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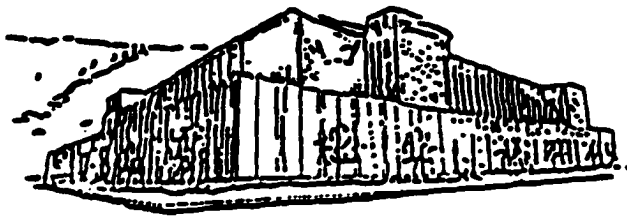
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**BUILDING SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS FOR NATIVE YOUTH**

**A Case Study of a Facilities-based Youth Organization in Indian Country**

by

**Howard A. (Hal) Schmid**

**B. A. University of Oregon, 1976**

**M. A. The University of Montana, 1994**

**Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements**

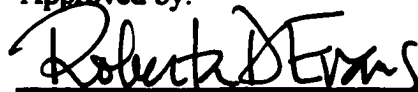
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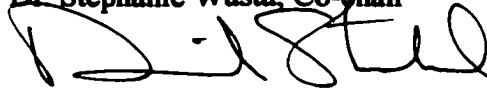
Approved by:



**Dr. Roberta Evans, Co-chair**



**Dr. Stephanie Wasta, Co-chair**



**Dr. David Strobel, Dean, Graduate School**

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**Building Supportive Community Organizations for Native Youth: A Case Study of a Facilities-based Youth Organization in Indian Country**

Co-chair: Dr. Roberta Evans

Co-chair: Dr. Stephanie Wasta

Children are educated in three complementary domains—home, school, and community. Thus, community youth organizations can play an important role in helping children and youth become healthy and productive adults. However, little research has been conducted in this area, and most available literature focuses on urban areas.

This case study examined a facilities-based youth organization in a rural American Indian reservation community on the Great Plains. The organization had been operating for ten years and was one of the first organizations in Indian Country to receive a charter from Boys & Girls Clubs of America. The study examined how the local organization formed, the role it played in the community, and its efficacy as perceived by community members.

Using qualitative case study design, data was collected via observations, document collection, and semi-structured interviews with club staff, student members, and community adults. Findings were derived primarily from the participant interviews, and storytelling and personal oral histories played a key role. This was consistent with the cultural setting. Categories and themes emerged during data analysis. Findings were reported in a narrative format intended to holistically preserve the integrity of the stories and the cultural perspective.

The study found that a core group of adults organized to create a safe place for youth in their community, motivated by changes they witnessed over their lifetime and, in some cases, by the loss of a young family member. The director played a key role, providing energy and vision. He actively engaged in community organizing and community building, and he reached outside the community to acquire valuable skills and resources. The organization's impact was seen as positive and multifaceted. Adequate, stable funding remained the greatest challenge however.

Study findings should prove useful for other rural or reservation communities. There are implications for practitioners and policy-makers as well, both Native and non-Native, and for national organizations operating in Indian Country.

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This case study could not have been undertaken without the openness, willing participation, and collaborative spirit with which I was received during my visits to the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation. Therefore, I would like to thank the director, staff, and student members of the Boys & Girls Club there, as well as the Tribal Council. I have grown personally through this experience and hope that I am able to contribute, in some small way, to helping build a better future for the next generation as you are doing.

Finally, I wish to thank my family for their patience and support, in addition to their frequent critiques, while my family wishes to acknowledge their indebtedness to Dr. Evans, as do I.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Statement of the Problem

Children, in the United States, are educated in three complementary arenas—home, school, and community. However, in an article published in *Phi Delta Kappan* in 1991, Stanford University professors Heath and McLaughlin asserted that “schools as social institutions are inadequate because they are built on outmoded assumptions about family and community” (p. 624). Certainly families have changed dramatically over the past twenty-five years. In 1997, the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that more than 28 million school-age children had both parents, or their single-parent sole provider, working outside the home (as cited in U. S. Department of Education & U. S. Department of Justice, 2000). Citing a 1998 U. S. Bureau of Labor Force Statistics study, the authors of *Working for Children and Families* stated that “in 69% of all married couple families with children ages 6-17, both parents work outside the home; in 71% of single mother families and 85% of single father families with children ages 6-17 the custodial parent is working” (U. S. Department of Education & U. S. Department of Justice, 2000, p. 5). The U. S. Department of Education (2000) has estimated that, when the school day ends, “at least 8 million of our children are left alone and unsupervised” (p. 1). This figure could actually range as high as 15 million, according to the National Association of Elementary School Principals (1999, p. 1).

Obviously, there are serious academic implications in these statistics. In *Working for Children and Families*, the authors reported that “in a 1994 Harris poll, more than

one-half of teachers singled out 'children who are left on their own after school' as the primary explanation for students' difficulties in class" (U. S. Department of Education & U. S. Department of Justice, 2000, p. 5). There are more than academic implications here however. A 1998 report from the Federal Bureau of Investigation pointed out that juvenile crime triples in the hours immediately following school, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention said that juveniles are most likely to be the victims of violent crime during these same after-school hours (cited in National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 1999, p. 1). Juvenile violence impacts everyone. Hawkins (1997) has shown, with regard to frequency, that the commission of violent crimes in the U. S. peaks at age seventeen before it begins to drop again.

As sobering as these statistics are, the outlook for American Indian children and youth in this nation is even more grim. A 1994 report by the U. S. Health and Human Services Department identified American Indian youth between the ages of 15 and 24 as the ethnic group with the highest suicide rate in the U. S. That rate was a startling 26.3 suicides per 100,000 young people. At 13.8 per 100,000 individuals, the suicide rate for European American youth—the next closest youth group—was nearly half the rate given for American Indians. Latino and African American youth, by comparison, followed with rates of 9.9 and 9.1 respectively ("Suicide Greater," 1994).

Certainly, economic setting must play a part in this disparity. A survey published by a physicians' task force from Harvard University in 1985, entitled *Hunger in America*, ranked counties in the United States with the highest indices of poverty. Six of the top ten counties were rural counties located in Montana that, for the most part, included major portions of Indian reservations (P. Miller, personal communication, October 30,



1995). Another three were rural counties in neighboring South Dakota. Foremost on the physicians' list was Shannon County, South Dakota, which encompasses a large portion of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Five years after the Harvard study, the 1990 U. S. Census found Shannon County was still the poorest county in the nation, with 63% of the population reported to be living below the poverty line (Little Eagle, 1993). Children make up a substantial proportion of this statistic.

When Indian children enter school, they face additional challenges in adapting to social environments they often find foreign and far from friendly. The result is predictable. According to one demographer, Hodgkinson (1990), nearly 36% of all Indian students leave school prior to graduating from high school. Some sources estimate this number a little lower while others place it higher (Eberhard, 1989; Kleinfeld, Williamson McDiarmid, & Hagstrom, 1989; Philips, 1983). However, despite different figures these sources cite, American Indian youth remain notable for having the highest dropout rate for any ethnic group in the United States. The ramifications for the nation socially, as well as for Indian youth personally, are considerable. In Montana, for instance, prison populations are represented disproportionately by American Indians—16% of the inmate population is Indian while Indians make up approximately 7% of the general population in the state. In South Dakota, American Indians represent 9% of the state population but account for over 23% of the prison population (Maguire & Pastore, 1995, p. 546; U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1994, p. 35).

A simple and solitary solution is unlikely. The situation is complex and multifaceted. It therefore stands to reason that the social and educational response might be complex and multifaceted as well. As such, the Carnegie Council's Task Force on Youth

Development and Community Programs underscored one positive understanding (and possible course of action) in the subtitle of their 1992 report, *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours*. That is, while the after-school hours present the greatest risks for adolescents and youth, these hours can potentially offer our children some of their greatest opportunities as well. The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services reported in 1995 that adolescents and youth who spend 1 to 4 hours per week in extracurricular activities are half as likely to use drugs and only 33% as likely to become teen parents (cited in NAESP, 1999, p. 1).

The Carnegie Council task force subsequently elaborated, in the body of their 1992 report, their conviction that the community plays a critical role in the maturation of adolescents into healthy young adults:

Young adolescents, aged ten to fifteen, do not become mature adults without assistance. They are profoundly influenced by experiences they have at home and in school, but they are also affected by experiences in their neighborhoods and the larger community during the nonschool hours. . . . (p. 9)

However, many educators and policy-makers believe that the community setting is underutilized. They advocate for increased educational and recreational opportunities during the non-school hours (Halpern, Spielberger, & Robb, 2001; NAESP, 1999; USDE, 2000). Several specifically highlight the role that community youth organizations can play in the development of adolescents into healthy, well-adjusted adults (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992; Heath & McLaughlin, 1991; Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1982; McLaughlin, Irby, & Langman, 1994; Roth & Hendrickson, 1991).

There are serious discrepancies in the availability of community programs for adolescents and youth however. There are also issues concerning youth participation. The authors of *A Matter of Time* noted that adolescents from low-income families have far fewer opportunities to participate in youth programs than do their middle- and upper-income peers (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992). Social services, in general, tend to be less readily available in rural areas than they are in urban and suburban areas. Furthermore, throughout the United States as a whole, youth participation in national organizations (such as YMCA, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, and Boys & Girls Clubs of America) declines precipitously after age 12 (McLaughlin et al., 1994).

### Context of the Study

Given that community youth organizations can serve a critical function in a balanced educational system then, this proposed case study investigation will examine one facility-based community youth organization that has been in operation in Indian Country since 1992. As with several other studies in this area of community youth organizations and after-school programs—particularly *Urban Sanctuaries* (McLaughlin et al., 1994), *Working for Children and Families* (U. S. Department of Education & U. S. Department of Justice, 2000), and *21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers* (U. S. Department of Education, 2000)—the purpose of this case study will be to investigate the efficacy of a grassroots effort in one Native community.

Located in a small, rural, and isolated Indian reservation community situated on the Great Plains in the western United States, the identified youth organization is a local “grassroots” effort to provide a safe place, in addition to educational and recreational

programs, for children and youth. Founded in 1992, the organization later incorporated and received non-profit status. In 1994, it received a charter from, and became affiliated with, the national Boys & Girls Clubs of America organization. Using case study design, data will be collected at the youth facility and in the local community. Methodologies will include participant observation, document collection, and semi-structured interviews with adolescent and youth members, former youth members, program directors and staff, the executive director, and current and former board members. Further, interviews with members of the local Indian community, juvenile and law enforcement officers, as well as teachers and administrators at the local school, will be conducted. Figure 1, on page 7, graphically depicts the setting of the Boys & Girls Club in the community. Political and economic institutions, agencies, and individuals are located in the upper half of the graphic. Cultural elements and individuals are located in the lower half.

While a community youth organization can never replace the important functions of the family or school, for many adolescents and youth who are making the difficult transition to adulthood, active membership in a youth organization and participation in community-based activities may offer the best hope of achieving healthy and productive lives. Community is, in this sense, the third leg of a stool that provides a stable “step up” for adolescents developing into healthy adults. Positive values, accepting responsibility, and high self-esteem may characterize an individual—but these behaviors are learned and expressed within the social context of family, peers, and community. Thus, the need for positive adult role models, a supportive community of peers, and the opportunity to participate in constructive activities are critical if high-risk youth—youth who are extremely

**Political****Economic****Cultural**

*Figure 1.* Social Setting of the Youth Organization in the Community.

vulnerable to school failure, social maladjustment, or in danger of making unsafe health and lifestyle choices—are to overcome challenges in their environment.

Few studies are available, however, with regard to community youth organizations that are successful in attracting and retaining high-risk minority youth. Existing studies are set almost exclusively in urban areas (Heath & McLaughlin, 1993b; McLaughlin et al., 1994). Rural communities, on the other hand—with their lack of social services, with their lack of monetary resources, and with their diffuse populations and scarce recreational facilities—have tremendous obstacles to overcome in simply establishing viable organizations for youth. Thus, while the needs of young people in rural areas have never been greater, research regarding community youth organizations and community-building activities for disaffected adolescents and youth in this setting is practically non-existent.

This point is especially pertinent with regard to American Indian populations in the United States. These populations tend to be characterized by high birth rates and youthful populations. Hodgkinson (1990) identified American Indian birth rates as 27.5 births per 1,000 individuals in 1986 as compared to 15.7 births per 1,000 individuals in the general population. Certainly the deferred dreams, futures, and lives of Native youth in America's countryside are as vital a concern for this society as are the more visible lives of youth in our inner-cities. Yet, as reported by the national press, between 1988 and 1991 the United States led 23 other industrialized nations with a youth homicide rate of 37 deaths per 100,000 young males between the ages of 15 and 24 (Ryan, 1994, p. 5). A physician at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control asserted summarily: “The second and third causes of death among young people are suicide and homicide”

(p. 5). What our children and youth need, broad-based literature in the social sciences concurs, is to form relationships with adults who care.

### **Research Questions**

This case study will investigate the circumstances surrounding the formation of a community youth organization in Indian Country, the efficacy of the organization's effort to address perceived needs of adolescents and youth in the community, and lessons that might be learned from this organization's experiences. Notwithstanding Stake's (1995) assertion, in *The Art of Case Study Research*, that "the best research questions evolve during the study" (p. 33), this inquiry will be guided by three over-arching questions and several related sub-questions:

**1. What is the nature of the youth organization serving as the focus of the case study?**

What perceived needs in the community served as catalyst and context for the organization?

How and why did the organization evolve?

**2. How did the organization fulfill its original goals?**

What are the outcomes of the organization's efforts?

Has the organization's mission and purpose changed over time?

What impact has the organization made on the community and on the perceived needs within the community?

**3. What findings from this investigation might be beneficial to other communities?**

What, in this organization's experience, can be instructive for other communities?

and individuals who wish to organize community efforts?

What similar challenges (and setbacks) might others expect to experience?

### Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this study, and for the discussion of related literature in the field, the following terms and definitions will be employed.

**Assertions.** Assertions are conclusions drawn from the study, part of the interpretation of data. Stake (1995) called them “a researcher’s summary of interpretations and claims” and traced the term to Erickson (p. 169). Creswell (1998) identified this as the last step in the analysis, where the researcher interprets and makes sense of the data.

**At-risk. High-risk.** At-risk youth are youth who (due to either social, economic, physical, or psychological factors) are in danger of academic failure, social maladjustment, or are prone to dangerous behavioral and lifestyle choices. High-risk youth are youth who are extremely vulnerable to failure, maladjustment, or risky behavior.

*Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, a 1989 report from the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development’s Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents, stated that approximately half of the 28 million boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 17 in the United States were at moderate or serious risk, while around 7 million adolescents were “extremely vulnerable to the negative consequences of multiple high-risk behaviors such as school failure, substance abuse, and early unprotected intercourse. . .” (p. 27).

Any of the following factors might identify or place a child or youth at-risk: economically disadvantaged or living in poverty; having physical or learning disabilities;



limited English proficiency; being victimized by crime; having alcohol- or substance-abusing parents; experiencing racial, ethnic, or sexual-orientation prejudice; poor school attendance; or experiencing abuse or neglect. Examples of high-risk factors might include: alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use; drinking and driving; antisocial, violent, or gang behavior; low educational achievement; running away from home; truancy or dropping out of school; depression and attempted suicide; unprotected sexual activity; and teen pregnancy.

Category. Categorical aggregation. A category is a grouping of coded data. In categorical aggregation, the researcher analyzes the data by looking at “sums or distributions of coded data” (Stake, 1995, p. 169).

Child. Adolescent. Youth. *Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (1987) defines a child as “a young person esp. between infancy and youth” (p. 233), while youth is defined as “the period between childhood and maturity” (p. 1369). For the purpose of this study then—since membership in the youth organization being studied is offered to individuals between the ages of 5 and 18—“child” will be used to indicate any boy or girl who is 12-years-old or less. “Youth” will designate male and female individuals who are between the ages of 13 and 18. Two other terms may be used as well. “Adolescents” will indicate males and females from 10 to 17 (as in the “at-risk” passage above), while “older youth” will designate males and females who are between 18 and 20.

Coding. Open coding. Axial coding. Associated with both phenomenology and grounded theory, coding is a process used in collecting and analyzing data. Stake (1995) stated coding means “classifying observations into files or categories, usually predetermined” (p. 169). This process involves categorization and conceptualization, which is

known as open coding, but it also involves the re-assembly of the data in new ways, which is known as axial coding (Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

**Constructivism.** Constructivism is the belief that knowledge is not an external reality to be discovered. Rather, constructivists believe that knowledge is experiential and actively created, generated, or produced in the context of specific social settings and based upon previous cultural understandings. This is a critical foundation underlying post-positivist thought and the qualitative and grounded theory research paradigm. Stake (1995) highlighted this point when he explained a critical difference between quantitative and qualitative research paradigms: “Quantitative researchers have pressed for explanation and control; qualitative researchers have pressed for understanding the complex interrelationships among all that exists” (p. 37). Thus, as Stake pointed out, the search for explanation and control focuses on an external and fixed conception of reality. Qualitative researchers and grounded theorists, on the other hand, seek to understand and articulate the constructed realities of the subjects, groups, or organizations they are investigating.

**Direct interpretation.** In contrast to categorical aggregation, direct interpretation analysis draws key meanings and interpretation from a solitary instance without connection to other instances or occurrences.

**Effective. Successful.** In prior field research in this area, a community youth organization was considered effective if: (a) it offered a multiplicity of services or opportunities to its youth members; (b) it took an holistic approach, designing and offering activities and programs which engaged the entire person (body, mind, and spirit); (c) its focus was not limited to one activity or function; and (d) the organization's

youth members identified the organization as an important element in their lives and saw membership in the organization as desirable (Heath & McLaughlin, 1993b; McLaughlin et al., 1995). Likewise, success was measured by two indicators of youth participation: (a) the degree to which the club operated at or near its capacity; and (b) the extent of its youth members' active participation and commitment. However, with regard to the current study, new indicators of efficacy may emerge during the investigation.

**Empowerment.** Empowerment means “enabling people to participate openly and directly in making the decisions that govern their lives” (Etzioni, 1993, p. 142).

**Gatekeepers.** Gatekeepers, according to Seidman (1998), are persons who either control (formal gatekeepers) or facilitate (informal gatekeepers) access to individuals identified for interviews.

**Grounded theory.** Strauss and Corbin (1990) defined a grounded theory as one that emerges, or is arrived at inductively, through the study of the identified phenomenon itself. “It is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis,” the authors assert. “Therefore, data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One does not begin with a theory, then prove it” (p. 23).

**Indian. American Indian. Native. Native American.** The term American Indian, or simply Indian, indicates an individual who is socially identified as a member of an American Indian community. Blood quantum and enrolled membership in a federally recognized tribe will not be the determining factors in this study. The right to determine one's own ethnic identity is a critical issue for American Indians. Thus, while I will use the terms Native American (or simply Native), American Indian, and Indian interchange-

ably, it should be understood that I am speaking in general terms and indicating persons who are identified, either officially through tribal enrollment or unofficially through self-identification, as members of an American Indian community.

**Indian Country.** While commonly used in casual conversation, the term “Indian Country” was given legal status by Congress in 1948. According to *American Indian Law in a Nutshell*, Indian Country is any: (a) area within the boundaries of a federally recognized Indian reservation; (b) traditionally recognized Indian land holdings, allotments, and rights of way; or (c) dependent Indian communities on or off reservation lands (Canby, 1998, p. 99).

**Patterns.** A researcher “looks for a correspondence between two or more categories to establish a small number of categories” for coded data (Creswell, 1998, p. 251).

**Protocol.** A protocol is, according to Creswell (1998), “a predetermined sheet on which one logs information learned during the observation or interview” (p. 126). Whether used for interviews or for direct observations, a protocol allows a researcher to organize and categorize data in advance, and it cues the researcher to information that the researcher might overlook or forget during the course of the interview or observation.

**Rural.** Rural designates non-metropolitan areas containing no recognized, incorporated townships of 2,500 people or more. Rural youth organizations are those organizations that draw their youth members from non-metropolitan areas, even if their facilities are located in metropolitan areas.

### **Delimitations and Limitations**

Through case study design and purposeful sampling, this proposed investigation will examine one organization and its particular context. No generalizations to other sites or organizations will be possible. "The real business of case study," Stake (1995) stated, "is particularization, not generalization" (p. 8). This is particularly true in an intrinsic case study such as this one. The unique character of the intrinsic case tends to diminish generalizations, an element that is more critical to quantitative research anyway. The case study, instead, seeks to generate assertions.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) approached the problem of generalizability, or external validity, through two concepts they believed more pertinent to the qualitative paradigm—transferability and fittingness. They stated that the degree to which results from one study can be applied to another context or situation depended on the degree of congruence or similarity between the two settings or contexts. This degree of congruence or similarity they called fittingness.

Eisner (1991) approached the question of credibility and internal validity in qualitative research along three lines of demarcation: (a) structural corroboration, or information substantiated via multiple sources; (b) consensual validation, or verification by the individuals investigated or consensual agreement between the various parties under scrutiny; and (c) referential adequacy, or the degree to which the analysis provides illumination which is recognizable to the readers of the study (pp. 110-114). The present, proposed study, as designed, will provide for structural corroboration. In addition, observations and interviews will be subsequently submitted to the concerned parties for

purposes of verification. It is assumed at this point that referential adequacy will not present a problem.

### **Significance of the Study**

There is little research available that looks at the role and impact of community youth organizations in rural settings. There is little data available that describes youth organizations for American Indian children and youth in the United States. This current research project addresses these absences. It intends to provide feedback to the organization being studied, to the executive director, to the program directors and staff, and to members of the board of directors. It intends to provide information to the wider reservation community, including parents. However, the greatest benefit of this research may come to educational policy-makers and other rural or American Indian communities. This study will provide them with an in-depth examination of one grassroots organization, how it formed, and the impact it has made on young people and the community.

Situated as it is, in a remote and isolated community, the focus organization has overcome tremendous challenges in funding, training, logistical support, and other resources. At the same time, the problems faced by children and families in the reservation community are many of the same faced everywhere. The articulation of this case stands to carry and create meaning, and carry inspiration, to other individuals and to other communities.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**In this chapter, literature serving as a foundation for the development of this case study is reviewed. This review is organized initially into four domains: (a) theoretical, historical, and operational understandings regarding community; (b) research pertaining to community-based youth organizations; (c) issues that have shaped, and continue to shape, education for children in American Indian communities; and (d) information that serves to help define the specific Native community in which this study is set. Finally, literature is reviewed which addresses critical issues related to conducting qualitative case study research in American Indian communities.**

### **Community**

#### **The relevance of community in education and youth development**

**A child's education transpires in three critical and complementary realms—home, school, and community. In a 1992 report titled *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours*, the Carnegie Council's Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs stressed the developmental importance of the adolescent years and the key role that each realm—home, school, and community—plays in the maturation of adolescents into healthy young adults:**

**Young adolescents, aged ten to fifteen, do not become mature adults without assistance. They are profoundly influenced by experiences they have at home and in school, but they are also affected by experiences in their neighborhoods and the**

larger community during the nonschool hours. . . . Young adolescents are preparing to become adults, and experiences in early adolescence help shape what kind of adults they will be. They are developing skills, habits, and attitudes that will determine whether they succeed or fail in school and establish personal and career goals. (p. 9)

Community is thus a critical educational setting for parents, educational policy-makers, and practitioners alike to examine.

### Approaches to defining community

Just as the American landscape has undergone dramatic change over the past two centuries, so too has the nation's expectation for, and experience of, community changed. Wilkinson (1986), in "In Search of Community in the Changing Countryside," discussed three contrasting and contemporary approaches to community. Wilkinson explained that people who subscribe to the first approach believe that community is on its way out. With urbanization, the need for community has been superseded by larger structures in our society. Those who take the second approach, Wilkinson argued, posit that smaller communities have replaced the larger communities. These smaller communities exist as networks, or communities of interest, such as Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) discussed in *Habits of the Heart*. The third view Wilkinson identified—a more traditional approach and the view shared by Wilkinson himself—sees community as something that still exists. Often invisible, it is something that rises to the surface and becomes visible during crises or when other needs arise. Wilkinson articulated three elements integral to this traditional view of community: (a) a local ecology or small



territory; (b) an organization that is holistic and global in structure; and (c) a field of community actions or purpose.

Wilkinson's first approach—viewing community as outdated and unnecessary—seems refuted by the increasing presence of gangs and the success of the facility-based youth organizations in the research cited below (Heath & McLaughlin, 1991; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993a; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993b; McLaughlin, Irby, & Langman, 1994). The remaining two positions—seeing contemporary community as a system of social networks and community as it has been traditionally defined—deserve scrutiny however.

Articulating and describing Wilkinson's second approach in *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, Bellah and his colleagues (Bellah et al., 1985) found that the notion of community to which many Americans still hold—i.e., a town of independent citizens bound by mutual interests as idealized by Thomas Jefferson or Alexis de Tocqueville and represented in Wilkinson's third approach—no longer exists in the main. It has been replaced in mainstream America by “communities of interest”—networks of like-minded individuals who share common interests. “Communities of interest” exist in no single place, are not defined physically, and tend to spread across the country as people follow career tracks or are introduced to each other via electronic media. An even greater contrast to the Jeffersonian ideal, Bellah argued, is the way in which these networks are voluntary associations and temporally quite short-term. They are defined by a value system that sees morality and virtue in relative terms, with each person having a right and an obligation to determine her or his own value system.

**Tönnies' conceptualization of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft***

Amitai Etzioni (1993), founder of the Communitarian Movement, and Figueira-McDonough (2001) each traced the evolution of sociological thought that addressed the social changes triggered by the mass movement of people from rural village communities to impersonal urban centers during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Both scholars highlighted the seminal work of German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies and the conceptual distinctions he articulated. Tönnies used the term *gemeinschaft* to signify the organic community that occurred “naturally” and defined rural, agrarian, peasant life—a physically bounded setting in which the members were known, a shared past was held in common, and self-sufficient economic interdependence was the rule. Tönnies subsequently used the term *gesellschaft* to denote an increasingly urbanized society that was the product of industrialization in his day. In this setting, individuals often had nothing in common with those around them. Relationships occurred rationally—even contractually—and they tended to be artificial, impersonal, and transitory. Figueira-McDonough argued, however, that urban society remained encumbered with persistent *gemeinschaft* ideology. This led to the present *pseudo-gemeinschaft*—an alternative and contemporary conceptualization of community as a network of personal associations or a personal community.

For Figueira-McDonough (2001), Janowitz's work supported a reconceptualization of community:

A fresh look at territorial communities was introduced by Morris Janowitz (1952) with the concept of “community of limited liability.” His work showed that the

urban neighborhood had not become an extinct community but a rather more specialized, more voluntarist, and partial institution.

He recognized that urban residential areas did not have the holistic, organic quality imputed to folk communities, that they were not self-sufficient social systems, and that they had fewer functions. Recognition of these facts freed the concept of territorial communities from a fixed, ideal structure. The purpose of territorial community research was transformed from the hunt for settlements that fitted the *Gemeinschaft* ideal to the investigation of the nature of social organization of neighborhoods and their different forms of community.

An important example of this outlook is offered by Terry Clark (1968), who used systems theory to characterize different types of communities. (pp. 10-11)

Employing systems theory then, Figueira-McDonough asserted, social scientists were no longer compelled to locate autonomous territorial communities but, rather, were freed to pursue comparisons between communities. A comparative approach proved particularly useful for social activists and social scientists who worked as community organizers.

#### Community organizing and community building

Minkler and Wallerstein (1997) noted that the term *social organization* has roots in Tönnies day. Social workers in the Northeastern United States first employed the term “to describe their efforts to coordinate services for newly arrived immigrants and the poor” (31). Their efforts became the settlement house movement of the late 1800s, as we now know it. However, Minkler and Wallerstein also credit social organization driven by African Americans organizers during the post-Reconstruction years, Populist reformers, and labor organizers during the 1930s and 1940s. In recent years, community building

and community development have gained their own added meanings, while community organizing has come to connote interventions by an outside organizer.

*In Community Analysis and Praxis: Toward a Grounded Civil Society*, Figueira-McDonough (2001) clearly identified herself as an outsider with respect to communities she studied and with whom she worked:

The earlier literature on informal exchange romanticizes the power and naturalness of the primary group as the best, if not exclusive, means to achieve social integration. This nostalgic view persists among some contemporary students of community. The Warrens (1980), for example, state that whenever possible, it is preferable to use an informal grassroots network approach to problems rather than to handle them through formal organizations. (p. 19)

Figueira-McDonough's assumed role was that of a positivist, academic, social scientist whose intent was to develop and initiate a sociological intervention from outside:

If community practice is understood as having the community as the unit of intervention, it follows that practice requires an understanding of this unit and the ability to analyze it. To intervene responsibly, a professional has to understand the unit she/he is trying to change. Approaches that conceptualize community as a multidimensional variable permit matched intervention. (p. 14)

Figueira-McDonough's purpose, as she stated it in her book, was to bring political power and economic development—i.e., social justice—to impoverished urban communities. Her method of doing this utilized intervention strategies directed by external experts to essentially reorganize and restructure the target community, ideally helping it operate more effectively and more efficiently.

**Minkler and Wallerstein (1997) adopted a different approach—community building. In a chapter titled “Improving Health through Community Organization and Community Building” in *Community Organizing & Community Building for Health*, the two authors contrasted and compared the two approaches:**

**For the purposes of this book, community organization is the process by which community groups are helped to identify common problems or goals, mobilize resources, and in other ways develop and implement strategies for reaching the goals they collectively have set. The newer and related concept of community building, as Cheryl Walter suggests in chapter 5, is not a method so much as an orientation to ways in which people who identify as members of a shared community engage together in the process of community change.**

**Implicit in both of these definitions is the concept of empowerment—an enabling process through which individuals or communities take control over their lives and their environment (Rappaport 1984). (p. 30)**

**However, as Walter (1997) stated in Chapter 5: “How we conceptualize community powerfully influences what we see and what we do in community practice” (p. 68). She continued:**

**Community organization strategies operate from the assumption that problems in society can be addressed by the community becoming better or differently “organized,” with each strategy perceiving the problems and how or whom to organize in order to address them somewhat differently. The concept of community as a social unit with which we as outsiders interact underlies this way of framing community practice.**

In contrast, the essence of a community building orientation to practice lies in conceptualizing and relating to community as an inclusive, complex, and dynamic system, *of which we are a part*. Such an orientation envisions community as a system that is multidimensional, involving people and organizations at many levels engaged in relationships with one another that are manifested in both actions and consciousness. Community building practice seeks to engage with these multiple dimensions of community, recognizing the range of perspectives and relationships that exist and integrating diverse strategies and methods of practice. The goal is to build the capacity of the entire system, and all of its participants, to operate as community. (Walter, 1997, p. 69)

### **Social capital**

Improving social interactions and the quality of our lives—both individually and collectively—was the focus of Robert Putnam’s *Bowling Alone*, a best-seller in 2000. Putnam, a professor of public policy at Harvard University, examined the nature of social cohesion and the dynamics of contemporary social change. The fundamental concept, around which Putnam’s analysis revolved, was that of social capital. “The core idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value,” Putnam wrote (pp. 18-19). He explained:

Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called “civic virtue.” The difference is that “social capital” calls attention to the fact

that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital. (p. 19)

Social capital can provide both a “private good” and a “public good” at the same time, according to Putnam:

Some of the benefit from an investment in social capital goes to bystanders, while some of the benefit redounds to the immediate interest of the person making the investment. [Furthermore,] networks of community engagement foster sturdy norms of reciprocity: I’ll do this for you now, in the expectation that you (or perhaps someone else) will return the favor. It was Yogi Berra who offered the most succinct definition of reciprocity: “If you don’t go to somebody’s funeral, they won’t come to yours.” (p. 20)

Mr. Berra’s definition is a wonderful example of specific reciprocity.

Putnam, however, pointed out that generalized reciprocity—acting on behalf of someone without expecting anything specific in return from that individual, all the while feeling confident that someone else will one day act on your behalf—is even more valuable:

A society characterized by generalized reciprocity is more efficient than a distrustful society, for the same reason that money is more efficient than barter. If we don’t have to balance every exchange instantly we can get a lot more accomplished. Trustworthiness lubricates social life. Frequent interaction among a diverse set of people tends to produce a norm of generalized reciprocity. Civic

**engagement and social capital entail mutual obligation and responsibility for action. (pp. 20-21)**

**On the other hand, Putnam underscored, networks and their associated norms of reciprocity, while usually beneficial to individuals inside the network, are not always positive to those outside the network. Putnam proffered the case of Timothy McVeigh, an individual whose social capital allowed him to carry out the tragic bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. "Social capital, in short, can be directed toward malevolent, antisocial purposes, just like any other form of capital," Putnam concluded (p. 22).**

#### **Bonding capital and bridging capital**

**One of the most important arguments Putnam constructed in his book had to do with clearly outlining the distinction between *bonding* social capital and *bridging* social capital. Bonding capital is exclusive and inward looking, tending to reinforce exclusive identities and the homogenous groups to which we belong. Bridging capital is inclusive and outward looking. It brings together people of diverse backgrounds and experience and "can generate broader identities and reciprocity" (p. 23):**

**Bonding social capital is, as Xavier de Souza Briggs puts it, good for "getting by," but bridging social capital is crucial for "getting ahead." Bonding social capital constitutes a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40. Bonding social capital, by creating strong in-group loyalty, may also create strong out-group antagonism. (p. 23)**

**Bonding and bridging are not mutually exclusive characteristics however:**



Many groups simultaneously bond along some social dimensions and bridge across other. In short, bonding and bridging are not “either-or” categories into which social networks can be neatly divided, but “more or less” dimensions along which we can compare different forms of social capital. (p. 23)

A very useful concept with which to view community and social interactions, Putnam emphasized that “the term social capital itself turns out to have been independently invented at least six times over the twentieth century, each time to call attention to the ways in which our lives are made more productive by social ties” (p. 19). Its first use was by a state supervisor of rural schools in West Virginia during the Progressive Era.

#### Community/individualism and systems/associations

Putnam’s *Bowling Alone* and Minkler’s *Community Organizing & Community Building for Health* each addressed issues central to contemporary discussions of Tocqueville’s and Tönnies’ social theories, as all contemporary texts in this area must. For Putnam’s part, the Harvard University professor argued that the term “social capital” was to some extent “merely new language for a very old debate” concerning a tension Tocqueville highlighted long ago:

Community has warred incessantly with individualism for preeminence in our political hagiology. Liberation from ossified community bonds is a recurrent and honored theme in our culture. Our national myths often exaggerate the role of individual heroes and understate the importance of collective effort. Nevertheless, the myth of rugged individualism continues to strike a powerful inner chord in the American psyche. (p. 24)

However, Putnam did not buy the sentiment that “community” and civic engagement were on their way out, to be replaced by networks and impersonal urban relationships:

It is emphatically not my view that community bonds in America have weakened steadily throughout our history—or even throughout the last hundred years. On the contrary, American history carefully examined is a story of ups and downs in civic engagement, *not just downs*—a story of collapse *and* of renewal. (p. 25)

In Putnam’s view, the first two-thirds of the twentieth century witnessed a steady increase in civic engagement and community involvement. Only within the past few decades did this pattern reverse.

John L. McKnight (1997), in “Two Tools for Well-being: Health Systems and Community,” a chapter in Minkler’s *Community Organizing & Community Building for Health*, examined the relationship between horizontally-structured community associations (ala Alexis de Tocqueville) and the rise of powerful, hierarchical social systems such as were highlighted by Figueira-McDonough in her discussion of systems theory:

In his monumental work *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville ([1835] 1945) observed that Americans had created a new social tool, the association, a self-generated gathering of common people, or citizens, who assumed the power to decide what was a problem and how to solve it and could then act to carry out the solution. According to Tocqueville, these self-appointed, self-defining assemblies of nonexpert citizens were, in their local aggregate, the new community of the new world—a universe of associated citizens. And through mutually supportive associations, he saw the creation of citizen power that led to a powerful new form of democracy. (pp. 21-22)

McKnight noted, however, that systems—contrary to associations—do not require citizens:

*Citizen* is a political term that describes the most powerful person in a democracy.

An association is a tool to magnify the power of citizens. System tools create and magnify clients. The Greek root of the word *client* is “one who is controlled.”

This is, of course, the opposite of a citizen, “one who holds power.”

A community of associations, then, is a social tool designed to operate through consent, combining the creative uniqueness of the participants into a more powerful form of expression. Put simply, the unique American community is an assembly of associations that is the vital center of our democracy, our creativity, and our capacity to solve everyday problems. (p. 22)

While an individual can certainly be both a citizen at one time and a client at another, McKnight shows that the two social structures are closely connected:

The reason for the apparent decline of our community of associations is not very obvious to most of us, even though it has been clearly defined by such brilliant social historians as Ivan Illich (1976), Jacques Ellul (1965), and Robert Bellah and his colleagues (1985). Their work demonstrates that the weakening of the tools of community results directly from the increasing power of the tools of systems. Indeed, they suggest a paradox—a zero-sum game. As the power of system tools grows, the power of community tools declines. As control magnifies, consent fades. As standardization is implemented, creativity disappears. As consumers and clients multiply, citizens lose power. (p. 22)

There is a direct relationship between the health of community tools and the strength of systems tools, McKnight noted. He summarized his argument: "As systems invade, associations retreat" (p. 23). What he advocated, then, was a balanced approach to health care—one that works to empower citizens and communities while serving their health care needs.

Establishing a new civil society, designing urban villages

Idealists Amitai Etzioni (1993) and Josefine Figueira-McDonough (2001) each proposed social changes to address basic human needs in the area of community. The path each chose, however, was quite different. Figueira-McDonough focused on social justice:

I will argue that community organization has a special role: the reestablishment of a new civil society. My contention is that the market ideology which has dominated what is generally defined as globalization, has in fact reinforced a two-tier society and, in this respect, has eroded democratic ideals. . . . Effective access and participation on the part of excluded citizens requires the cultivation of social capital, and this can best be accomplished in residential communities. Although social capital is usually defined in terms of the internal solidarity of a community, it also involves the capacity of linking to allies on the outside for joint action.

(p. 161)

Figueira-McDonough further asserted her belief that collective action could remove the market ideology stranglehold on the exercise of democratic participation for marginalized citizens. Residential communities—communities of place—and cultivating ties to

external resources via bridging capital played central roles in Figueira-McDonough's vision for establishing a new civil society.

Like Figueira-McDonough, Etzioni (1993), in *The Spirit of Community: The Reinvention of American Society*, decried the devaluation of place-oriented community and the loss of a commitment to shared values and acceptance of responsibility. With the rise of industrialization and urbanization, Etzioni argued, the transition from the constraints and inhibitions of a local village community (*gemeinschaft*) to the autonomy of a large, rationally based, and impersonal society (*gesellschaft*) was seen as desirable, evolutionary, and emancipating. It has not worked out as envisioned however. Still, Etzioni concluded that a return to the village was neither possible nor desirable.

Etzioni therefore sought middle ground. He chose to reassert Wilkinson's (1986) third approach to community—the traditional view that a small territory, holistic organization, and a field of community action characterize community—albeit in unique and modern fashion. He proposed that we rebuild social institutions and local communities around a mutually agreed-upon moral foundation. He proposed redesigning urban areas to foster the development of urban villages. He proposed redesigning multiple family housing units around natural, family-oriented courtyards where neighbors could meet and the supervision of children could be shared. At the same time, Etzioni argued for the continued maintenance of “a supra-community, a community of communities—the American society” (p. 160).

#### Sovereignty—from the divine right of kings to the natural right of nations

In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Benedict Anderson (1983) examined the origins of national identities and shared value

systems that characterize the modern societies of our “supra-communities.” Prior to the rise of nationalism, he argued, the larger communities which existed were hierarchical and either dynastic—the political empires of kings or other such rulers—or religious. The spread of written language and capitalism in Europe brought about a radical change however, as print media and shared economic concerns created new political and social boundaries with a horizontal and secular reach. Images of antiquity were exploited to trace national origins back to a remote past, Anderson stated, while cultural myths and icons were created to inspire allegiance to the new, abstract, “imagined” communities. (Anderson cited the tombs of unknown soldiers, who gave their lives to the motherland, as an example.) For some contemporary political scientists, however, the concept of sovereignty became problematic. They viewed it as a relic of nationalism—an era the scholars saw being rapidly replaced by internationalism. Still others found sovereignty troublesome due to the variety of meanings ascribed to the term, thus making the word itself useless (Fowler & Bunck, 1995).

Many indigenous peoples within the United States consider sovereignty neither useless nor antiquated however. Native Hawaiians have struggled for more than 100 years to have their sovereign status restored following the illegal overthrow of Queen Lili’uokalani’s government by American planters and U.S. Marines in 1893. Activists within the contemporary Hawaiian sovereignty movement have defined sovereignty as “the birthright of a people who share a common culture, language, value system, and land base to exercise control over their lands, their lives, and their future independent of other nations” (Ka Lahui Hawai’i, 1989). Political scientists share the concern for a recognized land base—a defined space, a homeland—in defining sovereignty. Anderson (1983), for

instance, argued that the demarcation of distinct political boundaries was key in the rise of the modern nation-state. Other theorists have argued that sovereignty is antiquated as a result of the eroding importance of national boundaries today in the face of growing internationalism.

For American Indians, the 1832 United States Supreme Court decision in the case of *Worcester v. Georgia* became an important landmark in the area of tribal sovereignty. In that case, which led to the removal of the Cherokee from the state of Georgia, the high court ruled that the sovereign rights of the Cherokee were not rights delegated or granted by Congress. They were inherent—i.e., innate, natural, inborn, intrinsic—rights that had never been extinguished. Those rights had become limited in nature however. Chief Justice Marshall determined that Indian tribes were no longer separate and independent nations but, rather, “domestic dependent nations.” In more than a century and a half since *Worcester v. Georgia*, while court cases have refined and articulated the nature and reach of tribal sovereignty, the inherent rights of American Indian nations have yet to be extinguished. In 1978, in *United States v. Wheeler*, the Supreme Court ruled that tribal governments are “unique aggregations possessing attributes of sovereignty over both their members and their territory” (quoted in American Indian Lawyer Training Program, 1988, p. 35).

#### Summary of the literature addressing community

Tocqueville’s analysis of American society and democratic citizenry and Tönnies’ theoretical conceptualization of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* remain iconic and key resources for contemporary theoreticians. Furthermore, *gemeinschaft* ideology continues to shape our expectations for, and representations of, community. Or maybe it is just that

some parameters of *gemeinschaft* remain desirable for individuals living in our modern society. As Etzioni (1993) indicated, return to the village community of our past is, for the most part, neither possible nor desirable. Yet the solidarity, trust, and connectedness of that setting remain key ingredients in a quality life experience. Therefore, social visionaries such as Etzioni have reasserted the importance of territorial communities, shared values, and a common field of action in their vision for a new society.

Reasserting a new civil society, social theorists have also stressed the importance of actions and structures that serve to empower, rather than control, the members of a community. To this end, Putnam's (2000) articulation of social capital identified bonding capital as the superglue of a community, while bridging capital kept the social machinery well lubricated. Walter (1997) additionally stressed the importance of "conceptualizing and relating to community as an inclusive, complex, and dynamic system, *of which we are a part*" (p. 69). Minkler and Wallerstein (1997) further noted that there "has been a growing appreciation of the importance of organizers facilitating *community building*, a process that people in the community engage in themselves" (p. 32)—a process that increases autonomy, empowerment, and social capital.

Finally, Tocqueville proclaimed that the creation of citizen power, through the rise of mutually supportive associations in the United States, led to a powerful new form of democracy. The term that describes the right to establish and practice that form of governance is sovereignty. It is a natural and intrinsic right of a people. It is an inherent right of a community of communities—the "supra-community," as Etzioni called it.



## Community Youth Organizations

### Filling an important role

While there remains a lack of clear consensus on how community is viewed and experienced, it continues to play a major role in American life. It plays a significant role in American education as well. The 1992 Carnegie Council task force report, *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours*, focused on out-of-school time. Researchers Heath and McLaughlin (1991) likewise stressed the role that community youth organizations can fill: "Policy makers and practitioners concerned with American youth acknowledge the special and critical contribution of community organizations as resources that extend beyond the family and schools" (p. 624). Community organizations are critical since "schools as social institutions are inadequate because they are built on outmoded assumptions about family and community," Heath and McLaughlin asserted (p. 624).

Like Heath and McLaughlin, Roth and Hendrickson (1991) argued that schools are "not equipped to offer [adolescents and youth] comprehensive guidance in developing a code for personal survival" (p. 620). Roth and Hendrickson outlined four reasons why they felt this to be the case:

The first condition that interferes with schools' preventive capacity is their pressing need to demonstrate to all students the values of a diploma. Students resent courses that lack relevance and a clear future payoff. . . .

Second, the various constraints within which teachers operate further limit the ability of schools to instruct young people effectively about actions that may

imperil their future. Teachers are given neither the training nor the discretion to determine the origins of or to assign treatments for high-risk behavior. . . .

Third, the complexity of the interpersonal decisions that adolescents face further calls into question the feasibility of using schools as the primary sites for grappling with lifestyle choices. The type of interactive learning that needs to take place cannot be accomplished through teacher-centered lecturing and the reading of textbooks. . . .

The fourth obstacle to empowering youths through life-management courses pertains to assessment. . . . Assessment of long-term behavioral outcomes is not routinely undertaken in educational settings. Indeed, those students who fail to grasp the consequences (e.g., drug abusers) are among the first to leave school. (pp. 620-621)

As a result, Roth and Hendrickson recommended increased utilization of community youth organizations to fill important functions that neither schools nor families can provide.

With regard to community-based programs for adolescents and youth however, obstacles and recommendations brought to light in the Carnegie Council task force report are complicated by serious discrepancies in program availability and youth participation. *A Matter of Time* reported that adolescents from low-income families have far fewer opportunities to participate in youth programs than do their middle- and upper-income peers. Furthermore, throughout the United States as a whole, participation in national youth organizations (such as the YMCA, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, and Boys & Girls

Clubs) also falls off precipitously for all adolescents beyond 12 years of age (McLaughlin et al., 1994).

### The Urban Sanctuaries study

In what remains the most comprehensive study of community youth organizations to date, Stanford University professors Shirley Brice Heath and Milbrey McLaughlin initiated a five-year ethnographic study in urban centers across the United States in 1987 (Heath & McLaughlin, 1991; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993a; Heath & McLaughlin, Eds., 1993b; McLaughlin et al., 1994). Assembling an extended research network, the team reviewed hundreds of youth organizations and conducted on-site observations for more than sixty of these. Researchers then selected, for in-depth ethnographic study, the organizations they deemed particularly successful in attracting and sustaining active memberships among older youth. These were organizations operating “at capacity” or beyond—thus identified and selected by youth members themselves, the ultimate judges for research team members. “Youth vote with their feet,” argued the researchers. “Youth from inner-city neighborhoods do not participate in organizations or programs, even those with noble charters and intent, when they are irrelevant or inhospitable to youth” (McLaughlin et al., 1994, pp. 7-8). The findings from this ethnographic study were ultimately published as *Urban Sanctuaries: Neighborhood Organizations in the Lives and Futures of Inner-City Youth* (McLaughlin et al, 1994).

*Urban Sanctuaries* identified numerous characteristics common to successful youth organizations. First of all, the research team wrote, “the successful organizations’ programs, activities, and missions are carried out in ways attuned to their adolescent members’ values and goals” (p. 3). Second, success depended largely on the vision, drive,

and commitment of a single adult, usually the director who ran the organization and its activities. Third, the organization and its programs viewed youth not as problems to solve or sinners to save but as important resources and bridges to hopeful futures. In addition, successful organizations tended to function as family-like communities in which each individual was truly valued and specific rules of membership were clearly delineated. Fifth, the organizations were places of hope and safety—"sanctuaries" in the midst of violence and despair. Finally, the authors noted that successful organizations distanced themselves from schools—all too often sources of frustration and rejection for the high-risk youth to which the organizations wished to appeal.

#### Directors and facilities

Two characteristics identified in *Urban Sanctuaries* deserve additional scrutiny—directors and facilities. The study found that the directors were so critically important to their organizations' success that the research team began calling these particular directors "wizards" because of the miracles they seemed able to produce. While "wizards" shared no common background with regard to education, training, or socioeconomic status—nor were ethnicity and gender critical factors—there were characteristics they *did* share:

[Wizards] share five broad characteristics. They see genuine potential in their youth. They focus on youth, putting youth at the center of programs. They have a belief in their own abilities to make a difference. They feel they are giving back something they owe to a community or society. And in everything to do with their organizations, they are unyieldingly authentic. (McLaughlin et al., 1994, pp. 95-96)

These characteristics were subsequently reflected in the organizations these directors led.

Likewise, while the programs each “wizard” created varied in focus and purpose, just as the organizations themselves varied, certain characteristics were found in each of the directors’ programs:

They offer safety. Their direction is taken from needs youth themselves express.

They are generous in the number and types of opportunities they offer. They encourage self-discipline through their clear and consistent rules and attitudes.

And they are future focused, encouraging youth to develop “real life” as well as educational skills. (McLaughlin et al., 1994, p. 104)

The directors—and the organizations and programs they directed—were driven by the directors’ sense of mission and their desire to maintain contact with the youth to whom they were committed.

In addition, while many of the community youth organizations considered in the original field of study were program-based—meaning they were mobile and delivered their programs in “borrowed” spaces around the community—the ethnographic research team ultimately focused strictly on facility-based organizations. Successful youth organizations’ facilities provided youth with a place to go—a place that was theirs. In the pages of *Urban Sanctuaries*, the authors described successful organizations as “places of hope” in the midst of violence, poverty, and despair—safe places where youth were offered safe activities and sheltered spaces where dreams could sprout and grow (p. 8). Youth in these organizations became members of constructive, supportive communities that functioned like families—much as the gangs in the same neighborhoods did. For youth in each, “place” played an important role in delineating membership and ensuring safety.

### Other research regarding facility-based community youth organizations

Following the publication of *Urban Sanctuaries* in 1994, there was a marked increase in the number of studies that involved facilities-based community youth organizations. Stanford University graduate students, working with McLaughlin and others, pursued youth development and “youth-as-researcher” studies (Kirshner & O’Donoghue, 2001; Strobel & McDonald, 2001). Most research in this area, however, focused either on program evaluation or the use of the youth organization as a site for a sociological or psychological study of children. Local Boys & Girls Club affiliates across the United States, as facility-based organizations with their “captive audience” of adolescents and youth, have proven to be ideal sites for selecting study populations.

In one sociological study, Mansfield-DiMaio (1997) surveyed adolescent boys and girls from 34 neighborhood Boys & Girls Clubs in a major U. S. city, looking for changes in gang behavior and examining the effectiveness of gang intervention programs between 1990 and 1996. She found that gang recruitment attempts toward club members rose significantly during that time period, as did community prevention and intervention programs and training for Boys & Girls Club staffers (p. 316). Funding for intervention and prevention programs also increased. At the same time, she determined, “youth gang activity appeared to decrease in several communities between 1990 and 1996,” and this “seemed to correlate with effective community task forces and community mobilization efforts” (p. vi).

For her doctoral dissertation study at Boston University, Geary (1999) selected 54 children (8 to 10 years old) from neighborhood Boys & Girls Clubs in an urban setting. She examined “social support, psychological distress and behavior problems for children

in low income neighborhoods who were exposed to ongoing community violence” (p. vi). She found that children with greater levels of exposure to community violence reported that they sought out greater numbers of adults for support (p. 54). Increased exposure also correlated positively “with externalizing behavior problems such as aggression, but it was not associated with internalizing behavior problems such as anxiety and somatic complaints” (p. vii). Conversely, increased exposure to community violence was associated with greater satisfaction with the levels of support the child received from adults (p. vii).

In her dissertation research, Ponce (1998) approached the issue of community violence and its impact on children from a different angle. She surveyed the directors of Boys & Girls Club in 13 states. Ponce intended to determine the prevalence and pattern of community violence with regard to family income levels. She also hoped to articulate the extent of psychological distress according to age and gender differences. However, while she found that poor and ethnic minority children (particularly African American and Latino children) were more likely to experience community violence than were mainstream European American children, she was not able to make any definitive statements with regard to age and gender differences.

Finally, Kirkpatrick (1997) did look at organizational issues in *Critical Elements in the Development of a New Family-School-Community Partnership Initiative: An Asset Building Approach*. Kirkpatrick designed a qualitative case study of a “Families FIRST!” initiative in one community. She employed a list of asset-building principles attributed to the Search Institute, a private foundation in Minneapolis: “(1) all young people need assets; (2) everyone can build assets; (3) it’s an ongoing process; (4) relationships are

key; (5) there is a need for consistent messages; and (6) kids need to hear the same positive messages and feel support over and over again, from many different people” (Kirkpatrick, 1997, p. 50). Through observation and interviews with leaders from various schools and civic organizations involved in the “Families FIRST!” initiative, ten elements were identified that participating leaders deemed critical: “(a) vision, (b) accomplishments, (c) relationships, (d) resources, (e) climate, (f) catalyst, (g) meeting needs, (h) strategies, (i) timing, and (j) process” (p. vi).

### After-school programs

A substantial body of research has also accumulated in recent years concerning after-school programs. In large measure a result of reports such as the Carnegie Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs’ *A Matter of Time*, numerous broad-based initiatives have been undertaken during the past six to eight years. Some of these were sponsored and funded through federal legislation. Others were developed and funded through private foundations. Likewise, some of the after-school programs are school-based while others are situated outside of schools.

A prime example of one such program, merging school and community as well as private and federal funding, is the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup>CCLC) program. Developed collaboratively between the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the U. S. Department of Education in the fall of 1997, the 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC project was originally funded with a \$40 million Congressional appropriation and \$2 million from the Mott Foundation (Mott Foundation, 2001). The following year, Congress appropriated \$200 million, and the Mott Foundation’s contribution rose to \$95.2 million over a seven-year



period. Congressional appropriations in fiscal year 2001 increased to \$846 million (U. S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2001).

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program has funded centers in over 6,800 schools located in more than 1,420 communities across the United States as of 2001 (U. S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 1). Programs implemented in the centers were focused primarily on the elementary (53% of the programs) and middle school (44% of the programs) grade levels. Programs that included activities and services at the high school level accounted for much less than 20% of the programs (p. 6). Ethnically, demographics show that students who participated in programs at 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites were: White (43%), African American (26%), and Latino (24%). Asians, Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and Alaska Natives collectively accounted for only 6% of the total, while 66% of the total were identified as living in “High Poverty” (p. 8).

Additional data from the Department of Education shows that reading and math activities account for the greatest number of learning opportunities at Learning Centers (p. 9). Science, art and music, technology, and social studies are also frequently reported academic enrichment activities. Finally, since one of the central missions of the centers is to provide safe places for students to gather during the non-school hours, the Department of Education reports that 78% of the centers operate on a daily or semi-daily basis, while nearly two-thirds are staffed at least 15 hours per week (p. 8). Mathematica Policy Research is currently conducting an evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program (Moore, 2001).

In addition to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC collaboration, numerous other public and private after-school initiatives have been funded. The Wallace-Reader’s Digest Funds developed Making the Most of Out-of-School Time (MOST). MOST funded after-school programs

in three cities: Boston, Chicago, and Seattle. The programs operated between 1995 and 1998 (Halpern, Spielberger, & Robb, 2001, p. 1). MOST was followed by Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds' Extended Service Schools (ESS) initiative. ESS funded 57 community partnerships, variously known as Community Schools, Beacon Schools, Family Support Schools, School-based Family Resource Centers, or Community Learning Centers (Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds, p. 3).

### **Evaluating after-school programs**

Evaluation reports on the various after-school programs and initiatives have provided valuable information as to what constitutes an effective program. Drawing on this collected data, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (1999) stated: "Although there is no best model for an after-school program, practitioners and researchers have found that the most successful programs offer safe environments staffed by caring and competent adults and their creation is often a result of collaborative community efforts" (p. 2). *Working for Children and Families: Safe and Smart After-School Programs*, authored jointly by the U. S. Department of Education and the U. S. Department of Justice (2000), identified elements that were found to be shared by the most successful after-school ventures:

1. Goal setting, strong management, and sustainability;
2. Quality after-school staffing [including low staff-to-student ratios];
3. Attention to safety, health, and nutrition issues [including appropriate environments with adequate space and materials];
4. Effective partnerships with community-based organizations, juvenile

justice agencies, law enforcement, and youth groups;

5. Strong involvement of families;
6. Enriching learning opportunities [including coordination of learning with the regular school day];
7. Linkages between school day and after-school personnel; and
8. Evaluation of program progress and effectiveness. (p. 36)

Additionally, *Working for Children and Families* cited evidence from a variety of sources and communities to show that after-school programs had demonstrated decreased juvenile crime rates (p. 10) and decreased vandalism at schools (p. 11). A “44% drop in the risk of children becoming victims of crime after opening an after-school program in a high-crime area” of Baltimore was mentioned (p. 11). There was a reduction in experimentation with drugs and alcohol and tobacco (p. 12), and *Working for Children and Families* noted a “decrease in aggressive behavior associated with watching television” (p. 13). At the same time, the after-school report highlighted enhanced academic achievement for adolescent participants: “Research has shown that children whose out-of-school time includes 20-35 hours of constructive learning activities do better in school” (p. 13). This was shown for after-school programs that provided learning opportunities in reading, math, and science.

*Working for Children and Families* also cited a number of programs that demonstrated increased student-interest in reading overall, as well as higher gains in literacy development for students identified as Limited English Proficient (pp. 15-16). The report included findings from Big Brothers-Big Sisters, LA’s BEST sites, Ohio urban schools,

Birchwood Elementary in Chattanooga, the Lighted Schools program in Waco, The 3:00 Project in Georgia, and the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program. All of these programs showed improved school attendance and/or reduced dropout rates for participating students (pp. 17-18). Finally, *Working for Children and Families* claimed that research “shows that appropriate after-school programs for middle school children contribute to increasing rates of high school graduation” and greater expectations for a rewarding future (pp. 19-20). Weiss (2001) cautioned, however, that determining the effectiveness of after-school youth programs is not really useful until basic systemic policy, infrastructure, and sustainability issues are adequately addressed.

#### **Problem areas in after-school programming**

Several points deserve additional discussion. Most of the literature mentioned previously specified initiatives and evaluations of programs situated in urban areas. Programs in rural areas are poorly represented. Further, like most community youth organizations, after-school programs predominantly serve upper elementary and middle school children. Programs that appeal to older youth, and address their needs, are few in number. Next, program evaluations show that after-school programs specifically fail to attract the adolescents who are at greatest risk for academic failure or dangerous lifestyle choices (Pittman, 2001). While “not-at-risk” children and youth certainly need services and “safe places” to gather—in fact, they demonstrate tremendous academic, attitudinal, and behavioral outcomes as a result—it remains imperative to note that most of the current after-school initiatives are situated in schools and are therefore at a distinct disadvantage for attracting and meeting the needs of older and at-risk youth (Heath &

McLaughlin, 1991; Roth & Hendrickson, 1991). This point was addressed in *Urban Sanctuaries*:

Organizations where youth prefer to congregate do not refer to themselves as providers of “after-school” or “out-of-school” programming because inner-city youth often view their schools as places that offer only discouragement or rejection. Successful inner-city organizations present themselves in relation to no social institution or social problem. They explain themselves simply as “for youth.” (McLaughlin et al., 1994, p. 8)

Finally, the availability of facility-based youth organizations and after-school programs for American Indian (as well as other indigenous) children and youth lags far behind those available to other ethnic groups. As calculated in *21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers*, the combined number of children of Asian, Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Native American heritage benefiting from federally-funded 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC activities is merely 6% of the total (U. S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 8). Yet reservation communities remain among the poorest communities in the nation, and the educational achievement of American Indian children lags far behind that of other ethnic groups in this nation.

#### Summary of research on community-based youth organizations

*A Matter of Time*, a report written by a Carnegie Council task force, highlighted both the dangers and the opportunities that face adolescents and youth in the after-school hours. At the same time, educators have called community-based youth organizations an under-utilized setting for the education and socialization of youth. These educators have

recognized that community youth organizations can provide opportunities, resources, and guidance that neither schools nor families can provide. Therefore, they advocated an increased utilization of these organizations as part of a balanced educational partnership of home, school, and community.

*Urban Sanctuaries*, the leading study in this area, highlighted characteristics of successful organizations that were identified as highly effective in meeting the needs of high-risk youth. Two highly critical factors were identified—directors and facilities. However, most research in this area—as well as in the area of after-school programs—was conducted in urban settings. Programs, youth organizations, and research in rural and Native American settings are generally absent.

#### Education in American Indian Communities

In the opening lines of “Educating Native Americans,” Tsianina Lomawaima (1995) stated that the three words in her title encompassed a 500-year-old struggle over the power to define educational mission, goals, and practices with regard to American Indian children (p. 331). She claimed that this battle had been fought within a larger historical, political, economic, and social struggle to defend or reclaim tribal sovereignty:

The assertion of tribal power is and has always been the assertion of sovereignty: to retain and/or reclaim rights to self-government, self-definition, and self-education (Barsch & Henderson, 1980; Castile & Bee, 1992; Wilkinson, 1987). (pp. 331-332)

For Lomawaima, self-education was one of three channels through which sovereign tribal authority has been expressed. It has remained in the spotlight with regard to federal Indian policies as well.

### **Shifting federal Indian policies**

The history of federal Indian policy has been one of frequent shifts and reversals brought on by economic turns and expansionism and changes in popular attitudes about Indians in the United States. American Indian education, in turn, was impacted by each revision, as Margaret Szasz (1974) elaborated in *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-determination, 1928-1973*. In general, changes in policy and popular attitude can be distinguished by six periods: removal, reservation-making, assimilation, reorganization, termination and relocation, and self-determination. (See Figure 2.) Amid the six periods, however, two themes are paramount. The early periods were dominated by policies of removal—initially to regions farther west, away from European American settlements, then to remote and isolated reservations. The later periods were dominated by policies promoting assimilation. During the removal era, Indian education was left to church groups. With the shift to assimilation, Indian education increasingly came under the control of the U. S. government (Hoxie, 1984; Szasz, 1974).

In the late 1870s, assimilationists (including an East Coast association called “Friends of the Indian”) argued that Indians must shed the vestiges of tribalism in order to be saved and educated. They believed that Indians’ system of values held them back. Assimilationists therefore presented a two-pronged attack, bent on changing the Indians’ vision of, and control over, their land and the education of their children (Hoxie, 1984). The General Allotment (Dawes) Act in 1888, sponsored by Massachusetts Senator Henry

<b>US INDIAN POLICIES</b>	
<b><u>Removal</u></b>	<i>until the 1840s</i>
<b><u>Reservations</u></b>	<i>1850s to 1870s</i>
<b><u>Assimilation</u></b>	<i>1870s to 1920s</i>
<b><u>Reorganization</u></b>	<i>late 1920s thru 1940s</i>
<b><u>Termination &amp; Relocation</u></b>	<i>early 1950s to 1960s</i>
<b><u>Self-determination</u></b>	<i>late 1960s to present</i>

*Figure 2. Changing U. S. Indian Policies.*

Dawes, provided for the break up of tribal cultures by breaking tribal land holdings into individual allotments. The Curtis Act (1898), the Burke Act (1906), and the Lacey Act (1907) followed, further fracturing tribal governments and Native social structures. On a second front, by taking young Indian children away from their families and their reservation communities and placing them in distant federal boarding schools, assimilationists sought to destroy the children's "Indianness" by immersing them in White society (Hoxie, 1984; Standing Bear, 1928; Szasz, 1974). This was a national policy of rapid and total assimilation.

Carlisle Indian Boarding School became the model for off-reservation boarding schools. It was initiated in 1879 with the entry of 137 young Indian children taken from their families in South Dakota and Oklahoma and transported by train to an abandoned cavalry barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Richard Pratt, a former Army officer, ran Carlisle Indian Boarding School in strict, military fashion (Standing Bear, 1928). Pratt was determined to drown the Indian to save the child (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1972; Szasz,



1974). His rigid perspective left no middle ground. One either became "civilized," or one remained "savage."

By 1900, the number of off-reservation boarding schools had grown to twenty-five, all largely patterned after Carlisle and offering a Uniform Course of Study which emphasized the acquisition of industrial vocational skills (Szasz, 1974). This curriculum was rigid and quite routine; students at each school studied the same topic at the same time on the same days. Furthermore, the schools were often more like penal institutions, and runaways were common. Numerous autobiographical texts have documented and examined the boarding school experience and its impact on individual Indians as well as on Indian communities (Haig-Brown, 1988; Lomawaima, 1994; Standing Bear, 1928).

#### Self-determination and the rise of tribal schools

Public opinion reversed in the 1920s as the devastation of Indian peoples came into the public's awareness. Following the publication of the Meriam Report in 1928, reformers called for a complete overhaul of the Indian Bureau and Indian education programs. John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs under Franklin D. Roosevelt, sought to shore up remaining tribal land holdings and offered tribes an opportunity to reorganize tribal governments under corporate charters. Many tribes did reorganize; some, however, chose not to do so. W. Carson Ryan—Quaker, dedicated Progressive educator, and author of the education section of the Meriam Report—was appointed Director of Indian Education in 1930. Along with Willard Beatty, another Progressive who succeeded Ryan in 1937, day schools were built in Indian communities and Indian culture was treated with greater respect. Beatty even developed a training program for teachers in government schools.

Still, many of the educational reforms enacted during the reorganization period proved ineffective, and the entire program operated largely under the tight control of John Collier and under the direction of White reformers. While Ryan dismantled the Uniform Course of Study curriculum at government boarding schools, the schools remained predominantly assimilationist in nature and in purpose. It wasn't until the late 1960s, when federal policies again shifted, this time toward policies favoring self-determination, that Indian tribes were allowed the power to choose for themselves (Szasz, 1974). Following the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the Indian Civil Rights Act was passed in 1968. The Indian Education Act followed in 1972 as well as the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act (Public Law 93-638) in 1975 (Lomawaima, 1995). In 1978, Congress passed the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Indian Child Welfare Act, which restricted the long-time custom of removing Indian children from their parents (American Indian Lawyer Training Program, 1988).

The first clear example of self-determination in education appeared during this same period. In 1966, community members on the Navajo reservation utilized the vision and strong leadership provided by outsider Robert Roessel, Jr., and began an experiment in Indian-controlled education. That year they established Rough Rock Demonstration School in a remote Indian community in Arizona. Funded initially by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Office of Economic Opportunity, Rough Rock was, as Teresa McCarty (1989) wrote, "the first school to be overseen by a locally elected, all-Indian governing board, and the first to incorporate systematic instruction in the native language and culture" (p. 484).

Beginning with 210 local Navajo children in grades K-6, Rough Rock grew and expanded, quickly becoming a K-12 program and the center of the community itself.

Roessel described the school's philosophy in his first annual report:

The philosophy underlying . . . Rough Rock Demonstration School is that the Navaho people have the right and the ability to direct and provide leadership in the education of their children. Rough Rock Demonstration School is funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Office of Economic Opportunity, but it BELONGS to the Navaho people. (Quoted in McCarty, 1989, pp. 488-489)

To realize its far-reaching goals and philosophy, the Indian school board "instituted a two-pronged program of classroom- and community-based efforts" (p. 489). The school founders sought explicitly to foster a sense of community identity and cooperation through projects initiated at the school:

"This is a community-oriented school, rather than child-oriented," Robert Roessel told a journalist who visited Rough Rock in 1967. "In the past, Indian schools have taken little interest in their communities, but here, we want to involve adults and teenagers, dropouts and people who have never been to school." (Quoted in McCarty, 2002, p. 84)

Community members were thus drawn into the Rough Rock Demonstration School as resources, to take adult education classes, and most importantly as employees earning valuable income in a remote area of Arizona where jobs were as scarce as good sheep pasture.

### The bicultural nature of American Indian education

With regard to classroom education, Rough Rock's purpose and philosophy remained firmly tied to one over-arching educational purpose—to provide a bicultural education:

The point of [the classroom] programs, Roessel emphasizes, was to expose Navajo children “to important values and customs of *both* Navajo culture *and* the dominant society,” removing the pressure “to make an ‘either-or’ choice . . . *either* you become an American, accept the new way and [become a] success, *or* you remain an Indian . . . and become a failure.” (Quoted in McCarty, 1989, emphasis in original, p. 489)

Programs at Rough Rock included culturally relevant instruction, Navajo-developed textbooks, and a bilingual focus utilizing both Navajo language and innovative ESL instruction (p. 489).

Robert Dumont, Jr. (1972) observed similar bicultural goals in a Cherokee community in Oklahoma. In “Learning English and How to be Silent: Studies in Sioux and Cherokee Class-rooms,” Dumont noted that about 10,000 Cherokee lived in the Oklahoma hills, away from cities and White developments:

It is one of the more economically impoverished areas in the country, and the Cherokee find the means to provide for their families only with the greatest difficulty. Like many poor people they believe that an education will provide economic stability, but very few have either finished school or can find other than low-paying transient or seasonal labor. (p. 350)

Dumont quoted one Cherokee community member who, while agonizing over the poor education Cherokee children received, voiced his heartfelt desire that some Cherokee children make it through the educational system so that they might one day return and assume teaching roles in culturally relevant classrooms (p. 363). Never in the discussion was there an expression of anything other than bicultural aspirations. Indian parents and community members by and large expressed a desire that their children learn English and mainstream social skills. This objective was to be achieved, however, without destroying tribal culture, values, and language.

More specifically, however, Dumont's research addressed the phenomenon of silence, which dominated formal, mainstream classrooms occupied by Sioux and Cherokee students. In these classrooms, Dumont observed, Indian students learned to mount formidable resistance to objectionable mainstream values, content, and instruction by wielding silence as a weapon:

Cherokee students control much of what goes on in the classroom, but in the school and larger community that control is meaningless. They know all too well—like most of the adult members of the Cherokee communities—that they are powerless. To learn and to be taught in Cherokee would exclude them from participation in the larger community, and it would be antithetical to what the Cherokee community has come to hold as the value of formal education (to learn English and to acquire a means of achieving economic stability). At the same time, the ways in which teaching-learning are transacted in the school are of such a nature that they keep the Cherokee student from learning English. . . . Education for most students is an either-or proposition: participate by teacher-school

established norms or withdraw. It is either being able to speak English or silence.

(pp. 368-369)

Silence can take more permanent forms, too. As cited in the first chapter, statistics have identified American Indian youth as the group with the highest dropout rate and the highest suicide rate in the United States (Eberhard, 1989; Hodgkinson, 1990; Kleinfeld, Williamson McDiarmid, & Hagstrom, 1989; "Suicide greater," 1994).

### Leadership issues in tribal schools

Twenty-five years after Rough Rock Demonstration School was founded, there were a substantial number of tribal schools in operation:

In the 1990-1991 school year, the BIA funded 180 educational facilities for Indian children, including 48 day schools, 39 on-reservation boarding schools, 5 off-reservation boarding schools, and 8 dormitories attached to public schools. In the same year, contracting tribes received BIA funds to run 62 day schools, 11 on-reservation boarding schools, 1 off-reservation boarding school and 6 dormitories. (Lomawaima, 1995, p. 333)

Still, tribal schools were not without problems. Teresa McCarty (1989, 2002), from the University of Arizona, sketched a number of recurring difficulties encountered at Rough Rock. Tied variously to administration, teaching, and funding, these problems compromised Rough Rock's success. To begin with, school board members, while acting as political and community leaders, had little or no educational background themselves and concerned themselves primarily with personnel issues and providing financial support to members of the community. This was consistent with traditional Native leadership roles.

Second, the teachers were for the most part non-Native and the teacher turnover rate was extremely high. This was due in part to problems with funding.

Finally, while board members focused on community concerns, the educational goals and programs of the school were left in the hands of non-Native administrators and grant writers. As a result, a complex maze of programs and funding sources bifurcated:

As the number of short-term, soft money programs grew, this financial and administrative structure fissioned, with department heads operating independently of each other and the central school administration. The resulting void in the coordination of academic programs made curriculum essentially the property of individual teachers, its continuity dependent on their longevity at the school.

Unfortunately, turnover among the primarily Anglo teaching staff was quite high, ranging from 33 percent to as high as 90 percent in some years. These major staff changes, in turn stemmed from volatile school finances, which left administrators unable to guarantee employment from one year to the next. . . . The upshot was that the curriculum was inconsistent and highly variable from year to year. High rates of pupil absenteeism and large numbers of new students each year further complicated this situation. (McCarty, 1989, p. 495)

Attendance at Rough Rock averaged only about 130 days per student per year, according to McCarty.

Weak educational leadership, poor curricular planning and implementation, and poor student attendance makes a poor recommendation for tribal education programs. Guy Senese (1986) pursued the issue farther though. Senese, from Northern Arizona University, claimed that self-determination in American Indian education was a ruse.

The problem, he argued, originated right in the Indian Self-Determination Act (PL 93-638) itself:

By taking a first glance at the statements of purpose which form the first part of the text of the act, it would seem that this legislation was a revolutionary step away from government paternalism. A brief analysis of the specific provisions which follow in the text, as well as the documentary and testimonial record surrounding the statute's implementation, suggest that this, clearly, was not the case. (p. 156)

Senese subsequently identified a number of ways in which PL 93-638 served to, in fact, work against tribal self-determination while strengthening BIA control and influence.

#### Cultural discontinuity in mainstream classrooms

Tribal schools are not the only issue. According to the 1980 U. S. Census, approximately 76% of all Indian children attended public schools (Lomawaima, 1995, p. 333). The 1980 census also revealed that only about half the American Indian population in the United States actually resided on, or near, an Indian reservation. The rest were living in urban areas. This is critical for several reasons. The first relates to the educational needs that Indian students bring into public school classrooms with regard to the five dimensions of multicultural education that Banks (1994) identified: content integration, knowledge construction, equity pedagogy, prejudice reduction, and empowering school culture (p. 5).

The second issue recalls the bicultural nature of Indian education. While Indians represent one percent of the population, Hodgkinson (1990) observed, they represent fifty percent of the diversity in the U. S. This fact presents considerable challenges for main-



stream classrooms. Lomawaima (1995) juxtaposed, in separate passages, the broad range of tribal diversity against problems that arise with pan-tribal identification:

One of the greatest challenges to research on Native Americans is the exhilarating range of diversity among our cultures. The federal government currently recognizes 510 tribes, including more than 200 Alaska Native villages. (p. 332)

It is perhaps ironic that a pan-tribal identity has become more real over time, but that pan-tribal linkage today complicates educational policy making and educational research. Too much policy has been predicated on creating viable solutions to "Indian" problems, generically defined. Too much research has been predicated on the hope that one teaching method or learning style or classroom environment or curriculum package will serve all Native Americans equally well. (p. 342)

Cleary and Peacock (1998) echoed Lomawaima's second point in *Collected Wisdom*, noting that "there is a growing body of research on American Indian learning styles, and it seems an Indian education conference would not be considered complete if it did not have at least one presentation of the latest research findings" (p. 153).

Philips (1983) conducted groundbreaking ethnographic research in the late 1970s. For two years, she lived on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Central Oregon, where she observed and analyzed cultural differences between the communication patterns of the Indian community and those of mainstream European American school teachers. She found that these differences produced serious, negative impacts on the

academic success of Indian children in the public schools. Miscommunication between a teacher and a student invariably led to an assessment that the student showed a lack of competence or understanding. In truth, the teacher was just as likely to have shown incompetence, having misinterpreted the student's response. As a result of these culturally discontinuities, students who were originally enthusiastic as first-graders gradually became frustrated and distracted. By sixth-grade, many were essentially disengaged from school.

In analyzing the two cultural communication patterns, Philips uncovered remarkable discontinuities between the social communication patterns students learned at home in their first six years and those that mainstream teachers employed to control and direct communication in the classroom. For example, the Indian community's communication showed unique gender and age specific responses. At community functions, men and women generally congregated separately, with married couples parting upon entering the group. Speaking and auditory skills were deemed acceptable arenas for older community members to express competence. Younger members were expected to show expertise in activities requiring physical strength, dexterity, or control. In addition, sensory emphasis for infants and children was placed on developing visual acuity and observational skills. Verbalization was of secondary importance. Philips related that Indian women would simply place a cloth over an infant's face to block visual stimuli, and the child would nap soundly in a loud and crowded room (p. 63).

The traditional tribal community also placed great importance on cooperation and social cohesiveness. Indian leaders led by example and by gaining consensus. Speakers directed their words diffusely toward an entire group assembled in a room, even when

one particular person was being addressed. Neither speaker nor audience sought to make direct eye contact or nod to indicate understanding. Communication was marked by long pauses as people waited to be sure that a speaker had concluded his/her thoughts. Indian children were taught this orientation to the group at an early age. Any action highlighting the achievement of one individual over her/his peers was highly scorned. Community was paramount.

Classroom communication deviated greatly from these traditional tribal norms, however. In the classroom, communication was strictly hierarchical and occurred between two individuals, one of whom was the teacher. The teacher controlled who spoke and for how long, addressing students individually, facing them directly, and maintaining unbroken eye contact. An emphasis was placed on competition, and individual achievement likewise created conflicts for the students. Finally, with the lengthy delay time between speakers in the Indian community and the lack of responsive gestures, teachers often misread Indian students' responses as lack of comprehension.

Following the publication of Philips' findings in 1983, along with Gardner's *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* in the same year, a growing body of research accumulated related to American Indian learning styles. Cleary and Peacock (1998), in *Collected Wisdom: American Indian Education*, identified some learning style preferences often associated with American Indians: (a) "the need to [practice and] feel competent before engaging in an activity"; (b) cooperative rather than competitive learning environments; (c) emphasis on visual learning and direct observation; (d) emphasis on oral learning and acute listening skills; (e) hands-on learning; (f) the need to establish relevance to the topic material in advance; and (g) holistic learning rather than analytic

and fragmented learning. However, as the authors claimed, "there is no single American Indian learning style" and "there is general consensus of the importance of knowing individual student's learning styles and adapting instruction to address each individual" (p. 154). Cleary and Peacock also cited scholars whose work stressed that "the learning, cultural, and motivational styles of many minority students, including American Indians, differs from the teaching styles most frequently used in schools" (p. 154).

### Cultural congruence

Like Philips, an early literacy specialist named Au (1993) noted similar examples of cultural discontinuities in communication between Native Hawaiian students and their mainstream teachers in Hawai'i. In response, the Kamehameha Early Education Program developed reading lessons adapted to the social communication patterns characteristic of traditional Hawaiian culture and the Native Hawaiian community. Au and Kawakami (1994) called this type of culturally sensitive lesson design "culturally congruent instruction" and stated: "Students of diverse background will have better learning opportunities if classroom instruction is conducted in a manner congruent with the culture of the home" (p. 6).

Allington (1991) applied the term "culturally coherent" to this practice, while Ladson-Billings (1995) identified a variety of names for culturally specific, or situated, pedagogies:

A variety of terms falls under the rubric of culturally specific pedagogy, including *culturally responsive* (Cazden & Legett, 1981; Mohatt & Erickson, 1981), *culturally appropriate* (Au & Jordan, 1981), *culturally compatible* (Jordan, 1985;

Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp; 1987), *cultural synchronization* (Irvine, 1990), and *culturally relevant* (Ladson-Billings, 1992b). (p. 754).

While the intent is not to replicate the home or community environment of the child, culturally congruent instruction attempts to incorporate features of the child's home environment and culture, making the classroom a more hospitable environment for culturally diverse students (Au & Kawakami, 1994). In the absence of such adaptations, Au (personal communication, July 6, 1995) points to increased disciplinary problems and off-task behavior. D'Amato (1993), an educator and an attorney, explored this aspect in some detail in "Resistance and Compliance in Minority Classrooms." He concluded that minority student resistance invariably results in lowered academic achievement for the minority students.

In seeking to create culturally congruent academic settings, then, Salyer (1993), from St. Mary of the Plains College in Kansas, provided useful theoretical insights. Teachers are limited by their own intercultural awareness and their own level of cultural adaptation, Salyer argued. He illustrated this with a progressive six-stage model that moves from ignorance to cultural versatility. (See Figure 3.) Individuals travel through the six stages in orderly fashion, beginning wherever they find themselves. Hopefully, their cross-cultural awareness grows as cross-cultural experiences increase.

Curriculum theorist Geneva Gay (1995) created a related, progressive model of multicultural curriculum development that recognized four stages: inclusion, infusion, deconstruction, and transformation. As with Salyer's model, a teacher could neither develop nor deliver curriculum that was transformative, Gay asserted, if the teacher had not progressed (personally and philosophically) beyond the deconstruction phase.

STAGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Ignorance</b>	This stage is characterized by a lack of awareness of anything outside the operational sphere of the host culture.
<b>Rejection</b>	Awareness of cultural differences from the host culture exists; however, this perception of cross-cultural variation often results in segregation and negative stereotyping.
<b>Approximation</b>	This stage is characterized by a focus on similarities, a blurring of cultural distinctions, and an approximation of cultural values—ignoring cultural differences which ultimately results in “intercultural myopia.”
<b>Awareness</b>	Cognitive awareness of intercultural behavior grows, but there is a lack of appreciation for the underlying values and mindset—and no desire to participate.
<b>Approval</b>	This stage is typically characterized by acceptance and approval of both cultural similarities and differences; contributions of other cultures are appreciated and included; and there is participation in the customs and observances of the non-host culture.
<b>Versatility</b>	An extremely rare stage, Salyer claims, cultural versatility exists when an individual is equally comfortable in each culture and moves between them smoothly.

*Figure 3. Salyer's Model of Cultural Versatility.*

The Salyer model and the Gay model each point directly to the important role a teacher's own intercultural awareness and philosophy play with regard to the creation of culturally congruent learning environments. Without such settings, culturally diverse students are at serious risk of academic failure in mainstream classrooms.

### Culture brokers

Szasz (1994, 1995) examined the concept of cultural intermediaries and the important historical role cultural brokers have played in North America. These brokers share a number of characteristics:

First, intermediaries retain an intrinsic curiosity about the “other side” of the cultural divide. Without this curiosity, they would not begin the process of becoming brokers. Beyond curiosity, however, they also approach the other side with a receptiveness that acknowledges the inherent cultural worth of the outside

culture. Their attitude is based on the premise that “other” worlds offer something of value.

Those who accept the role of intermediary share further characteristics. To retain this position, they convince both cultures that they can be trusted. They learn the cultural cues, the accepted behavior of each culture, and prove again and again that they will abide by these rules. . . . Perseverance and care define the profile of a successful broker. (1995, pp. 9-11)

Cultural intermediaries, or brokers, may emerge from either side of a cultural boundary, Szasz related.

Some of the “wizards” in the *Urban Sanctuaries* study originally came from the neighborhoods in which they served. After leaving and finding success outside of their communities, these directors returned to give something back. Thus, they were insiders. Other directors entered their neighborhoods as outsiders. They subsequently learned the values, social mores, and communication patterns held by the communities in which they worked. Either way, however, as insiders or as outsiders, for the youth with whom they worked, these directors functioned as cultural brokers. They acted as intermediaries, translating and interpreting and educating across a cultural boundary:

Not all [cultural brokers] succeed. When they do succeed, they can add another characteristic not mentioned earlier: they can provide an example for the youth of the community. Their ability to maintain the balance between cultures, and yet retain the core of values held by their own people, sends a message to the young people. Consequently, theirs can be a unique form of leadership. . . . (Szasz, 1995, pp.15-16)

Cultural brokers, as individuals who cross cultural boundaries and remain inquisitive and respectful to each culture, embody the highest stages of Salyer's (1993) model of cultural versatility. If these brokers were directors of community youth organizations, they would seem ideally positioned to establish culturally relevant and culturally congruent programs and environments for non-mainstream youth, in ways mainstream schools have found little success. This would be particularly relevant with regard to Native American youth in rural settings.

#### Community youth organizations for indigenous youth

One study of youth organizations in rural Alaska—and a rare piece of research, focused as it is on rural organizations for Native youth—produced an important finding with regard to culturally relevant youth organizations. Kleinfeld and Shinkwin (1982), in "Youth Organizations as a Third Educational Environment Particularly for Minority Group Youth," found that most of the organizations they studied in rural Alaska (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H) were centered around Alaska Native or Inuit youth but were founded by European American teachers, missionaries, or VISTA volunteers. These youth groups dissolved rather quickly when founding individuals moved away. The authors, therefore, concluded with one strong recommendation: typical, national youth organizations need to be redesigned to fit the different cultural settings in which Native youth live.

Of particular interest, in this regard, was the authors' description of one viable, functioning, and unique rural community youth organization—Chevak Village Youth Association (CVYA):



Although nominally an organization for youth, for example, CVYA sponsors events for the entire community. It has no fixed membership list; youth belong in a diffuse fashion. Youth do not occupy normal leadership roles but work with adults in a cooperative organizational pattern. The organization provides no badges or other insignia of achievement which single youth out from the group. CVYA, in short, reflects the values and organizational patterns characteristic of traditional Eskimo villages. (p. 13)

CVYA offers a unique example of a community-based youth organization adapted to an indigenous community and functioning according to that community's traditions.

#### Summary of literature related to education for American Indians

Education, for American Indians, has been a study in power and control over who has the right to determine what Indian students will learn. Practices and policies have changed, just as federal Indian policy has frequently shifted and changed. What has remained consistent has been the legacy of loss—a history of children being taken from their parents, children forbidden to speak their Native language, and a dismal record of school dropouts. Philips (1983) identified the process and factors that play into children disengaging within the classroom. Other researchers have identified parameters for culturally relevant instruction. Others have focused on learning style preferences.

Educational goals in Native American communities have continued to focus on providing education that enhances Indian children's ability to walk in two worlds—education that is bicultural. Policy changes at the federal level have embraced self-determination for American Indian tribes and communities, but several critics have questioned the efficacy of the policy in practice.

### **The Setting for the Case Study**

**This case study investigation examines circumstances surrounding the formation of a community-based youth organization, efficacy of the organization's effort to address perceived needs of adolescents and youth in the community, and lessons that might be learned from the organization's experience. Key to understanding the circumstances and the actions individual community members took, however, is awareness of the unique history and traditions of the community—or, actually, the community of communities—in which the youth organization was created and continues to operate. To be specific, this community youth organization is located on an Indian reservation that I will, from this point forward, call the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation. While the literature which is reviewed below is in no way meant to present a comprehensive view and understanding of the Tsitsistas, their history, or their culture; it is presented as a partial view in order to provide critical perspective into the social and cultural milieu surrounding the people, their homeland, and the issues facing the community.**

#### **From a distant northern past**

**The Tsitsistas speak a language that is a member of the Algonquin linguistic family and points to the tribe's origin in the northeastern region of North America (Waldman, 1985, p. 67). No strangers to change, their oral history recounts several major cultural adaptations the Tsitsistas made as they migrated to the south and to the west over a period of many centuries.**

**Historians have traced the movement of the Tsitsistas from the woodlands of Minnesota and Wisconsin (Debo, 1970; Waldman, 1985). Weist (1977), however, cited legends that located the Tsitsistas on the shores of large lakes in wooded areas of what**

would now be Eastern Canada. He hypothesized that the lakes lay between Hudson Bay and the Great Lakes. The Tsitsistas' diet and culture centered on fish at this time (Stand In Timber & Liberty, 1967). They constructed seine nets from willows and drove fish into the nets in the shallow waters near shore. The climate was cold, food was often in short supply, and Weist (1977) stated that legends also mentioned a great sickness that left many Tsitsistas orphaned (p. 9). Therefore, the Tsitsistas eventually moved south in dugout canoes until they came to an area of extensive marshland. Unable to go farther, they camped on the edge of the marshy barrier and sent scouts out to find a way through the marshes:

The reeds and grass were so tall and thick that the scouts were afraid of losing their way. So they cut many long poles and put them in their canoes. Then, sticking the poles in the shallow water to mark their trail, they moved farther and farther into the marsh. Some days later the scouts returned to camp and told the people that there was a large lake bordered by open prairie on the other side of the marshlands. (p. 10)

The Tsitsistas, following the trail of cut poles, crossed the marsh in their loaded canoes.

#### In the woodlands of Minnesota

Weist hypothesized that the area the Tsitsistas traversed was the great marshland of southern Ontario and northern Minnesota. He stated that Sioux reported Tsitsistas were already settled in the upper Mississippi region (east of the headwaters of the Mississippi) when the Sioux migrated into the area from the south around 1650. The Tsitsistas fished, gathered food and berries, and hunted on the prairie with bows and arrows at this time. They used dogs to transport their belongings. At some point,

however, Tsitsistas made another great cultural shift. They moved to an area along the Minnesota River in southwestern Minnesota and constructed permanent settlements:

Within a short time, they obtained corn and began planting fields. Also they abandoned their wigwams and built a permanent village of earth lodges, surrounded by a ditch and log stockade. This village was probably patterned after other villages in the region built by friendly tribes. (Weist, 1977, pp. 12-13)

The Tsitsistas grew corn, beans, and squash, and they ventured out on the plains on foot to hunt. Stands In Timber, in retelling a traditional story called "The Great Race," referred to clay pottery—probably linking that story to this agricultural period in their history (Stands In Timber & Liberty, 1967, p. 20).

#### Out on the plains

Several developments in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century caused the Tsitsistas to make a third great cultural shift: (a) Tsitsistas acquired their first horses; (b) European settlements in Eastern North America were dislocating indigenous peoples farther west, creating pressure on Tsitsistas from neighboring tribes to their east; and (c) enemy tribes on their eastern flank were being armed with flintlock rifles and steel knives by traditional European enemies—the British and the French. In response, the Tsitsistas moved farther west as well, moving into the Dakotas (Debo, 1970; Waldman, 1985; Weist, 1977).

According to John Stands In Timber, a renowned historian of the Tsitsistas Nation, once the Tsitsistas were living on the plains they met another group already living there. This group, the Suhtai, spoke a language very similar to the Tsitsistas. The Suhtai claimed also to have originated in the north in a region of lakes. Stands In Timber

(Stands In Timber & Liberty, 1967) speculated that the two groups might have gotten separated during the migration south. After meeting on the plains, the two groups joined, combining their traditions and their ceremonies. Stands In Timber said that this occurred in an area along the Missouri River and that it was before the tribe had horses. Around the year 1825, after contact with European Americans, after acquiring horses and developing a highly mobile buffalo hunting culture, the Tsitsistas nation began to separate into northern and southern divisions—part of the tribe hunting on the southern plains and creating alliances with tribes there, while the remainder of the tribe hunted buffalo on the northern plains and allied with bands of Lakota and Arapaho in the area.

#### Treaties with the United States and removal to Oklahoma

The Friendship Treaty was the first treaty between the Tsitsistas and the United States government. It was signed in 1825, at a time when the tribe had begun to separate into northern and southern divisions. In September of 1851, the first Fort Laramie treaty was signed. It was also known as the Horse Creek Treaty. In that treaty, the United States government recognized the land claimed by the Tsitsistas and agreed to pay annuities to the Tsitsistas for the loss of buffalo on the plains. In return, the Tsitsistas gave the United States government the right to build roads and forts and to allow U. S. citizens to migrate across Indian territories. More than 10,000 members of more than eight Indian nations arrived at Fort Laramie for the treaty signing. Representatives from both the northern and southern divisions of the Tsitsistas were included. Even though the groups were living separately at this time, they continued to view themselves as a single nation, and they continued to travel back and forth between their two homelands.

**Stands In Timber pointed out problems with the Fort Laramie Treaty though, claiming that the Tsitsistas understood very little of the treaty that was signed:**

**Most of the tribes got to keep their usual territory, but the Sioux were given rights to the Black Hills and other country that the Tsitsistas claimed. Their home country was the Black Hills. Sweet Medicine reorganized them there. They did not know they were pushing them south [with the southern half of the tribe].**

**Afterwards they could not get along with the Sioux when they move in there.**

**The squaw men told them, "This ground does not belong to you now." A good interpreter would have helped, but they did not have one. (Stands In Timber & Liberty, 1967, p. 162)**

**This was probably the second Fort Laramie treaty—the Treaty of 1868—to which Stands In Timber referred however. The Treaty of 1868 established the Great Sioux Reservation, covering most of what is now western South Dakota. It included the Black Hills, sacred to both the Lakota and the Tsitsistas. Following the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876 and the surrender of Crazy Horse in 1877, Tsitsistas bands traveled to Fort Robinson to surrender, fully expecting to live near the Black Hills:**

**Agents from the Indian Bureau informed them, however, that the treaty committed them to live either on the Sioux reservation or on a reservation [set apart for the Southern Tsitsistas in Indian Territory—Oklahoma]. The agents recommended that they be transferred to Indian Territory to live with their kinsmen. (Brown, 1970, p. 316)**

**Weist (1977) reported that 972 men, women, and children were taken south to Oklahoma in the summer of 1877.**

### **Flight from Oklahoma**

The climate and living conditions in Oklahoma were in no way suitable for a people acclimated to the northern plains:

Unused to the hot, humid climate, they were soon stricken with malaria. The agency physician had only limited medical supplies and many of the sick went untreated. Undernourished as well, due to inadequate rations and the almost total absence of game on the reservation, many children and old people died, either from malaria or a measles epidemic. (Weist, p. 77)

By the summer of 1878, conditions had steadily deteriorated. When Morning Star and Little Wolf went to see the Indian agent, John Miles, Morning Star did not even have the strength to speak. So Little Wolf spoke. He asked that they be allowed to return to their home in the north: "Before another year has passed, we may all be dead, and there will be none of us left to travel north" (quoted in Weist, p. 80). Later, after their request was denied, Little Wolf returned and informed Miles of his decision to leave Oklahoma anyway, telling Miles that if there was to be a fight with soldiers, at least allow the Tsitsistas to get a little distance from the agency first.

While Miles did not believe the Tsitsistas would really attempt a long hazardous journey across the plains in their condition, he had troops placed around their camp. Still, early on the morning September 9<sup>th</sup>, a group of 297 Tsitsistas slipped past soldiers and began their long, difficult hejira north:

[They] were able to hide their trail, separating whenever the troops came too close, then regrouping to continue their march. On four occasions they were forced to fight major battles. Each time they managed to pick a good defensive

position and battled the soldiers to a standstill. Still the people kept moving, picking up horses and cattle whenever and however they could. (Weist, p. 81)

When they reached northwestern Nebraska, Little Wolf's group headed into the sandhills area to camp for the winter. Morning Star's band continued on to Fort Robinson, intent on requesting that they be allowed to settle with the Sioux there. However, they were caught in a late October snowstorm, and then two companies of cavalry bumped into the band in the midst of the snowstorm, too. Two days of talks with the soldiers ensued, and Morning Star was informed that there were no longer any Sioux at Fort Robinson. It was finally agreed, however, that Morning Star and his band would be taken there.

#### Fort Robinson Breakout

Morning Star's band was told to turn in their guns, and they were taken to Fort Robinson. One hundred and forty-nine people crowded into a log barracks built to house 75 soldiers (Brown, 1970; Weist, 1977), but everything was fine:

For a month or two they had a very good time. They helped with the work around the fort, like washing dishes, and some went hunting with the army scouts to bring in meat. But the good luck did not last. (Stands In Timber & Liberty, 1967, p. 235)

An incident with one Tsitsistas brought an end to the privileges the people enjoyed at the fort. Suddenly they were confined to the barracks with guards placed outside. Then a cold front sent temperatures below zero. Finally, on January 3, 1879, Morning Star's band was informed that the Indian Bureau had ordered that they be shipped back to Oklahoma. "You will have to kill us and take our bodies back down that trail," Morning Star told the soldiers. "We will not go" (quoted in Stands In Timber & Liberty, p. 235).



The fort commander subsequently ordered that the Tsitsistas be given no food and no firewood for heat. Several days later, he ordered that they receive no water either. Stands In Timber related that the people scraped ice off the windows to drink. Finally, the commander attempted to have several of the men put in chains. The Tsitsistas there upon barricaded themselves in the log barracks and produced several guns that had been disassembled and hidden under women's dresses or carried by children when they entered the fort. Young men with no weapons found wood to use as clubs. But soldiers did not storm the building. Still, after days without food, water, or heat, the Tsitsistas had become desperate. So, at about 10 o'clock on the night of January 9, 1879, they shot the sentries, broke down the door, and fled out into the cold January night (Brown, 1970; Weist, 1977).

There was snow on the ground, and Stands In Timber described the night as being "almost as light as day" as some of the people ran to get water from the creek and then joined others trying to make it to the bluffs a couple of miles from the fort. Soldiers from the fort followed, shooting:

The soldiers hunted [them] for twelve days. In the end, of the 149 persons originally imprisoned at Fort Robinson, 61 were killed. Many of the survivors were badly wounded. (Weist, 1977, p. 84)

Morning Star and his family made it to Pine Ridge after several weeks. Other survivors, who were captured near the fort, were eventually taken there as well. Thus the Tsitsistas, who had escaped starvation and disease in Oklahoma, who had endured the long hejira from Oklahoma, and who had escaped death during the Fort Robinson Breakout, were finally allowed to remain on the northern plains. After tremendous hardship, sacrifice,

and bravery, a reserved homeland was established for the Tsitsistas by executive order in November 1884.

### The accumulation of poverty

Adapting to reservation life may be a fourth great cultural adaptation that the Tsitsistas have made—or it may be more accurate to say that it is a cultural adaptation that they are still making. Adapting to reservation life is, after all, just as critical as any previous adaptations they have had to make in order to survive as a people. General William T. Sherman made this point quite explicit in a statement he made in 1867—one year before the Tsitsistas signed the second Fort Laramie treaty:

The more [Indians] we can kill this year the less will have to be killed the next war, for the more I see of these Indians, the more convinced I am that they all have to be killed or be maintained as a species of paupers. (Quoted in O'Brien, 1989, p. 63)

While these sentiments may not have been those of every federal policy-maker or army officer, they are certainly views that have helped shape federal Indian policy. Theodore Roosevelt, in "These Foolish Sentimentalists," said that the only fault he found with U.S. Indian policy was the weakness it displayed:

It cannot be too often insisted that [the Indians] did not own the land; or, at least, that their ownership was merely such as that claimed often by our own white hunters. . . . To recognize the Indian ownership of the limitless prairies and forests of this continent—that is, to consider the dozen squalid savages who hunted at long intervals over a territory of a thousand square miles as owning it outright—necessarily implies a similar recognition of the claims of every white

hunter, squatter, horse-thief, or wandering cattle-man. . . . As a nation, our Indian policy is to be blamed, because of the weakness it displayed, because of its shortsightedness, and its occasional leaning to the policy of the sentimental humanitarians; . . . there has been little wilful wrong-doing. (Quoted in Sanford, 1974, pp. 88-90)

It might be well to keep these statements in mind, then, when viewing current statistics for, and circumstances on, the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation in the passages below.

Enrolled members of the Tsitsistas Nation currently elect 12 council men and women from five voting districts, or communities, on the Tsitsistas reservation. The largest community is home to the tribe's headquarters. In this study, that community will be called Antelope Springs. It is tucked against low-lying pine-covered hills on the Great Plains. The 2000 U. S. Census listed the population of Antelope Springs at just over 2,000. Ninety-three percent of the population in Antelope Springs identified themselves as Native American. The median household income for Antelope Springs was \$13,425 per year, while a second community on the reservation had a population of 695 people and a median household income of \$8,113 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2001).

Another source listed the tribe's enrollment at 8,008 members—4,243 of whom lived on the reservation. Per capita income for the tribal membership was identified to be \$4,479, and their unemployment rate was 31.4%.

### Measured resistance

Josefina Figueira-McDonough (2001), in *Community Analysis and Praxis: Toward a Grounded Civil Society*, highlighted an important link that researchers have been able to establish between economics and crime: "In their longitudinal analysis of

community crime careers, Schuerman and Kobrin (1986) found that economic deterioration preceded crime at all stages" (p. 29). The University of Washington's Luana Ross (1998), author of *Inventing the Savage: The Social Construction of Native American Criminality*, believed another factor came into play with regard to economics and crime:

From the time of European contact to the present day, [America's indigenous] people have been imprisoned in a variety of ways. They were confined in forts, boarding schools, orphanages, jails and prisons and on reservations. Historically, Native people formed free, sovereign nations with distinct cultures and social and political institutions reflecting their philosophies. Today, Native people are not free; they are a colonized people seeking to decolonize themselves. (3)

Ross discussed the pass system—procedures that Natives had to use in order to receive permission to leave the reservation originally. She also elaborated how the experience of colonization played out for her as a child growing up in Indian Country:

Because we are a colonized people, the experiences of imprisonment are, unfortunately, exceedingly familiar. Native Americans disappear into Euro-American institutions of confinement at alarming rates. People from my reservation simply appeared to vanish and magically return. I did not realize what a "real" prison was and did not give it any thought. I imagined that all families had relatives who went away and then returned. (p. 1)

Examining the social construction of deviance then, Ross traced the development of Native peoples as profane and deviant. The result of that social construction of deviance, Ross articulated, is visible in our penal system:

Native people are now locked up in great numbers. Native Americans are only 0.6 percent of the total population, yet they comprise 2.9 percent of federal and state prison populations (Camp and Camp 1995). The disproportion of imprisoned Natives is more clearly seen at the state level, where they account for 33.2 percent of the total prisoner population in Alaska, 23.6 percent in South Dakota, 16.9 percent in North Dakota, and 17.3 percent in Montana compared to approximately 15 percent, 7 percent, 4 percent and 6 percent of the overall state populations, respectively (Camp and Camp 1995). (p. 89)

Supporting and reinforcing the identification of indigenous people as profane, Ross argued, is a commonly accepted belief that native peoples were “completely lawless.” “Nothing could be further from the truth,” she stated (p. 12).

### Sweet Medicine

John Stands In Timber addressed the concept of Native lawlessness as well, telling of Sweet Medicine, a cultural hero and visionary of the Tsitsistas from a long time ago:

Many centuries ago the prophet and savior Sweet Medicine came to the prairie people. Before his birth the people were bad, living without law and killing one another. But with his life those things changed. Indians are often called savages, and it was true of the Tsitsistas at first, but not after Sweet Medicine's time.

(Stands In Timber & Liberty, 1967, p. 27)

Sweet Medicine brought the Tsitsistas four sacred arrows and religious ceremonies for their renewal. Stands In Timber credited Sweet Medicine with organizing the warrior societies as a policing force as well as the ruling body of 44 chiefs as a governing body.

Chiefs were the peacemakers of the tribe, and that role brought with it heavy responsibilities. Chiefs had to live as examples of generosity and virtue, and they had to see that the laws that Sweet Medicine brought the people were upheld:

There were many of them [laws]. [Tsitsistas] were not supposed to marry too young, or to anyone related to them. They were not to take anything by force, from another person, or use it without permission, or to say bad things about others, especially the leaders or chiefs. They were to take pride in their bodies and the way they appeared, to keep clean and stay healthy. They were not to talk to their mothers-in-law or fathers-in-law, and that one rule saved a lot of trouble.

(Stands In Timber & Liberty, 1967, p. 45)

Above all, no Tsitsistas was to kill a fellow Tsitsistas. If such a thing occurred, the offender was to be thrown out of the tribe. Yet, after four years, there was a procedure for adopting the offender back into the tribe, if the person had survived (Stands In Timber & Liberty, p. 44).

#### Restorative justice vs. punitive justice

Deloria and Lytle (1983) claimed that the primary goal of Native American tribal justice systems “was simply to mediate the case to everyone’s satisfaction” (p. 111):

Under Anglo-American notions of criminal jurisprudence, the objectives are to establish fault or guilt, and then to punish. . . . Under the traditional Indian system the major objective was more to ensure restitution and compensation than retribution. (p. 111)

Robert Yazzie, chief justice of the Navajo Nation Tribal Court, described Euro-American justice as a vertical system of hierarchy and power while the Navajo system is different:

*“Hozhooji naat 'aanii,”* or Navajo peacemaking, uses a justice model based on equality and healing. Yazzie said the shape of the model he uses is much like a circle. “A circle is the symbol of Navajo justice because it is perfect, unbroken and a simile of unity and oneness.” (Cohen, 2002, p. B3)

Ross (1998) commented on Yazzie’s views and drew a connection to a basic distinction that holds with other indigenous systems of law and justice:

Yazzie conveys that law is the source of a meaningful life, precisely because life emerges from it. In the Navajo system of law, all parties are allowed to explain their view, and there is no one authority that ascertains the “truth.” This is a system of restorative justice based on equality and participation, with a notion of justice that involves recuperating both the offender and victim. (pp. 30-31)

Indian law thus focuses on restoring balance and harmony. It is seen as a healing process for the offender, the offended party, and the community as a whole.

### Cultural capital

Colonization produces hierarchical structures, differential expectations, and hidden rules of behavior. One factor in this differentiation, Ross contended, is racism. “Neocolonial racism permeates social interaction between whites and Natives and is woven into the fabric of all institutions in the United States,” Ross wrote. “As in the past, today Native people encounter overwhelming odds at every stage of the Euro-American criminal justice system” (pp. 71-72). Another lens through which to view institutionalized social bias is the theory of social reproduction as articulated by French social theorists Bourdieu and Passeron (1990). Bourdieu was identified by Robert Putnam as one of at least six different social theorists who independently invented the

term *social capital* during the twentieth century. For Bourdieu and Passeron, social capital was identified with the *cultural capital* that comes into play in power relations between different groups or classes within society.

Joyce Elaine King (1995) provided a useful explanation of the term *culture* in “Culture-centered Knowledge: Black Studies, Curriculum Transformation, and Social Action,” a chapter in *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*:

Culture usually refers to group ways of thinking and living. At the most specific level, it is a group’s “design for living” (Nobles, 1985); it includes the shared knowledge, consciousness, skills, values, expressive forms, social institutions, and behavior that enable their survival as a people. This usage is consistent with a definition Bullivant (1989) prefers: Culture is a social group’s design for surviving in and adapting to its environment. In other words, culture is the total product of a people’s being and consciousness that “emerges from their grappling with nature and living with other humans in a collective group” (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1984, p. 81). (p. 270)

For Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) then, *cultural capital* signified the “cultural goods”—the knowledge, skills, consciousness, values, language, behaviors, experiences, and so on—that are recognized and rewarded as correct or appropriate by the dominant culture. Cultural capital—possessing cultural goods—involves choosing:

The ‘choices’ which constitute a culture (‘choices’ which no one makes) appear as arbitrary when related by the comparative method to the sum total of present or past cultures or, by imaginary variation, to the universe of possible cultures; they



reveal their necessity as soon as they are related to the social conditions of their emergence and perpetuation. (p. 8)

The choices appear arbitrary “because they correspond to the material and symbolic interests of groups or classes differently situated within the power relation,” and they “tend to reproduce the structure of the distribution of cultural capital among these groups or classes, thereby contributing to the reproduction of the social structure” (p. 11). In other words, the choices that are rewarded serve to help maintain the power status quo.

### Social reproduction

Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) insisted, therefore, that, “All pedagogic action is, objectively, symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power” (p. 5). Whether it be the dominant culture, dominant class, or the dominant race—the group in power perpetuates and legitimates itself and its control over the resources within its grasp. In doing this, other cultures, classes, or races are effectively dis-empowered; and, as the French social theorists articulated in *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, educational institutions serve the dominant group by imposing their *cultural arbitrary* without questioning its legitimacy or recognizing alternatives (as per Freirean pedagogy).

Implicit pedagogy, the authors wrote—in contrast to explicit instruction in the skills, knowledge, and rules favored by the *cultural arbitrary*—“is doubtless the most efficient way of transmitting traditional, undifferentiated, ‘total’ knowledge (the assimilation of styles or knacks), in that it requires the disciple or apprentice to identify with the physical person of the more experienced ‘master’ or ‘companion’, at the cost of a thorough self-remission which prohibits analysis of the principles of the exemplary

conduct. . .” (p. 47). In other words, keeping knowledge, skills, and rules implicit plays a major role in sustaining privilege and power for particular members of society.

Children arrive at school carrying varying amounts of cultural capital, Lisa Delpit (1995) noted. Some arrive with “more accoutrements of the culture of power already in place,” as she expressed it—while other children arrive carrying less. For these latter children to be successful in school—especially if they come from a home culture that is markedly different from the dominant culture reflected in the classroom—Delpit argued that they need to receive explicit instruction in the rules, skills, values, and language that come into play the classroom as well as in the larger society. Otherwise, these children are effectively barred from participating in what Delpit called the *culture of power*.

#### The culture of power and the codes of power

“To act as if power does not exist,” Delpit stated, “is to ensure that the power status quo remains the same” (p. 39). Delpit therefore examined five aspects of power she proposed in her book *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflicts in the Classroom*:

1. Issues of power are enacted in the classroom.
2. There are codes or rules for participating in the power; that is, there is a “culture of power.”
3. The rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the rules of the culture of those who have power.
4. If you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier.

5. Those with power are frequently least aware of—or least willing to acknowledge—its existence. Those with less power are often most aware of its existence. (p. 24)

Thus, while minority students do need to receive technical skills and informational knowledge from the schools, Delpit stressed the need to provide them with critical thinking skills and creative thinking skills as well—so that these students are able to participate in making their education meaningful and liberating as well. It is this, she argued, that will allow minority people to truly progress and to truly effect change (p. 19). The noted educator added one last word of caution, or one last recommendation, near the close of her chapter titled “The Silenced Dialogue”:

I am also suggesting that appropriate education for poor children and children of color can only be devised in consultation with adults who share their culture.

Black parents, teachers of color, and members of poor communities must be allowed to participate fully in the discussion of what kind of instruction is in their children’s best interest. Good liberal intentions are not enough. (p. 45)

#### A youth organization on the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation

Poverty is a characteristic of the isolated communities on the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation. In this setting, an organization was created—a facilities-based, community-based youth organization—in the early 1990s. The executive director of the organization, which is now a Boys & Girls Club, identified the role the club has taken:

This community is a poor, over-dependent society. The need is to create a sense of belonging—to the tribe and the reservation. We want to do it in a fundamental

way and we start in microcosm by a sense of belonging to the club, create a tie to adults, and then expand it to the community. (Quoted in Burke, 1997, p. 26)

The organization was granted non-profit status and became affiliated the national Boys & Girls Clubs of America organization in 1994. The club serves children from ages 5 to 18, in a facility that once belonged to the local Catholic Church.

By affiliating with the national Boys & Girls Clubs of America organization, the Tsitsistas club created a link to an outside organization that is one of the leading youth development organizations in the United States. The national organization's roots go back to 1860 in Hartford, Connecticut. At that time, several women decided to create positive alternatives for boys who roamed the streets of the city. In 1906, various Boys Clubs in the New England area affiliated. In 1931, the organization became Boys Clubs of America, and the organization changed its name to Boys & *Girls* Clubs of America (BGCA) in 1990. The national organization supports a network of more than 900 autonomous, local community youth organization affiliates. These affiliates operate 2,851 neighborhood facilities (Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 2001).

The youth development organization places special emphasis on facility-based centers and programs for disadvantaged youth. Most clubs are located in urban areas. Recently, though, BGCA began focusing on expanding the number of rural affiliates, including clubs on American Indian reservations. The Boys & Girls Club, in which this case study is set, was one of the first Indian clubs. It has remained active. Its annual budget exceeds \$500,000. It is an important enterprise on the reservation, in more ways than one.

### **Summary of the study setting**

The specifics of Tsitsistas history and culture—as well as the dynamics of colonialism, racism, and social reproduction—shape and color the setting of this case study. The Tsitsistas Nation has survived—and indeed thrived—through several periods of great cultural adaptation. They developed a notable culture on the North American plains. Now they are adapting to a new way of life while working to maintain their culture and traditions and community, too.

The establishment of the Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation was a recent attempt to address changes in the community. Affiliated with the national Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the local chapter is a grassroots community organization and community building effort that specifically addresses the needs of children and youth in the community.

### **Qualitative Case Study Research**

Heath (1995) argued that, “by their very definition and rationale of existence, communities do not include outsiders such as researchers; they are not open institutions inviting general membership, and their everyday interactions are guided by unspoken (often out-of-awareness) rules of behavior and language” (p. 117). This is only one of numerous factors that complicate educational research conducted in Native communities, however. In addition, the researcher must confront the legacy of prior research that has been conducted *on* Native peoples by members of the dominant society. There is also the issue that the research initiative must attempt to bridge discontinuities between Western (European American) academic methodologies and Native ways of knowing.

Peacock cautioned non-Native researchers that “humility, generosity, and respect need to be mutually established before seeking the truth” (quoted in Ambler, 1997, p. 10). Peacock’s concern is particularly relevant when non-Native researchers enter communities that have consistently been exploited in the name of “truth”:

Since the Native people of this hemisphere came into contact with Europeans, [Native peoples] have been the subjects of intense scrutiny. Sometimes this scrutiny is for financial gain, sometimes it is for the sake of knowledge, and at other times it is for the sake of dominance. Researchers who make brief visits and then leave are no longer welcome, especially when their research benefits only an individual agenda or an outside institutional agenda. (Crazy Bull, 1997b, p. 17)

Crazy Bull (1997a) recommended that a researcher begin by questioning her or his intent:

When a researcher wants to do research in the tribal community, the first question should be, “Whose needs will be met by this research?” If the community doesn’t fit into the answer, then the researcher should rethink his desire to go into the tribal community to do research. (p. 24)

Crazy Bull’s recommendation is one that might well be followed any time research is done by an outsider in an ethnic minority community.

Rowland extended this concept, however, asserting that “knowledge is power and may be used as a political device by those in power or as a means of spiritual rebirth and strength by those oppressed” (quoted in Crazy Bull, 1997b, p. 18). Thus, rather than exploit, research holds the possibility of helping reinvigorate Native communities by

empowering the community itself—giving voice to community members, traditions, and long-held ways of knowing. Crazy Bull (1997b) stated that Indian people “are intensely interested in understanding [their] circumstances and how [their] families and communities came to be the way they are today” (p. 17). Therefore, a collaborative partnership is possible. Elsewhere, Crazy Bull (1997a) wrote:

Community-based, participatory research validates tribal knowledge and tribal practices to the benefit of the research process and the researcher. Researchers should be aware that Native life is seen as a whole and it usually would not be appropriate to utilize analytic methods that separated the whole into parts....  
(p. 24)

Pierce concurred with the latter point. He asserted that “a major advantage of indigenous thought is its examination of relationships and the whole” (quoted in Crazy Bull, 1997b, p. 19).

In holistic investigations conducted in indigenous communities then, Crazy Bull (1997b) noted that Conti articulated an important consideration. He acknowledged that the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms were not equally positioned:

The Western scientific approach focuses upon quantifying. In contrast, qualitative research is based upon the assumption that multiple realities exist in people’s perception of the world, says Dr. Conti. Qualitative research requires information from a wide variety of sources, often through oral interviews. The qualitative approach is more compatible with the traditional Indian way of knowing. It is holistic. It seeks to describe and understand rather than to test hypotheses. While the qualitative approach is still the dominant method, Dr. Conti says, tribal

scholars should not let this deter them from using the qualitative approach. (p. 18)

Stake (1995), in *The Art of Case Study Research*, cited Erickson's assertion that "the most distinctive characteristic of qualitative research is its emphasis on interpretation."

Regarding qualitative case studies specifically, Stake concluded:

The real business of case study is particularization, not generalization. We take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others but what it is, what it does. There is emphasis on uniqueness, and that implies knowledge of others that the case is different from, but the first emphasis is on understanding the case itself. (p. 8)

Qualitative case study research thus provides a valuable vehicle for examining and attempting to interpret and understand phenomena in Native communities.

Creswell (1998) offered a slightly different interpretation of "case study" in *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*:

Whereas some consider "the case" an object of study (Stake, 1995) and others consider it a methodology (e.g., Merriam, 1988), a case study is an exploration of a "bounded system" or a case . . . over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. This bounded system is bounded by time and place. . . . Multiple sources of information include observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports. The context of the case involves situating the case within its setting, which may be a physical setting or the social, historical, and/or economic setting for the case. (p. 61)



After presenting an extensive discussion of research validity and the numerous stands qualitative researchers have taken in confronting this issue, Creswell observed that the multiple views “show that writers view it from a quantitative perspective to find equivalents, employ a distinct language to provide a legitimacy for it in naturalistic research, reconceptualize it within a postmodern framework, or suggest that it is a distraction to good research” (p. 200). Creswell’s choice was to use the term verification instead of validity and to approach verification along several different lines. Primarily, however, Creswell believed that the strength of qualitative research—time spent in the field, detailed thick description, and familiarity with the participants being studied—provided the necessary verification. Triangulation—“using multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence” (p. 202)—is key in this respect.

All of these points, articulated by Stake and Creswell, provide support for employing qualitative case study methodologies when conducting research in American Indian communities. With traditional reliance on oral histories, with respect for multiple views and multiple realities, with evidence showing preferences for learning styles that are cooperative and visual and “hands-on”—qualitative case study methodologies may provide the most natural fit:

Now we must come full circle back to the use of our own research techniques. . . .

These research methods include oral histories, community forums, surveys, storytelling, ceremonies and rituals, evaluations, and interviews. (Crazy Bull, 1997b, p. 19)

Therefore, the focus returns to intent—what purpose the research will serve—who the research will serve:

We must think of what we are leaving for the seventh generation. . . . Just as the seventh generation of our ancestors before us thought of us even though they did not know us, so must we think of our future generations. . . . We must leave a rich culture, enhanced by our tribal commitment to knowledge-gathering and sharing. How we share our stories and our experiences will be our test. This sharing constitutes our campfires, our lodges, our relationships, our research voice. (Crazy Bull, 1997b, p. 23)

In this, then, the non-Native researcher has an opportunity to support and complement the on-going work of Native scholars, Native peoples, and Native communities.

### Chapter Summary

The Stanford University team of Heath and McLaughlin claimed that schools have outdated educational expectations and policies with regard to families and community. In contrast, *Urban Sanctuaries* highlighted community youth organizations that attracted and sustained active memberships among older youth. These organizations functioned as families, and the facilities proved to be sanctuaries. High expectations for success, relationships with caring adults, and safe and stimulating environments—these were many of the characteristics identifying successful after-school programs as well. Statistics have shown, however, that establishing and maintaining viable youth organizations and programs in rural areas has been a challenge. Providing culturally relevant learning opportunities in culturally compatible settings has, likewise, proven a challenge

for educators of American Indian children. Cultural capital and codes of power help to explain some of the institutional factors that limit academic success for American Indian students.

Social scientists and lay persons alike have noted the loss of community and the loss of healthy community structures in the United States over the past century or more. The social landscape has changed from small, familiar territorial communities to large, impersonal, urban centers. Figueira-McDonough (2001) advocated the reorganization of impoverished communities in order to promote social justice and engender democratic processes. However, Walter (1997) noted that community building is becoming a more prevalent approach today. Community building, in contrast to community organizing, connotes social change led by individuals within the community rather than by outside organizers—thus empowering the community itself. Lisa Delpit (1995) likewise promoted minority community involvement in education for minority students—and explicit instruction in the codes of power such that students of color may participate in the culture of power.

In summary then, community is the thread that weaves through the literature reviewed above. The youth organization at the center of this case study investigation is an example of community organizing by members of the community. It is an example of community building to address community needs for a community that is adapting to change. It is an example of reaching out, developing *bridging social capital* to bring much needed resources to the community. Furthermore, it is an example of a sovereign people responding to needs in their own communities.

### **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

**The methodology that was employed in conducting a case study investigation of the Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsitas Nation is discussed in this chapter. The study incorporated recommendations made by Native scholars and researchers (Ambler, 1997; Crazy Bull, 1997a; Crazy Bull, 1997b), including: selection of a qualitative approach, setting a purpose that includes concern for the Native community in which the research is conducted, and remaining open to new ways of knowing.**

**Eisner (1991) contended that the world could be known by multiple means. Crazy Bull (1997a) and Rowland (in Crazy Bull, 1997a) highlighted an expectation that non-Native researchers, when conducting research in Native communities, honor and respect the knowledge and “ways of knowing” that Native peoples hold. Conti suggested, therefore, that qualitative research was the appropriate research paradigm to employ in Indian Country (Crazy Bull, 1997b). This paradigm is conceptually imbued with constructivist thought.**

**Crazy Bull (1997b) highlighted appropriate qualitative methods, including oral histories, storytelling, personal interviews, and community forums. In these, the spoken word is honored. Concurring with Parker, Crazy Bull (1997b) wrote: “Oral knowledge brings a metaphysical presence, a total response, to the context of research. Researchers try to express this presence on a two-dimensional plane in writing” (p. 21). This was the basis of the research design that follows.**

## Research Design

Creswell (1998) identified case study research as one of five traditions in the field of qualitative research. The primary sources of research, which help ground and inform this case study investigation, have, in fact, been associated almost exclusively with qualitative research and ethnographic methodologies. Creswell (1994) noted that qualitative research is primarily concerned with process, rather than outcomes or products, and with how people construct meaning in their lives and from their experiences (p. 145). In *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, Creswell (1998) elaborated:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (p. 15)

This was consistent with the case study design, which was conducted on-site in the community and relied on three primary sources of data—interviews supported by observations and collected documents. The purpose of the research was to develop an in-depth, holistic understanding of the youth organization, its contextual setting, and the meaning it held for people in the community.

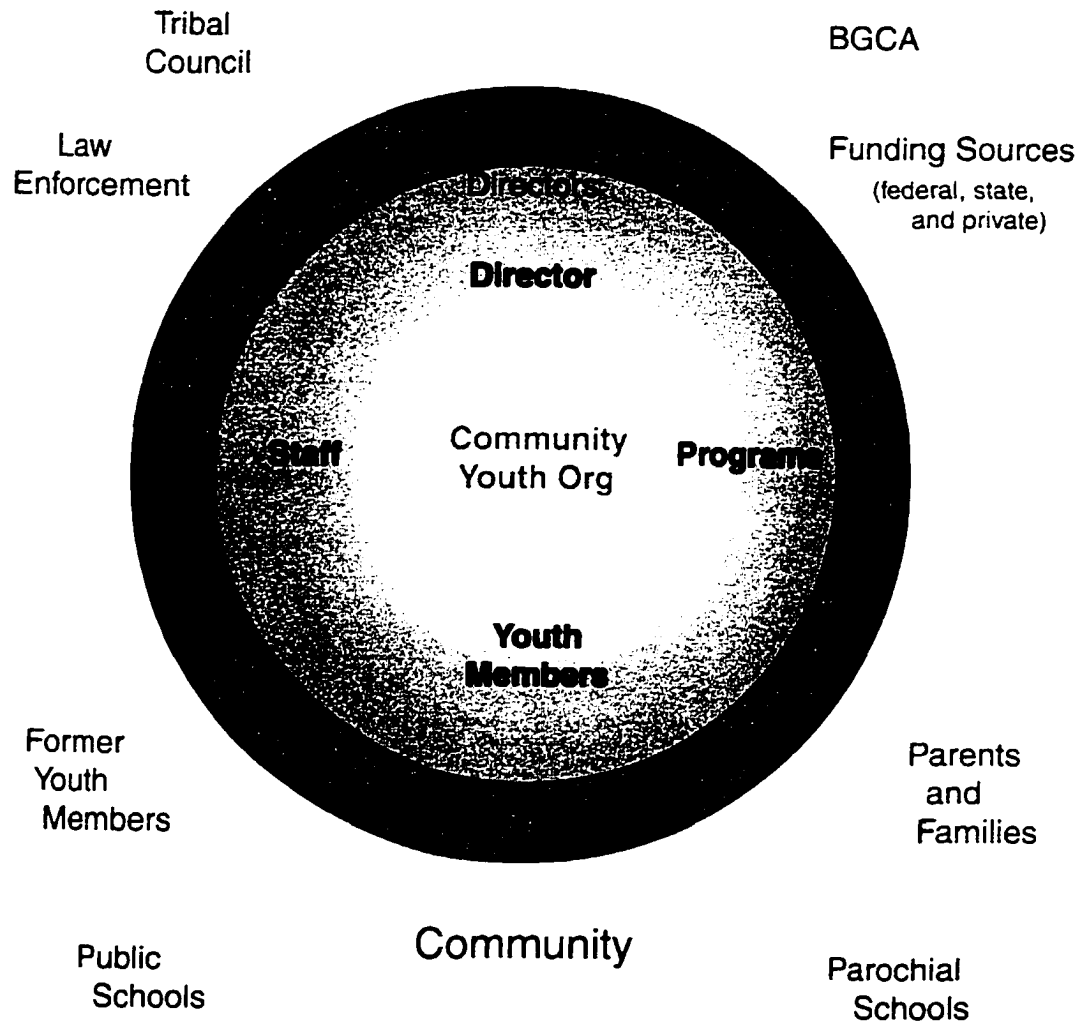
## Sample

Purposeful sampling is a key characteristic of qualitative inquiry, especially case study research, and it comes into play at several levels. “It applies to both the selection of the case to study as well as the sampling of information used within the case,”

Creswell (1998) claimed (p. 251). Creswell, therefore, stressed the importance of articulating the rationale behind the sampling strategies employed. Miles and Huberman (1994), for their part, provided a generous list of possibilities (p. 84).

In this study, the highlighted organization was chosen because it stood to provide valuable information based on its rather unique characteristics—it was located in a rural community on an isolated American Indian reservation. This sort of focus drives studies that Stake (1995) identified as intrinsic. An intrinsic case study, Creswell (1998) explained, is studied “because it holds intrinsic or unusual interest” in and of itself (p. 250). Very little research data existed to describe and examine an organization such as the one that was selected. It was therefore politically important as well. Understandings derived from this case may influence social and educational policy. Finally, this case was also a critical case. Established through a local grassroots effort, and existing for nearly a decade, it was anticipated that there would be a wealth of data and experience to probe.

Three types of data were collected: documents, observations, and interviews. The sampling strategies used to select data, of each type, were also multiple. Sources, situations, and subjects were chosen for maximum variation, in order to provide a holistic understanding of the diverse experiences and perceptions within the community. Opportunistic sampling enabled the researcher to take advantage of information and understandings that arise naturally and inductively in the course of the investigation. Mixed sampling allowed triangulation. The case was examined in its natural context. (See Figure 4.)



**Figure 4. Multiple Data Sources in the Organization and in the Community.**

### **Data Collection**

**Data was collected on-site at the Boys & Girls Club facility and in the community at large. Several individuals and agencies served as important gatekeepers in the local community. An instructor at the tribal college was a cultural leader. A tribal education director had worked extensively with area schools. The Tribal Council was a key entity in the community, while the primary gatekeeper was certainly the club's director.**

**Prior to initiating research in the community, each gatekeeper was contacted in person as well as in writing. The purpose of the study was explained, the interview process was described, and a description of the procedures that ensured confidentiality was included. The executive director expressed his support and gave verbal approval before the study was initiated. The Tribal Council gave qualified approval.**

### **Confidentiality**

**None of the participants, neither adolescents nor adults, were identified in the research project. Complete confidentiality was maintained in the observation notes, interview notes, and research reports. This was in keeping with the informed consent and active assent documents. See Appendix A. Reference to individuals was through codes such as P-1, P-2, and so on. Field observation and interview notes were kept in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's residence. Subject identification keys, linking names of subjects with their identification code, were kept secure in a location that is locked and separate from the collected data. Furthermore, after a suitable time and after publication of the research findings in various formats and venues, all notes and documents and collected data from field observations and interviews will be destroyed.**



### **Document collection**

Multiple forms of data were gathered to gain a holistic perspective and understanding of the Boys & Girls Club. These included public and archival documents, such as: organizational papers, budgets, organizational charts, program development plans, grant proposals, program evaluations, membership records, and so on.

### **Observation notes**

In addition to gathering public and archival organizational documents, observations were recorded in the community and at the Boys & Girls Club facilities. Observations at large, on the reservation, helped provide a context for the study and a holistic understanding of the club's acceptance and role in the community. Community activities and patterns were observed and described.

Participant observations were logged at the club where members were boys and girls aged 5 to 18. Staff training, scheduling, and the organizational procedures were observed. Adolescent and adult participants were observed while engaged in educational, recreational, and managerial activities at the club or during sponsored activities in the community. Activities were described, and student-staff interactions were noted.

### **Interviews**

Interviews were the primary means by which community members shared their perceptions and the ways they constructed meaning of their interactions with the Boys & Girls Club and with each other. Seidman (1998) said, "it is this process of selecting constitutive details of experience, reflecting on them, giving them order, and thereby making sense of them that makes telling stories a meaning-making experience" (p. 1).

Open-ended questioning allowed this process to unfold naturally. Stake (1995) wrote that “qualitative case study seldom proceeds as a survey with the same questions asked of each respondent; rather, each interviewee is expected to have had unique experiences, special stories to tell” (p. 65). Stake did recommend arriving with a list of questions.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with volunteering adolescent boys and girls, older male and female youth, adult staff members of the Boys & Girls Club, and adults in the community. Adolescent and older youth subjects were members, or former members, of the Boys & Girls Club. Members were interviewed at the club facility during regular club hours. Sessions lasted about 15 or 20 minutes. Students were asked a number of questions. How long have they been members of the club? What kinds of activities do they enjoy? What is the best thing about being at the club?

A former club member was identified through recommendations made by a Boys & Girls Club staff member. The individual was contacted and then interviewed in the family home with an adult present. Adult participants were interviewed at their place of employment and were questioned as to their perceptions of the organization’s role and efficacy. The researcher actively and openly shared the purpose and intent of the research—with adolescents, youth, parent-guardians, and adults—prior to, and during, data collection. Interviews with adults were tape-recorded, while interviews with individuals under the age of 18 were not recorded.

### Interview Protocol

This study used an interview protocol that followed from Creswell (1998). The protocol helped keep the interviewer on track while logging data and transcribing notes

regarding the responses. Following Creswell's recommendations, the interview protocol for this study included: (a) a demographic information sheet with the time, place, and setting of the interview; (b) opening statements; (c) interview questions; and (d) an interview form with space for descriptive and reflective entries. The protocol is located in Appendix B.

### **Research Questions and Rationale**

This study investigated the circumstances surrounding the formation of a community youth organization, the efficacy of the organization's effort to address perceived needs of American Indian adolescents and youth in the community, and lessons that might be learned from this organization's experiences. Interviews were the primary means of collecting of data. Creswell (1998) recommended semi-structured interviews with a core set of questions. Others agreed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Stake, 1995). Seidman (1998) stressed the role that phenomenological interviewing can have with regard to understanding how individuals construct meaning of their life experiences. Two questions were subsequently added at the beginning of the adult interviews to facilitate this process and set the stage for questions related directly to the local Boys & Girls Club organization.

Sources of collected data, as they relate specifically to the research questions, are identified below.

1. What is the nature of the youth organization serving as the focus of the case study?

What perceived needs in the community served as catalyst and context for the

**organization?**

**How and why did the organization evolve?**

**Organizational documents and initial funding requests shed some light on the needs for which the founding members formed the organization. However, one-on-one interviews were the primary vehicle by which individuals' perceptions were revealed and described. Interviews put a human face on the circumstances and needs. Observations at the club and in the community supported the findings gathered in the interviews.**

**2. How did the organization fulfill its original goals?**

**What are the outcomes of the organization's efforts?**

**Has the organization's mission and purpose changed over time?**

**What impact has the organization made on the community and on the perceived needs within the community?**

**One-on-one interviews in the community provided personal perceptions as to the impact the organization has on the children and youth in the community. Did adults believe the organization had achieved desired outcomes that impacted these young lives? Program evaluations of federal grant awards provided some support in this, but program goals are frequently set in Washington, D.C. and may have differed from the community's focus.**

**3. What findings from this investigation might be beneficial to other communities?**

**What, in this organization's experience, can be instructive for other communities and individuals who wish to organize community efforts?**

**What similar challenges (and setbacks) might others expect to experience?**

The lessons learned by this community, which may provide critical information or perspective or inspiration to other communities, resided in the experience and growth of the community itself. The community's experience was primarily derived from data gathered in personal interviews once again. Observations in the community supported the findings from the interviews.

As Stake (1995) pointed out, in case studies “*emic issues emerge*” (p. 20), a process of progressive focusing unfolds, and “the best research questions evolve during the study” (p. 33). In this research, the researcher looked for patterns and categories and corroboration in the data that was gathered. Interpretation and the reporting of finding utilized thick description. Semi-structured interviews remained open-ended and flexible.

### Data Analysis

Open and axial coding followed data collection. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) described data analysis as “the process of systematically searching and arranging”:

Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others.

(p. 153)

With qualitative data, this occurs through coding. Stake (1995) stated that coding means “classifying observations into files or categories, usually predetermined” (p. 169). This process involves categorization and conceptualization, which is known as open coding; but it also involves the re-assembly of the data in new ways, known as axial coding

(Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Following coding, data was aggregated in categories, looking for patterns. Analysis proceeded inductively.

### Reporting Data

The findings of this qualitative study were ultimately reported in narrative form. Just as participants actively constructed meaning in the language to which they gave voice, so have the meanings derived in the study taken final form again, translated into words.

In *The Enlightened Eye*, Eisner (1991) expressed his belief that qualitative research is more art than science. In this Meloy (2002) agreed, and she pointed to “one of the dictums of art . . . that ‘form follows function’”:

Perhaps the observable structure of format of the qualitative dissertation—including the number of chapters, headings, inclusion and type of data, appendixes, audit trails, and so forth—provides readers with explicit clues to the researcher’s process of analysis and interpretations, which are a part of the meaning of the study. If this idea makes sense, then the notion of an “appropriate” format for qualitative dissertations probably does not exist unless it is explicitly linked to the substance and context of the study and the methodology that generated it. (pp. 12-13)

Stake (1995) tied this to thick description, a critical technique in constructivist research:

Qualitative research tries to establish an empathetic understanding for the reader, through description, sometimes *thick description*, conveying to the reader what

experience itself would convey. (p. 39)

It is my hope that the findings from this study will provide valuable information and perspective back to the community in which the study is set. The study also intends to provide valuable understanding to other communities. It is hoped that this has been accomplished through narrative description and through an appropriate and “natural” presentation of the findings and their analysis. “Oral knowledge brings a metaphysical presence, a total response, to the context of research,” Crazy Bull (1997b, p. 21) wrote. “Researchers,” she concluded, “try to express this presence on a two-dimensional plane in writing.”

### Role of the Researcher

In *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, Merriam (1998) wrote:

In a qualitative study the investigator is the primary instrument for gathering and analyzing data and, as such, can respond to the situation by maximizing opportunities for collecting and producing meaningful information. Conversely, the investigator as human instrument is limited by being human—that is, mistakes are made, opportunities are missed, personal biases interfere. Human instruments are as fallible as any other research instrument. (p. 20)

With this in mind, as a researcher, I brought a number of strengths to this inquiry. To begin with, while the researcher was an outsider to the community and non-Native, I had developed personal and professional relationships with several key individuals in the

community during the preceding five years. These included the director of the youth organization, the tribal education director, and the president of the local tribal college.

In addition, I have lived and taught in numerous cross-cultural settings in Japan, Hawai'i, and Montana. Furthermore, I have resided on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Western Montana for the past 18 years. Between 1990 and 1993, I taught at a tribal high school run by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. For the past five years, I have been the project director over a multifaceted federal bilingual education program in four schools across three school districts on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The project includes Salish and Kootenai language revitalization components. In short, I have sought out and crossed many cultural boundaries and have grown in the experience.

My own academic training has been broad as well. I earned my BA in biology (with a minor in Asian Studies) and my MA in English, and I completed graduate course work at the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington. Finally, I worked as a volunteer in my community in the area of youth development. I served a key role in founding Boys & Girls Clubs on the Flathead Indian Reservation and in Missoula, Montana.

### **Validity and Reliability**

#### **Prolonged engagement**

Six weeks were spent on site, recording detailed observations at the club and in the community at large, between January and April 2002. Programs and activities were observed; interactions between youth members, staff, and the director were noted; and



shared community planning and decision-making sessions were documented. The club's executive director and program directors were interviewed using the semi-structured interview protocol. Informal interviews were also conducted during the course of the investigation. Youth and adolescent members will be interviewed in small and informal group forums. Former members and "drop-outs" were identified and contacted—as were board members, staff, volunteers, and members of the community—to gain important perspective and information. Finally, documentation of organizational structures, mission and policy statements, and programs and activities were collected.

### **Triangulation**

Stake (1995) asserted that "in our search both for accuracy and alternative explanations, we need discipline, we need protocols which do not depend on mere intuition and good intention to 'get it right'" (p. 107). These protocols and procedures, Stake identified as triangulation. Eisner (1991) stated that "structural corroboration, like the process of triangulation, is a means through which multiple types of data are related to each other to support or contradict the interpretation and evaluation of a state of affairs" (p. 110). In this study, triangulation was employed through the collection of multiple types of data—interviews, observations, and collected documents. Furthermore, with regard to the interviews, participants were chosen from various positions that were identified in the community (in relation to the Boys & Girls Club) prior to starting data collection.

### **Member checking**

Member checking was employed to validate key information that was collected.

### Chapter Summary

Case study methodology is an appropriate means to develop holistic understanding of an intrinsic case—a Boys & Girls Club on a remote American Indian reservation. Multiple purposeful sampling strategies resulted in multiple forms of data. Triangulation of data, member checking, and an established presence in the community helped ensure the validity of the data collected. Findings have been reported in narrative form, recreating a sense of the context and circumstance of the case under study. In the end, the most meaningful information was that that was self-reported by the participants in the club and the community themselves. This was appropriate. The study focused, after all, on how *they* constructed meaning of the organization and its activities for themselves.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### Introduction

Constructivist thought highlights the notion that individuals actively construct knowledge, understanding, and reality for themselves. Stake (1995) noted that qualitative research is usually anchored to this conceptual view. He wrote that “most contemporary qualitative researchers nourish the belief that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered” (p. 99), and he subsequently identified the researcher’s role as that of an interpreter and a gatherer of interpretations. In the stories and accounts gathered in this chapter, individuals have reconstructed and made meaningful expression of their own experience as it relates to the formation, operation, and efficacy of a community youth organization in their community. What they have conveyed, in essence, are short oral histories.

In *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, John Creswell (1998) stated that an oral history “is an approach in which the researcher gathers personal recollections of events, their causes, and their effects from an individual or several individuals” (p. 49). This approach is particularly valuable in the current study for two reasons. First of all, this case study was undertaken in a Native American community in which storytelling and oral histories are highly valued and commonly shared. Second, while the reader will ultimately make her or his own meaning of these accounts, it is critical—due to the cross-cultural nature of this study—that the participants, themselves, represent and interpret their own knowledge and experience. The current approach then, it should be noted,

aligns with the cautions and recommendations made by Crazy Bull (1997b) with regard to carrying out research in Native communities.

### Reporting case study findings

As for reporting study findings, Creswell repeated a colleague's assertion: "There is no standard format for reporting case study research" (Merriam, 1998, p. 227). Stake (1995) argued, further, that "case study research *shares* the burden of clarifying descriptions and sophisticating interpretations" (p. 102) (emphasis added).

Following a constructivist view of knowledge does not require the researcher to avoid delivering generalizations. But a constructivist view encourages providing readers with good raw material for their own generalizing. (Stake, p. 102)

The role assumed by the current researcher, then, was: (a) to encourage and facilitate the telling of these individuals' stories while gathering corroborating documents and making observations in the community; (b) to arrange the recollections, stories, and statements in a meaningful way; (c) to provide key supporting evidence where necessary and helpful; and (d) to supply supplemental analysis and interpretation, as is the expressed purpose of qualitative case study research in the first place. The format employed, for reporting the case study findings, reflects these researcher roles.

### Interviewing community members

Interviews were conducted with 28 adult, youth, and adolescent participants drawn from a variety of positions in, and around, the community of Antelope Springs—a fictitious name—on the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation over a three-month period. Demographic information concerning these participants is supplied in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information for Participants Interviewed.

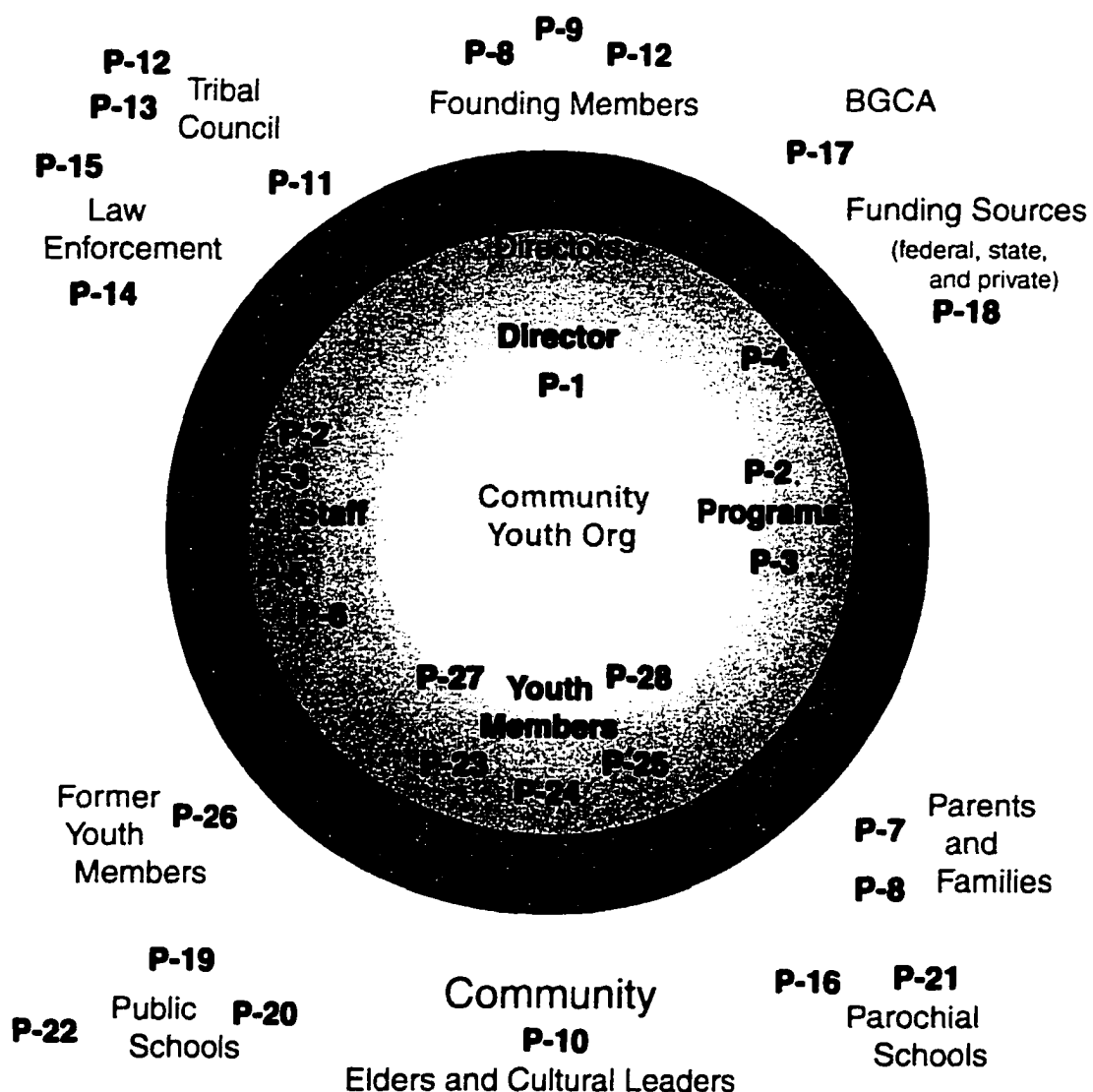
Participant	Location in the community	Gender	Age	Ethnicity
P-1	club staff - exec director - founder	male	45	Native
P-2	club staff - programs - startup staff	female	49	Native
P-3	club staff - programs	female	46	Native
P-4	club staff - grants - educator	female	40	Non-Native (married in)
P-5	club staff - program	male	40	Native
P-6	club staff - VISTA volunteer	female	35	Non-Native
P-7	parent - new-hired staff	female	34	Native
P-8	founder - parent - nonprofit director	female	53	Native
P-9	founder - tribal employee	male	56	Native
P-10	cultural leader - educator	male	60	Native
P-11	tribal program director - educator	female	60	Native
P-12	tribal government - founder	male	54	Native
P-13	tribal government	female	44	Native
P-14	tribal law enforcement	male	40	Native
P-15	board of directors - tribal judge	male	55	Native
P-16	board of directors - tribal school admin	male	50	Non-Native
P-17	former club director (out-of-state)	male	32	Other Native
P-18	funding source	male	40	Other Native
P-19	local school administrator	female	55	Non-Native (married in)
P-20	local school administrator	male	50	Non-Native
P-21	parochial boarding school admin	male	55	Local Non-Native
P-22	off-reservation school admin	male	49	Non-Native
P-23	junior staff - club member	female	19	Native
P-24	junior staff - club member	female	18	Native
P-25	junior staff - club member	female	18	Native
P-26	teen member - inactive	male	16	Native
P-27	adolescent club member	female	12	Native
P-28	adolescent club member	male	11	Native

Figure 5, on page 113, graphically and holistically situates the individuals in the community with regard to the Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation. Figure 6, on page 114, presents a schematic representation of club programs and operations. In the graphic, the executive director carries out board policy and interacts with staff through a shared vision. Programs are developed and implemented as a function of funding and the director's direction. Programs are, ideally, designed to meet the needs of the club student members. Finally, adolescents and youth interact with staff in the club's facilities. Outside the bounds of the club, are community structures. Political and economic elements lie in the top half of the diagram. Cultural elements lie in the bottom half.

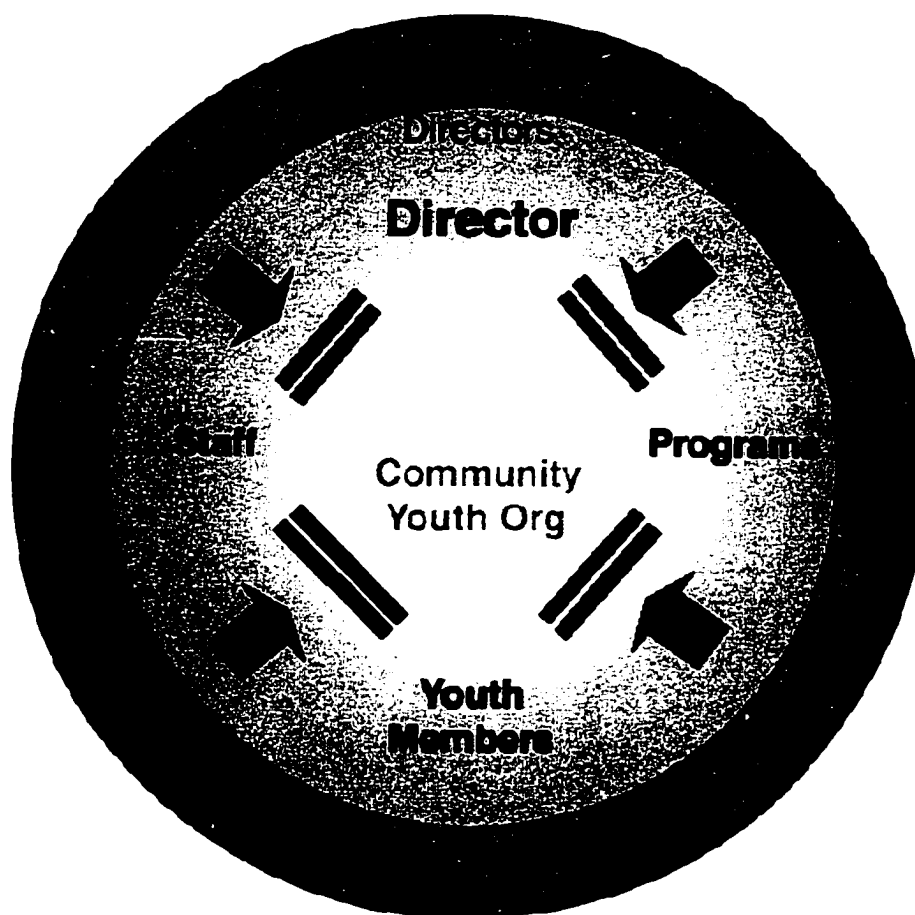
#### Coding—emergent categories, themes, and characteristics

In Table 2 on page 115, the three initial lines of inquiry that drove the study are represented. These lines of inquiry, or categories of investigation, spawned the study's three formal research questions. The semi-structured interview protocol was subsequently constructed to address the collection of information related to the research questions. This step is represented in Table 3 on page 116. Finally, data generated by the interviews was analyzed, using open coding procedures. Merriam (1998) characterized the process of data analysis:

Data analysis is a complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation. These meanings or understandings or insights constitute the *findings* of a study. Findings can be in the form of organized descriptive accounts, themes, or categories that cut across the data, or in the form of models and theories that explain the data. (p. 178)



*Figure 5. Location of Interview Participants in the Community.*



*Figure 6.* Operational Schema for Boys & Girls Club Organization.



Table 2. Initial Categories Used to Construct the Research Questions.

INITIAL CATEGORIES	RESEARCH QUESTIONS
<p>1. What did they do?</p> <p>2. How did they do it?</p> <p>3. How can someone else do the same for their community?</p>	<p>1. What is the nature of the youth organization serving as the focus of the case study?</p> <p>What perceived needs in the community served as catalyst and context for the organization?</p> <p>How and why did the organization evolve?</p> <p>2. How did the organization fulfill its original goals?</p> <p>What are the outcomes of the organization's efforts?</p> <p>Has the organization's mission and purpose changed over time?</p> <p>What impact has the organization made on the community and on the perceived needs within the community?</p> <p>3. What findings from this investigation might be beneficial to other communities?</p> <p>What, in this organization's experience, can be instructive for other communities and individuals who wish to organize community efforts?</p> <p>What similar challenges (and setbacks) might others expect to experience?</p>

Table 3. Categories Emerging from the Community Interviews.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	EMERGENT CATEGORIES
<p>A. What was it like, for you, growing up here in this community? [family, school, free time]</p> <p>B. What does it mean for you to be Tsitsistas?</p> <hr/> <p>1) How and when did you first become aware of the Boys &amp; Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation? What were your first impressions of the organization?</p> <p>2) What has been your involvement with the Boys &amp; Girls Club? (Do you have any adolescent family members who are active in the club?)</p> <p>3) In your opinion, what role does the club play in the community? (Or, how would you describe the mission and purpose of the organization?)</p> <p>4) Do you think the organization has been effective in achieving its mission and purpose? In what ways might it be more effective?</p> <p>5) What impacts—either positive or negative—do you think that the Boys &amp; Girls Club has on families here?</p> <p>6) In what ways is the Boys &amp; Girls Club like the local schools? In what ways is it different?</p> <p>7) What do you think the impact on the community would be if the Boys &amp; Girls Club was not here?</p> <p>8) Given your experience, what would you want to tell another community about creating a youth organization like Boys &amp; Girls Club in their community?</p>	<p>#1: Perceptions of Need— Changes in the Community</p> <p>#2: Responding to Perceived Need— Organizing and Building Community</p> <p>#3: The Role of the Organization— A Positive Place</p> <p>#4: Perceptions of Efficacy— Challenges Facing the Organization</p> <p>#5: Looking to a Better Future— Voices of the Youth</p>

Merriam (1998) subsequently described the process of categorization:

Categories are conceptual elements that “cover” or span many individual examples of the category. . . . The names of your categories can come from at least three sources: the researcher, the participants, or sources outside the study such as the literature. The most common situation is when the investigator comes up with terms, concepts, and categories that reflect what he or she sees in the data. In the second approach, the data can be organized into a scheme suggested by the participants themselves. “This approach requires an analysis of the verbal categories used by participants. . .” (Patton, 1990, p. 393). (pp. 182-83)

Merriam further articulated that the categories that are identified should “*reflect the purpose of the research*” and should be “*exhaustive*,” “*mutually exclusive*,” “*sensitizing*,” and “*conceptually congruent*” (pp. 183-84).

Table 4, on page 118, lists the categories into which the themes, which emerged in the course of this study, were grouped by the researcher. Thematic labels were supplied, or inspired, by verbal utterances made by participants. Subsequently, sub-themes and/or key conceptual points were identified (by the author) in italics in the narrative, stories, or descriptions in each thematic section.

Table 4. Themes Emerging from Community Interviews by Category.

CATEGORIES ———>	EMERGENT THEMES
#1: Perceptions of Need— Changes in the Community	“It was different when I was growing up.”
#2: Responding to Perceived Need—Organizing, Building Community	a) “It takes more than one person to do this.” b) “Their organization has had strong, stable leadership.” c) “It takes dedication and commitment.” d) “I’ll work with anyone.”
#3: The Role of the Organization— A Positive Place	a) “It’s a safe place to be.” b) “Someone calls them by their name, and asks, ‘How was your day today?’” c) “The club provides opportunities for kids that many parents here can’t.” d) “Programming is problematic in Indian Country.” e) “I think it’s just a matter of using my parenting skills.” f) “But if they didn’t feed the kids dinner, some kids would go to bed hungry.”
#4: Perceptions of Efficacy— Challenges Facing the Organization	a) “There’s so much more we could do if we had the resources.” b) “It’s different here.”
#5: Looking to a Better Future— Voices of the Youth	a) “If I didn’t come here, I’d probably just get in trouble.” b) “I learn how to get along with people and make friends.” c) “I’m just waiting to get out of here.”

### **Storytelling—making meaning of experience**

Findings reported in this chapter are essentially individual oral narratives—or histories or stories—that were imbedded in a larger narrative. The range of responses within each theme (or sub-theme) was also represented, or indicated, narratively. This format is intended to maintain the integrity of the holistic study. It is also compatible with the researcher's belief that narrative best captures the emotion, intricacy, and complexity of the human experience—especially the expression human experience that lies outside, and is subject to, the culture of power.

In *The Art of Case Study Research*, Stake (1995) reported some concern with case study reporting as storytelling:

Increasingly, we hear references to the writing of case study research as telling stories. Once in a while, it will be useful to present the report in story form and, much more often, it will be useful to tell a few stories or vignettes to illustrate what is going on, but case study reporting generally is not storytelling. The elements of a story are these: It becomes apparent that characters in a certain setting have a problem. Initial efforts to solve the problem fail and the problem takes a turn for the worse. Then by extraordinary and climactic effort, the problem is resolved. (p. 127)

Stake effectively summarized the “story code” of the culture of power—the cultural arbitrary to which “a story” becomes compared. Janet Burroway (1992), in a text on creative writing, explained it even more succinctly.

‘Story’ is a ‘form’ of literature. Like a face it has necessary features in a necessary harmony. . . . Fortunately, the necessary features of the story form are

fewer than those of a face. They are *conflict, crisis, and resolution*. (pp. 38-39)

Literary critics trace this expectation for story form to the classical writings of Aristotle. Aristotle's analyses of the best form and structural elements to use in creating dramatic tragedy, in *The Poetics*, have shaped expectations for "story" in mainstream European American culture (Kaplan, 1986). It has become an unconscious expectation.

### Storytelling—form and power

Considered critically, then, Stake's characterization and view on storytelling might be considered narrow, exclusive, and restrictive; and adherence to his view might result in failure to recognize important views, experiences, and data. It may cause failure to recognize a story—or *devaluation* of a narrative. Toni Morrison (1992), noted African American author, initiated a discussion of other codes of power embedded in American literature in her essays in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*.

For reasons that should not need explanation here, until very recently, and regardless of the race of the author, the readers of virtually all of American fiction have been positioned as white. I am interested to know what that assumption has meant to the literary imagination. (p. xii)

Henry Giroux (1988) stated that "power has to be understood as a concrete set of practices that produce social forms through which different sets of experience and modes of subjectivities are constructed;" and it is *discourse* that "functions to produce and legitimate configurations of time, space, and narrative which position teachers and students so as to privilege particular renderings of ideology, behavior, and the representation of everyday life" (p. 88).

Accounts related in this chapter have, for the most part, been considered stories. Many of the stories I heard, while collecting data for this case study project, were stories of loss. There were personal accounts of a son or a daughter whose life was cut short by alcohol, drugs, or an automobile accident. Several individuals shared feelings of being abandoned by their parents when they were sent off to boarding school as a child. And there were stark and constant reminders, all around me, of the great sacrifice and loss that these people's forbearers experienced. It was deeply moving to have these personal and community losses shared with me. However, the stories reported in this study focus on personal and collective actions that were undertaken in response to loss. They are stories of commitment to the community. They are stories of risk-taking. They are stories of endurance and survival. The following story illustrates this point.

**Taking action: The executive director's story**

Late on a February night in 1998, Ed Byrd sat in a hotel room following a busy day of meetings at a state-wide conference of Boys & Girls Club directors. His eyelids were heavy, and he was obviously quite tired.

Still, he hadn't lost his humor. When he was asked what made his Boys & Girls Club special and different from other clubs or youth organizations, the executive director laughed and quipped, "They've got me!" Since he was always quite quick to credit volunteers and other youth advocates in his community though, Byrd's joking seemed to be a direct, honest, and truthful response. Byrd showed he was well aware of the personal strengths he brought to the organization. He had spoken with a great deal of confidence when he addressed an audience earlier in the day, and he had demonstrated a

belief in his own ability to make his community a better place—and his belief that his organization had fostered, and was fostering, hope in young Tsitsistas lives.

This confidence came about quite naturally, he said:

I had instinctive organizational skills. I would move into a community, and I would just start looking at the whole thing, you know, and say, “Man, we could do this,” and, “We could do that.” And I would go ahead and do it. I’d just roll up my sleeves and do it. Usually, about half the time, I was doing it by myself.

I’d go to all these agencies . . . police force, everybody, BIA . . . and I was just nothing. My voice was nothing. So I figured out . . . we just get more voices together. (P-1, February 1998)

After organizing a neighborhood watch group and drawing up articles of incorporation, Byrd noticed that tribal agencies responded much more readily to the group’s requests. The experience was not lost on Byrd. He explained:

Everyone gets dependent on government agencies to do everything. Everyone has that idea, and you just got to do it yourself. For example, we had bare walls in this building we were in, and we had the equipment in there and no lights . . . no nothing . . . just bare walls . . . dark. So I got lighting in and I had a sheet rocking party. I advertised it for two weeks—had promises everybody would be there—and I cooked a big pot of chili. Told everybody, you know. . . . And I was the only one that showed up. And I got mad. I had 12-foot sheets of sheetrock, and I just hung them suckers, you know. Just did the whole thing



myself. Put it all together. I told my wife, "I don't care if it kills me, I'm going to do it. I know I can do it."

But that's kind of the determination it's taken because you have people that are so dependent on other entities to do things for them. And then they lose their creativity. They lose their vision. They can't see the potential in something and roll up their sleeves and go after it. And that's just what I saw in the Boys & Girls Club—this is do-able. We can do this. (P-1, February 1998)

### **Summary**

In this chapter, case study findings are reported. The findings were derived primarily from participant interviews. The individuals' stories are, essentially, oral histories, and their accounts are captured in their own words as much as is possible. They were interpretively arranged according to categories and themes that emerged from the study—and in a narrative format that seeks to holistically preserve the integrity of the stories and the focus of the case study. Where names were used, it should be noted that fictitious names have been created. Where names were not necessary, individuals were simply identified by where they were situated in the community.

## **The Reservation Setting**

### **Geographical setting—entering the reservation**

An Indian reservation was established for the Tsitsistas Nation by executive order in 1884. The reservation sits on the northern plains, and it encompasses approximately 455,000 acres of broken hills, buttes, low bluffs, and sandstone outcroppings. Several small streams run through the reservation. Where sides of the rocky bluffs have been

exposed, the hills show stratified layers of red, tan, brown, grey, tan, red, and chalk-white rock as one goes from the tops of the bluffs to the floor of the winding river bottoms.

Pine trees, juniper, sagebrush, and short prairie grasses cover the dry hills. Willows and cottonwoods grow in places along the streams and creeks.

The established settlements are situated along the several streams. There are five districts—Antelope Springs, White River, Clay Creek, Blushing, and Red Butte. (Names have been changed.) Two state highways cross the reservation. They intersect at the tribal headquarters of the tribe—Antelope Springs. Where the highways' junction, there is a four-way stoplight. It is the only stoplight in Antelope Springs. The town is tucked against low, pine-covered hills that shelter it on three sides. Where a stream flows north, there is a narrow valley that runs toward an off-reservation border town that is less than 30 miles distant.

There are no motels in Antelope Springs. There are no movie theaters. There are few options, as far as small cafes are concerned. The tribe owns the local gas station and mini-market. There is one grocery store, but there are numerous churches. Housing is clustered against the hills, and (other than the two highways) most of the roads are dirt.

#### Community setting—identification with specific communities

In one of the earliest interviews conducted for this study, I asked an older gentleman what it was like for him, growing up in the community there. He was a man who had lived both on and off the reservation and who had traveled quite widely in this country and abroad. At that moment, he was sitting behind a large conference table, with papers spread out before him, tying up loose ends before he was to leave on another major trip.

His response to my question surprised me. "I didn't grow up here," he said quite matter-of-factly. I hesitated, not knowing what to ask or say next. I was certain, from talking with him, he had grown up on the reservation. After a pause, he continued. "I grew up in White River. I was born here at Antelope Springs when there was still a hospital here. But I lived in White River from the time I was . . . from the time I was . . . my parents lived there. I lived there until I was 15 years old, then I moved off the reservation."

The community of White River was 16 miles west. For this man, however, those 16 miles were an important distinction to be made between the two communities. Other individuals made similar distinctions when I asked them about growing up in the community. One man said, "I grew up in Red Butte. . . . We were known as the Scabbie people in the Red Butte district." When questioned about the Scabbie people, he answered: "It was a band that selected that place to live when we were brought back from Fort Robinson, and some of the people were known as White River District, Antelope Springs. . . . We got different names and that's where they selected to live."

A third man, originally from Antelope Springs, when questioned about whether the community ties stemmed from ties to different Tsitsistas bands, commented, "Yeah, I think it is just a community." The distinctions between communities still played a strong role for a young Tsitsistas woman however:

The Antelope Springs community is so different from the Blushing community.

Like you say, there's the Red Butte-Tsitsistas, there's the Blushing-Tsitsistas, and the White River and Antelope Springs—which is unfortunate, because everybody should be. . . . But, to me, it seems like the Antelope Springs people think the

Blushing Indians are . . . they are the breeds. They have the White in them. So they aren't good enough for them? It's really weird how different—20 miles in between—how different the communities can be.

**Cultural setting—what it means to be Tsitsistas, to be Indian**

Age seemed to play a part in how many individuals identified themselves.

Individuals above the age of 50 seemed to identify themselves as Tsitsistas and seemed to identify with the older, Tsitsistas-speaking community. The language was particularly key to one community member:

I can't imagine being anything else. I'm very proud to be a Tsitsistas.

I've spoken the language ever since I've been able to speak. I think that knowing the language has made me have a very good self-concept and led a lot to my success—having a positive self-concept. I never had any question as to who I am. I've always been very proud of being Tsitsistas. In fact, it's just recently when I started articulating the fact that I was Tsitsistas. I thought everyone knew it—you know, I thought it was the whole package. . . .

I could no more imagine being a Black person, a Hispanic or a White person, and don't want to be, actually. I'm pretty satisfied in my skin—who I am.

(P-10, February 20, 2002)

Another man, when asked what it meant to him to be Tsitsistas, did not mention the Tsitsistas language. He addressed historical, political, and spiritual matters:

I come from a very proud heritage. We were one of the last tribes to give in—that's why we have the smallest reservation. My ancestors fought Custer in

battle. We have a real rich heritage, which I think the non-Indian kind of pushed aside so we can't build ourselves up. Seems like we are always getting knocked down everywhere we turn. They told us don't go to your traditional ways because you're going to hell. Come over here, and then we don't understand what's going on to speak a different kind of language at the Catholic Church. We all kind of grew up there. But my ancestors helped me a lot today. They came back from Oklahoma—it took them ten years—because this is their homeland. They had to fight all the way. They died, coming back here to their home country. And I think about them. When I was 'Nam, I thought about them. I said they could walk without food and this and that, then I could make it through here.

I look at it that way and I have pictures of all my ancestors. I teach this to my children. You always have to remember that because the government is trying to get rid of us a lot of different ways. We are part of the creator. Created us here to be here. That's his plan. If I was supposed to be different, I would have been born in England or someplace else, but they put us here, so I try to be proud of it.  
(P-12, March 20, 2002)

When asked directly about the Tsitsistas language, this man stated that it was his first language. He was in his mid-fifties, and he spoke Tsitsistas before he spoke English. He said his sisters tried to teach him English, but his first language was Tsitsistas. When he was growing up: "Everybody used their Indian names—they all spoke Tsitsistas."

In contrast, a woman in her forties spoke to being Native American:

Not even necessarily Tsitsistas . . . but to be Native American, I consider it an honor. When I think of the sacrifices and the hardships that *my* ancestors went

through so that I could be able to sit here today, it is an *honor . . . for me*. I haven't always felt that way. But, as I sit here today, I can only hope that my ancestors will be proud of me. (P-3, March 18, 2002)

### Identity as impacted by language loss and heritage

This last woman, in articulating how her identity and values had changed as she grew older, mentioned the issue of Native language. She identified a factor common to numerous participants who stated that they could understand spoken Tsitsistas, but they weren't able to speak the language:

As I grew older, as I gained more experience, I saw things through different eyes. And a lot of that came from my parents—how they would talk to us. Although they didn't speak the [same] language—my mom spoke her language, and my dad spoke his language, but they didn't speak the same language. . . . My mother was Oglala Sioux, and my dad was Tsitsistas. But they were great . . . they were storytellers. (P-3, March 18, 2002)

Another woman likewise shared that her father was Zuni while her mother was Tsitsistas. In her case, as well, English became the home language of the children.

The executive director of the Boys & Girls Club, also in his forties, explained and described how he viewed his own cultural identity when he was younger, mentioning both the Tsitsistas language and other avenues that were available to him with regard to being accepted by his peers. Foremost among these was to excel in sports:

I was always proud of being Tsitsistas. I didn't know what it meant—just that it was Indian, we were Indian. My folks were dark-skinned. So I saw no

difference. I always looked out on a sea of brown faces, and I was a white face, you know, with blue eyes. Even when I went to college . . . looking out on this sea of white faces, I was thinking, “Oh, my gosh. I’m so different from these people.” But I looked just like them.

So then I began to realize, well, being only quarter-Indian. . . . But still, I never saw any differences . . . though I couldn’t speak the language. It wasn’t really important to kids to speak the language. It was important to be a good basketball player, football player, track—and I did all those. So I was in. All my cousins were probably a little bit darker than me—they didn’t speak Tsitsistas. It didn’t seem important—even to kids who spoke Tsitsistas. I guess it wasn’t really defined—it was just that you were Indian. And you just kind of left it at that. (P-1, February 20, 2002)

As indicated by several of the study participants, cultural identities changed, deepened, and evolved with age and with experience. How others viewed an individual, and how the individual viewed herself or himself—these were not always the same. This was particularly the case when complicated by mixed-tribal or mixed-blood heritage.

### Cultural identity in the face of racial prejudice

Like the club’s executive director, several individuals described their cultural identity in relation to interactions with others outside the reservation. However, whereas the director recounted personal challenges to his own cultural awareness and identity—which might be said to be part of his personal growth—other participants described encounters that were experienced as racial prejudice. A Native American educator,

who recently turned 60, explained her experiences growing up in a community off the reservation:

Well, I learned one thing there: what it was like to be Indian in a border town . . . [laughs] . . . situation. We were the only Indians in the public school system. We had Indians who came in and then they would leave. But they wouldn't ever stay. We stayed. I stayed there. My older brother and I, we both started school there and graduated there. And my other two brothers were boarded at White River at the tribal school. So they grew up here, and we grew in S\_\_\_\_\_ [a border town].

It was really bad. Yeah, we were chased home and called names. Really, for my brother, it wasn't so bad because it seemed like boys were more accepting than girls were. So I didn't hardly have any friends at all when I grew up in S\_\_\_\_\_. It was just like you were isolated. I became a loner, you know . . . just did my work . . . went home. In those days, too, you know sports for girls wasn't as strong as with boys. It was a little different kind of situation. I'm sixty years old, my gosh. It's hard to believe. But in those days, you know, girls weren't really into sports. And you had more social kinds of things. Not sports. But my brother was into sports and he was really good. He was a track star and a football star and everything. He was more accepted by the community than I was . . . than girls were. Don't know why that was, but it just was. So it was really hard growing up there. (P-11, February 20, 2002)



Another woman, thirty years younger and of mixed-blood heritage, related similar experiences when she talked about moving off the reservation to attend high school in a border town:

Well, being Native American and White—here growing up wasn't tough because I was an athlete and stuff. But when I went to B \_\_\_\_ [a border town]—that was where I was treated like a foreign exchange student. Once they found out that I was Indian—I definitely had people—even though I looked White, I was too Indian over there for some of them . . . until they knew I could play basketball and golf. Then you fit in. (P-5, April 12, 2002)

The impact of experienced racism was not lost on the first woman. As a woman who returned to the Tsitsistas reservation to live, raise her children, and work as an educator, it shaped not only her personal awareness but her actions as well:

[It was] good coming back because then I could see where . . . how the Indians treated the non-Indians—it was same way I was treated in S \_\_\_\_\_. And the Indians were treating the non-Indians that way here, and that was just unacceptable to me—especially with children. When I started working in the school systems, I just couldn't believe that the poor little non-Indians were treated so cruelly. I kind of became their advocate, I guess, because I knew what it was like to be treated that way. (P-11, February 20, 2002)

Finally, one individual summed up how he viewed his identity as a Tsitsistas and as a Native American as a list of positives and negatives. He said that the positives far outnumbered the negatives, and the negatives were all external:

The negatives are . . . racial prejudice, racial profiling, and some of the diseases that we've got. (We're all highly susceptible to diabetes.) All of the negative things are external. I think they're all solvable. I mean, I don't know about the racial part. Here in [this state], it's still very rife. I mean you have state senators saying Indians are not normal. And the news media. You try to tell them, hey, you're racial profiling and you're being prejudiced. And they don't know that. They think that's part of the way they're supposed to be. That's the way they were brought up. They have this really . . . almost benign ignorance of what it means to be other than White. And those of us who are not White probably know more about White people than they know about us, because for us it's a survival technique. I think those are the external things that I don't like.

For me, those external things are something that I cannot control. And I've come to that conclusion, I say, that's their problem, you know—whoever it might be—that's their problem. When they equate me as somebody who's a drunken Indian, for instance—I go down the street and people say, there goes an Indian, therefore he's a drunk—they don't know that. They don't know that because they haven't bothered to find out. They don't know that I'm witty, that I'm intelligent, that I have a whole store of experiences that are probably better than theirs in their own society. But they never bothered to find that out.

I once told a senate subcommittee here at the state legislature: "When I get on an airplane, I can always tell people who are—most, most of the time—I can always tell people who are from in-state and those who are out-of-state. If a person sitting in front of me starts talking to me, I can almost deduce that they're

from out-of-state. If a person in front of me doesn't talk to me, I can almost deduce that they're from in-state, because they don't want to find out about me. They already know." And that's literally true. And again, those are things that I can't control. So I just never bother with them. (P-10, February 20, 2002)

### **Summary**

The Tsitsistas Nation, comprised of five distinct communities on a reservation on the northern plains, is—both geographically and culturally speaking—quite isolated and remote from mainstream communities in the United States. While the number of individuals interviewed for this case study was small and was selectively drawn—still, there seemed to be some difference between the way individuals over the age of 50 characterized their identity as Tsitsistas and the way younger individuals characterized their ethnic identity. A factor in this seemed to be an individual's ability to speak Tsitsistas—or proximity to the Tsitsistas-speaking older generation.

### **Category 1: Perceptions of Need—Changes in the Community**

#### **"It was different when I was growing up."**

For all its isolation, the Tsitsistas Nation has been anything but immune to major changes in the past several decades. As one interviewee phrased it: "It's like going from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" (P-15, April 11, 2002). These changes were witnessed in the short span of a couple of decades. One interview participant stated:

I was raised three miles out of Red Butte. We didn't have a facility to go to. We didn't have electricity . . . indoor facilities. There was lamps and candlelight, and

we—all we did was play around the bonfire in the moonlight and . . . things were different then. (P-9, April 8, 2002)

It was different then, and it was the dramatic changes—in the community, in the families, in the lives of children and young adults—that participating adults addressed in the interviews. They highlighted a number of key characteristics, or parameters, of the change. These included: family stability, housing patterns, discretionary time, mobility, and accessibility to alcohol and drugs. In their accounts and statements, however, these characteristics were rarely isolated. Rather, the characteristics were intertwined in the memories of what each individual had experienced while growing up on the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation and their experience of the community today. The personal history and recollection that follows, related by one community member, helps serve to illustrate the degree to which childhood experiences have changed.

Floating down the White River: A community member's story

We had a lot of activities. I mean most of the stuff we did was largely of our own improvisation because we were all pretty poor. So we did a lot of horseback riding. The storeowner brought in the concept of Boy Scouts. So many of us joined Boy Scouts. Most of the time we just played out in the hills. Nothing really structured . . . during the summer time. You know, during school we had the normal we had the normal activities in school. Basketball, baseball, and sports—you know, that kind of stuff. And many of us also went to church—and they had games, they had Bible school, they had activities, camps. So we did have that.

But much of that, now when I look back on it, was done on a very limited budget. I mean we didn't even have—when we were in the Boy Scouts, we never had any uniforms. We couldn't afford uniforms. We would have fund-raisers . . . to go on trips. I remember having pancake suppers and they were really well attended. And we would go to camporees and jamborees, as they called them. And usually we would always take first in whatever was going on . . . because we had pretty good preparation for that. And we always did it without uniforms, and all these other troops from H\_\_\_\_, B\_\_\_\_ and outlying White areas always had what a Boy Scout troop should look like. And we never did. But we were always getting the better of them and winning jamborees and camporees.

And then there were other cultural activities—like dancing, singing, hand games, bingos, fundraising bingos. And a lot of this—we took part in that all, activities, like the handgames, the bingos, the riding of horses, hunting on horseback . . . even trying to find something to float down the White River with. We stole a pig trough one time, thinking we could use it as a boat. And it leaked and sunk. Later on, it looked like . . . uh . . . it reminded me of a dugout canoe that I'd seen on the Discovery Channel and so forth . . . from other Indians. But it sank. [Laughter.] (P-10, February 20, 2002)

### Families are not as stable anymore

By and large, family stability was the strongest parameter of change addressed by the participants. When asked what it was like to grow up in the community, it was common for an individual to start by describing the poverty and primitive conditions—as

well as the isolated location—of the person’s childhood home. However, this was quickly followed by a description of family stability. Three males over the age of 50 focused mainly on social stability—family stability in the context of the larger community. One stated:

When I was growing up, we didn’t have electricity, running water. Some of the homes didn’t even have a floor—they had dirt floors. It seemed like social structure was stronger. Families were a lot stronger—there was more family interaction. We didn’t have diversions like TV, radio, and that sort of stuff. Oh, no, we did have radio some of the time. It was really remote. (P-15, April 11, 2002)

Another person—a 55-year-old White male—expressed sentiments that Antelope Springs “was a great place to grow up.” His feelings often surprised people, he said, but the town was very different back then:

There just weren’t a lot of problems that you see now. Alcohol was a problem, but you didn’t see juvenile delinquency. It was the kind of community where nobody even locked their door. At that time there were a lot of very traditional Tsitsistas. . . . Just lots of really solid, very traditional families. A lot of them didn’t speak English. But you’d see couples that had been married 50 - 60 years, and so I think they provided a lot of stability in the community. They were so very well respected. I feel very fortunate to have been there at that time. (P-21, April 9, 2002)

Quite a few children were being raised by grandparents at that time, as today, the man stated. It was the second generation, however—the parents of other children around

him—who were being heavily impacted by alcohol, while the older generation continued to provide “a real kind of stabilizing force” for families and for the community.

Community stability was supported by a shared value system in the community that has all but disappeared, asserted a third man. “When I grew up,” the 54-year-old male reported, “people would stop me and say, ‘What you doing?’” That doesn’t happen anymore, he said: “Parents don’t say that, they just kind of let everything go. I noticed a lot of crime and break-ins—just a lot of things that people don’t respect each other anymore” (P-12, March 20, 2002). A tribal judge agreed. “There was a lot of respect that was taught,” he said. “When I was growing up, any elder or any person really, if you were misbehaving, they had the right to come over and correct you. That seems to be gone these days” (P-15, April 11, 2002).

In contrast to the focus on social stability by participants over 50 years in age, speakers under the age of 50 seemed more likely to comment primarily on the stability of their own home. “I believe I had a very strong family, and a very close kinship with grandparents, uncles, aunties,” one woman articulated. She went on to explain that, “in the Tsitsistas way, your first cousins are your brothers and sisters, your aunts and uncles are like your second set of parents.” She concluded by speaking of the importance of being with her grandmother when she was small (P-13, March 20, 2002). For another woman, what once caused her shame now appeared as a blessing:

We had certain hardships. I considered them to be hardships then. Such as, we had no running water. We used kerosene lamps. We had to use a wood stove. Those types of things—which I was ashamed of . . . because I felt that I was the only one . . . because no one lives like that anymore . . . I thought. In a

lot of ways, I was ashamed of my home. I didn't want my friends to come there. We only had two rooms—real basic, nothing fancy.

[But] my dad worked hard all his life. He provided very well for us. We always had food on the table, clothes—those types of things. When I look at it now, I feel that, in a lot of ways, I was privileged and I was blessed to be able to grow up in that environment . . . because it forced us to bond as a family . . . because we didn't have TV, we didn't have this, we didn't have the other. So we spent a lot of time together as a family. (P-3, March 18, 2002)

Finally, two males in their forties commented on their fortune to come from stable homes—even though alcohol was a complicating issue:

I was fortunate in that my parents were a stable couple. They will be celebrating 46 years of being married, and we did have issues with, as some of my friends did, alcoholism and other types of problems within the family unit itself. (P-18, April 8, 2002)

I came from a big family. There was alcoholism in the family. There was pretty good structure at home though, so it was kind of a haven. I guess we were raised differently from a lot of my cousins and friends. They didn't have that structure, I guess . . . maybe a few of them did. We grew up poor—ten of us in the family. My dad drank all of my life, growing up. So I grew up within that. But he worked . . . made his job everyday. (P-1, February 20, 2002)



### **Clustered housing is a problem**

The next three themes seemed to go hand-in-hand—increased mobility, increased discretionary time, and clustered housing patterns. For many participants, these three parameters, or characteristics, were essentially identified together:

At the time I was growing up, I didn't live in town. I lived on a ranch. To me it was a long ways from town, but now today, it's real close because of housing. It has changed tremendously from my time.

I went home and did my chores and I rode horseback, had a lot of animals, but it was very different from what it is today. (P-13, March 20, 2002)

Several other individuals spoke of living on a ranch—for example, “my dad tried ranching off-and-on” (P-15, April 11, 2002). Some simply described their childhood home as remote: “I was raised three miles out of Red Butte” (P-9, April 8, 2002).

Another adult male stated: “Most of my life I lived about 10 miles south . . . in a rural country setting . . . in a variety of housing that didn't have indoor sanitary facilities” (P-18, April 8, 2002).

A 34-year-old mother, who had also been reared in Antelope Springs, stated that the town had changed a lot just since she was a child. As she reflected on the changes, she began to describe some of the physical changes:

It hasn't grown a whole lot, but it has changed a lot. A lot of the buildings are different. This used to be a church with a gym. The room back there was a social room. The fitness center wasn't out there. The tribal building had it's own gym and it was different. The post office wasn't there. The bank wasn't there.

There was more buildings between where Mr. M\_\_\_\_'s house is and where the flour grinder is.

There's probably more families now. I don't know where they are going, because the town really hasn't gotten bigger, it's just gotten more crowded. (P-7, April 9, 2002)

When this woman reported that the town had not grown much at all, she was speaking of geographical size. Population density *had* increased dramatically.

A philosophical male commented on the re-orientation this requires. He said that he felt the older, traditional generation (which is now gone) had been more accepting of diversity, more accepting of each other. Those values were important to the traditional social structure of the tribe, the participant said:

The values were necessary in order to live together, and our values really had to be redefined because *our people never did live clustered together like this*. Our people were spread out from Mexico all the way into Canada. We came together sometimes on an annual basis, and not always then. (P-15, April 11, 2002)  
(emphasis added)

A young Lakota professional, from a reservation outside the state, articulated the same understanding as he reflected on reservation environments today:

We aren't used to living by each other in these close areas. Cluster housing is created because it's cheaper and you can house more people. But in actuality, it really defeats our tribalism and our values. We were never meant to be cramped together like that. Just as any other thing does in nature, people turn on each other when that oppressive atmosphere is created.

They are ghettos and a lot Indian people will never say that. They don't like to consider their homelands ghettos. But the way the cluster housings are situated—the way they're created—that's been the end result of it. As Lakotas, we had what they called *taeoshpae* [?], and that was our village, our community, our family structure. That's been eroded because of the cluster housing and things like that. (P-17, April 8, 2002)

There is greater mobility today

Greater mobility, along with clustered housing, was perceived as exacerbating problems. The change in mobility, in this community, was probably much greater than experienced elsewhere in the United States in the past 40 to 50 years. A community member explained:

Parts of the reservation weren't as accessible as they are now because there were no roads and transportation was pretty rough. When I was growing up, our transportation was team horses and wagons and saddles and horses. Later on we became more mechanized. . . . cars. Right now, if I decided to, at 4:30, I could be out in an area 20 miles from here, in my pickup, because the roads are now that good. And previously, when I was growing up, that would probably be a week's trip . . . going out and coming back on the wagon. So it's totally different now.

Everything is accessible. (P-10, February 20, 2002)

Just traveling into town was a special occasion for one woman whose childhood home was quite remote:

Every once in a while I got to come to Antelope Springs. I actually lived out in the country. It was just a great big thing for me to come to Antelope Springs. It was just the best. Even to go to my aunt's house with their running water. I mean, just little simple things like that. (P-3, March 18, 2002)

Children reared in town experienced little mobility as well. One woman reported that she "never got to come downtown unless we went to the store to buy bread or something with my mom" (P-8, April 10, 2002). The same woman stated: "We just had one reliable vehicle—now everybody has two or three vehicles, and that's why there is so much dust." As a result, few of the adults that were interviewed had traveled very far from the reservation as children:

It was a big deal to go from here to H\_\_\_ [border town]. I don't remember going off the reservation except for the time I was in the hospital, probably one time, until I was about 6 or 7 years old. I remember going to H. one time. The rest of the time it was right here. It doesn't really seem like it was harder then, it was just different. Sometimes I think it is harder living today. (P-15, April 11, 2002)

#### Youth have more discretionary time today

Living on a ranch left little discretionary time for many of these Tsitsistas in their youth. For others, living in remote locales determined how discretionary time was used: We didn't have TV. We didn't have this. We didn't have the other. So we spent a lot of time together as a family. The time with my siblings, we were forced to be creative—to create our own games. As an example, when we would go get wood, we did it as a family. (P-3, March 18, 2002)

The executive director of the Boys & Girls Club described how his mother kept a leash on his brothers and him—forbidding her boys to leave the yard without notifying her at work. In the meantime, they had work to do:

Where my other cousins would get up in the morning and just roam all day long, we always had jobs. We'd have to get up at 5:30—two of us—every morning and go weed the garden, all summer long. And dishes, chores, all that. We got our cows—when I was about 10 years old—and started haying and had another paying job on the side. So we worked. (P-1, February 20, 2002)

In contrast to their own circumstances, the interview participants expressed repeated concern and frustration over the situation of children and youth in the community today—lack of constructive activities, no movie theaters or recreational facilities, few social outlets for kids not involved in sports, parents working long hours outside of the home, youth living on the street, and the prevalence of alcohol and drugs.

#### Alcohol and drugs have become readily accessible

Alcohol has been a problem on the reservation for a long time—even though possession of alcohol has been illegal “since the beginning of the reservation” (P-9, April 8, 2002). It hasn't stopped bootleggers from bringing alcohol into the community. Older community members have witnessed a change however:

Even though there was drinking and that kind of stuff going on [when I was young], it wasn't as pervasive as it is now. Drugs and alcohol were not as pervasive as they are now because of the accessibility and the mobility that we now have. (P-10, February 20, 2002)

A younger community member reflected on the availability of alcohol and drugs among here peers:

When I was growing up here, there was a lot of fighting. Tsitsistas against [a rival tribe]. If we would go to a powwow, you always had to stay in a group because they would try to fight you.

Drugs weren't too bad. There weren't hardly any people that used drugs that I knew of. Drinking, I don't remember seeing a whole lot of it, but I know that a lot of my friends started in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. There wasn't that high of a risk of teen pregnancy, it was really frowned on.

[But] there wasn't too much to do. You could play basketball—there's outdoor courts all over—or you could walk around Antelope Springs. That's probably the only thing to do, and that's what we did . . . is walk around. (P-7, April 9, 2002)

All of these behaviors—underage alcohol consumption, drug use, fighting, and teenage pregnancy—are now seen as major problems in the community.

Ed Byrd said that alcohol played a major role, not only with regard to his father's alcoholism in the home, but in his own life and in the lives of his siblings. He painted a pretty clear picture of what young males could find in his day:

All of us [brothers and cousins] were into athletics. But all of us were drinking at a young age—all the boys. I was probably about the worst. I started really young—I was just out of control. I lost a sister when I was about 14. She died, and I was close to her—so that was another thing. Just cover it up and keep drinking.

We brought drugs in when I was 15. Vietnam vets were coming back and we buddied up with them. We were smoking pot, doing mescaline before anybody else around here, and found acid when we were freshmen. We tried that a few times, and it was a little too much for me. I didn't care for the drugs, but I liked the alcohol. Till I quit. When I was 17, I finally quit—after car wrecks that summer, and getting shot at, and gang fights. (P-1, February 20, 2002)

It wasn't the last time he had to quit drinking, however.

### Summary

Adult community members, who participated in the case study interviews, highlighted changes that they perceived had exacerbated problems in their community for youth. "It doesn't really seem like it was harder [back] then, it was just different," a participant commented. "Sometimes I think it is harder living today." There was respect for the religious ceremonies, the traditions, and for people. "There was a great deal of respect for diversity then, a lot more than what there is now—a non-judgmental acceptance of others which kind of goes along with more of the traditional way of life," he said (P-15, April 11, 2002). "Things are supposed to be getting better," another man told me. He looked at me with a level, steady gaze and continued:

When I grew up, we didn't have much. Things have changed since then. I'm 54 years old right now. When I was young there was hardly any break-ins of houses. A lot people still spoke the language. Today you could bolt your house down and everything else, and people will still rip you off. There is no more sacredness or what the parents teach their children—respect. There is no respect anymore. We

are supposed to have advanced, but up until now, it seems like we've gone backwards. (P-12, March 20, 2002)

He was one member of the community who became involved in the formation of a youth organization to address the needs of youth in the community.

## Category 2: Responding to Change—Organizing for Youth, Building Community

"It takes more than one person to do this."

The Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation began as a desire to provide a safe and supervised space for youth—to get youth off the streets and away from dangerous activities and behaviors, especially alcohol and drugs and the violence often associated with alcohol and drugs. Ed Byrd, the only executive director the club has known, said that he originally ran for the Tribal Council in order to advocate programs for youth and for children:

I started talking with another lady who had been on the council before, and I said, "Let's try to get something going, and let's run for council if we can't get it done any other way." So we both ran. She lost. I won.

I got on [the council] and got my head slapped around for about two years. But I wanted to start a youth center and a daycare . . . because I would hear young mothers saying, "I can't even go to school. I've got 3 kids, and I'm not educated. We need a daycare."

And a youth center—I saw all the kids doing things. I saw people who did baseball or basketball—here and there, little pockets of activity for kids—but nobody was doing anything comprehensively. I was kind of used to organizing



some of my community, so I thought, “Well, maybe we can do this.” (P-1, February 20, 2002)

**Working together—Creating a loud voice for youth**

Anne Longley—a community member who was a key player in establishing the youth facility—the woman who was not elected to the council at the time Ed ran—stated: “One [person] can’t do it all. Ed couldn’t have done it all. It takes different people to be committed to do it” (P-8, April 10, 2002). A number of individuals did play significant roles in the effort to organize the community and establish comprehensive programs for children and youth. A tribal education director for the tribe at that time remembered the effort:

I remember Ed running for the council. He had some really strong support when he did that. There were some good council people on there, and there was a good grants-woman who helped Ed a lot. She and Ed were on the council at the same time. In fact, they were called the HEY Committee—the committee system for the Tribal Council was organized at that time. They had a Health, Education, and Youth Committee—the HEY Committee! [Laughs.] They were really a strong advocate kids and for education . . . and we [the Tribal Education Department] were able to benefit by their activities. (P-11, February 20, 2002)

A third member of the HEY Committee remembered the focus and youth advocacy effort of that committee: “We were interested in it because the kids didn’t have anything here—at the time we had a gym here, and the building had burned down, and there was no place for the kids to go” (P-12, March 20, 2002).

Along with these youth-oriented activists, the Tribal Chairman also played an important role, gathering political support. Together, they were successful in opening the doors of a former Catholic church building as a youth facility. Anne Longley noted:

“It’s a beautiful building, if you’ve ever seen it. It costs a lot of money to heat it, and the roof—no wonder they got rid of it. [But] it was a building. It was something.” (P-8, April 10, 2002)

The former church’s gym was opened for basketball. They held arts and crafts sessions, creating Indian beadwork and dream catchers. The facility was staffed by volunteers and VISTA workers. “We didn’t have to pay [the VISTA workers], but we had to give them a place to live,” Longley stated (P-8, April 10, 2002). Commented the former Tribal Chairman: “If we didn’t get it started then, if it didn’t become a reality, I don’t think we would have it today” (P-9, April 8, 2002). The story of his participation, he told in the narrative that follows.

Putting the money in one pot: A founding member’s story

Well, I’ll tell you my story. Everything on the reservation is pretty much political—the Tribal Council, Tribal Administration, kind of govern what happens on the reservation. I don’t know the exact year, but St. \_\_\_\_\_ Indian Mission had a church here, and they owned it—the present Boys and Girls Club—and that was donated to the tribe for youth activities. Along with that, the tribe got a grant to build a facility for the youth—right now it’s the present Head Start building. The tribe had to get a grant from the state. They had to waive their

sovereignty in order to get that grant money. I didn't feel that was right, that we had to waive our sovereignty to get grant monies.

As years passed, I became Tribal Chairman. I represented the entire tribe. Ed Byrd was on the council at that time. He was on the council prior to me, and then I became the chairman. Then there was a structure fire. The tribal building burned down. Immediately the tribal administration took over the building that was meant for the youth, that was built with state monies—coal board monies. The building that the Mission gave to the tribe for youth was set up for gaming, bingo and gaming machines. I think 50% of our population or better is under the age of 30—maybe it's 70%. We have a very young generation, and they had no place to go. Tribal Administration took one of the buildings, and the other one was set up for gaming.

I had one son and there was no place for him to go. They'd go drinking and partying. And my boy got killed in a car wreck. I felt that if we had a facility for the young people to go to, to have activities for them, we would be a lot better off for our youth.

I told the council—I became Tribal Chairman, and I told the council and the people when I was campaigning, "I'm going to create a facility for the boys and girls. The boys and girls don't have a facility. Gaming has a facility. The adults took all the space away from your kids. I'm going to do my darndest to get you a facility." I crashed with the gaming—the gaming commission. [But] I was successful with the council. The council agreed with me. We shut down the gaming. We created the Boys and Girls Club so it was a place to go—"a place to

call theirs," I said. It took a long period of time. It doesn't take long when you're talking about it, but it took several months and years to get it off the ground. But we were successful.

There were families that lost their children, and they were the ones that were really instrumental in pushing to make it a success. They wanted something better for the future kids that are coming up; our kids didn't have it, and we lost our children due to that. There were a lot of volunteers that come out and helped clean that place up.

It does save lives, and it took a lot of our kids off the street from drugs and alcohol, and it was a better place for them. We still have a long ways to go. But what I was saying, we brought all the monies together. Before, five or six or fifteen or twenty different programs got their money. Now they all come to the Boys and Girls Club. So we serve all the kids, not just a select few. (P-9, April 8, 2002)

"Their organization has had strong, stable leadership."

#### A welder with a vision

Ed Byrd was working as a pipe fitter at large mining operation off the reservation at the time he became interested in running for council with Longley in order to advocate for youth programs and a daycare. He made really good money welding pipe at the mine. It was good for his family, to have that kind of income, but it wasn't satisfying. It was only good for himself and his family. It didn't benefit his community at all, he related (personal communication, January 28, 2002).

Another person in the community voiced a different perspective: "Ed lived on the reservation, but he worked off the reservation, and he would just come through here, through the reservation, and not be a part of it. He was just sort of a commuter" (P-10, February 20, 2002). From this man's vantage point, Ed Byrd became a part of the reservation community when, as a Tribal Council representative, he became involved in the issues and problems facing people. But, according to Byrd himself, the welder had a vague vision and project in mind all along. While he was on the council, several pieces of the picture started coming into focus.

"The gym was kind of assigned to me on council," Ed said. "So I called a meeting of volunteers in the community, and I said, 'We got the building. Who wants to help?' Ed turned and looked over at the woman sitting at the other end of table. "So Pam stepped up—stepped out of the crowd . . . a light came down on her!" He smiled across the table at her. "As I remember, we just came in and started cleaning" (P-1, March 21, 2002). The volunteers had to scrub and scrub the walls of the gym to get the cigarette smoke off so that paint—donated by a community member—would stick. It was a lot of work.

Now they had the gym, but the rest of the building continued to be occupied by the tribe's casino. The casino manager became the group's first funding source, providing a stand where they could sell snacks to casino customers. "He felt sorry for us. He gave us all the candy, all the sandwiches, all the pizzas that he had; his ovens, freezers, all that," Pam related. "He said we could use it and run a concession stand rather than the casino . . . because we didn't have any money. That's where our first money came from" (P-2, March 21, 2002).

**“There were kids, older people, sometimes adults and their kids,” Pam continued. “A couple of times we tried to split the gym, and we tried two different times. We just had to try a variety of things. There was way too many people in the gym and it was like overcrowded. In the beginning, we didn’t have a lot of little kids. The older ones came. Sometimes we split the gym in the middle so that the girls had one side of the gym and the boys had the other half.”**

**They began to try programming some activities, according to Ed. “We did a culture night once a week. Food. Beadwork. Native crafts. We used to have big rough tables.” Ed paused, leaning back in his chair. He looked over at Pam, and then the truth came out. “Our main activity was to keep them from fighting.”**

**“There were a lot of fights,” agreed Pam. “They brought it in off the street. That’s what they were used to. They weren’t used to having somebody say, ‘You can’t use that kind of language,’ or ‘You have to respect each other when you come in—no fighting in here’” (P-2, March 21, 2002).**

**“Yeah, no drugs,” Ed said. “The first four months was really rough. We called the cops every just about every night. Pam ran the programs, and I was doing administrative. I couldn’t believe it. I would come down and the cops would have them against the wall. After four months I told Pam, ‘We have to shut this down. This isn’t going to work. They are going to kill each other, and us, too.’ They just . . . about four months of testing. Then they realized that we meant what we said, and we backed it up. It just died down after that” (P-1, March 21, 2002).**

### **Making connections inside the community**

Ed Byrd said he spent two years getting his head slapped on the council. He obviously learned a few things in the process. He learned a lot about getting things done through political channels and through working with people. He learned that, as before, his enthusiasm, commitment, and self-confidence could carry him a long way. One man said he remembered hearing about the Boys & Girls Club “just pretty much through the community talking about it. Ed was so active. He would walk around with presentations written on the back of his head” (P-15, April 11, 2002).

“Ed has got excellent communication skills,” another person confirmed. Developing other critical skills was just as important though, especially when working in the politically charged atmosphere of tribal government, this individual shared. “You just have to be able to let some things slide off your back. You don’t dwell on it. You move on. Eventually you wear them down. I’ve seen Ed do that with some of those Tribal Council members who have treated him pretty badly. He didn’t run them down or anything—just kept trying to work with them . . . going through other people who were positive and believed in what he was doing” (P-11, February 20, 2002).

### **Making connections outside the community**

Ed Byrd sat behind his desk, checking his email occasionally as he talked. There were pictures of children on the wall, and pictures of his family. There were pictures of Ed and other club staff at banquets. There was a framed photo of Tsitsistas club kids with a Native American Senator.

**“I was in the council for six years,” Byrd said. “The first two years, the older, political people—they’d just use me, educate me, and just tear me up in council meetings. I hated it, but I was learning, too. It’s kind of where I learned to use politics in a positive way—to get things done . . . learned about recognizing people, doing positive strokes, giving them the credit” (P-1, February 20, 2002).**

**“My second term, I saw that Pine Ridge had opened a Boys & Girls Club. I knew nothing about clubs. I called them up . . . got their name out of the newspaper . . . and they said, ‘Yeah, you can do this. We did it.’ That was 1992, I think. So I went up to the B\_\_\_\_\_ Boys & Girls Club, walked in and said, ‘This is it—a whole building just for kids!’ It just like blew my mind. That visit to the B\_\_\_\_\_ club set Ed on a new path. The director of the B\_\_\_\_\_ club provided early advice and help, and soon a representative and regional service director from the national Boys & Girls Clubs of America showed up at Ed’s door.**

**“My mentors were actually Jerry McGinnis and Sarah White Bull . . . especially those two. Sarah ran a senator’s staff in DC for eight years or so. Came back to the rez. I was on the council on a committee with her where she taught me a lot for about a year—how to organize meetings, initiatives, pull the right people in, get the right resources, get them going, how to keep them going—how to write. She taught me how to do grants. And Jerry taught me a lot about leveraging—about how to do community work. I saw all the resources through the council. He showed me how to use them, how to pull them together. And it wasn’t always successful in our community, but I learned a lot of tools from him—how to leverage money, how to leverage your influence—how to**



get people to do things they don't want to do. Put them in a position. It's all about positioning" (P-1, February 20, 2002).

Community members on the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation cited evidence that spoke to Byrd's effectiveness in publicizing the Tsitsistas' club and establishing relationships to people and agencies far from the pine-covered hills that they call home. "People that I've met, just in the work and the travels that I do on my own—I think three or four people that I didn't even know, when they found out I was Tsitsistas, would come up and comment very positively on the Tsitsistas Boys & Girls Club" (P-10, February 20, 2002).

Another man, who served on the club's board of directors, repeated a similar experience:

The interesting thing for me was that I found out more about it from other places than I did right here. I think the first time I really got a clear picture of the Boys and Girls Club here was up at KwaTaqNuk. They were having some sort of meeting up there years ago, and they began speaking about . . . , talking about our Boys and Girls Club and all the things that were being done through it. That's when I first really became aware of it. Even at that time, I didn't understand the full scope of what was going on. That came later. (P-15, April 11, 2002)

"Ed can go and talk to the best—to all these corporations, to people who have the money—and he does a really good job in presenting his program and what he's done," one last woman commented. Sometimes people, just like programs, come and go, she stated. "We're just fortunate that didn't happen with Ed. Ed stayed for the long run and kept going after his Tribal Council stint" (P-11, February 20, 2002).

**“It takes dedication and commitment.”**

One theme rang through nearly every community member who was questioned about the Boys & Girls Club. Each commented on the commitment and dedication that was required—either with regard to the individuals who founded the club, the director who has positioned the club in front of the community, or the staff members who spend countless hours at the facility and with the children and youth. A given response seemed to address either the perception of dedication and commitment to the community and the children and youth in the community, or it addressed the long hours and low pay that staff members accept due to their commitment to the children and youth with whom they interact each day.

A staff member, who was originally a community volunteer in the organization's first days, spoke very firmly on this theme:

Although you may have people that have come for different reasons, I think when you start you should at least have a core group of people who genuinely care and want the best for children—and want to make a change in the community. If you do not have a core group like that, you will not survive . . . because that core group will survive everything. It can survive without money. Believe me, I know. You can have no money and you can survive. But if you do not have that core group of people who believe that things . . . no matter what, still I'll be there, no matter what. If they don't believe in that, and if they are not committed to that—your organization will not survive. (P-2, February 20, 2002)

“You have to care about the children that you are serving—and if you are not willing to give of your self . . .,” another staff member said, her voice kind of trailing off. “It takes

a lot of time away from your family. So you need to be committed to the children” (P-3, March 18, 2002).

The same staffer said that, while she was paid for 40 hours per week, she worked between 10 and 12 hours each day, five days a week. Her sister, she estimated however, probably put in more than 60 hours each week. “She comes in on Saturdays. She comes in on Sundays. She stays on Friday night. She comes in the morning. She stays here until the teens go home at 9:30. She puts in a lot of hours” (P-3, March 18, 2002). The necessity of working long hours—and working non-traditional hours—is one of the main reasons for the club’s high staff turnover, the executive director asserted.

As for the commitment to the community and community activism, one cultural leader and educator didn’t see any connection to the tribe’s past. “I think when you get people together and you see a need, they’ll try to meet that need,” he said. “I don’t know if it has anything to do with cultural values—but when you see a need you fix it” (P-10, February 20, 2002).

Anne Longley, one of the community members who helped found the organization and acquire the facility, has always been a person to step forward when she saw a need. In addition to the Boys & Girls Club, she was also involved with starting a homeless shelter and a food bank in Antelope Springs. “Every community can do it, but it takes somebody to be committed,” she said pointedly. “[The Boys & Girls Club] took a lot of hard work, because I wrote the grants for Ed in the beginning for nothing—because I wanted something for the kids.” The challenges in starting a non-profit community organization can be overcome, she said. “It just takes a commitment on each person. One [person] can’t do it all. . . . It takes different people to be committed to do

it. It's not an easy thing to do, but it's good for the community—it's good for the kids" (P-8, April 10, 2002).

**"We'll work with anyone."**

In March 1996, Byrd asserted that the Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation would collaborate with anyone (personal communication). Later the same year, he repeated his claim: "We work with every agency, in every way we can, for our children" (Robinson, 1996, p. 8). He explained why the organization adopted this position:

We have to collaborate in our small community to be successful. But it's usually the Boys & Girls Club reaching out first with the resources. We've got our Smart Moves coordinators-counselors in five schools. We have to bridge with the schools to maximize our efforts. We can reach more kids that way. . . . We're both taking care of the same kids. So we work with them. We allow them to come do their practices [in our gym] . . . because they don't have enough room in theirs. We trade resources all the time. We have to establish those kinds of relationships. (P-1, February 1998)

Developing collaborative relationships was not easy, however. When Byrd and Longley began organizing a youth center and youth programs, Byrd says they tried to develop partnerships within the community and among the various tribal agencies. It didn't work very well. People were suspicious, kept their distance, and protected their turf. So Byrd and Longley tried another method by "inviting them in and saying, 'What are your needs, and how can we meet them?'" (P-1, February 1998) With some of these people, Byrd

said, the Boys & Girls Club shared the meager resources they had. For others, the Boys & Girls club hired a grant writer, found funding sources, and wrote grant proposals.

A high school principal listed a number of projects and programs in which his school participated and cooperatively developed with the Boys & Girls Club. Grant monies and programs, received by the club, deepened the school's involvement and commitment to shared endeavors, according to the school administrator:

I became real active with the Boys and Girls Club four years ago. It started with us developing some programming around youth in our community—youth summits, gatherings that they do over there for workshops, and things like that. Then I got more involved with a lot of the programs that fed out of government grants, that they do, that came into our school. Consequently, we spend a lot of time going back and forth between them and us. I'm a heck a lot more involved now. I'm on the Executive Council. (P-16, March 21, 2002)

An administrator from a different school district also claimed that his school worked fairly closely with Ed. He cited a recent youth leadership conference that his school district had sponsored and hosted with the Boys & Girls Club. High school students from reservation and off-reservation schools in the area attended, and participated in, the two-day conference (P-21, April 9, 2002).

Club director Byrd summed up the club's method of establishing collaborative relationships in the community: "We started building a trust relationship. I realized that it all went back to trust. There's so much mistrust in Indian communities because of drugs and alcohol use and all the dishonesty that people and kids grow up with in that. So we tried to establish trust" (P-1, February 1998). Trust and cooperation were more

than just strategies for developing and sharing resources however. They were inherent values at the core of the organization and the people who established it for kids in the community.

### Summary

Responding to needs they perceived in the community—dramatic and negative social changes that were witnessed and contrasted with their own childhood upbringing and community experiences—a group of individuals collectively organized and created a facilities-based youth organization. It was a collective action, but participants viewed its success as a reflection of the dedication and commitment of the people involved and the leadership and vision that the organization's executive director brought to the effort. A local school administrator summed it up this way:

I would say that the success of an organization like the Boys and Girls Club, particularly in a small community, is going to depend on the people involved. Unless you've got somebody like Ed Byrd and some key people on staff, it will be just one of those programs that kind of comes and goes.

When I think of the Boys and Girls Club, I think of Ed probably more than the organization itself. I think if you're in a town as big as B\_\_\_\_\_ or someplace like that, then it is the *organization* because there are enough people around to keep it going. With this Boys and Girls Club, I don't think it would be there if it weren't for Ed. It will fly if you have the right people to do it, and if you don't, it won't. (P-21, April 9, 2002)

### **Category 3: A Positive Place—The Role of the Organization**

**“It’s a safe place to be.”**

The Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation has a certain physical prominence in the town of Antelope Springs—as it should, since it occupies the former Catholic Church building in a small town. It sits behind the newer and much larger Tribal Headquarters Building, and the two are only separated by an asphalt parking lot. When asked what he saw as the role of the club in the community, one school administrator identified the importance of the club as a place:

The big role that I see is just a place for kids to go. I mean we know that a lot of our kids they go there for meals. There has always been just a huge need for just a place for kids to go, a place where they know that kids can get in out of the cold. That’s the big role that I see. There is just a central place that provides activities for kids. (P-21, April 9, 2002)

Most of the participants who were interviewed responded to the same question by speaking first of the club as a positive place for kids. My initial reaction, as I sat through the first couple of interviews, was disappointment. I thought, this is just the slogan they have heard—this was good marketing by the executive director. But place—having a place of your own—is something of which the Tsitsistas people know the importance. A Native American man who was not Tsitsistas but had visited the club many times, said:

When you come in here, you see the young people take ownership of this Boys and Girls Club. They feel very comfortable. They know how to be respectful of it. They know what the routine is. They know what’s expected of them. This is something that’s theirs, and it’s their oasis. (P-17, April 8, 2002).

The Boys & Girls Club *is* a place. It is a place for children and youth in the community. One community volunteer, who helped make it into a place for children and youth in the community, related how that came to be.

He made me do it!: A community volunteer's story

Ed made me do it. [Laughs.] No, actually, I was kind of part of the evolving process. I was already here when it was a youth center. In my mind, it didn't matter to me who we were affiliated with, you know, because if we were affiliated with 4H, or with Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, or whoever—my purpose would still be . . . I would still be here. It was Ed's choice, as the director, as to which organization, which direction he wanted to lead us.

My coming here was kind of strange because I had actually lost my girl. I actually felt so strong about alcohol and how it took our kids away from us, that I did, I think, three memorial dances for her—in memory of her. We always had speakers and things like that. I was doing the memorial dances, and I knew a lot of the kids anyway, because my girl always brought her friends to the house. I always had a message of alcoholism in the dances. And they were huge dances. It took me a year to plan them—that's how huge they were. So when I did the third one, I couldn't find a place to hold it. I heard that they had moved bingo out of here, and that I needed to talk with Ed Byrd if I wanted to use this building for a dance.

So I went to talk with him, and he said yeah, I could use it. So I used it, and then I went back and I gave him the key. And he said, "Pam, you wouldn't be



interested in running some activities over there, would you?" He said, "We have the building, and we've had several people who've attempted to open it for youth. But it's always fell through." And at the time I wasn't really doing anything. I was just drifting here and there. So I thought, why not. I enjoyed being around the youth and the kids. So I said, "Yeah, I'll give it a shot—I'll try it." So he gave me the key, and he said, "You're probably going to have to clean it up and that sort of thing."

I got a lot of my relatives—like my brothers and my cousins and folks like that. We had them come over here, and we started cleaning. We had to clean. It was a horrible mess because we wanted to paint the walls, and we couldn't even paint the walls because there was so much smoke on them. We kind of launched a community type event to clean the walls and get them painted and get the building presentable. We even had one of the [Catholic] sisters come over, and she painted the bathroom walls and spent a lot of time here. A lot of the kids spent time here.

So we cleaned it up. Got it opened—opened it as the youth center. Had absolutely no money—zero budget—nothing—and the only part [of the building] we had was the gym. We had to go through a lot of struggles because this was a whole new arena for me. I knew nothing about managing large groups of kids. We went through a lot of turmoil—a lot of things like that. But we had a lot of volunteers—a lot of people in the community who wanted it to be a place for kids to come. (P-2, February 20, 2002)

**“Someone calls them by their name and asks, ‘How was your day today?’”**

The Boys & Girls Club is more than just a place, a “space” for kids. Participants identified the success and the role of the youth center, and then the Boys & Girls Club, with the *people* who were at the heart of the organization. The community volunteer, who related her story above, addressed a fundamental characteristic of this organization when she spoke about what it meant to her to be Tsitsistas, to be Indian:

I guess I just feel . . . I’m different . . . a different kind of human being.

There’s kind of sadness associated with it and pride.

I look at us as caretakers of the earth and having a relationship with nature that’s different than other people . . . like we’re special . . . like there’s something about us that the Creator, he bestowed this gift upon us, to take care of things, to take care of people. I don’t know, I kind of look at us as caretakers in a way. We were born to be caretakers of things.

And I guess the negative part of that is . . . there’s a part of me that always goes back historically. I guess the sorrow I feel is that all of what we went through, all of what our ancestors went through, to be able to live here. And the other part of the sorrow is that today the children kind of don’t realize how important that was. A lot of children are just here. They don’t know how we’re here—they don’t know that people gave up their lives to be here. There’s that element that’s kind of missing in this generation.

I know one of our problems today that we face is . . . because we’re always “I gotta get this done, I gotta get this done, I gotta get this done” . . . and we care for families and we care for kids . . . but sometimes we forget to care

about each other . . . as staff . . . as coworkers. We need not to forget that someday you may need to ask your coworker, "Hey, could you do this for me? Could you help me?" Always remember that you're a team—and take care of each other in that way. (P-2, February 20, 2002)

Another Boys & Girls Club staff member told the story of how she came to work at the club.

It is a privilege: A staff member's story

How did I come to the Boys & Girls Club? I was living up north, and they had this position open here. From what I understand, there was a lot of turnover. It was a youth court advocate position. So, with my experience—because I used to be a judge, I used to be prosecutor, I was a public defender . . . and at that time I was into Native American therapeutic foster care. I was a treatment manager. I was pretty well rounded in all areas, I like to think.

I want to share this with you. When I would come home to visit, it was really awesome for me because I would see different people in the community that I hadn't seen for a while, or older relatives, or maybe some elders. And whenever they would see me, they would just come up and give me a big hug and say, "Man, I'm glad you're home. How long are you gonna be here? How long you gonna be with us?" Others would say, "It's time for you to come home now. What are you doing out there? Come home now." So I always felt welcomed. I always felt accepted. Every time I came here. I wanted to share that.

But I eventually got the job. I started as Youth Court Advocate—actually that job became probation officer. It was unusual for a probation officer to be housed and to be paid by a Boys & Girls Club because that's not a traditional position in a club. So I absolutely positively loved it. And I began to bond with a lot of my kids on probation. From there I started to evolve as a club person. I began to know the kids who came to the Boys & Girls Club. I became familiar with their stories. I knew who they were. And now, I consider it, I have been so blessed that I have been given all of these opportunities . . . because it is truly a privilege to be allowed into the lives of children. Not many people are given those opportunities . . . because they're just amazing, they're a blessing, they're an enrichment. And they come here and they're pitiful. And they have their stories. And so I feel, for whatever reason, I was put here and I'm allowed into the lives of all these little ones.

So now I look at it very differently. I know all the kids when they come in, and I hear their little footsteps running and hear the door open and hear them coming. Without knowing it, they mean so much to you—they just enrich your life. You don't know what might have happened to them at home last night. Don't know if their parents came home. Don't know if some of them are drinking. Don't know if somebody was picking on them at school. Don't know if they had a terrible day. But at least I can be there for them and help them and love them and ask them, "How was your day today?"—because maybe nobody else will ask them. Maybe nobody wants to know.

So I have very strong feelings about the Boys & Girls Club today. At least, for myself, I'm allowed into the lives of children. They've opened the door and found me fit to enter. And so I must cherish that. (P-3, March 18, 2002)

**"The club provides opportunities for kids that many parents here can't."**

The third characteristic or parameter, which participants identified as a key role of the club, was programming. The club's programs were seen as alternatives, or complements, to what was offered in school:

I believe that it [the club] is not only a recreational program—it's an academic program. They help kids. They have computers over there now. It grew from, basically not having too much. But then from reading books to children, or children having access to books, tutoring programs, and then as well as the recreational programs. Arts and crafts. A feeding program. A lot of our kids don't have food. And so they provided after school snacks or a meal. I think they filled a void that was missing for young people that our schools couldn't provide during the after school [time] or on weekends. (P-11, February 20, 2002)

Other participants pointed to the opportunities that many children and youth received as members of the club—opportunities and experiences that, many times, their parents could not provide:

I think it fills a gap that families don't have . . . sometimes it's the resources like computers, like access to computers, access to going on trips, access to learning skills, that families don't have resources for, don't have the financial where-with-all to do. So I think they fill a pretty good gap. They keep the kids . . . at the very

least they keep the kids off the streets. But I think they expose them to something positive that normally wouldn't be here. So I think that they fill a very good niche here . . . and steer kids in the right direction. (P-10, February 20, 2002)

**"Programming is problematic in Indian Country."**

One educator and administrator on the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation spoke to some of the problems associated with running youth activities and programs on the reservation:

We tried, you know, after school programs and there was funding for those at one time. And then, like any federal programs, the funding goes away. We used to do crafts and different kinds of cooking or learning how to play the guitar. Once the money was gone, then there was nothing to do . . . there wasn't [anything] here.

(P-11, February 20, 2002)

The same educator also cited examples of some of the creative approaches, programs, and ideas that have come from the Boys & Girls Club—acting as a catalyst for change in the community, even when some of these programs were less than successful or lacked funding to implement:

Ed was trying to do an alternative school and just get about maybe 10 kids in the school, you know, who had just completely dropped out . . . so that we could at least get something going for some of these kids that are just out there in the community. But in that discussion, in fact I think it was in one of our [collaborative] meetings, Antelope Springs School decided to take his idea and expand it.

(P-11, February 20, 2002)

An alternative high school opened in Antelope Springs this past school year. A counselor at the alternative school said that, although the alternative school was intended to focus on about 15 students in its first year, they instead capped enrollment at 60 students after 72 students signed up for the program (personal communication, March 22, 2002).

Byrd stated that programming is always problematic at the Boys & Girls Club and in Indian Country in general:

I found out in Indian Country, Boys and Girls Club programming doesn't come natural. What we are used to in Indian country all over the United States is just activities, powwows, basketball leagues. [This daily programming] we have at the club here is really hard to staff. You do this for three, four, five, six months. It's tough. You have to find the right staff to do that. Everybody likes to take basketball trips, put on a tournament. That's easy. And then do very little in between. That's the kind of programming that has been perpetuated by funding in the past—the drug elimination grants. That's how they run it. Club programming demands a lot more. It doesn't come easy—programming doesn't. Money doesn't come easy.

“I think it's just a matter of using my parenting skills.”

Parenting came up repeatedly in interviews and conversations on the reservation. A tribal court judge talked about the history of removing Indian children from their homes and sending them to boarding schools. It resulted in a great loss of their language and their parenting skills, he said. The club's executive director mentioned that his mother had been sent to a boarding school out of state at the age of twelve. “One

comment [my mother] made,” he said, “was that she learned to mother from her mother-in-law—who’s my dad’s mom, who’s really, really good—because her [own] mom was sent off to boarding school when she was 5 years old” (P-1, February 20, 2002).

A newly hired staff member at the club stated that she felt that a lot of what she would be doing at the club was a matter of “using a lot of parenting skills that I do have, and that I have learned working with kids” (P-7, April 9, 2002). She was always a very quiet person who preferred to stay in the background, she said. But that had changed:

Being a parent, I’ve had to learn to speak up for the sake of my kids what I wanted for them and for myself. Speak up to the kids [when I worked as a sub at the school]. I have to speak up to the teachers. I have to speak up to the school. I have to tell the Tribal Council my thoughts and views. I’m on one of the district committees here. I have to speak up for my people, for my community. I’ve just learned that the past couple of years. I’ve been really learning and growing.

It finally came down to—if I don’t do it, whose going to do it? Whose going to make sure my kids gets a good education? I had to say, “Hey, I want them to go to school at C\_\_\_ [a border town school district].” I know that C\_\_\_ is off the reservation, but they’re going to have to learn how to deal with a lot of those situations over there that they won’t have here on the reservation.

I’m a dancer, I bead, I sew, and I want to learn my language again. I think it is up to me as a parent to teach my kids those things. (P-7, April 9, 2002)

She had ambivalent feelings about the club’s role with children:



One of the bad things about the club and how it impacts families is that the kids aren't with their parents where they should be. The parents are letting the club take that responsibility of teaching their kids discipline. . . .

The good thing about the club is that the kids are here. They are safe, and they have things to do, people to talk to, they have a meal, they have friends here, they get to do different things and I think it affects them. . . . I think it's a good place and I wish the parents would help out more with either the club or the kids.  
(P-7, April 9, 2002)

"But if they didn't feed the kids dinner, some kids would go to bed hungry."

The last point becomes the most critical bone of contention with the club and the community—does the club assume the parents' responsibility and allow them to neglect their children. It is a dilemma for some people in the community. One participant expressed some frustration:

There was a time when it made me wonder if the Boys and Girls Club kind of took the place of the parents. They were even to the point where they were going to start serving breakfast. The kids could go and be dropped for breakfast, put on the bus. Coming home, get dropped off at the Boys and Girls Club, do their homework, have supper, and be taken home again. Where are the parents at? Where's the intermingling with the family? By the time they get home it may be 9:00, time for bed. Get up and start all over again. I had a problem with that. I felt there was no family time there. At the same time, the sad thing is . . . what if there's no people . . . family . . . at home.

On one hand, it's like pounding on the Boys and Girls Club. But at the same time they're a safety net for these kids. I don't want to take something away from the youth, the children . . . because they may not have it. So I just dropped it. (P-13, March 20, 2002)

This person later talked about the supportive role the club serves with regard to single parents—who are typically single mothers. Again, some frustration was expressed at the situation, at the dilemma of the situation.

A different participant also spoke to the way that women in his office were better able to meet the demands of their job and the financial needs of their family due to the presence of the Boys & Girls Club in the community. But this participant saw other levels of support that he felt the club offered families:

I think the positive impact is that they're structured in such a way as to keep or to get the families involved, not just with the club, but with the children in a setting outside the home. They're showing parents that there are alternatives and that there are fun things to do with their kids rather than some of the things going on at home. They simply divide people. One of our biggest narcotics we have anymore is television. People go in and they don't have to communicate, they don't have to do anything. There's no interaction.

The other thing is that the parents realize, and I'm looking through the courts and the kids that are assigned over there, the parents realize that they aren't alone with these kids. That there is somebody there that is not only monitoring the kids, and helping kids, but monitoring parents' behavior and encouraging the

parents to get involved with kids. That's a healthy process. As far as anything wrong with it, I couldn't say. I haven't seen anything negative come out of it. (P-15, April 11, 2002)

Finally, one participant looked at both of these issues—at the dilemma that this situation encompasses—and addressed the ultimate challenge that the organization must address:

Some of the kids that go to the club would not have a hot meal in the evening, if they were just to go home. With some of them, it's because of some of the problems within the family unit itself; with others it's just because of the work schedules of the parents. . . . On the other side, it can also be a crutch, a detractor from strengthening the family unit, which in some cases is needed.

Whenever a program is offered to address a negative or something that is absent in the family unit or within the community, the organization needs to understand that they're providing something that really should be provided *by* the family unit or *by* some other structure within the community. Also, to look at *how we get back out of this*—because as long as those structures are in place, the people become dependent on them. It enables the parent—who is unwilling or unable—to provide the structured time for studying schoolwork, to provide a hot nutritious meal to the child, to provide a structured safe place for the child. It enables some of them to get out of those responsibilities. For others, it can be a lifesaver. (P-18, April 8, 2002)

### Summary

While at the club in Antelope Springs and their expansion site at the Catholic boarding school in Blushing, I observed many of the characteristics identified by participants in this study. I watched as teens entered the facility in the evening to hang out in the gym, socialize, and shoot baskets. They were greeted with smiles, called by name, and often subject to good-natured teasing. I watched young children—many as young as five-years-old—running around in the afternoon, after school or after being transported from Head Start. I was impressed at how uninhibited and how open these young ones were—and how vulnerable they were as well. I was awed by the immense responsibility that the club staff had willingly and gladly accepted. I don't know what the world was like for these children outside the walls of the Boys & Girls Club, but I could see that it was safe and caring inside. I was also impressed with the number of people who were actually in all the areas of the building, and how the staff—adults and junior staffers—remained unshaken and unruffled with the seeming chaos and energy that seemed to engulf the facility after school let out.

I observed high school graduation photos on the walls and desks of the staff members—next to prom pictures and pictures of the staff member's family. I was several times reminded that not all students in the community go to the club, but that the ones who most needed “a safe place” and a caring smile did. Based upon what I saw, I would believe that to be the case. However, I also watched a little girl—about 8-years-old, I would guess—struggling with a math worksheet. As I helped her with the problems, I quickly realized that the material was outside her “zone of proximal development,” and that the tutors were not trained in any way to make the difficult and

abstract math concepts, with which she struggled, concrete and relevant to her life—to the objects and experiences that surrounded us in that building. Finally, I can only say that watching 40 small children sitting at tables eating dinner was a sobering experience for me. It caused me to reflect on my own childhood and my parents. I would not trade our eating-three-meals-a-day-together for anything, even though it often seemed like a terrible imposition when I reached high school. On the other hand, the club meal felt in no way like eating in cafeteria or some place like that—it was warm and cozy, and there were friendly, familiar faces in every direction those children turned.

#### **Category 4: Perceptions of Efficacy—Challenges Facing the Organization**

When study participants were queried regarding their perceptions of the efficacy of the Boys & Girls Club—how well the organization achieved its mission, purpose, and goals (as the interviewees perceived them)—only positive responses were received. However, individuals tended to qualify their responses along two lines: (a) funding and the availability of other resources in the community, and (b) the unique setting and issues that confront youth, families, and a youth organization located in Indian Country. Each was perceived to place limits on the effectiveness of the youth organization.

These themes, then, direct attention to specifics that appear instructive with regard to the case that was investigated. One respondent laid out most of these points in concise fashion:

I think the club has done a remarkable job in pursuing its mission. I think, as with many other organizations, funding is a continual concern. Staffing and finding qualified staff is a challenge as well.

The political winds on the reservation seem to change a lot quicker than they do in other municipalities, counties, or states—it just tends to be more a volatile type of environment—and I think the fact that the club was incorporated and chartered through the state [rather than under the tribe] has really helped them to weather many of the changes in political wind that take place. (P-18, April 8, 2002)

The characteristics of these two themes, while they cannot be isolated in reality, are examined in more detail in this section.

“There’s so much more we could do if we had the resources.”

#### Reaching into other communities

Subsequent to being questioned regarding the role the Boys & Girls Club played in the community, participants were asked if they thought that the organization and its programs were effective. A common response—whether the respondent was inside the organization or viewing the organization from the outside—went something like this individual’s statement: “But I think there are so many things Ed wants to do, it’s just finding the money to do it and the people to make sure it happens” (P-11, February 20, 2002). When pressed, several individuals outside the youth organization responded: “Yes, they could be more effective by going out to other communities” (P-10, February 20, 2002).

The first individual cited in the paragraph above, situated outside the club, was pressed to reflect further on the club’s effectiveness and *did* respond by identifying some of the sentiments she encountered in various communities across the reservation:

About the only thing I can think about there . . . is if they could expand to each community. A lot of people get upset because the Boys & Girls Club is just here in Antelope Springs and then in Blushing. White River needs its own Boys & Girls Club. Red Butte needs its own Boys & Girls Club. Because they're all little communities and this transportation problem is an issue. I don't think the outlying communities really support the Boys & Girls Club because it's here in Antelope Springs, and they don't realize what it really is doing and what it can do for a community. And so, I think that's probably the biggest complaint that I hear . . . is that it's just in two communities, and they haven't expanded to other communities.

But that's just money. Where are you going to get the money to do that? And I think that the [outlying] communities would like to have it, but it's easier to complain about something than to actually get it started . . . to work with Ed to make it happen. Then the other problem is that there are no facilities in those communities [in which] to put a Boys & Girls Club. White River lost theirs—their community center burned down. And I don't believe Red Butte has one, other than the church. So there really aren't any facilities to [house] a Boys & Girls Club in those areas. (P-11, February 20, 2002)

A man living in a community neighboring the reservation, who frequently worked with the club to help the club secure funding, likewise responded:

One of the goals [of the Boys & Girls Club] has been to provide outreach into the outlying communities; and that has been, in my opinion, an operation minimally successful because of the absence of funding and getting reliable employees who

would carry that out in a satellite operation that doesn't get day-to-day attention and supervision from the administration. (P-18, April 8, 2002)

**Building and maintaining facilities**

The same man later addressed the issue of existing facilities:

I think the facilities there in Antelope Springs are probably marginally adequate for the services that they are attempting to provide. I think the physical plant is in need of both repairs and some updating. We've been attempting to assist in that to the extent that we can, understanding that it's not our building, but we try to go in and help out. (P-18, April 8, 2002)

The former Tribal Chairman who helped secure the present facilities, commented on what was seen as a goal for the club:

Well, I think the tribe—I mean the Boys and Girls Club—could do a lot more if they had the funding. One of the things that we have talked about doing was building a swimming pool and adding it right on the facility. We had an architect come out and draw it out and how it was going to work. That was going to be used for our elders, too, to come and swim or have wheelchair ramps into the . . . so it would have been beneficial to the elderly and handicapped to swim and exercise. And I think that is still one of our plans in the future, when we get the money. We've got the design already, and the drawings. All we have to do is get the money and get a company to build it. (P-9, April 8, 2002)



However, a current Tribal Councilman indicated that Ed Byrd had plans for a whole new building: "The last time I talked to Ed, they're trying to get a new building so they can do more things" (P-12, March 20, 2002). Byrd confirmed this:

I want to have a big gym, like at least 3 courts going, and have one for the teens, right after school. Then the teens can take over all of the courts in the evening. I have already sketched out several times the layout that I would like to see. (P-1, March 22, 2002)

Byrd said that he hoped to build this new facility on the present site:

Yeah, tear [the existing structure] down. Mechanically, it's just got very little left in it. It's not arranged very well for activities either. So the plan is to hopefully get appropriations from Congress and go after some matching funds with that. Foundations will match up to \$1 million. Then I would look at doing a feasibility study and all that . . . start contacting people about that.

We're looking at three to five years to raise the money before we can start building. Hopefully, it's on the lower end of three years. There are people in businesses and organizations that will step up. Once you get the momentum going, from what I've seen with other clubs, it's amazing how people will step up. (P-1, March 22, 2002)

In the meantime, I watched the Boys & Girls Club staff greeted children and youth in the facility they had, while plastic 5-gallon buckets lined the hallway in the office area and the "plop, plop, plop" of water could be heard any time even a light rain shower passed overhead.

### Stabilizing quality staffing and programs

“It’s tough running [this organization] on soft money,” Byrd complained. “And we are still doing grants like crazy. But, hopefully, we will get an endowment [some day], to where we can really plan with our money . . . design our programs.” Later that same the afternoon, Byrd admitted: “What we need is a teen center so they can come right after school, do their homework, and socialize” (P-1, March 22, 2002).

“In a dream world,” I asked, “what would you want for your teen center? How would deal with facilities, programming, and staff?” Byrd didn’t hesitate:

For me, it would be to have enough staff here—not just one. We could fill a lot of areas where they need extra help, like in education and personal family lives, counseling, doing groups. It has just come to the point where we could (?) 30, 40, 50 kids, so it isn’t just hang out. There is a bit more structured at times. Learn some things, like art, speaking, really challenge them.

Right now, we just limp along, come in and play basketball, socialize, check your e-mail. Have like 5 or 6 staff. (P-1, March 22, 2002)

Pam, program director, spoke up:

We don’t really have a teen staff. In other clubs you have. You don’t have staff that works with little kids *and* the teens—they’re either little kids *or* teens. We don’t have a teen staff that focuses only on teens.

They get leftover me. (P-2, March 22, 2002)

**Meeting the needs of youth**

**“I think [the Boys & Girls Club] is really effective,” a high school administrator asserted firmly. “Do I think that they reach every kid on this reservation? Not yet. I don’t think that they probably will ever reach every kid. They make an attempt to, though” (P-16, March 21, 2002). He continued:**

**The club seems to be geared around the younger group of students, the real young ones. But if we don’t catch it there, then the rest of it is a moot point. So they are spending a lot of their time, energy is going to young kids. They haven’t really developed a lot of programs for high school-aged kids. They are trying real hard. They have some really good ideas.**

**The principal talked quickly and got right to the point he wanted to make. He seemed confident and knowledgeable when he spoke, and he gave you the impression that he had already thought these things out well in advance:**

**The club also gives organization to things that kids can do. Instead of having four or five kids that jump down to the local creek and go swimming, you may have 30 to 40 kids get on a bus and go there. You’ve got more of a community involvement—kids working together in a larger numbers as opposed to small groups. It takes away from the gang mentality in the community because kids are in that larger group now. You don’t have those small clicks forming in there that in the long-term end up battling with each other. That is one of the major things that I see these guys doing. This particular Boys & Girls Club is highly successful. It is a nationally recognized type of organization. (P-16, March 21, 2002)**

He continued on, talking about the opportunities local children and youth have to make trips out-of-state. "It has taken them away from the edges of the box," he said.

Pam added one last thought:

I'm not a counselor. We have so many that are needing those services.

The services that we have aren't really what the kids need, or they are not accustomed, or for whatever the reason, they are not being utilized. If we had a counselor. . . .

And the other thing I would like to see is Alateen. There are teens that go to treatment, and there are teens that choose not to drink. But they don't feel like they have a group to belong to. (P-2, March 22, 2002)

"It's different here."

For someone who has no background and no experiences on an American Indian reservation, there is much that is Native and makes one feel foreign in this place. In fact, that is the case. One staff member at the Boys & Girls Club noted:

The majority of the teachers [in the local public schools] are non-Indian or not of color. The majority of them live in C\_\_\_\_\_ or F\_\_\_\_\_. There's other teachers that come down from B\_\_\_\_\_ that teach, and they might stay during the week but they go home.

I think one of the problems with the community is that when the kids see you in the community, they are more accepting of you. They want to learn from you. They respect you. There're some teachers who won't even stop at the store. (P-4, April 9, 2002)

When the children leave the reservation, they are thrown into disequilibria as well. A parent mentioned the impact on his child:

My daughter took a test when she was a little girl up at the university, and they asked, “Which supermarket do you go to?” We have one store here. We have one store, one red light, one gas station. (P-12, March 20, 2002)

A school administrator discussed his school’s statistical data:

Last year from 7<sup>th</sup> grade on to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, we had a 41% turnover in our students. This year in high school out of 11 staff members, I had two remaining at the end of last year. We had 13% of kids that went to college last year. 6% were done one month into the school year and came back home. (P-16, March 21, 2002)

While these examples demonstrate the challenges for American Indian children who must learn knowledge and skills to succeed comfortably in a world outside their reservation community that is in many ways foreign, the converse is true as well. Non-Native people who come into these reservation communities encounter cultural differences that impact their abilities to do “business as usual.” Two themes that emerged in this study are indicative of these cultural differences—the unique character of tribal politics and the inherent nature of sovereignty.

### Tribal politics

Executive director Ed Byrd and the former Tribal Chairman each recounted the role that tribal politics played in establishing the Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation. Other members of the community identified the impact that tribal politics played

as well. For Byrd, the experience taught him much. The impact of tribal politics is felt throughout Indian Country, according to Byrd:

And I've heard that throughout Indian Country—and just to maintain it, to fight off politics. And, even if they are doing that—some of them are—and they aren't growing, but they're maintaining. And even that is an accomplishment in itself. That's what I used to say—"My biggest accomplishment is that I lasted, I stayed."  
(P-1, February 20, 2002)

### Tribal sovereignty

One participant spoke obliquely regarding tribal sovereignty:

One of the things that we always battle here is that dependency syndrome which was engendered in us by the federal government, the patronizing treatment that we had from them—even a simple fact of not being able to learn from our own mistakes. Mistakes were made for us and we were blamed for them. We never got the opportunity to make the mistakes and then to learn from them.

And sometimes—when you have organizations that come and say “Hey, you're an Indian, and you've got a plight; I want to solve your plight for you”—I think that if we do it ourselves, we will be much better off—even to the extent of making our own mistakes and learning from them. Successes we can deal with. We can deal with that. But often, if you make enough mistakes in an area, it's eventually going to lead to success. And that's what we haven't been able to do. We don't know what the mistake is until something comes up and hits us in the face because of a certain decision that was made. So there are positives even to

making a mistake because it's a learning experience. And we haven't had that happen. What often happens, as I said, is that a mistake is made, and it goes on, and then the Indians are blamed for it. And the Indians didn't have anything to do with it . . . with the formulation of that mistake and then the eventual conceptualization, culmination, of that mistake. A giant example is the IM . . . Individual Indian Account monies that are unaccounted for. (P-10, February 20, 2002)

A second participant spoke directly of sovereignty:

Well, the sovereignty is our inherent right to govern ourselves. That is the bottom-line.

There are limitations if you get into the judicial realm, say federal laws and all that. If you start trying to compare it with the American system and the state system, or anything like that, but what I believe is that we are not acting to the fullest right now to preserve our sovereign identity. To me the exercise of sovereignty should not be through the courts, but we are here to enforce what the tribes say and we are here to interpret, but to exercise the sovereignty really is the Tribal Council. (P-15, April 11, 2002)

### Summary

Individuals in the communities surrounding the Boys & Girls Club spoke very positively about the organization, its leadership, staff, and programs. When confronted directly with questions as to the efficacy of the club, most participants immediately spoke to the club's lack of adequate funding, staffing, and facilities—in Antelope Springs and

in the outlying communities. Adults who were on the outside of the club were also likely to answer the question in terms of their own field of endeavor. For instance, a school administrator spoke in terms of education and "alternative programming for some of the things those schools wouldn't touch, such as dealing with alcohol, substance abuse" (P-16, March 21, 2002). These, he said, were successful and filled an important void. (The SMART Moves curriculum that I observed contained lesson plans, activities, and quizzes that followed a well-thought out scope and sequence. Participation in the middle school classroom was encouraged and rewarded with incentives, including a Saturday trip to B \_\_\_\_ for pizza and a movie.)

A tribal court judge likewise said that he first thought that the Boys & Girls Club was a good idea. Then he began to work with the club, assigning juveniles to the club to complete community service. Soon he began to see other possibilities:

It fit my ideas with the direction I wanted the court to go, which under the old process of dealing with juveniles in the court, it was totally ineffective. Our recidivism rate was almost 100%. The kids found out right away our hands were tied as far as what we could do with them. (P-15, April 11, 2002)

With staff at the club, juveniles developed a strong, nurturing, supportive relationship:

Over a years period we saw a drop not only in arrests, but we saw a drop in those who were arrested again. Where right now I think we may have about 30 a month, at one time we were as high as 60 or 70 a month. We've got about 5 or 6 drug offenses a month now, and just a few alcohol offenses. The benefit to the kids is the benefit to the community. The go hand-in-hand. I like the direction that the club is going because it's the same direction I'm taking the court is now



that we have a process in place, what we want to do is work together now to include the families of these juveniles into this process. That's the next step we are taking. (P-15, April 11, 2002)

The tribal education director had similar success stories. She said that it gratified her to see young Tsitsistas people going on to college now and completing their undergraduate degrees. That, she said, was a big change from when she started in her position. I asked what she believed had made that difference. Without batting an eye, she said: "The Boys & Girls Club" (P-11, February 20, 2002).

There is little structured programming for teens, however; and the director notes that steady programming is problematic for Indian clubs. Still, observations and collected documents showed that there were quite a few programs and opportunities that impacted teens. Four or more high school girls worked as junior staff members. Three or more high school boys worked in the print shop behind the club, silk-screening T-shirts. In addition, the club helped sponsor the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Summit—a two-day conference with nationally renowned speakers. High school students were planning a Junior Youth Summit for this May. Furthermore, the club facilitated cooperative planning sessions for area high school students who were attending a regional Indian youth leadership conference. The club, finally, is a catalyst for other opportunities that have been provided in the community.

### Category 5: Looking for a Better Future—Voices of the Youth

Data from observations of, and interviews with, adolescents and youth at the club facilities and in the community resulted in the collection of data that was coded separately from data collected from adults in the community. Analysis of the youth data revealed three emergent themes. Each descriptive vignette in this section illustrates one of those themes. However, the names and descriptions of the individuals were changed.

“If I didn’t come here, I’d probably just get in trouble.”

Malia was sitting at a table in the game room with four young girls who were collectively working on a jigsaw puzzle. She looked up when the program director brought me in to meet her, but she didn’t look right at me. She politely turned in my direction without facing me directly. I could tell that she didn’t want to lose track of the little girls on her left.

She agreed to talk with me. When I asked her questions, however, her answers were monosyllabic. *Kathy said you just turned 18 this week?* “Yeah.” *Are you still in school?* “Yeah.” *High school?* “Junior.” (P-24, April 11, 2002) She had a polite smile on her face. Still, it was obvious she was more interested in the young girls beside her.

It was Malia’s first day back working as a Junior Staff member at the club. She said she’d been laid-off for a while. I’d seen her at the club, I thought, during teen nights when guys would be shooting basketballs out on the court, and there were girls shooting baskets at the side hoops. Malia was one who watched the boys shooting around.

She started coming to the club when she was a freshman, she said. Before that, she had lived outside of town and hadn’t participated much—only going on fieldtrips

once in a while. *Did she like living in town?* “Yeah. [But] there’s nothing to do down here, but to come [to the club]. I got two nights to play basketball and that’s really interesting besides get in trouble.”

*What did she do when you lived out of town?* “Cruised in the hills and stuff.”

*What did she do in the summer?* “I want to go firefighting this summer. That was my goal last summer, but I was too young.” *It’s hard work.* “Yeah. Hard, but good experience.”

I was keeping her from working on the puzzle. *What’s the best thing about being a member here?* “It’s fun. You always have people to talk with.” *What’s the best part about working here?* “Kids.” *Which ages did she like best?* “Five- and six-year-olds. *What did she think she would do when she finished high school?* “Go in the military.”

*How did she get started working here?* “I was volunteering, like my freshman year I volunteered.” *Why did she volunteer?* It was something to do after school. *Did she think of that, or did someone. . . ?* “My mom suggested it.” *Did she think you would really get into trouble if she weren’t at the club?* “Yeah. If I weren’t here, I would. . . .” Her voice trailed off. I thanked her, and I excused myself. I could tell she was relieved that she could focus on the girls at the table again.

Malia was friendly and had a gentle and peaceful demeanor. She was very attentive to the children—those working on the puzzle at the table, and I sensed that she was quite aware of what the other children in the room were doing as well. The little girls seemed very open to her, too. It seemed as though she liked being there very much.

I had asked her if she made a lot of money. She had shrugged her shoulders slightly. I asked what she did with the money she made. She didn’t say anything and her

shoulders stiffened a little. I liked her, so I teased her a little, asking if she bought a lot of clothes when she went to B \_\_\_\_\_. Her shoulders had stayed rigid, and she said quietly, "I pay the bills."

I felt badly. There aren't any McDonald's in Antelope Springs. There isn't much in the way of cafes or any kind of fast food. There is one gas station with a mini-market. The gas there is self-serve. The Boys & Girls Club is one of few job opportunities for teens in the town. I had spoken with the three Junior Staff workers at the Boys & Girls Club. Each of the young women smiled warmly when they said loved being around the kids. There were teen-aged males who worked out in the club's T-shirt print shop, too. They seemed to enjoy their work, their routines, and having a place to fit in. They all seemed to take their jobs seriously, too.

I watched from the hallway as Malia and the four girls put the final pieces of the puzzle together.

"I learn how to get along with people and make friends."

Eleven-year-old Tanner looked like a rascal. He was little smaller than his peers, and there was a twinkle in his eye. He just exuded charm. His hair was a dark honey-brown color and he looked like he always sat on the front edge of his seat. Other kids focused on him, but he just looked like he was focused straight ahead. He was seeing everything coming his way, and he was enjoying life.

*When did he start coming to the club?* Since he was five years old. When he was four, some of his friends were already coming, but he was too young. He couldn't wait until he was five so he could come, too. (P-28, April 11, 2002)

*What were his favorite things to do at the club?* Shooting baskets was his first interest—especially the lightning game. Pool and basketball were his interests now.

*How often did he think he came down to the club?* Without hesitation: “Every-day.” Then he caught himself and changed his answer: “Every day it’s open.” He was there from the time the club opened until the van runs took the kids home. Most of his friends were club members. He came to the club with them . . . or he met them there. Either way.

*What did he learn at the club?* He learned new words in the Street SMARTS classes. He learned how to get along with people. This year there were five new kids in school. He didn’t have any trouble getting to know them and becoming friends. Shooting basketballs was still his favorite activity at the club, but he was also happy that he had learned table manners during meals at the club.

*What would he tell someone else about the club?* You can meet new friends. You can play around and have fun. You can learn new things. But if you get three time-outs, you get suspended for three days and can’t come down to shoot baskets.

*Was there anything else he wanted to say about the club?* Yeah. With a focused look of concentration, Tanner proceeded to rattle off the name of every staff member—and every junior staff member, too. Then he drew a great big smile across his face, obviously quite proud that he knew all their names. You could tell that he considered them all to be his friends.

**“I’m just waiting to get out of here.”**

The first time JJ went to the Boys & Girls Club he was nine-years-old and following his older brother. They shot baskets and played air hockey and pool. Basketball was the main thing though. That was a few years ago now.

During the summers of 1997 and 1998, he was at the club almost every day. He and his friends would ride to the club on their bikes. Most of his friends from those days have moved on now though. They’ve left the community. Friends who are around don’t go to the club. A few do, maybe. Most are enrolled at the new alternative school. JJ’s there, too, and they are all trying to help each other get through school now. He’s busy and doesn’t go to the club anymore either.

JJ wants to get his high school diploma and then move away from the community. “This is no place for kids to grow up,” he said. “If you lived out of town a ways, it would be good. But not here in town.” He likes to walk in the woods. He likes to ride horses sometimes, but some of the horses can be pretty rough, too. (P-26, April 10, 2002)

His older brother is busy now. They don’t spend any time together. And JJ’s uncles all live out of state. He can confide in his older sister though, and he has some older friends. But the younger kids around all act so tough. They all act like gangstas. “No, this isn’t any place for children to grow up.”

### Chapter Summary

“We have a very young generation,” the former Tribal Chairman said. “They had no place to go, and the juvenile delinquency rate was climbing. We took a survey, and I thought if we created a youth center, juvenile delinquency would go down. I think it did”

(P-9, April 8, 2002). Statistics and surveys confirmed what the community already knew. In this case, they didn't really need to read about it. They could see it. Some were living with it daily, in the loss of a son or daughter.

In response, a youth organization was formed in 1992 with loosely structured activities running in an abandoned church. This shaky beginning evolved into a Boys & Girls Club. Documents showed that the organizational papers were drawn up in 1993, and a BGCA charter was given to the local affiliate in 1994. The most recent annual report that was drafted for the Board of Directors showed 549 active members. Of this number, 79% were Tsitsistas, 52% were male, 42% came from single parent families, membership peaked with 10- and 11-year-olds, and 32% of the children came from homes with household incomes below \$9,000. In 2001, 10,622 meals were served, and 70 percent of the total were served to children between the ages of 5 and 11.

Grants supply most of the funds on which the club operates. Major grant award documents and evaluation reports that were examined included: the Communities In Partnership (CIP), Weed and Seed, State Abstinence Program, Juvenile Justice, the CIRCLE grant, and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers. Funding based on these federal and state program resulted in herky-jerky program development, however, and stable funding remained a critical issue for the organization. During a January visit I was introduced to several program directors and SMART Moves coordinators who, when I returned in February, were gone. At that time, there were six job openings being advertised. All were part-time positions. Existing employees filled several of the jobs, leaving their positions vacant in the mean time. With funding based on programs that come and go, it is difficult to attract and keep qualified and professional employees.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**In this chapter, conclusions have been drawn, implications have been considered, and recommendations have been made regarding the study findings that were reported in Chapter Four. The conclusions below, like the findings, follow from the categories that emerged in the course of the case study.**

### **Conclusions**

#### **Category 1: Perceptions of Need**

**Adult community members who were interviewed during the course of this investigation reported witnessing dramatic changes in the physical, social, and cultural worlds of the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation. They had witnessed these changes over the course of their lifetime. Each expressed concern for the impact these changes had on the lives of children and youth in the community—and they tended to reflect on the qualitative differences between their own childhood and the present-day circumstances. All of the adult community members were individuals who, I would argue, were actively working to improve the community—from teachers and school administrators, to tribal leaders, tribal policemen, tribal judges, and so on. They were adults who made, in some way, an intentional choice to work on behalf of children and the community.**

**One participant stated that, when people see a need, they get in and fix it. He didn't see a cultural connection to the social activism in his community, and it is true that**



these same actions and choices are realized in other communities around this nation. I would argue, however, that the adults in this particular community were keenly aware of the sacrifices that were made on their behalf by their forbearers. I would also argue that the actions that were undertaken to establish and maintain a safe and friendly place in their community—a community with little available monetary or structural resources—were done in culturally meaningful ways. Certain individuals witnessed the deteriorating situation of the youth and they acted. They acted together, without thought of personal gain. Several of the individuals even restructured their own lives around this effort.

### Category 2: Responding to Perceived Needs

Bridging social capital played a significant role in the community's response. Creating an association and a link to an outside organization, such as Boys & Girls Clubs of America, brought much needed resources into the community. Not only did the national organization help bring grants and funding opportunities to the organization, they provided critical training and organizational expertise to the staff, especially the executive director. Where other activity-based programs had come and gone, this one stuck. That may be in good measure due to two factors. In the first place, the youth organization was initiated locally and later reached out to the national organization. It was, at heart, a grassroots effort. In the second place, the organization was facility-based. Programs came and went, but the committed individuals had a home and a place that reinforced a shared commitment and a shared identity. The director's role in this cannot be understated.

Bridging social capital came into play with regard to the establishment of collaborative ties within the community and outside the community. However, bonding social capital was strongly evident as well. Club staff expressed a drive to care for children and to care for each other. Activities within the club could be seen as culturally-based or culturally-derived—from the dinners fed to children before they left in the evening, to the proactive acceptance of a collective responsibility for raising children in the community. Older community members claimed that this was the way it was done when they were children.

### Category 3: The Role of the Organization

For numerous individuals, the lost life of young community or family member was a catalyst for action. The programs, activities, facilities, and social climate that the youth-oriented activists tried to foster and develop in response, then, largely focused on attempts to address and mitigate critical social issues that seemed much more exacerbated in the reservation community than in off-reservation communities surrounding them. Gen. Sherman's words, in 1867, appear to indicate a key to understanding the situation, when he said: "The more I see of these Indians, the more convinced I am that they all have to be killed or be maintained as a species of paupers" (quoted in O'Brien, 1989, p. 63). Intentional poverty may have been the de facto policy of the United States.

The term generational poverty came up in several conversations and interviews. Two non-Native educators referred to a book by Ruby Payne (2001), *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. In that book, Payne highlighted the difference between situational poverty, which is short-term and caused by some precipitating circumstance, and

generational poverty, which is longer-term—over several generations—and creates patterns of behavior and expectations of hopelessness.

The Boys & Girls Club, through its activities and programs, provided children and youth in their community with *bridging social capital* as well as with *cultural capital*. Trips to distant cities, participation in national and regional youth conferences, jobs as junior staff members, or entrepreneurial endeavors such as the club's print shop provided skills, awareness, confidence, and heightened self-esteem for club members. Such activities appeared to have fostered hope in young people, a goal of the club and a characteristic of successful organizations described in the ethnographic *Urban Sanctuaries* study (McLaughlin et al., 1994).

#### Category 4: Perceptions of Efficacy

No one I spoke with, either within the community or outside of it, spoke critically of the Boys & Girls Club, its programs, its staff, or its director. However, when challenged to respond to the question of how the club could be more effective, there were two universal replies: more money and more communities. "If the club branched out into more communities. . . ." "If the club had better funding, it could do a lot more." The issues surrounding greater efficacy all revolved around resources: quality facilities, well-trained staff, and stable funding for the programs, facilities, and staff.

The situation is not likely to change quickly either. Indian clubs are essentially on islands, one former club director stated (P-17, April 8, 2002). Indian clubs throughout the plains states and the West—and the reservation communities in which they reside—are far from the public spotlight. They are isolated. They are resource poor. Many of

the organizational and funding strategies employed by Boys & Girls Clubs units in urban centers around the United States do not apply in Indian Country, where power and influence rely more on family membership and personal connections in the community and less on personal wealth and connections to corporations or wealthy executives.

#### Category 5: Looking to a Better Future

An adolescent male took great pride in telling me the names of every staff member and junior staff member who worked at the club. He obviously felt ownership in that place—he felt he belonged there. He was there nearly every day after school. Older students did not show the same exuberance, but they exhibited the same sense of ownership and belonging. For older teens, the club was characterized as a safe place to be—safe in the sense of avoiding risky behaviors that they might fall into if they hung out on the streets with some of their peers.

What was lacking, during the time the study was conducted, was formal programming at the club for older youth. Older youth used the facilities for unstructured activities—mostly basketball. There were few structured activities for teens that were visible. In part, this was due to the time of the year and recent turnover in staff. On the other hand, besides the teen workers at the club and in the print shop, critical conferences, youth summits, and youth leadership projects were underway due to the Boys & Girls Club's initiative. Thus, while active teen members utilized the club for its "unstructured" time, many young adults in various reservation communities were participating and benefiting from club-sponsored events—even though they were not active members of the club. Some non-member teens were even actively engaged in

assisting with developing youth conferences, selecting presenters, and coordinating the events.

Several staff and non-staff adults referred to a youth council that the club had initiated when it first began operations. This, I believe, is a critical role that should be encouraged—active youth participation in planning and implementing programs and activities. The whole notion and understanding of sovereignty could be a fabulous vehicle for engaging young adults in a reservation community such as this. For teens who feel ownership and a sense of belonging within the walls of the club's facilities, nothing could be more empowering than taking responsibility for governance and directing their own education as well. This was evident in planning meetings for the Junior Youth Summit. As the executive director noted on several occasions, however, lack of a space separate from that used by younger children, and lack of adequate staffing to focus on the needs of older youth, has severely limited the club's ability to move forward in this area—even though it was their primary focus when they began.

Finally, there was one theme that was voiced by all of the older teens who were interviewed. They all were waiting desperately to leave the community. They could hardly wait. It was a desire to escape. While I could not begin to conjecture from what each wanted to flee, certainly generational poverty, the prevalence of drugs and alcohol, and violence in the community each played a role. Then again, they were teenagers eager to get out on their own. The isolation of the community seemed to be a big factor as well. Going into the military was one option. Just getting in a car, and taking off, was another. Teens who were working as junior staff members seemed to have the clearest idea—they seemed to have a plan. It appeared that the club provided some of the

stability, skills, and heightened expectations that fostered those dreams. I believe it also helped give them a shared sense of belonging such that most of these teens will probably feel eager to return home again some day.

### **Implications**

For the community of Antelope Springs, publication of this study may provide useful material for reflection on what they have done, where they have come, and how they might move their children, their youth organization, and their community forward. Several Tsitsistas participants spoke thoughtfully about their ancestors, the sacrifices that were made in order that they could be here, and the desire to live up to that legacy that was given to them—likewise, to live with courage and honor and generosity. I think that their stories certainly document that they have been successful in doing that.

The greatest benefit to come from these findings, therefore, may come to other Native—or non-Native—communities in rural or isolated settings and to the tribal or educational and legislative policy-makers whose work exerts a powerful influence over lives in those communities. The implications are, I believe, quite simple. This community has shown other communities what can be created and built, by holding to a vision, working together, and being persistent. Obviously, in their example, one individual can have a tremendous impact on her or his community—and on the future, through the lives of the children who are touched—when that individual joins with others to work for a common goal. The challenge, then, is to act—and to act together.

For policy-makers, the challenge is to find ways to support and encourage grass-roots activism, community involvement, and empowerment on a local or neighborhood

level. Money was a constant issue, impacting the stability and qualifications of the staff, the availability and condition of facilities, and the continuity of programming. Ed Byrd demonstrated creativity and initiative in pursuing many avenues for bringing funding and resources into his community. Other individuals gave generously of themselves while asking for nothing. Federal and state agencies have provided invaluable support, but most clubs in Indian Country are merely maintaining, Byrd stated. Clubs need stable funding and quality professional development. As I am sure is the case with many youth organizations in many communities, the ideal circumstance would be to cover basic operating expenses through an endowment account.

Practitioners, in the areas of education and youth development, might see these study findings useful as they work to address family and education issues in impoverished communities such as Antelope Springs. Of particular importance might be the role that facilities-based youth organizations can play in providing social stability, elevating adolescent expectations for good behavior and academic achievement, and fostering the development of cultural capital. In addition, this organization exemplified the way collaboration, even in a resource-starved community such as Antelope Springs, can produce successful outcomes.

Finally, there are implications for youth embedded in the previous paragraph. In this study, it was found that spending time at club facilities allowed youth to develop relationships with adults and other youth on a basis different from that which they had with teachers or peers at school or on the street. Essentially, different norms were established. Different possibilities existed. Youth could choose to avoid risky behaviors and lifestyle choices by choosing to recreate and socialize at the club. Expectations and

behavioral norms at the club, then, stood in stark contrast to peer interactions on the street and in the schools. Thus, it was possible to develop and sustain a mutually supportive youth community within the walls of the youth facilities.

### Recommendations

This study illuminated only a very small piece of a complex and multifaceted field of experience in the life of one community. As there has been little published research in this area—community youth organizations in rural settings and on Indian reservations—there are doubtless innumerable investigations that would prove valuable. First and foremost, at a practical level, given the relative absence of literature in this area, more studies of individual cases—successfully implemented or not—would bolster our base of knowledge and highlight issues, problems, and useful strategies for engaging in social change and helping children and youth develop into healthy and caring adults.

At the policy level, studies that investigate funding initiatives, and how they support or weaken grassroots organizations, would be useful. More specifically, it would likely prove beneficial to look at ways of structuring funding such that rural and Indian communities with few assets and limited resources could weather the ups and downs of grant-driven programs. Another valuable focus for tribal leadership, policy makers, and youth advocates would be to look at avenues for systemic change to confront issues and policies that have created social dependence, fostered enabling behavior, and weakened parental responsibility and accountability. To effect and sustain long-term systemic change, culturally compatible avenues for economic development must be conceived, considered, and implemented. Amid the many priorities for the limited funds that



currently exist, families and children and youth must remain high on the list. They are our future.

Also on a policy level, greater understanding of how national organizations, such as Boys & Girls Clubs of America in this case, could adapt their programming, networks, and professional training programs to meet the unique challenges and requirements of working with American Indian tribes, socially and jurisdictionally, would greatly enhance the operation of grassroots organizations in Indian Country. Learning must be a two-way street.

This study highlighted the key role that the director played, and continues to play, in maintaining a strong, active, and healthy youth organization. Strong, stable leadership was identified as critical to the organization's success. Therefore, greater research into this domain would seem imperative, in order to understand and develop leadership capabilities and to sustain organizational vitality should a strong director depart. This, as well as other research foci highlighted here, might benefit from the perspectives, insights, and wisdom of Native scholars and researchers. Policies that promote and sustain a new generation of Native scholars and researchers are, therefore, clearly recommended. The oral storytelling format, engendered by the semi-structured interview protocol, played a major role in this study and was consistent with recommendations offered by Native researchers. Innovative methods for using this culturally appropriate methodology to ultimately initiate systemic social change might prove quite interesting and effective.

Theoretically, several lines of investigation seem intriguing and valuable. First, this investigation was greatly enhanced by understandings in the area of community organizing and community building. Further investigations in this area, focusing

specifically on Native communities with strong internal bonding but few bridges to outside resources, would likely prove fascinating. Second, the issue of parental responsibility, and social and community programs that serve as crutches that enable parents to effectively abrogate their responsibility, is a delicate and potentially controversial focus. Yet, if we are to move forward, it seems that we must find ways to provide community support and programs, such as the feeding programs at Boys & Girls Clubs and in the public schools, while finding ways to foster greater parental involvement in the lives of their children.

Finally, sovereignty was an issue that surfaced almost daily, when involved with policy-makers, community activists, and political leaders on this Indian reservation. I believe that a greater level of understanding of sovereignty in general, and of tribal sovereignty in particular, is necessary in order to reverse years of discriminatory practices and policies in education as well as in government. Sovereignty, I believe, could provide an ideal conceptual model for working with older youth in a community organization such as was studied in this qualitative investigation, too. This case study documented the existence of community characteristics within the Boys & Girls Club—a defined territory or bounded place, a shared identity, and a common field of action. Limited sovereignty, with its additional focus on self-governance or self-regulation, would provide a valuable vehicle for developing Native youth leadership in addition to fostering individual and collective responsibility. Articulation of such a model would be useful and remains to be undertaken.

## Chapter Summary

In this qualitative case study, individual community members of the Tsitsistas Nation articulated their perceptions and experiences regarding the formation of an organization in their community to address the needs of children and youth, whose lives had been greatly impacted by perceived changes in the community. The findings of the investigation should prove particularly useful to other rural and/or American Indian communities. There are also implications for practitioners and policy-makers. For the community, and for the Boys & Girls Club, the greatest organizational need identified was greater—and more stable sources of—funding. That remains the challenge: to find ways to inspire, support, fund, and understand effective grassroots community organizing and community building in impoverished, rural, and culturally distinct communities. The Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation has shown the impact that such an endeavor can have in the lives of the healthy boys, girls, and youth it has touched.

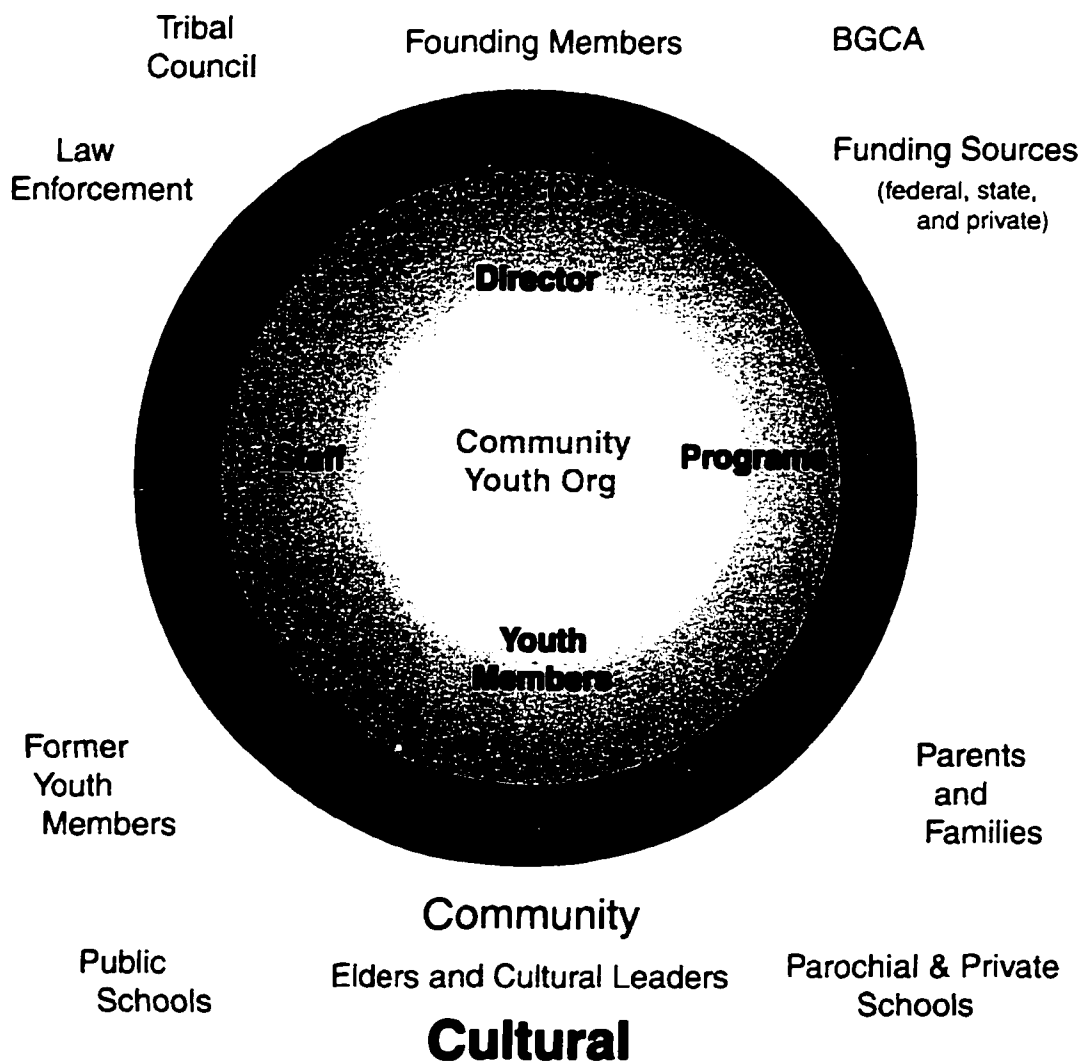
## ENDNOTE

I visited with a man who had formerly been the executive director of a Boys & Girls Club on an Indian reservation in a different state. He said that, over a number of years, he had visited many clubs—Native and non-Native—across the United States. The Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation was special, he said:

You look around at what they have, and it's basically an abandoned gym, abandoned warehouse, and this room we're in here. I don't know what it was, but it was abandoned too, and they renovated it. Ed was able to really make lemonade out of the situation and modify things, tweak them, and inspire a good grass-roots constituency to get behind him and really make this work for the youth of this community.

This particular Boys and Girls Club is not fancy at all. But yet when you come in here you get a really strong feeling of comfortability and of heavy use. It has a spirit to it when you walk through those doors that a lot of Boys and Girls Clubs lack. When you come in here, you see the young people take ownership of this Boys and Girls Club. They feel very comfortable. They know how to be respectful of it. They know what the routine is. They know what's expected of them. This is something that's theirs, and it's their oasis. It's their time for respite from some of the more negative elements in the community.

No Boys and Girls Club in the country—Indian one—does a better job of creating that atmosphere than the Tsitsistas Boys & Girls Club. (P-17, April 8, 2002)

**Political****Economic**

*Figure 7. Holistic Representation of the Organization's Situation in the Community.*

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## APPENDICES

**Appendix A: Letters**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION and INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**Project Title: Building Supportive Community Organizations for Native Youth**

**Project Director: Hal Schmid  
P. O. Box 3603  
Missoula, MT 59806  
Phone: (406) 726-3776**

**Supervisor: Dr. Roberta Evans  
School of Education  
University of Montana  
Missoula, MT 59812  
Phone: (406) 243-5877**

**I am asking for your help with a research project I am conducting. It is part of my doctoral dissertation at the University of Montana.**

**I am studying the local Boys and Girls Club. I hope to understand how the club was formed and how it operates. I want to understand its role in the community. I also hope to learn some of the ways people may see it as effective or helpful. Therefore, I am interviewing people here in the community.**

**If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked a series of questions. The session will last about 20 minutes. It will focus on your own experience and perceptions of the Boys & Girls Club. If you feel uncomfortable, you may stop the interview at any time.**

**No names will be used in my notes. I will use letters and numbers (P1, P2) to identify each person. All data will be confidential. I will store the notes and consent forms in separate locked file cabinets. My advisor and I will be the only ones who see and use these materials.**

**With your permission, I will record our interview. However, the recording will be transcribed without any information that could identify you. The recording will then be erased or destroyed.**

**Little information is available about youth organizations in rural areas. There is even less information about organizations on Indian reservations. With your help, I hope to learn more about ways people can create safe places and valuable activities for children and youth. No direct benefit may come to you. It is my hope that the findings will benefit other communities though. I would be happy to send you a summary of my findings when the study is complete.**

We do not foresee any risk for anyone taking part in this study. Participation is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you may still withdraw at any time. Contact me here at the Boys & Girls Club or at the phone number above. I will be happy to remove you from the study. If you have any questions now or during the study, I would be happy to answer them.

Although we do not foresee any risk in taking part in this study, the following liability statement is required in all University of Montana consent forms:

"In the event that you are injured as a result of this research you should individually seek appropriate medical treatment. If the injury is caused by the negligence of the University or any of its employees, you may be entitled to reimbursement or compensation pursuant to the Comprehensive State Insurance Plan established by the Department of Administration under the authority of M.C.A., Title2, Chapter 9. In the event of a claim for such injury, further information may be obtained from the University's Claims representative or University Legal Counsel. (Reviewed by University Legal Counsel, July 6, 1993)"

I have read the above description of this research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have also been assured that the researcher will answer any future questions I may have. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

---

Printed Name

---

Signature

---

Date

I agree to have the interview recorded.

---

Signature

---

Date

## PARENT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

**Project Title:** Building Supportive Community Organizations for Native Youth

**Project Director:** Hal Schmid  
P. O. Box 3603  
Missoula, MT 59806  
Phone: (406) 726-3776

**Supervisor:** Dr. Roberta Evans  
School of Education  
University of Montana  
Missoula, MT 59812  
Phone: (406) 243-5877

I am studying the local Boys and Girls Club as part of a graduate research project at the University of Montana. I hope to understand how the club was formed and how it operates. I want to understand its role in the community. I also hope to learn some of the ways children and adults may see it as effective or helpful. Little information is available about youth organizations in rural areas. Even less is available for organizations on Indian reservations. So I hope that findings from this study will help not only your community, but other communities as well.

I will be working as a volunteer at the Boys & Girls Club. While there, I will observe children and staff members involved in club activities. I also hope to interview local people. This will include children and youth. I am very interested in learning about how club members (and former club members) view their involvement and time spent at the club.

If you agree for your child to take part in this study, your child may be included in focus group interviews at the club or at school. Each focus group will involve a question and answer session with 3 to 6 students. Sessions will last from 15 to 20 minutes. Students will be asked to talk about a number of things. How long have they been members of the club? What kinds of activities they enjoy? What is the best thing about being at the club?

Later, I hope to select a few students for individual interviews. This will help me get a much clearer picture of the students' experiences and how they feel about the club.

If any students feel uncomfortable about answering questions during the interviews, they may stop at any point. No names will be used in my notes. I will use letters and numbers (P1, P2) to identify who is speaking. My advisor and I will be the only persons who use the notes. All data will be confidential. I will store my notes and all consent forms in separate locked file cabinets. At your request, I would also be happy to send you a summary of my findings when the study is complete.

With your help, I hope to learn more about ways people can create safe places and valuable activities for children and youth. While no benefit may come directly to you or your children, it is my hope that the findings will be very helpful to other rural or American Indian communities.

We do not foresee any risk for anyone taking part in this study. And participation in the study is entirely voluntary. If you and your child decide to participate, you or your child may still withdraw at any time without effecting your child's participation at the club. You or your child may contact me at the Boys & Girls Club or at my home phone number listed above. Tell me that you no longer wish to be part of the study. If you have any questions now or during the study, feel free to contact me as well. I am happy to speak with you. You can also request to have a staff member at the club ask me to get in touch with you.

Although we do not foresee any risk in taking part in this study, the following liability statement is required in all University of Montana consent forms:

"In the event that you are injured as a result of this research you should individually seek appropriate medical treatment. If the injury is caused by the negligence of the University or any of its employees, you may be entitled to reimbursement or compensation pursuant to the Comprehensive State Insurance Plan established by the Department of Administration under the authority of M.C.A., Title 2, Chapter 9. In the event of a claim for such injury, further information may be obtained from the University's Claims representative or University Legal Counsel. (Reviewed by University Legal Counsel, July 6, 1993)"

I have read the above description of this research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have also been assured that the researcher will answer any future questions I may have. I voluntarily agree to take part or to have my child take part in this study. I understand that I will receive a copy of this consent form.

---

Printed Name of Child

---

Subject's Signature

---

Date

---

Signature of Parent or Legally Authorized Representative (for subjects less than 18 years old)

---

Date

## ASSENT FORM

**How can people create a place like the Boys & Girls Club for kids?**

**Project Director:** Hal Schmid  
P. O. Box 3603  
Missoula, MT 59806  
Phone: (406) 726-3776

**Supervisor:** Dr. Roberta Evans  
School of Education  
University of Montana  
Missoula, MT 59812  
Phone: (406) 243-5877

*This form may contain some words that are new to you. If you read any words that you don't understand, please ask me for help.*

I have asked your parents to allow you to be in a study about the Boys & Girls Club. This form will help answer any questions you have about the study. The form also gives me your permission to ask you questions for the study and talk with you about the club.

**Why you?** By talking with students like you, I hope to learn more about the way people can create places for kids. I want to learn about activities and programs, too.

**What will you have to do?** You will be asked some questions. There are no right or wrong answers. Just answer them the best way you can.

**Is there any danger in this project?** There is no risk of injury. If you feel uncomfortable about answering any questions, you can stop any time you like.

**What will this project do for you?** You may not get anything out of this project. But by sharing your thoughts with us, students somewhere may one day have a place to go after school. You may be helping them.

**Who will know about your answers?** Your name will not be used at all. I will only use a letter and a number (like P1) to show who said what. My advisor and I will be the only ones who see my notes. We will be the only ones who know what you say.

**Can you quit if you want to?** You can quit anytime you wish. Just tell me that you do not want to be part of the study any longer.

**What if you have other questions?** If you ever have questions, you can call me at the phone number above. Or you can have a Boys & Girls Club staff member call me.



**Permission:** I have read this form, and I understand it. I want to take part in the study and know that I can quit at any time. I will be given a copy of this form after I sign it.

---

**Printed Name of Student**

---

**Student's Signature**

---

**Date**

## **Appendix B: Interview Protocol**

### **Standard Interview Introductory Statements**

The following opening statements will guide each interview.

- Thank you for taking time to participate in this study. Before we begin, I would like to explain the interview process and how the session will go.
- I will be asking a series of general questions and taking notes of your answers as we go along. I will refer to you only as “P” or “M” in my notes.
- All the information gathered in this interview will be confidential, including your statements, my responses, and all of the notes that I take. At no time will you be referred to by name or by any other description that would allow someone, who reads this research study, to identify you in the study. I protect this confidentiality as the author of the study, as does my doctoral dissertation chair, as does a requirement by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Montana.
- Your name will not be known to anyone but myself.
- Direct quotes used will not be name-specific, and all names used (or referred to) will be changed to protect each person’s privacy.
- There are no expectations as to how you will answer these questions and there are no incorrect answers. The goal of each question is to assist me in understanding the perceptions you hold with regard to the Boys & Girls Club in this community.
- *Community member adults only:* With your permission, I will record our interview. However, the recording will be transcribed without any information that could identify you. The recording will then be erased or destroyed.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

**Student Focus Group Interview Protocol**

- 1) Do you remember the first time you came to the Boys & Girls Club? How old were you—how long ago was that?
- 2) What sorts of activities were you involved with when you first started coming to the club?
- 3) What are some of your favorite activities now?
- 4) How much time do you think you spend here at the club every week? Do you come here more often now than you did, say, two years ago?
- 5) Do most of your friends come here to participate in activities? Do any of your friends from school choose not to come here? Why do you think that is so?
- 6) In what ways is the Boys & Girls Club like school? In what ways is it different?
- 7) What would you say is the best thing about being a member of this club?
- 8) Given your experience, if you could talk with some adults in another community like this, what would you tell them about this Boys & Girls Club? Should they try to create a place like this for their community? Why or why not?

**Thank you for your participation. Remember, everything that was said here will be kept strictly confidential, and no one's name will be used in any of the reports or research findings.**

**Community Member Interview Protocol**

*A) What was it like, for you, growing up here in this community?  
[family, school, free time]*

*B) What does it mean for you to be Tsitsistas?*

- 
- 1) How and when did you first become aware of the Boys & Girls Club of the Tsitsistas Nation? What were your first impressions of the organization?
  - 2) What has been your involvement with the Boys & Girls Club? (Do you have any adolescent family members who are active in the club?)
  - 3) In your opinion, what role does the club play in the community? (Or, how would you describe the mission and purpose of the organization?)
  - 4) Do you think the organization has been effective in achieving its mission and purpose? In what ways might it be more effective?
  - 5) What impacts—either positive or negative—do you think that the Boys & Girls Club has on families here?
  - 6) In what ways is the Boys & Girls Club like the local schools? In what ways is it different?
  - 7) What do you think the impact on the community (and or families) would be if the Boys & Girls Club was not here?
  - 8) Given your experience, what would you want to tell another community about creating a youth organization like Boys & Girls Club in their community?

**Thank you for your participation. Remember, everything that was said here will be kept strictly confidential, and no one's name will be used in any of the reports or research findings.**

**Demographic Information Sheet**

Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview # \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

or

Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview length: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Code: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix C: Tribal Council Presentation**

### Final Tribal Council Presentation

Upon completion of this case study, the researcher returned to the Tsitsistas Indian Reservation to present study findings to the Tribal Council and Executive Director Ed Byrd at a scheduled Council meeting. Using PowerPoint software, the format of the doctoral dissertation was explained, the three educational settings were described, and the highlights of the *Urban Sanctuaries* study were articulated. Following this, the schematic representations of the Boys & Girls Club and its situation in the community, as well as the location of the community members who participated in the interviews, were portrayed graphically. The emergent categories and themes were then identified, followed by a discussion of the implications and recommendations put forward in the study. The main points here concerned the need for: (a) adequate and stable funding; (b) systemic change to address issues of social dependence and parental enabling; (c) Native researchers in the community; and (d) developing tribal sovereignty as a model for working with Native youth.

Following the presentation, approximately half of the Councilmen and Councilwomen in attendance offered comments. These included statements regarding the way elders used to discipline, chastise, and encourage them where they were children. One man mentioned that drugs had dramatically changed the community and the environment in which youth were reared. In his day, he said, there was a discrepancy in the way parents told children not to drink while they continued to consume alcohol. But the situation with drugs is much worse, he contended. Ed Byrd spoke for several minutes regarding the feeding program at the club and the dilemma it originally created for the



staff. One Councilman stated that it sounded to him that the study pointed out that youth in the community needed to feel ownership with regard to activities and facilities. Then, as the presentation came to a conclusion, the researcher reiterated his desire to continue the study and broaden its focus. One councilman responded that he hoped that the study would continue. I think it is good, he said.