. I never expected it. When I was a senior in high school and got accepted at the UA, and my dad was on the downhill, and he asked me what I was going to do. I told him and he want so sure, but I went anyway. I didn't know where the money was going to come from. All I had was the Indian Scholarship and I went anyway. I was assigned to a room and my classes were done and I was registered. I had to always work. I worked Christmas time and spring break and summers. What made it worse is I had my own car. I was working a lot and my dad didn't want me to not be able to get around.

I got the Masters in 1991 in American Indian Studies and now I am applying for a Doctorate in American Indian Studies. If I get into the program, I will take time off to take the classes.

I think I have been a role model for girls in a round about way because I have a couple of older girls tell me that. Not as much here at this school. Now more are identifying with me being Indian here. Some of the kids I work with think I am a role model, but I am not always conscious of it.

I am a very contemporary Indian woman and have accepted the fact that I am not a traditional Hopi, through no fault of my own. It kind of makes me sad and uncomfortable at time, representing Hopi and I am not able to explain and have ownership of the real experience. I don't participate in the ceremonial activities but I do observe the ceremonies. I am what you call an urban Indian. I don't go to powwows too much. It was not part of Hopi culture and there is nothing that thrills me about it. Every time there is a function that I am invited to, I go and I'm a little bit more involved in the graduate center here at the university. Most of the activities I am involved in include Indian alumni and Indian studies. I am a little involved with cultural exchanges. I know I could do more.

I think there is no conflict between culture and work as long as I don't initiate it. If I have any difficulties it is because I have made it seem that way. I am going to take responsibility for it. Nobody is going to bug me and cause me a problem unless I become verbal about it. I did once and it made a lot of positive changes. One time I caused a lot of conflict. There is a lot of conflict out there, but how it is kept in check is in my hands. If I want to let it pass, it will pass, but I want to do something about it, I create a problem for myself with administration and school community.

When I taught at the high school for 10 years, they just assumed that because I was Indian that I should be in charge of the Indian club. I said, "No," because at that time I had the attitude that just because I was Indian, doesn't mean that I am supposed to work with Indians. I was having an identity crisis. I couldn't figure out what was right and wrong. I had been

fighting that all through high school, and college. The Peace Corps put things into perspective for me. I had to sort it out for myself. I had a bad attitude. It looked that way to others. I was really trying to sort it and try to use it. So I wouldn't be sponsor of the Indian club. Just because we're Indians didn't mean we had anything in common. The only thing we had in common was that we were from the same ethnic culture. The kids were Yaqui, Tohono O'odham, and Cherokee, and I didn't know anything about their cultures. I didn't feel you could throw us all together and we could have this really cool program. I refused to do that.

When I switched and went to elementary, I started meeting with Indian parents and working with the summer school program. I became involved their Parent Committee and started raising questions to them and telling them that they had power and that they could change it. They were totally ignorant of what they could do. They tried to use the teacher aides for their program, but no one was in charge of it. They hired them for the summer program, and not teachers. I applied for the position and they told me I had to be interviewed. They interviewed me and they hired someone else. I contacted my association and they did an investigation.

As a teacher I found I could teach the curriculum and do the cultural basket thing, but when I start teaching about race relations, I got a lot of complaints. I was probably too extreme. I scared people away. I have had little influence here on how some teach and making them think how they are teaching. Some get it. It is a one-on-one process. In all the years I have taught here, very few have come to me for ideas. I have done inservices.

I guess I probably would choose teaching again. I found that I really like to learn and share what I am really all about. I think there are people who like my style of teaching and I have good management.

If I finish the Ph.D., I would like to find out more about my own culture and people and write it down and share it. I have an Olympic runner in my family, my uncle, and I would like to write about him. Its always the same people who are written about--Geronimo, Maria Tallchief --they have reputations. I want my uncle to have the same thing. My dad was an excellent role model, a lot of Indian men aren't. I'd like to bring that up. And talk about how we need to listen to the wise elders and that will get us through.

Teresa's Story

Teresa is currently a kindergarten teacher at a school adjacent to the Yaqui reservation. She is Yaqui and is in her third year teaching kindergarten. She is married to an Anglo and has two girls. She graduated with a BA in Spanish and a minor in American Indian Studies.

I was born and raised in Tucson in the village. My parents were very young. I was the only child for five years. My mom was 18 when she had me. My dad was 20.

We were very poor. Slowly my mom and dad sacrificed everything and they finally got a house. My dad was going to junior college part time. My mom was involved in the schools all the time. She volunteered in the day care and they gave her a job. Then when I went to kindergarten she volunteered in the classroom and they gave her a job again. Then she got

into an Indian tutor advisor position in other schools in the district. Then she went to the family literacy project and went and worked for the tribe. She is a fluent Yaqui speaker, so is my grandmother.

My father almost got his degree in business. He never finished, but he did go up in the salary levels. When they divorced, my mom had to go to work full time to support us. That was when I was in high school. We went from being very poor to being OK, and back down again. I started working when I was 13--one job, and then I had two jobs when I was in high school.

My mom helped me in school all the way through from grade school to college. My brother was born when I was in kindergarten and my sister was born when I was in second grade. I went to elementary school in my neighborhood and was in the GATE program for a couple years, then went to middle school and high school. I was in the GATE program for first through fourth grade. I didn't like it at all. I skipped fifth grade and went on to sixth. Then seventh and eighth were very hard. It was a totally different environment than I was used to. It was hard because there were kids that were at my level who weren't there before. There were kids at my elementary school who were probably at my level, but they weren't worked with to bring them up to a higher level. I was the only one that was pushed as much as I was. Also in middle school I was with people of different color. I couldn't do what they were able to do. It took me a long time to catch up.

Academically in the beginning I did really, really well. When I got to junior high, I lost interest in academics because I thought I couldn't do it

any more. I got involved in other activities like orchestra, student council, anything I could to try and learn my way around. I was also trying to escape what was happening at home. I think out of the 20 people who went on to junior high with me, there were only three others from my sixth grade class that went to the same school. All the rest either dropped out or were failing really, really bad at another school. Our sixth grade teacher did nothing academically with us at all, just art. I had very strong second, third and fourth grade teachers but sixth grade was a total lost. That teacher couldn't handle the behavior there. A lot of what I did in sixth grade was on my own. She just gave me the book and said here you do it. I don't remember any language arts there at all. I've gone back and asked people who were there what they thought, and they say she did nothing with us. There were only two or three people at the junior high from where I was from and they didn't like going to school. They liked to party or ditch or whatever. I had to make new friends there and they were into all these other things. It helped me to stay afloat to be involved and to do well academically.

Then I went to high school here for all four years. I graduated when I was 16. Three days after high school ended, I started the New Start program at the university. I got burned out right away. In the spring of my freshman year, I got pregnant with my first child. I had her in January and took a semester off and went back that fall. I got married in 1990, about eight months after my daughter was born. I have two children now, seven and three. It took me about an extra year to finish.

I made it hard on myself because I had my daughter so early. And then I was pregnant again on the way out of college. I couldn't ask anyone for help in college, because they hadn't been there--my mom helped as much as she could, but she hadn't done registration, or grants or getting the money. I couldn't have anyone edit my papers or help me with math because they hadn't gone that far. In my community there was no help academically.

At the university I didn't know who to ask so I struggled a lot on my own. Eventually I figured it out. When I started catching on, I brought my brother in and helped him because I didn't want him to have to go through what I went through. I took him and showed him how to use the library when he was a freshman and sophomore in high school because he was doing the same work I was doing at the same time. He was much better at math than I was, so he would try to help me too, but he wasn't quite there yet because he was so much younger.

It took me five years to finish, but I just kept going. While in school I worked at a fast food restaurant. Sometimes I held two jobs at a time. I changed my major a couple times too. I thought I wanted to be in bilingual education, but I wanted to finish my degree in Spanish first. Being here as a teacher I don't think I really want to do that now, bilingual education anyway. I minored in American Indian studies and got interested in that and law.

I am currently teaching kindergarten at a school adjacent to the Yaqui reservation. I have a BA in Spanish and minor in American Indian studies. I am on an emergency certificate because I didn't have a teaching

degree. I was hired as a tutor advisor for the Native American Studies program in a local school district right after college. Then they hired me as a kindergarten teacher, and I have been taking classes to get certified.

My mom influenced me a lot. It was expected that I do well. She expected me to go to college and do well. There was never a question of if or when, but it was expected. I was expected to be a teacher by everyone in the community and my family. I had two teachers I can truly remember, my third and fourth grade teachers. They were always pushing me and expecting me to do well. They always asked about me, even in college. That is what they thought I would do, go to school. Teaching is my career because I have always been in education. I don't know another way. As for a career, I don't know if it what I want to do it forever.

My family was always there to support me even if it was to only ask me if I was finishing or was I done yet. It wasn't an issue of can I take you somewhere, it was more one of moral support. I felt I had an obligation to finish. I had one cousin who had a few credits to go, and she stopped and got married so I was the next person.

I feel I sacrificed because I went to school all day, then come home, then go to work till 9 o'clock while my husband watched my daughter. Then I would spend time with them, go to bed and get up at 12:00 to do my homework until 3 a.m. My husband worked 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. so I would get up and take him to work. I was taking 18 units. After I had my daughter, I did so much better. I started getting A's and B's. One time I took 20 credits. My freshman year I did the worst because I didn't want to be there. I was suppose to go out of state to school, but my mom got sick

and I didn't want to leave my brother and sister who were eight and ten at the time with her by themselves.

I think I am a role model because of where I came from, but then I stop and look at my mom and other people's parents at that time. My mom had a lot more to do with it than I did. She always had a way of getting me into things, she always pushed and got me going. When I got pregnant people told me my life was over and I wasn't going to finish. I feel that that part I could of done better. When I talk to young girls I feel kind of awkward telling them to finish and do a good job and to stay away from boys. But at the same time I did finish. It's kind of hard to say have a kid and you will finish. It might not happen for them. In reality it did happen because I worked hard. I don't want them to use it as an excuse to not finish.

Within my community our society is very patriarchal. I feel that I don't fit in at times, in a sense. But I know where I belong. In the last few years, seeing how any successful Native American woman is treated by the tribal council, it is discouraging but at the same time I understand. The traditions are disappearing. In 20 years there won't be much of the culture left, if even the language. So I understand what they are holding onto, even though it may not be right in this society today. Long time ago it was OK to have this perspective. Some Indian societies are matriarchal and some are patriarchal like mine.

I see Indian women are more accepted by men of other tribes and races. Yet, I get conflicting messages from my own tribe. They say, yes you should go to school, yes you should do well, but at the same time their

actions speak differently. I'm not sure what my place is with them. I just know that I have been pushed to finish. I just don't know where I am to go from here.

When we had a woman chairman, she got chewed on all the time because she was a woman and they thought women shouldn't make decisions. She wasn't given the chance and was brought down by the men on the council. It's too bad. Things have changed, they are changing, but not enough.

In a broader perspective, I feel that I am moving up with everyone else who has finished. A lot of other Native American women are finishing faster than Native American men. A lot more are finishing their degrees and are going from a B.A. to an M.A. to a Ph.D. They are the ones that are moving and shaking right now. I think it is very interesting in my generation because there will be some changes. Most of the ones that I know who are Native American and who did finish their degrees are women.

I see that there is conflict between work and culture on a daily basis. I see people learning all the methods and strategies on how to teach these children and how to reach them, but not practicing them. I feel a lot of pros and cons. There are a lot of generalizations about Native Americans that aren't necessary true for our tribe. I'm sure it is the same for everyone. That is what I struggle with everyday. I see what the kids are going through because I was there. It makes me step back and say OK, this isn't working I have to try something else. Also, knowing their histories is hard for me. I know the abuse and neglect, especially the drug and alcohol

abuse. It is hard for me to decide when to open my mouth and when should I keep it shut. How far should I go. A lot of it is my family and friends. It is hard for me to know what I should say and what I shouldn't say. Sometimes I feel I can't be objective. I have to take a step back and take a teacher's point of view. I really have three points of view. First, I have been there, second I'm on the teacher's side and third, I'm also a member of the community and have to take things on. I have all these different roles and sometimes I don't know where I stand.

I am not married to a Yaqui. He is Puerto Rican and Irish. I didn't want to marry someone who was Yaqui. I tried dating a few Yaqui guys, but it didn't work. I'd find my father image when I did date them. My father was very chauvinistic of my mom. If she was too successful, he was insecure. He felt she belonged with the kids, and yet she was with us all the time. I was always helping her succeed. I dated a few, but they had a problem with me doing better than them and trying to tell me what to do. They were trying to bring me down. I couldn't see waiting on them hand and foot and couldn't see doing those things that were expected of me with them. I wanted to experience something outside of my community. I wanted a new perspective. I saw lot of guys who were from my community, who were not good in school and weren't involved in activities and wanted to just hang out and party. That is alright for awhile, but it wasn't what I wanted for the long time.

I feel like I have been in education all my life. I feel like I was a Chapter I child and I was a GATE child my whole life. I was the example. I was geared toward this. I would like to try something new like

management, a corporation type of job. I have never been anywhere else. I grew up with meetings after school and at night, going to retreats. I was the student representative on the Parent Committee and now I am on the Parent Committee as a parent. I was on so many panels growing up that I just keep repeating myself on how I did succeed and what I did. After awhile I got very rebellious and was tired of people telling me what to be and when to do it. I was always known as the teacher pet or the nerd. I was tired of it, especially in college. Now, I really want to take some time and think about what I really want to do. I want to do what I want to do now, not what everyone tells me to do. Some people aren't going to like it.

Rosa's Story

Rosa is a second year kindergarten teacher at a school adjacent to the Yaqui reservation. She is married to an Alaskan native and has two children. She has a degree in journalism and American Indian Studies. She has an emergency teaching credential and is taking classes to finish her permanent credential by this fall.

I was born near Pembroke in North Carolina. I lived there all my life except for two years when I was in Georgia on placement program. I was never out of Robinson County until then. There were seven kids in my family. I have a twin sister and one brother, who is one year older, and one sister, who is older. Then there were three more boys after us. The one that is two years younger was raised by my aunt. She got attached to him and we lived in the same area.

My aunt's kids treated him really bad. We were never allowed to tell him that he was our brother and they teased him and tell him who he

really was. He didn't find out until he was 16 and my mom had sign for his license. He was very close to my aunt and is now close to my mom. My mom had a nervous breakdown when we were real young and my aunt took him and my grandmother took the rest of us. My oldest brother thought that my grandmother was his mom. They were very close. My younger brother caused my mom some problems. His IQ was so high my mom didn't know what was wrong with him, and she didn't always have the patience. She took him to the doctor and found out that he had a high IQ. He is president of a bank now. She worked with him, but today he probably would be on some sort of medication at school .

There were always lots of kids around--seven kids. My mom was always working. We came from a very poor family. My dad always had great jobs, but unfortunately he didn't support the family. He was an alcoholic and spent a lot of money on that. My dad was very spiritual and always liked to pray and was very protective of his kids. He never let his drinking buddies bother us or touch us in the wrong way. Mom was very supportive of us. But they was very supportive of our education. I guess that is why I got into education. Mom and dad were totally different in discipline. If we told my dad we got in a fight and we didn't fight back, we got a spanking, and the opposite if we told my mom. We didn't know what to do. My mom and dad let us have our free agency and let us be any religion we wanted to.

Both my parents are Lumbee. Our tribe isn't federally recognized. We have our own land. We own it, that land we were on. Instead of giving up our land rights, we hid in the swamps when they were pushing

Indians out west. We are still trying to get certified by the federal government. But we don't want to give up all the land that we have now. It is mostly farm land. Our home town is run by Lumbee Indians and you have some on the board that are a different race, but it is community run not tribal. We have a big homecoming during the 4th of July weekend. We have Lumbee traditions--seashells on the dresses because we lived near the coast, and white buckskins. We are descendents from the Cherokees. We really have four different names--Eastern Cherokees, Croytans, Tuskaroras, and Lumbees. There is still a group of Tuscaroras, but they are very rebellious. There is also a theory that we are a mixture of all the Eastern tribes and there is another theory that we were descendents of Sir Walter Raleigh and then there is another theory that we are mixture of all three races. Some Lumbees have very coarse hair, some are blond with blue eyes, some are dark skin and light skin. My kids prove it. One is light skinned like me and the other has dark skin like my dad.

My twin sister, and I were the first ones in the family to go to kindergarten. I went all the way through grade school there. My kindergarten teacher gave me my first job when I was in seventh grade. I cleaned her house after school and she took us to different churches. We were always going around to different churches. She put us on display. I bet no one can go through the scriptures like we can. We always had to compete against the audience. Then she would take up money for us to have our pictures taken. It was embarrassing. My grandmother also went to different churches and had high standards for herself and us. We weren't Mormon until we were 12 years old. Then we all went on

placement program. My sister and I were placed near Atlanta the first time and the other time was near Macon. My older sister reached the rebellious stage about that time and she is inactive. My younger brother lived with my aunt and he went to college in Utah for a year. She died and then he came home. She wasn't Mormon, but she wanted everyone to go to college out there. He's inactive, too. You can tell the difference between him and the rest of my brothers and sisters because he was raised with my aunt and her kids. But there is just a difference. My mom taught honesty to us more than her sister's kids. Several kids of hers were in jail, stuff like that. My mom was very strict with us.

I went to grade school in town. I went on placement program in eighth grade, then came back and stayed home for ninth grade. Then I went back on the program in tenth grade to a different family. I still communicate with them now. My sister and I were both in her home. We decided we wanted to graduate from our hometown school so we didn't go back. We liked to play sports there, too. We were all in the Upward Bound program, too. My sister went to summer school that summer after high school in North Carolina, and then transferred her classes. I worked that summer after high school. My older brother graduated from high school in eleventh grade. He had enough classes to graduate early. He waited two years for us to graduate and then we all went to college at the same time.

We drove out in a car and had a lot of problems. We slept during the day and drove at night. I spent all my money on car problems. But when we got there, the Indian Education program helped us financially.

They gave us the scholarship money. I spent five years there with a double major in Public Relations and Journalism and a minor in Native American Studies. I didn't know where I was going. I was just taking all these classes. I met my husband in 1976, my second year there. He is Tlinget Indian from Alaska. I tried to get him to vote for my sister, as president of the Indian club and he laughed at my accent. We didn't get married until 1985. I said I wasn't going to be the typical one to go to college and get married. I was totally against it and that's probably a part of why I didn't get married for 10 years. But my husband had patience with me. It was a long distance relationship. He didn't graduate from there, he only went for three years and finished an electrician's program. He went back to Alaska.

I was really bad in English, but I got an English award at the Laminate awards banquet at school. My twin got the highest GPA, I am proud to say. So did my older brother. I had a cousin that was my role model at college. She also received the Laminate award for the highest GPA. I also was the vice president of the Indian club. I was an editor for the Eagle's Eye, a Native American newspaper there. I graduated in 1980 and then I worked for my tribe for a year. I went back in 1982 and worked on my masters for a while. I have about 15 credits towards a Masters.

We didn't live in the best places that I would have liked to in school. At first it wasn't important to me, but as I got older it was more important. It was cheap, and that was what mattered. I didn't get to go home as often as everyone else. I got stranded in Oklahoma one time. Indian Education

paid for a ticket to fly back and our car stayed in Oklahoma until our uncle could drive it back. We were too far away and couldn't go home as often as we liked. We had some people who were like our grandparents, they took us under their wing. They tried to marry my sister off to their son.

I studied harder in college than when I was in high school. I made my best grades when I was a freshman in college, they say that you don't. I would stretch my money and send some of the scholarship money home to my mom. I had a scholarship for free tuition for Indian students, but I had to work for the rest. The tribe doesn't fund higher education. I had obstacles finding jobs on campus, so I did work study. I had to get up at 4 in the morning. We all lived together as a family, and my brother had a car there and he would let us use it sometimes. I had religion class after working every morning. I worked in the cafeteria and had to wear a long dress, way down past my knees. My husband, was in that class and all the other Lumbees were in there, too. I would come in about 10 minutes late every time. I didn't get an A in that class because I was always late, so I got a B and I was so upset. I had to work all the time. Sometimes I just went home and went back to sleep instead of going to class, I was always so tired.

My sister got a job with IBM here after college and so I came down and applied for a tutor advisor position in town and I worked with them. We would go skiing in Las Vegas and one time she took a wedding dress along and told my husband we needed to get married because I was dating someone else here. So we got married and then we went back to Alaska.

When we were in Alaska, I started a family about two years after we were married. I played ball and just had fun. I volunteered in the preschool and kindergarten when my first daughter was in school. I did start working at the before and after school Indian program for a few hours--arts and crafts for kids and I found out what teachers do. He is a fisherman there and his dad is an electrician. He fishes and is good at it. He likes to work with computers. He goes up there in April and come back in September. I was beginning to feel like gypsy. I was always going somewhere for him and I felt my kids needed something stable. He couldn't see anything wrong with moving here and there. But when my kids got into school I decided we needed some stability. So I went to work in the schools. Now I am on their schedule and it easier to do things with them. My kids didn't know my family as well. In Alaska we were always around his family, it was really hard.

When I moved back here, I applied for a position with Native American Studies. I worked as a tutor advisor and a mentor. Then the director was hiring more Native American teachers so I applied and got emergency certification to be in the classroom. She always pushed me to go back to school and finish.

I'm now a kindergarten teacher. I am still taking classes. I need to take at least six more classes in education to get certified in education. You have to promise to take six credits a year to keep the emergency certification. I only have a few more classes to go and should be done by next year. I also have to take a lot of classes and workshops as part of the school curriculum.

I chose teaching because I wanted to learn more. Teachers never stop learning. I'm lazy when it comes to going back to the university. Going to workshops has really helped. I knew that there was something that my daughter wasn't getting in reading, but I didn't know what it was as a parent. Now that I have been attending workshops I can see what it is. I retained her and now I am glad that I did it, even though some people told me not to do it. I like summers off with my kids. I didn't know that I would be teaching at a year around school.

I try to be a role model to Native American girls today--I think about it when I play sports and in education and by having dress codes and standards.

I am a Native American of the '90s. I don't believe in letting the man rule the woman. My husband calls me a working lady of the '90s. I buy the bacon and cook it up in the pan. He knows that I like sports and want to be a good mom and be good at my job. He thinks I am lacking in my cooking. I am on the Parent Committee, the IPAC. Also, I try to go to my sister's district events--family nights. She is director of Indian Studies in her district. I play ball at the gym here on the reservation and the kids see me. They see me in the community. We go to the powwows and fund raisers.

It is hard here because even though I'm Indian and I teach Yaqui kids, you have to be Yaqui to get anything in this community. You have to be Yaqui to work at the casino. They need to have their own "grow your own teacher" program with their casino funds. I see that there are differences between the Hispanic and Native American teachers here also.

I don't see any problems with my culture and the teachers here. Maybe it is because I'm not from here.

There was a lot discrimination in the area where I grew up. I didn't know any Lumbee words, but some kids were punished for speaking Lumbee at school. My mom didn't teach us any. Indian children were denied an education for about 50 years in our area. In our town there was a fountain for the whites, one for the blacks, and one for the Indians. My sister married a white guy and it took us two weeks for us to tell my dad, because we knew he would be mad. That was his favorite daughter. They did become friends later on. He preferred us to hang around with blacks, because he felt the whites treated the Native Americans and the blacks so badly in our area. He wouldn't get mad if we played basketball with the blacks in the neighborhood, but if we played with the whites he would be mad. My mom wasn't that way. Here there have been a few racial problems. People think I am Hispanic sometimes and want me to speak Spanish, but I can't.

I was making more money when I was a tutor advisor with the Native American Studies department than I do as a teacher. Now I see why they say teachers are underpaid. I love my job, I really like it. I want to take more classes to make better use of my time. I need to find ways to do my job better.

Ana's Story

Ana is currently a special education teacher at a third through fifth grade school in a large metropolitan school district in the southwest. She is from the Acoma Pueblo, and

has lived most of her adult life in the Tucson area. She has a B.S. and M.Ed. in Special Education.

I was born in Albuquerque. I lived on the Acoma reservation until I was about 5, with my grandparents, and aunts and uncles. My grandparents ran a farm at the bottom of the reservation in Macarty. Everyone was there, It was a big family, aunts and uncles, and cousins always there. There was an orchard and there was always corn. My grandfather grew corn, there was always work and something to do. My mom was working in Grants at the time--she worked for a doctor's office, she didn't have a degree but she did something there for a long time. She was alone at the time and dating a lot. I remember that I didn't spend a lot of time with my mom at the time. My grandmother took care of us. I am next to the oldest. I have a older brother, he is five years older and six younger siblings.

I started school in Acoma, first grade, a little day school. There was no kindergarten at the time. I wasn't there at Acoma very long. I remember that it was the same teacher that had taught there forever. She must have taught there for 30 years. She taught my mom and my uncles in a one room school house. My mom later went to boarding school in Albuquerque.

Then my mom met my stepdad and we move to Grants and lived there a couple years and I attended school there for a while. We moved around a lot from Arizona to New Mexico. He wasn't native. He was in construction and we lived in some real isolated places. We lived in Gallup, and on the Navajo reservation. We probably moved once a year at least, in my grade school years. We moved around so much, even in high school.

My freshman year I was in Gallup, my sophomore year in Snowflake, my junior year in Casa Grande and my senior year here. I feel like I have major holes in my education because everyone was on different pages every time we moved.

When I was a senior in high school, they told us that the top quarter of the class could get in to the university without any problems. But funding was a problem. My mom helped me figure it out, not the school counselors. They didn't say anything. I knew it was possible and I was going to do it. So I graduated from high school and went from there to the university here. I went the whole four years on scholarships--the general Indian scholarship for tuition and fees offered by the university, and I had a grant from the All Indian Pueblo Council in Albuquerque. It doesn't exist any longer but that is where I got funded for my living expenses for four years through that program.

My freshman year at the University was hard. I was pretty sheltered at home. I didn't know how to handle it. I took about four classes. I was really really struggling with those classes. I had no study skills. In high school my dad was very strict and didn't let me out of the house. But in college when I made my own decisions of what to do with my own time, studying was secondary to socializing.

They put me in an English X class where you have to learn grammar. I said that I didn't belong in this class and they said, "Then you have to write a paper to check out of the class." I did and they moved me to an English I class where there was more reading and writing. But then I realized I was failing. It was mostly the math classes that were hard and

philosophy. Oh my gosh, philosophy. It was in a huge auditorium with 700 kids and a professor who would just walk back and forth. I don't remember anything else about it. Someone did try to tutor me, and I finally made it through with a D. School was hard. I made it through, but I took an extra semester to get all my credits.

I didn't work while at the University. The grants and scholarships helped me through. I had no financial help from my parents. I learned how to manage the money. In those days they gave you the scholarship and grant money on monthly basis. That helped me, otherwise I would have spent it all. I remember my roommate and I eating just potato chips for dinner. We would gather up all our pennies and go down and buy bologna and bread at the store. They would just look at us as we dumped all our pennies on the counter and tell us to roll them. I didn't even know what rolling pennies was at that time.

My first year I had an Indian roommate. They must have said, they're Indian, put them together. It had nothing to do with our personalities. We struggled. She was from a different tribe. I'm a easy person to get along with, she was more worldly than me and very possessive of her material things. It was hard. We managed for a semester. Then there were other friends that I got together with. I probably had four different roommates.

I met my husband during my sophomore year at the University. My mom used to work at the Tucson Indian Center, and he was working there at the time. He was a social worker and counselor for kids referred there.

We've been together for a while now. We had two children, one who is 20 and the other is 17. And I have one granddaughter now.

I felt I had a responsibility to my family to finish school, and it turned me around. My older brother had gone to a training school in Chicago before he was drafted to Vietnam, but he was the only other one at the time to go beyond high school. I wanted to do it for my family so they could say "she's in college and she's going to be a teacher." I decided that I had a responsibility to myself and the people who were trying to get me through financially. I just knew I had to do it. My study skills were bad, but I found a way to do it. I managed to get all the reading done for the classes and that helped. I did some study groups and that helped. I think it was mostly that I couldn't let anyone down, and what else was I going to do. I didn't want to go home. I wanted to stay there, I liked the life there. It wasn't until I was a junior or senior that I finally did much, much better. My life had kind of settled down and I did better.

The main people that I was exposed to outside of my little world were teachers. I had one seventh grade teacher who thought I was brilliant. She was probably trying to make me feel good, but that was OK. Then I had a high school English teacher that I got along with really well, and encouraged me to read a lot of books. I did really well in her class. My stepdad was always telling me to be a teacher. I never really thought about it until I went to college. It wasn't until the end of my sophomore year that I decided to be a teacher. I didn't want to go into regular ed, I wanted to do special ed. It was a little different. All the kids with learning disabilities and those who were mildly mentally retarded, they always

intrigued me. I wanted to know how to teach them. I student taught in a self contained classroom for severe LD kids and MMR, an intermediate class, third, fourth and fifth grades.

When I finished college, I taught in Sells for a semester. I went down and applied with the county. They were looking for contract teachers to teach in special ed classrooms in Sells. I interviewed and did it for one semester. After that I stayed home and raised my two boys until they were about in third grade. I decided that I had to do something else and so I then looked into getting recertified. I had to take a couple more courses. When I got my teaching certificate I heard they were looking for more Native American teachers in the district, so I applied and went to be interviewed at an elementary school. I started there in 1987. It was an LD classroom--third, fourth and fifth graders who were severely LD. After that I went to a cross categorical primary classroom--CCP. I had a very small class and I taught there in that position. They did away with that position and they had enough kids in the school to have two resource teachers so I did that for two years. Then they decided to split the school and build a primary school. The other resource teacher had more seniority by one week, so I had to move to the new school. I went between the two schools for two years. I really wanted to be in 1 building, so they asked if I would be the ABLE teacher there, so I was half-time CCS resource and half-time ABLE. Then that program changed--the breakthrough program didn't work out there, and I wanted to be in only one school. I applied here at this school and got the job. My current teaching position is as cross categorical resource (CCS) teacher in a third to fifth grade school.

I have a Masters degree in LRC, not in special ed, because I wasn't sure what I really wanted. By the time I figured it out I had enough credits in LRC so I just went that way. I may go back and get it in Special Ed. I contemplated going beyond a Masters, but not for very long.

I don't think I had to sacrifice when I was working on my bachelors or my masters. My husband worked at home and he was there to pick up the slack. I feel that I did the masters when the kids were older so it was easier. Since he worked at home I didn't have to worry about getting a sitter. I had no family in town so it was between he and I and a few friend who helped out once and a while.

My mom influenced me the most. She was always so busy with the kids—eight kids, but she always maintained. This is what has amazed me to this day. She always maintained and somehow managed to feed us all and cloth us all. She didn't work until much later in her life. She didn't have a lot of work experience. She had gone to boarding school in Albuquerque. My dad didn't have a steady income, but she knew she had to be home. She knew how to make things stretch and she was always making clothes for everybody. She made sure we had food and clothes. Even though we could have been on welfare, my stepdad refused to go down and apply and my mom was always a little upset about that. He wouldn't hear of it. We always struggled. When we moved here we moved from house to house. We were always being evicted. We moved around a lot. Even though I managed to graduate from a high school in Tucson, we probably moved four times in that year.

They've been separated for about 15 years. She moved back to Acoma about 20 years ago. She gets a lot more support there, with the HUD homes and making pottery. She decided that she could make a living with it and she is pretty independent. It took her a long time to decide to leave. The children were older and she decided they could handle it. I look back on it now and I wonder how she did it, I can't imagine. I know I couldn't have done it, I would have gone crazy. I don't know if it was that she didn't know any other way or life or what. She had a wonderful sense of humor. It has brought her through many difficult times and the family, too.

I think that I'm a role model for Native girls today, when they find out. They say, "Oh, she's Indian?" They don't automatically assume I'm Indian. They assume I am Hispanic. I've tried to help out in youth groups in different ways, just to be there as a chaperone or whatever. I don't feel that any one person looks up to me. My nieces and nephews are now going onto college. They look at me and say, "If she can do it, I can do it" and I always say, "You can do it. You just need to decide to do it. You will get support from everybody." My grandmother had a sixth or seventh grade education. She couldn't speak a lot of English. But she could always say in English, "Go to school." I wasn't around my grandmother much after age six and I had no extended family here at all, so I really didn't receive any support from them at the time. They could say, "Go to college," but none of them had ever been to college and couldn't give me any specifics. I feel like I floundered my way through school. I just really didn't know what I was doing.

I've been off the reservation for so long that I don't feel a lot of attachment. I'm losing a lot of the language. I go back but I've forgotten how to speak it, but I can understand it pretty well. The receptive part is still there but I don't use it so I lose it. I still have some, but I don't have a lot of contact with anyone who does speak it. My mom speaks it. When she comes to visit me, she is around other people who don't speak it and so we use English. My children don't speak it.

My husband, who is Walapai, has managed to maintain his language. He heard it more. He grew up with his grandmother until he was a senior in high school and went to Oklahoma to school. That was all she spoke. She spoke some English but mostly Walapai. His uncle, who is a retired postman from Long Beach spoke only Walapai to him, even when I was around. That is one of the reasons why he has kept his language. My kids were only exposed to his language when we went to visit, maybe five times a year and in the summer. It wasn't enough for them to speak it. They understand it a lot, but then we come back here and they go to school and only dad speaks it at home. You really have to around it to maintain it.

With me I had been away from my grandmother since I was six or seven. Then we didn't speak it at home with my stepdad. That was when I really started losing it. Now it is pretty much gone. Which is sad. It is hard. My extended family see me as a part of my family, but I am almost a stranger. They see me as my mom's daughter. But I am beginning to see that I don't belong there. You just feel that.

I don't feel that I belong to the Indian community here either. It is so fragmented here. When I wasn't teaching for those 10 years, I was

doing jewelry with my husband and traveling to shows. We have had our boys with us and that in itself has given them really good background and experience. We went to Oregon and Washington, fishing and boating and that sort of stuff. They loved that sort of stuff anyway. When we were doing just jewelry, we used to do picnics here in the park with other families. But after I started working again, I just didn't have the time to arrange things, so people lost interest.

Traveling with my family all over to shows makes me think of the kids we work with and why their language is so poor. It goes back to their lack of experiential background and that really affects their reading.

I think I have been urbanized. The most conflict I feel at work is discipline, what others believed in. They believed in forcing kids to do things and I don't. You can't force them. It creates too much stress. There is more of a conflict with administrators. They are more biased toward their own racial groups. It is hard not to be. My previous administrator was more biased. She felt she was reaching out to the community, but she wasn't. The differences were there. The things that she would say and do were biased. It is everything, how to greet people, even how to dress. There are different ways of dressing, culturally, dressing up or down to be more on their level. Staff members at the school had the same problem. There was a lot of talking down to children and adults. The worse part was the talking down to the adults who were trying to come in and help. They didn't feel welcome, there was a very superficial greeting but people knew it wasn't really there.

If I had to do it over again I think I would work for UPS because they make \$60,000 a year without a masters degree, and I think of all those benefits. My husband's cousin works for UPS and makes about that much with only a high school diploma. I think about that and then think, "Here I am struggling with all this."

I think I would have liked to have done something in business. There are so many ways now to make a lot of money and are a little less stressful than this profession. It would have to be the right thing. I would look at the right ways to invest money. It intrigues me how people make money. I wouldn't be as afraid to take risks. I know I am not a risk taker and my husband is less than I am. I think I would do something to overcome that. I really would like to get into real estate. I could look at all the beautiful homes and pick one out for myself. I have even called up one of the places that teach real estate and they sent me a little booklet about it. I've got to do it. I've got to do it sometime. I need to do just try it.

Section Two: Findings

This study attempted to examine the influences on the lives of five Native American women who selected teaching as a career choice. Commonalities among these women were found in the areas of education, family, cultural conflict, and self perception.

Education

Historically, for Native American women, teaching has always been a part of their traditional culture. This study indicates that Native American women still retain their traditional responsibility to teach children, though not always in the same traditional setting as their predecessors. The participants in the study have adapted the formal educational system of the Anglo-American by completing their university programs, and now teach Native American and other children using curriculum designed by the same Anglo-American culture. They have done so in order to better themselves, their life situations and to preserve part of their own culture.

The Native Americans on this continent learned quickly that they had to adopt the Western European system of formal education, their languages and their religions in order to survive (Szasz, 1974). This desire for an Anglo education has not ceased during the twentieth century. As such, all five participants felt that their parents had pushed education as a way for them to succeed in the world. In four of the five participants families, the assimilation went as far as not teaching the native language so that the children would have a better chance for success. Rosa recalls that, "I didn't know any Lumbee words, but some kids were punished for speaking Lumbee at school. My mom didn't teach us any. Indian children were denied an education for about 50 years in our area."

Ana, who learned her native language as a child indicated that, "I'm losing a lot of the language. I go back, but I've forgotten how to speak it, but I can understand it pretty well. The receptive part is still there, but I

don't use it so I lose it. I still have some, but I don't have a lot of contact with anyone who does speak it. My mom speaks it. When she comes to visit me, she is around other people who don't speak it and so we use English. My children don't speak it". Similarly, Teresa learned to speak Spanish and Yaqui before she learned English in preschool and kindergarten. The grade school she attended did not have bilingual classes, so learning English became a necessity.

All five participants attended urban public schools, though two started first grade on the reservation. One attended a mission school and the other a reservation day school. Each of them later attended urban public schools when their families left their reservations.

All five indicated that they did well in the primary grades when they attended their neighborhood schools. Marsha and Teresa were both moved up a grade because their teachers thought they could handle the work. Marsha recalls, "I went to first grade. They had a multigrade, a first-second grade combination and I ended up being transferred into the second grade portion of the school." Likewise, Teresa skipped a whole grade. "I was in the GATE program for first-fourth grade. Then I skipped fifth grade and went on to sixth."

Three of the participants indicated that they started to notice academic differences and difficulties when they reached middle school. They found the student population was more racially diverse and there were students with higher levels of academic skills. Teresa noticed when she reached middle school that, "Seventh and eighth were very hard. It was a totally different environment than I was used to. It was hard because

now there were kids that were at my level who weren't there before. Also I was with people of different color. I couldn't do what they were able to do. It took me a long time to catch up." Marsha noted that,

I made friends in sixth grade who were Hispanic and very high achievers. I hung out with them. I had to work harder than they did. They just got things easier. I don't think I had the strategy of learning, but I liked to learn. I never could psych out the teachers. I was a good student but it would have been a lot easier if I had the skills and strategies for studying.

Four of the five graduated from off reservation public high schools, though each participant noted that it was difficult for them to do so. All five indicated that they felt high school did not prepare them academically for college. Ana moved frequently growing up. She attended a different high school for each of her four years of high school. Looking back she says, "I feel like I have major holes in my education because everyone was on different pages every time we moved".

Maria dropped out of school and earned a GED soon afterward. She indicated that,

I didn't apply myself in high school. The most I learned was up to the eighth grade. In high school it was pretty much a social gathering. I didn't learn anything there. I was kicked out of school for cussing. I had a bad attendance record. The principal didn't really care for me. He told me I shouldn't have a mouth like that and not to come back on campus. I didn't have a lot of people saying to stay in school. And at that time everything else was more important than school.

Statistically more Native students attend community colleges after high school. Yet when all five participants finished their secondary education, they went directly to four-year institutions.

All participants indicated that they had financial, academic and social problems in college. All five women had some sort of financial aid during college, but very little help in applying for scholarships and grants. Teresa said, "I couldn't ask anyone for help in college, because they hadn't been there--my mom helped as much as she could, but she hadn't done registration, or grants or getting the money." Ana remembered, "When I was a senior in high school, they told us that the top quarter of the class could get in to the University without any problems. But funding was a problem. My mom helped me figure it out, not the school counselors. They didn't say anything." Four out of the five women worked their way through school because the financial aid provided by the schools was not enough to meet their needs. None of them had financial support from their families.

Marsha remembered,

I worked all the time. It was the main obstacle and sacrifice. That is why my grades suffered. I only had the general Indian scholarship which took care of the fees and tuition. Every semester I had to go in and requalify for the grant from the BIA. I didn't qualify for any more grants because both my parents worked and I was an only child. I never saw money from my family. I never expected it.

Rosa was involved in a work study program on campus,

I would stretch my money and send some of the scholarship money home to my mom. I had a scholarship with BYU for free tuition for Indian students. I had obstacles finding jobs on campus. I did work study. I had to get up at four in the morning.

Maria struggled financially and academically. "When I got to college, it was challenging to me. Financially and academically I was

struggling, but I made myself do it. I isolated myself, and made myself do it. I didn't do anything but study and go to church."

Rosa indicated that she worked harder academically in college than high school. She also felt that the Indian Education department at BYU was a support system for her to draw on. "I didn't get to go home as often as everyone else. We were too far away and couldn't go home as often as we liked. I got stranded in Oklahoma one time. Indian Ed. paid for a ticket to fly back and our car stayed in Oklahoma until our uncle could drive it back."

Four participants felt that they received very little to no academic counseling and emotional support on their college campuses. Each of these four women indicated that they didn't know where to turn for help. They all said that it took a couple of years for them to figure out the system, and they had to do it out on their own. All five women indicated that they did better after their first two years on campus. Teresa remembers,

At the University I didn't know who to ask so I struggled a lot on my own. Eventually I figured it out. When I started catching on, I brought my brother in and helped him because I didn't want him to have to go through what I went through. I took him and showed him how to use the library when he was a freshman and sophomore in high school because he was doing the same work I was doing at the same time.

Ana had similar feelings about the support she received from her family.

I really didn't receive any support from them at the time. They could say go to college, but none of them had ever been to college and couldn't give me any specifics. I feel like I floundered my way through school. I just really didn't know what I was doing.

Marsha had an especially hard time finding a safety net to make it through the system.

I didn't realize what it took to get through college. In high school I had my family and my friends were there to study together. But in college that was all gone. By the end of my sophomore year, the beginning of my junior year, some girls in that dorm, about three or four of them got me in my room one time and asked me why I was prejudiced. I didn't think I was at all. They said that they wanted to be friends with me and I didn't seem interested. I had thought that I was staying out of their way. They let me have it and they become my core of friends there. I did much better my junior year because I had a support system. I never talked about my grades my freshman and sophomore years, they weren't good. But finally one of these girls showed me how to make it better. I turned everything around.

Statistically Native students take longer to finish college degrees.

O'Brien (1992) reports that 60% of them take at least six years to finish.

Three of the five women studied did take more than four years to finish their college degree because of academic difficulties and personal problems. They all indicated that they felt they had a commitment to themselves, their families and their communities to finish their degrees.

Ana took an extra semester to finish all her courses. She said, "I wanted to do it for my family so they could say,"she's in college and she's going to be a teacher." I decided that I had a responsibility to myself and the people who were trying to get me through financially".

Mentoring is defined in this study as giving support to others to finish a task. All five participants were mentored by family, community, and teachers. Three of the five participants said that they had been positively influenced and mentored by teachers growing up, and that influence helped when it came to making a career choice. Rosa's

kindergarten teacher gave her a job cleaning houses when she was only 12. "My kindergarten teacher gave me my first job in seventh grade. I cleaned her house after school". Ana remembered two teachers who inspired her to do well in school, and to become a teacher herself.

The main people that I was exposed to outside of my little world were teachers. I had one seventh grade teacher who thought I was brilliant. She was probably trying to make me feel good, but that was OK. Then I had a high school English teacher that I got along with really well, and encouraged me to read a lot of books. I did really well in her class.

Ana and Maria chose teaching as a career because they liked working with children. Maria started out majoring in Christian education in college and switched to elementary education because she thought,

Why limit myself. I thought I would be more effective in a public school. If you live a good moral life, as a role model you influence more people being in a public school. I also had friends who told me I would be a good teacher.

Ana didn't want to limit herself to regular education.

I didn't want to go into regular ed, I wanted to do special ed. It was a little different. All the kids with learning disabilities and those who were mildly mentally retarded, they always intrigued me. I wanted to know how to teach them.

Marsha fell into the education field because she was counseled by her advisor at her University that it was a way to get into physical therapy.

I was told if you take the courses in special ed, specifically MR I would have some of the requirements. So that's what I did. I started taking special ed classes which really weren't geared to physical therapy, but it didn't dawn on me that I wasn't going to be a physical therapist. I ended up with a degree in Special Ed and realized when I looked into the physical therapy program that I couldn't afford it

and that I had no background in it, so I ended up teaching. It was sort of like, that was what I was suppose to be I guess. I don't having regrets or any desire to change course now.

Rosa and Teresa both graduated with degrees in the liberal arts fields and came to teaching on an emergency certificate. Besides the liberal arts degrees they both had minors in American Indian Studies and worked as tutor advisors in public school Indian education programs. They were asked by the Native American Studies director in their district to try teaching in a regular classroom. Both are continuing to take classes and are close to qualifying for a basic K-8 certificate.

Family

Traditionally the concept of family is at the heart of Native American life. In this study, the participants indicated their parents were determined that their children receive a better education than they did. Teresa, knew early on that it was expected of her to go to college. "It was expected that I do well. She (her mom) expected me to go to college and do well. There was never any question of if or when, but it was expected." Teresa is the oldest of three children. Her brother is now almost finished with his degree.

The participants themselves knew that education was a way to a better life. All of them wanted to get away from various family situations they had at home. Marsha expressed that need, "I wanted to get as far away from home as possible so I had picked the university here." Ana said she knew she had to do well and finish because she didn't know what

she would do if she failed. "I didn't want to go home. I wanted to stay there, I liked the life."

Maria, who had turned herself around before she entered college said,

I didn't come from a good home. I think it would be labeled dysfunctional. The situation I grew up in was one where I saw people drinking and doing drugs. I didn't want that for myself. Yet I did end up doing what everyone else was doing, but not to the same extent. In 1991 I became a Christian. I had been raised a Catholic, but we weren't devote. That was my turnaround in life. I reevaluated my life, because I felt I needed to live with biblical principals. It wasn't something that anyone taught me, I had to learn it on my own.

While all five women didn't have financial support from their families, they did have moral support that helped them finish their education and succeed as educators. Teresa said that, "My family was always there to support me even if it was to only ask me if I was finishing or was I done yet? It wasn't an issue of can I take you somewhere, it was more moral support. I felt I had an obligation to finish." Ana felt that family obligation to finish,

I felt I had a responsibility to my family to finish school, and it turned me around. I wanted to do it for my family so they could say, "She's in college and she's going to be a teacher." I decided that I had a responsibility to myself and the people who were trying to get me through financially. I just knew I had to do it.

Rosa had other family members attending college with her. Her brother had finished high school two years earlier, and waited until Rosa and her twin sister to finish high school and were ready to attend college together.

Despite coming from homes that they themselves labeled as dysfunctional, all five participants are now in stable relationships themselves. Four of the five are married and have children. The fifth one is getting married in the near future. Three of the four married participants waited until after they were finished school to have children. Teresa was the only one to interrupt her college education to have a child.

Of the four married participants, none of them married someone from their own tribal background. Both Teresa and Marsha married Anglo men. Teresa says,

I am not married to a Yaqui. He is Puerto Rican and Irish. I didn't want to marry someone who was Yaqui. I tried dating a few Yaqui guys but it didn't work. I'd find my father image when I did date them. I dated a few but they had a problem with me doing better than them and trying to tell me what to do. They were trying to bring me down. I couldn't see waiting on them hand and foot and couldn't see doing those things that were expected of me with them. I wanted to experience something outside of my community. I wanted a new perspective. I saw lots of guys who were from my community, who were not good in school and weren't involved in activities and wanted to hang out and party. That is all right for awhile, but it wasn't what I wanted for the long time.

Rosa waited 10 years to marry her husband after meeting him in college. She remembers,

I met my husband in 1976, my second year there. He is Tlinget Indian from Alaska. I tried to get him to vote my twin sister as president of the Indian club and he laughed at my accent. We didn't get married until 1985. It was a long distant relationship. We would go skiing in Las Vegas and one time my sister took a wedding dress along and told him we needed to get married because I was dating someone else here. So we got married and then we went back to Alaska.

Historically, much of the research conducted on Native American women indicated that grandparents had lot of influence over the grandchildren. Neithammer (1977) suggests that while the parents worked, the grandparents taught their grandchildren the ways of survival and tribal traditions, and it was the children's duty to learn and learn well, because the future of the tribe would soon be their own. Conversely to the Neithammer findings, this study found that four of the women felt that their mothers influenced them the most. They felt that their mothers not only influenced them, but pushed them to have a better life. Teresa tells how her mom influenced her a lot. "My mom had a lot more to do with it than I did. She always had a way of getting me into things, she always pushed and got me going." Ana remembers her mother's influence,

My mom influenced me the most. She was always so busy with the kids, eight kids, but she always maintained. This is what has amazed me to this day. She always maintained and somehow managed to feed us all and cloth us all. I look back on it now and I wonder how she did it, I can't imagine. I know I couldn't have done it, I would have gone crazy. I don't know if it was that she didn't know any other way or life or what. She had a wonderful sense of humor. It has brought her through many difficult times, and the family too.

Maria said that both her mother and her uncle had a lot of influence over her.

My mom and my uncle influenced me the most when I was growing up. He is a teacher. He graduated from the university here and teaches in California. He wasn't like everyone else. He would always tell me don't limit yourself. You could do better, you have a lot of potential. Don't be like everyone else. Go to school, get a job. Put yourself through school, no one else was going to do it for you.

Marsha felt both her parents had a great deal of influence over her.

If I didn't understand things at school, they always told me I could do it. There was a lot of strong moral teachings. I grew up believing that any difficulty I had was a test. Every difficulty was a test and if I passed the test, I was better for it. If someone treated you mean you were not to become the same way. You were suppose to convince them that you were a nice person to know. Those all come back to me now. You never treat a person the way you are treated, you turn it around. They use to tell me that a lot of people were jealous or unhappy. Those were the teachings that they gave me.

Cultural Conflict

Culture can be defined as a way of perceiving, believing, evaluating, and defining the way one thinks, feels, and behaves in society. Values and beliefs are determined by our cultures. At times we view our own cultural beliefs and values as correct and better than those of other cultures. This can cause conflict.

All five participants felt that there were some major conflicts between their cultural identity and their work. Four of the five women said they saw a lot of racial tension especially between Hispanic and Native American teachers at their school sites and felt it strongly from the school administration. Maria put it,

I see conflict between culture and work. I see it in the leadership, it might not all be spoken, but I can sense it. It all goes back to me being Hispanic and Native American. It is where I see the major division. I know that they try to cover it up but I know it is there and I try to keep harmony. It goes back to racial barriers. You can put all the community together but some things don't work. They have tried to mix the two.

Rosa also saw some conflict between Hispanic and Native American teachers, "I see that there are differences between the Hispanic and Native American teachers here. I don't see any problems with my culture and the teachers here. Maybe it is because I'm not from here."

Teresa said she saw it on a daily basis at the school.

I see that there is conflict between work and culture on a daily basis. I see people learning all the methods and strategies on how to teach these children and how to reach them, but not practicing them. I feel a lot of pros and cons. There are a lot of generalizations about Native Americans that aren't necessary true for our tribe. I'm sure it is the same for everyone. That is what I struggle with everyday".

The two Yaqui women saw some serious conflict between the Hispanic and Native American teachers in terms of language. Their school, which is more than 50% Yaqui, has a Spanish-English bilingual language program, and Yaqui is not seen as a component. Maria commented,

The bilingual program here, it is Spanish and English, yet the Native people here speak some Spanish, but not all. If you are going to use that term bilingual it should also incorporate Yoeme and English. There are some who are Yaqui who might not speak it but do understand it. Bilingual people (Hispanic) push the bilingual-Spanish and English only.

Ana experienced a substantial amount of conflict with both administrators and staff at her site:

There is more of a conflict with administrators. They are more biased toward their own racial groups. It is hard not to be. My previous administrator was much more biased. She felt she was reaching out to the community, but she wasn't. The differences were there. The things that she would say and do were biased. It is everything--how to greet people, how to dress--there are different ways of dressing, culturally, dressing up or down to be more on their level. Staff members at the school had the same problem.

There was a lot of talking down to children and adults. The worse part was the talking down to the adults who were trying to come in and help. They didn't feel welcome, there was a very superficial greeting but people knew it wasn't really there.

Marsha had an interesting way of looking at cultural discontinuity in her school.

I think there is no conflict between culture and work as long as I don't initiate it. If I have any difficulties, it is because I have made it seem that way. I am going to take responsibility for it. Nobody is going to bug me and cause me a problem unless I become verbal about it. I did once and it made a lot of positive changes. One time I caused a lot of conflict. There is a lot of conflict out there, but how it is kept in check is in my hands. If I want to let it pass, it will pass, but if I want to do something about it, I create a problem for myself with administration and the school community.

Self Perception as Educators

Misconceptions of Native American women have abounded in the literature for centuries. Many early historians negatively and disrespectfully portrayed Native women as either squaws or princesses with very little in between. Wilma Mankiller writes,

Precious few non-Indian people are aware of the role native women played in ancient tribal societies. Written records of tribal peoples have been taken from the notes and journals of diplomats, missionaries explorers, and soldiers--all men. They have a tendency to record observations of tribal women through their relationships to men. Therefore, tribal women have been inaccurately depicted, most often as drudges or ethereal Indian princesses. (1993, p. 19)

Today, Native American women are more likely to be portrayed as tribal leaders, teachers, administrators, healers, lawyers and doctors to name just a few. Yet these roles have always existed for Native women

within their tribal societies. Up until recently, being labeled as a Native American was seen as negative, and many did not claim their heritage. Now that stigma has lessened and even people with only small blood quantities are claiming Native American ancestry.

The five women in this study collectively expressed pride in their heritages. Three of the participants felt that they were modern and urbanized in their thinking. None of these three live near their reservations and felt more a part of city than their tribal land, though, each made periodic visits back home. For example, Marsha said,

I am a very contemporary Indian woman and have accepted the fact that I am not a traditional Hopi, through no fault of my own. It kind of makes me sad and uncomfortable at times, representing Hopi, and yet I am not able to explain and have ownership of the real experience. I don't participate in the ceremonial activities but I do observe the ceremonies. I am what you call an urban Indian. I don't go to powwows too much. It was not part of Hopi culture and there is nothing that thrills me about it.

Ana also feels little attachment to her reservation now, though she had been raised there for the first six years of her life and she still has family there.

I've been off the reservation for so long that I don't feel a lot of attachment. My extended family see me as a part of my family, but I am almost a stranger. They see me as my mom's daughter. But I am beginning to see that I don't belong there. You just feel that.

Additionally, Rosa sees herself as trying to do it all. "I am a Native American of the '90s. I don't believe in letting the man rule the woman. Bill calls me the working lady of the '90s. I buy the bacon and cook it up in the pan."

The other two women, Maria and Teresa who are both Yaqui, grew up in a very patriarchal society. Teresa had some very strong feelings about the situation,

Within my community our society is very patriarchal. I feel that I don't fit in at times in a sense. But I know where I belong. In the last few years, seeing how any successful Native American woman is treated by the tribal council, it is discouraging, but at the same time I understand. The traditions are disappearing. In 20 years there won't be much of the culture left, if even the language. So I understand what they are holding onto, even though it may not be right in this society today.

She goes on to say that,

I see Indian women are more accepted by men of other tribes and races. Yet, I get conflicting messages from my own tribe. They say yes you should go to school, yes you should do well; but at the same time their actions speak differently. When we had a woman chairman, she got chewed on all the time because she was a woman and they thought women shouldn't make decisions. She wasn't given the chance and was brought down by the men on the council. It's too bad. Things have changed, they are changing, but not enough.

Native American women are beginning to have more visibility as role models because more and more women are assuming leadership roles in tribal and governmental activities and becoming more visible role models. In this study a role model is defined as someone who is looked up to by others and admired for certain qualities they possess. All of the participants see themselves as role models for young Native American girls in some sense, but it was not something that they were real conscious of, or felt real comfortable with most of the time. Ana and Rosa both mentioned that living in the southwest, they was often mistaken for Hispanic women, and people felt that they should speak Spanish. Ana commented,

I think that I'm a role model for Native girls today, when they find out. They say, "Oh she's Indian?" They don't automatically assume I'm Indian. They assume I am Hispanic. I've tried to help out in youth groups in different ways. Just to be there as a chaperone or whatever. My nieces and nephews are now going onto college. They look at me and say "If she can do it, I can do it." I always say, "You can do it too."

Teresa found it hard to think of herself as a good role model because she got pregnant at an early age.

I think I am a role model because of where I came from but then I stop and look at my mom and other people's parents at that time. I think that she really was one. When I got pregnant people told me my life was over and I wasn't going to finish. I feel that in part I could of done better. When I talk to young girls I feel kind of awkward telling them to finish and do a good job and to stay away from boys. But at the same time I did finish. It's kind of hard to say have a kid and you will finish. It might not happen for them. In reality it did happen because I worked hard. I don't want them to use it as an excuse to not finish.

However, Marsha wasn't really conscious of being a role model.

I think I have been a role model for girls in a round about way because I have a couple of older girls tell me that. Not as much here at this school. Now more are identifying with me being Indian here. Some of the kids I work with think I am a role model, but I am not always conscious of it.

Maria and Teresa both felt that by teaching they were giving back to their communities. Maria felt that the youth in her community didn't know what they are capable of today. She says, "It brings tears to my eyes, because they don't even know what they are capable of to get past it all. That is why I became a teacher, I need to give back to the children of the community."

Women today do have more career choices than in the past. All five women see themselves as teachers in classrooms now, but not necessarily in the future. Three of the five indicated that there were other career opportunities they would like to try, and that they didn't want to limit themselves to teaching forever. Marsha is in the process of applying for a Ph.D. program at the university here, and would like to write about her tribe. Ana would like to try her hand in real estate, and Teresa felt that she had been in education all her life and would like to try something else.

Maria and Rosa both wanted to continue teaching in the classroom because they love their jobs. Rosa said, "I love my job, I really like it. I want to take more classes to make better use of my time. I need to find ways to do my job better." Maria put it rather succinctly, "I would choose teaching again because I enjoy working with kids and I love what I do. If you don't love your job, you are not going to be happy in anything you do."

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Contemporary Native women have simply accepted the reality that achieving these goals in modern society require that they put aside their reticence and work out their destiny in public as well as in private endeavor.

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Huran**

Chapter 5 will serve to familiarize the reader with the conclusions, implications and recommendations of this study. This chapter will be divided into two sections. Section 1 includes a restatement of the problem, the related literature and research, along with a restatement of the design. Section 2 includes the findings of this study, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

Section 1: Restatement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the elements that influenced Native American women to choose elementary school teaching as a career choice, and to identify and examine the common patterns and similarities within those elements.

Literature relevant to the education of women teachers and particularly Native American women teachers was identified and reviewed. Parameters were established to limit the review of literature to Native American women authors and non-native authors who wrote objectively about Native American women and Native education issues. Additionally,

an historical account of American Indian education in relation to Native women was included as part of the review of literature. This was very difficult as there is very little written about Native American women teachers, also historical accounts of Native education are often inaccurate, disrespectful and biased.

Five Native American women elementary public school teachers, representing four different southwestern tribes, were asked to participate in individual, in-depth interviews with this researcher.

The purpose of the interviews was to gather primary information regarding what elements in their lives lead them to select elementary school teaching as a career choice. The interviews were summarized into life stories for each of the participants and have been reported in Chapter 4.

Section 2: Summary of Findings

The results of this study indicate that all of the participants had parents who wanted to see their children have a better life and felt that a good education was the path to success. The general body literature that talks about success in school identifies having a supportive family as one key element leading to the academic success of Native American women.

All five of the participants attended urban public schools while growing up, two participants began public school in day schools on their reservations. Four of the five graduated from an urban public high school and the other participant received her GED. This schooling in these urban settings helped to broaden their multicultural experiences and increased their exposure to a variety of different career opportunities. In contrast,

young Native girls on the reservation have access to limited career opportunities and few multicultural experiences. The population is often isolated and racially segregated. They often see only basic services and jobs that are needed to maintain these rural communities. These women saw different models of achievement and behavior in the greater racial mix of students and teaching staff. When girls have the opportunity to observe different careers, they are more likely to pursue their own educational opportunities beyond high school.

Generally, the participants reported they all felt successful in their neighborhood elementary schools but began to experience difficulties and notice differences in relationships with peers and teachers when they reached middle school. They noticed that at the middle schools there weren't the same feelings of nurturing that they found in their elementary schools. The five women attended large middle and high schools that were more culturally and socially diverse than their elementary schools. All five perceived that they were less academically and socially prepared than their peers at these levels. They all expressed the idea that they had a hard time keeping up with other students and competing at the same level.

All five went directly to a four-year institution upon completing their secondary education. Each participant had financial and academic difficulties, adjusting and developing a safety net during their college years. They all obtained some financial help, and four of the five worked to supplement their limited grant and scholarship funds. Although none of the women had financial help from their families, each indicated that their

families provided moral support and encouragement that sustained each to successfully complete their Bachelor's degree from college.

Each participant struggled academically and socially until they figured out the college system. Four of the five indicated that they had little to no support from professors and support staff on campus. At first none of them knew what questions to ask, or where to find help. All five eventually developed their own network of peers who supported them on campus as their college career progressed.

The U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (1991), suggests that smaller numbers of Native American students enroll in college, and generally speaking, they enter college at a later age. They often take longer to finish their degree programs than the traditional four years, and many of them go part time. Often times Native American students have already started their families prior to entering college. In contrast to these data which were reported in the literature by O'Brien, only one of the five participants was married and had a child before graduating from college. Three of the five respondents did take longer than the traditional four years to finish their degree programs due to academic difficulties during their first two years of college. None of them went part time, each carried a full college load.

All five women graduated from college, three with degrees in education and K-8 certification. The other two graduated in liberal arts fields with minors in American Indian studies. After finishing school, each began tutoring Native children in public school Indian Education programs. They both had positive experiences as tutors, and consequently

were encouraged to enroll in a teacher certification program by the district Native American Studies director. Since each already had a college degree, they only needed to take their education classes. These two are currently certified with emergency teaching certificates and are in the process of finishing the state requirements for permanent certification. All five participants are teaching in the elementary classrooms, three in kindergarten and one in fourth grade. The other participant is a special education teacher for third to fifth grade students in a magnet school.

Four of the five respondents are married and have children. The fifth one is getting married soon. None of the five married a man of their own tribal affiliation, and two of the five married non- natives. Traditionally women married within their own tribes, or at least a member of another tribe. Many Native women are now moving away from tradition and marrying outside their tribes not only because of the variety of men they meet, but the acceptability of intermarriage in society.

Of the limited number of articles available on Native American women, most indicate that grandparents are the most influential people in the lives of Native American women (Lomawaima, 1994; Neithammer, 1977). However, all five participants in this study indicated that their mothers were the most influential people in their lives, and pushed them to better themselves. Their mothers' view of the world was closer to their daughters'. They had stepped inside the schoolhouse door themselves and knew what to expect.

Generally speaking, the traditional view of the Native women's role has changed over the past few decades. The literature suggests that prior to

the 1960s Native women were educated (especially in boarding schools) only in the domestic arts. Economically, the mothers of these women found that they had to leave their homes and families to work in low paying manual labor jobs to keep their families stable. They perceived that if their daughters got a better education than what they themselves had, then their daughters would have a better life. Two women indicated that there were other extended family members who were also important influences.

All of the participants reported that they had teachers in elementary and secondary school that motivated and influenced them to continue their education. These teachers took a personal interest in their academic achievement by providing encouragement and monitoring academic progress.

All five collectively expressed pride in their heritages. Three of the women felt they had become very contemporary and urbanized in their thinking. They could all see themselves as role models for other Native American women, in some sense, but it was not something that they were really conscious of most of the time.

All five women reported they had experienced some major conflicts between their cultural identity and that of their co-workers and school administrators. Four of the five women said they saw a lot of racial tension between Hispanic and Native American school personnel, especially in terms of Spanish-English bilingual programs established at their schools.

Collectively all five respondents reported that their experience in dealing with racial tension as adults in their career field was not dissimilar

to the racial tension they had experienced themselves on both high school and college campuses. They learned to accept the fact that cultural conflict happens and how to deal with conflicts one on one to reach resolution, thus providing the rationale for comparison first as a student and then as a teacher.

All five currently hold teaching assignments in public schools. Four of the five participants indicated that teaching in the classroom had opened doors for them to explore alternative careers. Three of the women expressed that they didn't want to limit themselves to teaching forever and that there were other career opportunities that they would like to explore in the future like real estate and tribal employment. Two of the women would like to continue their education by getting advanced degrees.

Conclusions

This study attempted to look at the elements in the lives of five Native American women that influenced them to choose teaching as a career. Instead, the study found some common threads among these women that influenced them to finish both their secondary and college educations. All did become teachers, three in the traditional manner by graduating with a degree in education. The other two women graduated in liberal arts fields and went into teaching through the back door. They tutored children in public schools and found they liked it well enough to return to school to become certified. There are commonalities among these women that can be drawn from this study about their families, education, cultural conflict in the workplace, and self perception.

Today, more than at any other time in history, Native American mothers have greater opportunities to influence their daughters to attend higher education institutions, thus exposing them to different career choices that were once denied to them. Historically, the literature suggests that traditionally grandparents were very influential in the lives of their granddaughters (Neithammer, 1977). However, in this study, each participant reported that their mother was the most influential family member in terms of their educational success in elementary and secondary school. Additionally, each participant said that it was their mother who was the primary factor in providing moral support during their college years. It appears as though the role of influence has passed from the grandparent's generation to the mother's generation. The mother now shares the role of the grandmother as the keeper of the wisdom, a fundamental base for positive role modeling. The mother has had experiences that are closer to those of her daughter than her own mother. Their mothers wanted them to go farther than they themselves had gone. They allowed their daughters more freedom to choose their own paths.

Mentors and positive role models for young Native American girls in elementary and secondary school is vital to their continuing on the road to higher education. The literature confirms that for a native girl to be successful, she must have caring adults in her life, although it did not necessarily have to be her parent or another female immediate family member (Bowker, 1993; Neithammer, 1977; Warner, 1991).

All of the participants were mentored, even though they may not have realized it at the time. They all had families, community members

and teachers giving advice and encouraging them along the way. These five women took the advice and believed in the support they were given.

Although none of the participants in this study had a Native American teacher as a role model while they were in elementary or secondary school, they did have at least one non-Native American female teacher who encouraged them throughout their school years. These teachers were sensitive to their needs and believed they could achieve. Each participant recognized that they now serve as role models to young students, even though they reported that they are not comfortable with their new role.

O'Brien (1992) reports that only 55 to 65% of the Native American students graduate from high school. All the participants in this study completed their secondary education either with a high school diploma or a GED. One of the primary reasons for the completion of this educational goal, as reported by the participants, was to make their families proud, especially their mothers. It also became important to each participant to persist and finish their course work. Each had developed the self motivation to finish.

Although many Native American females have successfully completed college, and the literature reports that the number of American Indian students enrolled in higher education is increasing, they still account for less than 1% (.8%) of all students (O'Brien, 1992). She found that more than half (53%) of Native students leave college after their first year and three out of four do not complete their degrees (p. 6). Lack of student networking, inconsistent mentoring programs, and few campus support

systems are the major reasons Native students do not successfully complete their college degrees. All participants in this study went directly to college after finishing their secondary schooling. Each reported that they had a hard time finding a safety net on campus, finding support from staff, and developing the networking necessary to successfully finish. Four of the five participants did take longer to complete their degrees.

All five participants in this study reported that finishing their secondary education along with their college degrees gave them a sense of accomplishment and helped to motivate each of them to further their education. That sense of accomplishment in conjunction with their positive teaching experiences have provided them with the necessary employment skills to expand their career choices from education to other career fields.

Another area of importance which surfaced as part of the participant questionnaire was cultural identity. Each participant in the study reported they felt they possessed a strong sense of cultural identity. In relationship to these five particular participants, each one noted the importance that their individual tribal practices and customs played in their personal development. In order to venture into something new and learn new things, a person needs a strong sense of tieback to their culture and community. The literature mentions on several occasions the relationship of tribal culture and personal development. Thompson (1978) and Whiteman (1978) both indicate that culture is the primary make up of special and unique personal characteristics; and that from this fundamental base each person is able to assess their surroundings.

None of the participants indicated they had any sense of cultural conflict as elementary students. They had all attended neighborhood schools where there were many students like themselves. As they began to attend schools with larger and more diverse populations, they had to deal with cultural conflicts. They learned how to behave in different multicultural settings and gained additional knowledge about their own cultural mores, thereby developing pride in their heritages. Because of these experiences, the respondents in this study were able to identify and articulate cultural conflict experiences as they occurred at their school sites. The primary area of cultural conflict for each of the participants stemmed from two points: (1) Language/cultural philosophical difference in the school curriculum and (2) Ethnicity differences among the staff. Both of these areas increased their natural cultural identity levels and thereby influenced their behavior to be more supportive and sensitive to the Native American students populations in their schools and to one another.

Implications

The following implications are suggested by the conclusions of this study:

1. Historically, the literature shows that there has not been enough mentoring of Native American girls in elementary and secondary public schools. As such, this study verifies the need to organize mentoring programs to assist Native American girls in elementary and secondary schools to graduate from high school and go on to college to complete their

degrees. Mentoring programs must match Native students with Native teachers, staff and older students who could then facilitate transitions and combat such problems as poor academic preparation, isolation, and homesickness.

2. Information needs to be distributed to Native American women and young women regarding what programs and services exist in the community, in K-12 schools, and on college campuses. Native American women of all ages need to be encouraged to participate in those programs which meet their needs. Again, this study confirms that there is a continuous need for colleges and universities to increase financial, academic, and social support for Native American women on campus.

3. The participants in the study agree that Native American women teachers need to be given the opportunity to tell their stories to Native American female elementary and secondary students. The motivation is stronger when students can identify with someone who is like them, to show them they too can overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.

4. The study indicates that public school administrators need to be trained to facilitate dialogue between school personnel, parents, and students by making the workplace comfortable and accessible to all. Principals and school staff need to be aware and sensitive to the diverse cultures of the parents and children in the school community.

5. This study verifies that Native women, who had contact with an individual or individuals who took personal interest in their progress and told them they could succeed in their goals, did accomplish them.

6. The participants in this study helped verify the need for college liberal arts programs such as American Indian Studies to integrate options such as teacher certification as part of their programs. More communication with college students during the early part of their would give students more awareness of alternatives for their careers.

Recommendations for Further Study

Results from this study indicate that additional research in the following areas may be warranted:

1. Replication of this study using a larger pool of Native American women public school elementary teachers to see if the same patterns and similarities would hold true.

2. Replication of this study looking for similar patterns between Native American women teachers both at the elementary and high school levels.

3. A longitudinal study using the same questions, given to the same five women in five years to see if their reflections have changed.

4. A similar study conducted on a larger scale to explore the patterns and similarities between other ethnic minority elementary school teachers.

5. A similar study conducted at colleges and universities to examine the services provided to traditional and non-traditional students to see if they can be improved.

6. A study conducted with middle school and high school students to examine their perceptions of teachers and explore their own options about going into the field of education.

APPENDIX A
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions were asked of each participant:

- 1. Describe your current teaching position and what was needed to obtain that position.**
- 2. Give a brief personal history. Describe your life as you were growing up.**
- 3. Did any one individual or individuals influence you to go into teaching? Who influenced you the most when you were growing up and how?**
- 4. What made you choose teaching as a career? Did you face any obstacles while in school? Please explain. Discuss any successes.**
- 5. Did you have to make any sacrifices to complete your education? Please explain.**
- 6. Do you think you have been a role model for American Indian girls today? Please explain.**
- 7. Describe yourself as a Native American woman today.**
- 8. Describe if any, your conflict between your culture and your work?**
- 9. If you could do it over again, would you choose teaching as a career? Please explain.**

Title of Research: Patterns and Similarities in the Career Paths of Native American Women Elementary Teachers.

ORAL STATEMENT TO BE READ TO PARTICIPANTS

PURPOSE

You are being invited to voluntarily participate in the research project named: **Patterns and Similarities in the Career Path of Native American Women Elementary Teachers**. The purpose of this study is to investigate the Native American women teacher's perspective of teaching as a career choice. The aim of the study is to find patterns and similarities in these teacher's lives that will help develop a model to encourage additional Native women to choose teaching as a career choice.

PROCEDURE

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to agree to an interview of approximately one to 2 hours.

RISKS

The risks for you are the identification within the Native American teaching community because of its small size, and identification of what Native American tribal members are participating in the study. The names of participants and identifying local characteristics will be changed to preserve anonymity.

BENEFITS

You will have the opportunity to share your life story, along with your values and beliefs about the education system. You are contributing to the very small amount of research that is currently available on Native American women teachers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Only the researcher will have access to the data. Within a week after the completion of the interview your name will be changed. No access to your name will be available afterward.

PARTICIPATION COSTS, SUBJECT COMPENSATION

There is no cost to you except the time it takes to do an interview. The interview time is approximately one to 2 hours, and can be broken up into two parts.

SUBJECT'S WRITTEN CONSENT FORM**AUTHORIZATION**

BEFORE GIVING MY CONSENT BY SIGNING THIS FORM, THE METHODS, INCONVENIENCES, RISKS, AND BENEFITS HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME AND MY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I UNDERSTAND THAT I MAY ASK QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME AND THAT I AM FREE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE PROJECT AT ANY TIME WITHOUT CAUSING BAD FEELINGS. MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT MAY BE ENDED BY THE INVESTIGATOR FOR REASONS THAT WOULD BE EXPLAINED NEW INFORMATION DEVELOPED DURING THE COURSE OF THIS STUDY WHICH MAY AFFECT MY WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT WILL BE GIVEN TO ME AS IT BECOMES AVAILABLE . I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE FILED IN AN AREA DESIGNATED BY THE HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE WITH ACCESS RESTRICTED TO THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR, CAROLINE CARLSON, M.Ed. OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TEACHER AND TEACHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. I UNDERSTAND THAT I DO NOT GIVE UP ANY OF MY LEGAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING THIS FORM. A COPY OF THIS SIGNED CONSENT FORM WILL BE GIVEN TO ME.

Subject's signature

Date

I can obtain further information from Caroline Carlson, M. Ed., at 578-4700. If I have questions concerning my rights as a research subject, I may call the Human Subjects Committee office at 626-6721.

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