

RECLAIMING MY FAMILY'S STORY: CULTURAL TRAUMA AND INDIGENOUS
WAYS OF KNOWING

by

Melissa Beard
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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to all the boarding school survivors and descendants of Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and the Holy Childhood School of Jesus. Especially for Phyllis Schmidt, Charlotte Cassibo, Eva May Chapman, Gloria “Jeannie” Feller and Alex Joe Cassibo. Also, to my beloved furbabies Bowman Senior, Rejina, Chum and Junior who have since passed on. And lastly, to my miracle Eloise June Jacob. You are the greatest accomplishment of my life.

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To my husband Jason who has gone through this dissertation journey with me from the beginning. Thank you for leaving all of your family in Michigan to move to Virginia with me for graduate school. We have gone through a lot of life since starting this process including a cross country move, getting married, losing four of our furbabies, and navigating through infertility and miscarriage. I know it hasn't always been easy, but I'm thankful to you for your support and encouragement to finish this degree. I love you more than I could ever express. I'll always be thankful I left my dorm room door open all

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School.....	MPIIBS
Holy Childhood School of Jesus.....	Holy Childhood
Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.....	SCIT
Michigan Home and Training School.....	MHTS
Indian Field Service	IFS
Michigan Children’s Aid Society	MCAS
Central Michigan University.....	CMU
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.....	FERPA
Environment Protection Agency.....	EPA
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.....	NAGPRA

ABSTRACT

RECLAIMING MY FAMILY’S STORY: CULTURAL TRAUMA AND INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING

Melissa Beard, PhD

George Mason University, 2020

Dissertation Director: Dr. Eric Gary Anderson

This dissertation project is an Indigenous autoethnographic study of my own family’s story of survival through the Native American boarding school system. The creation of this document is in part an academic exercise, but also an effort to reclaim pieces of my family’s experience that were purposefully silenced and erased from mainstream hegemonic nationalist narratives. The process of extracting the history of both the Holy Childhood School of Jesus and the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School through the collection of texts and oral histories provides insight to how the identity of my family was influenced by my own grandmother’s experience and also serves as a method of ceremony and reclamation. Essentially, this dissertation is my own personal ceremony in reclaiming my family’s histories, stories and culture and a method of healing from generations of cultural genocide and forced assimilation

The central question surrounding my dissertation is: how does a traumatic and culturally suppressing experience such as the Native American boarding school system affect and influence the identity development and understanding of an Anishinaabe

individual and their descendants? My goal for this dissertation was to understand not only how the boarding school experience may have affected those who physically attended a Native American boarding school, but how the experience has come to affect the children and grandchildren of those who attended. Additional sub-questions include: How does an Anishinaabe family affected by the boarding school system understand and express their individual and collective identities? Are they proud and/or ashamed of their Native American heritage? Can a process of cultural reclamation begin with the sharing of stories and the collection of oral histories, both pertaining to general Indigenous identification and boarding school experiences? Within these inquiries, I explore the role storytelling and collective memory play in the formation of Indigenous individual and ancestral identity.

In order to situate my research object within the context of cultural trauma and Indigenous ways of knowing, I draw upon scholarship from four bodies of research, which include: the institutional history of the Native American boarding school system, cultural trauma, collective memory, and Indigenous research epistemologies through storytelling practices. This dissertation collects and synthesizes the histories of the Holy Childhood School of Jesus and the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School in order to create a narrative of the Michigan Indian boarding school experience that has not been told before. There currently is not any written narrative that concerns the Holy Childhood School of Jesus or Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and the influences both institutions had on a number of Native American tribes in the state of

Michigan. This dissertation works to place the historical boarding school experiences in the context of contemporary familial narratives, experiences and ways of identifying.

I describe the method of my dissertation as an “Indigenous auto ethnographic” project because my theoretical framework is grounded in Indigenous research methods and ways of knowing, which exist within, against and beyond mainstream western frameworks. My gathering of evidence consisted of employing both auto ethnographic and oral histories as well as archival work through the examination of texts and materials. During the interview process with my family members, I practiced an Anishinaabe cultural etiquette in which I presented each interviewee with the gift of tobacco and we performed a brief prayer and smudging before the interview process began. The majority of my interviews were conducted in a collective setting in which multiple family members participated all at once. This process is not only a reflection of Indigenous research methods, but it is also a way that I am able to give back to my family and community as an Anishinaabekwe scholar. I would like to acknowledge my tribal community and family members as co-authors of this dissertation.

INTRODUCTION

A black and white photograph will forever change the way in which I understood my maternal familial history and the stories surrounding my grandmother's life. This photograph included the image of a group of Native American¹ children on the front porch of an aged white building and written on the back in spiral cursive: "Village Children at Holy Childhood School." The children in the photograph each had short hair that was cut close to their scalp and the expressions on their faces were solemnly serious. Among the eleven children present in the photography was my grandmother, Phyllis, and her sister, my great-aunt Gloria, who went by the nickname of Jeannie. The discovery of this photograph led to a number of unanswered questions and underscored confusions and distortions surrounding the childhood experiences of my grandmother. How could we have not known that she attended a Native American boarding school? Why did she not speak about this experience? Was this a common experience for other Native American children in our family?

I always knew that my grandmother had grown up in an Anishinaabe family on our ancestral territory of Mackinac Island, located in Upper Michigan's Lake Huron, but I had never heard any mention of the time she spent at the Holy Childhood of Jesus

¹ The terms "American Indian," "Native American," "Native," and "Indigenous" are all used interchangeably throughout this document to highlight inclusivity and respect for individual choice in regard to language usage. These terms are used to refer more broadly to peoples indigenous to North America. When appropriate, the names of an individual tribe or nation such as Anishinaabe or Ojibwe will be specifically used.

School in Harbor Springs, Michigan. It was completely shocking and disturbing for my grandmother's children and grandchildren to not only learn of this history, but to know that our own grandmother had gone through this horrific and traumatizing experience. We wanted to know more about the Native American boarding school system, especially the history of the Holy Childhood of Jesus School², and what our grandmother's experience may have been like as a student there. As I began the process of putting together the missing puzzle pieces of our family's narrative, I discovered that my grandmother was just one of many family members who was subjected to the assimilative influences of Native American boarding schools. Her mother, my great-grandmother Charlotte, had also attended the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School³ in Mount Pleasant, Michigan in addition to her grandfather, my second great-grandfather John. I began to discover that myself and my family were third generation survivors of the Native American boarding school system, yet we knew nothing about the history and its impact on our family and our ability to identify as Anishinaabe.

This dissertation project is an Indigenous auto ethnographic study of my own family's story. The creation of this document is in part an academic exercise, but also an effort to reclaim pieces of my family's story that were purposefully silenced and erased from mainstream hegemonic nationalist narratives. The process of extracting the history of both Holy Childhood and MPIIBS through the collection of texts and oral histories will not only provide insight to how the identity of my family was influenced by my own grandmother's experience, it will also serve as a method of ceremony and reclamation.

² I will refer to the Holy Childhood of Jesus School as "Holy Childhood" for future references.

³ I will refer to Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial School as MPIIBS for future references.

As Cree scholar Dr. Shawn Wilson has stated, research is in itself a ceremony. “The purpose of any ceremony is to build stronger relationships or bridge the distance between aspects of our cosmos and ourselves. The research that we do as Indigenous people is a ceremony that allows us a raised level of consciousness and insight into our world.”⁴ Essentially, this dissertation is my own personal ceremony in reclaiming my family’s histories, stories and culture and a method of healing from generations of cultural genocide and forced assimilation.

The central question surrounding my dissertation is: how does a traumatic and culturally suppressing experience such as the Native American boarding school system affect and influence the identity development and understanding of an Anishinaabe individual and their descendants? My goal for this dissertation is to understand not only how the boarding school experience may have affected those who physically attended a Native American boarding school, but how the experience has come to affect the children and grandchildren of those who attended. Additional sub-questions include: How does an Anishinaabe family affected by the boarding school system understand and express their individual and collective identities? Are they proud and/or ashamed of their Native American heritage? Can a process of cultural reclamation begin with the sharing of stories and the collection of oral histories, both pertaining to general Indigenous identification and boarding school experiences? Within these inquiries, I will explore the role storytelling and collective memory play in the formation of Indigenous individual and ancestral identity.

⁴ Wilson, Shawn. *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Fernwood Publishing Co, 2009.

In order to situate my research object within the context of cultural trauma and Indigenous ways of knowing, I will draw upon scholarship from four bodies of research, which include: the institutional history of the Native American boarding school system, cultural trauma, collective memory, and Indigenous research epistemologies through storytelling practices. This dissertation seeks to collect and synthesize the histories of Holy Childhood and MPIIBS in order to create a narrative of the Michigan Indian boarding school experience that has not been told before. There currently is not any written narrative that concerns the Holy Childhood or MPIIBS and the influences both institutions had on a number of Native American tribes in the state of Michigan. Much of the existing literature focuses on prevalent Native boarding school institutions such as the Carlisle Indian Industrial Boarding School, the Haskell Institute and the Chilocco Indian Agricultural School. Additionally, much of the current research focuses upon the historical experiences of students who attended these boarding schools, which is incredibly important and beneficial, but does not acknowledge the intergenerational trauma that is often passed down among families. This dissertation will work to place the historical boarding school experiences in the context of contemporary familial narratives, experiences and ways of identifying.

I describe the method of my dissertation as an “Indigenous auto ethnographic” project because my theoretical framework is grounded in Indigenous research methods and ways of knowing, which exist within, against and beyond mainstream western frameworks.⁵ My gathering of evidence consisted of employing auto ethnographic, oral

⁵ Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People*. Zed Books, 2012.

histories and archival work through the examination of texts and materials. During the interview process with my family members, I practiced an Anishinaabe cultural etiquette in which I presented each interviewee with the gift of tobacco and we performed a brief prayer and smudging before the interview process began. The majority of my interviews were conducted in a collective setting in which multiple family members participated all at once. This process is not only a reflection of Indigenous research methods, but it is also a way that I am able to give back to my family and community as an Anishinaabekwe scholar. I would like to acknowledge my tribal community and family members as co-authors of this dissertation.

In researching the archival and oral histories surrounding the Holy Childhood and the MPIIBS, it became evident the performance of storytelling serves as a means of power and resistance for Native Americans. It is through storytelling that decolonization disrupts colonial notions of knowledge, history and truth. The use of a performance-focused approach such as storytelling creates a space for Indigenous ways of knowing to challenge and critique Western notions of epistemology and research. Performance-focused approaches are well-suited to the study of Native American culture and narrative as Indigenous identity and tradition are centered in the concept of the performance. The act of telling stories is an essential component to Native American culture and traditional education. In a contemporary sense, stories connect individuals to their culture, while also assisting as a process of cultural reclamation in the development of decolonization methods and resistance. The stories themselves are a form of resistance and it is in this essence that performance is seen as a site of defiance, continuation and survival.

Storytelling is a tool of liberation and it is in the performance of stories that sites of oppression and invisibility become visible. Essentially, it is through performance that trauma and genocide become visible, while also serving as method of healing and cultural restoration. The act of storytelling creates space for the “other”, while also exploiting the powers of structure and providing a method to navigating historically repressive spaces and the power to resist assimilation. The sharing of stories offers an opportunity to pursue and create social change.

In addition to the promise of creating social justice that storytelling presents, performance is also a space for the negotiation of identity politics. Native Americans are not only able to reclaim their histories and culture through the sharing of stories, but performance allows them to redefine their culture outside of the stereotyped and objectified culture that exists in mainstream society. It is in a performance that a Native American is able to culturally and politically represent themselves. The sense of loss that is acknowledged and realized through the performance process is what empowers and fuels the determination to create social change within Indigenous tribal communities and all throughout the world. Storytelling not only serves as an Indigenous research method but is in itself a form of ceremonial healing and knowledge transmission. It is a moment in which the violence of colonization is accepted as a part of the Native American experience and allows for individuals and families to process and restore the missing pieces of culture and history that were once absent from the repertoire of the Indigenous story.

It is also beneficial to recognize the impact that trauma has upon the construction of collective memory and the formation of collective identities. Memory and remembrance are central to the process in which identities are constituted and constructed in the same sense that trauma informs the foundation of identity. The theory of cultural trauma provides context on how traumatic events such as the Native American boarding school experience influence the memory practices and identity formation of a collective group. Collective memory in itself is an intergenerational process and is reflective of the transmission of historical trauma among generations and family members. Memory especially becomes critical in a society that privileges hegemonic narratives and truths, while also silencing and erasing knowledge from marginalized communities. Nation states have the power and ability to manipulate and exploit history in ways that only benefit specific groups of people. Collective memory does not become an alternative to exploitative history, but rather it is shaped by it, in which historians often disturb the selective process of remembering. The concept of counter-memory is a way in which memory has the ability to revise and challenge official history, while also offering alternative ways of knowing and reclamation of the past. Memory and the process of remembering provide an anti-colonial approach to methods of resistance and healing and allow for the correction of histories that often disregard the experiences of Indigenous peoples.

The forced assimilation produced through the Native American boarding school system in the United States can be categorized as genocide and is a piece of history that has been silenced and erased from the nationalist narrative. These institutions were

designed to destroy the intergenerational transmission of traditional culture and narratives and the Native American experiences of colonization and acculturation have been silenced by the dominant society. Not only is storytelling a traditional component of Native American culture, but narratives also serve as an acting agent in the process of counter-memory and assist in the healing and resiliency of Native American boarding school survivors and their families. Sharing stories offers a space and opportunity to create social change and has the power to restore the intergenerational transmission of familial stories of Indigenous survival and strength.

Literature on Native American Boarding School Histories

The first emergence of scholarly research surrounding Native American boarding school histories becomes evident in the early 1980's with several publications from non-Indigenous scholars examining experiences specific to certain institutions and the overall assimilation campaign of the late 19th century including Sally McBeth, Robert Trewnert, Frederick Hoxie and Donal Lindsey. Sally McBeth suggested that the boarding schools were the foundation for the development of a "pan-Indian ethnic consciousness" in her book, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians*. The author studied the schooling experiences of Native Americans from the Oklahoma counties of Caddo, Kiowa and Comanche through the review of secondary sources and conducting interviews with former students. McBeth argued that the boarding schools were able to maintain a "separate" ethnic identity for Native Americans and allowed for the retainment of cultural traditions through relationships

with students from other tribes.⁶ Similarly, Robert Trennert stated that the Phoenix Indian School had a “favorable impact” on American Indian culture as it provided employment opportunities, health care and the opportunity to learn the English language. In his book, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935*, Trennert examines the administrative history of the Phoenix School and the relationship between the school and the city of Phoenix. Not surprisingly, Trennert concluded that the city of Phoenix welcomed the economic benefits that the school provided such as the outing system in which Native boys and girls worked for white families in the area.⁷

Frederick Hoxie also presented a historical examination of the Native American boarding school system in which he investigated the assimilation campaign that developed following the allotment policies of the Dawes Act of 1887 in his book, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920*. Hoxie focuses on two phases of the assimilation campaign, which include the administration of government policies and mainstream society’s views of Native Americans as savage. His overall argument is that the assimilation campaign and the continuous attempt to transform Native people into “civilized citizens” through boarding school attendance essentially produced a legacy of “racial distrust and exploitation” towards Native Americans.⁸ Donal Lindsey provides a unique perspective on the Native American boarding school history with his book, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923*, which is an examination of the Hampton

⁶ McBeth, Sally J. *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians*. University Press of America, 1983.

⁷ Trennert, Robert A. *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.

⁸ Hoxie, Frederick E. *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920*. University of Nebraska Press, 1984

Institute in Virginia and its roles in educating both American Indians and African Americans together. The book focuses heavily on the school's first principal, Civil War General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, whose assimilation efforts were influenced by the institutionalization of Native Hawaiians in Hawaii. Hampton Institute was founded in 1868 during Reconstruction in which it was created primarily as a school for the industrial education of African Americans. In 1877, a smaller program was created specifically aimed at educating Native Americans and both populations began to take classes together. Lindsey describes this process as the "politics of comparative examples" in which white administrators and faculty emphasized the strengths of either racial community in order to reveal and compare the "weaknesses" of the other.⁹

The key Indigenous scholars in the area of boarding school history are Tsianina Lomawaima and Brenda Child, who have both published extensively on the subject. Both Lomawaima and Child first released work on the Native American boarding school system in the mid-1990s. Lomawaima's book, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*, is the story of her father's experience at the Chilocco Indian Agricultural School in Oklahoma. This particular work is one of the first auto-ethnographic accounts of the Native American boarding school system as well as one that gives voice to the students who attended and survived the institution. Lomawaima interviewed sixty alumni to contextualize the student experiences during the 1920s and 1930s. She draws upon Michel Foucault's concept of surveillance and biopower to

⁹ Lindsey, Donal F. *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923*. University of Illinois Press, 1995. p. 99

describe how the boarding schools were a “socialization machine.”¹⁰ Similarly, Child offers an auto-ethnographic account of her grandmother and great-grandfather’s experiences of attending boarding school in her book, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*. This text concentrates on the Red Lake Ojibwe community and the non-reservation schools they attended including Flandreau, Pipestone and Haskell. Child utilizes archival sources, particularly letters written by students and parents, and oral histories.¹¹ Through her research, Child found that despite the harmful assimilative and abusive practices of Native boarding schools, many families turned to these institutions for relief and assistance especially during the Great Depression.

Choctaw academic Devon Mihesuah examines an all-female Cherokee seminary in her book *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909*. The research focuses on the Cherokee Seminary in Indian Territory, which is located in present-day Oklahoma. Despite the school enrolling only all-female students, the school was known to exasperate class divisions among its students. The only students who were able to graduate from the seminary were those who had educated parents and a small amount of Cherokee ancestry. Mihesuah claims that because of the Cherokee Chief John Ross’s ownership of slaves, it contributed to the seminary students’ inability to identify with people of color. Additionally, she argues that although many of the seminary students were proud of their Cherokee heritage, they did

¹⁰ Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*. University of Nebraska Press, 1995.

¹¹ Child, Brenda J. *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*. University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

not observe Cherokee cultural practices or customs.¹² Clyde Ellis' research on the Rainy Mountain Boarding School had very different outcomes in that the students were struggling to retain their Native American identities and to culturally persist in an institution that was designed to make them disappear. Ellis' book, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920*, details the history of the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, which was a school located on the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache reservation in southwestern Oklahoma. Despite that Rainy Mountain was a reservation school, it was still sponsored and supported by the federal government and rarely was supplied with adequate resources. Ellis argues that due to the lack of sufficient supplies from the government, Native American students were encouraged to maintain their cultural identities due to the close proximity of the school to the reservation and the lack of governmental involvement.¹³ David Wallace Adams' book, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928*, offers an introduction and broad overview to the subject and history of Native American boarding schools. Adams examines the total institutionalization of the boarding school system through examples of architecture, military regiment, clothing, etc. from a variety of schools all across the United States.¹⁴

As the number of scholarly publications about boarding school histories and experiences increased in the mid-late 1990s, more Native American academics began to

¹² Mihesuah, Devon A. *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909*. Univ. of Illinois Press, 1998.

¹³ Ellis, Clyde. *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920*. Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1996.

¹⁴ Adams, David Wallace. *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928*. University Press of Kansas, 1997.

share their family's histories and stories. Amanda Cobb explores the Bloomfield Academy in her book, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females, 1852-1949*, which is also the same boarding school that her grandmother attended. Cobb explains that after the Chickasaws were removed from their traditional homelands and placed within Oklahoma, they established schools for tribal children in their new territory. The Bloomfield Academy was one of these schools, which educated Native American women for over ninety-seven years. The school was administered by missionaries, the tribe and eventually the United States government and it held to high academic standards, which established a sense of privilege for those who were able to attend. Cobb interviewed fifteen former students in order to tell the history of Bloomfield Academy when it was under federal control. She stated that in order for the Chickasaws to survive, they adopted many white customs and they learned to value literacy education as a tool of survival. Cobb additionally argued that schools like Bloomfield Academy, who were established by the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma, were shaped by very different historical events in comparison to other boarding schools throughout the country.¹⁵

Similarly, Matthew Gilbert writes and researches about the boarding school his grandfather attended in his book, *Education Beyond the Mesas: Hopi Students at Sherman Institute, 1902-1929*. As an enrolled member of the Hopi Tribe, Gilbert centers the narrative around his tribal community, the creation of the Hopi Reservation in northern Arizona and the establishment of the Sherman Institute in Riverside, California.

¹⁵ Cobb, Amanda J. *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females, 1852-1949*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

Gilbert argues that the Hopis utilized the school in order to serve their own community and that they benefitted more from the institution than the federal government did. He identifies this notion as “the concept of turning the power”¹⁶ in which the Hopi sought to use the knowledge and skills acquired at Sherman Institute to strengthen and protect their tribal culture. Gilbert draws upon interviews, archival materials and secondary sources to create the narrative of the Sherman Institute as well as practicing the standards of the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office. The importance of reciprocity is evident in that Gilbert pledges to sharing his research findings with his tribe. Another publication centering the experiences of Native American students at the Sherman Institute is by Diana Meyers Bahr, who is a non-Indigenous scholar and does not have any personal connection to the school. Her book, *The Students of Sherman Indian School: Education and Native Identity Since 1892*, focuses upon the vocational education that Native students received and the federal policies that impacted the administration of the school. Bahr argues that the Sherman School offered a unique intertribal and intercultural experience and that the students who attended the school became agents of change within their own personal lives.¹⁷

Amelia Katanski, Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Clifford Trafzer all focus upon the experiences of students who attended the Carlisle Indian Industrial Boarding School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in their publications from the mid-2000’s. Katanski explores the way in which Native American students utilized writing as a way to survive the boarding

¹⁶ Gilbert, Matthew Sakiestewa. *Education Beyond the Mesas: Hopi Students at Sherman Institute, 1902-1929*. University of Nebraska Press, 2010. pg. xxx

¹⁷ Bahr, Diana Meyers. *The Students of Sherman Indian School: Education and Native Identity Since 1892*. University of Oklahoma Press, 2014.

school experience in her book, *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding School Experience and American Indian Literature*. She describes this ability as Native students were able to appropriate a non-Indian practice for their own purposes, which was ironically also being used to encourage complete assimilation and cultural destruction. This practice has been classified as "acts of rhetorical liberation"¹⁸ by Katanski. In an effort to not focus solely on Carlisle, Clifford Trafzer's book provides insight into the experiences of students from Rainy Mountain Boarding School, the Rapid City Indian School, St. Boniface Indian School and the Sherman Institute, while utilizing the extensive archival depository of Carlisle records. The book, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, is a collection of essays that strives to demonstrate the diversity of boarding school experiences, both positive and negative.¹⁹ Jacqueline Fear-Segal provides new insight into the analysis of the physical environment of both Carlisle and the Hampton Institute through the use of photographs and maps in her book, *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation*. Fear-Segal examines how race influenced Native American education and asserts that boarding schools did not adequately prepare Native children for entering into mainstream society. She states that this essentially placed young Native Americans into forced racial and class segregation.²⁰

¹⁸ Katanski, Andrea V. *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding-School Experience and American Indian Literature*. University of Oklahoma Press, 2005.

¹⁹ Trafzer, Clifford E., et al. *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*. University of Nebraska Press, 2006.

²⁰ Fear-Segal, Jacqueline. *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation*. University of Nebraska Press, 2007.

One of the few accounts of the missionary Native American boarding school experience is chronicled in James Carroll's book, *Seeds of Faith: Catholic Indian Boarding Schools*. Carroll limited the focus of his research specifically to Catholic Indian mission schools and chose to examine the Fort Totten Indian Industrial School, the Fort Yates Indian Industrial School, the Saint Francis Mission and the Holy Rosary Mission. These schools were all originally established as on-reservation boarding schools and had immigrant sisters from Canada, Switzerland and France, which Carroll saw as a special contribution to the education of Native American children. He stated that the immigrant sisters were aware and sympathetic to the trauma caused by cultural destruction and the painful process of assimilation.²¹ Additionally, he felt as though the process of assimilation wasn't as influential for Native American children in Catholic Indian Mission schools because many of the schools were located near reservations and that the students were able to form a "bicultural school identity."²² Carroll felt that there was an evident separation between Catholic and government boarding schools based upon general teaching and religious philosophies, organizational structure and modes of staffing.

Cultural Trauma and Collective Memory

The study of memory and cultural trauma has early roots in a number of major cultural studies theorists including Frederick Nietzsche, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Sigmund Freud, Walter Benjamin, Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx. Although the intellectual and

²¹ Carroll, James T. *Seeds of Faith: Catholic Indian Boarding Schools*. Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000. p. xxii

²² Carroll, James T. *Seeds of Faith: Catholic Indian Boarding Schools*. Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000. p. 175

cultural interest in memory and trauma did not develop until the 1960s and 1970s, the work of theorists such as Freud, Durkheim, Lyotard, Nietzsche, Benjamin, and Marx greatly contributed to the foundation and establishment of an academic field in collective memory and cultural trauma. Walter Benjamin considered the role of memory and trauma in his critique of history in his essay, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” in which both are inherently linked to the evolution of modernity. Although Benjamin did not use the term “collective memory,” he perceived the material world as accumulated pieces of history and highlighted the changing conditions of society with the rise of modernism. He states that in particular storytelling itself is coming to an end because human experience has fallen in value with the development of modernity.²³

Additionally, Benjamin proposes that the decline of storytelling was specifically perpetuated by the rise of the novel and the invention of printing. Due to this decline, Benjamin suggests that it also becomes evident that the vanishing oral narrative presents a romanticized perception of the disappearing past.²⁴ According to Anne Whitehead and Michael Rossington, Benjamin conceives of modernity as a “break in consciousness” which is inevitably comparable to the conceptualization of trauma.²⁵ The link between memory and trauma in Benjamin’s work is evident in that he describes memory as the creation of a “...chain of tradition which passes a happening on from generation to

²³ Benjamin, Walter. “Theses on the Philosophy of History.” *Illuminations*. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn Schoken Books Inc., 1968. p. 99

²⁴ Benjamin, Walter. “Theses on the Philosophy of History.” *Illuminations*. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn Schoken Books Inc., 1968. p. 100

²⁵ Rossington, Michael, and Anne Whitehead, eds. *Theories of Memory: A Reader*. John Hopkins University Press, 2007. p. 106

generation.”²⁶ Benjamin concludes his piece by discussing the Paul Klee painting entitled “Angelus Novus” and how it reflects his imagining of what he describes as the “angel of history,” in which the concepts of history, commodity culture and modernity collide.²⁷ The work of Sigmund Freud also considers the relationship between memory and trauma, especially in the essay, “Totem and Taboo: Resemblances between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics.” Freud inadvertently addresses the concept of collective memory and examines the way in which repressed memories are passed on throughout societal generations as he poses the question: “...what ways and means does a generation use to transfer its psychic states to the next generation?”²⁸ He states that the term “repressed” is utilized to describe something that has vanished and is in the past and suggests that the current generation must be concerned with reviving such memories.²⁹ Additionally, Freud suggests that the memories of the past are often only partially recovered, which allows for the individual to reimagine and create one’s own recollection of a particular moment.³⁰

For Karl Marx, Frederick Nietzsche and Jean-Francois Lyotard, forgetting is an essential component of the historical process. Lyotard argues that if there is a history of remembering, then there must be a politics of forgetting. He suggests that due to the

²⁶ Rossington, Michael, and Anne Whitehead, eds. *Theories of Memory: A Reader*. John Hopkins University Press, 2007. p. 102

²⁷ Benjamin, Walter. “Theses on the Philosophy of History.” *Illuminations*. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn Schoken Books Inc., 1968. p. 103

²⁸ Freud, Sigmund. *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances Between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*. Trans. A. A. Brill. Moffat, Yard & Co, 1918. p. 84

²⁹ Freud, Sigmund. *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances Between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*. Trans. A. A. Brill. Moffat, Yard & Co, 1918. p. 88

³⁰ Freud, Sigmund. *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances Between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*. Trans. A. A. Brill. Moffat, Yard & Co, 1918. p. 87

continuous habit of forgetting, one must question the existing fragments of societal memory. Lyotard is suggesting that post-modernity has conditioned individuals to ultimately forget and disregard specific events and moments in history and emphasizes the need to only look forward to the future.³¹ Marx and Nietzsche also both resonate with the nineteenth century approach to history that emphasizes the process of forgetting and the influence of the industrial revolution. Within the text, “The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,” Marx suggests that humans inevitably create their own history, not through a method of self-determination, but through a direct and specific context.³² Nietzsche describes the tension between past and future and memory and forgetting as essential components for what he terms as “life” in his essay, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life.” As Nietzsche states, “forgetting is essential to action of any kind, just as not only light but darkness too is essential for the life of everything organic.”³³ Additionally, Nietzsche is adamant in suggesting that it is possible to live without memory, but it is insufferable to exist without the process of forgetting.³⁴

Emile Durkheim explored the concept of memory in terms of commemorative rituals and its use in solidifying connections and relationships within social communities in his essay, “The Elementary Forms of Religious Life.” According to Durkheim, rituals serve as a system of recording the histories of a community as well as sustaining the

³¹ Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. University of Minnesota Press, 1984. p. 194

³² Marx, Karl. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. International Publishers Co. 1994. p. 97

³³ Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*. Cambridge University Press, 1983 p. 103

³⁴ Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*. Cambridge University Press, 1983. p. 104

beliefs and practices of a society.³⁵ In addition, Durkheim suggests that ceremonial rituals serve to connect the present to the past and allows an individual or group to relive and remember the memories of their ancestors.³⁶ Recollections of a shared and experienced past and beliefs are defined by Durkheim as a “collective or common consciousness,” which he suggests acts as a unifying force within society and that the contents of an individual’s consciousness are largely shared in common with other members of their community.³⁷ This notion of shared collective consciousness led to the development of studies in social and collective memory.

French philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs is acknowledged for developing the concept of collective memory after the release of his book *La Memoire Collective* and was widely influenced by the work of Emile Durkheim. Based upon his presentist position on social memory practices, Halbwachs has been described as having anticipated postmodernism and its influence on cultural commemoration practices and public memory. According to Halbwachs, individual memory does not exist within society and the only “real” memory is that of collective memory, which is always located within the framework of a specific social grouping such as one’s family, religion, social class, etc.³⁸ Individual memory is conceived in relationship to one’s social or group membership, such as the regulation of the family structure which Halbwachs describes as

³⁵ Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Trans. Joseph Ward Swain. Hollen Street Press, 1915. p. 136

³⁶ Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Trans. Joseph Ward Swain. Hollen Street Press, 1915. p. 137

³⁷ Durkheim, Emile. *The Division of Labor in Society*. The Free Press, 1997. p. 79

³⁸ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992. p.37

“family armor” or the patterning that becomes evident within family memories.³⁹

Essentially, Halbwachs proposes that it becomes impossible for individuals to recollect memories outside of group contexts and that individual memory is negotiated within a collectively shared past.⁴⁰

The social frameworks in which memory is negotiated and recollected are manifested into existence through institutions, laws, norms, customs, ceremonies, etc. and as Ron Eyerman suggests, collective memory is also a social necessity.⁴¹ Memories of the past become a reflection of society’s needs and the changes in our knowledge of such memories correspond to societal transformations. Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam similarly argue that society influences an individual’s needs based upon what might be a current “need” for a nationalist agenda rather than a true reflection of past events.⁴² Additionally, the meaning of historical events is often interpreted and determined by the community or group social needs and desires. Collective memory is essential to a group’s notion of itself and thus must continually be made over to fit historical circumstance. While this collective memory makes reference to historical events, that is, events that are recorded and known to others, the meaning of such events is interpreted from the perspective of the group’s needs and interests, within limits of course.⁴³ Society finds meaning in

³⁹ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992. p. 38

⁴⁰ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992 p. 52

⁴¹ Eyerman, Ron, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Elizabeth Butler Breese. *Narrating Trauma: On the Impact of Collective Suffering*. Paradigm Publishers, 2010. p. 65

⁴² Gedi, Noa, and Yigal Elam. “Collective Memory - What Is It?” *History and Memory* 8.1 (1996): 30–50. pp. 39-40

⁴³ Eyerman, Ron, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Elizabeth Butler Breese. *Narrating Trauma: On the Impact of Collective Suffering*. Paradigm Publishers, 2010. p. 67

history based upon its institutional and organizational fluctuating needs and according to Halbwachs, the understanding of history and the past is influenced by the suggested solutions to current day social problems.⁴⁴ It becomes evident that society is able to adjust and modify memories of the past according to its own partiality and that powerful institutions value certain histories and memories more; as Gedi and Elam state, “history becomes a tool for ideological and moralistic needs of society.”⁴⁵

Although Halbwachs recognized the use of history “to bridge the gap between past and present, restoring ruptured continuity,”⁴⁶ he emphasizes that collective memory is not the same as formal history and that it plays an important function in conceiving of a society’s past.⁴⁷ Halbwachs adamantly declares that meaningful history is not actually produced by historians, but by society and that history is simply a tool available for the needs of society.⁴⁸ He states that collective memory differs from history in that it provides multiple frameworks for social memory to be recollected and exchanged, while history only provides a singular framework in which to process the past. In describing the framework in which history organizes and relocates memory, Halbwachs describes the differences in recording memories through the practice of historiography. Additionally, Halbwachs states that the frameworks with which history organizes memories and events

⁴⁴ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992. p. 7

⁴⁵ Gedi, Noa, and Yigal Elam. “Collective Memory - What Is It?” *History and Memory* 8.1 (1996): 30–50. p. 40

⁴⁶ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992. p. 79

⁴⁷ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992 p. 139

⁴⁸ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992 p. 40

are always external to the groups and communities that define the specific moments in memory.⁴⁹

Practices of remembrance through collective memory are also shaped and reinforced by the societies and cultures in which they occur. According to Barry Schwartz, recollection of the past is an “active constructive process” and through this continuously performing system, memories are also shaping the salient identities of specific communities and groups.⁵⁰ Halbwachs also supports this perspective as he sees memories being reinforced and reproduced by society all throughout one’s life as well as the perpetuation of one’s sense of identity. As these memories become repetition during different periods of our lives, they often lose the structure and essence of the manifestation they once had.⁵¹ Not only are group and community identities shaped through the narrative of collective memory, but individual identities as well. Ron Eyerman suggests that “...individual identities are shaped as experiential frameworks formed out of, as they are embedded within, narratives of past, present, and future.”⁵² In addition, Eyerman proposes that individuals are able to locate themselves through positioning within the narratives of collective memory, which he describes as an outcome of an interaction within the social memory process.⁵³

⁴⁹ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992 p. 143

⁵⁰ Schwartz, Barry. “The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory.” *Social Forces* 61.21 (1982): 374–402. p. 374

⁵¹ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. The University of Chicago Press, 1992. p. 47

⁵² Eyerman, Ron, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Elizabeth Butler Breese. *Narrating Trauma: On the Impact of Collective Suffering*. Paradigm Publishers, 2010. p. 66

⁵³ Eyerman, Ron, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Elizabeth Butler Breese. *Narrating Trauma: On the Impact of Collective Suffering*. Paradigm Publishers, 2010. p. 67

French historian Pierre Nora expands upon Halbwach's distinction between collective memory and history in his essay, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memorie". Nora explores French identity and national memory within the disappearance of peasant culture and the growth of industry among France through a memoriologist point of view, in which memory is seen as a living and breathing entity. According to Nora, history is merely a reconstruction of the past and it is memory that ties one to the present. He sees authentic memory as something that is distorted by historians and that history attempts to suppress or destroy certain memories. Nora's response to postmodernity and its influence on history and memory is what he describes as "the acceleration of history." "[T]he acceleration of history': the most continuous or permanent feature of the modern world is no longer continuity or permanence but change. And increasingly rapid change, an accelerated precipitation of all things into an ever more swiftly retreating past." (Nora 438). As Nora states, the most prominent feature of the modern world is change and uncertainty of the future, which he suggests creates a societal obligation to remember and preserve. Nora describes the "acceleration of history" and its affects as a misunderstanding between the distinct use and definition of the terms history and memory and suggests that memory is only able to be located within sites of commemoration or archives, which has led to the creation of museums, libraries, inventories, etc.⁵⁴

[W]hat we today call 'memory' – a form of memory that is itself a reconstruction – is simply what was called 'history' in the past. We are dealing here with a radical and dangerous shift in the meaning of words, a shift itself characteristic of

⁵⁴ Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memorie." *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–25. p. 439

the spirit of the age. 'Memory' has taken on a meaning so broad and all-inclusive that it tends to be used purely and simply as a substitute for 'history' and to put the study of history at the service of memory (Nora 439).

Nora emphasizes the need for the deliberate creation and maintenance of archives and commemorative anniversaries and states that due to the influence of history, these activities no longer occur naturally in society. Nora refers to these examples as "lieux de memoire" or "sites of memory" that he sees as places of "memorial consciousness" that have survived through the historical abandonment of memory.⁵⁵ Additionally, Nora suggests that the development of sites of memory is due to the notion that memory does not exist within a modern society that is focused solely on historical reconstruction. He asserts that memory is spoken about often because "there is so little of it left"⁵⁶ and he suggests that there should be a demand for truth rather than the "reality" that is provided by history. According to Nora, memory recollection can be emancipatory and that the right to memory is a call to creating justice. In order for minority groups to establish a more accurate archive of their past and culture, Nora examines the democratization of history and what that means for the process of decolonization within memory. As memory restoration is essential to a minority group's reaffirmation of identity and past, Nora suggests that there are three types of decolonization that occur in order to produce such memories: international, domestic and ideological decolonization. Nora states that the "process of decolonization has affected cultural groups in that they have possessed

⁵⁵ Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memorie." *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–25. p. 441

⁵⁶ Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memorie." *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–25. p. 441

reserves of memory, but little to no historical capital.”⁵⁷ Essentially, Nora suggests that even through the process of decolonization and the increased access to collections of memory, the influence of history poses a risk of manipulating such memories, which is why sites of memory are such an important piece of the process.

In the same sense that memory plays an important role in the development of both individual and collective identities, trauma also has an essential role in the construction of collective memory and identity formation. According to Jeffrey Alexander in his essay, “Toward a Cultural Theory of Trauma,” cultural trauma is not the result of an individual or community experiencing physical pain, but rather the discomfort of the effects of trauma entering into one’s sense of identity. “Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways.” (Alexander 307). Alexander states that trauma does not exist naturally and that it is a social constructed concept. “Events do not, in and of themselves, create collective trauma. Events are not inherently traumatic. Trauma is a socially mediated attribution.” (Alexander 309). The emergence of trauma is associated with the arrival of modernity and the rise of industrialization, which in itself produced large numbers of machinery that attributed to increasing numbers of train and factory accidents. According to Alexander, the experience of trauma is “a sociological process that defines a painful injury to the collectivity, establishes the victim,

⁵⁷ Nora, Pierre. “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memorie.” *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–25. p. 441

attributes responsibility, and distributes the ideal and material consequences.”⁵⁸ As a result, one’s collective identity experiences a moment of revision and repeated recollection of the past in order to connect to one’s present sense of self.

Similarly, Cathy Caruth presents a psychoanalytic theory of trauma, in which she suggests that it is not the experience itself that produces a traumatic effect, but rather the remembrance of it. “The pathology consists, rather, solely in the structure of its experience or reception: the event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it. To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event.” (Caruth 400). According to Caruth, history occurs as a symptom of trauma and those who are affected by trauma essentially “carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves as the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess.”⁵⁹ Trauma has the ability to transmit not only personal, but historic truth and provides an alternate way of listening to and speaking about the experience of trauma. Caruth also proposes that the history of trauma may only take place through listening to each other. The historical power of trauma is ultimately experienced through the inherent process of forgetting.

In the essay “The Return to the Sacred Past,” Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart examines the concept of historical and intergenerational trauma and the transmission of unresolved grief across generations within Native American communities. According to Yellow Horse Brave Heart, historical trauma may be defined as cumulative trauma,

⁵⁸ Alexander, Jeffrey C. et al. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004. p. 309

⁵⁹ Caruth, Cathy, ed. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. John Hopkins University Press, 1995. p. 201

including collective emotional and psychological wounding, that exists across generations. “For American Indians, historical unresolved grief involves the profound, unsettled bereavement that results from generations of devastating losses which have been disqualified by prohibiting indigenous ceremonies and by the larger society’s denial of the magnitude of its genocidal policies.” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart 288). Within Yellow Horse Brave Heart’s research among the Lakota peoples, she states that unresolved grief becomes apparent within the community through the occurrences of depression and substance abuse and she views this as a “manifestation of impaired bereavement.”⁶⁰ Essentially, Native American communities and individuals have been unable to properly grieve through the loss of not only their ancestors and family members, but the loss of cultural traditions, language, and Indigenous ways of knowing. Yellow Horse Brave Heart states that generational trauma has become an organizing construct in the lives of Native peoples and that it is continuously perpetuated through transmission across generations. Native Americans have been socially constructed as incapable of experiencing emotional responses to pain and suffering, which is strategically used by dominant society in order to justify the disempowerment of Native peoples. “The historical view of American Indians as being stoic and savage were incapable of having feelings. This belief system intimates that Indians had no capacity to mourn and, subsequently, no need or right to grieve.” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart 11). Similarly, Kenneth Doka’s concept of disenfranchised grief provides a comparable

⁶⁰ Yellow Horse Brave Heart, Maria et al. “Historical Trauma Among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: Concepts, Research, and Clinical Considerations.” *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 43.4 (2011): 282–290. p. 291

argument in that some populations of people are unable to publicly mourn their own grief and loss, which is evident within Native American communities. “The concept of disenfranchised grief facilitates the explanation of historical unresolved grief among Indians. The historical legacy denied cultural grieving practices, resulting in multigenerational unresolved grief.” (Doka 42). Those who are deemed as incapable of experiencing grief are also seen as not having a legitimate purpose for mourning or public acknowledgement of any sense of loss.

Ojibwe scholar Brenda Child describes the boarding school experience as a metaphor for genocidal colonialism in her article, “The Boarding School as Metaphor.” The extreme loss of culture, language and family structures from attending boarding schools leads Child to compare this traumatic intergenerational history to the “disruptive process of settler colonialism” (Child 275). Additionally, Child suggests that the boarding school narrative also serves as an allegory for the extensive inequality of power that exists between Indigenous sovereign nations and the United States government. “Has boarding school become an adaptable metaphor Indian people in the United States use to describe and encapsulate many different forms of colonialism and historical oppression?” (Child 279). She states that she has observed that when Native Americans share stories about the boarding school experience, they are essentially utilizing the concept to discuss issues of genocide and colonial control. The boarding school experience is one in a list of multiple oppressive influences that have disrupted tribal communities for centuries. “Boarding school history offers a plausible explanation for how and why colonialism has been destructive to American Indian community life, with the resulting losses to tradition

and especially to the Native languages of North American” (Child 282). Child also describes the boarding school narrative as an example and reminder of the resilience of survivors and their descendants as they navigate reclaiming their identity, culture and language in a post-boarding school society.

The concept of genealogy from French philosopher Michel Foucault provides a critical approach to the practices of remembering and forgetting, which he suggests is crucial for resisting dominant ideologies and oppression, in his essay, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.” Influenced by Nietzsche’s work on the development of morals through power, Foucault describes genealogy as the attempt to deconstruct truth and challenge the notion that history progresses in a linear order. According to Jose Medina in the essay, “Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance, Counter-memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerilla Pluralism,” Foucaultian genealogical investigations trace the “...development of discursive formations that give rise to certain forms of knowledge and power relations.”⁶¹ As the work of genealogy provides opportunity for resistance, Foucault suggests that one must understand the nature of power relations and how remembering and forgetting function within the context of power.

Foucault makes it obvious that the analysis between power and resistance suggests that the two terms are interrelated and that resistance is something that is exerted not from the outside of power, but within it.⁶² According to Medina, “Foucault’s methodology offers a way of exploiting that vibrant plurality of epistemic perspectives which always contains

⁶¹ Medina, Jose. “Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism.” *Foucault Studies* 12 (2011): 9–35. p. 13

⁶² Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. Vol 1: An Introduction. Trans. Robert Hurley. Vintage Books, 1990. p. 95

some bodies of experiences and memories that are erased or hidden in the mainstream frame- works that become hegemonic after prevailing in sustained epistemic battles.”⁶³ Another piece of the Foucaultian epistemology of resistance is the production of counter- memories through the process of genealogical inquiry. Foucault’s understanding of counter-memory is it is an “individual’s resistance against official versions of historical continuity.”⁶⁴ As counter-memories are produced, Foucault states that the production actively influences the positive transformation of both social and political realities. Counter-memory designates a practice of memory formation that is both social and political and includes the reclamation of forgotten and excluded histories. Additionally, counter-memories often challenge the official histories of government organizations and institutions in order to demonstrate the political nature of selectively remembered pasts and memories that manifest within nationalistic agendas.

Foucaultian notions of genealogies not only contribute to the production of counter-memories, but also to the production of counter-histories, which are experiences and memories that have been silenced and excluded from integration into official histories. According to Medina, counter-histories have the ability to transform counter- memories and “while an official history keeps entire groups of peoples and their lives and experiences, in darkness and silence, ‘ a counter-history teaches us precisely how to listen to those silent and dark moments.” (15). The ability to negotiate narratives and resist imposed interpretations of the past is an example of ways in which counter-

⁶³ Medina, Jose. “Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism.” *Foucault Studies* 12 (2011): 9–35. p. 10

⁶⁴ Medina, Jose. “Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism.” *Foucault Studies* 12 (2011): 9–35. p. 9

histories develop. Medina states that through the Foucaultian notion of counter-histories, silences that have been created by official histories have the ability to become audible.

Official histories are produced by monopolizing knowledge-producing practices with respect to a shared past. Official histories create and maintain the unity and continuity of a political body by imposing an interpretation on a shared past and, at the same time, by silencing alternative interpretations of historical experiences. Counter-histories try to undo these silences and to undermine the unity and continuity that official histories produce. Foucault emphasizes the ability that counter-histories have in drawing attention to moments in history that have been forcibly silenced and forgotten in the mainstream discourse. Counter-histories are able to resist distortions to historical narratives and relate to the past from the perspective of the present.

Foucault's concepts of counter-memories and counter-history, through the production of genealogical influence, encounter the challenges in remembering and forgetting through the excavation of, what Foucault refers to, as subjugated knowledges.⁶⁵ Subjugated knowledge is described by Medina as "...forms of experiencing and remembering that are pushed to the margins and rendered unqualified and unworthy of epistemic respect by hegemonic discourses." (11). The unveiling of subjugated knowledges has the ability to revive buried and forgotten bodies of experiences and memories, which allows for the critique of hegemonic histories and discourses. According to both Foucault and Medina, it is vital and important for subjugated

⁶⁵ Foucault, Michel. *Society Must Be Defended*. Ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana. Trans. David Macey. Picador, 1997. p. 90

knowledges to achieve visibility in order to contest the internalized epistemic exclusions of dominant institutions and to provide visible possibilities for resistance.

According to Brieg Capitaine in “Telling a Story and Performing the Truth: The Indian Residential School as Cultural Trauma,” the collecting of oral histories and counternarratives also provides the foundation for a collective memory in which a group identity is able to form and construct itself (66). Capitaine suggests that the actors or participants of an event such as the boarding school experience construct trauma in the process of attributing meaning to their experiences and that these cultural traumas are historically made. “An event is not intrinsically traumatic; it becomes so through the imaginative and subjective work of social actors. An event acquires the status of cultural trauma not because it is inherently damaging but because actors believe that the event has profoundly harmed the group’s collective identity and meaning system” (Capitaine 51). In terms of the boarding school experience, the individual student is not the only entity that suffers during and from the assimilation process; it created a destructive impact upon traditional language and cultural practices for many tribal communities. Capitaine describes this pain as representing “a loss of meaning and rupture in an individual’s relationship with the collective” (55). Through the sharing of an individual’s story, one is able to give structure to the collective while also executing the function of collective memory. “The individual testimonies both broadcast and carry out the work of collective memory. By narrating their personal experiences, survivors come across to the audience as authentic victims bearing traumatic memory” (Capitaine 66-67). The testimonies of survivors not only heal the individual but provide space for an intergenerational healing.

According to Capitaine, this is important as the children and grandchildren of boarding school survivors are more withdrawn and distant from the evolving collective narrative (59). The sharing of these stories allows for those who did not personally and physically experience life within the boarding school system to empathize and recognize the community of survivors. Capitaine states that the children and grandchildren of survivors often classify themselves as intergenerational survivors or the descendant of a survivor. “The act of characterizing suffering as a crisis of meaning, along with a degree of vagueness in the qualification of the victim, permits individuals with no direct experience of residential school to represent certain events as traumatic. The identification of youth with the identity of survivor is so strong that they define themselves as intergenerational survivors or multigenerational survivors” (Capitaine 59).

Indigenous Epistemologies

Indigenous Epistemologies can be described as traditional knowledge systems that are transmitted from generation to generation within tribal communities. For the purpose of this dissertation, I focus on the use of storytelling as Indigenous epistemology and its ability to disrupt the colonial mindset and to fill in the gaps and limitations of Eurocentric theory. Indigenous epistemology also provides a form of healing and ceremony for tribal communities and it is particularly useful and culturally appropriate to practice in collecting and sharing boarding school survivor and descendant narratives.

Scholar and New Zealand Aboriginal Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes the circular cycle of Indigenous storytelling and its elements of reciprocity in her book, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Storytelling is not only a way in

which Native people give back to their community or family, but also serves a way to connect one another. “The story and the storyteller both serve to connect the past with the future, one generation with another, the land with the people and the people with the story” (Smith 146). Smith is explicit in stating that colonialism is far from being over and that colonial power is not only about taking physical land from Indigenous peoples, but also permeating within traditional thought processes and knowledges. While Indigenous research exists with a system of colonial power, Smith suggests that the decolonization of research methods will help reclaim control over Indigenous ways of knowing and being. “When indigenous peoples become the researchers and not merely the researched, the activity of research is transformed. Questions are framed differently, priorities are ranked differently, problems are defined differently, people participate on different terms” (Smith, 193).

Shawn Wilson describes Indigenous research as a literal form of ceremony in his book, *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. As a Cree scholar, Wilson states that the purpose of ceremony is to build stronger relationships, while in a similar fashion, Indigenous methodologies are based upon maintaining relational accountability. Additionally, the research that Indigenous scholars conduct is a ceremony that allows an individual to reach an increased level of consciousness and understanding, which provides an opportunity to learn more about what it means to be an Indigenous person. Wilson emphasizes that within Indigenous research, one cannot remove themselves from the subject that they are examining, and that Indigenous research is an incredibly personal process. The humanizing element of research is emphasized by Wilson through this

concluding statement: “If research doesn’t change you as a person, you haven’t done it right” (135).

The stories obtained by Indigenous researchers are inevitably political, according to scholar Margaret Kovach in the book, *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. Kovach states that research serves as a tool for Native peoples’ self-determination and that Indigenous epistemology is how Native Americans are able to understand their world. “An Indigenous epistemology is a significant aspect of Indigenous methodology and suggests an Indigenous way of functioning in the world...Indigenous epistemology is fluid, non-linear, and relational. Knowledge is transmitted through stories that shape in relation to the wisdom of the storyteller at the time of the telling.” (Kovach 27). Because of the political implications associated with Indigenous research, Kovach suggests that it is crucial for Indigenous peoples to gain control over the research process in order to enact a sense of decolonization. “If knowledge is fundamental to understanding, interpreting and establishing values within a society, then control over its production becomes an integral component of cultural survival” (Kovach 31).

Diana Taylor explores the position of performance in historical terms and the transmission of knowledge through embodied action in her book, *The Archive and the Repertoire*. Although Taylor is a non-Indigenous scholar, her work closely aligns with the performative nature of Indigenous epistemologies. Taylor suggests that it is imperative to keep re-examining the relationship between embodied performance and the production of knowledge. She states that if one were to reorient the ways in which social

memory and cultural identity have been previously studied to be looked at through the lens of embodiment and performed behaviors, the stories and memories of the oppressed will become visible.⁶⁶ Only through performance will the unacknowledged trauma and genocide will become visible. Additionally, Taylor suggests that the roles of the archive and what she describes as the “repertoire” work together as valued sites of knowledge and transmission and she seeks to counter the historically imposed divide between these two sites. “The rift does not lie between the written and spoken word, but between the archive of enduring materials (texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge (spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)” (Taylor 19).

While the archive provides the text, Taylor states that the repertoire expands the traditional archive and is the site in which embodied memory is enacted and knowledge is transmitted. “The repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by ‘being there,’ being a part of the transmission. As opposed to the supposedly stable objects in the archive, the actions that are the repertoire do not remain the same. The repertoire both keeps and transforms choreographies of meaning” (Taylor 20). The repertoire also allows for an alternative perspective on history and story through the process of following traditions of embodied practice.

In the same way that Taylor observes the repertoire enabling alternative forms of history and counternarratives, Indigenous epistemologies recognize the use of stories in enacting decolonization through the disruption of colonial influence and the production and sustenance of traditional knowledge production. Aman Sium and Eric Ritskes

⁶⁶ Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Duke University Press, 2003. p. xviii-xix

describe stories as “decolonization theory in its most natural form” in their article, “Speaking truth to power: Indigenous storytelling as an act of living resistance.”⁶⁷ Additionally, stories serve as “creative acts of rebellion” and loudly proclaim that Indigenous people are still alive and breathing.⁶⁸ The role of the storyteller is extremely important, and they are often seen as the educators, historians, language keepers and healers of the community. “In Indigenous traditions around the world, storytellers are sacred knowledge keepers, they are the elders and medicine people, and they shape communities through the spoken and written word. Stories are not only agentic and individual, but they are communal sharings that bind communities together spiritually and relationally” (Sium & Ritskes 5). The delivery of trans-generational memory and stories from tribal elders and storytellers ensures the survival and continuance of Indigenous epistemic traditions.

Not only do Native stories serve as a site and tool for cultural survival, they convey Indigenous philosophies, epistemologies, and theories within their narratives. The theoretical articulations of Indigenous stories and theory not only reclaim traditional epistemological practices, but they also value the personal and self that is found within stories. “By telling our stories we’re at the same time disrupting dominant notions of intellectual rigor and legitimacy, while also redefining scholarship as a process that begins with self” (Sium & Ritskes 4). It is important for the personal to be valued and recognized as political in researching Native American communities as they are the

⁶⁷ Sium, Aman, and Eric Ritskes. “Speaking Truth to Power: Indigenous Storytelling as an Act of Living Resistance.” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2.1 I–X. p. 2

⁶⁸ Sium, Aman, and Eric Ritskes. “Speaking Truth to Power: Indigenous Storytelling as an Act of Living Resistance.” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2.1 I–X. p. 4

foundation of decolonization theory. According to Sium and Ritskes, “decolonization demands this specificity, demands this personal and relational understanding, and demands the richness and creative vitality that storytelling brings” (2). However, Sium and Ritskes all exclusively support the argument that stories must be seen as theory in academia and that the personal is not only beneficial to pursuing a decolonized historical process, it is absolutely necessary. Stories are a living and organic process, a way of life.

While dominant scholarship might push aside methods such as autoethnography or traditional storytelling as not rigorous enough or as ‘identity politics’, the experiences of those who live out decolonization are integral to the integrity of the movement, grounding it to the material realities of the people whose lives bear the scars of colonialism and the long histories of resistance and triumph” (Sium & Ritskes 3).

Native American stories not only thrive and rely on the personal, but they also maintain a close connection to the natural land. Sium and Ritskes suggest that stories are a part of a cycle of renewal and recreation, in which the foundations of traditional Native life, figuratively and literally, were taken away through the process of colonization. Natives are not only living out the stories of their ancestors, but continuing and creating new perspectives, while working towards self-determination and total sovereignty. The land is also described as an “archive for Native stories” and Sium and Ritskes argue that the land recollects and fabricates relationships with those who reside on its grounds. “Indigenous truth rests on the empowerment of Indigenous land and sovereignty, not needing any legitimization from colonial states or modernity. These claims to Indigenous epistemologies and truths rest on Indigenous peoples and lands as carriers and sustainers

of knowledge production” (Sium & Ritskes 2). In a way, research and storytelling may be seen as an act of ceremony.

Beyond the concept of the boarding school experience as a method for colonization, the discovery and sharing of boarding school stories is in itself an act of reclamation and an opportunity to recover a sense of control and power that our family members and ancestors were once denied.⁶⁹ Cree/Metis scholar, Kim Anderson, describes the process of doing oral history work as “digging up the medicines.” “The recovery of our peoples is linked to ‘digging up medicines’ of our past. Knowing our history is an integral part of recovery for us as Indigenous peoples and for our communities in general” (Anderson 4). Anderson states that the process of collecting oral histories and stories is just as important, if not more important, than what is produced at the end of the collection and transcription. It is through the process of collecting oral histories that the healing and recovery may begin for Indigenous families and extended communities. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge and understand the history of Native American experiences such as the boarding school era, which prepares the younger generation for constructing a better future. “We know that the more we understand about Indigenous experiences in the past, the better we will be able to shape our future; the more we understand about colonization, the better we will be at decolonizing ourselves and our communities” (Anderson 4).

⁶⁹ Louellyn White. “White Power and the Performance of Assimilation: Lincoln Institute and Carlisle Indian School.” *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, University of Nebraska Press, 2016, pp. 106–123.

The use of storytelling as a form of testimony and as a part of the reparative practices is explored by Julia Emberley in her book, *The Testimonial Uncanny: Indigenous Storytelling, Knowledge, and Reparative Practices*. According to Emberley, testimonies serve as a reconciliatory endeavor and as an organizing framework for the transmission of memory.

Testimonies, I contend, are not only the repository of forgotten memories of trauma; they also hold remnants of desire that are productive – of aspirations once articulated and spoken out loud, of needs that call out to be met, of demands that refuse to be reduced to a silent murmur. It is these remnants of desire that disrupt the meaning of “testimony” as simply a discourse of trauma relegated to its capacity for producing and reproducing the evidentiary claims of the historical record (Emberley 2-3).

Emberley additionally states that testimonial practices challenge existing notions of national truths and that the documentation of testimony is important to the process of healing. Emberley suggests an alternative epistemological formation which she designates as the “Indigenous Uncanny.” The reparative episteme of the “Indigenous Uncanny” provides a space to analyze the effects of colonization in the field of indigenous epistemology and in return, indigenous epistemology makes it possible to view the uncanny as a knowledge repository. “The indigenous uncanny conceptualizes how Indigenous storytelling epistemologies take oppositional dualities, such as the animate and inanimate, the domestic and foreign, the home and the state, and deploy them for the purposes of achieving balance among various ecologies of political kinship” (Emberley x). As indigenizing epistemologies work towards critiquing western epistemologies for the absence of recognizing the influence of colonialism on its structures of power, truth and knowledge, Emberley suggests that the Indigenous uncanny provides a process of

“unlearning the institution” and also maintains a constant state of fluctuation in order to disrupt the power of western episteme. “Demonstrating the value of playing opposites, the indigenous uncanny maintains a constant state of flux in order to disrupt and destabilize knowledge and power from settling into hardened and irrefutable regimes of truth” (Emberley x). The constant duality that exists within the Indigenous uncanny is an “ethico-epistemic challenge [that] lies in the dual process of unlearning the institutional, epistemic, and representational violences of colonization and learning from Indigenous storytelling about the interwoven fabric of reciprocity, respect, balance, and responsibility that informs an Indigenous approach to reading Indigenous stories” (Emberley 53). Additionally, Emberley discusses the use of historical assemblage in order to piece together a more complete and truthful sense of history and the past.⁷⁰ Through historical assemblage, the past is reconfigured through the present-day realities of a social community, in which they engage in a process of re-telling and restoring balance. Emberley suggests that indigenous storytelling also reconsiders the role of witnessing in discourses of testimony and suggests that within the indigenous uncanny, an “uncanny witness” has the ability to see beyond dominant claims of history. “Uncanny witnesses display remarkable abilities to ‘see’ beyond the merely evidentiary claims of history and into other imaginative possibilities. They become, in other words, visionary bearers of knowledge, they bring new insight into their respective ‘worlds’” (Emberley 29). In addition, Emberley describes the uncanny witness as an imaginary figure that exists within a spiritual realm, that is also a key site of witnessing and suggests that

⁷⁰ Emberley, Julia. *The Testimonial Uncanny: Indigenous Storytelling, Knowledge, and Reparative Practices*. State University of New York Press, 2014. p. 2

position of the uncanny figure allows for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge components, such as notions of spirituality, that were once deemed ‘outside of the episteme’.⁷¹

Emberley touches upon the work of scholar Jo-Ann Archibald and her concept of “storywork” in the book, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*. According to Archibald, storywork provides an alternative model to the study of testimony, in which it recognizes that the past continues to intervene and influence the everyday life in present day.⁷² Additionally, Emberley expands upon Archibald’s notion of storywork and states that in order for decolonization to be effective, public acknowledgement of trauma and violence must occur. “It requires the opening of avenues to document the nature of such violence and its past and generational effects; it requires the implementation of ways of healing; and it requires a response from the political and religious institutions that consented to the conditions that allowed violence to occur” (Emberley 71). Storytelling not only serves as a form of violence, it provides the space to recognize and acknowledge that the violence of colonization is a part of the Indigenous experience. Emberley suggests that this sense of loss is what empowers and charges the force and determination to create social change.

In terms of decolonization, Emberley argues that it is not only a matter of decolonizing the mind, but also the heart, body and spirit in honor of the Indigenous emphasis on balance and reciprocity that is often reflected in Native American

⁷¹ Emberley, Julia. *The Testimonial Uncanny: Indigenous Storytelling, Knowledge, and Reparative Practices*. State University of New York Press, 2014. p. 28

⁷² Archibald, Jo-Ann. *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*. University of British Columbia Press, 2008. p. 30

storytelling practices.⁷³ “Indigenous storytelling is based upon an epistemological framework that embraces the idea of balance between four aspects of existence: the physical, the emotional, the spiritual and the intellectual” (Emberley 213). It is this idea of restoring balance that emphasizes the power of storytelling in Native American culture as it creates a restored sense of balance across various social entities “...including those between humans, human and animal, and human and nature in general, or the land” (Emberley 296).

The first chapter of this dissertation explores the ways in which the 1836 Treaty of Washington and the 1807 Treaty of Detroit disrupted Indigenous cultural practices and traditional lifestyles of the Anishinaabeg in Northern Michigan. As a part of Michigan gaining statehood and the Anishinaabe tribes ceding land to the federal government, the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial School was created as a part of the treaty agreement. The purpose of developing a federal government boarding school in Michigan was to interrupt traditional Anishinaabeg child rearing practices and familial structures under the façade of institutional social services as well as serving as a quick fix to the growing poverty and economic desperation in Michigan Indian communities.

Chapter Two provides a variety of personal narratives from Native American boarding school survivors that include stories of the stability and routine that the institutions provided while also examining the traumatic stories of physical and sexual abuse, illness and death. Due to the explicit content that was recorded in many of the student records, it has been incredibly difficult for individual students to obtain copies of

⁷³ Emberley, Julia. *The Testimonial Uncanny: Indigenous Storytelling, Knowledge, and Reparative Practices*. State University of New York Press, 2014. p. 79

their files. The concealment of these records has particularly been restricted over the last year as the State of Michigan has begun an investigation into the claims of sexual abuse within several Michigan Catholic dioceses.

Chapter Three examines the ways in which the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and the Holy Childhood School of Jesus exploited and targeted young women and girls to perform essential institutional duties in order to meet the standards of “Victorian Womanhood.” Female students were indoctrinated into subservience and the false notions of appropriate and accepted femininity. This was done through extensive domestic labor training, exposure to specified education topics such as child rearing and gender expectations, and the control of their individual social growth through gendered learning spaces and controlled interactions with students of the opposite sex. The education for Native girls in schools such as MPIIBS and Holy Childhood was centralized around restructuring traditional gender roles in order to reform the Native American household and overall community structure and practices.

Chapter Four analyzes the architecture and land that both the MPIIBS and Holy Childhood occupy as they are consistently important and influential to contemporary connections of present-day tribal members. The school buildings were not only utilized to assimilate young Native American children, but they also can be conceived as text and a depository of memories and history. The presence or absence of these buildings has significant effect on the narrative that is constructed for both MPIIBS and Holy Childhood as well as influencing the healing and repatriation process for Michigan Native communities. While the presence of boarding school buildings can be a reminder

of the trauma and loss of culture for many Anishinaabek, the loss of these structures also carry negative connotations in that their absence erases physical and concrete evidence of harm and the reality of a past experience.

And lastly, the summary chapter expands upon my own familial narratives and the ways in which my immediate family identifies and experiences their Anishinaabe heritage. I discuss the ways in which sharing counternarratives not only provides a foundation for collective memory, but creates space for healing, ceremony, medicine and reclamation. The sharing of these stories allows for family members to understand how they individually exist within the narrative and how their parents' and grandparents' experiences continue to collectively impact the lives of multiple generations. In addition to sharing personal stories, my family reflects upon how the multiple generations of boarding school survivors in our ancestry has impacted how we understand and express our Anishinaabe culture and identity as a collective family. The boarding school survivor testimonies assist in providing intergenerational healing among families, which is crucial and important as the children and grandchildren of survivors are often more withdrawn and distant from the evolving collective narrative.

CHAPTER ONE

The Native American boarding school system was created upon the notion of assimilative education, but the institutions were ultimately designed to disrupt Indigenous parenting practices and traditional labor patterns of Anishinaabeg families all through the state of Michigan. Although treaties between tribal nations and the government appear to be a consensual process, they often disrupt Indigenous cultural practices. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the treaties that are associated with the development of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and the birth of Michigan as a state. These treaties, The Treaty of Washington and the Treaty of Detroit, in correlation with the fur trade industry, were the catalyst for immense change among the traditional livelihoods of the Anishinaabeg. According to Chantal Norrgard, treaties and the fur trade introduced the growth of capitalist industries among the Great Lakes Native American tribes in which they became involved with lumber production, commercial fishing, hunting and trapping as well as selling natural commodities such as berries, wild rice and maple sugar.⁷⁴ Particularly in Northern Michigan and on Mackinac Island, many Native Americans became heavily involved in work with the tourist industry and domestic servitude. Additionally, Norrgard states that the increase in tourism in the Great Lakes led to the restriction of the Minnesotan and Wisconsin Ojibwe tribes' treaty rights as

⁷⁴ Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014 p. 6-7

many Ojibwe people attached meaning to labor in ways that intersected with indigeneity and tribal sovereignty.⁷⁵ What happened to Minnesota and Wisconsin Ojibwe tribes also happened to Northern Michigan Ojibwe tribes.

Prior to colonization, Ojibwe communities were based upon clans and not political or economic advantages, according to Basil Johnston.⁷⁶ An individual's clan association determined one's role in the collective community and my family's clan, the eagle clan, was traditionally associated with leadership. Johnston states that the "principles of leadership are often best exemplified by birds" and that the characteristics of exemplary leadership are a reflection of bird migration patterns as nothing in life is either permanent or constant (61). The labor patterns of the Ojibwe also reflect the migration of birds as families moved in conjunction with the shift in seasons. Familial movement within the community was based upon where labor was accessible, and resources were readily available. Norrgard describes this as the "seasonal round of subsistence activities" for Ojibwe communities in Minnesota and Wisconsin (5). The spring season was a time in which Anishinaabeg families established sugaring camps to tap maple trees and boil the sap to create maple sugar as well as spearing and netting fish in nearby rivers and lakes. In the warmer summer months, families retreated to larger villages near waterways in order to continue netting and trapping fish in addition to harvesting wild berries and collecting birch bark to be used for canoes, baskets, and wigwams. As summer turned to fall, families returned to smaller camps on lakes where

⁷⁵ Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014 p. 10

⁷⁶ Johnston, Basil. *Ojibway Heritage*. University of Nebraska Press, 1990 p. 72

they harvested wild rice in preparation for the winter. Once winter arrived, families secluded themselves inside birch bark wigwams and relied on the supplies of berries, maple sugar, game, fish and wild rice as sustenance through the cold months. It was also during the winter season that families constructed essential items for the community such as moccasins, clothing, blankets, and snowshoes.⁷⁷ According to Johnston, no occupation was more respected within traditional Anishinaabeg communities than that of hunting, fishing and trapping. This role not only provided nourishment to families, but it also required a high level of skill and perseverance (66). There were not specific tasks or roles associated with gender within traditional Anishinaabeg communities, but men and women often had specific tasks that they were expected to fulfill. Anishinaabe (men) were often involved with the hunting, fishing, and creation and repairing of tools and instruments utilized in food capture or warfare.⁷⁸ Additionally, Anishinaabekwe (women) were central in preparing food, blending medicines, lodge creation, and mending clothing.⁷⁹

Despite the role that Anishinaabe performed in capturing wild game and fish for meals, it was the Anishinaabekwe that held authority over the distribution of food, which also included gathering berries, harvesting wild plants and rice, and tapping maple trees during sugaring camps.⁸⁰ According to Norrgard, prior to the creation of any treaties, gathering also played an important role in the fur trade and foods such as maple sugar and

⁷⁷ Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014 p. 4

⁷⁸ Johnston, Basil. *Ojibway Heritage*. University of Nebraska Press, 1990 p. 111

⁷⁹ Johnston, Basil. *Ojibway Heritage*. University of Nebraska Press, 1990 p. 111

⁸⁰ Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014 p. 22

wild rice were essential to the survival of fur traders. They traded with Anishinaabeg communities in order to have enough food to survive the cold trading season.⁸¹ As colonization grew through the establishment of treaties and the territory of Michigan entering into statehood, berrying and other forms of gathering provided a way for Anishinaabekwe to earn an income. This was particularly important for women who did not have a spouse or other male relatives to contribute to the household or who lived in areas of the state that did not have work readily available.⁸² Norrgard argues that berrying was also the less likely regulated aspect of the treaties as opposed to hunting and fishing rights (30). Additionally, berrying also encouraged the mobility of Ojibwe peoples even after the creation of the reservation and allotment system and was an example of how a traditional form of labor was repurposed in order to subsist among forced assimilation.⁸³

The Treaty of Washington was signed on March 28, 1836 in Washington, D.C. by Henry Schoolcraft, an Indian Commissioner for the United States and several representations of the Michigan Native American communities. This was treaty between the US and Odawa and Ojibwe Indians within what was to become the state of Michigan. Upon signing this treaty, the tribes ceded an area of approximately 13,837,207 acres in the northwest portion of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and the eastern portion of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The treaty guaranteed Anishinaabeg permanent reservation lands and access to natural resources, which included hunting, gathering and fishing

⁸¹ Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014 p. 25-26

⁸² Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014 p. 30

⁸³ Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014 p. 36

rights. Present-day tribal leaders all throughout the State of Michigan continue to reference the 1837 Treaty in order to protect ongoing tribal rights to hunting, fishing and gathering within the ceded Great Lakes territory.

Unfortunately, after the Odawa and Ojibwe representatives had left Washington, Congress decided to alter the terms of the treaty, which guaranteed Anishinaabeg communities only five years to remain on their homelands before the government could consider forcibly removing them from majority of Northern Michigan. While Agent Henry Schoolcraft was supposed to be a representative for Michigan Indian Nations during the treaty negotiation process, he did not stop the amendments that were proposed by Congress. He intentionally recommended that the Anishinabeg be forcefully removed from their homes.⁸⁴ The 1836 Treaty of Washington was not only the legal decision that helped lead to Michigan entering into statehood on January 26, 1837, it also marked the end of a stabilized economic partnership between the Anishinaabeg and European settlers that began with the fur trade industry of the 1500's.⁸⁵ Many Michigan Indians were involved in the fur trade industry in addition to commercial fishing, maple sugar production, fruit harvesting, and lumbering, which not only brought in financial capital, but it also produced food and subsistence for extended families. Due to the climate in Northern Michigan, there was little reliance on agricultural crops and farming. Families often moved seasonally and in accordance with where their work took them. The winter

⁸⁴“Treaty with the Ottawa, Etc.: March 28, 1836.” *1836 Treaty Ceded Territory*, Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, www.saulttribe.com/images/downloads/history_and_culture/story_of_our_people/1836_treaty_washington.pdf#view=fitH.

⁸⁵ McClurken, James M. “Wage Labor in Two Michigan Ottawa Communities.” *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1996, p. 66–99.

months were spent in lumbering camps, while the summers were spent near the shoreline for fishing, gathering and fruit harvesting purposes.⁸⁶

As traditional community settlements were eradicated through the terms of treaties such as the 1836 Treaty of Washington, Michigan Indians were only able to retain land through either allotment or private ownership. This was done through the 1855 Treaty of Detroit, which contained provisions to allot individual pieces of land to Michigan Indians. The terms outlined that individuals would receive 40-acre plots and families would receive 80-acre plots. In order to determine eligibility to receive an allotment, Indian Agents were instructed to create a list of Anishinaabeg that resided in their jurisdiction. Under Article 2 of this treaty, it was outlined that the United States would pay 80,000 dollars for educational purposes in addition to the appointment of teachers and the management of schools in consultation with the Native nations.⁸⁷ Both the 1836 Treaty of Washington and the 1855 Treaty of Detroit were precursors to notable changes among Anishinaabeg lifestyle, familial and economic practices and principles. The creation of a state-wide federal Indian boarding school and system of institutionalization not only continued many missionary churches were already implementing through schools such as the Holy Childhood School of Jesus in Harbor Springs, it was also used as a quick fix to the growing poverty and desperation that spread throughout Michigan Indian communities in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

⁸⁶ Littlefield, Alice. "Indian Education and The World of Work in Michigan, 1893-1933." *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1996, p. 100–121.

⁸⁷"Treaty with the Ottawa and Chippewa: July 31,1855." *Story of Our People: The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians*, Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, www.saulttribe.com/images/downloads/history_and_culture/story_of_our_people/1855_treaty_ottawa_chippewa.pdf.

The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School was created and developed as a part of the terms listed in Article 2, which designated federal funds for establishing educational programs and services for Native American communities in the state of Michigan. Despite the promise of educational opportunities that were outlined in the 1855 Treaty of Detroit, MPIIBS was never created to serve as a place of learning for Native American children. Its purpose was to interrupt traditional Anishinaabeg child rearing practices and familial structures under the façade of institutional social services. This is evident within the 1930 MPIIBS Superintendent Report to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in which L.R. Baumgarten states that “the necessity for the Mount Pleasant Boarding School is...in reaching those whose home conditions are such that they cannot attend a public school. It is more in the nature of an orphan institution than that of probably any other school of its kind in the Service. There is considerable poverty and distress in certain sections and this, with the orphans, the children from broken homes, almost constitute our enrollment.”⁸⁸ The view of Michigan Indian parents and families as poor, broken and absent was utilized to justify Indian boarding school education and to convince Indian service educators and religious missionary clergy that the system they had created was in the best interest of the child.⁸⁹ This was not only reflected in governmental documents and reports, but in magazine publications such as *The Indian Sentinel*, which was published by the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. In the July

⁸⁸ Baumgarten, L. R. 1930 Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Superintendent Report to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Administrative Records of the Superintendent, 1915-1933.

⁸⁹ Littlefield, Alice. “Indian Education and The World of Work in Michigan, 1893-1933.” *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1996, p. 106

1916 issue, Father Joseph D. Erkens of Holy Childhood writes that “even today, the Indian retains the peculiar traits and ways of days gone by. He is satisfied with his little home. In his work he is not persistent. When he works he does his work well, but he likes to take his holiday, to spend his earnings, and he is not solicitous about the future. He is always the poor Indian. A rich Indian is as rare as a white crow, and white men will not permit such freaks to exist.”⁹⁰ It was not only the objective of the boarding schools to assure that their employees believed in the pursuit and assimilation of Native American children, but that the general public from mainstream Euro-American society were also in support of these efforts.

An article in the May 1914 edition of *The Indian School Journal* describes the driving purpose of MPIIBS as preparing Native American boys and girls for the “duties, privileges, and responsibilities of American citizenship” through training in the formation of good habits, developing character among physical, mental and moral capabilities and to encourage interest in industrial development.⁹¹ The boarding school system not only wanted to assimilate Native children into mainstream Western culture, but indoctrinate them into the industrious mentality of the working class. Alice Littlefield states that the boarding school experience and educational and vocational curriculums prepared students for the process of “class formation” among Michigan Indian communities. “The boarding school experience facilitated the process of proletarianization, not necessarily by imparting specific vocational skills...but by imposing the behavioral routines, patterns of

⁹⁰ Erkens, Joseph D. “Catholic Indian Schools: The Holy Childhood Mission, Harbor Springs, Michigan” *The Indian Sentinel*, July 1916. p. 10

⁹¹ “A Short History of the Mt. Pleasant School” *The Indian School Journal*, May 1914, p. 445-451. The Indian School Journal, 1904 - 1926, National Archives, Record Group 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1793 – 1999.

social interaction, and personal dispositions necessary for adapting to an industrial economy” (Littlefield 120). Despite the extensive efforts to provide Native American children with the needed vocational education to assist in their transition into the work force, Veronica Passfield characterized these skills as “worthless” particularly following technical developments such as the Model T car. “Keep in mind that while white children were learning skills that could lead to middle class or white-collar jobs, Indians were being taught to be underclass laborers, gardeners, nannies and laundresses. You have to ask how this made any sense. Who in a remote reservation community is going to have money to hire nannies and gardeners?”⁹²

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, enrollment in Native American boarding schools such as MPIIBS and Holy Childhood were at an all-time high due to the Great Depression and they were perceived as institutions that primarily cared for poor and orphaned Native American children. During an interview with my second cousin Alex Joe, who attended Holy Childhood, he described Native boarding schools as “poor houses.”⁹³ My mother Corrina, who did not attend boarding school, but was often threatened to be sent to “Harbor” as a punishment during her childhood, exclaimed that she always thought of Holy Childhood as an orphanage.⁹⁴ Alex Joe’s brother, my second cousin Kenny who also attended Holy Childhood, agreed with my mother. He said “it [Holy Childhood] was a very bad place. It was an orphanage, but all the kids had parents.

⁹² “They Came for the Children.” *Northern Express*, 24 Aug. 2008, <https://www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3658-they-came-for-the-children/>.

⁹³ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

⁹⁴ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

The parents just didn't have any way of feeding them.”⁹⁵ Despite the historical narrative of Native children being forcibly taken from their families and placed in boarding school, it is often not acknowledged that families also purposefully sought out enrollment for their children in these schools, particularly during the Great Depression. According to Brenda Child, this was often a “strategy of family preservation”⁹⁶ in which Anishinaabeg families were forced to find an alternative arrangement for the care and keeping of their children. “It is apparent that boarding schools created problems for Indians, but clearly in other instances the institutions provided a solution, however temporary, to some of their most crucial dilemmas. American Indians at times resented boarding schools, and rightly so, but they also found them useful. In times of family crisis or economic hardship, Indians could turn to boarding schools for help.”⁹⁷ Parents knew that their children would have their basic needs met such as clothing, food, and shelter and also assumed that boarding school would prepare for future employment with rudimentary education and trade skills. Education was seen as a way to reposition oneself out of poverty. Winters in Northern Michigan were especially brutal for Anishinaabeg families such as my own, who lived on Mackinac Island, which is located on Lake Huron. Alex Joe stated that he wasn't surprised that our Grandma Charlotte was sent to MPIIBS due to the winter conditions and lack of seasonal work. “She went there because Grandma [Grace] couldn't

⁹⁵ Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

⁹⁶ Child, Brenda J. “The Boarding School as Metaphor.” *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education*, SAR Press, 2014. p. 272

⁹⁷ Child, Brenda J. *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families 1900-1940*. University of Nebraska Press, 1998. p. 24

take care of her. It was a rough existence on Mackinac Island during the winter.

Unemployment was high.”⁹⁸

In addition to a severe weather conditions and the despondency of the Great Depression, many Native men and women were forced to relinquish custody of their children to the boarding school system due to the death of a spouse or family member. Particularly, when a Native woman was raising children as a single mother, she was often seen as inadequate to parent.⁹⁹ My cousins Kenny and Alex Joe were being raised by our Grandma Charlotte when they were first sent to Holy Childhood in the early 1970s. Their mother, my great-Aunt Jeannie, was not actively involved in their lives as children and their grandmother assumed her place as their maternal figure. This was often considered an inadequate situation for young Anishnaabeg children and according to my cousin Kenny, it was the main reason why him and Alex Joe were sent to Holy Childhood. “The only reason we got sent to Holy Childhood is that Stella King said grandma couldn’t take care of us boys anymore. She was the nurse on the island. She was a busy body nurse and was like the social worker of the island.”¹⁰⁰ This nurse, Stella King, who worked at the small medical center on Mackinac Island, was known to place judgement upon local Native families in regard to their familial situations. Alex Joe also recalled a comment that Stella made after Kenny was born in which she suggested that my Aunt Jeannie should give the baby up for adoption since the father had abandoned his responsibility as a parent. “She told my mom after she had Kenny that she should give him up for

⁹⁸ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

⁹⁹ “Honoring, Healing, and Remembering Afternoon Guest Speakers.” YouTube, uploaded by Saginaw Chippewa, 6 June 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCIS5VtibFg>

¹⁰⁰ Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

adoption. Grandpa Cassibo said, ‘I paid for this delivery and you gave us nothing. What do you think we are, dogs? We don’t give our children away’.”¹⁰¹

Whether boarding school attendance was forced through legislature or purposefully chosen by parents, it was common for state and federal government organizations to interfere with the family relations of MPIIBS students such as my own great-grandmother Charlotte. Anishinaabeg families were not given the authority to make informed decisions surrounding the education and treatment of their children, particularly once the MPIIBS closed on June 6, 1933 and the student files became social work cases for the State of Michigan.¹⁰² Shortly before Charlotte began attending MPIIBS in September 1930, her father John died of a stroke and her mother Grace was left to parent as a single mother. A letter from MPIIBS Superintendent Frank Christy to Cecil Brown of the Michigan Children’s Aid Society (MCAS) on November 14, 1933 stated that even when John was alive, he was reported to be a “helpless paralytic cripple.”¹⁰³ The MCAS was a state chapter of the national Children’s Aid Society, which was founded in 1853 by Charles Loring Brace in New York City.¹⁰⁴ This organization is most known for developing the Orphan Train Movement in which over 120,000 orphaned children were put on trains and placed with families across the United States.¹⁰⁵ The superintendent was concerned about the parenting capabilities of Charlotte’s mother Grace, who was

¹⁰¹ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁰² Passfield, Veronica. Personal interview. 30 August 2018.

¹⁰³ Christy, Frank. Letter to Cecil Brown. 14 November 1933. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹⁰⁴ “A History of Innovation.” *Children's Aid*, www.childrensaidnyc.org/about/history-innovation.

¹⁰⁵ “The Orphan Train Movement.” *Children's Aid*, <https://www.childrensaidnyc.org/about/orphan-train-movement>.

described by an Indian Field Service (IFS) Representative from the Department of Interior as “immoral” and an individual who is rumored to have a “social disease.”¹⁰⁶ During this time in America, the euphemism of “social disease” was often used to describe venereal disease, which was associated with immorality, prostitution and hypersexuality.¹⁰⁷ As a single mother who was described as a frequent visitor to the local bars in town, it is no surprise that Grace would be considered “immoral” based upon mainstream views on sexuality and womanhood.

Following the closure of MPIIBS, it was suggested by the superintendent that Charlotte should be placed in a foster home based upon her living conditions since returning home. MCAS continued to examine Charlotte’s case between 1933 and 1936 and Ruth Chamberlain, a field representation from the IFS, was sent to observe Charlotte and her family within their home on Mackinac Island on June 29, 1936. She was accompanied by a MCAS nurse who was referred to as Miss Veenhuis. Upon arriving on Mackinac Island and entering the village of Harrisonville, it is described as a “small settlement inhabited almost entirely by Indians living on a low level.”¹⁰⁸ The Cadreau family home is portrayed as an unattractive four room log cabin that has broken windows, a sagging roof and garbage littering the yard. There are three rooms downstairs and another lofted room that is reached by a ladder. The oldest sister, Christine, greets Ruth and Miss Veenhuis and discloses that along with herself and their mother Grace, the

¹⁰⁶ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹⁰⁷ Wuebker, Erin. “Taking the Venereal Out of Venereal Disease: The 1930s Public Health Campaign against Syphilis and Gonorrhea.” *Notches*, 31 May 2016, notchesblog.com/2016/05/31/taking-the-venereal-out-of-venereal-disease-the-1930s-public-health-campaign-against-syphilis-and-gonorrhea/.

¹⁰⁸ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

home is currently occupied by her siblings Charlotte, Edward, Wilfred, Philip, Elizabeth, her husband and their four children. The cleanliness of the home is described as unsanitary and the field notes indicate that “the beds were covered with filthy old blankets and the table had many dirty dishes, liquor bottles and remnants of food on it.”¹⁰⁹ In addition to describing the conditions of the home, the field notes also provided a summary of the family and their physical attributes. Christine, who was thirty-three years old at the time, stood at a height of 5’2 and was depicted as having a medium build, straight black hair worn in a knot at the back of her neck, a round face, small black eyes, an “aquiline” or hooked nose, full lips and nice white teeth. The field representative described Christine as being cooperative and “fairly intelligent” with decent English and conversational skills. Despite having four children who appeared to be healthy and well-behaved, the fieldnotes indicated that “her general attitude was one of disinterest and some disgust with the present situation of her family. She was crude in her actions and used rather rough language.”¹¹⁰ Her sister, Elizabeth, is described as the same height as Christine, but plumper in stature. She is said to have similar physical traits to her sister, but she appears to be more “lethargic in her manner” and has been bedridden for the past five days.¹¹¹

According to Muskogee Creek scholar K. Tsianina Lomawaima, Native homes were often seen and described by federal officials as inappropriate and filthy spaces that

¹⁰⁹ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹¹⁰ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹¹¹ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

were not suitable for children. These “primitive” architectural designs were seen as backward and a symbol of savagery and the uncivilized.

Native homes and public buildings necessarily housed and protected – from federal viewpoint and by federal definitions – inappropriate family structures; immoral reproductive units or sexual alliances; sexual disease and moral degradation; unproductive, inefficient (or worse yet, competitive) economies; filth and vermin; strange and unappetizing foods; and heathen religious practices linked with ‘injurious’ health practices (such as sweats) (Lomawaima 150).

The boarding school system was not only designed to separate Native children from their parents and traditional family structures, but to also remove them from “uncivilized” Native homes to the civilized spaces of Western architecture.

When Ruth and Miss Veenhuis arrived at the Cadreau residence, Grace and Charlotte were not present and were said to have been visiting family in St. Ignace. Kenny stated that growing up, he was told that a number of family members worked to hide Charlotte from the case workers and field representatives when they visited Mackinac Island. He bluntly said that “they were hunting our family, period. You realize why they were hunting her, right? She had a bad heart, so she missed a lot of school. But look at how smart grandma was. They wanted to take her out of the home, but she self-educated herself. She was very smart.”¹¹² After returning from MPIIBS in June of 1933, Grace sent Charlotte to live with her older sister, Rita LaTour, in St. Ignace, who lived in a one room cabin with her own children. Once the MPIIBS superintendent, Frank Christy, was aware of Charlotte’s whereabouts, a case worker was sent to the LaTour home for observation. In the field notes, the LaTour family was described as a family that

¹¹² Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

was “chronically known to local relief agencies”¹¹³ and that they lived in a very dirty cabin. The case worker noted that the day she visited the LaTour home, all of the children were absent from school because they did not have enough food to take for lunch that day. It became evident from the tone of the letter that the case worker felt that placement with her own sister was not an adequate living situation. “According to local officials, this LaTour family is not only financially poor but low grade in every way and not able to provide a suitable home for Catherine.”¹¹⁴ Alex Joe stated that he was told that Christine, or Aunt Tine as she was known to family, had disclosed Charlotte’s location in St. Ignace to the social services authorities following her return from MPIIBS. “Aunt Tine, the snitch. She told them right where she [grandma] was. She was so far up Father Ling’s ass, she went right along with them and said that grandma couldn’t learn and that she was retarded. Her own sister. Aunt Tine lived with Father Ling and took care of his house as a maid. He had a place right on the beach. She was even working there when I was a kid.”¹¹⁵ Father Ling was also mentioned throughout the IFS fieldnotes and he stated that although the family identified as Catholic, they did not attend church services and were known as having a poor reputation of being lazy and having a “slovenly way of living.”¹¹⁶ The Catholic priest also described the Cadreau family as “immoral” and stated that there were rumors of Grace frequently visiting the taverns in the village. The

¹¹³ Christy, Frank. Letter to Cecil Brown. 14 November 1933. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹¹⁴ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹¹⁵ Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹¹⁶ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

fieldnotes contained extensive aversions to any and all choices that the Cadreau family were working in terms of schooling for the children, homemaking and financial decisions. The majority of the document focused heavily on the lack of work ethic and poor monetary practices of the family unit.

The family have the reputation of not being very ambitious. They show very little foresight in planning. When the boys bring home what money they earn the family spends all of it immediately for food and liquor and then starve or beg until the next pay day. They do not seem to be able to care for their clothing adequately and wear it until it is worn out and no longer serviceable, then apply to the relief for more. Last winter they spent their money without providing for clothing for the cold weather.¹¹⁷

Not only were the case worker and field representative concerned about the financial situation of my great-grandmother's family, they also emphasized great interest in the schooling that Charlotte was receiving since returning home from MPIIBS. At the time of this specific field note documentation, Charlotte had turned sixteen years old in May, but was only functioning at a fifth-grade level in school. Christine stated that her sister did not like school and that while it was hard for her to learn, she also showed little to no ambition for schoolwork. It was said that Charlotte was slow in her actions and that she was considered to be emotionally and socially immature. Ruth and Miss Veenhuis also spoke with the Mackinac Island public school principal, Mr. C.P. Wellington, who stated that Charlotte always appeared disinterested, was slow to comprehend material and preferred to play with the younger children. Her attendance was irregular and the truant officer visited the Cadreau home frequently in which Grace always had an excuse as to why her daughter was absent. Some of these excuses included not having adequate

¹¹⁷ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

clothing or that Charlotte was ill, which it had been known that she grew up with a heart condition. Mr. Wellington said that Charlotte caused no behavioral problems other than consistent truancy. Ruth and Miss Veenhuis asked about Charlotte's intelligence level and Mr. Wellington stated that he would send along her grades to their organization. He was adamant in stating that he felt that Charlotte was "retarded" and that it may have been due to the "bad environment" that she was currently being raised in.¹¹⁸

Following the conclusion of Ruth and Miss Veenhuis' home visit to the Cadreau home on Mackinac Island, Mrs. Cecil H. Brown of the MCAS sent a letter to Miss Olive Gwinn of IFS on July 16, 1936 in which she expressed her opinion of this family situation as "very unsatisfactory" and that she recommended that Charlotte receive a mental test to reveal her low level of intelligence. "This is another very unsatisfactory situation. I am suggesting that our Upper Peninsula worker do everything possible to get Charlotte away from these surroundings. I do think however a mental test might reveal feeble-mindedness in which case she could be sent directly to the Michigan Home and Training School, Lapeer."¹¹⁹ The Michigan Home and Training School (MHTS) in Lapeer, Michigan opened in 1895 as the Michigan Home for the Feeble Minded and Epileptic, which had three buildings on the property and was able to house up to 200 patients. The MHTS was the largest institution of its kind in Michigan and one of the

¹¹⁸ Chamberlain, Ruth. Field Notes. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹¹⁹ Brown, Cecil. Letter to Olive Gwinn. 16 July 1936. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

largest in the entire United States.¹²⁰ By 1938, the institutional buildings exceeded over 100 buildings and the peak population reached 4,467 people in 1956. The institution closed in 1991 and had since been renamed the Oakdale Regional Center for Developmental Disabilities.¹²¹ According to Laura Fromwiller, author of *Oakdale: The Lapeer State Home*, men would often commit their wives to the institution during menopause and orphans and children with unfit parents were frequently placed there. Fromwiller describes this as “false imprisonment” in which residents were unable to leave despite any ability to prove they were wrongfully committed. Additionally, Fromwiller states that over 2,336 cases of sterilization occurred at the MHTS and that the state of Michigan ranked fourth highest in the country for completing sterilizations based upon mental disabilities and racial or ethnic origin.¹²² The majority of the sterilizations in Michigan occurred during the 1930s and 1940s, which is when my great-grandmother Charlotte would have been institutionalized at MHTS.¹²³ In his book, *Darwin Day in America: How Our Politics and Culture Have Been Dehumanized in the Name of Science*, John West describes this use of sterilization as a way to “breed out poverty” in addition to the racial and ethnic specificities that were challenged through the practice of eugenics (123).

¹²⁰ “Lapeer State Home.” *Asylum Projects*, 17 Dec. 2017, www.asylumprojects.org/index.php/Lapeer_State_Home.

¹²¹ Fromwiller, Laura and Jan Gillis. *Oakdale: The Lapeer State Home*. Arcadia Publishing, 2014.

¹²² Carnacchio, CJ. “False Imprisonment, Sterilization and Murder, Oh My!” *The Citizen*, 27 Jan. 2016, thecitizenonline.com/false-imprisonment-sterilization-and-murder-oh-my/.

¹²³ “The Verdict of History: The History of Michigan Jurisprudence Through Its Significant Supreme Court Cases.” *Michigan Bar Journal*, Jan. 2009, www.michbar.org/file/barjournal/article/documents/pdf4article1462.pdf.

A former patient from MHTS brought a lawsuit to the state of Michigan in 1994 as a victim of forced sterilization. Fred Aslin was sent to MHTS shortly after his father died during the Great Depression, which was a decision based upon the accusation that his mother could no longer care for him and his other brothers and sisters. Aslin, who was Odawa and Ojibwe from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, was similarly diagnosed as “feeble-minded” like my great-grandmother Charlotte and during his time at MHTS, he was forcibly sterilized at the age of eighteen. Aslin stated in an article published by the *Washington Post* that “they said it was because we were feeble-minded morons and that any children we might have would be just like us, or worse.” Although Aslin’s suit was dismissed because the statute of limitations had expired, he received a formal letter of apology from James K. Haveman Jr., the Director of the Michigan Department of Health, for his sterilization that occurred fifty years earlier. Aslin continued to feel as though him and his siblings were victims of “social prejudice” and thought that his identity as a “poor Indian” was a large part of the reason he experienced sterilization.¹²⁴

During the 2016 Honoring, Healing and Remembering event for the MPIIBS, my aunt Dawn, my sister Marissa and myself went on a guided tour of the boarding school grounds with Craig Graveratte, the Environmental Response Program Specialist for the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe (SCIT), a tribal member and descendant of a MPIIBS boarding school survivor. Craig stated that during the 2011 process of the SCIT gaining ownership of the boarding school grounds, he toured the grounds with a number of state

¹²⁴ Lessenberry, Jack. “Scarred by Sterilization.” *The Washington Post*, 9 Mar. 2000, www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2000/03/09/scarred-by-sterilization/0357c811-b684-4dd5-a821-5f067f35fc2a/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.8215d39cbfc1.

officials and after entering the girl's dormitory, they found a number of antique hospital equipment items in the basement of the building. This discovery led many of the SCIT committee members to believe that there had been sterilizations happening at MPIIBS. "[There] were wooden wheelchairs and a wooden gurney with stirrups, which is where we believe they may have been doing some of the sterilization of the students that were here. We haven't been able to prove that, but it is a theory based on things that we witnessed after entering the building."¹²⁵ The implication of sterilization occurring to Native American children and teenagers at MPIIBS was quietly mentioned to my mother Corrina when she was a child. She remembers being told by her Grandpa Cassibo, my great-grandfather who married my great-grandmother Charlotte, that Uncle Phil was sterile and that was why he didn't have any children. "[Uncle Phil] took on caring for other people's kids on the island. It was surprising that he didn't have any kids since everyone was sleeping around on the island, but it makes sense if he had been sterilized during his time at Mt. Pleasant."¹²⁶ While our great uncle Phil attended MPIIBS with our grandmother Charlotte, he had run away from the school in 1932 at the age of fourteen and my mother often wonders if it is because he had been forcibly sterilized in addition to suffering from physical or sexual abuse.

Since the closing of MPIIBS, the MHTS served as a secondary form of institutional control for Anishinaabeg families in the state of Michigan. A mental test was performed on Charlotte on September 29, 1936 and according to a letter from Lydia Conlogue, Mackinac County Welfare Agent, to Miss Sarah Lewis of the MCAS on

¹²⁵ Graveratte, Craig. Personal interview. 6 June 2016.

¹²⁶ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 11 December 2018.

October 28, 1936, the results of the test placed Charlotte at an intelligence quotient of sixty-four and a mental age around ten years old. According to Lydia, this classified her as “a feeble-minded individual of the moron type” and the next steps were to commit Charlotte to the MHTS in Lapeer as “removal from her home would be the best thing for the girl.”¹²⁷ My family members were astounded to read this in my great-grandmother’s student file as they never once thought of her as being incompetent. My cousin Alex Joe said “my grandma was so smart. She could take a pattern from crocheting and re-do it and change it up and make it into something else. She held the same job for twenty years and raised me and my brother. She raised Aunt Phyllis, Aunt Barb and Aunt Jeannie. Took care of her mom and uncle, and her brothers.”¹²⁸ My Aunt Dawn reiterated similar sentiment to Alex Joe’s comment about Grandma Charlotte always taking care of others. “[She] never turned anyone away. She would make a huge pot of chili just to make sure that there was some for everyone who might stop by the house.”¹²⁹ My mother Corrina also agreed with Dawn and Alex Joe that she never thought of her grandmother as a less intelligent person and that she was always quick to care for friends and family. At one moment, she realized that the only education that grandma Charlotte ever received other than intermittent attendance to the Mackinac Island public school was that of the curriculum at MPIIBS. She felt that seeing the letters and records within grandma Charlotte’s student file helped her to understand her grandmother on a deeper and more vulnerable level. “Not that I ever thought grandma was stupid, but dad would always say

¹²⁷ Conlogue, Lydia. Letter to Sarah Lewis. 28 October 1936. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

¹²⁸ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹²⁹ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

she was a ‘galivanter’. It explained why she did domestic work. It explained why she had some problems with being migrant, it explained why she took Kenny and Al in and she raised them.”¹³⁰ It was incredibly alarming for Kenny, Alex Joe, Corrina and Dawn to think of their grandmother as someone who was in the process of being taken away from her family and sent to a mental institution.

Due to the brutal weather conditions of a Northern Michigan weather, there were numerous letter correspondences between October 1936 to March 1937 in which various case workers were unable to travel to Mackinac Island. The last letter sent in regard to institutionalizing Charlotte was from the school social worker, Olive Gwinn, to Cecil Brown of the MCAS on April 16, 1937.¹³¹ She expressed her uncertainty in achieving the institution of Charlotte to MHTS and this was the last letter sent in regard to the matter. As Charlotte was nearing her seventeenth birthday in May 1937, it seems as though she was considered close to the age of adulthood and her case was not considered as an urgent priority. Additionally, the rural location of the Cadreau family home helped to seclude Charlotte away from governmental case workers and physically did not allow for them to cross Lake Huron to Mackinac Island during the harsh winter months. The extended Cadreau family had an established plan of protection for Charlotte in which she went to live in St. Ignace with her older sister Rita. Despite the four-year pursuit to separate Charlotte from her family and institutionalize her at the MHTS in Lapeer, she was able to remain in the Anishinaabeg community of Harrisonville on Mackinac Island,

¹³⁰ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 1 July 2016.

¹³¹ Gwinn, Olive. Letter to Cecil Brown. 16 April 1937. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Student Case Files, 1912-1946 (Series 1 of 2).

but her experiences at MPIIBS and with the MCAS system continued to impact her life and future generations of family members. This is evident in that Charlotte sent two of her daughters, my grandma Phyllis and great aunt Jeannie, to boarding school at the Holy Childhood School of Jesus in Harbor Springs, Michigan in addition to two of her grandchildren, my second cousins Alex Joe and Kenny.

The influence and interruption of Native American child-rearing practices in Michigan continued well into the 1960's, 1970's and even 1980's. Odawa Native Paul Raphael was one of nine children who were sent to attend Holy Childhood. He stated that his mother had believed that by sending her children to boarding school, they would all stay together as family rather than be separated within the foster care system. "I asked my mom afterwards, why did I have to go? She told me that at that time, in the early 1960s, they were coming through Peshawbestown¹³² and taking kids away from parents. Pretty much all the houses didn't have running water or electricity. They didn't consider them fit to live in, so they'd put all the kids in boarding school."¹³³ Despite hearing stories and concerns from their children about the trauma and abuse experienced at boarding school, Sandy Arnold felt that the majority of the parents on Mackinac Island didn't believe the accusations or consciously did not want to believe them. "A lot of the parents were alcoholics on the island, and I'm not sure they even cared what was going on. But all of

¹³² Peshawbestown, Michigan is located on the reservation lands of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians in the lower peninsula. It is located 20 miles north of Traverse City on the Leelanau Peninsula.

¹³³ "The Legacy of Holy Childhood." *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

the kids—the boys and girls both—just hated the nuns.”¹³⁴ An article from the *Grand Rapids Press* in 1983 described the housemothers Sister Elsa and Sister Josepha as “surrogate mothers” who play with the children and discipline them when necessary. It is obvious that the Holy Childhood school was purposefully creating a separation between the children and their biological mothers in their traditional communities and was utilizing propaganda to distribute this message to a mainstream non-Indigenous audience. The nuns were praised for their selfless dedication to mothering the Native children of Holy Childhood. Sister Josepha stated that she had suffered emotionally through the process but did not consider the children to be problems. “I do try to teach self-discipline. That’s what they need in life, to stay out of trouble and to hold a job.”¹³⁵ The parenting practices of Native mothers was portrayed as distant and lacking affection, which may have been true for children whose parents also attended boarding school, but was once again an intentional decision to criticize Native American parenting practices. Sister Josepha stated that many children told her that they do not receive a lot of affection and attention at home. “One boy told me, ‘My momma is showing me more love now.’”¹³⁶

While Holy Childhood was a missionary institution with a religious objective, MPIIS was committed to producing proletarian service and trade workers within Michigan Indian communities. This was particularly detrimental to Michigan Ojibwe tribes as they had been successfully supporting themselves economically through logging, the fur trade and fish and wild berry sales, but the onset of treaties between

¹³⁴ “The Legacy of Holy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

¹³⁵ “Indian Boarding School Struggling to Survive.” *The Herald-Palladium*, 17 Nov. 1981, p. 7.

¹³⁶ “Indian Boarding School Struggling to Survive.” *The Herald-Palladium*, 17 Nov. 1981, p. 7.

multiple Michigan Indian communities and the federal government changed the landscape in which they were able to find work and support themselves independently. The 1836 Treaty of Washington led to the decision to allow Michigan to enter into statehood on January 26, 1837, which also interrupted the economic development and stability between the Anishinaabeg and European fur traders of the Great Lakes. The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School was created and developed from the Article 2 section of the 1855 Treaty of Washington, which outlined that the United States would pay \$80,000 for educational purposes in order to establish an allotment land system for Michigan Indians. The attack on traditional family structures, parenting practices and assimilative educational programs were purposefully created to remove Native American children from their homes and to indoctrinate them into the industrious mentality of the working class. The creation of boarding schools in Michigan was a way for the state and federal government to create an inequitable class system among Michigan Indian communities.

CHAPTER TWO

Among the numerous narratives of the Native American boarding school experience, there is a variation among personal stories and opinions of the overall impacts of the institution. Some students felt that they were given a sense of stability and routine in their lives, while others continue to battle the traumatic memories of their experiences all throughout adulthood. Schools such as the Holy Childhood School of Jesus and the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School functioned under a daily regimented schedule that included militant physical and emotional punishments. This inspired many students to attempt to run away from school, but many were not successful in reaching their family homes. There are a number of mysterious and unacknowledged student deaths that have recently become apparent in the discrepancy of death records from schools such as MPIIBS. Despite the daily challenges that these students dealt with in the boarding schools, there were moments of resilience, laughter and pranks that allowed these students to exercise a sense of authority and power over the clergy and school staff members.

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe members Sharon Hinmon and Paul Walker were placed in Holy Childhood with their other two siblings as young children. Hinmon stated that her and her siblings thought the experience of attending school in Harbor Springs would be like a Hollywood movie. "When we heard about (the school), we thought it was

going to be like a Shirley Temple movie," Hinmon said. "But when we got there, we saw the great big three-story building and there were no kids outside. And I knew that it wasn't going to be any good." Sharon and Paul attended Holy Childhood from 1967-1970 and it was difficult for them to experience being separated from their siblings. "I was not allowed to associate with my siblings, but sometimes we saw one another at meals," Hinmon said. It seems as though it was common for each sibling to have conflicting experiences during their time at Holy Childhood. Hinmon experienced intense feelings of abandonment and fear, while her younger sister appears to have been unaffected by the trauma that occurred during their schooling. "People say that I should just get over it, but it's something that's always with you," Hinmon said. "When I talk to my one sister about it, I can see that the school didn't have that much of an impact on her."¹³⁷ Yvonne Walker Keshick also remembers driving up to Holy Childhood with her father and four siblings who each had a small cardboard box in place of a suitcase. She said that the nuns appeared to be sweet and nice in front of her father, but once his car drove away, they took on an entirely different persona.

My dad parked the car. 'This is school. You kids be good.' Another car pulled up, beer cans fell out, a cardboard box flew out, and a boy tumbled out of the car. The car drove off. My dad went up to the school and rang the doorbell. Nuns came to the door. Kids were peeking around the corner. All you could smell was homemade bread. The nuns said to my dad, 'We'll take good care of your kids.' She was really nice, but as soon as dad left, the door barely closed and she yelled, 'Now get to where you belong, heathens!'¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Ecker, Patricia. "Siblings Share Traumatic Childhood Boarding School Past." *The Morning Sun*, 4 June 2009, www.themorningsun.com/20090604/siblings-share-traumatic-childhood-boarding-school-past.

¹³⁸ "The Legacy of Holy Childhood." *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

Don Portman described his experience at Holy Childhood as positive and that it brought him comfort during a difficult time in his life. In 1943, Portman's father brought him to Harbor Springs from Cheboygan, Michigan and did not understand why he was being sent away to school. He did not have any contact with family for the next two and a half years and since no one appeared to pick him up at the end of the school year, he stayed on campus during the summer and continued to sleep in the dormitories. While many students had a negative relationship with the nuns at Holy Childhood, Portman was thankful for their guidance and hospitality. "The nuns took me in, and they gave me a bed to sleep on, food, clothes, education and most of all they gave me religion. There was some hard time dealing with the fact that nobody came back for me when everybody went home, so a lot of faith, a lot of prayer. The nuns always took care of me well," Portman said.¹³⁹ Holy Childhood was staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, which was an international group of Catholic nuns who were dedicated to providing school for underprivileged children. They slept in tiny bedrooms with a small single window and woke up at 3:30 am each day to begin care for over 200 children. Although Portman reported positive experiences with the nuns at Holy Childhood, a number of former students describe feeling scared and afraid of the clergy staff. Minnie Wabanimkee said that while she attended Holy Childhood, she was forced to copy from a pre-written letter when she wanted to send her parents a message. She felt as though she could not express

¹³⁹ Parsons, Emmy. "A Thousand Whispers!: Historic Holy Childhood School to Be Razed." *The Record Eagle*, 28 June 2007, www.record-eagle.com/archives/a-thousand-whispers-historic-holy-childhood-school-to-be-razed/article_bf6eccd9-286f-5ef4-82c8-6b5535e87846.html.

her true feelings in her letters and she suspected that the nuns were censoring each students' mail correspondence with their families.¹⁴⁰

My cousin Kenny said that each day at Holy Childhood started at 6:00 am in which all of the kids were up before sunrise to start on their daily chores. Each child was expected to make their bed, which were small cots all lined up in a row. Alex Joe stated that he often made Kenny's bed for him since he was much younger and smaller than the other boys. "My routine would be that I would get up, make my bed, make my brother's bed. They had a little shelf on the wall with numbers and that is where your underwear hung and your little cup with a toothbrush and toothpaste. Then you went and brushed your teeth."¹⁴¹ After the day school students arrived, who were local children that attended class but did not sleep in the dormitories, Alex Joe said that class started around 9:00 or 9:30 am and ended around 2:30 or 3pm in the afternoon. After classes concluded, the students headed back to the dormitory for a snack and then supper. According to Alex Joe, the school served mostly food that had been donated from the community which included venison, bear meat, apples and carrots. Despite the abundance of food, Alex Joe and Kenny both agreed that it always did not look very appealing or taste all that great. "They had this mash that they fed us. I don't know what it was, but that stuff was nasty. It looked like maggots. I mean it was thick, it looked like a pile of maggots," Kenny said¹⁴². The nuns would threaten to punish students who did not finish their meal and Alex Joe said that many children utilized a method of placing uneaten food in their empty milk

¹⁴⁰ "The Legacy of Holy Childhood." *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

¹⁴¹ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁴² Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

carton. “If there was something you didn’t like and you didn’t eat, you would get in trouble. You [speaking to Kenny] would just sit there and sit there. And wouldn’t eat it. So I would take it and put it in my milk carton. And I’d also put mine in my milk carton and fill that baby up. Other kids would say, hurry put it in your milk carton, she’s not looking.”¹⁴³ Kenny remembers that each nun at Holy Childhood wore a habit and that he often thought they looked like penguins.

While Alex Joe’s experiences at Holy Childhood were extremely negative, Kenny had a different perspective while describing his time at the school. He said that Sister Ann, who served as the head nun, was very nice and kind to him. He often did not remember the violent episodes of abuse that occurred between the nuns and students and became agitated after his brother shared his stories and experiences. I’m not sure if Kenny truly does not remember his time at Holy Childhood due to his young age or whether he is attempting to block out this specific time in his life. Alex Joe recalled a time when he received a beating and had to spend the day in a dark potato cellar after helping Kenny make his bed in the morning.

Because I made my brother’s bed, he couldn’t make it in the morning and grandma sent us these transistor radios and I usually tucked mine under the seam [of the bed] so if someone was looking for it, they couldn’t steal it. I didn’t tell Ken where it was and when we were packing to go, he couldn’t find it, so I knew he was going to get it. I went it got it and made his bed and said, here is his radio. She [the nun] said, ‘you have been making his bed all along, haven’t you?’ And I said, ‘yup. Because he can’t.’ I sure got it. I spent days in the potato cellar.¹⁴⁴

Alex Joe said that the nun grabbed a large piece of driftwood with a huge knot, threw him onto the bed and began hitting him with it. “They pulled me across that bed and I got ten

¹⁴³ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁴⁴ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

whacks. I got so many whacks that I almost passed out. She wasn't just hitting my ass either, she was on my legs."¹⁴⁵ As Alex Joe was describing the difficulty in making Kenny's bed, which had a heavy mattress and was harder to lift for military corners, my mom and Aunt Dawn in unison looked at one another and said, "Mom taught us to make our bed that same way!"¹⁴⁶ Aunt Barb also agreed that her mom enforced military corners when making the bed as well. Alex Joe said that the nuns expected everyone's bed to be made perfectly. "You had to have it so tight that you could bounce something off it. You can't expect a little boy to do that. I'm four years older than Kenny and I was about nine or ten, so he's a lot younger than me. And of course I'm going to help my little brother."¹⁴⁷

Not only did Alex Joe help Kenny with making his bed, he also made sure to help him with his assigned chores for the day. Alex Joe said that his job was to mop the steps, while Kenny was to clean the bathroom floors. Unfortunately, Kenny also had the chore of washing underwear for all of the boys. "I always got stuck washing dirty underwear in a bucket with soap. Yeah everyone's dirty underwear, that was gross."¹⁴⁸ All of the kids were expected to wash their underwear clean each night and the nuns utilized this activity to publicly embarrass the students who may have had an accident or visible stains.

They had a big sink that was almost like a trough and we all would go over and then have to show the nun our underwear. She would have to see if there was any stains or skidmarks. If you had skidmarks, you were given a bar of soap and you had to go over to the sink to scrub. That was so embarrassing, but you did it, you

¹⁴⁵ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁴⁶ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁴⁷ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁴⁸ Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

know? I'd help my brother even do that. And we'd ring 'em out and we'd be ready to go. We did it because if you didn't, you would get a whoopin.¹⁴⁹

Alex Joe recalled a particular moment when Kenny was extremely ill and he had to finish mopping the bathroom floors for him. He said that Kenny had turned pale and was heavily vomiting, so he told him to sit down in one of the stalls while he finished. Despite helping out his sick little brother, Alex Joe was punished for doing Kenny's chores. "Just as I was getting done, Sister Roberta came in and said, 'give him back that mop'. I said, 'he's sick' and she said 'give him back the mop.' So I gave him the mop and he started doing it. Next thing I know, BAM and he's passed out on the floor."¹⁵⁰ After Alex Joe finished describing this story, Kenny was adamant that he remembered it happening differently.

I remember that a little different. Someone stuffed some frickin underwear in the toilet and I was sick and laying in bed, right? So they called us all into the bathroom because someone stuffed their dirty underwear in the toilet and I was sicker than a dog laying in my bed all day. And I went in there to listen to their spiel about someone sticking their underwear in the toilet and that's when I passed out. And then right around that time is when you went for an appendix operation too.¹⁵¹

As the older sibling, Alex Joe kept repeating he remembered exactly what happened and that Kenny was too little to remember. This began to create a large tension in the room and Kenny eventually left and said that he did not want to talk about Holy Childhood anymore. It was as though he was upset with Alex Joe and acted as though he was telling lies. Alex Joe was confident in his memories and said that he remembered everything very well. The appendix operation that Alex Joe underwent happened around the same

¹⁴⁹ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁵⁰ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁵¹ Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

time that a number of cousins ran away from Holy Childhood. Alex Joe said that he was upset that he missed his chance to run away, but after the children were found walking the shoreline and brought back to be violently punished, he was glad that his appendix rupture saved him from another beating. The runaway boys were brought on stage in the school's auditorium and were forced to endure a beating in front of the entire school.

“They took the razor strap, you know the kind that you use to sharpen your knives with the metal on it, and beat them three boys on their backs and asses to see which ones would cry first. Dave would not cry and they kept hitting him harder.”¹⁵² Kenny acknowledged that he remembered this public beating and he assumed that it was a lesson in scaring students towards better behavior. “I remember that. It wasn't for entertainment. It was like, guess what, if you do that, you are going to get this. It was a lesson.”¹⁵³ Even as a child, Alex Joe understood that the public beating of his cousins was a way to place fear in the minds of the other students. “They used it as a way to scare you. But that isn't a way to treat somebody, that ain't a lesson.”¹⁵⁴

A number of children attempted to run away from Holy Childhood over the years and one particular attempt in February 1940 ended in tragedy. David Devernay and Donald Douglas, both thirteen years old, left school during a harsh Northern Michigan winter in an effort to reach their home in Munising, which is over 150 miles away from Harbor Springs. While Donald survived the journey, David unfortunately was found frozen to death near Sturgeon Bay. According to an article in the Battle Creek Enquirer,

¹⁵² Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁵³ Cassibo, Kenneth. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁵⁴ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

Donald stated that David asked him to locate help while he stopped to rest. “David says to me,” Donald said, “I’m tired. I want to go to sleep. You just let me rest here and go on and get help.”¹⁵⁵ Yvonne Keshick, a member of the Little Traverse Bay Band and attended Holy Childhood for eight years, said that she has heard multiple stories about students attempting to runaway from Harbor Springs. In the 1960s, a group of girls set out in their pajamas one night, but were found and brought back to school. The nuns and priest took turns beating them over the next several days with a horse whip. A woman from Cross Village described a similar situation happening to her husband, who ran away from Holy Childhood over three times during the 1950s. She stated that the priest forced him to strip naked and horsewhipped him in front of the other students.¹⁵⁶

There were also hundreds of runaway cases at the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School. Dr. Sarah Surface-Evans states that between 1892 to 1925, at least thirty-five cases of runaway students, who were predominantly male, were documented in the local newspapers.¹⁵⁷ A young man named Floyd left MPIIBS’ campus and hopped on a train headed north to Charlevoix. Lloyd stated that he was only nine or ten years old at the time and he wanted to get back home to help his father with fishing and gathering mushrooms.¹⁵⁸ While running from school was a way in which students

¹⁵⁵ “2 Boys Run Away From School; One Frozen to Death.” *Battle Creek Enquirer*, 19 Feb. 1940, p. 14.

¹⁵⁶ Fox, Emily. “Native American Boarding Schools Have Nearly Killed Michigan's Native Language.” *Michigan Radio*, 28 Sept. 2015, www.michiganradio.org/post/native-american-boarding-schools-have-nearly-killed-michigans-native-language.

¹⁵⁷ Surface-Evans, Sarah L. “A Landscape of Assimilation and Resistance: The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School.” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2016, pp. 574–588.

¹⁵⁸ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance - Keynote Address: Veronica Passfield, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 Aug 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmt2Z6wPI08>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

could physically escape the confines of boarding school, they also found ways to be secretly resistant on school grounds. Elders who were interviewed during the 1991 Mount Pleasant Indian School Reunion shared stories about children meeting in the basement of the dormitories to pass around a stick that served as a ceremonial pipe. Students would trade buttons and marbles as a form of currency to participate in the ceremonies. Dr. Surface-Evans stated that buttons were found all over the MPIIBS campus during her field school research project with Central Michigan University. Other items of currency or contraband were also found hidden in the foundations of the gazebo, which included buttons, ceramic plates that had been made into tools and stones that were carved into animal effigies. Dr. Surface-Evans believes that the gazebo was used as a place to safely and discreetly store these items away from school staff and administrators.¹⁵⁹

Moments of resistance at MPIIBS and Holy Childhood also consisted of playful laughter during chores and vengefulness towards the school staff. Josephine went to MPIIBS when she was around ten years old and one of her chores was to scrub the floors. She said that she was forced to wash the floors by hand with a large wet rag. After ringing out the dirty rag, Josephine said that students would smack at each other with the rags and one time a student accidentally hit a matron. “That bucket seemed like it was so big, and we had to ring out a big rag. We’d take that old wet rag and snap it at each other. One time we got one of the teachers smacked just right and wow did she ever scream. She didn’t expect that of course but she was mad.” Another MPIIBS student named Dorothy described an incident when a matron’s underwear fell down in front of all the

¹⁵⁹ Surface-Evans, Sarah. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

young children, which they thought was absolutely hilarious. “The matron was getting ready to walk up the stairs and darned if her underpants did fall down. Us kids just laughed and laughed I’ll never forget that.”¹⁶⁰ These were not only moments that provided a humorous release from an abusive and controlling environment but allowed an opportunity for students to exert a sense of authority and power.

According to my cousin Alex Joe, many of the children attending Holy Childhood from Mackinac Island had quite the reputation and were known to cause trouble with the school clergy. “We ganged up over there so much we could have run it. We probably could have run it. We pretty much knew everybody. They tried to split the island kids up. They put the Bazinaws [our cousins] in another dorm, they didn’t want us together.” Alex Joe said one of his younger cousins, Dave Bazinaw, often picked fights with him back home on Mackinac Island, but while they were both attending Holy Childhood, they put aside any differences and joined together in order to survive the harsh environment. “Dave Bazinaw was younger than me and was a terror just like me. We grew up in the same village and in the summer we would rock fight against each other. And in the winter, we were friends at Holy Childhood and we would be against the other people.” Despite the separation of girls and boys, the female students were also known to participate in physical altercations with the nuns that lived in their dormitory. “Yup the

¹⁶⁰ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance - Keynote Address: Veronica Passfield, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 Aug 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmt2Z6wPI08>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

girls were separated, and they got some of it too. Some of the girls were kicked out when they got older for beating up Sister Naomi, some of the island girls.”¹⁶¹

The school staff and clergy members at both MPIIBS and Holy Childhood exercised physical and emotional punishments towards students that included name calling, slapping, punching, being forced to eat or withholding food and extreme cleaning duties. During her keynote address for the 2012 “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” event, Dr. Suzanne Cross shared that her mother described a number of horrific forms of punishment that she endured at MPIIBS including kneeling on uncooked rice on a cement floor, being beaten with a belt and being locked in both a dark closet and in a wooden box.¹⁶² Additionally, at the 2013 “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” event, Veronica Passfield shared the story of an elder named Dorothy who described kneeling on a scrub brush for over an hour as punishment for running on the beds in the girls dormitory.¹⁶³ Minnie Wabanimkee spent her time at Holy Childhood trying to be as “quiet as a mouse.” She was too afraid to speak up and ask for things such as additional blankets for her bed at night during the cold winter nights. After months of shivering in the cold, Minnie ended up with pneumonia and required hospitalization.¹⁶⁴ Another young student who had a bedwetting problem was publicly humiliated in front of her peers and was physically forced to smell her own urine. “They’d put the sheet over my head where the

¹⁶¹ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

¹⁶² Keynote Address: Dr. Suzanne Cross, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (6 July 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHSzms9t9rQ>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

¹⁶³ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance - Keynote Address: Veronica Passfield, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 Aug 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmt2Z6wPl08>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

¹⁶⁴ “The Legacy of Holy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

pee was. Then I'd have to stand out in the sun with the sheet over my head while the girls laughed at me."¹⁶⁵ Sharon Hinmon also expressed that many students at Holy Childhood were hit and humiliated for bedwetting, which often led to the punishment of cleaning toilets with one's bare hands.¹⁶⁶

In addition to the physical abuse that many children endured at Holy Childhood and MPIIBS, the nuns and other school staff left lifelong emotional and psychological impacts on students with the use of cruel words. Sharon Hinmon stated that she always felt the nuns were trying to "instill fear and get into [their] heads" while attending school in Harbor Springs.¹⁶⁷ Yvonne Keshick, a member of the Little Traverse Bay Band and former Holy Childhood student, was often told by the nuns that she would never amount to anything in her life and that she would just end up pregnant. Paul Raphael said that the psychological beating bestowed by the nuns left him feeling low and depressed. "They used to call us worthless, stoic Indians. We wouldn't amount to anything. Our parents are worthless, we were worthless. That's why we were there. To get a proper upbringing."¹⁶⁸ Keshick also felt that students who were more phenotypically "Native" appearing experienced more abusive treatment from the nuns. "The darker you were, the worse you were treated. They showed preference, a direct preference to lighter-complected kids." Keshick stated that she experienced abuse almost every single day during her time in

¹⁶⁵ "The Legacy of Holy Childhood." *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

¹⁶⁶ Ecker, Patricia. "Siblings Share Traumatic Childhood Boarding School Past." *The Morning Sun*, 4 June 2009, www.themorningsun.com/20090604/siblings-share-traumatic-childhood-boarding-school-past.

¹⁶⁷ Ecker, Patricia. "Siblings Share Traumatic Childhood Boarding School Past." *The Morning Sun*, 4 June 2009, www.themorningsun.com/20090604/siblings-share-traumatic-childhood-boarding-school-past.

¹⁶⁸ "The Legacy of Holy Childhood." *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

Harbor Springs. She said that if she got a math problem wrong, the nun would grab her head and use her face to erase the math problems from the chalkboard. “I have less hair on this side of my head because the nun was right-handed, so she would reach out and grab me on the left side of my head and drag me around, and then use my face and head as the dust eraser.”¹⁶⁹ Paul Raphael once saw a nun smack another student so hard with a dusting broom that she fell off her chair and he was forced to kneel on the stairway all night long. “It was cold, but the kneeling was the hardest part of it. We tried to sit down, and she came out and yelled at us.” Paul also stated that his third-grade teacher at Holy Childhood was exceptionally cruel. She would beat students with the edge of a ruler if they didn’t know the answer to a question. “She just kept slapping and slapping your hand if you couldn’t come up with the answer. But if you didn’t know it, you didn’t know it.”¹⁷⁰

While students were often punished for acting out in characteristically childlike behavior, they were also susceptible to receiving punishment for the habitual practice of speaking in their Indigenous language. Veronica Passfield interviewed an elder named Floyd, a Little Traverse Bay Band member who attended MPIIBS and witnessed the violent death of a schoolmate who was beaten for refusing to speak English in the classroom. “He said that the teacher went to the corner of the classroom and got this big pole that had a hook on it and you can see on these tall windows they used the hook to

¹⁶⁹ Fox, Emily. “Native American Boarding Schools Have Nearly Killed Michigan's Native Language.” *Michigan Radio*, 28 Sept. 2015, www.michiganradio.org/post/native-american-boarding-schools-have-nearly-killed-michigans-native-language.

¹⁷⁰ “The Legacy of Holy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 3 Aug. 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3870-the-legacy-of-holy-childhood/.

pull the mats down and to pull the shades down in the classroom. And he said that the teacher beat that child to death in front of the class and that they buried that child that day.” And while Floyd did not experience the same physical harm, the act of witnessing such a horrific event has long lasting implications on the young minds of children.

Veronica Passfield stated that she felt this particular moment influenced Floyd’s decision to run away from school and head back home. “That sure gave a strong message to all the kids in that classroom. We know from trauma and that kind of trauma and abuse that even if you’re not the one that’s getting hit you get the idea about how you better behave. I believe that is why Floyd went home.”¹⁷¹

Since the first annual “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” event in 2012, the 235 names of students who passed away while attending MPIIBS are formally acknowledged by being read out loud and followed with the sound of the drum for each name. MPIIBS only reported five student deaths over the forty-one years that the school was operating, but the Zibiiwing Cultural Center in Mount Pleasant has discovered that nearly 225 deaths were not reported. The first mention of death at MPIIBS appears in the 1917 Superintendent Report in which three deaths were recorded. While two of the deaths were caused by the illnesses pulmonary tuberculosis and peritonitis, the third death was classified as accidental: a boy was collecting beech nuts from a tree fell to the ground, and died instantly from a fracture to the skull.¹⁷² The 2016 Keynote Speaker for

¹⁷¹ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance - Keynote Address: Veronica Passfield, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 Aug 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmt2Z6wPl08>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

¹⁷² Cochran, Robert A. 1917 Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Superintendent Report to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record

the “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” event, Dr. William Cross, shared that his grandmother’s younger brother died after a year of attending MPIIBS and many questions surrounding his death and the location of his body are still unanswered. “In March of 1897, just four years after the first building was completed, my grandmother’s younger brother, who was only eight years old at the time, walked through the doors. One year later he was dead. We don’t know how that happened and like many other children who died behind these walls, we don’t know what happened to [his body]”¹⁷³ The discrepancies in death records from MPIIBS created concern among the SCIT MPIIBS Committee and the tribe released a press release in 2011 in search of information on students who were believed to have died during their time in Mount Pleasant.¹⁷⁴ A long list of names was provided and unknowingly, my family realized that my great-aunt Eva May Chapman was listed as having died at school in 1921. No one in my family had realized Eva May had passed away while attending MPIIBS since she is buried in the family plot on Mackinac Island. After obtaining Eva May’s death certificate, I learn that she passed away on March 15, 1921 at the age of fifteen from encephalitis lethargica, which is often described as “the sleepy sickness” or inflammation of the brain. The cause of this disease is still unknown, but many researchers speculate that it may have

Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Administrative Records of the Superintendent, 1915-1933.

¹⁷³ "HONORING, HEALING & REMEMBERING" Afternoon Guest Speakers, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2016) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPxB8PH0Shs>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

¹⁷⁴ “Information on Indian Boarding School Attendees in Michigan Sought.” *Indian Country Today*, 18 Oct. 2011, newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/information-on-indian-boarding-school-attendees-in-michigan-sought-7b8aaS-300-mMi85r-nRPQ/.

developed as an acute virus from the 1919 influenza epidemic.¹⁷⁵ Patients diagnosed with encephalitis lethargica experienced sleepiness, ocular motility and fever while also presenting flu-like symptoms such as shivering, headache, vomiting and vertigo. The largest number of cases occurred during 1920-1924, which is when Eva May would have contracted the disease. There is still no evidence that encephalitis lethargica is contagious, but many continue to question how the disease is transmitted.¹⁷⁶ It would not be surprising if this disease was contagious and spread among Native students during the influenza epidemic and it seems as though the illness was at its highest in numbers at Mt. Pleasant during the 1920s. According to the MPIIBS 1920 Superintendent Report, there was considerable sickness among the students with 235 confirmed cases of influenza. Also as a result of the influenza outbreak, there was an increase in cases of whooping cough, scarlet fever and measles. The student enrollment in 1920 was 364 students, which means that nearly two-thirds of the student population were sick.¹⁷⁷ While Eva May was listed as having attended MPIIBS in the 1920 Superintendent Report (which was the first of the school's superintendent reports to list out all of the pupil names for each year) her death was not mentioned in the 1921 Superintendent Report. It seems suspicious for the institution to not report student deaths and after Veronica Passfield attempted to locate the student files of deceased students, she found that many of them were missing. My great-aunt Eva May's student file is one of the missing archival

¹⁷⁵ Easton, Ava. "Encephalitis Lethargica," *Encephalitis Society: The Brain Inflammation Charity*, Apr. 2014, www.encephalitis.info/encephalitis-lethargica.

¹⁷⁶ Hoffman, Leslie A., and Joel A. Vilensky. "Encephalitis Lethargica: 100 Years after the Epidemic." *Brain: A Journal of Neurology*, vol. 140, no. 8, Aug. 2017, pp. 2246–2251.

¹⁷⁷ Mount Pleasant Superintendent Annual Reports, 1920; Indigenous Digital Archive; <https://omeka.dlcs-ida.org/s/ida/iiif/manifest/1600/5aa7297a71588>

documents. “I went to the archives with the list we had last year of the 150 kids who they had identified had died at this school. Two of them had student files. The other 148 kids, their student files are gone.”¹⁷⁸

The SCIT MPIIBS Committee began to discover the discrepancy in death records after unsuccessful attempts to locate burial locations for many of the deceased students. Prior to the State of Michigan gaining ownership of the MPIIBS grounds as part of the Michigan Department of Mental Health Services, locals throughout the community reported seeing little white crosses in the woods north of the campus.¹⁷⁹ Without record of where each child was buried, the SCIT MPIIBS Committee has hypothesized that after the children would pass away, they were buried in a mass burial. There are currently over 200 missing burial plots associated with children who died while attending MPIIBS.¹⁸⁰ During the tour of the MPIIBS campus in June 2016, Craig Garavette said that during the excavation of the school grounds the researchers found traces of steak bones under the administration building. This discovery led many to believe that the school administrators and public officials were eating extravagant foods while many students perished due to malnutrition. “Administration building is where the head person of the boarding school would have stayed. During the excavation, researchers found traces of steak bones, which

¹⁷⁸ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance - Keynote Address: Veronica Passfield, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 Aug 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmt2Z6wPI08>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

¹⁷⁹ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

¹⁸⁰ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance – History of Acquiring the Boarding School Grounds, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 August 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0WC9HTslac&feature=youtu.be>. Accessed: October 22, 2018.

shows that they ate a lot better than the students. Many of the students perished there due to malnutrition. Many of the death certificates stated that they died of consumption.”¹⁸¹

The physical and emotional abuse of students at both MPIIBS and Holy Childhood often extended to sexual violence and misconduct. Warren Petoskey, an Odawa and Lakota elder, had been told by his relatives who attend MPIIBS that the administration often did not believe the complaints of young girls who said they were being raped by a groundskeeper. “The young girls talked about this man, who used to be a maintenance man on grounds, that at night he would go through the girl’s dorms and rape these girls. And they would go up to the administrative office to complain and they would say it’s just your imagination because you are at the age where you are passing through puberty.” Petoskey’s aunt was a victim of sexual abuse during her time at MPIIBS and it continued to affect her life into adulthood and beyond. “My older auntie was one of the victims of that and she lived a large part of her life as a prostitute because she learned at the boarding school that she could gain things through sexual favors.”¹⁸² And while the narrative is often told of a male predator abusing young students, female school administrators were just as guilty of abusing both young girls and boys. Dr. Suzanne Cross’s mother shared that girls at MPIIBS were sexually abused by the dormitory matron in exchange for food. Food would be placed on the bed of a young girl in order to convey that it was her turn to spend the night with the matron. Dr. Cross’s mother stated that she would intentionally get into trouble to avoid the chance that she

¹⁸¹ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

¹⁸² Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan. *School Days Remembered: the Mt. Pleasant Indian School Reunion*. Michigan Council for the Humanities, 1991.

would be chosen by the matron that day. “She caused enough trouble during the day that would ensure she would be beaten with a belt. The matron would not want to spend the night with a girl who had just been beaten.”¹⁸³

The sexual abuse that occurred at Holy Childhood was highlighted in a special issue of the Grand Rapids Press in 1994, but it did not gain national media attention. Nine former students of Holy Childhood described the events of the sexual abuse towards altar boys that occurred with two nuns who were referred to as Sister Beth and Sister Fran (these were not their real names). Veronica Passfield states that many of the elders that she interviewed shared that the priests were consistently getting the young girls pregnant and killing the infants after they were born and hiding their remains in the school walls or in the furnace.¹⁸⁴ Fred Kiogima, a member of the Little Traverse Bay Band and former Holy Childhood student, stated that it was well known that some of the nuns were sexually abusing the young boys and they often were receiving advantages such as better food, additional clothing and less violent beatings. “It’s like the nuns had their certain key people that they would pick out. Those were the ones that -- the boys' group on our side of the house -- we knew who was either having sex with that nun or was making out with her or doing whatever. Because they got the best treatment. They got the best clothes. They got more food. They got longer TV hours. They didn’t get beat.”¹⁸⁵ A young man named Jerry (which is not his real name to protect his identity) was sent to Holy

¹⁸³ Keynote Address: Dr. Suzanne Cross, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (6 July 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHSzms9t9rQ>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

¹⁸⁴ Passfield, Veronica. Phone conversation. 30 August 2018.

¹⁸⁵ Fox, Emily. “Native American Boarding Schools Have Nearly Killed Michigan's Native Language.” *Michigan Radio*, 28 Sept. 2015, www.michiganradio.org/post/native-american-boarding-schools-have-nearly-killed-michigans-native-language.

Childhood when he was six years old after his mother was declared mentally unstable and hospitalized. Jerry's father felt that his four kids would have a better education at the Catholic-affiliated school in Harbor Springs. Once Jerry was around the age of twelve, his housemother Sister Fran, who was in her mid-twenties, kissed each boy on the forehead before bed at night and began to teach Jerry how to give her hickies all over her body. She also would kiss her favorite boy on the lips and these kisses would continue to get longer and longer for Jerry. Once during a class photo session, Jerry stated that Sister Fran enticed him into pleasuring her underneath her long black robes. This quickly turned into a continuous sexual affair and during his eighth-grade year, Jerry said the nun thought that she might be pregnant with his baby. "Once, she told me she was pregnant. I was in eighth grade and we were just sitting there next to each other on the couch. I talked with her. She started crying, telling me, I don't know what I'm going to do." Jerry stated that while the two had never had penetrative intercourse, it was possible she could have been pregnant from other sexual acts. "She'd get on top of me, we were both naked, and she'd move really fast over me. There was a lot of sex, oral sex — just me for her, not her for me. She just masturbated me with her hand."¹⁸⁶

Jerry was not afraid or embarrassed to talk about his relationship with the nun and he often would talk about it with the other boys in school. "I told everybody about it. All my young friends. They all knew. I told my parents, but nobody seemed to think much about it. My male friends, they'd say, 'Oh that's cool.'" He also once told a police officer about the inappropriate relationship after running away from school with a friend named

¹⁸⁶ "Unholy Childhood - Legacy - Alleged Abuses Haunt the Memories of Former Boarding School Students." *Grand Rapids Press - Perspective*, 17 July 1994, p. 1-3.

Danny. The officer did not seem to show concern in the fact that a grown woman was having a sexual relationship with a teen boy. “We hid out along a beach until it got dark. The cops picked us up. Danny said, tell them, tell them! So I did. They told us to shut up. They said, ‘They’re trying to do what’s best for you kids. We’re going to take you back. Don’t talk that crazy talk anymore.’ We got back. They beat us, they beat us real bad.” Jerry grew to feel that his abuser was truly in love with him, especially since the sexual encounters often protected him from daily violent beatings. He often dealt with feelings of guilt and shame as a result the forbidden relationship he was continuing with Sister Fran.

She told me she loved me, and I think she meant it. It didn’t seem like it was phony. We spent a lot of time talking. She told me about her life. She felt like it was her calling to be a nun. The sex, it felt good. But then she’d say, don’t talk about it to anybody or confess to it. We cared for each other. She’d say it was okay, but, at first, I felt I’d burn in hell, I’m going to die. But the more time we spent together, the more I felt like I would be okay. No bolt of lightning came and hit me in the head, or nothing like that.

While Jerry was home during the summer between seventh and eighth grade, Sister Fran began sending him love letters, which Jerry stated he had buried in a metal box near his mother’s home. Sister Fran continued to send Jerry love letters during the summer break over the years and when he was sixteen years old, both Sister Fran and Sister Beth came looking for him. Jerry said that when Sister Fran approached him, she was hysterically crying and begging Jerry to consider pursuing a relationship with her. This relationship did not lead to anything as Jerry was still considerably underage and Sister Fran’s intentions were not appropriate. While she left the convent in 1970, Jerry eventually discovered that she had abused his two brothers as well. Jerry stated that the verbal abuse

haunted him more than the sexual encounters. He said that the nuns were constantly telling the Native children that they were worthless and unloved. “They told me, ‘Your parents hate you and that’s why you’re here. Even your parents don’t want you.’ I think that hurt worse even than the beatings.”¹⁸⁷

Paul Raphael was a few years younger than Jerry and he remembers seeing Jerry kissing a nun on the couch while they were watching television. He said that she was also known to kiss many of the boys, which began with bedtime kisses and as the boys grew older, they would sneak them into their bedroom for the night and the boys would leave early in the morning. Raphael said that many of the boys were willing to submit to the nuns’ sexual desires since they would reward them with special privileges such as candy or letting them watch a movie at the theatre in downtown Harbor Springs. Many of these male students lost their virginities to nuns while attending Holy Childhood and it was common for a nun to entice a student to fondle her while sitting on the couch in the day room watching television. Jerry would often participate in engaging sexually with Sister Fran while other students were in the room. “They’d have day rooms, TV and games, and one big couch. Just he and me and the two sisters would sit on the couch, blankets on top of us. The other kids would sit in front of us four. They’d have nothing on under their robes and they’d say, ‘Turn around and watch TV.’” Another former student, Brian Anthony, also told the *Grand Rapids Press* that he often sat on the couch with one of the nuns and that at the age of twelve years old, he had sex “damn near every night” in the nun’s bedroom. The nuns were also known to approach the young boys in their beds at

¹⁸⁷ “Unholy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 29 June 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3760-unholy-childhood/.

night and according to Russell Menefee, one of the nuns would always walk into his dormitory after everyone was asleep and she would fondle him. David Burks was not sexually abused, but he witnessed many kisses between a fourth-grade boy named Timothy Quijas and a nun during the late 1970s/early 1980s. “Usually she’d kiss him when he was playing at recess and did something cute. You know how you see in the movies, they’ll kiss and close their eyes. It was that kind of a kiss. The nuns always were telling us, ‘Think of us as your mom away from your mom,’ and I thought, that was not a motherly kiss.” Timothy committed suicide at the age of thirteen and David always felt that the sexual abuse that Timothy experienced at Holy Childhood was a factor in his decision to end his life.¹⁸⁸

When I first began my journey in recovering my grandmother’s boarding school story, I submitted a genealogy request through Marquette University which holds all of the student files for Holy Childhood. The archivist, Mark Thiel, responded back and stated that although they were not able to locate my grandmother’s file, they did have her sister Gloria Cadreau on file. He was able to send a portion of the attendance records that listed my aunt Gloria Cadreau as a full-blooded Ojibwe who was enrolled at Holy Childhood on September 30, 1948 at the age of seven and attended until June 30, 1949. It is unclear how long my Aunt Jeannie and grandmother attended Holy Childhood as the archivist was only able to provide one example of an attendance record and could not provide me with all of my Aunt Jeannie’s school records. In an email correspondence, Thiel stated that “providing copies of these attendance records for any one individual is

¹⁸⁸ “Unholy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 29 June 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3760-unholy-childhood/.

problematic, since the information is dispersed among several pages, each of which contain information on many other students. But we will provide a sample page with one school year quarter. Then keep in mind that except for the dates, all the others are virtually identical.”¹⁸⁹ He additionally said that although he was unable to find my grandmother’s file, it did not mean she was not a student at Holy Childhood since the attendance records were created for a special institutional purpose and that they did not apply to all students.¹⁹⁰ I also knew that despite the lack of a student file, my grandmother had attended Holy Childhood with her sister Jeannie. After all, there was a photograph of her, my aunt and a number of other Mackinac Island Anishinaabeg children on the steps of the school dormitory.

Bay Mills tribal member Veronica Passfield also had incredible difficulties in obtaining any and all Holy Childhood student files and records for her dissertation research. In an email correspondence with Passfield, she described the Holy Childhood files as the “unholy grail.” “The Holy Childhood student files have been an absolute Holy Grail, literally. Or Unholy Grail. The archdiocese in Gaylord wouldn’t allow students to get their own files, let alone the files of other people.”¹⁹¹ Yvonne Keshick, the former records technician for the Little Traverse Band, also stated that it has been nearly impossible for former students to get their own personal files.¹⁹² Passfield believes that the Archdiocese of Gaylord became more protective of the Holy Childhood records once

¹⁸⁹ Theil, Mark. “Re: Genealogy Request.” Message to Melissa Beard. 23 June 2014. Email.

¹⁹⁰ Theil, Mark. “Re: Genealogy Request.” Message to Melissa Beard. 18 June 2014. Email.

¹⁹¹ Passfield, Veronica. “Re: Holy Childhood Research.” Message to Melissa Beard Jacob. 17 August 2018. Email.

¹⁹² “Unholy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 29 June 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3760-unholy-childhood/.

the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada began investigating residential school abuse in 2008. It was also around the same time that the school buildings in Harbor Springs were being destroyed and repurposed. Passfield believes that they wanted to eliminate all pieces of evidence, which included the buildings that these abuses occurred in.¹⁹³

I additionally reached out to the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians Department of Archives and Records directly to inquire if a direct descendent could obtain a family member's student file and the archivist Jordan Karlis stated that their archive was currently closed for research. "While our department does have some records from Holy Childhood, they contain sensitive information for our community members and are not available for research requests. Furthermore, due to legal issues our archive is currently closed for research. You could try to contact the Diocese directly—though that might be its own challenge."¹⁹⁴ I was frustrated by his response as I asked to get access to my grandmother's records as a family member and not a researcher. My mother also reached out to Karlis, but did not receive any response. I also contacted Colleen Medicine, the Cultural Repatriations Specialist from my tribe, and she also stated that the Little Traverse Bay Band Archival Department was currently closed, but even when it is open, the Holy Childhood records are sealed due to the sensitive information contained in them. She also expressed that the State of Michigan was currently in a litigation case. "Their whole department is currently closed due to litigation with the State of Michigan.

¹⁹³ Passfield, Veronica. Phone conversation. 30 August 2018.

¹⁹⁴ Karlis, Jordan. "Re: Harbor Springs Holy Childhood of Jesus School Student Records." Message to Melissa Beard Jacob. 3 January 2018.

The department will not open up until after the litigation case is closed out. Their staff assures me we may be able to discuss this in the future after litigation is over. I will be in touch in the future regarding this but as of now there is nothing that can be done to obtain those records.”¹⁹⁵ The Harbor Springs Area Historical Society had a gallery of images from Holy Childhood that were displayed for a few months online, but they were abruptly removed. I emailed Beth Sylak, a program staff member from the historical society, and she stated that the images were removed as many of the photographed individuals were still living and that they were part of a “donor restricted file”. “I believe the records you are talking about were removed because we realized some of the children/individuals in those images might still be living and we felt it wasn’t appropriate to display them online. Other photographs of Holy Childhood are part of a donor restricted file and were removed for that reason.”¹⁹⁶

It seems as though it would be easier for individuals and their families to receive student files through the archdiocese as Marquette University is an educational institution and must function under the specifications of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Ironically, FERPA does not apply to deceased individuals, but it was still impossible to get access to my grandmother's records due to the institutional policy of Marquette University, the Little Traverse Bay Band Archival Department and the Diocese of Gaylord. Although I was able to access my great-grandmother’s student files from Mount Pleasant at the National Archives in Chicago, a number of the MPIIBS

¹⁹⁵ Medicine, Colleen. “Re: Holy Childhood Records.” Message to Melissa Beard Jacob. 12 September 2018.

¹⁹⁶ Sylak, Beth. “Re: Holy Childhood Photo Collection.” Message to Melissa Beard Jacob. 27 October 2016.

committee members stated that they are still having difficulties in obtaining many of the records due to FERPA stipulations.¹⁹⁷ Despite institutional policies and restricting laws, the current investigation of the Catholic dioceses in Michigan will continue to influence the public access to these records. It was announced publicly on September 21, 2018 that the State of Michigan would be investigating allegations of sexual abuse and assault by Michigan Catholic dioceses and priests dating back to the 1950s. The investigation began in August 2018 and will examine seven Michigan Catholic dioceses including the Archdioceses of Detroit, Grand Rapids, Marquette, Gaylord, Lansing, Saginaw and Kalamazoo.¹⁹⁸ In October 2018, more than seventy police officers, special agents and government officials executed search warrants on all seven of the Catholic dioceses in Michigan. Attorney General Dana Nessel stated that Michigan is the first state to execute a search warrant on the Catholic Church in this way. "We did not depend on the dioceses to turn over documents which is what primarily happened in other states. Our team seized and is now continuing to review hundreds of thousands of pages of documents, including procedures for receiving and investigating allegations of abuse by the church." The Catholic Diocese of Gaylord created an online list of priests and deacons who had been "credibly accused" of sexually abusing a minor dating back to 1971. As of November 2018, the list featured ten clergy members. Eight of the priests are deceased, but the two

¹⁹⁷ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

¹⁹⁸ LeBlanc, Beth. "Michigan AG Opens Investigation into Priests Accused of Sexual Abuse." *The Detroit News*, 21 Sept. 2018, www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2018/09/21/schuetter-investigation-michigan-priests-sexual-abuse/1378827002/.

living priests, Ronald Gronowski and James Holtz, have been permanently removed from their clerical positions.¹⁹⁹

Law enforcement put out a call for tips when the investigation officially began in August and have received over 300 tips on alleged sexual misconduct within Michigan's seven Catholic dioceses. Victims are able to provide their tips through an online submission portal or the investigators' clergy abuse hotline. On February 21, 2019 Nessel also stated that it could take nearly two years to complete this investigation and that she estimates that over 1,000 sex abuse victims and crimes will be uncovered. The investigators have emphasized the need for collecting any and all reports of sexual abuse through the tip online portal and hotline. According to Nessel, "those who have been abused, no matter how long ago, deserve to be heard and their abusers brought to justice. Even if the abuse falls beyond the statute of limitations, their account can be useful in other prosecutions."²⁰⁰ Most recently, Michigan reformed its statute of limitations last summer after the case of Larry Nassar, the former Michigan State University sports doctor who was convicted of multiple accounts of sexual abuse. The new law allows victims who were sexually assaulted as minors to file criminal charges until their twenty-eighth birthday or up to fifteen years after the incident has occurred. The law had

¹⁹⁹ Hicks, Justin. "Michigan Catholic Diocese Publishes List of Priests Accused of Sexual Abuse." *MLive.com*, 15 Nov. 2018, www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2018/11/catholic_diocese_of_gaylord_li.html.

²⁰⁰ Waterman, Cole. "300 Catholic Sex-Abuse Claims Reported since State Investigation Began, Attorney General Nessel Says." *MLive*, 21 Feb. 2019, www.mlive.com/news/saginaw-bay-city/2019/02/300-catholic-sex-abuse-claims-reported-since-state-investigation-began-attorney-general-nessel-says.html.

previously only allowed a victim to report the crime until their twenty-first birthday or ten years after the incident.²⁰¹

Since the investigation began in August 2018, law enforcement and the Michigan Attorney General's office announced the charges of five men with twenty-one counts of criminal sexual conduct on May 24, 2019. These charges are the result of evidence found within records seized from the seven Michigan Catholic dioceses and the suspects include priests from the Lansing Diocese, Archdiocese of Detroit and the Kalamazoo Diocese. The victims in each of these cases range in age from five years old to twenty-six and the suspects may face up to fifteen-year sentences to life in prison. The investigators also discovered evidence leading to cases that unfortunately were either outside of the statute of limitations, involved priests who are dead or victims who are not comfortable in sharing their stories just yet. It is estimated that investigators have reviewed less than ten percent of the collected documents and that they have received over 450 phone calls through the tip line. Deputy Solicitor General Ann Sherman stated that the documents that were obtained from the dioceses in October 2008 revealed a number of disturbing cases of sexual abuse that often-included victim blaming rhetoric. She shared a statement written by a priest reflecting on a fellow priest's abusive behavior that stated "if someone drops an apple and the apple gets bruised, there are two sins; the first one belonging to the person who dropped the apple, and the second to the apple for getting bruised."²⁰² The

²⁰¹ Dias, Elizabeth. "Michigan Attorney General Announces First Arrests in Catholic Clergy Abuse Investigation." *The New York Times*, 24 May 2019, www.nytimes.com/2019/05/24/us/michigan-arrests-catholic-clergy-sex-abuse.html.

²⁰² Thompson, Carol. "Five Men Charged in Michigan Attorney General's Investigation of Catholic Church Abuse." *Lansing State Journal*, 24 May 2019,

dioceses were obviously documenting cases of sexual abuse, but it is clear that these crimes were not taken seriously or handled appropriately.

Although the allegations of sexual abuse that occurred at schools such as Holy Childhood were often dismissed until recently, it is incredibly important that the State of Michigan will be investigating claims of sexual abuse and assault that may have occurred within Michigan Catholic dioceses. Many are hopeful that this will be the start of reconciling the past and working towards an official apology from multiple clergy organizations and the United States federal government. Former students are also hopeful in that their school records will be more accessible following the conclusion of the investigation as there is a historical pattern in that most are unable to access their own personal records. The ability to gain access and possess these records may provide a sense of closure and healing for many boarding school survivors and their descendants.

CHAPTER THREE

Male and female students at the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School were both exploited through forced labor without pay, but it was particularly the young Anishinaabe women and girls who were targeted to perform essential institutional duties in addition to meeting the standards of the ideal “Victorian Womanhood.” The agenda of the federal Native American boarding school was to not only assimilate Anishinaabe children into mainstream Euro-American society, but to train and indoctrinate female students into subservience and false notions of appropriate and accepted femininity. This was done through extensive domestic labor training, exposure to specified education topics such as child rearing and gender expectations, and the control of their individual social growth through gendered learning spaces and controlled interactions with students of the opposite sex. They were exposed to many years of strenuous manual labor and were inevitably taught that they were unable to pursue employment outside of domestic and household-related work. These young women and girls were unknowingly forced into a position of servitude for an institution that did not value their labor, contributions or frankly, their lives. The education for Native girls in schools such as MPIIBS and Holy Childhood School of Jesus was centralized around restructuring traditional gender roles in order to reform the Native American household and overall community structure and practices.

One way that young Anishinaabe women and girls were taught the mechanics of domesticity was through the school's Domestic Science Cottage, which was a bungalow style home that was built by the exploitative labor of male students. This teaching home consisted of four rooms, pantry, bathroom and two bedrooms on the first floor and several closets and storerooms on the second floor. According to an article from the January 1914 issue of *The Indian School Journal*, six classes of girls were given instruction in the Domestic Science Cottage daily, which included lessons in preparing a kitchen and dining room, washing dishes, clearing and setting a table, how to sort and wash clothing, making beds, sweeping and dusting, personal cleanliness and table manners. Each month, a young woman was selected to serve as the domestic science "housekeeper", which meant that she essentially lived in the home and cared for all the daily housework. This role specifically encouraged the housekeeper to create doily and embroidery pieces to display throughout the cottage.²⁰³ The domestic science cottage also allowed for teachers and administrators to utilize the labor of students in order to raise funds for the school. The female students were encouraged to bake cookies, doughnuts, cakes, etc. to publicly sell and the earnings were used to buy dishes, silver, pictures, vases, glassware and porch furniture for the cottage.²⁰⁴ There was never any intention that the students would receive any money for their labor in producing baked goods or the profits from selling them. It has been documented that in the 1922-1923 academic year, a

²⁰³ Noire, Otilie M. "About Things Domestic: The Domestic Science Cottage at the Mt. Pleasant Indian School" *The Indian School Journal*, January 1914. The Indian School Journal, 1904 - 1926, National Archives, Record Group 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1793 - 1999.

²⁰⁴ Noire, Otilie M. "About Things Domestic: The Domestic Science Cottage at the Mt. Pleasant Indian School" *The Indian School Journal*, January 1914. The Indian School Journal, 1904 - 1926, National Archives, Record Group 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1793 - 1999.

total of \$2684 worth of goods were produced by female students working within the laundry department.²⁰⁵ Additionally, administrators would parade visiting state and federal officials through the Domestic Science Cottage in order to show them the adaptability and domestic reform that MPIIBS had instilled in their female students. The nature of the domestic science program at MPIIBS was not only a space in which the school received free labor from female students, it was also a place that functioned as a performance of the institution's overall objective in preparing Anishinaabe women for proletarian service and trade work.

The concept of domestic colonialism and its use of the family institution and domestication as a metaphor for the hierarchical categories of race, gender and class are discussed by Anne McClintock in her book *Imperial Leather*²⁰⁶. According to McClintock, the Victorian middle-class home was a space in which race, gender and class were re-evaluated and re-invented for the benefit of white imperial power. "The Victorian middle-class home became a space for the display of imperial spectacle and the reinvention of race, while the colonies – in particular Africa – became a theater for exhibiting the Victorian cult of domesticity and the reinvention of gender" (McClintock 34). McClintock saw spaces of domesticity as racialized and that spaces became colonized through domesticity (36). Additionally, Noelani Goodyear-Ka 'ōpua explores the three processes of domesticating in the article "Domesticating Hawaiians:

²⁰⁵ Surface-Evans, Sarah L. "A Landscape of Assimilation and Resistance: The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2016, pp. 574–588.

²⁰⁶ McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. Routledge, 1995.

Kamehameha Schools and the “Tender Violence” of Marriage.”²⁰⁷ Goodyear-Ka ‘ōpua recognizes three processes of domestication that Native Hawaiians experienced while attending boarding school in Hawaii. The first process includes the training of students in industrial vocations in order to create productive individuals for the benefit of white capitalists. Secondly, domestication is a feminizing project in which Native Hawaiians (particularly female students) unlearn traditional views of gender roles and expectations in order to be classified as valuable in a postmodern Eurocentric society. And lastly, domestication carries a political connotation in that it plays a role in the settler colonial narrative and the seizing of Indigenous lands. The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School practiced its own form of domestic colonialism through gendered vocational training, but also by utilizing a separate spheres ideology and literally separating male and female students using buildings, land and architecture. The landscape and campus of MPIIBS itself was strictly divided among its male and female occupants. According to Sarah Surface-Evans, all of the buildings north of the classroom were associated with masculine activities and all of the buildings south were associated with feminine activities. The boys’ area included the male vocational buildings, athletic fields, agricultural fields and a wooded lot, while the girls’ area included the laundry building, greenhouse, domestic science cottage and the hospital buildings. Surface-Evans states that the organization of space is incredibly inequitable as the male students had access to more than 300 acres of school grounds, while female students were restricted to

²⁰⁷ Goodyear-Kaopua, Noelani. “Domesticating Hawaiians: Kamehameha Schools and the ‘Tender Violence’ of Marriage.” *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education*, edited by Brenda J. Child and Brian Klopotek, SAR Press, 2014, pp. 16–47.

less than 20 acres. It is evident that the division of space at MPIIBS was reflective of the differential treatment that boys and girls received at Native American boarding schools. “This spatial distinction between male and female students (and even employees) was a symbolic representation of the subordinate role of females within Western society and yet another expression of patriarchal colonization” (Surface-Evans 583). According to MPIIBS oral history, male students had more physical freedom in that they were allowed to roam the wooded area near campus and frequently hunted and fished in nearby Mission Creek (Johnson 1991). It is no surprise that majority of the runaway students were males as they had access to the secluded areas of campus such as the woods in which it was easy to sneak away. Female students had to find other ways to rebel within the constraints of their gendered space.

Out of the many assigned tasks and chores that young Anishinaabe women and girls performed while attending the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School, it seems as though laundry duty was an area that created immense frustration for many female students. Not only were they washing the clothing of each and every student that attended MPIIBS, but according to the 1911 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the women and girls were “encouraged to wash for the employees using tubs and rubbing the clothes on wash boards.”²⁰⁸ The school was equipped with machinery to assist in washing clothing, but administrators felt it was important that the female students learn to use washboards because once they returned home to their tribal communities, they would not have access to modernized facilities. A MPIIBS student

²⁰⁸ Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, for the Year 1911. United States. Office of Indian Affairs, 1911, digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.AnnRep11.

from the Potawatomi Nation, Martha Shagonaby, physically expressed her dissatisfaction and attempted to burn down the laundry building on campus. She did not succeed in her first arson attempt, but according to the July 7, 1899 issue of the *Isabella County Enterprise*, she saturated rags with kerosene, lit them and threw the rags into a room on the upper floor of the girl's dormitory, which was completely destroyed within hours. When asked why she felt the need to start a fire, Martha stated "she was very sorry for it and didn't know why she did it. Says she didn't know what else to do."²⁰⁹ Unfortunately, Martha was sentenced to a reform school for girls in Adrian, Michigan to serve her charges of arson after MPIIBS refused to take her back as a student.²¹⁰ There is not much more known about Martha's story, but it seems as though both fires, particularly the one set in the laundry building, were a manifestation of Martha's anger and frustration towards the gendered division of labor that existed at MPIIBS. While male students were known to run away from school as an act of rebellion, Sarah Surface-Evans suggests that arson was utilized by desperate female students who were physically unable to escape due to the separated gender seclusion of women and girls. Additional fires were later documented at the school and appeared to be a recurrent issue.²¹¹

In the 1928 Meriam Report, which was a government funded project that examined the conditions of Native American boarding schools including MPIIBS, the report explicitly stated that the education provided to young Native American women

²⁰⁹ "Set Fire to School." *Isabella County Enterprise*, 7 July 1899.

²¹⁰ *Isabella County Enterprise*, August 4, 1899

²¹¹ Surface-Evans, Sarah L. "A Landscape of Assimilation and Resistance: The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2016, pp. 585.

was mainly focused on preparing them for homemaking rather than wage earning occupations. It was assumed in the early twentieth century that all young women would someday become housewives and that homemaking would be the most useful training they could receive.²¹² In addition, the Meriam Report overall suggested that Native Americans were only capable of doing the unskilled labor work that non-Native Americans were unwilling to do. There was definitely a gendered division in terms of labor expectations for female students, but male students were also receiving tailored vocational education to meet the labor needs of a growing industrialized America. The Native American race was described as “savage” and “backward” throughout the Meriam Report, which was said to have been attributed to the “unprogressive character of the women”. For many children of Native American boarding school survivors, a large part of their childhood was spent cleaning and learning how to be domestic. My mom and aunties stated that my grandmother was always focused on teaching them how to properly clean, wash laundry and the best bed-making practices. My mom emphasized that as a child she was expected to make her bed everyday with neat and tidy hospital corners. She always assumed that my grandmother just liked to see beds made that way, but didn’t correlate this practice with her boarding school experience until she became an adult. “Now looking back I realize Mom taught us how to make a bed with hospital corners because that was the way she was taught.”²¹³ In addition, my mom and her sisters were encouraged to pursue employment in any cleaning or domestic positions and her

²¹² The Problem of Indian Administration: Summary of Findings and Recommendations from the Report of a Survey Made at the Request of Honorable Hubert Wor, Secretary of the Interior, and Submitted to Him February 21, 1928. Institute for Government Research, 1928 p. 639

²¹³ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 1 July 2016.

first job was cleaning rooms at a local camping resort in Mullet Lake, Michigan. While my grandmother always encouraged her children to pursue a higher education, she continued to emphasize the importance of domestic work and keeping a clean home. Due to the continuous cycle of these practices being passed down generationally, it was no surprise that my grandmother learned this practice not only from boarding school, but from my great-grandmother, who also was taught the same expectations from her family and a boarding school education. The boarding school system was devised in order to continue generationally transmitting the notion that Native women should only be prepared to work and exist within the domestic sphere

In addition to an educational curriculum focused upon gendered labor training, Native American women and girls attending MPIIBS were immersed into comprehensive courses on child and infant care. For young girls, this training began early with tasks to care for baby dolls. It was widely assumed that Native American women were unfit to be mothers and the baby dolls were given to young girls as a way to “teach” them how to become an acceptable parent.²¹⁴ During the ground excavations of the female oriented spaces of the MPIIBS campus, Sarah Surface-Evans noted that her team discovered fragments of ceramic doll parts (583). Seminars were provided to young adult women in health-related topics such as hygiene and first aid and in the 1917 MPIIBS Superintendent Report detailed a lecture series called the Save the Baby Campaign, which was delivered to girls over the age of fourteen by the school nurse.²¹⁵ Beginning in

²¹⁴ Surface-Evans, Sarah. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

²¹⁵ Cochran, Robert A. 1917 Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Superintendent Report to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record

October 1917 and ending in May 1918, MPIIBS female students were required to complete courses detailing pregnancy, the care of children and infants including bathing, sleep schedules, and feeding, contagious diseases, and the sanitation of homes where infants reside. Before a young woman could graduate from MPIIBS, she was required to complete and present a layette, which is a set of clothing, linens, and the necessary toiletries for a newborn child.²¹⁶ The Children's Bureau designated the year 1918 as the "Children's Year", which was a national campaign created in order to encourage statewide governments to create child welfare programs and agencies. The campaign slogan was "Save 100,000 Babies" which referred to the overall focus of reducing the number of infant mortality rates.²¹⁷ This national focus on infant and child welfare influenced a number of Native American boarding school such as MPIIBS to facilitate educational programs on childrearing to young girls and women.

The Office of Indian Affairs also published a book in 1916 entitled *Indian Babies: How to Keep Them Well*, which essentially was created and distributed to Native American women as a way to dissuade them away from practicing traditional pregnancy and mothering ways. The publication claims that Native American babies are dying due to the poor practices of their mothers, which was another way to critique and interrupt Indigenous methods of motherhood and femininity. "It is a pity, therefore, that so many Indian baby lives have been lost because their mothers did not know how to keep them

Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Administrative Records of the Superintendent, 1915-1933.

²¹⁶ Annual Calendar. US Indian School Mt. Pleasant, Mich. 1917-1918.

²¹⁷ Centennial Series: The Children's Year, 1918-1919." *Children's Bureau Express*, cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?event=website.viewArticles&issueid=135&ionid=1&articleid=3495.

well. It is because so many Indian mothers follow wrong ideas in caring for their children that so many of them die” (3). The publication presented traditional childrearing practices such as long-term breastfeeding, birthing ceremonies and cradle boarding as examples of negative and abusive parenting choices. As women and mothers have the ability to bring life into the physical world and are a child’s first teacher, government officials and boarding school administrators knew that it was important to assimilate the mothers of the next generation of Native children. It is through the influence of mothers and children that Native American culture is either celebrated and shared with the family or withheld as a practice of survival or product of shame. While both male and female Native American boarding school students at MPIIBS and Holy Childhood were assimilated into expected gender roles and ideals, it was the women (who were expected to enter into marriage and motherhood) that would have the largest influence on intergenerational familial traditions, teachings and beliefs.

In addition to a critique of Indigenous motherhood and childrearing, Native American boarding schools such as MPIIBS and Holy Childhood created an overall attack on notions of Ojibwe womanhood, which included perceptions of accepted hairstyles, clothing, beauty standards and interactions with the opposite sex. The Department of the Interior published a book in 1928 on the problematic behaviors of Native American women entitled *The Social Heritage of the Indian Girl*²¹⁸. This book was published by the request of the Commissioner for Indian Affairs who felt that the problematic behaviors of Native American communities were due to the cultural

²¹⁸ *The Social Heritage of the Indian Girl*. Government Printing Office, 1916.

expectations of traditional Native women. Essentially, the Commissioner wanted to blame Indigenous culture rather than individual behavior for the perceived “backwardness” and “child-like nature” of Native American lifestyle choices. Native American women were viewed as silly, immoral and unclean and until they were completely reformed, the entire Native community could not be redeemed. “Stereotypes of Indian women were embedded in the minds of Euro-American educators and policymakers, and the perception that Indian women led particularly degraded lives was freely discussed at Indian service conferences and mentioned in official reports. Some reformers held the belief that only when women were reformed could the entire Indian race be uplifted from savagery” (Child 77). Native American boarding schools such as MPIIBS and Holy Childhood carefully supervised all of their students but were purposefully over observant of their female students. The schools exerted control over Native American women's bodies, their interactions with the opposite sex and the spaces in which they existed. School administrators and staff were more focused upon the physical appearance of the female students compared to male students and according to Tsianina Lomawaima, many schools required that girls and young women pass a daily inspection to ensure that they were wearing the proper undergarments (91). The inspections and constant surveillance became increasingly more invasive once girls reached the age of puberty. The school matrons, who were considered to be more appropriate and wholesome maternal figures for the young girls, kept extensive records of each girl’s menstrual cycle as a way to deter sexual promiscuity (Child 38). This was often done by placing each girls’ menstruation products visibly on a shelf or the matrons

would hand out supplies to menstruating girls in a public forum. (Lomawaima 91). According to Cutcha Risling Baldy, menstruation was once associated with power and strength in Indigenous cultures, but the influence of Western culture created a false notion of menstruation and coming-of-age practices as dirty and taboo. “Menstruation, therefore, became about controlling the body and making it one that ‘would not leak, smell, hurt, cause anxiety, appear unfashionable or lose efficiency.’ Menstrual taboos were part of enforcing order and obedience by treating these ‘sanitary’ practices as normal and natural for women, culture and society.”²¹⁹ In addition to monitoring each girl’s menstruation cycles, the female students who were considered both underweight and overweight were required to follow a special diet and to keep a record of their fluctuating weight.²²⁰ The overall fascination and focus on Native girls’ clothing, menstrual cycles and physicality are examples of the way that school administrators, staff and Euro-American society viewed Native American bodies as “savage” and “uncivilized”²²¹ The threat of premarital sex and illegitimate pregnancy was a consistent justification for the literal and spatial separation of male and female students at Native American boarding schools. According to David Wallace Adams, Native American children were thought to have no sense of morality or chastity (178). Boarding school administrators felt that Native boys and girls were not able to interact together in a

²¹⁹ Risling Baldy, Cutcha. *We Are Dancing for You: Native Feminisms and the Revitalization of Women's Coming-of-Age Ceremonies*. University of Washington Press, 2018. p. 101

²²⁰ Meriam, Lewis. *The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a Survey made at the Request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and Submitted to Him, February 21, 1928/Survey Staff: Lewis Meriam...[et al.]*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928 p. 619

²²¹ Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*. University of Nebraska Press, 1995 p. 82

wholesome way, so male and female relations were highly ritualized and emphasized heterosexual marriage as the overall objective of these interactions. The 1931 MPIIBS Superintendent Report described the construction of a new home economics building, which was not only built for female vocational training, but as a space to host social gatherings between male and female students. “These social gatherings will be held for two purposes: one is to provide good wholesome contact between boys and girls, and the other to teach the pupils the finest social usages and to fit them to have similar gatherings in their own future homes.”²²² Many of the social gatherings at MPIIBS and Holy Childhood included Saturday night dances and dinner socials. These highly supervised social gatherings were seen as a way to allow the young women to interact with young men in more moral and wholesome ways. While both sexes were monitored during male and female interactions, the blame for any promiscuous activity was often placed upon female students. Due to the negative stereotypes of the oversexualized Native American woman, it was assumed that female students would seduce and tease the young men. The 1928 Meriam Report discovered that many boarding schools were nailing down the windows in the girl’s dormitories and locking the fire escape doors in order to keep girls from sneaking out and boys from sneaking in (578). Pregnancy was not reported by school administrators in annual reports or news articles. Superintendents thought that any discussion of pregnancy occurring at their schools was a poor reflection of their ability to transform and assimilate sexually promiscuous Native Americans.²²³ Ironically, most of

²²² Baumgarten, L. R. 1931 Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Superintendent Report to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Mt. Pleasant Indian School and Agency, National Archives at Chicago, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Administrative Records of the Superintendent, 1915-1933.

the illegitimate pregnancies occurred during the outing program or as a result of sexual abuse by clergy members or school staff. The outing program was developed by Carlisle Indian Industrial School founder Richard Henry Pratt as a part of the boarding school education curriculum and vocational training. This was not only a way to purposefully position Native students to work within a lower socioeconomic class, but it also prevented them from returning to their families during the holiday and summer breaks. Young Native men and women were entering the homes of White middle-class families to work as farm hands and domestic servants, which was thought to be a good alternative to returning home to their family and traditional culture. They were able to experience “civilized” social and moral practices rather than reverting back to the “primitive” culture of Indigenous familial traditions. Many former Superintendents such as Estelle Reed felt that “association with good White people” was one of the best civilizing agents for young Native American students.²²⁴

The inequitable treatment of female students and their inability to navigate the MPIIBS campus and the surrounding community of Mount Pleasant was documented in the 1917-1918 Annual Calendar. It stated that female students were allowed to attend weekly religious services, but only if they were chaperoned by a school staff member. Additionally, the girls were only allowed to go shopping on Saturday mornings once a month. These trips were always supervised by a chaperone, while the boys had the

²²³ Adams, David Wallace. *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience 1875-1928*. University Press of Kansas, 1995 p. 180

²²⁴ Archuleta, Margaret L., et al., editors. *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences 1879-2000*. Heard Museum, 2000.

freedom to visit town every Saturday afternoon.²²⁵ The value of purity and virtuous womanhood influenced the experiences of all Anishinabekwe that attended MPIIBS and their worth was measured by their ability to get married. Although Native women received domestic vocational training at boarding school, it was stated in the 1928 Meriam Report that the overall goal for female students was to prepare them for service in marriage and schools often encouraged students to enter into matrimony with fellow students. Domestic training was to not interfere with any possibility for marriage and it was to serve as a secondary resource for desperate unmarried women. “Since domestic service leads to no better occupation, it is more important that it should not be allowed to interfere with opportunities for marriage” (Meriam 640).

Among the required coursework on domestic laboring, childcare and physical appearance, Anishinaabe boys and girls were exposed to “cultural traditions and practices” at both MPIIBS and Holy Childhood. An article from 1946 that appears in the *Battle Creek Enquirer* describes the “cultural” traditions that Native children were learning at Holy Childhood, which included birch bark decoration, weaving, beading and tribal dancing. As part of a recreational program, the article describes that the students took part in “ancient dances” in the school gymnasium. “It’s amazing what enthusiasm is displayed when these youngsters don feather headdresses and clothes like their ancestors wore centuries ago” declares Sister Vleomena.²²⁶ While the school worked hard to appear as though they were providing Native American students with a culturally informative

²²⁵ Annual Calendar. US Indian School Mt. Pleasant, Mich. 1917-1918

²²⁶ “118-Year-Old School Teaches Indian Children Ancient Art.” *Battle Creek Enquirer*, 26 Jan. 1946, p. 10.

and supportive environment, they were teaching them in a way that placed Native American culture and tradition in the past. In addition, non-Natives were distributing this knowledge and practice that was not always culturally accurate or appropriate. While Ojibwe and Odawa cultures practice birch bark biting and beadwork, they do not wear headdresses as a part of traditional ceremonial dress. An article from 1948 in the *Battle Creek Enquirer* with the headline “Indians Want Deer Skins” asks the public to send deer skins to Holy Childhood as the school was looking to provide “authentic Indian costumes” for the annual powwow the following summer.²²⁷ The 1948 Holy Childhood Enrollment Report also mentions the need for deer skin in order to be used within the craft classes. Priest Benign Adam states that the “Indian arts” are in need of a revival and the clergy has decided to start with teaching the children. “We also have special craft classes in which Indian beadwork, quill work and basketry are taught. These Indian arts need to be revived in this section, so we are beginning with the children. We plan to teach moccasin making this year. As soon as the hunting season is here we will get the buckskins which will then be tanned for use in our craft work.”²²⁸

The Native children were not the only individuals participating in “traditional ceremony” and cultural practices at Holy Childhood according the September 1938 issue of *The Indian Sentinel*. In an article entitled “Ottawa Naming Ceremonial” Sisters Mary Zachary and Honesta were given honorary Odawa names, which was performed by Chief Fred Ettawageshik of the Michigan Indian Defense Association. It was stated that Odawa

²²⁷ “Indians Want Deer Skins.” *Battle Creek Enquirer*, 14 Nov. 1948, p. 6.

²²⁸ Holy Childhood Enrollment Report, 1948. Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Mission School Reports, 1877-1977, Series 2-1. Special Collections and University Archives. Marquette University.

tribal members performed traditional dances during this ceremony, but they were described as humorous and portrayed in a very stereotypical way. “Painted and dressed in old Indian costumes, they performed, first, the traditional pipe smoking ritual and then, to the accompaniment of tom-toms and Indian chants, the Ottawa dances. These included versions of the medicine-pipe dance, the challenge dance, the humorous one-legged dance, the scalp dance and the sun dance.” Sister Mary Zachary was named Bine-Kwe or Partridge Lady because she is known to clap her hands to wake the Native children in the dormitory at Holy Childhood and Sister Honesta was given the name Mimi-Kwe or Dove Lady due to her “unassuming and amiable disposition.”²²⁹ Receiving a traditional name in Anishinaabe culture is a spiritual experience that an individual receives from a healer in their community and this article minimizes the sacredness of this ceremony. While a number of Native children are separated from their families at Holy Childhood and deprived of any cultural participation, the clergy appropriates traditional practices and shamelessly participates as though they are a member of a tribal community. It is disappointing to read that an Odawa leader performed this “ceremony” at Holy Childhood, but it illustrates the deep loss that had occurred due to the long history of colonization and boarding school influence in the state of Michigan. While non-Native people were entertaining themselves through “playing Indian” and romanticizing ceremonial experiences such as a naming ceremony, Michigan Indians were struggling to remember who they were. There was evidence that Anishinaabe cultural artwork was practiced at the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School as well, but it was

²²⁹ Devota, Sister Mary. “Ottawa Naming Ceremonial” *The Indian Sentinel*, Sept. 1938. p. 101. The Indian Sentinel, 1902-1962. Special Collections and University Archives. Marquette University.

employed as a mechanism for exploitative female labor. During the MPIIBS ground excavations, Dr. Sarah Surface Evans stated that the research team found turquoise beads in the soil and it was later discovered that the school sold the students' beadwork in order to raise money for the institution²³⁰ A former student's granddaughter shared that her grandmother talked about learning beadwork at MPIIBS, but according to Surface-Evans, it is highly unlikely that school administrators chose to train female students in beadwork as a way to retain their culture.²³¹

All students at Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and the Holy Childhood School of Jesus were exposed to a rudimentary academic curriculum and the majority of their daily instruction consisted of domestic and vocational training. For female students at MPIIBS, these home-economic based courses taught young Anishinaabe women and girls how to wash dishes, cook and bake meals, launder and mend linens and uniforms, and clean and tidy household spaces. Although these "lessons" were considered the foundation to their vocational training, it was also all essential labor that was required for continuous daily operation of the school. The MPIIBS and Holy Childhood could truly not function without the forced labor of their female students and the provided home-economics based curriculum was a reflection of the administration's expectations surrounding Victorian Womanhood, domestic colonialism and the ideals of feminine domesticity. This curriculum and training did not

²³⁰ Surface-Evans, Sarah. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

²³¹ Surface-Evans, Sarah L. "A Landscape of Assimilation and Resistance: The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2016, pp. 574-588.

prepare Anishinaabe women to create and develop their own sense of home and family life, but prepared and encouraged them to pursue employment as maids, cooks or nannies within wealthy white households. Anishinaabe women were assimilated into expected gender roles as they were seen as having the largest influence on intergenerational familial traditions, teachings and beliefs. Ultimately, the pride or shame that is associated with celebrating or suppressing Anishinaabek culture was passed from mother to child, generation after generation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Although Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and the Holy Childhood School of Jesus were the two prominent Native American boarding schools in Michigan and had similar goals of assimilating young Native students, they both have differing histories and origin stories. The architecture and the land that both institutions occupy is consistently important and influential to contemporary influences on present-day tribal members. The school buildings were not only utilized to assimilate young Native American children, but they also can be conceived as text and a depository of memories and history. The presence or absence of these buildings has significant effect on the narrative that is constructed for both MPIIBS and Holy Childhood as well as influencing the healing and repatriation process for Michigan Native communities. While the presence of boarding school buildings can be a reminder of the trauma and loss of culture for many Anishinaabek, the loss of these structures also carry negative connotations in that their absence erases physical and concrete evidence of harm and the reality of a past experience.

The Holy Childhood School of Jesus was established in Harbor Springs in 1829 by a group of missionaries and Odawa community members, who wanted to build a permanent church and school near Little Traverse Bay. According to James McClurken, the Odawas were completely complacent and involved in the construction of this

institution. The local tribal community was enthusiastic about the potential education and job opportunities that might develop through the establishment of a missionary school. In 1823, members of the nearby Odawa tribe contacted Congress and requested a “teacher or minister of the Gospel.”²³² They hoped this missionary establishment would provide the mechanisms and education that were needed in order to survive the new political and economic climate of their traditional homelands.²³³ The school grounds began as a log cabin and a fifty-four by thirty foot church and grew to include an administrative building and two dormitories.²³⁴ In the book *The Indians of Hungry Hollow*, an Odawa man named Bill Dunlop recounts his experiences as a youth living in a small Indian community in Northern Michigan. He explains that the local Native children in Harbor Springs referred to Holy Childhood as “The Convent” and describes the school as presenting a “pleasing enough appearance.”²³⁵ The school was closed from 1839-1884 due to lack of funding opportunities, but it was reopened by the Franciscan Fathers of Sacred Heart of St. Louis and in 1886, the School Sisters of Notre Dame took over the administration of the school. In 1926, a brick school building was constructed and the institution stayed open as Native American boarding school until 1983. The school buildings were utilized as a day care center beginning in 1988.²³⁶

²³² “Unholy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 29 June 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3760-unholy-childhood/.

²³³ McClurken, James M. “Wage Labor in Two Michigan Ottawa Communities.” *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1996, p. 66–99.

²³⁴ “Holy Childhood Indian School” *The Indian Sentinel*, 1905-1906 p. 25-29. *The Indian Sentinel*, 1902-1962. Special Collections and University Archives. Marquette University.

²³⁵ Dunlop, Bill, and Marcia Fountain-Blackledge. *The Indians of Hungry Hollow*. University of Michigan Press, 2004. p 132.

²³⁶ “Unholy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 29 June 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3760-unholy-childhood/.

The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School was established in 1891 after an act of Congress was approved to establish an Indian Industrial or Training School in the State of Michigan. This Congressional decision appropriated \$25,000 for the purchase of no less than two hundred acres of land²³⁷. Several towns throughout Michigan submitted propositions to be considered as a possible location for the school, but the Secretary of the Interior chose the city of Mount Pleasant. The land was valued at \$8,400, of which the government paid \$5,000 and the citizens of Mount Pleasant contributed the remaining amount.²³⁸ The location of Mount Pleasant provided a point of accessibility for most Native communities in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan.²³⁹ The campus of MPIIBS consisted of thirty-five separate buildings and 320 acres of farming land. According to the 1915 MPIIBS Superintendent Report, the school campus comprised over twenty acres and presented the appearance of a little village.²⁴⁰ The campus buildings consisted of two dormitories for boys and two dormitories for girls, a school hospital, a dining room and kitchen, a laundry, academic building with auditorium, a gymnasium, a powerhouse and employee's club house, cottages for employees, a home economics building, and barns with a dairy herd of twenty-five

²³⁷ "A Short History of the Mt. Pleasant School" *The Indian School Journal*, May 1914, p. 445-451. The Indian School Journal, 1904 - 1926, National Archives, Record Group 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1793 - 1999.

²³⁸ "A Short History of the Mt. Pleasant School" *The Indian School Journal*, May 1914, p. 445. The Indian School Journal, 1904 - 1926, National Archives, Record Group 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1793 - 1999.

²³⁹ "A Short History of the Mt. Pleasant School" *The Indian School Journal*, May 1914, p. 445. The Indian School Journal, 1904 - 1926, National Archives, Record Group 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1793 - 1999.

²⁴⁰ Mount Pleasant Superintendent Annual Reports, 1915; Indigenous Digital Archive; <https://omeka.dlcs-ida.org/s/ida/iiif/manifest/1595/5aa72879159d3>

cows.²⁴¹ Superintendent R. A. Cochran stated in the 1917 Report that “the grounds are well laid out, with trees, shrubs and flowers, and I know no hesitancy in saying that our campus is one of the prettiest in this part of Michigan.” Toward the end of the MPIIBS tenure, the 1929 Superintendent reported that he thought the amount of land that the school held was not enough and that more land should be purchased.²⁴² The main buildings contained all brick construction and the school controlled its own heating, lighting and water systems.²⁴³ Despite its close proximity to the city limits of Mount Pleasant, MPIIBS functioned as a small city all on its own.

While Holy Childhood was mostly staffed by nuns and other clergy members, MPIIBS had over forty-seven employees at the height of its enrollment. These employees included a superintendent, three clerks, a principal, physician, nurse, three junior high school teachers, five elementary teachers, a social worker, an instructor of shop subjects, a music teacher, two home economics teachers, a physical director, a girls adviser, a boys adviser, school farmer, dairyman, dining room matron, four house matrons, and approximately nine laborers and assistants in various departments.²⁴⁴ MPIIBS was quick to boast about its “modern appliances” and the ability to reduce manual labor through the utilization of dishwashers, steam cooking, electric mixers and gas ovens.²⁴⁵ There is no

²⁴¹ “Mount Pleasant Indian School, Description.” <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/s/sos/x-269/bl001621>. University of Michigan Library Digital Collections. Accessed: September 20, 2017.

²⁴² Mount Pleasant Superintendent Annual Reports, 1929; Indigenous Digital Archive; <https://omeka.dlcs-ida.org/s/ida/iiif/manifest/1608/5aa72bfe30c06>.

²⁴³ “Mount Pleasant Indian School, Description.” <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/s/sos/x-269/bl001621>. University of Michigan Library Digital Collections. Accessed: September 20, 2017.

²⁴⁴ “Mount Pleasant Indian School, Description.” <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/s/sos/x-269/bl001621>. University of Michigan Library Digital Collections. Accessed: September 20, 2017.

²⁴⁵ “Mount Pleasant Indian School, Description.” <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/s/sos/x-269/bl001621>. University of Michigan Library Digital Collections. Accessed: September 20, 2017.

mention of the immense amount of work that individual students contributed to developing and sustaining the school and its campus.

The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan (SCIT) currently holds ownership of the MPIIBS property after Governor Jennifer Granholm signed Executive Order Public Act 208 on October 25, 2010. This act authorized the conveyance of the MPIIBS land back to the city of Mt. Pleasant and the SCIT after previously being retained by the State of Michigan. The city and tribe were given 180 days to decide whether or not to accept or reject this conveyance. According to SCIT member Charmaine Shawana, the tribe decided to launch a community-based feasibility study to get the opinion of tribal members. “The council wanted to know if we’re given the land, what would they do with it? The advisory group was charged to rigorously assess community interests and identify key factors to consider in order to provide the SCIT Tribal Council with enough relevant information to guide the decision.”²⁴⁶ MPIIBS Project Director, Dr. William Cross, stated that the majority of the tribal membership felt that the property should be evacuated and conveyed under ownership of the tribe, which would also include the current buildings on the land.²⁴⁷

The SCIT Tribal Council voted to accept the conveyance on April 22, 2011 and the official deed transfer from the State of Michigan to the Tribal Chief took place on April 25, 2011. For one dollar, the city was given 311.14 acres and the tribe 8.86 acres,

²⁴⁶ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance – History of Acquiring the Boarding School Grounds, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 August 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0WC9HTslac&feature=youtu.be>. Accessed: October 22, 2018.

²⁴⁷ “Honoring, Healing & Remembering” Afternoon Guest Speakers, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2016) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPxB8PH0Shs&feature=youtu.be>. Accessed: October 22, 2018.

which included six historic school buildings and the Mission Creek Cemetery.²⁴⁸

Charmaine stated that the SCIT tribe wanted to complete the small monetary exchange of one dollar between the tribe and the Michigan government in order to signify the return of traditional homelands to the Anishinaabe people. “I remember when Frank Claudia our PR guy was there when we officially did the deed and nobody had a dollar so Frank had to pull out of his wallet a dollar and gave it to the State of Michigan and they gave us the land. But we know it was our land anyway.”²⁴⁹

Central Michigan University (CMU) professor Dr. Mary Cross conducted the community survey with the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, which was available both in print through the SCIT newspaper and online through the SCIT and CMU websites. The survey received over 590 responses, which included 140 responses from SCIT members, 18 responses from SCIT descendants, 52 responses from members of other tribes and 120 non-Native community responses. Over two-thirds of the responses from SCIT members and nearly ninety percent of the SCIT descendants had a family member who attended boarding school, which may have included a grandparent, aunt or uncle, cousin, great-grandparent or great aunt or uncle. The survey gave each respondent six suggestions for usage of the land and buildings and asked them to rank their preferred choices. The top three suggestions that were widely supported by all respondents were that the buildings should be used as a boarding school museum, a cultural preservation and language

²⁴⁸ “Former Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Added to the National Register of Historic Places.” 27 Mar. 2018, www.sagchip.org/news.aspx?newsid=1614#.XKOf2etKjox.

²⁴⁹ 2013 MPIIBS Annual Observance – History of Acquiring the Boarding School Grounds, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (20 August 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0WC9HTslac&feature=youtu.be>. Accessed: October 22, 2018.

revitalization center, and as a healing center. The other three suggestions, which did not convey a strong sense of support from respondents, included using the buildings for a skilled trade center, a tribal college or a charter school for middle and high school students. Cross stated that the findings were all very similar across all four groups who were surveyed and that whether or not a respondent had a family member who attended the school did not influence the survey's assessment.

In addition to ranking the six suggestions for the usage of the land and buildings, respondents were asked how they would like to see the land used if the buildings need to be removed. A number of respondents suggested that the land should be used to construct a memorial wall with the names of the children who were students at MPIIBS. There was a strong emphasis on tearing down the buildings due to the negative memories and energies associated with them. One SCIT member stated, "It's not the building that should be left as a monument, but the emphasis of those children who sacrificed greatly should be remembered. A memorial stone wall with MPIIBS students' names would be appropriate, especially with the many sculpturing artists we have among our tribe." Another SCIT member emphasized the need for the spiritual cleansing of the buildings on the MPIIBS property regardless of whether they should be demolished or preserved. "After ensuring that there are no more ancestral remains undiscovered or found on the property, there needs to be an internal cleansing of the buildings as the spirits that still remain inside those buildings need peace. Then those buildings need to be torn down so that the pain and misery that lay deep in the foundations of those buildings are released." The overall consensus of the survey was that respondents were most concerned with

utilizing the land and buildings in a way that would teach the history of MPIIBS to both Native and non-Native communities.²⁵⁰

During a grounds tour of MPIIBS on June 6, 2016 as part of the annual “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” memorial²⁵¹, SCIT member and Environmental Response Program Specialist Craig Graveratte described the state of the buildings in 2011 as an “obstacle and hazardous.” Graveratte and a number of other SCIT members toured the grounds and buildings with the state government after the tribe took ownership of the property. “When we first came back, it was disheartening that we were walking on the same ground as our ancestors had walked on and suffered traumatic experiences. There was a heavy feeling when we first entered those buildings.”²⁵² He stated that they were initially able to enter a few of the buildings, but that many of them are not safe to expose to the public. Lead paint had leaked down into the soil and lead and asbestos had also been detected inside the buildings. Graveratte emphasized that the gymnasium appeared to be in the best shape of all the buildings, but after significant structural analysis, it was discovered that it was in terrible condition. “They have been doing structural analysis on all of the buildings to see which ones are worth saving and we were disappointed to find that the gymnasium is the worst and that it was not a structurally sound building.” The MPIIBS committee would like to be able to restore the buildings to

²⁵⁰ “Honoring, Healing & Remembering” Afternoon Guest Speakers, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2017) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sdq-ZKijdiQ>. Accessed: October 22, 2018.

²⁵¹ The first “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” event was held on June 6, 2010 as a way to celebrate the closing of the MPIIS, which occurred on June 6, 1934, and to honor and remember the children who were students there.

²⁵² “Under The Shadow of History: Abandoned Native American Boarding School Brings Light to One Tribe's Struggles.” *Central Michigan Life*, 15 Jan. 2014, www.cm-life.com/article/2014/01/under-the-shadow-of-history-abandoned-native-american-boarding-school-brings-to-light-one-tribes-str.

their original condition and preserve as much as they can, but many of the roofs are caving in due to many years of neglect. An individual on the tour asked Graveratte how the SCIT was looking to secure funding to clean up the land and buildings for potential future use as a museum and memorial and he stated that because the land is technically situated on a brownfield, government money could be used to clean up and restore the property. A brownfield is described by the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) as a “property that is complicated by the presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant”.²⁵³ Additionally, Graveratte mentioned that the city of Mount Pleasant removed the buildings that were on their allotted properties and the environmental cleanup cost was in the six to eight million dollar range. This cost did not include the restoration of the buildings, but only to eliminate the lead and asbestos that was present.²⁵⁴

Despite the environmental concerns in regard to the extensive hazardous material inside and outside of the buildings, Graveratte stated that SCIT was hoping to reclaim the complete 320 acres of the MPIIBS property, but they were overall happy to receive major historic segments that included a number of buildings. “We had to fight for some of the historical portions. We originally tried to fight for the whole 320 acres because it is historic to the tribe, but we ended up with what we have.” The first visit to the MPIIBS property was an unsettling experience for Graveratte and other members of the SCIT. He said that although the tribe was moving forward with reclaiming ownership of the land

²⁵³ “Overview of EPA's Brownfields Program.” *United States Environmental Protection Agency*, www.epa.gov/brownfields/overview-epas-brownfields-program.

²⁵⁴ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

and buildings, the state government representatives were proceeding with caution and hesitation. While tribal members were assuming they would be able to take photographs of the building sites while touring the grounds, they were forbidden to do so. “When we first took conveyance of the buildings, the person from the state told us we couldn’t take any photos or let anything show up on Facebook until we officially took conveyance of the buildings.” Graveratte was not afraid to encourage our tour group to post photos of the MPIIBS grounds in order to create more visibility and awareness of its history and desired rehabilitation. “We recommend that you take photos and post them on Facebook. Do what you need. Anything that helps us bring attention to the property and the restoration that needs to happen.”²⁵⁵

Another tour attendee asked if the tribe was looking to utilize casino profits in order to fund this restoration project and Graveratte indicated that the committee wanted to primarily incorporate government funding before any other outlets. “The casino operation funds will help restore a lot of things, but we are looking to incorporate government funding since they were originally government run buildings, so any type of government grants that we can get would be more than welcome. But it is a long process.”²⁵⁶ On February 28, 2018, the MPIIBS was added to the National Register of Historic Places, which is a nomination that CMU and SCIT had been working on together since 2015. This listing is extremely beneficial to the suggested environmental and restoration renovations for MPIIBS as it qualifies the property to receive federal

²⁵⁵ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

²⁵⁶ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

assistance in historic preservation grants.²⁵⁷ Dr. Sarah Surface-Evans, Professor in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work at CMU and Principal Investigator of the MPIIBS Project, stated that the MPIIBS Committee has recently submitted a grant application to the US Department of the Interior Park Services Tribal Historic Preservation Program for \$60,000 to help with building restoration, specifically to address the vandalism on the structures, and to establish fencing around the buildings. Dr. Surface-Evans additionally stated that the auditorium/chapel and gymnasium are currently most deemed viable for rehabilitation and preservation.²⁵⁸ Graveratte stated that he would like to see the buildings utilized in a way that educates the general public about the past. "I would like to see some type of museum built to bring back the history. We could use it as a teaching tool, so people can see how they lived."²⁵⁹

In partnership with the Central Michigan archeological department and the SCIT, Dr. Surface-Evans teaches a field school, which uses ground penetrating radar to recover lost buildings and any unknown gravesites on the school campus grounds. According to Dr. Surface-Evans, a geophysical survey was utilized in order to look beneath the ground and determine if there were any disturbances attributed to human activity.²⁶⁰ In addition to the ground penetrating radar, Dr. Surface-Evans used historical documents, maps, records and photographs to re-create a campus layout of standing buildings and structures

²⁵⁷ "Former Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Added to the National Register of Historic Places." 27 Mar. 2018, www.sagchip.org/news.aspx?newsid=1614#.XKOf2etKjox.

²⁵⁸ "Honoring, Healing & Remembering" Afternoon Guest Speakers, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2018) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCIS5VtibFg>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

²⁵⁹ "Under The Shadow of History: Abandoned Native American Boarding School Brings Light to One Tribe's Struggles." *Central Michigan Life*, 15 Jan. 2014, www.cm-life.com/article/2014/01/under-the-shadow-of-history-abandoned-native-american-boarding-school-brings-to-light-one-tribes-str.

²⁶⁰ 2014 MPIIBS Annual Observance – Part 2, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOcW5Sgo6C0>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

that no longer existed. One structure that was unexpectedly discovered was a gazebo or bandstand. This structure was not marked on any historical maps, but it was located near the reflecting pool and there were a number of photographs that captured the bandstand. Dr. Surface-Evans stated that they were able to locate the site of the gazebo/bandstand through the use of excavation and ground penetrating radar. “After doing excavation and GPR work, we discovered there was some sort of anomaly underground and after the excavation, we found out that the anomaly was cobblestones. The cobblestones served as the foundation for the pillars on which the gazebo once stood”.²⁶¹ This design was an intentional choice in which landscaping was among one of the “civilizing elements” of the MPIIBS assimilation process. Landscape was utilized as a technique of control in which buildings were built and carefully placed in relation to authority and power. Dr. Surface-Evans states that the buildings and school campus of MPIIBS was a space of reform and change. “Landscape was not used as a positive thing, but as a tool of assimilation. [If you can] control the space that people are moving on a daily basis, you can control the way they think.”²⁶² The campus buildings are described by Surface-Evans as “imposing structures” that combines the neo-classical architecture elements of both Greek and Federalist styles, which have been historically utilized by Western culture in order to convey control and power. The authoritative nature associated with neo-classical architecture was utilized in the design of many national, state and local governmental

²⁶¹ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

²⁶² 2014 MPIIBS Annual Observance – Part 2, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOcW5Sgo6C0>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

buildings including hospitals, schools, state capitals and courthouses.²⁶³ Muskogee Creek scholar K. Tsianina Lomawaima also stated that Western institutional architectural design was consciously created and implemented as a part of the colonial and assimilative agenda of federal and missionary Native American boarding schools in the United States. “Federal policy makers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries assumed that exposing Indians to new forms of architecture would automatically generate new ‘civilized’ forms of behavior” (Lomawaima 153).

According to Surface-Evans, the gazebo was an intentional design choice made by the MPIBS administration in order to impose upon the everyday experiences of students and to openly display and magnify the power of the institution.

The gazebo was an intentional design of the school. While we might think of a gazebo as a sort of pleasure place where people might sit, dine and relax, there was actually a gazebo at the very first boarding school, which was Carlisle. Carlisle started out as barracks that was repurposed to be an Indian boarding school and the bandstand was in the middle of their marching grounds and all the buildings in which students lived and worked were all situated around it. Pratt himself, who was a big tall guy, he was six foot something, would stand on the band stand and just sort of watch. And he would watch the students and mentally note who was misbehaving or were doing something he didn’t want them to. He would then shame them by writing a column called “The Man on the Bandstand” in the “Indian Helper,” which was the school newspaper at Carlisle. This was a form of control for him to be able to use that space to observe and watch the children and then shame them publicly in the newspaper so that they would behave. We don’t know if the superintendents of the Mt. Pleasant school did this sort of thing because we haven’t been able to find any student newspapers, but we imagine that there was a similar role in all of the boarding schools across the nation. If you look at all boarding schools, they almost all have a reflecting pond and a bandstand right next to it. They were symbols of the power of the institution. And a place for superintendents to entertain guests. Federal dignitaries

²⁶³ Surface-Evans, Sarah L. “A Landscape of Assimilation and Resistance: The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School.” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2016, pp. 574–588.

would come here to observe the experiment of the school and see if the social re-education was working.²⁶⁴

During the excavation of the school grounds, Dr. Surface-Evans stated that a steak bone was found under where the gazebo would have stood. As a number of dignitaries were entertained at MPIIBS and brought to the gazebo to observe students, it is suspected that the administrators were serving their guests with lavish meals.²⁶⁵ Shortly after MPIIBS student Martha Shagonaby set fire to the school's laundry building in 1904, a reflecting pool was constructed directly in front of a classroom building located at the center of campus. Surface-Evans describes this choice as an attempt by school administrators to reinstate control over students after the Shagonaby arson incident. "Its location magnified the importance of the principal academic building and symbolically reinforced the centrality and authority of Western culture over students" (Surface-Evans 580).

Architecture was not only used as a symbol of the civilizing process and to create student intimidation, it was also employed in physically controlling and disciplining students at both MPIIBS and Holy Childhood. In a phone call conversation with Veronica Passfield, she described a door that was located in the girl's dormitory that had no internal doorknob. Passfield believes this space was used to punish and discipline young girls by isolating them in a small dark space with no ability to escape from the inside.²⁶⁶ The MPIIBS campus had a similar room located in its auditorium and chapel building. Craig Graveratte stated that during the SCIT Committee's initial tour of the grounds in

²⁶⁴ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

²⁶⁵ 2014 MPIIBS Annual Observance – Part 2, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOcW5Sgo6C0>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

²⁶⁶ Passfield, Veronica. Phone conversation. 30 August 2018.

2011 they discovered that this building had a padded room. Graveratte and the other tribal members were intrigued by this room as it had full floor to ceiling padded walls and there was no doorknob located on the inside. Many SCIT Committee members suspect that this room was used to punish and isolate students for bad behavior, while representatives from the State of Michigan suggested that the room was a place for students to quietly practice their instruments in. “There were thoughts that children were being put in this room because they were bad or to be punished. But others have come back and said that it was the room that they used to practice their instruments without disturbing the rest of the individuals in the building. So we do have two conflicting stories and you leave it up to yourself to determine.”²⁶⁷ Regardless of what the space was used for, it is disturbing that if a child was placed in that room with the door closed, they would have no ability to open the door from inside. It seems as though it was a deliberate design choice crafted by school administrators. Another form of punishment that was practiced on the MPIIBS campus was discovered outside of the woodshop and carpentry building. Graveratte described this location as the “Wall of Tears” which was where students had carved their names and initials into the brick wall while they were placed in a form of timeout. There were also small hooks fastened on the side of the walls and Graveratte believes that they were used to tie up students while they completed their punishment against the brick wall. Despite being told by State of Michigan officials that the hooks were used to shackle horses, it seemed suspicious to Graveratte that these hooks were also located near a space used to punish children. “We were told that is where

²⁶⁷ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

they tied up the horses, but the hooks were not large enough to support a horse. This is where we think the kids were tied up and they scratched their names into the wall as they were forced to stand there.”²⁶⁸ According to Surface-Evans, there is a greater number of male student names and initials carved into the wall, which indicates that this may have been a punishment specifically given to male students. There are over 816 names and initials that correlate with the names of students from MPIIBS enrollment reports.²⁶⁹

In addition to ground penetrating radar and excavations, the Central Michigan field school also conducted botanical surveys in order to verify the crops that were planted as a part of the MPIIBS garden and working farm. According to Tonia Bleur, 2012 Chair of the MPIIBS Planning Committee, this information also helps in locating unmarked gravesites. “It lets us know the types of plants that were planted back in the boarding school era that would be indicative of grave sites. We are still trying to find where the children we do know that perished and we’re not able to locate where they all are as far as their resting place, so we are trying to search for that”²⁷⁰ Although records show that the Mission Creek Cemetery or “old Indian Reservation burial ground” was included in the original land purchase for MPIIBS, it is unknown where the cemetery boundaries end. An article in the May 1914 edition of the *Indian School Journal* states that the traditional burial grounds were utilized by the school officials to bury deceased students, but it has become evident that many of the graves were unmarked. During the

²⁶⁸ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

²⁶⁹ 2014 MPIIBS Annual Observance – Part 2, Saginaw Chippewa on Youtube (6 June 2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOcW5Sgo6C0>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

²⁷⁰ Keynote Address: Tonia Bleur, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (3 July 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HA3tn4LQYJI&list=WL&index=14>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

2013 Sunrise Ceremony²⁷¹ at Mission Creek Cemetery Shannon Martin, SCIT member and director of the Ziibiwing Center, stated that oral narratives suggest the cemetery actually extends further than the current boundaries. “As NAGPRA²⁷² was not in place during the development of this site, some folks may be interred under the road. Records indicated that two students were interned in the cemetery. Tribal chiefs and community members were buried there as well”.²⁷³

As MPIIBS was built on sacred Anishinaabe land that was a place for ancestral burial, it is no surprise that oral narrative suggests the school and grounds were haunted. Ojibwe scholar Brenda Child writes about the placement of the MPIIBS on sacred Anishinaabe homelands and the negative energy it created for students in her book, *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community*. Child states that children at MPIIBS often told stories of the jibbayag, or ghosts, that roamed their school. “During the forty years of the school’s operation, children who occupied it at times felt unsettled, because their living quarters, classrooms, and work stations covered the burial grounds and they noticed unusual noises in the buildings and on campus” (Child 121). According to the oral narratives included in *The Tree That Never Dies: Oral History of the Michigan Indians*, the students often reported hearing strange noises in the attic of the school dormitories and on a number of occasions, a priest was called in to expel the spirits with holy water. One of the young girls recalled a spooky

²⁷¹ A part of the Healing, Remembering and Honoring event

²⁷² The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) was enacted on November 16, 1990 and it requires that any agencies and institution that receive federal funding must return any cultural items or human remains to the proper Native American tribe and/or direct familial descendants.

²⁷³ June 6, 2013 Sunrise Ceremony, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (7 June 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LamD0itvJvE&feature=youtu.be>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

incident associated with the dormitory attic and suggested that the activity was caused by a bearwalker. Bearwalkers or mockawamosa are believed to have the ability to change form and may bring “bad medicine” to others. The children believed that the school grounds were haunted by these ghosts and bearwalkers, who were disrupted by the establishment of the MPIIBS on traditional Anishinaabe homelands. “Stories of ghosts and bearwalking demonstrate that children had very well-developed conceptions of their surroundings. The land where they now learned, slept, and played, had belonged to their ancestors; it was not “designed” to be a school, it was taken for that purpose. Indian children believed that ancestors were haunting the school because their land had been wrongfully seized” (Balabuch 12).

The supernatural is an element of Ojibwe culture that often materializes within everyday conversation and family storytelling. During an interview with my cousins Alex and Kenny and my Great-Aunt Barb, the story of our ancestor, Madame Cadotte, was shared. Kenny stated that if you saw the ghost of Madame Cadotte, you didn’t live long after and Aunt Barb had always heard that she was often seen dressed in all black. “Old Lady Bandana was Madame Cadotte. She was Cree. She was a medicine woman in that she had knowledge.”²⁷⁴ In addition to Madame Cadotte being a medicine woman, it was known that our Aunt Anita Bazinaw was a bearwalker. Aunt Barb stated that Aunt Anita was a spiritually powerful woman who used to see things in her house often. As Aunt Barb continued to tell more stories about growing up on Mackinac Island it became apparent that the spiritual and supernatural were intricately connected to the childhood

²⁷⁴ Curtis, Barbara. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

experiences of Anishinaabe people. Aunt Barb was once walking past Fort Mackinac²⁷⁵ as a little girl and she stumbled into the path of a headless soldier. She describes how she quickly climbed up a tree to hide until the soldier disappeared. This moment continues to scare her even into adulthood and she shakes a bit as she tells the story. “Uncle Gunny always told me you aren’t supposed to look at spirits because they will grow bigger and bigger. And that guy was already huge.”²⁷⁶ Despite the number of scary stories involving Ojibwe children and the paranormal there are also many supernatural entities who have positive relationships with the habitants of the island. My Aunt Barb describes one of these entities as the Little People of the Forest and she states that they have always had a good relationship with the Ojibwe. The Little People, pronounced “Maemaegawaehnssiwuk” in Anishinaabe or “Puckwedges” as my cousin Alex refers to them, were known for their special regard and care for small children. They are often described as “shaggy, hairy, unkempt miniature grown-ups” and are said to only appear to children who are lost and in need of finding their way home.²⁷⁷ According to my Aunt Barb, Mackinac Island is home to a large number of Little People. Her sister, my Great-Aunt Jeannie, once saw the Little People in the woods and brought them home for the afternoon while our cousins Loretta and Mary were also fed a biscuit breakfast with the Little People while playing in the Great Turtle Park.²⁷⁸ As legends and folktales play a

²⁷⁵ Fort Mackinac was established by the British on Mackinac Island in 1780 and the Americans took control of the fort in 1786. The British regained ownership of the fort during the War of 1812 and the United States took control once again following the conclusion of the war. Fort Mackinac was at the center of the Great Lakes fur trade and remained active until 1895.

²⁷⁶ Curtis, Barbara. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

²⁷⁷ Johnston, Basil. *The Manitous: The Supernatural World of the Ojibway*. HarperCollins, 1995

²⁷⁸ Curtis, Barbara. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

large role within Anishinaabe culture and traditional child-rearing practices, it is evident that there is a message or lesson to be learned within each and every story. As my cousin Alex explains, these stories are not only shared as a form of entertainment, but as a piece of knowledge that creates an opportunity to learn. The spooky nature of tales such as the bearwalker or the Little People is that these stories evolved from a past incidental phenomenon. “There are so many things that can’t be explained. And out of all those legends, there is always some sort of truth to them.”²⁷⁹

During the 2016 “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” MPIIBS grounds tour, many of the questions from attendees were connected to the idea of ghosts or hauntings. Our tour guide, Craig Graveratte, said that anytime someone visits the property, they always see something out of the corner of their eye. In particular, he said that the trees on the school grounds are often described as the “trees of faces.” Many individuals say that they see the faces of children within the trees from a distance. One woman in the tour group stated that a friend of hers had witnessed the image of a little girl in white near the school early one morning. “One of our friends saw a little girl in a white dress near one of the no trespassing signs at about one in the morning. It startled her and she went back to help the little girl, but she was gone.” Another man, who stated that he had worked for over thirty-four years on the MPIIBS property while it was utilized as a State Hospital²⁸⁰, also voiced that he had experienced a lot of ghostly occurrences as an employee. “One night another gentleman I was working with said, ‘Hey did you see that?’ I don’t know

²⁷⁹ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

²⁸⁰ After the MPIIS closed in 1934, the land and buildings were used as a part of the State Hospital or the Mt. Pleasant Center, which housed and cared for mentally and physically challenged individuals. This center was open until 2008.

what it was, it was like a mist. I saw it and it was gone.” During the initial acquisition of the MPIIBS property, Craig described the chilling atmosphere of a room in one of the buildings that himself and his colleagues experienced while touring the campus.

[There was] very little debris on the floor, very little paint peeling off the walls and it had to have been used during the Mt. Pleasant Center era because there were newer toys boxed up and put in the corner. Without knowing exactly what had happened and why that room in this building that was in such disarray was kept like that, it made us feel a little uncomfortable. And we didn’t want to fully enter that room. We just stayed at the door, thought about it and then walked out. We didn’t touch anything because if there was still children or something that was there we wanted to leave them with some good thoughts. That room was clean and kept up nice compared to the rest of the building for a reason.

Based upon the multiple experiences of visitors sensing and receiving supernatural and ghostly feelings and messages at MPIIBS, it is apparent that the energies of former students and the ancestors continue to persist within a space that is both traditional Anishinaabe territory, but also a place of great sadness and trauma. Craig believes that by visiting and touring the MPIIBS grounds during the annual “Honoring, Healing and Remembering” celebration, it is a way for family members and descendants to reclaim the land and bring back the practice of ceremony that was once forbidden.

We like to believe that the ancestors and children are here with us and that we are bringing back something that they were not allowed to do. They were not allowed to beat on the drum, they were not allowed to sing or dance, they were not allowed to hear their language. These are things we have brought back here to help them and to help us remember and honor them because of the things they weren’t able to experience.²⁸¹

The Holy Childhood School of Jesus was also built upon traditional Odawa land that was also a space for honoring and burying ancestral remains. Harbor Springs, the city

²⁸¹ Graveratte, Craig. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Annual Honoring, Healing and Remembering Celebration. 6 June 2016. Tour.

that Holy Childhood was located in, was known to the Odawa as Weekwitonsing. This area of land is extremely sacred to the Odawa as it was the place where an evil spirit was banished into a pond. That pond has since been enclosed and Harbor Springs has become a large tourist destination containing million-dollar vacation homes.²⁸² Coincidentally, Holy Childhood was also built upon an unmarked cemetery in the same fashion as MPIIBS. During the 1890s expansion and construction of Holy Childhood, the city developed a new street that cut directly through a large burial site and disturbed over 400 graves. Wes Andrews, trained archeologist and Cultural and Historic Preservation Officer for the Little Traverse Band of Odawa Indians, stated that his grandmother often spoke about an unmarked cemetery that was located on the south side of the Holy Childhood church. After a number of other tribal elders voiced the same information, the Little Traverse tribe and the city of Harbor Springs worked together to locate and excavate ancestral remains in order to give them a proper ceremony and burial.²⁸³ In a phone conversation with Veronica Passfield, a member of the Bay Mills Indian Community, she stated that many trees were planted on the top of unmarked graves of children throughout the tenure of Holy Childhood in order to distract any attention.²⁸⁴

While the MPIIBS buildings are still existing and plans are being developed to restore the historical structures, the Holy Childhood school was demolished in the fall of 2007. Despite the trauma and negative memories associated with the school, many former

²⁸² Blouin, Lou. "Hear My Heritage, Eric Hemenway Talks Being Native American ." *MyNorth*, 24 Apr. 2017, mynorth.com/2017/04/hear-my-heritage-eric-hemenway-talks-being-native-american/.

²⁸³ Edwards, Lissa. "Renovating The Holy Childhood of Jesus Church of Harbor Springs." *MyNorth*, 18 Nov. 2013, mynorth.com/2013/11/renovating-gothic-church-harbor-springs/.

²⁸⁴ Passfield, Veronica. Personal interview. 30 August 2018.

students and their families struggled to accept that the buildings would be demolished. Sharon Hinmon felt that the buildings should be restored and left as a reminder to the Harbor Springs community about its history surrounding the assimilation and oppression of Native American children. "There were three generations just from my family who attended the school, and to me I think they need to do something that serves as a reminder for people who visit that site in the future." Hinmon's sister, Donna DeLap, also agreed that the school represents much more than a building that is in need of structural repairs and that it is a place that represents the lives and experiences of human beings.²⁸⁵ Another former Holy Childhood student, Kateri Walker, had hopes of suspending the demolition for at least a year. She had planned to develop an organization and raise funding in order to save and restore the Holy Childhood buildings. Walker envisioned transforming the space into a place for healing and education including a native foods restaurant and offices for counseling programs. "How wonderful it would be to turn that around and transform it into a place of beauty and healing?" Walker attended Holy Childhood for six years as well as her father and five siblings and despite the negative memories associated with that experience, she found herself sobbing during the closing ceremony. She could not help but wonder why the school had to be eliminated.²⁸⁶ She felt as though the restoration of Holy Childhood would provide an opportunity for former students and descendants to reclaim their Anishinaabe identity and culture. "Holy Childhood is one of

²⁸⁵ Parsons, Emmy. "A Thousand Whispers!: Historic Holy Childhood School to Be Razed." *The Record Eagle*, 28 June 2007, www.record-eagle.com/archives/a-thousand-whispers-historic-holy-childhood-school-to-be-razed/article_bf6eccd9-286f-5ef4-82c8-6b5535e87846.html.

²⁸⁶ Anderson, Loraine. "Hoping for a Miracle: Woman Attempts to Save Holy Childhood School." *The Record Eagle*, 30 Aug. 2007, www.record-eagle.com/archives/hoping-for-a-miracle-woman-attempts-to-save-holy-childhood/article_47556ef1-492c-5e1b-a668-f9c75730fa3e.html.

the great peaceful last stands for Indians; a movement unto itself. This is an opportunity to re-identify ourselves, renew our languages, renew our cultural ties; and provide a place for all Indian boarding students to pilgrimage to and thus find healing for themselves and their families.”²⁸⁷

The Holy Childhood parish hosted a closing ceremony in June 2007 for community members and former students to attend as a way to see the building one last time before it was demolished. They additionally gave tours of the grounds and the barber chair that was used to cut the hair of Native American children after arriving at the school was still standing. Bishop Patrick Clooney offered an apology to all Native peoples on behalf of the church, which was an emotional moment for many attendees including Hinmon and her sister, but some former students including Walker Keshick were not accepting of Clooney’s attempt at atonement. “He never went to Holy Childhood School, and there is no way he can know what happened there. There is no way he represents us.”²⁸⁸ Former student Sharon Wasageshik shares a similar sentiment to Keshick’s response in that Holy Childhood serves as an archive and storage of past haunts and trauma. “Part of my hurting spirit is in the school.”²⁸⁹ Shirley Naganashe-Oldman, a Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians council member, also supported the attempt to save Holy Childhood as it held an immense amount of history and saw a

²⁸⁷ Hughes, Kristina. “Native American Group Wants Former Catholic Board School Preserved, Not Torn Down.” *Petoskey News Review*, 27 Aug. 2007, articles.petoskeynews.com/2007-08-27/historic-school_24021163.

²⁸⁸ “Unholy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 29 June 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3760-unholy-childhood/.

²⁸⁹ Hughes, Kristina. “Native American Group Wants Former Catholic Board School Preserved, Not Torn Down.” *Petoskey News Review*, 27 Aug. 2007, articles.petoskeynews.com/2007-08-27/historic-school_24021163.

potential renovation as a way to begin the healing process for former students and their families. "This is more than a building. Harbor Springs used to be known as the Odawa capital of the world. Children came from different bands in Michigan to attend the school. This is their home and for them to demolish it is wiping away our history and wiping away our lives. Rather than destroying it we would like to preserve it, to preserve our history and begin healing,"²⁹⁰ Father Joseph Graff, Senior Priest at Holy Childhood, could not understand why former students would not be able to begin and accomplish their healing journeys in a newly built building, but he did acknowledge that healing was a large and important aspect of the process. "There are so many different dimensions to this. It's not black and white. The question of healing and reconciliation is important ... When you look at it from the aspect of the heart it's difficult."²⁹¹

After the demolition of the Holy Childhood school many community members and former students found it suspicious that the Catholic diocese was adamant about the destruction of the buildings. In a phone conversation with Veronica Passfield, who had previously done research on Holy Childhood for her doctoral dissertation, she stated that she felt the Roman Catholics tore down the school and many others across the country and in Canada in order to destroy the evidence and to avoid any potential for lawsuits.²⁹² Passfield describes boarding school sites as similar to a battlefield or a crime scene and

²⁹⁰ Hughes, Kristina. "Native American Group Wants Former Catholic Board School Preserved, Not Torn Down." *Petoskey News Review*, 27 Aug. 2007, articles.petoskeynews.com/2007-08-27/historic-school_24021163.

²⁹¹ Hughes, Kristina. "Native American Group Wants Former Catholic Board School Preserved, Not Torn Down." *Petoskey News Review*, 27 Aug. 2007, articles.petoskeynews.com/2007-08-27/historic-school_24021163.

²⁹² Passfield, Veronica. Personal interview. 30 August 2018.

emphasizes the visual loss of not seeing the buildings and not being reminded of their legacies. “By today’s standards, many of these schools are crime scenes. They are also sacred sites in a sense, in the way that a war camp or a battlefield is a sacred site.”²⁹³

Diocese spokeswoman Candace Neff stated that the decision to demolish Holy Childhood was the result of a three-year examination, which began in 2004 and included parishioners, community leaders, and the local Native American tribes. A structural study was performed and it was determined that the building had too many costly architectural and renovation issues. According to Father Joseph Graff, the school building would cost 8-13 million dollars to renovate. Overall, it was more cost effective to build a new 2,532 square foot parish hall, which provides space for a daycare facility, library, kitchen, meeting rooms and an additional 2,320 square foot gathering space.²⁹⁴ Neff stated that in addition to the new building a memorial for Holy Childhood would be erected, but currently the only form of a memorial is a historical marker on the property²⁹⁵. In addition to a closing ceremony that was organized on the Saturday before the building demolition, a yard sale was also held and artifacts from the school were suspiciously

²⁹³ “Unholy Childhood.” *The Northern Express*, 29 June 2008, www.northernexpress.com/news/feature/article-3760-unholy-childhood/.

²⁹⁴ Hughes, Kristina. “Native American Group Wants Former Catholic Board School Preserved, Not Torn Down.” *Petoskey News Review*, 27 Aug. 2007, articles.petoskeynews.com/2007-08-27/historic-school_24021163.

²⁹⁵ Anderson, Loraine. “Hoping for a Miracle: Woman Attempts to Save Holy Childhood School.” *The Record Eagle*, 30 Aug. 2007, www.record-eagle.com/archives/hoping-for-a-miracle-woman-attempts-to-save-holy-childhood/article_47556ef1-492c-5e1b-a668-f9c75730fa3e.html.

sold²⁹⁶. It seems as though in the same instance as the physical buildings, the diocese wanted to destroy and eliminate any evidence linked to Holy Childhood and its history.

²⁹⁶ Parsons, Emmy. "A Thousand Whispers!: Historic Holy Childhood School to Be Razed." *The Record Eagle*, 28 June 2007, www.record-eagle.com/archives/a-thousand-whispers-historic-holy-childhood-school-to-be-razed/article_bf6eccd9-286f-5ef4-82c8-6b5535e87846.html.

SUMMARY

“Be proud you’re Indian, just be careful who you tell it to.”²⁹⁷ My cousin Lois said her mother, my great aunt Liz, would always repeat that phrase to her children. My Aunt Dawn also remembers my grandma saying that she was also advised as a child to be careful who she told that she was Native²⁹⁸. Despite the rampant racism that existed on Mackinac Island between the islanders and tourists and the shame that was often connected to identifying as Anishinaabeg, my cousin Janet felt that this was a way for the adults to protect the children from being taken away to boarding schools. “I’m not sure if she was ashamed, I think she didn’t want her children taken to the Indian schools against her will.”²⁹⁹ Lois described her mother’s careful decision to only expose her Nativeness to trusted individuals not as an act of shame, but as a mode of protection and a learned method of survival from attending boarding school.

She wasn't ashamed she just knew from living her life that at the time we were young it still was not a good thing to admit you're Indian if you did not have to. My parents went through a lot because of their Native blood and because of what they went through they wanted to protect us from that. The elders would still gather in the dark hours and talk the old stories and such but they were afraid to share with us because they were forbidden to do this as they grew up...it is a long dark road³⁰⁰

²⁹⁷ Maki, Lois. Boarding School Discussion. Facebook. 22 Jan. 2019, 3:33 p.m., www.facebook.com/lois.maki/. Accessed 24 Jan. 2019.

²⁹⁸ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

²⁹⁹ Sutter, Janet. Boarding School Discussion. Facebook. 22 Jan. 2019, 6:19 p.m. www.facebook.com/janet.sutter.5. Accessed 24 Jan. 2019.

³⁰⁰ Maki, Lois. Boarding School Discussion. Facebook. 22 Jan. 2019, 3:33 p.m., www.facebook.com/lois.maki/. Accessed 24 Jan. 2019.

As a child, Lois explains that she always knew she was Native American, but she did not quite understand what that meant and questioned why pieces of her heritage seemed to be missing from her upbringing. “I learned that I did not know much. I was unaware of my Indian culture and that the culture of my ancestors had been effectively taken away. I could not practice or even know the beliefs of my ancestors. I had to be like everyone else” (Maki 114). Despite not knowing much about her traditional culture, Lois felt that the Mackinac Island tourism industry capitalized on the presence of local Natives in commercialized events and celebrations. “[It was] so sad. We were welcome to be Indian if we would ride in a parade with costumes on [which were] not true regalia. I remember once they asked me to ride in the parade as an Indian princess....I didn't do it. We didn't even know what regalia was when I was young, not my family anyway.”³⁰¹

The community that my grandma and other family members such as Lois grew up in on Mackinac Island was Harrisonville, which is known to the locals as the Indian Village. Dawn stated that grandma talked about the frustration of living in a community as small as Mackinac Island where the islanders often felt that certain individuals carried more ancestral privilege based upon their family history and blood quantum. When it was more of a benefit to acknowledge a family’s French or Anishinaabe ancestry, it impacted how the individual would choose to identify themselves. Mackinac Island was a pivotal location during the fur trade and many of our family members and tribal community also have French ancestry from numerous intermarriages between French fur traders and

³⁰¹ Maki, Lois. Boarding School Discussion. Facebook. 22 Jan. 2019, 3:33 p.m., www.facebook.com/lois.maki/. Accessed 24 Jan. 2019.

Anishinaabekwe. According to Dawn, my grandma would say “you are damned if you are Native and you are damned if you aren’t.”³⁰²

During my grandma’s childhood in the 1940’s, it was not favorable to be identified as a Native American on Mackinac Island. My grandma once described her experience as a little girl and singing on the streets for the visiting tourists. “Grandma said they used to sing in the streets on the island and the kids would throw pennies at her and say, ‘you can have the Indian money.’ No one wanted to be an Indian back then, but now everyone wants to be.”³⁰³ This experience has been prevalent throughout multiple familial generations and according to Dawn, this experience was not unique to just my grandma, but was also the same experience for my great-grandmother. “I think that more so than just Gramma’s experience, but also your Great-Gramma’s experience. Gramma Charlotte also encouraged Gramma to not acknowledge her Native identity, but yet everyone knew.”³⁰⁴ All of my grandma’s children felt that she kept her Native identity quiet as a way to avoid judgement from others. This was also during a time when identifying as Native American was associated with impoverishment and immorality. My mom expressed that while growing up, she did not realize that her mother was Anishinaabe and that if she ever talked about her culture, it was in a minimizing and facetious way. “I didn’t know that Gramma was full-blooded. She would always say, I got a little Indian in me. We would always tease her about how tan she would get in the

³⁰² Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³⁰³ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³⁰⁴ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

summer.”³⁰⁵ My Uncle Fred also explained that since my grandmother was adopted by her French stepdad at a very young age, everyone assumed that her father was white. “To look at Grampa Alex, who we thought was her dad, he was white. He was French.”³⁰⁶ It was not until my grandmother was an adult that she had her adoption records opened and she was able to confirm the identity of her biological father, who was also Ojibwe. My mom Corrina stated that my grandmother was also able to connect with a number of her half siblings and she realized that many of her childhood friends and neighbors were relatives. “She got in touch with her half brothers and sisters after they had opened her adoption papers to confirm who her dad was. I always thought her half siblings were her cousins.”³⁰⁷

My grandmother grew up with two sisters, Jeannie and Barb, and it was always said that she was characterized as the “rich sister” since she left Mackinac Island after marrying my grandfather and started her life away from the reservation. Despite living a lower working class lifestyle, my Mom said that she remembers many family members calling my grandmother and desperately asking for money. “Family was always calling for money and Grampa said it was enough. Her way of avoiding that was to literally avoid them.”³⁰⁸ As she grew older and began to set better boundaries, Dawn said that my grandmother began to embrace her extended family and she was committed to reconnecting with relatives and her tribal community. This became extremely evident after her mother, my great-grandmother Charlotte, passed away. Dawn stated that she

³⁰⁵ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³⁰⁶ Schmidt, Frederick. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³⁰⁷ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³⁰⁸ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

was able to relate to this experience after losing her mother as well. “After Gramma Charlotte passed away, I think that is also where things started to change. I can’t explain how it feels to lose your mother, but it does encourage you to start looking for where your roots were. It’s a shame we weren’t able to take more interest in her life while she was still alive. People have a desire to dig in and find roots when someone significant in their life passes away like a parent or grandparent.”³⁰⁹ Dawn does not remember my grandmother speaking about the poverty and seclusion of the reservation until she was an adult living on her own. She always felt that it was a lifestyle that my grandmother did not want for herself or her children. “There was no talk of the reservation or anything like that until I was out of the home. I don’t think she would have ever wanted to live on the reservation. She knew where she was happy and that was with Grampa. The reservation implied being taken care of to her.”³¹⁰ Education was always something that my grandmother emphasized to her children and Fred felt that she saw a college education as something that would keep them away from the reservation lifestyle. “Many tribal members are just happy to live on the rez and Gramma didn’t want that for her children or grandchildren. She always pushed education as a way out.”³¹¹ My grandmother only received an eighth-grade education and although she attempted to go back to school later in life, she did not find enjoyment in a formalized learning environment. Corrina explained that grandma often said that she “just didn’t like school,”³¹² but we will never

³⁰⁹ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³¹⁰ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³¹¹ Schmidt, Frederick. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³¹² Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

know whether or not her boarding school experience influenced her opinion and the decision to not complete her education.

My grandmother's three eldest children all agreed that they learned the most about their Native culture by visiting my great-grandmother Charlotte at her home on Mackinac Island. Dawn explains that they were never verbally told that they were Native American, but they were actively being taught about the culture on their visits to the island. "We learned because we would go to the island. It wasn't like we would sit at home and talk about it. Just going to the island would bring up the subject. We would go across the boat and Gramma Charlotte would start talking about something and Mom would jump in."³¹³ There are many things that my mom, aunt and uncle remember being shared by my great-grandmother and other relatives, but it was never explained to them as being a part of their Ojibwe culture. Fred remembers hearing a lot of words being spoken in Anishinaabemowin, but he always assumed they were nicknames or words that grandma Charlotte had created herself. "I remember one of the first times going over to the island and meeting Gramma Charlotte at the boat dock. She told me to be careful and not step in the 'uckatawa'. I asked her what that was and she said horse shit. She had lots of little names for things. She would use a lot of Ojibwe words for things and I would pick up on that stuff."³¹⁴ My cousin Alex Joe stated that many of our family members spoke a mixed dialect of Anishinaabemowin and French. They would often interchange names and phrases between Ojibwe and French while speaking³¹⁵. According to Dawn,

³¹³ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³¹⁴ Schmidt, Frederick. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³¹⁵ Cassibo, Alex Joe. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

they were also treated to fry bread as children, but they never knew that it was a Native American dish. “[Gramma Charlotte] always made fry bread and taught us how to play bingo. But funny enough, we didn’t know it was Indian fry bread. She always called it fried gallettes. It is a French term. She would say fry bread sometimes, but it was never Indian fry bread.”³¹⁶ The Ojibwe cultural practices and traditions that my great-grandmother shared with her grandchildren were not seen as Native American, but rituals and personal knowledge from an elder family member. Dawn used the example of grandma Charlotte’s knowledge of plants and natural medicine. “We knew about a lot of things that we didn’t see as Native, but just things that Gramma Charlotte did like when your mom fell and her hand got cut open. Gramma went out into the front yard, pulled a leaf up and pulled out the veins and told your mom to sleep with it on her hand. The next morning it had pulled out all of the dirt and infection. We didn’t think of this as something Native, but that Gramma Charlotte was just good with plants.”³¹⁷ Fred had a similar experience in which he contracted a severe case of poison ivy and grandma Charlotte was able to cure him of the infection within a few days.

Once I was working as a mason tender laying block and the lot they had cleared had a lot of debris and they were burning the poison ivy. I had gotten poison ivy so bad that it was literally in my blood system. And the doctors tried a ton of Benadryl shots and they were talking about putting me in the hospital, but Gramma Charlotte said, ‘Phyllis just give me that boy for a few days and I’ll cure that and we’ll be done with it.’ So, I went to Gramma Charlotte’s for three or four days. She used what I call the [plantain] or medicine leaf and she went out into the yard and picked a ton of them. She put them down on my body as a salve to draw the poison out and then more on top to soothe it. In three days, my poison ivy was gone³¹⁸

³¹⁶ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³¹⁷ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³¹⁸ Schmidt, Frederick. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

My mother recently visited our tribal traditional healer in the summer of 2019 and he shared that our matrilineal lineage comes from a long line of medicine women. My third great-grandmother, who was known as Madame Cadotte³¹⁹, was a midwife on Mackinac Island and she was known to practice traditional healing among the island community. The knowledge and skills that my great-grandmother shared with her grandchildren seem to have been passed down through the generations from one matriarch to the next.

In addition to the learning moments that my mom, aunt and uncle experienced visiting family on our ancestral lands, all three of them identified specific life moments in which they realized that they were Native American. For Dawn, this moment was early in her childhood during the second grade. “I remember some little boy had a crush on me and someone said, ‘oh he likes the squaw’. I could tell that skin color wise, I had some differences.”³²⁰ Corrina was in her teenage years when she first felt that she understood her identity as a Anishinaabekwe after receiving her physical tribal member identification card.

For me, it was when we got our Indian Cards in the early 1980s. Gramma started doing the paperwork to get Aunt Dawn the tuition waiver. Not that I didn’t know before then, but I actually had something that made me go, ‘Oh yeah, I’m Native’. Up until that point, it wasn’t anything that was talked about. And up north, there wasn’t a lot of other races, so there was nothing to compare it too. It was just White or Black. It just wasn’t brought up³²¹

³¹⁹ Madame Cadotte was a mixed-blood Native of Cree and French ancestry. She was born in the Churchill river country between Hudson’s Bay and Great and Little Slave Lakes. Cadotte was given to marriage at the age of twelve to a fur trader of Hudson’s Bay Company. She was described as an “intelligent, industrious, hard-working woman, and is generally respected.”

³²⁰ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³²¹ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

Despite our tribe gaining federal recognition by the U.S. government in 1975³²², people living in our small Northern Michigan hometown were still apprehensive about publicly identifying as Native American. Corrina remembers being embarrassed having to utilize Tribal Health Services to see a doctor and if she saw anyone that she knew in the clinic, she would pretend that she did not see them. She was ashamed to have anyone acknowledge that she was going there for medical care.³²³ It was also in high school that Fred began to recognize our family as being tribal members after my grandmother become involved in helping other local Native families to enroll and receive their tribal identification cards. He also still felt a sense of shame being Native American as many of the local townspeople considered families who were enrolled in the tribe to be struggling financially. “When I was in high school, I kinda knew [we were Native] since Gramma was the one who took Mrs. Grawndin and her kids down to sign up for their tribal cards. It was like an unspoken nod if you were Native. It was considered almost like you were on welfare if you were Native, so you didn’t march down the halls exclaiming that you were Native.”³²⁴ As Fred grew up, he began to feel a sense of pride in being an Ojibwe man and it was specifically his naming ceremony that inspired him to take more initiative

³²² The process to obtain federal recognition for the “Original Bands of Chippewa Indians and Their Heirs” began in 1953. Descendants of both Sugar Island and Sault Ste. Marie were interested in pursuing federal recognition as a way for the tribe to contract with the federal government for basic services such as adequate housing, employment opportunities and hunting and fishing rights. The federal recognition process took over 20 years to complete. The descendants gathered archival documents, historical records, census rolls, church and military records. In the early 1970’s, the leaders of the Original Bands of Chippewa Indians traveled to Washington to submit their historical findings and legal argument to the Secretary of the Interior, who granted the tribe federal status in 1972. Once federal recognition was complete, the Original Bands became the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Land was taken into trust by the tribe in 1974 and Sault Tribe members adopted a constitution in 1975.

³²³ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³²⁴ Schmidt, Frederick. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

in learning about our heritage. It was a spiritual moment that he had never experienced before.

Aunt Kate called me and said you have got to get up to the Lambert Center. The traditional healer is here and I got you an appointment to see him to get your Anishinaabe name, clan and colors. You need to bring tobacco and cloth. He asked me what I did for a living and I told him I was an ironworker. He said, ‘oh our people like to work at great heights, they like to soar like eagles. As soon as he started drumming and chanting, it took me to a different place. There was just a different aura in the room. Whoever he was talking to, I could hear them answer. It was like an echo. He knew that Gramma was from the island and he said ‘your father is white, you have his eyes’. He also said ‘the spirits tell me that one day you will speak for your people’. My traditional colors were white and lilac and my clan was the eagle clan. My name in Ojibwe means Red Stone, which is what our people have also used to make pipes. There are only a few specific spots in Minnesota that you can find this stone. We were in ceremony for over two hours, but it really only felt like twenty minutes. That was when it hit me, that I was Native American. I had reached manhood and I now had my name, clan and colors. And after that, I started to take more interest in learning more about our culture.³²⁵

The three older siblings felt that their youngest sister, my Aunt Kate, had a different understanding of her Native American identity since she was born later in my grandmother’s life. Dawn observed that my grandmother began taking more interest in reconnecting with her Ojibwe culture when my youngest aunt was a teenager. “Aunt Kate will have a completely different take on this. She is seven years younger than Uncle Fred. Gramma started wanting to learn more around the time Aunt Kate was in high school”³²⁶ Both Corrina and Dawn felt that Kate had an advantage in that my grandmother was able to help her to think of her Native identity in a more positive way than she had done with her oldest children. “Aunt Kate had the benefit of Mom looking back on her life and identifying more with her heritage. It became more natural to her as she got older. Aunt

³²⁵ Schmidt, Frederick. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³²⁶ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

Kate was at a different time in her life with Mom.”³²⁷ Corrina also felt that my grandmother was more comfortable identifying as Ojibwe in her older age, which was a great benefit for Kate. “Kate is evidence of the fact that Gramma started identifying as Native more as she got older. I can remember going to powwows, but not as much as Kate. I think that is because once the older kids left the house, it gave her the opportunity to go out to more ceremonies. It was her way of socializing.”³²⁸ Kate also worked for our tribal health center, The Lambert Center, as a medical administrator for over three years and her boss only spoke to her in Anishinaabemowin. She had more exposure to our language and cultural practices working on the reservation and learned a lot about traditional medicine. Dawn said that Kate picked up on many of the Anishinaabemowin words and was able to start answering back in the language, but she felt that once Kate left that job, she started to draw away from the culture. “It’s not that she [Aunt Kate] wasn’t proud of [being Native], but there was a side she wasn’t very proud of [i.e. reservation life, etc.]”³²⁹ Despite stating that she did not feel shameful about identifying as Native American or working on the reservation, it was evident that Kate was not comfortable visiting family that lived in tribal housing.

At that time in my life, I had my 21st birthday while working at the Lambert Center, I only stopped to see them [family] unless Gramma made me. When Uncle Roger was in the wheelchair, we ended up going a lot. I never felt like it was shameful and I didn’t see any discrimination or any of that. I don’t know if its because I’m so much younger. Times have changed and evolved, but I do still feel like when I say my aunt lived on the rez, there is some stigma attached to that.³³⁰

³²⁷ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³²⁸ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³²⁹ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³³⁰ Smith, Katherine. Personal interview. 1 July 2016.

Dawn also agreed that Kate felt more shame in the fact that we had a number of family members living on the reservation. It may have been the connotation that reservation life was equal to living in a low-income area. Even as Kate grew older and had children of her own, Dawn remembers not being allowed to take Kate's daughter Brooklyn up to the reservation to visit her Aunt Jeannie. She often felt that the homes were unclean and she did not want to expose her daughter to such an environment.

Even though Kate was immersed in our Ojibwe culture while working on the reservation, it was not until she was an adult that she strongly identified with her Anishinaabe heritage. The specific moment she remembers is when she wanted to go back to college and she had to process paperwork with the government in order to get her tuition paid for through the Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver program³³¹. "I guess I first recognized that I was Native was when it mattered. And when it mattered it was when I wanted to go to college and I needed to show proof that I was Indian. I think my revelation was when Central Michigan made me go through a federal entity to recertify my blood quantum."³³² Kate consistently stated that she did not feel she had to disclose the fact that she was Native American until a situation in which she had to prove her identity and she felt that she did not have to do this until later on in her adult life. She also agreed with her sister Corrina in that there was a consistent racial binary that existed

³³¹ The Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver or Public Law 174 enacted in 1976 that waives the tuition costs for eligible Native Americans attending public community colleges or universities within the State of Michigan. It waives tuition for full-time or part-time undergraduate or graduate courses, but students are still responsible for all other fees and expenses including room and board, books, supplies, etc. To be eligible, one must be enrolled in a US federally recognized tribe, be a resident of Michigan for at least twelve consecutive months, be accepted for enrollment at a public community college or university in Michigan and be certified as one-quarter Native American blood quantum.

³³² Smith, Katherine. Personal interview. 1 July 2016.

in Northern Michigan and that was between White and Black folks. Native Americans were often grouped in the White category and unfortunately were often a last forethought for many individuals navigating racial tensions and relations in the area. “Being so far up north, I never heard any distinctions between being Native and non-Native until I had to show proof of it. I didn’t feel any different, I didn’t say anything. Most of my friends were tribal. I had Indian friends, I worked at an Indian place and I had Indian family, so I never realized any distinction and I didn’t identify as anything out of the ordinary.”³³³

It is unfortunate that my grandmother walked on on June 19, 2007 and that she is no longer physically alive to answer questions about her boarding school experience, but as the eldest grandchild, I have taken on the role of educating and guiding my younger cousins in learning more about their Ojibwe heritage and to be proud tribal members. After my grandmother’s death, it seemed as though the last link to our Anishinaabe culture was now gone and my younger cousins still continue to struggle with understanding their own identities and what it means to be an Anishinaabeg. I was blessed to have over twenty years with my grandmother and I grew up close to her, so I was able to learn bits and pieces of cultural practices such as sewing and beadwork. Dawn also felt that my grandmother began attending powwows and ceremony more frequently once she had grandchildren. It was a way for her to not only reclaim experiences and reconnect with extended family members, but to share things with her grandchildren that she wasn’t able to provide for her children.

Going to powwows was Gramma’s way of reclaiming and to help her children learn as she was also learning. She couldn’t pass things on to us, but she wanted

³³³ Smith, Katherine. Personal interview. 1 July 2016.

to reclaim things. It was important to her to take you and Pat, she loved exposing those things to you. But I think she was also a little sad that she couldn't pass on more. And even though she didn't talk a lot about things, I don't think she had or knew much to talk about. It may have even brought up sadness or even conflict for her.³³⁴

It is still a struggle for the younger generation to understand and connect with our Anishinaabe heritage and culture, which was even more exacerbated by the loss of our grandmother. My cousin Gabbi has often stated that the only things she knows about being Native is that she has a tribal identification card and that her college tuition is paid for through the Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver program.³³⁵ While attending college at Ferris State University, Gabbi was involved in the Native American student organization on campus for a short while, but stopped attending after she felt uncomfortable in claiming her Ojibwe heritage while not appearing phenotypically Native with her blonde hair and blue eyes. Dawn stated that throughout our immediate family “everyone has a different comfort level in reclaiming our culture.”³³⁶ Her own sons struggled as young kids to understand what it meant to be Ojibwe while living away from family in downstate Michigan. The distance from family was not only difficult for Dawn and her sons, but also navigating the public-school system and the history that was being taught as a part of the curriculum. “I remember telling Ben when he was little that we were Indians and he looked at me and said, ‘no we are not, we don't live in teepees’. I thought, oh wow, they've already gotten to him and he's only in preschool.”³³⁷ It is evident that each family member reflects on their own identity as an Anishinaabeg in different ways

³³⁴ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³³⁵ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³³⁶ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³³⁷ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

and particularly at certain stages in their lives. Corrina felt that her own desire to reclaim more of her Native American culture became stronger in middle adulthood. “The need for reclaiming gets stronger as you age and reach a new level of spirituality that you don’t experience in your 20s and 30s.”³³⁸ She also stated that as she has grown older, it is not necessarily the act of saying and claiming that you are Ojibwe, but realizing how influential and intertwined the culture and knowledge becomes a part of the daily practices in your life. “Besides just verbally saying you are Native, you need to feel how it affects you in your daily life and in your beliefs. For example, believing that souls come back as butterflies at my house. For Aunt Kate, it is hummingbirds. In my 20s, would I have thought that? Hell no.”³³⁹

After reflecting on their own identities and experiences as Anishinaabeg, my grandmother’s children have begun to understand how her boarding school experience may have impacted their own perceptions of tribal belonging and cultural knowledge. The intergenerational impact of the boarding school experience became even more apparent after learning more about the previous generations that also went through the traumatic assimilative system. Dawn stated that she felt her mother did not want to identify as Native American not only because of her experience at Harbor Springs, but because of her own mother’s, Dawn’s grandmother’s, journey through the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and the Michigan Child Welfare system. “There are many things in our lives that we didn’t realize were a part of the boarding school experience that they all had. I think that not wanting to identify as Native came

³³⁸ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³³⁹ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

from Gramma Charlotte's experience. I [wish I could] talk to Mom about how she felt about having a mother that was in a boarding school and what she may have been told to not talk about."³⁴⁰ Dawn's sister Corrina also agreed that our family is still experiencing a sense of familial disturbance and intrusion that was caused by Charlotte's intense and traumatizing experience during and after attending boarding school. "Especially since she was essentially being hunted down [by the state government] and it was probably not a good memory for her."³⁴¹ Dawn stated that it was a healing and spiritual experience to visit the grounds of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School during the 2017 annual "Honoring, Healing and Remembering" event. It was a day full of many moments of sadness and mourning, but also was an important and crucial component of her own personal journey in reclaiming her Anishinaabeg culture and identity.

I spent the day at the site of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding school participating in the "Honoring, Healing and Remembering" event. I did it for my grandmother and her family members who were sent there, I did for my mother and family members who were sent to the Harbor Springs Holy Childhood Boarding School and I did it for myself and my future offspring. As we toured the facility, I carried my Aunt Jeannie's medicine bag (the one that was given to me by my cousin Ken). I felt the pain as I saw initials of children carved into what is called the wall of tears and allowed myself a moment to mourn all that had been lost there. And then, I watched as a sacred healing ceremony was performed. I listened to the beat of the drum that echoed through the abandoned buildings and I heard the voices of song being lifted up. And as I participated in dance, a smile came to my lips and a feeling of peace came over me. Here I stood upon the ground where my family was forbidden to practice anything Native. A place where our culture was taken from not only my grandmother but from her future children and grandchildren. Here I was...reclaiming my culture. I listened as our language was spoken and thought how ironic it was that this site was now Indian

³⁴⁰ Clayton, Dawn. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

³⁴¹ Huffman, Corrina. Personal interview. 28 June 2016.

land and that our ways were being honored here. It was a wonderful, emotional, and educational day spent with my nieces and look forward to the next time.³⁴²

While it is incredibly important to honor and remember the experiences of our ancestors who personally experienced the boarding school system firsthand, there is an increasing need to recognize and explore the ways in which the attendance of family members and loved ones continues to impact the lives of their children, grandchildren and future generations. Dr. Suzanne Cross, member of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and Associate Professor of Social Work at Michigan State University, addressed this notion during her 2012 keynote address at the Honoring, Healing and Remembering annual event in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. Dr. Cross stated “I intend no diversion from the experiences of others who actually attended boarding school. However, it is important to acknowledge parental attendance had an impact on the lives of their children and continues to resonate in the subsequent generations.”³⁴³ She discussed her experiences as the child of a boarding school survivor who continued to practice habits that she unknowingly inherited from her mother.

At lunch my friend and I were sitting across from each other at a restaurant when she noticed my first action is to quickly take the silverware which was rolled up in a cloth napkin and put it in the exact proper setting. Then she noticed I cut my food into tiny little pieces and ate with exactitude. She asked, ‘how did you learn to do that?’ I said, ‘boarding school’. She said, ‘I didn’t know you went to boarding school?’ I promptly responded, ‘I didn’t, but my mother did’. I actually was surprised by my own response. I learned much from my mother’s boarding school experience, which includes to eat quietly and precisely for the consequence of making any noise with your silver or plateware was to take mandatory leave from the table. To clean the house with such detail to include the use of

³⁴² Clayton, Dawn. Mt. Pleasant Event Reflection. Facebook. 6 June 2017, 9:35 p.m., <https://www.facebook.com/dawn.clayton.94/>. Accessed 6 June 2017.

³⁴³ Keynote Address: Dr. Suzanne Cross, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (6 July 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHSzms9t9rQ>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

toothbrushes, q tips and toothpaste to remove the smallest particle of dirt which was barely seen by the naked eye.³⁴⁴

Lois Maki also stated that although she did not attend boarding school herself, she felt the impact of their experiences within their family home. She said that although it was difficult for many of her relatives to verbally speak about their experiences, the trauma and significance was obvious through their habits and actions. “Boarding schools and government rules did this to us. I did not go to an Indian boarding school, but yet I felt the results of the horrors my relatives faced in the schools, taken from their families and sent away to learn to be American. My parents, grandparents and siblings brought the horrors, the stories, home to share. Though they did not share with words. Their actions spoke what they could not say” (Maki 114-115). It has become important to Lois to reclaim the parts of her Ojibwe culture that she felt was taken away as a result of the boarding school system. She describes the silence that she experienced from her family members as a way to protect the remaining pieces of their traditional stories and ritual practices and to survive during a period in time when it was not safe to identify as Native American. “I am learning the ways of my ancestors. I am learning to be proud of my Indian blood. The government schools did not take all of the culture away. Some of the so-called “drunken Indians” were wise in keeping up a front while secretly concealing our culture and stories, waiting for the time to share again, to teach and bring back respect to the Anishinaabe and other tribes of America” (Maki 115). According to Kevin Chamberlain, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe member and former elected chief, many of

³⁴⁴ Keynote Address: Dr. Suzanne Cross, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (6 July 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHSzms9t9rQ>. Accessed: October 22, 2018

the negative stereotypes that are often associated with Native Americans such as alcoholism and domestic abuse can be tied directly to the boarding school experience. “They think that we choose to drink, they think that we choose to ignore our children, they think that some of us choose to live the way that some of us have lived and died. This [the boarding school] is why we are the way we are.”³⁴⁵ Chamberlain emphasized that in addition to the trauma that our ancestors experienced as boarding school students, it also created a level of cultural amnesia that has spread from generation to generation. As a result of this forgetfulness and inability to connect with traditional cultural practices, many tribal communities have seen their people turn to drug and alcohol abuse as a way to cope with this loss. “We don’t choose to drink. We don’t know where else to turn because we don’t know who we are. And we are in the process every day, more and more, determining who we are and rediscovering who we are.”³⁴⁶

The history of the Native American boarding school system in the State of Michigan not only offers an explanation of how and why colonialism has been destructive to Native American identities and communities, it was also the product and result of the continuous settler colonial desire to acquire all Indigenous lands. The 1836 Treaty of Washington lead to the decision to allow Michigan to enter into statehood on January 26, 1837, which also interrupted the economic development and stability between the Anishinaabeg and European fur traders of the Great Lakes. The Mount

³⁴⁵ Special Statement from Kevin Chamberlain, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (24 May 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGkAu6giIUc&index=18&list=WL>. Accessed: October 22, 2018.

³⁴⁶ Special Statement from Kevin Chamberlain, Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on Youtube (24 May 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGkAu6giIUc&index=18&list=WL>. Accessed: October 22, 2018.

Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School was created and developed from the Article 2 section of the 1855 Treaty of Washington, which outlined that the United States would pay \$80,000 for educational purposes in order to establish an allotment land system for Michigan Indians. In order to continue dismantling the identities and cultural traditions of Anishinaabeg and literally disconnecting them from their lands, the creation of boarding schools such as the MPIIBS in Mount. Pleasant, Michigan was a way in which to emphasize the forced separation of families, interrupt the role of parenting and child rearing and create a pseudo foster care system after the closure of the school in 1934. In order to eradicate a culture or a targeted population, one of the easiest and influential strategies is to infiltrate a nation through their children. The assimilative and abusive influences of the boarding school experience dramatically impacted not only the self-esteem and cultural identity of an individual student, but the collective identities of their community and their future children and grandchildren. It is through this intergenerational experience that many Native Americans have forgotten their language, their cultural practices and their ancestral histories. They have lost the ability to understand what it means to be an Anishinaabeg.

The sharing of boarding school histories and stories is a way for Native Americans to reclaim and recover a sense of agency that their ancestors were once denied through the process of settler colonialism and assimilation. Part of this recovery process is simply knowing and acknowledging the collective history of one's family and tribal community. The sharing and collecting of oral narratives is in itself a large part of the healing process and these counternarratives provide the foundation for collective

memory. It is through collective memory that a group identity is able to develop and provides space to heal from the loss of collective cultural practices and the use of traditional language. The boarding school survivor testimonies assist in providing intergenerational healing among families, which is crucial and important as the children and grandchildren of survivors are often more withdrawn and distance from the evolving collective narrative. Additionally, the sharing of these stories allows for family members to understand how they individually exist within the narrative and how their parents' and grandparents' experiences continue to collectively impact the lives of multiple generations.

The act of sharing boarding school stories not only provides context to a family member's experiences, but is also a form of healing, ceremony, medicine and reclamation. As a three-generation descendant of Native American boarding school survivors, it has been important to reclaim and share the stories and experiences of my ancestors, while also exploring the ways in which this history has impacted how my own family understands and expresses our Anishinaabe culture and identity. The process of researching and writing this dissertation has in itself created a space for healing and reclamation as I was able to gather and share information about my grandmother and great-grandmother's boarding school experiences that were once an unknown mystery to myself and my family. As I finish writing this dissertation, I'm currently pregnant with my first child who is due in May and I cannot help but include her in this process of healing and reclamation. As an Anishinaabekwe, my literal existence is resistance and I'm carrying a piece of the next generation who will have a strong connection to her

Native culture. I will share the stories of her great-grandmother's boarding school experience and she will learn the history of our people. I never want her to question her identity as an Anishinaabekwe and I hope that she will always carry the stories of our ancestors' resilience.

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BIOGRAPHY

Melissa Beard is an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Her traditional name in Anishinaabemowin is Awunkoquay, which translates into Woman in the Fog and she is eagle clan. Melissa received a Bachelor of the Arts in Journalism from Michigan State University in 2009 and a Master of Arts in Film and Media Studies from Wayne State University in 2011. She is currently employed as an Intercultural Specialist for Native American/Indigenous Student Initiatives through the Student Life Multicultural Center at The Ohio State University. Additionally, Melissa is a STEP Faculty Mentor and Adjunct Instructor at The Ohio State University. Melissa served as the Indigenous Advisor for the 2017 and 2018 ACPA—College Student Educators International Conventions.