

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

(Re)writing and (Re)righting

California Indian Histories: Legacies of Saint Boniface

Indian Industrial School, 1890 to 1935

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in American Indian Studies

by

Kelly Leah Stewart

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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Kelly Leah Stewart

Master of Arts in American Indian Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Mishuana R. Goeman, Chair

California Indians histories are interwoven from oral accounts of our ancestors' hardships and triumphs, intertwining experiences of lost and concealed culture, traditions, and perspectives on our past, bound together by generations that have overcome adversity through endless resiliency, directly tying Indian people to our ancestors' experiences, Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural connections and familial bonds. One overlooked narrative in California history is that of the Mission boarding school experience. California Indian boarding school literature continues be dominated by the Sherman Institute, and there remains an absence of perspectives of California Indian students attending Saint

Boniface Indian Industrial School. Cross referencing archival documents, oral histories, and family photographs, this thesis provides a narrative of California Indian Mission school history by exploring how descendants of former students are (re)writing and (re)righting histories. The purpose of this thesis is to examine how descendants of one family from Sahatapah, California have overcome the loss of familial bonds and cultural connections to reclaim their California Indian heritage.

The thesis of Kelly Leah Stewart is approved.

Benjamin L. Madley

Peter Nabokov

Mishuana R. Goeman, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2018

For the Gonzales sisters:
Emma, Carmelita, and Mary Jeanette

And for all the former Saint Boniface students whose stories are yet to be told.

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EPIGRAPH: PASSAGES OF TIME
By Mary Jeanette Gonzales
April 28, 2008

The passages of time bring back memories when we were young.

Four sisters, of different dimensions that pass-through time, that hold memories of their time. The memories of childhood at the ranch, that possess different meaning for each to treasure through time.

Memories of Dad and Mom are special to us all. The legacy of their love and compassion, they instilled in us all. Their spirit locked in our hearts for us to share, the meaning of life through the passages of time.

Four sisters of different dimensions that pass-through time with families united as one. All of us with a bond, a bond of love which comes from the core of our being as one.

Memories that we shared from being born till now hold the success and sorrows that time bestows on the true meaning of time. Our heritage we must keep alive so that it must not fade though the passages of time.

Our spiritual relationship we hold dear Leonard, Gilbert, Raymond, Dora, Louis George and Carlos will forever be in our hearts of time. Which God has given us his will to share their remembrance of our family during our special times.

Four sisters, of different dimensions that pass-through time that hold memories of their time. Will always exist in our family ties to share, to love for always until the end of time.

CHAPTER 1: RECLAIMING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INDIAN HISTORIES

Southern California Indian history is interwoven from the oral accounts of our ancestors' hardships and triumphs, intricately intertwining the experiences of lost and concealed culture, language, traditions, and perspectives on our past. It is a history bound together by generations that have overcome adversity through endless resiliency. Oral accounts of the past directly tie Indian people to our ancestors' life experiences, Indigenous knowledge systems, and – most importantly – our cultural connections and familial bonds. Spoken narratives of Southern California Indian history “teach the young and remind the old what appropriate and inappropriate behavior is in our cultures; they provide a sense of identity and belonging, situating community members within their lineage and establishing their relationship to the rest of the natural world.”¹ It is through these oral histories that California Indians, young and old, learn who we are, where we come from, and where we are going. Best explained by Ohlone-Costanoan Esselen/Chumash writer and poet, Deborah A. Miranda, loss of our culture and our history occurs “when we stop telling the stories of who we are, where we have been, how we arrived here, what we once knew, [and] what we wish we knew.”² Much of California Indian history is written from the perspectives of well-meaning outsiders, providing a narrative of California Indians through the lens of Euro-American perspectives. By not recounting *our* stories, *our* experiences, and *our* histories we lose our narratives as California Indians. We need to tell, and (re)tell, California Indian narratives of our past in order to truly understand who we are as a people.

¹ Angela Cavender Wilson, "American Indian history or non-Indian perceptions of American Indian history?," *American Indian Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1996): 4.

² Deborah A. Miranda, *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir*, (Berkeley, CA: Heyday, 2013), xiv.

Through the loss, concealment, and misinterpretation of our narratives, we are not only losing our familial bonds and cultural connections, we risk losing our Indigenous



knowledge systems. Wailaki and Concow and historian, William J. Bauer, Jr. simplified this concept further stating, “telling stories retains and perpetuates knowledge.”³ Only by reclaiming our culture, our knowledge systems, and our narratives can we continue the journey toward reclaiming our history as California Indians. Through this thesis, I aim to reclaim

Figure 1: Link, Tima Lotah. *Native People of This Place. What John Muir Missed The California Road Map California Native American Tribes Map*. 2018. August 1, 2018, <http://centroculturalaustriaco.com/california-native-american-tribes-map/what-john-muir-missed-the-california-road-map-california-native-american-tribes-map/>.

the narrative of the Southern California Indian boarding school experience through the examination of Native perspectives on Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School. Saint Boniface, a Catholic Mission Boarding school located in Banning, California, was funded and operated by the Catholic Church from 1890 to the late 1950s. The school provided a Western education and Catholic catechism to the local Iviatim (Cahuilla), Yuhaviatam

³ William J. Bauer Jr., *California Through Native Eyes: Reclaiming History* (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington, 2016), ix.

(Serrano), Payómkawichum (Luiseño), Tongva (Gabrieliño), Acjachemen (Juaneño), and Ipai (Kumeyaay) tribal communities (see Figure 1).⁴ I aim to shed light on the legacies that were created by former Indian Mission school students through the narratives of their experiences and the methods of resistance that they – and their descendants – have utilized as a way of retaining their identity as Southern California Indians.

Forgotten Narratives

An important, but often overlooked, aspect of Southern California Indian history revolves around the boarding school experience. Southern California Indian boarding school literature is dominated by student accounts at the Sherman Indian School (located in Riverside, California). Works such as *Riverside, Tourism, and the Indian: The Students of Sherman Indian School*, *Empty Beds: Indian Student Health at Sherman Institute, 1902-1922*; and *The Indian School on Magnolia Street* focus on the history of the Sherman Indian School, sharing perspectives of the school and of former students.⁵ Meanwhile, there remains an absence of perspectives of the Southern California Indian students who attended smaller boarding schools in the same region. One such school, Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, was a Catholic mission boarding school located in Banning, California. Remains of the school are located approximately 34 miles east of the more popularly studied Sherman Indian School.⁶ Little research has been conducted on this

⁴ Throughout this thesis, I will alternate between traditional tribal names with names given to Southern California Indians by Spanish missionaries.

⁵ Nathan Gonzales, "Riverside, Tourism, and the Indian: Frank A. Miller and the Creation of Sherman Institute," *Southern California Quarterly* 84, no. 3/4 (2002): 193-222.
Diana Meyers Bahr, *The Students of Sherman Indian School: Education and Native Identity Since 1892* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014).
Lorene Sisquoc, Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Clifford E. Trafzer, eds., *The Indian School on Magnolia Avenue: Voices and Images from the Sherman Institute* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2012).
Jean A. Keller, *Empty Beds: Indian Student Health at Sherman Institute, 1902-1922* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2002).

⁶ Throughout this thesis Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School may be referred to as simply "Saint Boniface."

institution, resulting in the exclusion of narratives from Cahuilla, Serrano, Luiseño, Tongva, Juaneño, and Kumeyaay youth – between the ages of five to thirteen – and select young adults – who attended Saint Boniface between 1890 and 1935, and within the history of the Catholic Church’s mission school system, as well as in the history of the education and experiences of Southern California Indian youth.

Only two other individuals have written on Saint Boniface. Leading scholars of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School history are historians R. Bruce Harley and Tanya Rathbun. Research published on Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School has been written from perspectives of the Catholic Church, school administrators, and non-Native scholars. These perspectives may lead readers to believe that relationships between Southern California Indian students, school administrators, and faculty were one of harmony, friendship, and respect. Overall, the concerns regarding these publications not only center around the limited perspectives on life at Saint Boniface from former students, but also lack information regarding the violence endured by students, the harsh lifestyles and labor imposed on the students, the legacy that the institution had on the descendants of these former students, and the methods of resistance that former students and their descendants utilized in retaining their Indigeneity.

Harley’s work, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School*, provided a general overview of the history of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, focusing on the perspectives of school administrators and the Catholic Church. However, Harley’s work neglects to shed light on the experiences of the Southern California Indian students who attended the school, especially those who attended the institution in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rathbun’s work, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” which is featured in the book *Boarding School Blues*, included perspectives of Native students, (re)telling the history of the school, and adding the

elements of the daily activities of the students and the relationships they had with school administrators. Although Rathbun's work included Indigenous narratives, it failed to examine the disintegration of many California Indian families and the intergenerational loss of culture, traditions, and history. Largely concerned with everyday activities, Rathbun's work did not address the impact of the school on former students, and their descendants, that will be undertaken in this thesis.

Primary sources on Saint Boniface that exist include articles featured in newspapers such as *The San Bernardino County Sun*, *The Los Angeles Herald*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Daily Courier* (published in the city of San Bernardino, CA). These articles primarily described school events, but limited the student perspectives of the Saint Boniface experience to a select few. The work of both historians, and the limited selection of student narratives featured in Southern California newspapers, offers a rare glimpse into the boarding school experience, while exposing a significant gap in the research on the secondary educational experiences of California Indian students.

As a Southern California Indian woman, and a descendant of two generations of students that attended Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, I contend that prior research fails to examine the intergenerational impact of boarding school experiences in Southern California. Specifically, previous research does not account for the fact that many Southern California Indian families were broken up because of their children attending Saint Boniface, thereby severing ties to traditional ways of life and culture. I intend to add to the boarding school narrative by examining the loss, or forced concealment, of familial bonds and cultural connections that many Southern California Indian youth experienced after attending Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, and the methods of resistance utilized in their retention of Indigeneity, familial bonds, and cultural connections. The accounts from previous research on Saint Boniface center on the perspectives of the

Catholic Church and school administrators, thereby sharing Southern California Indian history regarding the boarding school experience through a non-Native cultural lens, often excluding or limiting California Indian perspectives on the subject. Moreover, with the passage of time – through the passing of tribal elders who attended this institution – eyewitness Southern California Indian accounts are beginning to fade and are not being recorded and preserved for future generations.

My inquisitiveness regarding the Indian boarding school experience stems out of the experiences of my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, and the ways that their time at Saint Boniface shaped my identity as a Payómkawish and Tongva woman. The purpose of this research is to add to the Indian boarding school literature by providing Southern California Indian perspectives on Saint Boniface through the examination of the loss of familial bonds and cultural connections, and the ways in which former students and their descendants have (re)membered, (re)tained, and adapted their understandings of family and culture.

With the passing of my grandmother Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales on January 16, 2016, I came to understand, deeply appreciate, and greatly respect the immense knowledge and history that our tribal elders carry. Elders, like my grandmother, not only carry decades of wisdom through lived experience, they also carry the history and culture of our tribe, community, and family. As Kiowa anthropologist, Gus Palmer Jr. explains “[s]tories keep alive the hopes, aspirations, and dreams of the tribe.”⁷ My grandmother carried stories of our ancestors’ cultural connections, our lineage, and stories of her father’s life at Saint Boniface, as well as her own personal reflections of life at the school. When she

⁷ Gus Palmer Jr., *Telling Stories the Kiowa Way* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2003), 12.

passed away, with the exception of a few handwritten letters and stories, these untold stories went with her.

As a child, I was not exposed to the history, traditions, and culture of my Payómkawish and Tongva heritages. Traditional knowledge of Indigenous California plants, fluency in our ancestral languages, traditions such as basket weaving and bird song and dance were removed from the daily lives of my ancestors as a result of the assimilative nature of Saint Boniface, and the strong promotion of the Catholic faith, thereby, preventing our Indigenous knowledge systems from being passed on to my mother's generation, my generation, and future generations. My great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins who attended the institution elected to conceal their Payómkawish and Tongva heritages out of fear and the necessity for survival. This removal from culture and family was not limited to one generation, as two generations of my family – my great-grandfather and my grandmother's – attended Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School. It was at Saint Boniface, starting with the first generation of students in 1890, through the exposure to formal Euro-American Catholic schooling, that the erosion of connections with familial bonds and culture began for not only my ancestors, but for many of the Southern California Indian youth who attended the institution. This legacy of loss is still felt today.

This cycle of cultural loss and concealment of Native heritage and family ties continued for the next four generations of the Gonzales family, as throughout her life, Carmelita remained relatively guarded regarding her experiences at Saint Boniface (1929-1935), as well as those of her father, uncles, cousins, and siblings who attended the school, and their California Indian identity. On occasion, usually after endless prodding – or a bit of liquid courage – my grandmother would share stories of the sadness she felt from being kept away from her parents, younger siblings, and grandmothers. She expressed fear and

dislike of the school's administrators and faculty – especially the priests – and described the isolation she experienced and bullying from her peers. She would speak of the times that she and her siblings ran away from school, in hopes of returning home to the Gonzales Ranch in San Timoteo Canyon, only to be apprehended by boarding school staff and returned to the school. Her stories included memories of her grandmother and father speaking in a language that she referred to as “Indian” – a language that may have only come back to her in her nighttime dreams, speaking in a tongue unfamiliar to her daughters, as she journeyed back to her youth in the last few years of her life as she battled dementia. It was through my grandmother's stories, and her witty comebacks to my grandfather's endless teasing about how her “people where here first,” that I learned the importance that Payómkawish and Tongva culture, traditions, values, and oral histories play in our education as Native people, as well as in the way that we retain our familial bonds and cultural connections.

Methodology

After examining archival documents and evaluating literature on the Southern California Indian boarding school experience for many former Saint Boniface students and the effect the legacy of the school had on their descendants, I decided that I wanted to examine two areas in depth. First, I examined how Southern California Indians who attended Saint Boniface retained their familial bonds and cultural connections despite the influence of Euro-American Catholic culture and values. Secondly, I explored how former students passed on, and continue to pass on, their memories and experiences of Saint Boniface, as well their culture and family lineages, to their descendants.

This would not be an easy task. Early in the archival research process I encountered a roadblock that would potentially derail my research. Seeking copies of enrollment records for my subjects, I contacted the San Bernardino Archdiocese, providing an archivist with a list of names of former students, dates of birth, parent names, and approximate years of enrollment. While he was able confirm that these students attended Saint Boniface, he was unable to offer copies of the records. In order to obtain copies of Saint Boniface student

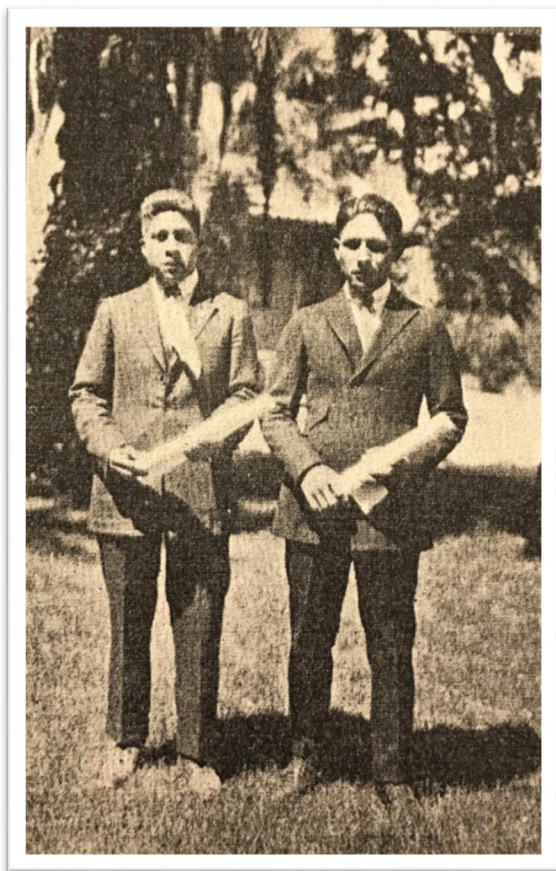


Figure 2: Deutsch, Justin. *Graduates* (Louis Florian Gonzales, left). Historical Review. Newsletter. Banning, CA: Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, 1925. Banning Public Library, Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Collection.

enrollment records, the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS), requires researchers to pay a fee to have the archival documents pulled, as well as to provide proof of descent from the students in question, as the OCS view the records – even of individuals who have passed on – as records of minor children. Fortunately, the OCS is not the sole source of Catholic Indian boarding school archival documents. A primary site for information on Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School continues to be the Southern California library, the Banning Public Library, which maintains a small archive that contains documents such as quarterly reports, historical reviews, newspaper articles, enrollment records and photographs.

Visiting the library multiple times over three months, I collected copies of over 500 documents, which were used to comprise the following narrative. As I was searching

through the Saint Boniface quarterly reports, I felt my ancestors encouraging me not to give up. Browsing through archival documents one day in February of 2017, I discovered a document hidden between reports that had the names of my grandmother, aunts and uncles. The document had been misplaced by someone looking for former students that they may conduct an interview with. That same day I found an important Saint Boniface publication. As I searched through photographs, quarterly reports, and school newsletters, I had a moment where I felt that someone was telling me to stop and look at what was in my hands. Right there staring back at me was my great-grandfather, Louis Florian Gonzales (see Figure 2). While the photograph did not have his name – it was simply captioned “Graduates” – I knew it was him because he looked exactly like my mother’s eldest brother, Alfred. I truly felt like he was telling me that I was on the right path, and to push forward. Photographs, such as this of my great-grandfather, are used to confirm and track the oral histories that have been passed down to me by my mother, grandmother, aunts, and uncles. Upon its discovery, I showed this image to other members of my family, who confirmed that it was their father or grandfather, and with those confirmations came additional chronicles of my great-grandfather’s life, providing a thorough image of his life at Saint Boniface, as well as his ancestral connections to prominent individuals in Southern California Indian history.

My final visit was the most impactful, because this was the day that I would view a compact disc that potentially had the school enrollment records that the Archdiocese refused to release to me without monetary compensation and proof of descent from the individuals whose names I had provided. It was on this day that I found enrollment records for my great-grandfather, but even more surprising than that, hidden in enrollment records from 1896 to 1914 was a record from 1917 that had my two of my great-uncles and a cousin; listing their ages and tribal affiliation.

Next, I search through newspaper articles from the Southern California region, specifically for the Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino county areas. I searched through hundreds of newspapers from 1890 to 1935, using the name of the school and the names of my subjects. My mother and my great-aunt provided me with family photographs, as well as the stories of the events in these photos. In addition, while conducting interviews with my mother at her home in La Puente, California, I carefully read through six of eight volumes my great-grandfather's journals, one of which is over 100 years old. Louis' journals had been passed to my mother after my grandmother's passing, and are a few of the remaining documents containing written histories pertaining to Louis' life that can be cross-referenced with oral histories and family photographs. My mother added to my data collection, by providing stories written by my grandmother that reflected on her life in San Timoteo Canyon. San Timoteo Canyon is located in Riverside County, California, and was known to the local Cahuilla, Serrano, Tongva, and Luiseño people as the village of Sahatapah – known to non-Natives as Squaw flats.⁸ This was the location of the Gonzales family ranch, which was once a part of Rancho San Bernardino, and had been passed down to the Gonzales family through their relation to the prominent Bermudes family, and the relationship that they had with Antonio Maria Lugo. The ranch was the central hub for many generations of the Gonzales family, as several families resided on the property.⁹

Finally, after gathering all my archival documents and family research, I felt confident enough to begin my interviews. The three people that I chose to interview were:

⁸ Throughout the remainder of this thesis, San Timoteo Canyon may be referred to as Sahatapah. Both terms will represent the location of the Gonzales Ranch, and the ancestral territory of subjects discussed throughout this thesis.

⁹ Emma Gonzales, (former Saint Boniface student) in discussion with the author, March 2, 2017. Mary Jeanette Gonzales (daughter and sister of former Saint Boniface students), in discussion with author, March 16, 2017.

Dolores Aguila, Mary Jeanette Gonzales, and Emma Gonzales.¹⁰ Dolores, Jeanette, and Emma each provide different chronicles of student life at Saint Boniface and the impact the school's legacy had on the Gonzales descendants' views of Indigeneity. Dolores and Jeanette Gonzales are both daughters of former Saint Boniface students. In addition to being the daughter of a first-generation Saint Boniface student, Jeanette is also sister to seven second-generation students. A talented writer, Jeanette not only provides a perspective of her father and siblings experiences, she also provides the perspective of a Native woman who has researched the school, her family, and the community where her relatives grew up. Emma Gonzales, a second-generation Saint Boniface student, was chosen to provide a perspective of her time at the institution, as well as to share the experiences of her six siblings and many cousins that she attended the school with. At the age of ninety-seven, Emma is potentially the oldest living former Saint Boniface student. Dolores Aguila, daughter of Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales, provides insight into her mother's narrative, while also beginning dialogue on how the school impacted her knowledge of her California Indian heritage, and shaped her familial bonds and cultural connections. Together, these individuals provide a multi-generational perspective on Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, and the legacy that the institution's assimilative and oppressive nature has created.

Using my archival research and literature reviews to create a baseline of interview questions, I went into my interviews with a list of questions, and determination to have each one answered. But after my first interview, I realized that it would be best to let them flow naturally. These women were giving me important information about the experiences of their family members, and it was more important to listen to their stories, as the

¹⁰ The women who provided interviews will be referred to by their maiden surname, as opposed to their married last name.

information provided in the stories would be cross-referenced with archival documents to authenticate the stories of both my great-grandfather (1901 to 1906) and my grandmother's attendance at the school.¹¹ Taking into consideration the strong role that oral histories have played in this research, throughout this thesis I will follow the research methods of Shawn Wilson and Angela Cavender Wilson by taking the role of storyteller through the incorporation of oral narratives throughout this thesis.¹² This will allow me to demonstrate, through stories passed to me during the interview process – and throughout my life – the strong familial bond that has been instilled in me as a descendant of the Gonzales family.

Through the combining and analysis of archival documents with oral histories and photographs, this thesis will add to the literature on the Southern California Indian boarding school experience by providing perspectives on Saint Boniface through the cultural lens of a California Indian and descendant of two generations of students of the institution. Chapter Two of this thesis will provide a general overview of American Indian education history in the United States (U.S.), focusing on the period of 1890 to 1935, while informing readers of the influence that the Catholic Church had on federal legislation regarding Indian education. It is important to provide a narrative on Indian education in California, as much of the existing boarding school literature focuses on boarding schools outside of the state, while education literature for California primarily focuses on the Sherman Indian School, leaving a gap in California Indian boarding school literature. In Chapter Three, I scale-down and (re)tell the history of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial

¹¹ Peter Bradley, Email to author, June 20, 2016. Peter Bradley, Email to author, November 9, 2017.

¹² Shawn Wilson, *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*, (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), 32.
Angela Cavender Wilson, "Grandmother to Granddaughter: Generations of Oral History in a Dakota Family." *American Indian Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1996): 7.

School by providing an overview of the founding and history of the institution by blending Catholic Church narratives with those of alumni records and oral histories. Saint Boniface was a continuation of the Missions system, and its history is closely linked to the colonization, forced assimilation, and loss and concealment of Native identities because of the criminalization of Indigeneity. It is important to acknowledge that the trauma experienced at Indian boarding schools created legacies passed on to future generations, thus Chapter Five of this study will discuss the ways in which Saint Boniface severed cultural connections and familial bonds for one Southern California Indian family – the Gonzales family of San Timoteo Canyon, while examining methods of resistance and adaptations of culture and traditions displayed by multiple generation of the Gonzales family, to the present day. This thesis will conclude in Chapter Five by exploring possible future areas of research on Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School.

CHAPTER 2: A CALIFORNIA NATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON INDIAN EDUCATION

The history of education for American Indians is unique, filled with anguish and violence, often resulting in trauma that is felt for multiple generations. While there are opposing sentiments on American Indian boarding school experiences – with some students claiming a positive experience and others a horrific – the history of educating American Indians has not been a high priority for the U.S. government, as the government has consistently failed to provide American Indians with the adequate educational resources to succeed in Western educational institutions. The unique cultural needs and learning styles of American Indians have not always been taken into consideration by those informing policy, often resulting in the failure of American Indian youth to meet Western ideals of success and intelligence. The aim of this section is to discuss important federal policies that shaped the American Indian education system, how the Catholic Church benefitted from federal Indian education legislation, and how education for Native youth in the state of California differed from that of other states across the nation in the time period between 1890 to 1935.

Mississauga Nishnaabeg writer, musician and scholar, Leanne Simpson, describes her experience of education: “...from kindergarten to graduate school, was one of coping with someone else’s agenda, curriculum, and pedagogy, someone who was neither interested in my well-being as a kwezens, nor interested in my connection to my homeland, my language or history, nor my Nishnaabeg intelligence.”¹³ The primary curriculum utilized for American Indian education was one based in Euro-American traditions, values and history – that often disgraced and attacked American Indian history and culture. Whereas American Indian education taught by Natives placed a great emphasis on

¹³ Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and Rebellious transformation," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3, no. 3 (2014): 6.

obtaining knowledge through family, traditions, and culture. U.S. education in the boarding schools emphasized knowledge obtained through Western books and manual labor, and often had the added influence of a Christian religion.

The Euro-American world's methods of teaching in these schools systematically ignored the extremely valuable knowledge found in American Indian ways of teaching. Described by historians Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller and Cahuilla/Apache elder Lorene Sisquoc as a "successful failure," the education of American Indians has primarily operated under the goal of assimilating Natives into mainstream Euro-American society.¹⁴ This was to be accomplished by providing Native youth with rudimentary reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, while offering vocational training so that they might obtain low-income employment in urban areas.¹⁵

Prior to European contact, many American Indian communities – as a group – provided for the well-being of their tribal members. Education was provided by all members of a tribe, clan and family, as "tribal elders, grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, singers, and storytellers" provided education to Native youth utilizing "oral tradition" and hands-on learning.¹⁶ The axiom "it takes a village" is truly how American Indians reared their children prior to European contact. All members of a Nation were responsible for passing on Indigenous knowledge systems. From immediate family to extended clan and tribal members, Native youth learned:

tribal history, including origin and great deeds; physical science, as seen in the Indian's love and care of the natural world; physical education and athletic ability; etiquette, including respect for elders; hunting or learning to

¹⁴ Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 1.

¹⁵ Ibid, 1.

¹⁶ Ibid, 5.

provide for one's family; religious training and fasting, which connotates self-discipline; and diet and health care.¹⁷ Indigenous knowledge systems were presented to Native youth in hopes that they would develop the skills necessary for survival.¹⁸ Prior to the establishment of Indian boarding schools, the perspectives of Native youth, particularly in California, was that "children were literally running wild in the desert. Many did not know what it was to wear clothes and all were about as degraded as it is possible for human beings to become."¹⁹ These views of Native youth "running wild" do not take into consideration the fact that American Indians maintained their own traditional practices for educating Native youth, and demonstrate that Western white society did not consider Indigenous ways of life to be a method of formal schooling.

Colonial Era

Contact with Europeans (British, French, Spanish, Russian, and others) changed the ways in which American Indians educated their children. Upon arrival in the New World, many Europeans mistakenly believed that "Indians had no systems of [formal] education, no forms of governments, no religions, no valuing of wisdom, no methods of advancing knowledge, and no way to teach their children."²⁰ American Indian traditions and religion were often viewed as "the work of the Christian devil."²¹ Many newcomers viewed

¹⁷ David H. DeJong, *Promises of the Past: A History of Indian Education in the United States* (Golden, CO: North American Press, 1993), 5-6.

¹⁸ John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian education: A history* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 9.

¹⁹ Unknown, "Thrifty Agent Rust," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 August 1892, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

²⁰ Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, 4.

²¹ Tanya Rathbun, "Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School," in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, ed. Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 160.

American Indians as “savages” who needed to be “civilized” and “saved” through Christianity and a European education. However, American Indians were in fact educators to the newly arrived Europeans – providing colonists inspiration in physical health through their utilization of healing plants and through teaching Europeans how to farm produce indigenous to the Americas.²² American Indians also greatly influenced European – and future American – political systems, such as: “the American constitution, representative government, Marxism, socialism and the women’s rights movement.”²³ Many American Indian communities believed, and still believe, in equality and doing what is best for the tribe.

Despite the assistance that many Europeans had received from the Indigenous peoples of the Americas, Indians were not regarded as the Europeans’ intellectual equals. Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou, Māori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, described the early European view of American Indians as “primitive.”²⁴ In her book, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Smith stated,

One of the supposed characteristics of primitive people was that we could not use our minds or intellects. We could not invent things, we could not create institutions or history, we could not imagine, we could not produce anything of value, we did not know how to use land and other resources from the natural world, we did not practice the ‘arts’ of civilization.²⁵

In other words, Europeans structured society under the belief American Indians did not have the mental capacity to create, govern themselves, utilize the land, and were overall considered uncivilized in the way Europeans felt a civilized human should be. This allowed

²² Andrea Tamburro and Paul-René Tamburro, "Social Services and Indigenous Peoples of North America: Pre-Colonial to contemporary times," *Social Issues in Contemporary Native America: Reflections from Turtle Island* (2014): 45.

²³ Ibid, 45.

²⁴ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples* (New York: Zed Books Ltd., 2013), 26.

²⁵ Ibid, 26.

Europeans to feel justified in the violent expansion of their territory and their methods for educating American Indians.

Mission Schools

The Indian Civilization Act was passed by the Fifteenth Congress of the United States in 1819. This legislation allowed Catholic and Protestant missionaries to continue in their undertaking of educating and assimilating American Indian youth in the ways of Euro-American culture and values.²⁶ Through this act, the U.S. federal government provided \$10,000 a year to various religious organizations and individuals who were willing to live among and provide “education” to American Indians.²⁷ However, the focus of missionaries was not Western education, but rather the Christianization of American Indians, while assimilating them into mainstream Euro-American society. The separation of families was an essential part of their strategy, as missionaries, saw that American Indians “love[d] their children above all things.”²⁸ It was believed that by removing Native children from their parents, familial bonds and cultural connections would be broken, thereby creating an environment where Native youth would have no choice but to adapt to Euro-American ways of life.

Creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs

By 1824, Congress realized the need to strengthen their control over American Indians, and formed the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to oversee tribal nations.²⁹ Originally housed under the U.S. Department of War (DOW), this agency would play a vital

²⁶ Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, 10.

²⁷ John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian education: A history*, 27.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 9.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 36.

role in the creation of American Indian educational policies. Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun, did not think of American Indian nations as “independent nations,” and hoped to utilize the BIA to bring American Indians “within the pales of law and civilization.”³⁰ Without approval from Congress, Thomas L. McKenney, the former Superintendent of Indian Trade (1824-1930), was appointed to the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1832 by Secretary Calhoun. In 1849, the BIA was moved from the DOW to the newly formed Department of the Interior (DOI).³¹ The change in managing agencies “had little effect on Indian education,” as missionaries from Christian denominations remained the primary educators of American Indians.³²

Grant’s Peace Policy & the Catholic Church

In 1870, Ulysses S. Grant, the eighteenth president of the United States, established the *Indian Peace Policy*. Grant’s *Peace Policy* shifted control over Indian agencies from the U.S. government to many Christian missionary organizations.³³ The purpose of Grant’s policy was to “authorize a civilian group, called the Board of Indian Commissioners, to advise the Bureau of Indian Affairs and to serve as a watchdog over funds appropriated for Indian administration.”³⁴ In addition, in an effort to end corruption within the BIA, “the Indian agencies were turned over to church missionary groups, who nominated the agents and other personnel,” as missionaries were considered “persons of good moral character,” an underlying stipulation of the legislation.³⁵ In essence, Grant’s *Peace Policy* was stripping

³⁰ John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian education: A history*, 27.

³¹ *Ibid*, 36.

³² *Ibid*.

³³ R. Bruce Harley, "The Founding of St. Boniface Indian School, 1888-1890," *Southern California Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (1999): 2.

³⁴ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 1.

the federal government of their treaty obligations to American Indian nations, with the underlying goal of ending corruption by handing responsibility over to religious organizations.

Because many religious organizations, such as the Catholic Church, had already formed relationships with Native communities through their missionaries who were charged with bringing the “word of God” or as teachers who brought Western knowledge systems, it was believed that the transition from U.S. federal government oversight to that of religious organizations would be a smooth transition. Written in *The Tidings* in January 27, 1900 – thirty years after the implementation of the *Peace Policy* – Father B. Florian Hahn, superintendent for Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, provided insight into the Catholic Church’s belief that they were best suited for educating Native youth, stating:

Believing that religious instruction would assist very much in the civilization and elevation of the Indian, the government, some years ago, made the offer to pay so much per capita, to any religious denomination who would buy property, erect buildings and undertake the education of Indians. Acting upon this wise measure of the government, many religious denominations began to work, entering into the required agreement with the government.

The Catholic Church took up the work with more vigor than any other denomination, and spent many thousands of dollars in the purchase of the ground, the erection of building and equipping them for the purpose.³⁶ Through this reflection on the belief that education through religious was in the best interest of Native youth, Hahn demonstrates a frustration that the Catholic Church had when the U.S. government did not fluidly transfer oversight of educating Native youth primarily to the church.

³⁵ Ibid, 1.
Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, 10.

³⁶ B. Florian Hahn, Transcript of *The Tidings*, 27 January 1900, Box 1, Folder 3, Record 4, picture1346-picture1347, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

The Catholic Church assumed, albeit incorrectly, that they would take the lead in the allocation of Indian agencies, due to their established relationships, as they had already infiltrated many Indian communities as missionaries, and believed that they would greatly benefit from the *Indian Peace Policy*. Prior to its enactment, the Catholic Church oversaw thirty-eight of the seventy-two Indian agencies that the OIA had to allocate.³⁷ To their dismay, the OIA only provided the Catholic Church with seven of the seventy-two agencies, giving the other sixty-four agencies to other various Christian denominations, with the Methodist Church taking the lead with fourteen agencies.³⁸

In 1874, dissatisfied with the OIA's allocation of agencies, Archbishop James Roosevelt Bayley of Baltimore, Maryland, with authorization from leaders in Rome, attempted to create a "central agency" to unite Catholic Indian missionaries across the United States.³⁹ This central office would be the primary point of contact between the federal government and Catholic Indian missionaries, and would be responsible for all negotiations regarding Catholic Mission school funding. In 1879, this agency officially became the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions (BCIM).⁴⁰ The goals of the BCIM were to: manage agencies which Catholic missionaries could control, to lobby politicians in Washington, D.C. to gain access to the remaining thirty agencies that they were denied, to protect the interests of Catholic Indians, and to establish a system of Catholic Indian Schools on and off federal reservations.⁴¹

³⁷ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912*, 2.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 2.

³⁹ *Ibid*.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 1-2.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 1-2.

Federal Boarding Schools: Carlisle Indian School

The U.S. Congress authorized the opening of its first government-run, off-reservation boarding school, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, in 1879.⁴² Founded by Lieutenant Richard Henry Pratt, Carlisle differed from Mission schools, as it was run like a military school. The focus on Christianity also shifted to vocational training. Pratt, best known for his statement of "we must kill the savage to save the man," believed that it was in the best interest for the future of American Indians to remove anything and everything that made youth "Indian."⁴³ This meant removing Native youth from their families, cutting children's hair, removing their clothing and replacing it with Euro-American uniforms, forbidding cultural ceremonies, and restricting the use of Native languages and cultural practices. Pratt's justification for removing the "Indian" out of his students was so that they would be able to intermarry with Euro-Americans, and assimilate into mainstream Euro-American society through Western systems of education.⁴⁴

Boarding schools had become a tool of forced assimilation and "were part of the colonial making of place and an alienation of the body from land as a life blood."⁴⁵ By removing American Indians from their traditional lands, their bonds with land, culture, and family were severely damaged or irrevocably broken, allowing for the imposition of mainstream Euro-American culture. William A. Jones, U.S. Commissioner of American Indian Affairs from 1897 to 1905, believed that "to educate the Indian in the ways of

⁴² John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian education: A history* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 79.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 80.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 80.

⁴⁵ Mishuana Goeman, "Land as life: Unsettling the logics of containment," *Native Studies Keywords* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2015), 81.

civilized life ... is to preserve him from extinction, not as an Indian, but as a human being.”⁴⁶ Through the assimilation of American Indian children into mainstream white U.S. society, American missionaries believed they were rescuing American Indian youth from a life of being less than “human.” Administrators at Catholic Indian Mission schools on the other hand, did not focus on assimilating Native youth into mainstream Euro-American society in order to make Native youth more “human.” The purpose of educating Native youth for Catholic Indian Mission schools was to create pupils who were “focused first and foremost on God and only secondarily on the United States,” thereby creating a group of Native youth who would be loyal to the Catholic Church above all others.⁴⁷ This loyalty to the Catholic Church would require Native converts to attend mass daily/weekly, to contribute to the Church financially, and to ensure that each following generation became members of the faith – thereby creating lasting financial support for the Catholic Church.

Indian School Curriculum

Education at residential schools was broken down into academic education (reading, writing and arithmetic) and vocational training. Students typically spent half of their day learning reading, writing and arithmetic. The second half of their day consisted of vocational learning through exposure to the daily operations of the residential school. For young men, this meant learning skills such as farming. For young women, it entailed learning household skills such as cooking and laundering. Much like the California Missions, residential schools abused American Indian children by utilizing them as free labor to maintain the schools. The education provided did not prepare many American

⁴⁶ William A. Jones, ARCIA, 1903, 2, quoted in David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928*. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 21.

⁴⁷ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 156.

Indian youth for continuing onto higher education, but that was not the goal of Indian education.

The purpose of Indian education was to educate Native youth just enough so that they could assimilate into Euro-American society, so they would no longer belong in their own world because their cultural connections and familial bonds had been destroyed, and to create useful workers. However, “the American boarding school... experience for many Native American children provided new skills in language, literature, mathematics, and history that strengthened their identities as Native Americans.”⁴⁸ Even with the erosion of cultural identity and the horrific physical and emotional abuse that accompanied attending an Indian boarding school, many Native “[s]tudents used the potentially negative experience to produce a positive result – the preservation of Indian identity, cultures, communities, languages, and peoples” ensuring that future generations would be able to reclaim their identity as American Indians at a time when it was safe for communities and tribes.⁴⁹

The Meriam Report

In 1926, because of the “continued failures of Indian education,” and a changing economy in the United States, the Secretary of the Interior, Hubert Work, requested a report on conditions of Indian reservations and Indian residential schools.⁵⁰ This study was conducted in 1928 and was published as *The Problem of Indian Administration*, and today is known as the *Meriam Report* (named after Louis Meriam – the principle investigator of the study). The Meriam Report investigated issues such as allotment and Indian Health,

⁴⁸ Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, 1.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 1.

⁵⁰ John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History*, 103.

as well the quality of education and living conditions at Mission and Federal Indian boarding schools.

Meriam and his colleagues found that the living conditions at boarding schools were deplorable. Students were fed very little, receiving food that was “deficient in quantity, quality and variety.”⁵¹ Students were also found to be the primary laborers of the schools, working the land and maintaining school facilities. In addition, students received very few lessons of the promised “Western” education. The *Meriam Report* called for a drastic change in the Indian education system, and even advocated for placing the education of Native youth into the hands of their tribal communities.

The Indian New Deal and Johnson O'Malley Act

In 1934, the *Indian Reorganization Act* was passed. Better known as the *Indian New Deal*, this act “ended the allotment of Indian lands and provided for Indian religious freedom, a measure of tribal self-government, and Indian preference in hiring Bureau of Indian Affairs employees.”⁵² It was the beginning of self-determination for Indian peoples. This act can be considered the foundation of modern Indian Social Welfare policies, as it also consisted of employment programs that American Indians benefitted from.

In the same year as the *Indian New Deal*, the *Johnson-O'Malley Act* was also passed by Congress. The *Johnson-O'Malley Act* “authoriz[ed] the Secretary of the Interior to enter into contracts with states or territories to pay them for providing services to Indians.”⁵³ Shifting the federal government’s treaty obligations for American Indian education to non-federal parties, this act allowed the government to pay the states for educating Native

⁵¹ John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History*, 103.

⁵² *Ibid*, 104-105.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 106.
David H. DeJong, *Promises of the Past: A History of Indian Education in the United States*, 207.

youth. However, this funding did not go directly to Indian education, instead it went to a general fund for the school district and was utilized on the education of non-Indians.⁵⁴ This act also made states assume, incorrectly, that they had power over tribal nations. Tribes are sovereign nations, and as domestic dependent nations, tribes should be working directly with the federal government.

While there are decades more of Federal Indian legislation regarding the education of American Indians that can be discussed, this study only focuses on Southern California Indian students who attended Saint Boniface from 1890 to 1935, and the legacies that were created by their attendance at the institution. The education of California Indians was not a priority for the State, or the Federal government. In the next section, I will discuss the founding of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, by examining historical documents, existing literature, and student narratives.

⁵⁴ John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian education: A history*, 106.

CHAPTER 3: A SCHOOL FOR MISSION INDIAN DESCENDANTS

The history of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, a Catholic Indian Mission boarding school, formerly located in Banning, California, is a narrative that is known to few people (see Figure 3). As stated in Chapter One, only two historians – R. Bruce Harley and Tanya Rathbun – have written on the institution, both providing Euro-American centric views on the school’s founding. The narratives and memories of the experiences of the Southern California

Indian students who attended the school – while often silenced – is a legacy that lives on through the descendants of each former student.

This section will provide a historical account of the founding of Saint

Boniface Indian

Industrial School through examination of archival documents and the limited

existing narratives by former students.

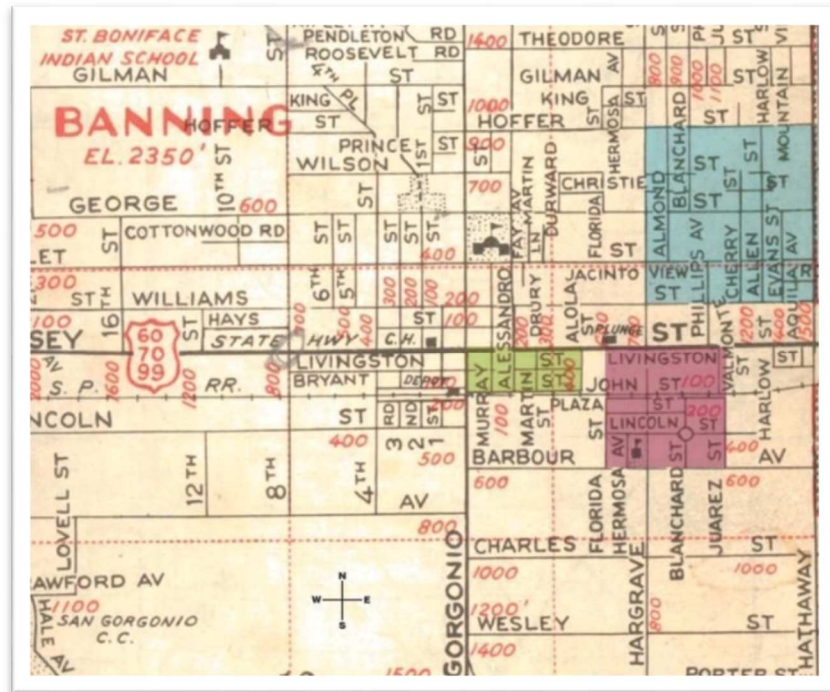


Figure 3: Bell, Bill. *Color-coded 1947 map of downtown Banning before the I-10 freeway shows approximate boundaries in Banning: “La Chancla,” “El Sapo,” and “El Lagartijo”*. San Gorgonio Pass Historical Society, Banning Public Library, Banning, CA. June 3, 2017. <https://i1.wp.com/sgphs.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/map.jpg>.

The Founding of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School

The vision for Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School began in 1888, when Bishop Frances Mora – of the Monterey-Los Angeles Diocese – declared his aspiration to build a school for Mission Indians in the San Gorgonio Pass, in order to “build up religion in the

hearts of those children presumably Catholic people, the Missions Indians.”⁵⁵ Mora wanted to create a school that would continue promoting the Catholic faith, through education, to the descendants of the California Missions. Saint Boniface was one of the latter schools established in Southern California – on the shared territory of the Luiseño, Serrano, Tongva, and Cahuilla people – being built nearly twenty years after the establishment of President Ulysses S. Grant’s *Peace Policy* in 1870 and thirty-eight years after establishment of California statehood in 1850. However, with the availability of federal government funding through the *Peace Policy*, it was Bishop Mora’s hope that the future



Figure 4: Unknown. *Color tinted panorama of St. Boniface Indian/Industrial School and San Jacinto Mountains*. 1906. Banning Library District Local History Collection, Banning Library District, Banning, CA. June 3, 2017. <https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/c8542km9/>

⁵⁵ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978* (San Bernardino, CA: Diocese of San Bernardino, 1994), 1.

school would, in addition to receiving funding from the Catholic Church, benefit from funding provided by the Office of Indian Affairs.

With a vision for educating Southern California Indian youth shaped, land needed to be purchased to begin the construction of the school facilities (see Figure 4). The land that would become the home to Saint Boniface was an eighty-acre ranch originally colonized by Dr. Welwood Murray, a prominent citizen of Banning, California – located on the alluvial fan of the San Jacinto Mountains. The tract was purchased on May 3, 1889 for the “price of \$12,000,” by Monsignor Joseph A. Stephan – head of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions (BCIM).⁵⁶ Founded in 1870, the BCIM was created to act as a catalyst between the Catholic Church and the U.S. government in an attempt to take control over the education of Native youth throughout the nation.

Funding for the purchase had been made possible as the result of a generous donation made to the BCIM by Katharine Drexel (see Figure 5). Katharine Drexel, better known as Mother Katharine Drexel, was a wealthy heiress from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania turned Catholic holy sister, whose calling in life was to “to establish an institution to Christianize and civilize young Native Americans to benefit them in this life and the next.”⁵⁷ Drexel became impassioned about educating Native youth after “two tours: one through the Dakotas and the other in Minnesota” under the guidance of director of the BCIM, Monsignor Joseph A. Stephan and Bishop James O’Conner (Omaha, Nebraska),

⁵⁶ “History of St. Boniface School,” *Historical Review*, Newsletter, Banning, CA: Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, 1925, Banning Public Library, Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Collection, Banning, CA, 7.
Transcript of *The Citrograph*, Redlands, CA, 11 May 1889, Box 1, Folder 6, Record 1.6.1, picture1310, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

⁵⁷ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 156.

where she came in direct contact with impoverished Native men, women, and children.⁵⁸

During Drexel's trek across the Midwest, she witnessed many Native communities living in poverty on the reservations and in areas adjacent to the missions of the Midwest. Historian Anne M. Butler states that:



Figure 5: Unknown. *Mother Katherine Drexel*. Date unknown. Photograph. From: R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978* (San Bernardino, CA: Diocese of San Bernardino, 1994).

In her [Drexel's] view, the reservations held simpler meaning. In a world invented by a neglectful government, disadvantaged Indians had been abandoned to poverty, ignorance, and untimely death. Without Anglo schooling, the Indians had no choice to extricate themselves from the dreary arrangements imposed by a disdainful white society nor, by her thinking, to enjoy Christianity. The reservations doomed Native people to prejudice, literacy, unemployment, and godlessness.⁵⁹

This perspective led Katharine Drexel to

utilize her wealth to provide education to American Indians, whom she felt had “no money, no champion, and no opportunity in white society.”⁶⁰ In order to achieve this goal of providing an education for Native

youth, Drexel would purchase tracks of land located in close proximity to tribal

⁵⁸ Anne M. Butler, *Across God's Frontiers: Catholic Sisters in the American West, 1850-1920*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press Books, 2012), 194.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 197.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*.

communities, and then deed the land to the BCIM, charging them with overseeing the schools.⁶¹

Drexel provided the BCIM with the funding necessary to complete the 1889 purchase.⁶² An additional 160 acres that was transferred to Father B. Florian Hahn in 1911 by the Department of Interior's General Land Office, and was deeded to the Catholic Church by Father Hahn on April 14, 1915.⁶³ In addition to Dr. Murray's eighty-acre ranch and the 160 acres of land transferred from Father Hahn, BCIM administrators also acquired three smaller land tracts in amounts of ten acres, seven acres and one acre – creating a total land base for Saint Boniface of 258 acres.⁶⁴ Figure 6, while from 1958, provides a visual of the Saint Boniface land base. While this image is more recent, it is one of the only images that contain an aerial view of the school. In an interview with Emma Gonzales, she described the school as being five-hundred acres, and I am sure to a seven-year-old away from her parents, it felt like a massive place.⁶⁵ With the securing of property, through the financial support from Drexel and the BCIM, school administrators were able to move on the next stage of development – the creation of school facilities.

Following the purchase of the initial eighty-acre tract, school administrators established an \$18,000 “construction contract... dated July 1889.”⁶⁶ Labor for the construction of the school facilities was provided by “a crew of Chinese workers at Capitan T.E. Fraser's brickyard... in Banning” and “[N]ative Indian labors” from the surrounding

⁶¹ Anne M. Butler, *Across God's Frontiers: Catholic Sisters in the American West, 1850-1920*, 198.

⁶² Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 156.

⁶³ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 5.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 5.

⁶⁵ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

⁶⁶ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 5.

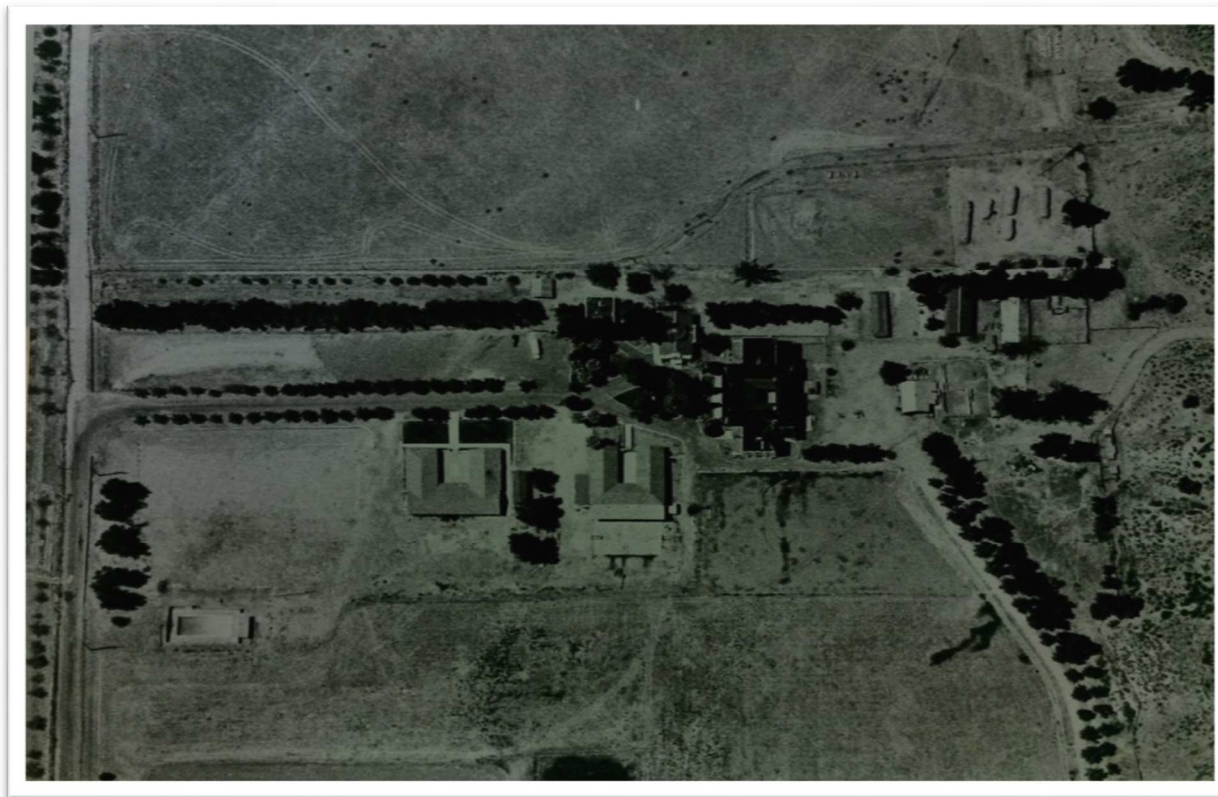


Figure 6: Unknown. *Photogrammetry, #40, St. Boniface School, Aerial*. August 30, 1958. Box 4, Folder 28, Record 06.01.07, picture14345. St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Quarterly Reports 1890-1915, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

community.⁶⁷ The initial building, bestowed the name “Drexel Hall,” named after benefactress Mother Katharine Drexel, was a three-story structure built of brick, and would house female students, holy sisters, and be the center of activities for the school. Modeled after St. Joseph Indian Normal School – another recipient of Drexel’s charity – of Indiana, the initial school facilities included: priest quarters (Murray’s former residence), a two-story building for the boys dormitory, a church for daily mass, cemetery, as well as Drexel Hall.⁶⁸ Drexel Hall contained “the chapel, Sister’ and girls’ apartments, dormitories, lavatory, bathrooms, sewing-room, class-room, the general office, recreation hall, store rooms, dining

⁶⁷ Ibid, 5.

⁶⁸ It should be noted that today all that is left of the school are the foundations of the buildings and the cemetery, as much of the surrounding land has been purchased and developed for residential properties.

rooms.”⁶⁹ All domestic labor took place in Drexel Hall, and was the central location for female students. The boys’ facilities consisted of: “class-rooms, office of disciplinarian and recreation hall, [the] boys’ dormitory, [and] lavatory and bathrooms” which were located in the basement of the building.⁷⁰

Saint Boniface school administrators and the BCIM would continuously depend on the kindness of its parishioners in the development of school facilities. Fortunately, Mother Drexel’s financial support was not limited to the initial funding for the land. Mother Drexel provided an additional \$40,000 for building materials and furnishings, as well as \$100,000 each year for the operation of the school during its first twenty years of operation, including the salary of school superintendents, such as Father B. Florian Hahn.⁷¹ In appreciation for Mother Drexel’s generous monetary contributions, the director of the BCIM, Monsignor William Henry Ketcham, stated that “[h]ad it not been for one devoted woman, raised up by Almighty God for the edification of the American people and for the succor of poor abandoned races, the whole system of Catholic Indian schools would have collapsed and the Indian children been given over to schools decidedly anti-Catholic.”⁷² Through her financial support and her desire to see Native youth received a Catholic and Western education, Mother Drexel may have been sole contributing factor to establishing the institution.

⁶⁹ B. Florian Hahn, *The Mission Indian*. Volume 4, no. 5, 15 February 1899, Box 1, Folder 14 Record 4, picture057-picture1067, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 157. B. Florian Hahn, Correspondence from Father B. Florian Hahn to Mother Katharine Drexel, 12 February 1895, Box 1, Folder 22, Record 24, picture3422 – picture3428, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

⁷² Amanda Bresie, “Mother Katherine Drexel’s Benevolent Empire: The Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the Education of Native Americans, 1885-1935,” *US Catholic Historian* 32, no. 3 (2014): 1.

On September 1, 1890, the BCIM opened Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School's doors to approximately 125 local Southern California Indian boys and girls, two of whom were Luiseño and Gabrieliño-Tongva boys, Paul and Emmanuel Gonzales, then aged nine and eleven respectively.⁷³ In its first four years of operations, Saint Boniface not only received funding from the Catholic Church and Katharine Drexel, but also received financial support from the federal government in the amount of \$12,500, "provid[ing] tuition for 100 students at \$125 each," with funding for the remaining twenty-five youth being provided through "charitable giving."⁷⁴ Saint Boniface would continue to receive funding from the federal government until 1894, to provide education to Native youth – between the ages of five and thirteen – from the local tribal communities surrounding Saint Boniface, such as the Serrano, Luiseño, Cahuilla, Gabrieliño, Juaneño, and Diegueño. Saint Boniface provided education to Native youth until the age of 13 and upon completion youth either returned to their tribal communities or continued their education elsewhere.

During the early and mid 1890s, the U.S. federal government began to withdraw financial support in an attempt "to eliminate any alternatives to their program of Americanizing the Native American population by means of education."⁷⁵ The Catholic Church, with its primary goal of creating good Catholics, saw this as "a continuation of the Nativist and anti-Catholic tradition that dominated American culture throughout much of the nineteenth century."⁷⁶ In letters written from Monsignor Stephan to Father Hahn,

⁷³ Bradley, Peter, e-mail to author, June 20th, 2016.

⁷⁴ R. Bruce Harley, "The Founding of St. Boniface Indian School, 1888-1890," *Southern California Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (1999): 465.

⁷⁵ Eugene F. Provenzo, Jr. and Gary N. McCloskey, "Catholic and federal Indian education in the late 19th century: Opposed colonial models," *Journal of American Indian Education* 21, no. 1 (1981): 11.

⁷⁶ Eugene F. Provenzo, Jr. and Gary N. McCloskey, "Catholic and federal Indian education in the late 19th century: Opposed colonial models," 11.

Stephan discussed the possibility of funding from the federal government, writing: “[t]he prospect for provision [financial funding] being made by Congress for our schools next year is exceedingly bright. Senate had passed such a provision, and although opposition will be made in the House, I feel quite confident it will be finally agreed to by that body.”⁷⁷

However, Stephan’s optimism regarding potential funding was in vain.

Inevitably, Saint Boniface’s federal funding was terminated due to a modification in federal Indian policies, as a change in management within the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) created a removal of funding for religious Indian residential schools. This meant that the school was financially supported solely by the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. Saint Boniface was not alone in their financial hardships, as many Catholic Indian schools across the U.S. faced the prospect of having to close their doors due to a lack in financial support from the federal government. Fortunately for Saint Boniface, Mother Katharine Drexel’s desire to see the school and its mission fulfilled, resulted in her becoming the primary benefactress of the institution through donations to the BCIM.

While Saint Boniface only served local tribes, assimilation remained their purpose, the same as other Indian schools. However, as a Catholic school, Saint Boniface had the added emphasis of assimilation through the Catholic faith. Due to its association with the Catholic Church, Saint Boniface’s daily operations placed a strong emphasis on the Catholic faith, while also stressing the separation of male and female students, and manual labor. Much like the California Missions, the education and oversight of Native youth was provided by priests and holy sisters, designated by the BCIM, some of who would leave a lasting impression on Native youth, as well as on Indian Mission school history. However,

⁷⁷ Correspondence from Monsignor J.A. Stephan to B. Florian Hahn, 26 February 1897, Box 1, Folder 24, Record 6, picture130 – picture131, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

unlike the Missions of California, Saint Boniface provided Native youth with a rudimentary education in reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as music. In a letter to William B. Allison, member of the Committee of Indian Affairs in 1890, requesting funding, Monsignor Joseph A. Stephan described the matter of education Native youth, stating:

The deplorable condition of the once prosperous and contented Mission Indians of Southern California has been so often set forth in reports of Commissions, Inspectors, Special Agents and visitors and in the press, that it has become a familiar story. By virtue of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo these Indians are entitled to the rights of citizens of the United States, yet in their simplicity, or ignorance, if you will, they have in almost all instances failed to secure individual titles to their lands under the public land laws, and have been driven from lands occupied and cultivated by them for generations to seek new homes elsewhere.

Very little has been done towards educating the children of the Mission Indians. It is true that what are called day schools have been established at different points for their benefit. Day schools, however, as is well known to your Committee, can accomplish very little under the most favorable circumstances; but when it takes into consideration the home surroundings of these children, the want of food and proper clothing that is almost universal. There is no occasion for surprise that these children have derived benefit this class of schools. A hungry, shivering child can make little progress anywhere in anything.

In this school we propose not only to give the Indian children training in the ordinary branches of an English education, but the most thorough industrial instruction as well. They will be taught the most necessary trades; how to till the soil; how to cultivate an orchard; how to prune; and how to irrigate; neither head nor hand will be neglected.

This institution is erected in their midst, and is dedicated to their use and benefit. Its influence for good will not be confined to the Indian children alone, but will extend to the older Indians as well, and will be of permanent benefit to all.⁷⁸

Monsignor Joseph A. Stephan's letter provides a detailed description of the intellectual and physical education that would be provided to Native youth who attended the institution, while also sharing the negative perspective that many Catholic Church officials had regarding the intelligence and lifestyles of California Indians. These negative outlooks would also be shared by many of Saint Boniface's school administrators.

⁷⁸ Correspondence from Monsignor J.A. Stephan to William B. Allison, 23 June 1890, Box 1, Folder 24, Record 1, picture123 – picture125, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

In her book chapter, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” Tanya Rathbun stated that administrators in charge of Saint Boniface regarded California Indians as “primitive Christians with heathen or unorthodox beliefs and practices,” clearly showing that school administrators held negative perceptions of the Indigenous knowledge systems that Southern California Indians utilized to rear their children.⁷⁹ This negative standpoint from the school administrators regarding the intelligence and spirituality of local Southern California Indians would greatly influence the relationships between school staff and the education and vocational training that they would provide to Native youth. Father B. Florian Hahn, in a letter – written February 12, 1895 – to Mother Katharine Drexel, giving thanks for her payment of his salary, stated “I shall do all I can for the salvation of the Indians and every cent that I received from your most generous charity shall be applied for God’s honor in the Indian work in the Indian [M]issions.”⁸⁰ Hahn’s letter primarily focuses on the salvation of California Indians through Christianity, and did not express a desire for to Native youth receive a Western education for the betterment of their families and tribal communities.

Saint Boniface Superintendents

Saint Boniface’s daily operations and education were provided to local Southern California Indian children by assigned Catholic priests from Benedictine and Franciscan orders and holy sisters, with the most notable of these were: Father George L. Willard, Father B. Florian Hahn, Father Justin Deutsch, and five holy sisters from the order of Saint Joseph of Cardondelet.

⁷⁹ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 159.

⁸⁰ Hahn, B. Florian. Correspondence to Mother Katharine Drexel, 1895, 12 February 1895.

Original superintendents for Saint Boniface were Father Dominic Block and Father Bernardino Dolweck, both priests from the Order of Saint Benedict.⁸¹ At the request of Bishop Mora, Block and Dolweck relocated from Saint Vincent's Abbey in Pennsylvania to Banning to assist with construction of the school.⁸² The Benedictine priests were instrumental in finding Dr. Welwood Murray's ranch, which would become the center of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School. However, due to a change in leadership within the Office of Indian Affairs in January of 1890, Fathers Block and Dolweck's superior at Saint Vincent Abbey, Father Abbot Andrew, requested that BCIM director, Monsignor Joseph A. Stephen return the priests to St. Vincent's. With that, Monsignor Stephan was charged with appointing a new superintendent to take over the construction and daily operations of Saint Boniface.

While Fathers Block and Dolweck began the initial stages of founding Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, the first notable superintendent was Father George L. Willard. Father Willard came to Saint Boniface from the BCIM, where he held the position of Assistant Director.⁸³ During his four-month tenure, Willard oversaw the construction of Saint Boniface school facilities until his death on July 26, 1890 from typhoid fever.⁸⁴ At the time of his death, a great deal of work still needed to be completed at the school, including: coordinating financial support for furniture, classroom supplies, kitchen supplies, and furniture for dormitories.⁸⁵

⁸¹ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 85.

⁸² *Ibid*, 4.

⁸³ *Ibid*, 85.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 9.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 10.

Following the passing of Father Willard, BCIM director, Monsignor Joseph A. Stephan, assigned Father B. Florian Hahn to succeed Willard as Saint Boniface's superintendent and to oversee the final construction of the school. Father Hahn served as superintendent from August 1, 1890 to 1913.⁸⁶ Upon his arrival at Saint Boniface, Father Hahn took charge over the supervision of the final stages of construction on the school facilities, as well as the acquiring of furniture, livestock, and farming tools. Two of Hahn's most notable accomplishments during his tenure included the creation of the Saint Boniface Boy's Band, as well as *The Mission Indian* – a monthly school newsletter. In a correspondence to Mother Katharine Drexel, Father Hahn shares the story of the creation of *The Mission Indian*, stating:

I am publishing here a little magazine and it did not incur to my mind, that you would interest yourself in California items. But as I see, you would like to have some copies. I will mail to you some copies regularly. Let your children read them. I myself am a professional printer – was eleven years working at the cases. I bought off a bankrupt lady her whole printing – office – outfit. Thus, I commenced to practice my old trade again.

The Mission Indian shall be the means to continue our work after the withdrawal of the appropriation. I am meeting with good success and I am confident that not only subscriptions, but also donations may result from the undertaking. The money invested is a mere bagatelle. The old printing office costed me but 45 dollars to which I added some fonts of new type. It was charity, that prompted me to buy the outfit off the lady, she would not have got a cent for all of it; being in heaps of pie; we fixed up the whole in about three weeks' time. Thus, you have the history, how the "Mission Indian" originated.⁸⁷

Under Father Hahn's guidance, students played vital roles in the operation of the newsletter. As demonstrated in Hahn's letter to Drexel, *The Mission Indian* was sent to Catholic parishioners and clergy across the nation via the postal service. Used as a method to supplement funding for the school, the daily operation of *The Mission Indian* was

⁸⁶ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 16.

⁸⁷ Correspondence from Father B. Florian Hahn to Mother Katharine Drexel, 17 June 1896, Box 1, Folder 1, Record 15, picture1456 – picture1457, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

overseen by Father Hahn, with male students charged with overseeing the printing of the newsletter.⁸⁸



Figure 7: Unknown. *St. Boniface's Industrial School Banning, Cal. Indian Boys' Band, Class 1905 to 1906. Rev. B. Florian Hahn, M.A., Director.* 1906, Private Collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, CA.

The Saint Boniface Boy's Band often performed at school celebrations, local weddings, and for the receiving of prominent dignitaries of the Catholic Church. Louis Florian Gonzales, and his older brother, Paul Gonzales, were both members of the school band from 1901 to 1906. In Figure 7, Paul Gonzales is the first young man on the right in the back row (he has a mustache) and Louis Florian Gonzales is the first young man on the

⁸⁸ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 19.

left on the back row. Through his participation in the band, Louis learned to play the French horn, drum, and violin.⁸⁹ The twenty-piece band and its members would often be utilized by Father Hahn, to perform at local community functions to solicit donations for raising much needed financial support for the school.⁹⁰

Of all the Saint Boniface superintendents, Father Hahn was perhaps the most beloved by the staff and children. Father Hahn was also beloved by many members of the local church community.⁹¹ In an article by the San Bernardino Diocese, on the loss of Father Hahn, the impact of his work, and his beloved status, Monsignor Thomas J. Fitzgerald wrote that to understand “the work accomplished by this zealous priest we have only to quote from the sermon at his funeral, these words of the panegyrist: ‘Since the days of the Spanish padres in California, the Pacific Coast has sustained no greater loss than in the death of Father Hahn.’”⁹² The passing of Father Hahn deeply impacted Native youth at Saint Boniface, while he did prioritize his mission of bringing the Catholic faith to the local California Indian community, Hahn had a deep love for the Native youth that attended Saint Boniface. His love for the children of Saint Boniface ran so deeply that upon his passing, at his request, he was laid to rest at the school cemetery.⁹³ This was unorthodox, as clergy of the Catholic Church would normally be laid to rest among fellow clergy or with family at their place of birth.

⁸⁹ Mary Jeanette Gonzales, (daughter and sister of former Saint Boniface students) in discussion with the author, March 12, 2017.

⁹⁰ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 158.

⁹¹ Ibid, 19.

⁹² B. Florian Hahn, *The Indian Sentinel*, Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, Washington D.C. January 1917, Volume 11, No 1. 39-40.

⁹³ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 18.

The final superintendent of Saint Boniface, during the time period that this thesis centers around, was Father Justin Deutsch. Father Deutsch was superintendent from January 4, 1923 until his death on April 10, 1935. During his time at Saint Boniface, Deutsch devoted his time to “continuing the great legacy of Serra.”⁹⁴ He believed that by attending Saint Boniface, Indian children would “have every opportunity of proper schooling; of domestic and industrial training, and above all, of acquiring a good religious education so as to “save” them for the Faith.”⁹⁵ Father Deutsch was superintendent during a difficult financial time for Saint Boniface, as the school was no longer receiving funding from the federal government, and only received \$100 per student per year from the BCIM for up to ninety students.⁹⁶ The Indian student population also began to decline during Deutsch’s tenure, and the school would be opened to other minority groups, such as African-Americans and Mexican Americans, who were unable to attend mainstream U.S. public schools due to segregation laws. Father Deutsch also over saw the construction of and updating of Drexel Hall, a second chapel, a new boy’s dormitory and new laundry facilities.⁹⁷

The superintendents of Saint Boniface played a vital role in the construction and operations of the institution, while also influencing school staff and the local community with their ideologies regarding the views of Southern California Indian knowledge systems and expectations for Native youth. What did not change with each new superintendent was

⁹⁴ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 16-17.

⁹⁵ Father Justin Deutsch “Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School,” *Historical Review*, Newsletter, Banning, CA: Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, 1925, Banning Public Library, Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Collection, Banning, CA, 6.

⁹⁶ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 43.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 44.

a desire to take care of Native youth, and adults, and to save them from life as heathens.

Father B. Florian Hahn expressed this perspective, stating:

A hundred years ago numerous Indian tribes inhabited the valleys and mountains of Southern California. The red man was happy cattle and sheep were grazing on the rich pastures, horses were plentiful for work and sports, grain and fruits grew in abundance, the Indians under the guidance of the Mission Fathers were cared for in every respect, for time and eternity.

However, under the present circumstances, the education of the Indian boys and girls is about the only redeeming feature in the Indian business. The government did not make the beginning in furnishing schools to the Mission Indians. The honor belongs to the Mission Fathers.

An Indian school is expected to give the pupils a common school education and manual training. A proper moral training and religious instruction including a preparation of the receiving of the Sacraments must be included.⁹⁸

Hahn truly believed that the road to “salvation” for California Indians was under the guidance of the Mission fathers and through a religious education.

Recruitment of Native Youth

Unlike the California Missions, and many other Indian boarding schools, Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School differed in their recruitment of Southern California Indian students, as priests and nuns did not fervently remove youth from their families and homes. Unlike many of off-reservation federal Indian boarding schools, which were rarely located near Indian lands and reservations, Saint Boniface was strategically positioned in Banning because of its “close proximity to the Morongo, San Manuel, Soboba, Agua Caliente, Cabazon, Torres-Martinez, and Twenty-Nine Palms reservations.”⁹⁹ This created a residential school where children were located in close proximity to their families and ancestral homelands. In addition, while many Indian boarding schools solely educated

⁹⁸ B. Florian Hahn, Transcript of *The Tidings*, 18 April 1903, Box 1, Folder 3, Record 8, picture1357-picture1358, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

⁹⁹ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 159. The tribes of this region were Cahuilla (Morongo, Agua Caliente, Torres-Martinez, and Cabazon), Serrano (San Manuel), and Luiseño (Soboba and Twenty-Nine Palms).

Native youth, many adults could receive a religious and Western education at Saint Boniface. However, the school primarily served students from first to eighth grades, with girls being provided their education in classrooms located in Drexel Hall, while boys received lessons in the two-story building designated for male students.

Saint Boniface subsequently “served primarily the Indian population and later other [ethnic] groups for nearly a century despite competition from a nearby U.S. government school.”¹⁰⁰ Indeed, approximately thirty-five miles west of Saint Boniface, the U.S. government’s Perris Indian Industrial School, became one of the largest federal American Indian boarding schools – Sherman Indian School, while the Catholic school, Saint Anthony’s Indian Industrial School, located in San Diego, provided additional competition.¹⁰¹ These three institutions, along with most federal and religious Indian boarding schools across the nation, shared the following basic characteristics: the removal of Indian children from their homes, families and communities, and forceful propagandizing into an education system whose primary goal was to assimilate Indian youth into mainstream white American society. According to Father B. Florian Hahn, the primary goal of Saint Boniface was to “build up religion in the hearts of these children of presumably Catholic people, the Mission Indians.”¹⁰² The school’s employees attempted to achieve this by providing an education consisting of rudimentary academics (reading, writing, and mathematics), religious catechism and domestic, agricultural and vocational training.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 1. After 1934, Saint Boniface opened its doors to African-American and Mexican-American students.

¹⁰¹ The Perris Indian Industrial School was moved to Riverside, California in 1903. The relocation also came with a name change to “The Sherman Institute.” Today, this institution still exists as Sherman Indian School.

¹⁰² R. Bruce Harley, *Readings in Diocesan Heritage: St. Boniface Indian School 1888 to 1978*, 19. B. Florian Hahn, *The Mission Indian*. Volume 4, no. 5, 15 February 1899.

Student Life at Saint Boniface

The daily operations of Saint Boniface provide an opportunity to examine the experiences of the Indigenous students who attended the institution. Existing sources provide narratives from the perspectives of the Catholic Church, the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, Saint Boniface founders and superintendents, school administrators and staff, and a limited group of former students. These limited perspectives result in an absence of Southern California Indian viewpoints, and create a void in the history of the Indian Mission boarding schools. In examining these untold or forgotten narratives, I aim to include Indigenous perspectives on the Southern California Indian boarding school experience.

In addition to being located close to Southern California Indian reservations, Saint Boniface differed from many other on and off-reservation federal Indian boarding schools in that great emphasis was put on the Catholic faith. While other schools placed emphasis on Christianity, Saint Boniface administrators ensured that “[e]very activity within the school resonated with religious themes and rituals,” thereby setting Saint Boniface apart from neighboring Federal Indian boarding schools, such as the Perris Indian Industrial School.¹⁰⁴ Through the assigned Franciscan priests, Saint Boniface’s maintained a close connection to the Mission system, which resulted in a mirroring of the missions’ emphasis on creating “good Catholics.” In 1925, the Diocese of San Bernardino distributed *A Historical Review* addressing the Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School.¹⁰⁵ In the review, Saint Boniface superintendent, Father Justin Deutsch, spoke to readers about the purpose of the

¹⁰³ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 160.

¹⁰⁴ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 159.

¹⁰⁵ Father Justin Deutsch “Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School,” 4.

institution, its students, and its connection to the California Missions. According to Father Deutsch:

They are the sons and daughters of the Indians whom good Father Junipero Serra one hundred and fifty years ago brought the light of Faith and the blessing of civilization. In these missions were once gathered a whole race of Indians whom he rescued from heathendom and converted to Christianity, taught and trained in suitable industries to an honest and happy livelihood. Here, the work of the old Missions, although on a much smaller scale, is continued.¹⁰⁶

Mission schools, such as Saint Boniface, were created as a method to continue the unfinished work of Father Serra. By placing emphasis on religion, priests and holy sisters encouraged children to put God first in all aspects of their lives, and to be loyal Americans second, thereby promoting religious education through the assimilative tactics of a Western education based in Catholicism.¹⁰⁷

Religion was a part of daily life for Saint Boniface students. From the time students woke up at five thirty in the morning to seven o'clock in the evening, students were expected to pray at designated times throughout the day, "upon awaking, before breakfast, during class, and at lunch and dinner."¹⁰⁸ The practice of the Catholic faith for Saint Boniface students began with morning mass at six-fifteen each morning and ended with mass at seven o'clock each evening, starting and ending their days with prayer, each morning youth would "assemble into the chapel, to say morning prayers and assist at Holy Mass, during which rosary and other prayers" were recited together.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Father Justin Deutsch "Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School," 4.

¹⁰⁷ Tanya Rathbun, "Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School," 156.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 156.

¹⁰⁹ R. Bruce Harley, "The Founding of St. Boniface Indian School, 1888-1890," 117.



Figure 8: Unknown. *Emma Gonzales – Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Penmanship Completion*. 1935, Private Collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, CA.

The emphasis on religious education and manual labor created an environment where children did not receive a substantial education while attending the school. Federal Indian boarding schools, like Sherman Indian Industrial School, provided a curriculum that was “rich in the industrial arts such as carpentry, mechanics, printing, masonry, animal husbandry, [and] agriculture,” while Saint Boniface – who also used students for manual labor on the school grounds – focused on incorporating religion as a method of preventing youth from continuing the “heathen or unorthodox beliefs and practices” that so many school administrators believed were detrimental to the survival of California Indians.¹¹⁰ Because much of the day focused on maintaining school facilities, as opposed to actual academic lessons, it can be concluded that the education received by Native students was

¹¹⁰ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 159-160.

also very limited, as emphasis was placed on religion and vocational training. In fact, the only type of academic education that Emma recalls learning was what she referred to as “a Paul Merchant penmanship class,” where she learned to write in cursive.¹¹¹ Emma remembers this fondly because she had her picture taken with the other students in front of the school (see Figure 8).

In *Wayta 'Yawa'—Always Believe*, Serrano story teller Dorothy Ramon shared many stories of student life at Saint Boniface. These stories were passed down to her by her father, who attended the school as a boy in the early 1900s. One such story described his experience while attending:

Long ago my father went to that famous school known as Saint Boniface. The Indians would do things on their own. The teachers there, they were supposed to teach the Indians their language, the white people's language. But others did not teach them anything. They were there. I don't know how it was for them. They didn't learn anything, he said. My father was there when he was a little boy (about 8 years old). And then he told us about it. 'But they did not teach us anything long ago.' 'We just would make bread.' And then they would eat it somehow or another. That's what the children would do. Who knows if they taught them anything else?¹¹²

In other words, students received little guidance from school staff and administrators in their promised Western education. Instead, school administrators utilized students to maintain school facilities. During our interview, when Emma Gonzales was asked what type of education she received while attending Saint Boniface, Emma scoffed and stated “religion.”¹¹³ Dolores Aguila, daughter of Emma's sister Carmelita Gonzales, stated that the school was:

[T]eaching them the White ways. It was teaching them how to, you know, sew and cook and, you know, they weren't teaching them to speak the Native language. They were teaching them English. So, they were – of course, they were making them very American. And so, growing up, my mom [Carmelita],

¹¹¹ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹¹² Dorothy Ramon and Eric Elliot, *Wayta 'Yawa': Always Believe* (Banning, CA: Lithopass Printing, 2000), 327-328.

¹¹³ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

you know, was very American. She was cooking a lot of American foods, not Mexican or Native foods.¹¹⁴ Overall, students receive an education that focused on the Catholic faith and vocational skills. Skills that would provide Native women to work in homes of Euro-Americans as housekeepers, while the education provided to boys would grant them the ability to work as labors at the many ranches surrounding Saint Boniface. This limited education did not prepare Native youth for life in main-stream Euro-American society.

A Hands-on Approach to Learning

A feature of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, that many other Southern California Indian schools also possessed, was the implementation of substantial student avocations (i.e. manual labor), like that of the California Missions system.¹¹⁵ A typical day for students was split into a half day of working in school gardens for the boys and kitchens for the girls.¹¹⁶ In addition to work in the kitchen, girls learned to sew, make lace, as well as work in other trades.¹¹⁷ This separation of genders, a vital Mission school policy, will be further expanded on in later sections, as it created a separation of male and female relatives – often resulting is a disconnection among siblings, resulting in the weakening of familial bonds.

In returning to the Saint Boniface grounds with her mother, Carmelita Gonzales described a typical day at school to her daughter. Dolores, recounted her mother's reflection of life at Saint Boniface, explaining that "half of the day was spent learning about school stuff... like math, writing. And the other half of the day they learned the domestic

¹¹⁴ Dolores Aguila (descendant of a former Saint Boniface student) in discussion with the author, February 22, 2017.

¹¹⁵ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹¹⁶ R. Bruce Harley, "The Founding of St. Boniface Indian School, 1888-1890," 117-118.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

stuff. Teaching them how to cook, and sew, and clean.” In regards to the domestic education received by students, Anne Vallarte (Cahuilla) described how,

We grew our own vegetables and fruit. Many things were donated to the school, too. The boys milked the cows and the girls churned the butter. We sulphured dried fruits and vegetables in the summer for use in the winter. We learned to make candles, crushed grapes for wine, and the boys pressed olive oil. These items were sold to help support the school.”¹¹⁸
The assignment of daily charges is confirmed by Luiseño and Gabrieliño-Tongva elder

Emma Gonzales, stated that the nuns at Saint Boniface taught her the “Catholic faith, how to be good, but mainly she was given different ‘charges’ every month and a half to two months.”¹¹⁹ She said that she learned how to sew, crochet, and to cook and clean, and that the boys at the school learned how to work the land and take care of the cattle. One of Emma’s avocations was making butter. She describes this experience, stating:

I made [the butter] when they brought the milk. The boys were away from the building, way over there. The Capitan taught them how to work with the cattle and milked the cows. They brought the milk to the kitchen, down to the [basement]. And they had a separator in a cellar to separate the cream from the milk. And they would put the milk in there and separate the cream. And we had to a wooden churn about this big [Emma measures almost as tall as her less than 5’ frame]. And they put the cream in there and we made our own butter. I did [that], I made it. And the butter didn’t go out to us, it just went to the sisters and priests – because they weren’t in that hardship. We got margarine.

Emma emphasized that the students did not enjoy the fruits of their labor, as the butter she churned was given to the school administrators during meal time.

Modeling the Mission system’s format for religious catechism and chores, students were expected to maintain school facilities, wash and dry clothing and dishes, pick the fruits and vegetables grown on campus, milk cows, dust and mop, and prepare meals. In essence, the students were responsible for the daily work of maintaining the school. In

¹¹⁸ Alta Rutherford, “History of old school told,” *The San Bernardino County Sun* (San Bernardino, CA), Feb. 20, 1974.

¹¹⁹ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

regards to the crops that were cultivated on the land by the students, these items were sold to supplement school funding. According to Father Hahn, previous school and church administrators were “impressed with the value of the property and the advantages of the location. He [Father Higgins] takes particular comfort in the \$800 check which he got from Mr. Luske for that part of the fruit which was shipped to Chicago.”¹²⁰

The manual labor, as well as separation from their families, hindered the spirits of the Native youth who attended Saint Boniface. Often resulting in disobedience by running away, refusing to complete assigned avocations, and refusing to participate in activities such as the Boy’s band. The next section will further discuss the methods of disobedience, as well as the consequences for these negative behaviors.

Education, Chastisement, and Attempts to Escape

If students engaged in behavior frowned upon by school administrators and staff, such as: disobeying directives given by school administrators or failure to participate in school activities (such as the boy’s band), their penance was additional labor.¹²¹ For example, Martha Manuel Chacon (Serrano, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians), shared a story about refusing to clean another students’ underwear. As a result of her alleged disobedience, a nun slapped Chacon and forced her to clean more underwear. Chacon ultimately ran away from Saint Boniface and never returned to the school.¹²² Chacon’s daughter, Pauline “Dimples” Murillo, reaffirms her mother’s narrative, stating that her

¹²⁰ B. Florian Hahn, Transcript of *The Herald of Banning*, 16 August 1890, Box 1, Folder 3, Record 1, picture1331, St. Boniface Indian School Historical Records, Rev. Florian Hahn Period 1890-1913, Catholic Diocese Archives, Temecula, CA.

¹²¹ Tanya Rathbun, “Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School,” 166.

¹²² *Ibid*, 161.

mother “was forced by the nuns to wash the dirtiest laundry and then slapped and whipped for her protests.”¹²³

Starvation was an additional form of abuse endured by students. Serrano elder, Dorothy Ramon, who had many stories on the experiences of family members who attended Saint Boniface, shared with Eric Elliott the account of students being locked up and starved. In the first of two stories, Ramon describes the imprisonment of Native youth, stating:

They used to do things to them (to the children). Their mothers and fathers went there (in the 1800’s). And then their children went there... (the next generation) They would lock them up. They would do all sorts of things to kids who did something wrong. They would lock them up...They would be [locked up] somewhere in the dark.¹²⁴

In addition, Ramon also provides insight to the starvation experienced by students.

In a story reflecting on two of her ancestors running away from Saint Boniface due to starvation, Ramon shares that:

[o]n the way he got hungry. The one younger brother (got so hungry that) he wanted to eat the bone of some animal. His older brother apparently said, ‘Don’t eat that.’ ‘It’s bad,’ he said. ‘But I’m hungry and I want to eat,’ he said. ‘Throw it away.’ ‘Don’t eat it.’ ‘It’s bad.’ ‘It’s rotten,’ he said. He said that to him. Then the one boy told about it. He was starving (at St. Boniface).¹²⁵

In addition to starvation, physical abuse was also a form of punishment, with students receiving whippings from teachers. Ramon describes the whippings of students by teachers:

Long ago the Indians used to go there. They called it a school a ‘Catholic school.’ It was there. They called it ‘Saint Boniface’... All the Indians went there, just the kids. Those who did not have any parents. Those children who were like orphans. [Native youth who did not have parents, or were not taken in by extended family members, were sent to live at SBIIS] Some of those who went there still have their parents. But they went there anyway. They lived there. They went to school there. They said that the

¹²³ Ibid, 167.

¹²⁴ Dorothy Ramon and Eric Elliot, *Wayta ‘Yawa’: Always Believe*, 325-327.

¹²⁵ Dorothy Ramon and Eric Elliot, *Wayta ‘Yawa’: Always Believe*, 311-312.

teacher there did not treat them right... They did not feed them properly. They did not treat them right. They would always whip them. They would do all kinds of things to them.¹²⁶

In an interview conducted by Rathbun, Donald Kolchakis described being whipped by Father Justin Deutsch, at the tender age of eight, for not wanting to join the school band.¹²⁷ It is unknown if this disciplinary action led Kolchakis to join the band in order to avoid additional punishment. However, it is clear that extracurricular activities were not optional.

As a result of the abuses endured by students, many turned to running away from Saint Boniface back to their homes. According to Bobby Wright, along with scholar Tanya Rathbun, many Southern California Native students were traditionally raised in communal homes, where they received love and affection from not only immediate family members, but also from extended family members.¹²⁸ This closeness of Indigenous families was seen as a barrier for assimilating youth into American society, which is the primary reason many Indian boarding schools were located far away from reservations. For students at Saint Boniface, separation from families must have been particularly difficult because students were aware that the love and affection that they desired was often less than a day's travel away from the school. This was the case for my grandmother and her siblings, and while they ran away three times due to the cruel priests, they were always forced to return by the school's staff.¹²⁹ In *Wayta 'Yawa' – Always Believe*, Ramon shared the story of two boys who ran away from Saint Boniface in the early 1900s. The primary reasons for their desire to return home can be seen in the following passage:

¹²⁶ Ibid, 307-309.

¹²⁷ Tanya Rathbun, "Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School," 165.

¹²⁸ Bobby Wright "The 'Untamable savage spirit': American Indians in colonial colleges," *The Review of Higher Education* 14, no 4 (1991), 439.

¹²⁹ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

Those boys from there used to go to Saint Boniface (School). This happened recently (before the 1920s, possibly 1917). Not long ago, no. They did not want to remain there. So he ran away from there with his older brother and came here. They came home. It is not far.¹³⁰

While their names are unknown, these two young boys, homesick, risked their lives to return to their Serrano family. Fortunately, they were able to return home, not all students were so lucky. Many runaways were recaptured by Saint Boniface guards or school administrators and returned to the boarding school before or once they reached home. Many of these children were then punished with additional work, whippings or worse.

Despite the threat of punishment, some students learned how to navigate the system of the boarding school. These students, such as August Martinez (Cahuilla), joined the school band or became altar boys in attempts to avoid being assigned additional work. Martinez recalled that those who acted as altar boys were given various tasks in the school chapel. However, many of them did not choose this assignment because of a religious calling. Rather it was more of an act of avoiding additional work, thereby resisting the standards and expectations of the institution.

In addition, not all narratives provide negative experiences of the institution. In an interview with the *Sun Telegram* on February 20, 1974, Cahuilla elder Ann Vallarte shared her experience at Saint Boniface. She began attending the institution in 1915, at the age of five, and graduated when she completed the eighth grade. She went on to further education at Saint Joseph's Academy located in Tucson, Arizona. While she did not describe her experience at Saint Boniface in detail, Vallarte stated, "I owe my education to St. Boniface. We had music and art, put on plays, were all good penmen, and we had fun

¹³⁰ Dorothy Ramon and Eric Elliot, *Wayta 'Yawa': Always Believe*, 311-312.

too."¹³¹ The previous narratives demonstrate a mixture of both positive and negative responses from former Saint Boniface students. And while they provide details of life at the institution, they fail to discuss the impact that the institution had on their views of their Indigeneity, as well as the impact the school had on their familial bonds and cultural connections.

The accounts of former Saint Boniface students are far and few, and important narratives of students from the late 1800s and early 1900s are missing in the literature regarding California Indian education. In addition, with each passing of elders who attended this institution, more Indigenous narratives of Saint Boniface are lost to future generations. It is important to record the stories of former students, as they provide valuable insight to the life experiences of former students, as well as demonstrate the methods of resistance to the assimilative tactics of Indian boarding schools. California Indian historical narratives are of extreme importance as generations of California Indian voices have been silenced by the genocide of the California Missions, the genocide waged by the United States between 1846 and 1873, and the erasure of California Indigeneity through boarding schools.¹³²

¹³¹ Alta Rutherford, "History of old school told," *The San Bernardino County Sun* (San Bernardino, CA), Feb. 20, 1974.

¹³² Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846-1873* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 11-12.

CHAPTER 4: FAMILIAL BONDS, CULTURAL CONNECTIONS AND RESISTANCE

As a youth, I had a love/hate relationship with history that often resulted in my earning less than stellar grades in my history classes in high school. This passion and distaste for history stemmed from the double lessons I received daily throughout the school year – the first of which was taught to me by my teachers at school, and the second of which was my father correcting all of the erroneous information that these teachers had provided. My father, a historian in his own right, has spent a majority of my life researching not only his family – some of whom were the original Scottish and English colonists on the Northeast Coast – but has also diligently traced my mother’s family back to the 1700s, something that is quite uncommon among California Indian families. It is my father’s passion for history – and for seeking untold narratives and truths – that has been a primary influence in my desire to conduct research centering on the untold, forgotten, and misconstrued histories of Southern California Indians. From an early age, my father taught me to examine existing evidence with a critical lens, and to always remember that my family – whether through my California Indian or my Euro-American ancestors – has played vital roles – albeit often untold – on both sides of many historic events.

For example, Corporal Pedro Antonio Lisalde, a Luiseño soldier from Pala who was a member of the Spanish Army, is remembered for leading Mission padres and soldiers from Mission San Juan Capistrano into the Temecula Canyon to “discover” the Luiseño people, but is never acknowledged as having Luiseño heritage.¹³³ Cross referencing archival documents with oral histories and genealogies of my family have led me to speculate that

¹³³ John R. Johnson and Stephen O’Neil, “*Descendants of Native Communities in the Vicinity of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton: An Ethnohistoric Study of Luiseño and Juaneño Cultural Affiliation*” (Santa Barbara, CA: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 2001), pg. 14.
Virginia Ruth De Soto, Memoir, 1 Volume (1977-1985), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California, 10.

Lisalde – who is often referred to as “Capitan,” a term often given to Native village leaders by the Spanish – may have signed the Treaty of Temecula, and, in leading his fellow soldiers to Temecula, he was showing his comrades to his ancestral territory.

Another overlooked individual, Maria Cirilla Armenta, a Tongva woman born at Mission San Gabriel in 1806, was praised for being the “first Pioneer women of Redlands (see Figure 9).”¹³⁴ Armenta is known not only for single-handedly digging the “Maria Armenta Ditch,” a hand dug stream that brought water to the Bermudes – and eventually Gonzales – Ranch, but is also known for being an entrepreneur who took her cultivated crops to Oxnard, California – roughly 125 miles west of Redlands and a two to three-day journey – via an ox-driven cart.¹³⁵ Armenta married Jose de La Cruz Bermudes – of the prominent Spanish Bermudes family – in 1823, and as a result of her marriage, her Native heritage was overshadowed by the Spanish ancestry of the family that she married into.



Figure 9: Unknown. *Maria Cirilla Armenta-Bermudes*. Date unknown. Cataldo, Nicholas R. “Energetic Pioneer Woman Made Indelible Impression.” City of San Bernardino, 2000, http://www.sbcity.org/about/history/pioneer_women/maria_armenta_bermudez.asp.

¹³⁴ Nicholas R. Cataldo, “Energetic Pioneer Woman Made Indelible Impression,” *City of San Bernardino*, 2000, http://www.sbcity.org/about/history/pioneer_women/maria_armenta_bermudez.asp.

¹³⁵ Redlands Daily Facts, “Maria Armenta Bermudez credited with several firsts in Redlands,” accessed May 15, 2006, <https://www.redlandsdailyfacts.com/2006/03/26/maria-armenta-bermudez-credited-with-several-firsts-in-redlands/>.

Because both of these individuals descend from or married into Spanish families, their Indigenous heritage is never mentioned when they have been written about in historical research. However, although the Indigenous heritage of these two individuals is ignored in historical records, it is a heritage I am aware of, because Lisalde is my fifth great-grandfather, while Armenta is my fourth great-grandmother. I share these stories to provide examples of the erasure of California Indian identity and narratives in written histories, and how – five generations later – through oral histories passed down for multiple generations, their true identity as Native people can be documented as a method of reclaiming their Indigeneity. Lisalde and Armenta’s untold stories are two of many that have influenced my desire to explore the history and legacy of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School.

From the beginning of my foray into writing this thesis, I sought to explore ways in which former Saint Boniface students retained their cultural identity as Southern California Indians, and how they passed on this identity to their descendants through photographs and written and oral histories. As I reviewed boarding school literature, gathered archival documents, conducted interviews with former students and their descendants, and cross-referenced these resources with photographs and oral histories passed down by my ancestors, I discovered conflicting information within the written accounts of California Indian history, especially in regards to the boarding school experience and the retention, adaptation, and revitalization of cultural connections and familial bonds.

Narratives of the life at Southern California Missions and Mission Indian boarding schools focused on perspectives of the Catholic Church padres and holy sisters, school administrators, Spanish soldiers, and prominent Spanish families – often neglecting Indigenous perspectives of historic time periods and events. This was especially

disconcerting, as the oral histories passed down to me through family members often described conflicting experiences rather than those documented in archival documents and existing literature. Available literature spoke of important individuals within my lineage, who are often found as one sentence blurbs in current written histories on Southern California. These written histories clashed with many of the oral histories passed down to me from various family members throughout my life. While separate from the boarding school narrative, these histories led me to evaluate the accuracy of current literature written on Southern California Indians – beginning with Saint Boniface.

As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, current literature on the institution is limited to research conducted by two scholars – R. Bruce Harley and Tanya Rathbun. Harley’s work provided a narrative of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School’s history through the Euro-American lens of the Catholic Church and school administrators. Rathbun on the other hand, included the narratives of a select group of former Saint Boniface students, and while her research shared a history of the school that included Native voices, it did not examine the intergenerational impact that the boarding school experience had on descendants of former students, and how these students retained, adapted, and passed on their familial bonds and cultural connections to their descendants.

Throughout my data collection, and during my interviews with Emma Gonzales, Mary Jeanette Gonzales and Dolores Aguila, as well as through conversations with other family members, the themes of familial bonds and cultural connections consistently reappeared. During each interview, my participants expressed a grief and curiosity over long lost family members, while expressing the importance of family that was instilled in them by their parents and grandparents. They each acknowledged that they were aware from a very young age that they were Native American – Cahuilla, Tongva, and Luiseño through Louis Florian Gonzales and Tohono O’odham through Ramona Ballesteros – as

they had been told of their Indigenous heritage through their grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles' stories about attending boarding school, from having family from neighboring villages visit the Gonzales Ranch, or from being a part of social service programs only available to American Indians. However, my subjects had difficulty articulating what being "Native" meant to them, as their connections to Southern California Indian culture and traditions had been forcefully taken away from their families for multiple generations, as a direct result of the assimilative tactics of the California Missions and Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School.

The fact that these themes reoccurred with each of my interviewees, and regularly show up in my conversations with family and fellow Southern California Indians, who are descendants of individuals who resided at the Missions or attended Saint Boniface, greatly assisted me in determining issues that have not been addressed or expanded on in current boarding school literature. The reoccurrence of these theme also assisted me with the lens through which I would conduct an analysis of my archival research, literature reviews, interviews, and oral histories.

For this thesis, due to my personal connection with Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School and the impact that the legacy of the institution has had on my identity as Luiseño/Tongva woman, I examined how one Southern California Indian family, the Gonzales family of Sahatapah, California, retained their familial bonds and cultural connections despite Saint Boniface's attempt to sever those associations through two generations of Mission Indian School students. This section will examine the ways Saint Boniface specifically sought to weaken familial bonds and cultural connections, while examining methods of resistance that these students and their descendants utilized in retaining and adapting their identity as Southern California Indians, and their connections to culture and traditions.

The Gonzales Family of Sahatapah



Figure 10: Unknown. *Gonzales Family at the Gonzales Ranch in Sahatapah*. Circa 1925, Private Collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, CA.

This study centers around the Gonzales family from Sahatapah, California (see Figure 10). The Gonzales family, by blood and through marriage, is among several of the first families who enrolled their youth at Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School upon its establishment in 1890. Over a period of forty-five years, thirty-three members of the Gonzales family, as well as their extended family members, are confirmed to have attended Saint Boniface between 1890 and 1935, roughly representing two generations of their family.¹³⁶ A mixed-blood family, the Gonzales family was of Spanish, Cahuilla, Luiseño, and Gabrieliño heritage through their maternal lineage, and Kumeyaay through their

¹³⁶ Peter Bradley, Email to author, June 20, 2016. Peter Bradley, Email to author, November 9, 2017.

paternal lineage. Louis Florian Gonzales' children, through his marriage to Ramona Ballesteros (of Tempe, Arizona) were also of Tohono O'odham heritage. Both generations of the family resided at a family ranch located in Sahatapah, a village in San Timoteo Canyon in Redlands, California, that had been passed on to the Gonzales family through their ancestors for multiple generations, and contained multiple dwellings to house their many family members.¹³⁷ While based out of Redlands, the family, as a result of strategic marriages of Captain Pedro Antonio Lisalde's twenty children, also maintained deep roots with the Missions: San Gabriel, San Luis Rey, San Juan Capistrano, San Diego, and many other missions in California. Many of Lisalde's sons, sons-in-law, and grandsons held important roles at various missions, such as his son, Jose Ramon Diego Lisalde, who was mayordomo, at Mission San Diego.¹³⁸ These prominent roles resulted in the Gonzales family members returning to the missions over many generations.

For purposes of this thesis, the first generation of the Gonzales family, that of Louis Florian Gonzales – my great-grandfather, is comprised of the thirteen children – four daughters and nine sons – borne to Maria Francisca Lisalde (Luiseño/Tongva) between 1844 and 1914, from her marriages to Pedro Velasquez (Tongva) and Loretto Gonzales (Ipai).¹³⁹ In addition to Maria's thirteen children, this generation includes nine of Maria's nieces, nephews, daughters-in-law, and sons-in-law.¹⁴⁰ Of the first generation, thirteen

¹³⁷ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹³⁸ Kathleen L. Hull and John G. Douglass, eds., *Forging Communities in Colonial Alta California*, (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2018), 248.

¹³⁹ Maria Francisca Lisalde's children from her marriage to Pedro Velasquez include: Secundino (born 1844), Casimiro (born 1856), Felicidad (born 1857), Francisco (1868-1913), Nazaria (born 1873). Maria's children from her marriage to Loretto Gonzales include: Joseph (1874-1910), George M. (born 1877), Paul (1879-1921), Emmanuel O. (1879-1945), Romona G. (born 1885), Nina (1885-1916), Louis Florian (1891-1969) and Narcisa Lueyano (1914-1997).

¹⁴⁰ For purposes of this thesis, extended family members of the Gonzales family (including cousins, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, nieces, nephews, etc.) will be included as members of the Gonzales family when referencing to the family.

Gonzales family members attended Saint Boniface between 1890 and 1906 (see Appendix B). The second generation, from which my grandmother, Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales, belonged, consisted of ten children, five sons and five daughters, borne to Ramona Ballesteros (Tohono O’odham), of which two were from her marriage to Leonardo Orozco (Akimel O’odham) and eight from her marriage to Louis.¹⁴¹ Seven of Louis and Ramona’s ten children attended Saint Boniface – along with thirteen of their extended family members – between 1910 and 1935 (see Appendix B).

Throughout this chapter, I will provide examples of the methods Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School administrators utilized in an attempt to sever the Gonzales family’s connections to their familial bonds and cultural connections, while also providing examples of resistance to these practices. First, we will examine how, despite Saint Boniface’s attempt, former students from the Gonzales family retained their familial bonds. A familial bond describes the strong kinship among family members, including the knowledge of one’s lineage, knowledge of tribal and family histories, and shared value systems within a family. Indian boarding schools, such as Saint Boniface, intended to sever familial bonds as a method of preventing the transmission of American Indian knowledge systems, such as language, knowledge of medicinal plants, traditional methods of healing, and tribal ceremonies. The next section will provide examples of the severing of familial bonds focusing on the separation of families, arranged marriages, as well as the creative ways that the Gonzales family resisted.

¹⁴¹ Ramona Ballesteros’ children from her marriage to Leonardo Orozco include: Leonard Orozco (1910-2004) and Gilbert Orozco (1911-1965). Ramona’s children from her marriage to Louis Florian Gonzales include: Raymond Joseph (1918-1998), Dora M. (1920-1985), Emma P (born 1921), Carmelita Mary Louise (1922-2016), Louis George (1927-1965), Carlos Florian (1927-2001), Cora (Born 1931), and Mary Jeanette (born 1940). Both Leonard and Gilbert Orozco were raised by Louis Florian Gonzales from the ages of five and three respectively, and will be acknowledged as Louis’ children throughout this thesis.

Separation of Families, Genders, and the Ill, and Arranged Marriages

Although Saint Boniface was located in a vicinity neighboring local Cahuilla, Serrano, Luiseño, Tongva, Juaneño, and Kumeyaay communities – where students may have had the ability to travel to and from the institution and their homes – students were required to live on campus throughout the academic year. Students were only allowed to return home during the Christmas holiday season and during summer break, or due to extreme illness. Emma Gonzales recalled in our interview that:

[We stayed] [a]ll year till school was out. When the school was out everybody that wanted to go home went home. The Indians from around the reservations... a lot of them they would stay at the school to take care of it. We went home.¹⁴²

Home for Emma, was the Gonzales Ranch, located approximately twenty-four miles northwest of the Saint Boniface grounds in the village of Sahatapah, known today as San Timoteo Canyon. Had they been permitted, it would have taken Emma's parents less than a day of travel to visit her and her siblings at Saint Boniface.

Although Emma's family resided relatively close to the school, she only went home during the Christmas season and summer break, and one additional time in 1933, due to unknown circumstances. In addition to being restricted from visiting her family, Emma was also separated from her siblings while attending Saint Boniface due to illness. Of her separation when sick, Emma states:

The only time I got sick, by the way, they had an infirmary there [at Saint Boniface]. They put the children in that room to separate us. I had the whooping cough. And they put me and another girl in that room and separated us from the other children. One side, which was part of the teenage, [and] young children and then on the other side, on the east side was for adult girls. Yeah, so they – but they had that room in the middle. They had it with an infirmary, they called it, for anybody that got sick... they put us there until we got well, then they let us know that we [were] pardoned. We were young too. Might have been... about 12, 11-12.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

Emma's story describes an additional separation, not only from her peers, but also her siblings due to illness. In addition, by keeping Emma at the school's infirmary during her sickness, school administrators prevented Emma from receiving traditional California Indian remedies of healing. Emma's paternal grandmother, Maria Francisca Lisalde, was a prominent healer and midwife in the community at Sahatapah – would have used traditional methods of healing to assist Emma with overcoming the whooping cough.¹⁴⁴ However, due to being restricted to the campus in the infirmary, in hopes of not spreading her whooping cough to other students, school administrators prevented Emma from receiving traditional Luiseño and Tongva methods of healing from her grandmother, as she had while living with her grandmother at the family ranch in the first six years of her life prior to attending Saint Boniface.

In addition to keeping youth on campus throughout the academic year, parents, siblings, and extended family were not allowed to visit students on a regular basis, often only being permitted to visit youth during times of celebration. One of these instances was the First Holy Communion of Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales. In a letter written to me by my grandmother, she stated “I remember, I got to choose my white dress and shoes and to be with all my friends, it was [also] very special to me that my parents were there to share a very special moment.”¹⁴⁵ While this rare occasion allowed Carmelita to reconnect with her parents, it did not cure her longing to be with her family, and she remained homesick for a majority of her years at Saint Boniface.

¹⁴⁴ Virginia Ruth De Soto, *Memoir*, 10.

¹⁴⁵ Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales, *Letter to Author* (1998), Private collection of Kelly Leah Stewart, Redlands, CA.

This separation of families was particularly difficult for the younger Gonzales children, as described in a short story – entitled *Christmas at the Gonzales Ranch* – written



Figure 11: Unknown. *Raymond, Dora, Emma and Carmelita at the Gonzales Ranch*. Circa 1925. Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, CA.

in 1989, Carmelita wrote of Christmas with her family at the ranch. She described how her older siblings' return from boarding school "added to her Christmas joy," as she had missed their presence during the fall and early

winter.¹⁴⁶ In the story, Carmelita is referring to her older siblings Leonard, Gilbert, Raymond, Dora, and Emma. Carmelita was born September 25, 1922, and her siblings each began attending in 1916 (Leonard, age 6), 1917 (Gilbert, age 6), 1927 (Raymond, age 8 and Dora, age 7), and 1928 (Emma, age 7) – prior to her enrollment in 1929 at the age of six (see Figure 11). Carmelita's story was told from the perspective of a young girl as young as the age of five. It should be noted that Carmelita did not share oral narratives of this experience with her children or grandchildren, and this document was discovered in 2017,

¹⁴⁶ Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales, "Christmas at the Gonzales Ranch," Journal, 1 Volume (1989), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente California.

by Dolores Aguila, Carmelita's daughter, as she cleaning her mother's house after her death. Dolores has stated that it was difficult for her mother to speak about her life at Saint Boniface because of the constant separation from her family.¹⁴⁷ However, Carmelita's hidden journals and short story demonstrate a desire to retain these experiences and memories for future generations of her family, despite the extreme difficulty she had in speaking about these moments of her life.

Saint Boniface not only practiced a separation of youth from parents. The school's curriculum emphasized a separation of male and female students in all aspects of life.¹⁴⁸ Vocational education was assigned based on gender, with female youth being assigned to domestic duties that were usually conducted in Drexel Hall, and boys being assigned to agricultural duties outside, such as tending the cattle and picking fruit from the many fruit trees. While attending the institution, Emma recalled that: "All the girls were on one side [of the campus] and the boys were all separate away from the girls. The only time they came together was in the dining room, because the dining room was big enough for the girls on one side and the boys [on the other]."¹⁴⁹ Boys and girls were separated within the dining hall, with each gender eating on different sides of the dining hall. This not only created a separation of genders, but also created a separation of siblings, as a result, many Southern California Indian youth, similar Emma, were separated from their siblings of the opposite gender. For instance, Emma did not recall her older brothers attending the school.¹⁵⁰ During our interview, I asked Emma if she ever interacted with her older brothers, Leonard, Gilbert, and Raymond who also attended the institution. Specifically speaking of

¹⁴⁷ Dolores Aguila (descendant of a former Saint Boniface student) in discussion with the author, March 4, 2017.

¹⁴⁸ Tanya Rathbun, "Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School," 168.

¹⁴⁹ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

her brother Raymond, she Emma stated that “No, I don’t think so. I never knew that he went, no.”¹⁵¹ The enrollment of Leonard, Gilbert, and Raymond at Saint Boniface Indian Industrial is confirmed by multiple primary sources. Both Leonard and Gilbert can be found on two quarterly reports from 1919 and 1920.¹⁵² Raymond, along with his sisters Emma, Carmelita and Dora, and his cousin are listed as Saint Boniface students on the 1930 United States Census under Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School.¹⁵³ In addition, during his life, Leonard O. Gonzales would frequently mention attending the school with his siblings. While the separation of students based on gender was to ensure that there were no improper relations between male and female students, this created a disconnection between brothers and sisters, often preventing them from creating close sibling relationships.

The Gonzales children were not only separated from their siblings, they were also separated from their cousins, aunts and uncles. During our interview, Emma asked me if I knew that we had an “Uncle Paul.” Paul Gonzales, Emma’s paternal uncle was among the first students to be enrolled at Saint Boniface in 1890. Emma stated that her father never told them about Paul and his children. However, one of Paul’s sons, Robert Gonzales, who became Louis’ ward after Paul’s death, attended Saint Boniface with the Gonzales children.¹⁵⁴ Emma stated that the discovery of these cousins was something that happened

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² B. Florian Hahn, Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Enrollments Records, 31 December 1919, Box 1, St. Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Archive, Banning Public Library, Banning, CA.

B. Florian Hahn, Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Enrollments Records, 31 December 1920, Box 1, St. Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Archive, Banning Public Library, Banning, CA.

¹⁵³ 1930 United States Census, San Gorgonio Township, Riverside County, California, population schedule, enumeration district (ED) 00-33, sheet 5B (handwritten), Raymond Gonzales; NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 184.

¹⁵⁴ 1930 United States Census, San Gorgonio Township, Riverside County, California, population schedule, enumeration district (ED) 00-33, sheet 5B (handwritten), Raymond Gonzales; NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 184

in her adult life. Separation of extended family members created a break in kinship structures within the family.

In addition to separating families, school administrators took it upon themselves to arrange marriages among male and female students at Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School. A common practice lingering from the Mission Era, Catholic priests, such as Father Junipero Serra, “promoted intermarriage between soldiers and newly Christianized [N]ative women in California as a way to establish [a] Christian family life and society, to foster alliances between the soldiers and the Indians, and to curb the soldiers’ sexual attacks against [N]ative women.”¹⁵⁵ These contractual marriages offered soldiers rewards such as: “a horse, farm animals, and land,” and had been a part of Gonzales family life since the 1700s.¹⁵⁶ As previously mentioned in the beginning of this section, Captain Pedro Antonio Lisalde, had entered his twenty children into arranged marriages with Spanish soldiers throughout California. While further research must be conducted, oral histories combined with archival research indicate that Lisalde strategically arranged these marriages as a means of retaining ancestral territories for his descendants, as several of the soldiers that his daughters married became prominent Spanish and Mexican land grant recipients.

This practice of arranged marriages continued during the boarding school era. During my dialogue with Emma, which had been organized and attended by her younger sister Mary Jeanette Gonzales, my great-aunts disclosed a family story that had not been previously discussed by grandmother with her children or grandchildren. According to

¹⁵⁵ Antonia I. Castañeda, “Engendering the History of Alta California, 1769-1848: Gender, Sexuality, and the Family,” *California History* 76, no. 2/3 (1997): 239.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Emma, Paul Gonzales' marriage to Flora Brown Noles had been arranged by Father B. Florian Hahn.¹⁵⁷ This arranged marriage disregarded matters of the heart, as Paul had been enamored with Flora's sister, Isabell, and his brother Louis harbored feelings for his brother's betrothed. This story was hidden from family members for multiple generations, for reasons not suitable to be discussed in this thesis, but at the core was a shame within the family for coveting another's wife. This arranged marriage could have created discord between brothers, Paul and Louis, and may ultimately be the justification for Emma not knowing about Paul and his children during her early life.

Resistance through Visitation and Running Away

Despite the separation, some Southern California Indian families, such as the Gonzales family, managed to retain their familial bonds. For example, Louis Florian Gonzales visited his children at least a minimum of once a month.¹⁵⁸ An active alumnus of Saint Boniface, Louis could ingeniously visit his children under the guise of going to Sunday mass, by providing maintenance services, or by performing with the Saint Boniface Boy's Band. Each of these stopovers was recorded in his journal from 1933 to 1941. Louis resourcefully outwitted school administrators by visiting his children, displaying a subtle form of resistance to the restriction of family visitation, thereby using these occasions to maintain a close relationship with his children while they were attending Saint Boniface.

However, monthly visits from their father were not enough to liberate the Gonzales children of their homesickness. While the Gonzales Ranch was less than a day's travel from Saint Boniface, Leonard, Gilbert, Raymond, Dora, Emma and Carmelita missed their

¹⁵⁷ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹⁵⁸ Louis Florian Gonzales, Journals, Volume 4 (1933-1941), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

parents, younger siblings and grandmothers greatly. During her life, Carmelita stated that she ran away from the school three times to return home.¹⁵⁹ However, her sister Emma only recalled one time, stating that:

[w]e wanted to go home. We were too tired of being there and we wanted to go home. We were about 13. We walked down to downtown [Banning] to my brother Gilbert. I knew where he lived so we walked over ... there in the evening [when] everybody was in church. Father [Justin] knew where to find us. He went straight to the house and got us... and brought us back to the school.¹⁶⁰

When asked why she chose to leave the school with her younger sister, Emma stated that she was worried about the possibility of Carmelita being harmed, so she went along to protect her sister.¹⁶¹ Carmelita's reasoning for running away was not solely due to homesickness, she also did not like the school administrators, Father Justin Deutsch in particular, as she did not feel that they treated her fairly.¹⁶² Carmelita's outright rebellion in attempting to return to the Gonzales Ranch provides an additional example of resistance to Saint Boniface school administrators' attempt to sever familial bonds.

Attempts to sever the familial bonds of the Gonzales family were both a success and failure. The separation of extended family – and the potential discord created by arranged marriages – created an environment within the family where members chose to avoid discussing issues of conflict and interaction with one another. However, within the immediate family of Louis Florian Gonzales, the familial bond was just as strong as after his children left the school, as it had been prior to their attendance. Of this strong familial relationship, Carmelita stated that her father, Louis, would take his children to “all his

¹⁵⁹ Dolores Aguila (descendant of a former Saint Boniface student) in discussion with the author, March 4, 2017.

¹⁶⁰ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹⁶¹ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

¹⁶² Aguila, interview, February 22, 2017.

concerts at the Redlands Park” and that “he cared enough about [his children] to [have us] be with him, he loved us” and taught us “togetherness always.”¹⁶³

Severing Cultural Connections: Tribal Affiliation, Language, Native Ways

As previously mentioned, the primary goal of Indian boarding schools was to assimilate Native youth into mainstream Euro-American society. Saint Boniface had the additional goal of assimilating California Indian youth into Catholic society, through an education that focused on Catholic catechism. The severing cultural connections was the method that Saint Boniface, and Indian boarding schools across the nation, utilized in an effort to achieve this goal. Saint Boniface attempted this in multiple ways, but three that stand out are: tribal affiliation, loss of language, and loss of traditions. In this section, I will provide examples of Saint Boniface’s attempt to sever cultural connections, along with the methods of resistance enacted by Gonzales family members who attended the school, as well as methods that additional generations utilized in the retention and reclamation of their Indigeneity.

¹⁶³ Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales, Letter to Author, 1998.

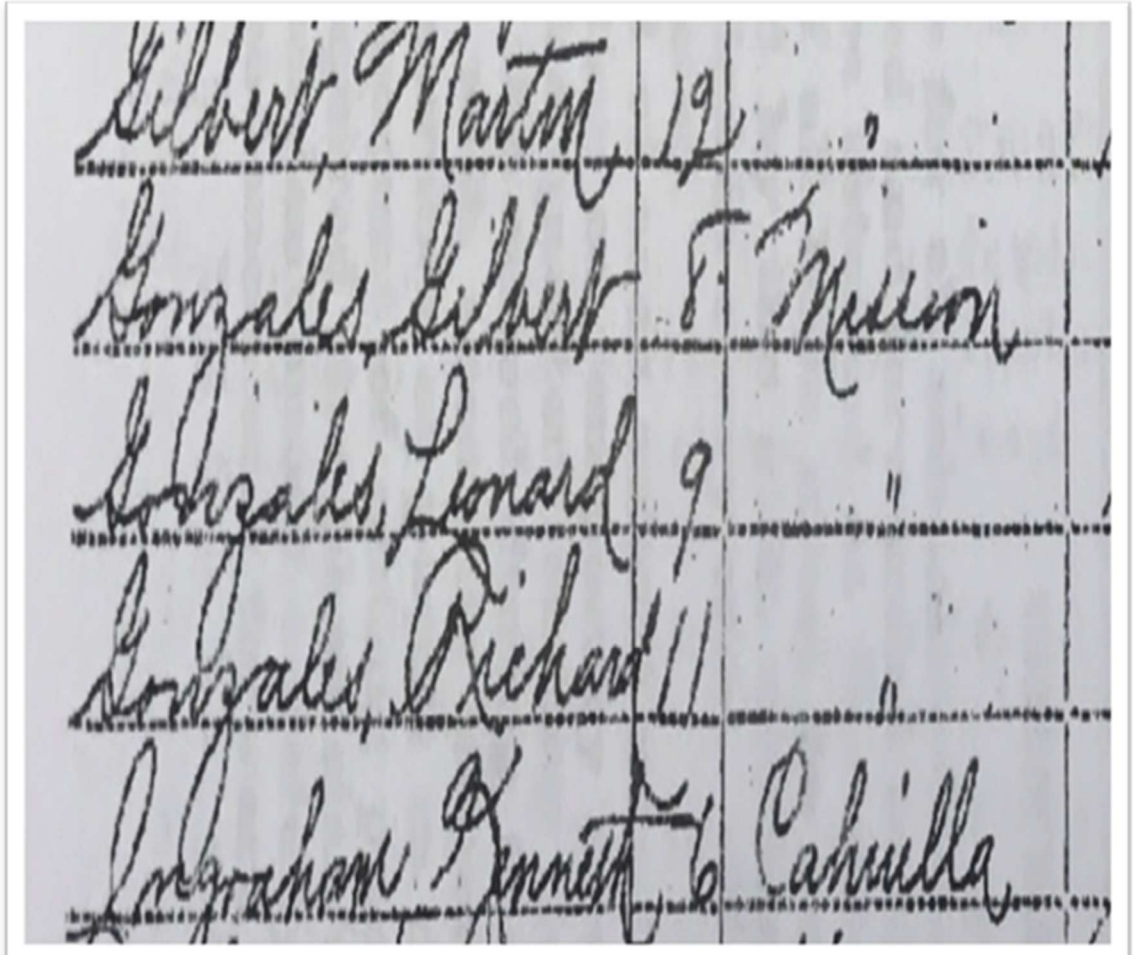


Figure 12: Hahn, B. Florian. *Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Enrollment Records*. 31 December. Box 1. St. Boniface Indian Industrial School Archive. Banning Public Library, Banning, CA.

The superintendents at Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School maintained annual and quarterly enrollment records of the students who attended the institution. Separated by gender, these records listed the name, age, tribal affiliation, date of enrollment, date of exit, and total number of days at the school for each enrolled student. Figure 12 displays an enrollment record from December 31, 1919, that shows Leonard and Gilbert Gonzales listed as “Mission Indian.”¹⁶⁴ However, just one year later in 1920, school administrators have Leonard and Gilbert listed as Cahuilla (see Figure 13).¹⁶⁵ It should be noted that the

¹⁶⁴ B. Florian Hahn, *Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Enrollment Records*, 31 December 1919.

¹⁶⁵ B. Florian Hahn, *Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Enrollment Records*, 31 December 1920.

Gonzales Ranch sat on what we know today as shared Serrano, Luiseño and Cahuilla territory. In addition, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) records list Leonard and Gilbert's sister, Carmelita, as Luiseño and Tongva on her Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) – tracing her lineage through her paternal uncle, Emmanuel Gonzales, who registered as Luiseño and Tongva on the 1923 California Indian Judgment Roll.¹⁶⁶ Both Leonard and Gilbert, Louis Florian Gonzales' step-sons, were not of California Indian descent. According to Leonard Gonzales, as told to my father when I was a child, his

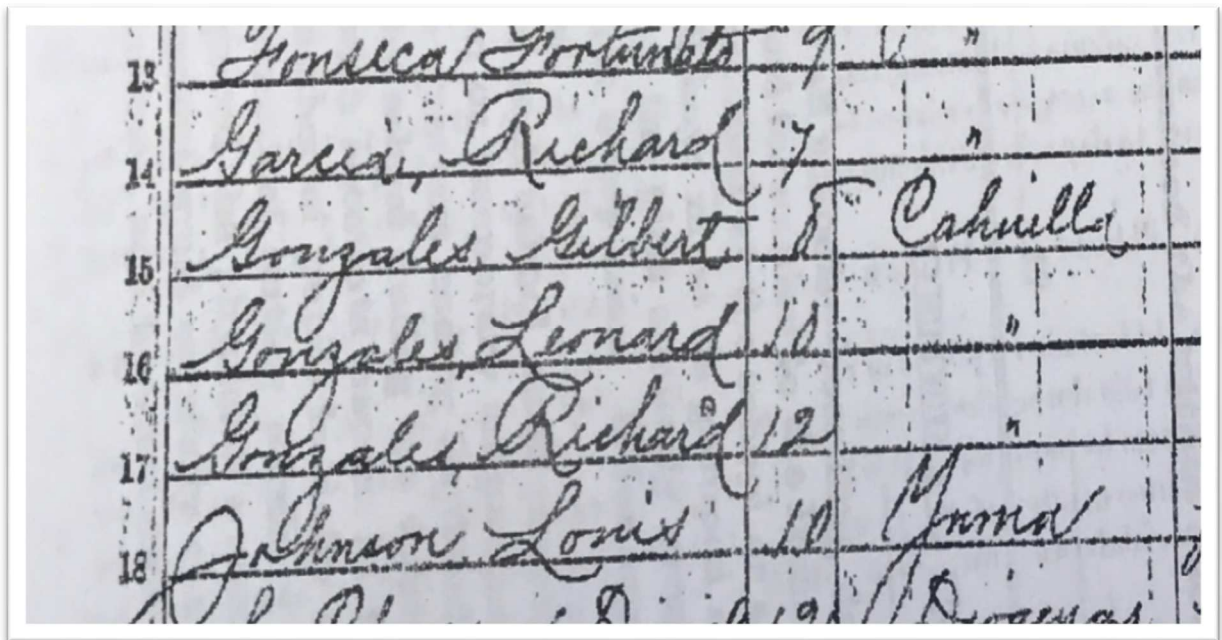


Figure 13: Hahn, B. Florian. *Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Enrollment Records*. 31 December 1920. Box 1. St. Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School Archive. Banning Public Library, Banning, CA.

biological father was of Akimel O'odham descent, and his mother, Ramona, was Tohono O'odham. While many Southern California tribes, such as the Luiseño, Gabrieliño, Juaneño, and Diegueño were categorized as "Mission Indians" on census records because of

¹⁶⁶ Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood for Carmen (Gonzales) Aguila, 11 April 2013, Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

their direct ties with the California Missions, this recording of differing tribal affiliations – along with the knowledge that Sahatapah was a shared territory – led to perplexity for future generations regarding their tribal affiliation.

As she was growing up, Dolores Aguila had been told by her mother that she was Cahuilla, however, upon applying for and receiving her CDIB – along with those of her four children – from the BIA, Dolores was surprised to learn that her tribal affiliation was recorded as Luiseño.¹⁶⁷ This contradictory information transmitted in the oral histories of tribal affiliations passed on to her, along with information provided by the BIA, created puzzlement as to what the proper traditional ways of life were for the Gonzales family –



Figure 14: Unknown. *Maria Francisca Lisalde and Louis Florian Gonzales*. Date Unknown. Private Collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, CA.

which resulted in their withdrawal from participating in Luiseño, Cahuilla, or Tongva ceremonies and traditions.

A second method that Saint Boniface utilized in an attempt to sever cultural connections was by forbidding Native youth from speaking in their ancestral language.

The last two speakers of the ancestral language in the Gonzales family were

Maria Francisca Lisalde and Louis Florian Gonzales (see Figure 14).¹⁶⁸ Louis' daughters,

¹⁶⁷ Aguila, Interview, February 22, 2017.

¹⁶⁸ Due to the inaccurate recording of tribal affiliations, and the fact that Sahatapah (the ancestral homeland of the Gonzales family) is shared territory between the Cahuilla, Serrano, Luiseño and Tongva, I cannot confidently state the specific language that my great-great-grandmother and great grandfather spoke.

Carmelita, Emma and Mary Jeanette all state that their grandmother and father spoke “Indian,” especially their grandmother.¹⁶⁹ Francisca’s knowledge of her ancestral language provided her with immense knowledge of the many healing properties of plants indigenous to California that she utilized in providing methods of healing to her grandchildren’s various ailments. This loss of language greatly impacted the family’s ability to continue to utilize, as well as the transmission of, traditional methods of healing.

Finally, Saint Boniface severed cultural connections by preventing youth from practicing Native ways of life. This would have included, but not been limited to: basket weaving, bird song and dance, traditional ceremonies, mourning practices and knowledge of traditional plants. The last being of extreme importance to the Gonzales family, due to Francisca’s role as a healer and midwife for her family, as well as to many neighboring Native families of Sahataph.¹⁷⁰ During his youth, Raymond Joseph Gonzales, was a sickly child, and was nurtured back to health through his grandmother’s knowledge of traditional healing plants.¹⁷¹ The combination of the loss of language and loss of practicing traditional ways of healing prevented this valuable skill from being passed on to future generations of the Gonzales family. As we will examine further, this confusion regarding tribal affiliations, loss of language and Native methods of healing did not sever most of the Gonzales family’s connections to culture.

¹⁶⁹ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

Dolores Aguila, interview, February 22, 2017.

Mary Jeanette Gonzales, (descendant of a former Saint Boniface student) in discussion with the author, February 23, 2017.

¹⁷⁰ Virginia Ruth De Soto, *Memoir*, 10.

¹⁷¹ Gonzales, interview, March 2, 2017.

Intergenerational Resistance: Retaining, Adapting, and Remembering

Despite the forceful assimilative tactics of Saint Boniface, the Gonzales family held onto different aspects of their culture, adapting them to blend with Euro-American ways of living. Various Lisalde and Gonzales family members, and their descendants, held onto their tribal identity. Despite the contradictory information regarding tribal affiliation provided through boarding school records and BIA CDIBs, Gonzales family members resisted the encouragement to assimilate fully into Euro-American society, and held onto the tribal identities passed onto them through oral histories. This resistance required the family to apply for the 1928 California Indian Census and the 1972 California Judgment Roll – with almost all applicants identifying as Cahuilla, Luiseño, or Tongva. This form of resistance did not end with the California Judgment Roll period. It endures today with Gonzales descendants continuing to apply for and receive letters from the BIA that reaffirm their Native heritage.

Furthermore, traditions adapted over time. When Louis was a youth, his mother would invite neighboring Mountain Cahuilla's, undoubtedly extended family, to the Gonzales Ranch for week long visits that included a feast and traditional bird song and dance.¹⁷² This early exposure to California Indian music, quite possibly helped Louis in learning to play the Euro-American instruments provided by Father Hahn to the boys in the Saint Boniface band. And while Louis may have used this skill as a means of supplementing his income as an adult to support his large family, as well as his many nieces and nephews, this may very well have been Louis' method of resistance in retaining his California Indian identity and a method for reconnecting to the traditional songs of his childhood. As an adult, using the rudimentary education and vocational skills taught to

¹⁷² Virginia Ruth De Soto, *Memoir*, 10.

him at Saint Boniface, along with the knowledge of Indigenous plant systems passed down to him by his mother, Louis also worked jobs as a laborer at various farms in the Redlands and San Bernardino area, while also managing the Gonzales Ranch.¹⁷³

Louis' daughter Carmelita, took the basket weaving techniques of her ancestors, and became a woman who meticulously packed parachutes during World War II (see Figure 15). Basket weaving is an extremely meticulous task. For example, in the making of pine needle baskets, weavers must carefully contemplate the position of their pine needles to determine the size and thickness of their baskets. They must carefully wind juncus around their pine needles, to not only create a pattern, but to secure the basket – making it strong enough to hold items. While packing parachutes,



Figure 15: Unknown. *Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales, Packing Parachutes in World War II.* Date Unknown. Private Collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, CA.

Carmelita utilized basket weaving techniques by carefully placed the strings of the parachute in a manner that would prevent it from tangling upon release from its bag. In

¹⁷³ Louis Florian Gonzales, Journals, Volume 1 (1914-1919), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

Louis Florian Gonzales, Journals, Volume 2 (1919-1924), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

Louis Florian Gonzales, Journals, Volume 4 (1933-1941), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

Louis Florian Gonzales, Journals, Volume 6 (1950-1955), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

Louis Florian Gonzales, Journals, Volume 7 (1956-1961), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

Louis Florian Gonzales, Journals, Volume 8 (1962-1969), Private collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, California.

addition, Carmelita combined her ancestral skill of basket weaving with the Western skill of crochet, taught to her by the nuns at Saint Boniface, to make blankets for her children and grandchildren. My fondest memory of my grandmother's resistance, and embracement of her Indigeneity, occurred on a weeklong summer visit to her house when I was a teenager. My grandfather was notorious for affectionately teasing his close family members and friends. Raised as viewing Natives as less than his Mexican ancestors, my grandfather repeatedly teased my grandmother about her Native heritage, often incorrectly mimicking Native war cries and dances that were not a part of California Indian culture. During my stay, after becoming understandably frustrated at my grandfather's relentless teasing, my grandmother calmly reminded him that her people were in San Bernardino first. Her simple statement flustered my grandfather, putting him in his place, while at the same time demonstrating her embracement of her Native roots as a descendant of the original inhabitants of Southern California.

Resistance to a loss of culture and Native identity continued with each new generation. Carmelita's daughters, Roseanna, Dolores and Delia Aguila are skilled floral designers. Their knowledge of plants not only includes those native to California, but also incorporates flowers from across the world. Each of the sisters retains knowledge of the seasons in which the flowers they work with grow, how they are best utilized in floral design, and the healing properties of many of these plants. They utilize this knowledge in providing floral arrangements for celebrations for immediate and extended family, as well as close friends and clients. It is a skill that has been passed onto my sister, Ramona, and me. Dolores and Delia, upon graduation from high school, gained employment through a program specifically for Native Americans.¹⁷⁴ Delia and Dolores' application to the program

¹⁷⁴ Aguila, interview, March 3, 2017.

required that they be of Native American descent, and rather than looking for employment that did not have this stipulation, they both identified as Native on their applications, thereby embracing their Indigeneity. While Dolores does not remember the name of the program, it afforded her the opportunity to work at Norton Air Force Base the summer of 1976, where she met and then married my father, thereby paving the way for this research in this thesis to be conducted.

Carmelita's son, Alfred Aguila, followed in the footsteps of her father as a brilliant musician, as a member of a band called *The Fabulous Jades* during the late 1960s and early 1970s (see Figure 16).



Figure 16: Unknown. *The Fabulous Jades*. Circa 1970s. Private Collection of Dolores Aguila Stewart, La Puente, CA.

During his celebration of life on June 28, 2016, Alfred's goddaughter and niece, Ramona Lynn Stewart, delivered a eulogy that reflected on a story given to her by one of Alfred's band mates. According to his band mate, Alfred never learned how to read music – a skill often considered a requirement for individual who wished to become a musician. However, he did not allow this lack of skill restrict his natural talent, as he learned to play the saxophone just by listening to music. More than likely this was an ability transmitted through his DNA from his bird singing ancestors that would visit the Gonzales Ranch, as lyrics to bird song are not written, and are passed from one generation to the next orally. Alfred took this natural ability and adapted it to become a proficient saxophone player.

The gift of music was not solely passed onto Alfred. His younger brother, Angel Aguila, also has an ear for music. One day, while running errands with my father, Lane Stewart, he told me a story of giving my Uncle Angel a ride home from school in his old Volkswagen Bug. According to my father, Angel complained about that the tuning of the music in the car did not sound correct. With my father's permission, he gave the knobs of the audio system a few twists and turns, and lo and behold, the music sounded much better than it had at the settings my father had created. Throughout my youth, I can also recall my uncle constantly drumming on tables as he absentmindedly browsed through weekly store advertisements with his daughters. Until beginning research for this thesis, I could not understand my uncle's need to create music where ever he went. Upon learning of our family's bird singing background, I realized that Angel's drumming was an adaptation to a tradition that had been taken from our family two generations before him, and this was his way – perhaps instinctually – of remaining connected to the music that was such an essential part of our ancestor's lives.

The examples of these adaptations of traditions protected valuable Southern California Indian knowledge systems until it was safe for traditions to reawaken to Gonzales descendants in their natural state. Several years ago, when I was the Cultural Preservation Coordinator for Torres Martinez Tribal TANF's Wilshire site, a Mountain Cahuilla co-worker suggested that we collaborate on a pine needle basket weaving workshop. Having never been exposed to basket weaving techniques, I asked my co-worker to devote some time to teach me how to weave a basket prior to the start of our series. On a Friday afternoon, he showed me how to knot the pine needles to start the basket, and explained to me the technique of weaving raffia – which, we were using in place of juncus – around the pine needles. Over the weekend, I diligently worked the raffia around my pine needles, meticulously wrapping it to form a pattern that my hands naturally decided to

create, while adding pine needles along the way to make my basket grow. By Monday morning, much to my co-worker's surprise, I had completed my first basket, which I gifted to my mother (see Figure 17). Several months later, upon showing photographs of my basket to another group of Mountain Cahuilla co-workers at our Anza site, I was told that I



Figure 17: Stewart, Kelly Leah. *Dolores Aguila Stewart Holding a Basket Made by Kelly L. Stewart*. 17 March 2013. Private Collection of Kelly Leah Stewart, Redlands, CA.

must descend from great basket weavers. According to them, there was no way that I should have picked up on the techniques so easily, especially considering the fact that I had grown up so far removed from our traditional ways.

Basket weaving is a skill that came naturally to me, and I cannot confirm whether or not one of my grandmothers was a proficient basket weaver.

What I do know is that every time I make a basket, I imagine the hands of the women who came before me, guiding my hands and leading me, as I make a beautiful piece of art work, filled with prayers and hopes that those who come after me embrace our Native heritage as my ancestors, in their resistance, did before me.

Writing, Storytelling, Painting, Research, and Community Service as Resistance

Gonzales family members have passed down, and continue to pass down, their memories and experiences in various ways, primarily as writers, artists, storytellers, researchers, and through work in the Native community. Combining written documents with oral histories, photographs and art, members of the Gonzales family leave a legacy of close family ties, culture and resiliency that will be remembered for generations to come.

Louis Florian Gonzales maintained journals, of which his granddaughter Dolores possesses six of eight volumes. These journals, filled with humble daily one-line entries, tracked his activities of: working on the Gonzales Ranch, income earned, loans to family and friends, playing music for the Redlands and San Bernardino Municipal bands and at the Soboba Reservation, taking family members on errands, and working for the Santa Fe Railroad.¹⁷⁵ Journal entries tell the story of a man who worked tirelessly to provide for his family through any means possible. When work was not available on neighboring ranches, Louis would work eight-hour days on the Gonzales Ranch, tending to the fields, despite a constant battle with inadequate water line access to his land – a battle that would ultimately result in the relocation of his family from the Gonzales Ranch to the city of San Bernardino. He recorded the births and deaths of his children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, brothers, sisters and parents, but most importantly, Louis' journals tracked his monthly visits to his children at Saint Boniface. These visits document a strong resistance to Saint Boniface's policy of separating Native youth from their families by not allowing them to return home throughout the school year.

Virginia Ruth De Soto, Carmelita Mary Louise Gonzales, and Mary Jeanette Gonzales, spent their lives recording family histories – creating primary documents that

¹⁷⁵ Louis Florian Gonzales, Journal, Volume 4.

not only describe the boarding school experience and life after, but that also preserve the Gonzales family history and lineage for future generations. These documents preserve the narratives of their Spanish and Native ancestors who played prominent roles in the formation of the California that we know today.

Carmelita and Jeanette's older sister, Emma Gonzales shares her memories and experiences through storytelling. At the age of ninety-seven, Emma can recall her time at Saint Boniface as if she was there yesterday. She is the matriarch of the Gonzales family, and the last surviving former Saint Boniface student in our family. She understands the importance of passing on her family's memories and experiences so that we may remember and reclaim who we are and where we come from.

Descendants of the Gonzales family still retain their familial bonds and cultural connections today, but through different mediums. In addition to the natural knowledge of plants and music of my mom and her siblings, the fourth generation of the Gonzales

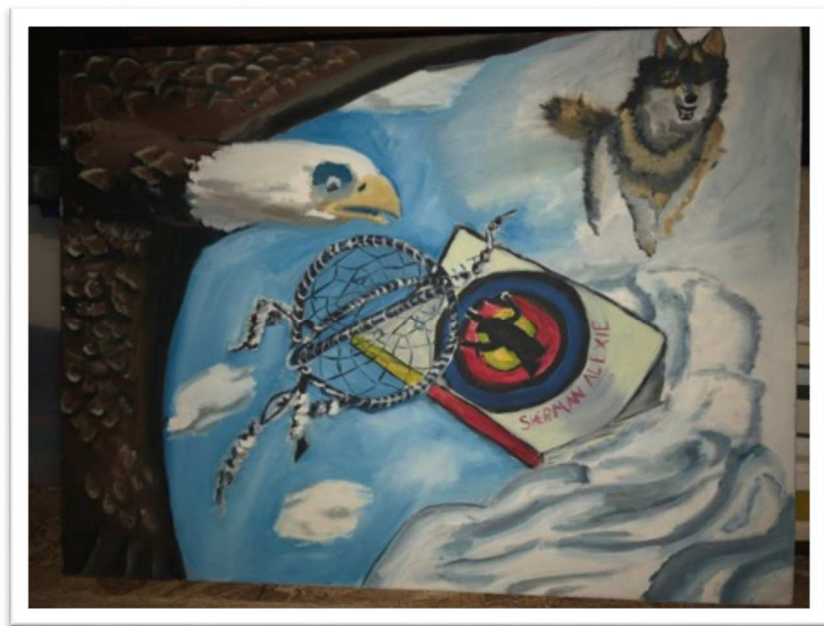


Figure 18: Stewart, Lane Leonard. *Untitled Painting by Lane L. Stewart*. 2012. Private Collection of Lane Leonard Stewart, Ontario, CA.

family has learned to embrace their Payómkawish and Tongva heritage through art and academic research. My younger brother, Lane Leonard Stewart, is a gifted painter. As a young boy, he began drawing as a way to escape pestering from his three older sisters. The first drawing of his that I saw was of a spotlight on an empty stool, which he referred to as

his “self-portrait.” Reflecting on this drawing, it not only expresses the solitude that he felt as being the only boy in our family, but also demonstrates the invisibility that so many California Indians feel in today’s society as a result of the erasure of our ancestor’s experiences and voices. Over the years, Lane has developed as an artist, creating paintings that show his Indigeneity through artwork that display items that have helped him in reconnecting with his heritage, such as dream catchers, eagles, and works of literature by authors like Sherman Alexie (see Figure 18).¹⁷⁶

My cousin Casandra Lopez, my sister Theresa Jean Stewart-Ambo, and myself, retain our familial bonds and cultural connections by reconnecting to traditional Native ways of life and by conducting research in the Southern California Indian community to give voices to our ancestors’ struggles and sacrifices. Cassandra, an established poet, writes poetry that responds to the misconstrued histories of our shared ancestors. Theresa, a recipient of the University of California’s Presidential Post-Doctorate Fellowship, conducts research focusing on the relationships between tribal communities and land-grant research universities, and the responsibility that these institutions have in educating California Indians. My research, as discussed in this thesis, works to give a voice to my ancestors by (re)claiming and (re)telling the histories of Southern California Indians, correcting misconstrued accounts of my ancestors’ roles in the formation of California. Our research not only fills voids in current literature on Southern California Indians, but also provides an often lacking, multi-generational, California Indian perspective to historic events throughout Southern California.

¹⁷⁶ It should be noted that Aguila, my mother’s maiden name, means Eagle in Spanish. Oral histories explain that the name was given to our family due to the “eagle brow,” that many of my ancestors had. This bridge in the eyebrow section of our eye brows is a physical feature that has been passed onto many Aguila descendants.

Finally, my sister and I work with our Tongva elders to bring awareness to the “visitors” in our ancestral homelands – reminding people that Southern California Indians are still here as a result of generations of resiliency of those who came before us. For example, in the summer of 2017, my sister, Theresa, and I were approached by faculty at UCLA to participate in the inaugural *Teaching the Tongva* workshop, held at the Tongva village of Kuruvungna, located near the UCLA campus in the Westwood area of Los Angeles. This two-day workshop brought together UCLA students, faculty, and Tongva Cultural Educators to provide teachers from the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) with oral histories, resources, and lessons so that they may teach their third-grade students about the Tongva people of the Los Angeles Basin. The underlying premise of the workshop was to explain to LAUSD teachers that the Tongva people still reside in Los Angeles, and that it is important to teach our history utilizing our voices and perspectives, while also bringing the Tongva into the present. The workshop provided my sister and I with the opportunity to work closely with our tribal elders, some of whom we learned are our distant cousins, and to learn valuable cultural traditions, while also reconnecting with lost family.

Through American Indian social service programs, many Gonzales family members are experiencing a resurgence of traditional ways of life. Through attending cultural workshops offered at Morongo Tribal TANF, our youngest generation of youth is being exposed to the history of Southern California Indians, such as bird song and dance, as well as basket weaving. Through their attendance at these community events, the fifth generation of the Gonzales family is reconnecting with traditional ways, preserving our culture for their future children, grandchildren, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

In addition, many tribal communities are answering the call to preserve Saint Boniface’s history through providing service to the land of the former school. Over the

course of this research, I have been informed that the land that housed Saint Boniface has been purchased by a local tribal community. Out of respect, and due to the project being in its initial stages, I do not feel that it is in the best interest of the tribe to disclose their name. I share this information because I believe that this is an important step in the reclaiming of lands and history belonging to Southern California Indian. While it is unknown what this tribe intends to do with the land, it provides hope that it will be protected from trespassers, and that the history of the school will be brought to the forefront in academia.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Writing a thesis is a daunting task. Writing a thesis that centers on the (re)writing and (re)righting of your ancestors' history is even more difficult. As a Native scholar, one must examine the ways in which research will not only impact academia, but also how it may impact tribal communities and family (immediate and extended). Native scholars must carefully examine each resource, cross referencing oral narratives with written histories to determine what may be fact versus what may be fiction. Learning the true California Indian history and identity is often a very emotional journey, where one must restructure their method of thinking, removing Western ways of looking at education and replacing them with California Indian ways. This is a journey that many California Indians across the state venture on in their journey to achieve success in higher education. By reclaiming the Indigenous narrative of Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School, I am reclaiming my cultural identity as a California Native woman. In addition, I am honoring the memories and sacrifices of my ancestors, and I am creating a foundation based in a strong California Indian identity and history for years to come. While the loss of culture for my family will never return to what it may have been had my family not attended Saint

Boniface, we are well on our way to reclaiming what we can, and securing a future filled in culture and tradition for all Gonzales descendants.

Despite the struggles, reclaiming the Southern California Indian boarding school experience has also a very healing process. The boarding school experience took much from my family. We lost contact with family as a result of the separation of brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and cousins at Saint Boniface. We forgot our traditional ways of healing, because youth who would have acquired those skills were forced to attend school away from home during the last years of the life of our last medicine woman and traditional healer. Confusion was created regarding our tribal affiliation due to the incorrect recordings of tribal affiliations on census and boarding school records. We lost our fluency of our ancestral language, as a result of bans on speaking our Indigenous languages at Saint Boniface, as well as the separation of children from their families and communities, thus preventing our Indigenous languages from being transmitted to my mother's generation and thereby future generations. However, by sitting with tribal elders, and listening to stories of their life experiences – and the experiences of their ancestors, one begins to remember what was lost, and sees the ways that relatives adapted, protecting traditional ways until society developed an understanding and appreciation for Native ways of life, creating a world where Native people could return to traditional practices.

Growing up I never identified as being Native American. I grew up in a predominately Hispanic community in the city of La Puente. A city that I have come to know as the Tongva village of “Awiigna.” From as young as the age of five, I can remember having an immense desire to fit in with my peers. It would be a difficult feat for me, as my outside appearances – with my fair skin, hazel eyes, and freckles – somehow, albeit accurately, indicated to my peers that I had Euro-American ancestry, but concealed my Payómkawish and Tongva heritage. My so-called friends often teased me when I would tell

them that I was Mexican-American just as they were. I can recall looking for similarities in our upbringings that might help to convince them that I was just like them. But my family was different from theirs – we did not eat the same foods, have the same ancestral stories, or share the same experiences of coming to California from Mexico as my peers' families had. Like my peers, I could trace a few of my family members to Northern Mexico, but, unlike my friends, most of my ancestors had been in California since time immemorial, and were the original inhabitants of what we know today as San Diego, Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties. We did not have a land base in the heart of Mexico to visit during summer vacations from school, something that seemed of great importance to my peers when recounting summer vacations.

Even our views on Western literature regarding Indigenous and Mexican culture and histories differed. In my freshman honors English class, I can recall one boy telling me that I could not possibly know the legend of La Llorona because I was “white.” Little did he know, I had first heard this story at the age of eight from my California Indian grandmother on a trip to visit my grandfather’s family in Baja California. On the way to San Felipe, my grandfather, Calistro Aguila, had arranged an overnight stay in Mexicali at a relative’s ranch. While preparing for bed, I noticed that a lamp on had been left on in the hallway of the room that my sister, cousins and I were sleeping in. Ever the curious children, the next day we asked my grandmother why this was done. She stated that my grandfather’s relative had done this because she was not sure that we were baptized in the Catholic Church, and she wanted to ensure that La Llorona did not come and take us. Of course, this scared all of the children. My grandmother explained that La Llorona was an Indigenous woman who married a Spanish soldier, who mentally and physically abused her, as well as left her for a Spanish woman shortly after La Llorona had borne this man two sons. In her distress and anger, La Llorona drowned her sons in order to punish her

husband's disloyalty. In remorse for her actions, La Llorona spends eternity, weeping and wailing as she searches for her sons each night. So, while this student knew the "Mexican" version of the legend, I knew the Indigenous perspective. I was aware from an early age of how Spanish, and then Mexican, citizens abused Indigenous people – my ancestors.

As an adult, it became easier to acknowledge that I was not like the youth that I had grown up with, and that I came from a family that was very Americanized on the surface. My first life experience where I felt like I belonged to the Native community occurred at the age of twenty-six. I had just ended a four-year relationship with a Mexican-American man who knew I was Native, but always ignorantly called me Cherokee, despite my telling him repeatedly over our relationship that I was Luiseño. My younger sister was determined to get me away from life for a few days. She, and one of her friends from UCLA, invited me to attend the four-day Jump Dance ceremony on the Yurok reservation in Northern California. During this trip, my sisters' friend's father told us a story of his tribe and concluded it by stating that it did not matter how much Native blood ran through our veins, we were all Native and that was all that mattered. It was the first time in my life, at the age of twenty-six, that I felt like I truly belonged. This forever changed my perspective on what my Indigeneity meant to me – inadvertently providing me with the motivation to complete my undergraduate degree and giving me the direction needed to begin working in the Native community.

When I began this research, I romanticized the cultural loss that my grandparents, and my whole family, had experienced for multiple generations. My mindset was – in order to be a true Native – you had to know all of your tribe's traditions, speak the language, and know all of the oral histories of your people. As I delved deeper into my research I learned that – while we may not have been telling the history of our ancestors through traditional songs and ceremony – stories, history, and culture were still being passed down from one

generation to the next. Instead of orally (re)telling family histories of culture and the loss of culture, relatives like my great-grandfather, grandmother, and aunts chose to write down our stories so that their descendants would find them after they had passed on. Perhaps this was their way of avoiding the strong emotions that come with the (re)telling of painful experiences. Throughout this journey, I have come to realize that culture is more than traditions – culture is the telling and (re)telling of family histories passed down from one generation to the next. Culture is the resiliency of multiple generations refusing to adapt to Euro-American society. It is learning of how to live in Western society, while still remaining true to Native values, culture, and Indigenous knowledge systems.

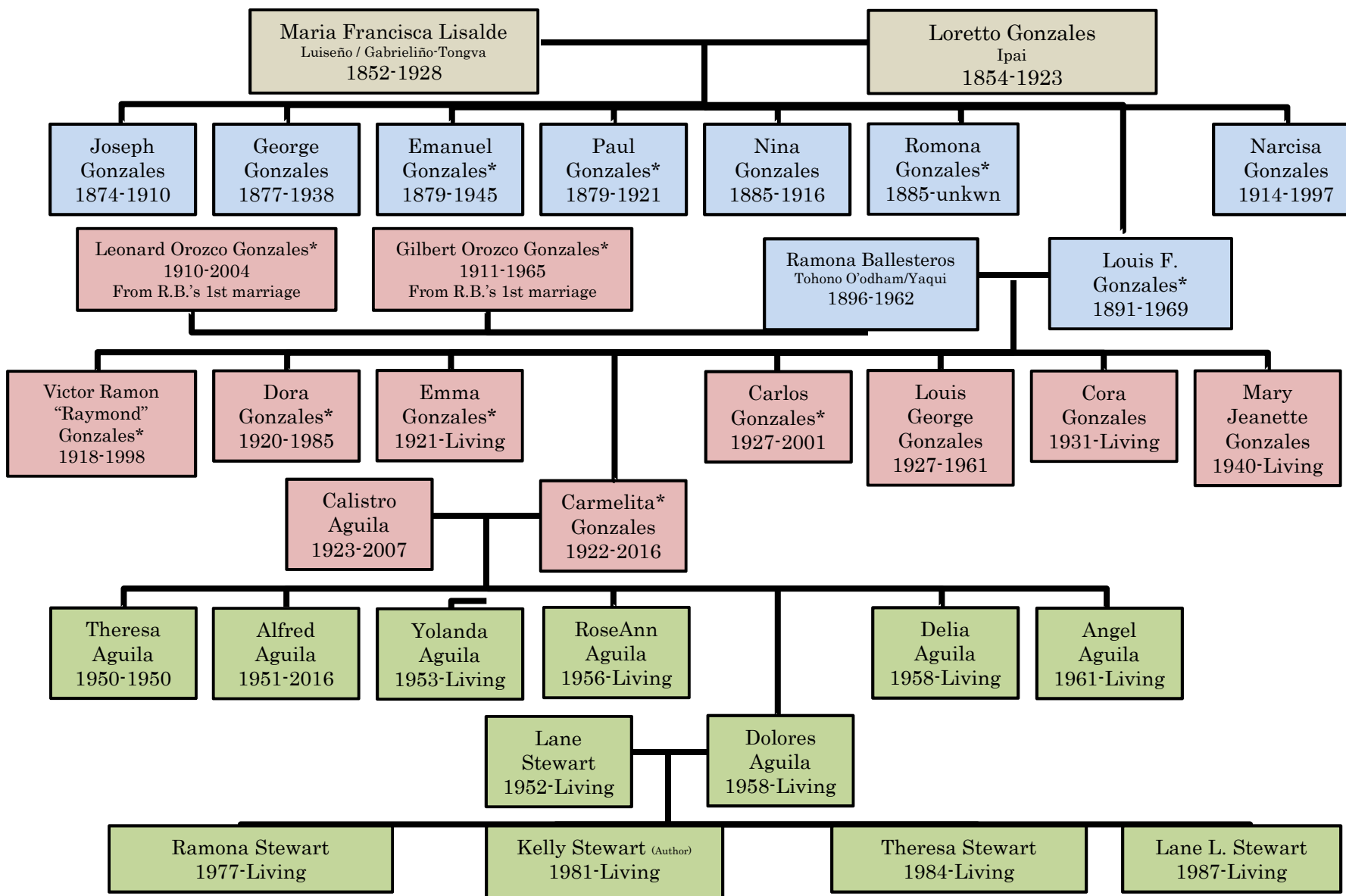
While the boarding school experience resulted in my great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins choosing to be guarded in the (re)telling of our ancestors' experiences as Southern California Indians, it never took our Indigeneity from us. Instead, it turned traditional healers into florists, bird singers into musicians of Western instruments, petroglyph makers into modern artists, and storytellers into Indigenous scholars who (re)write – and (re)right – the Southern California Indian history of our ancestors through Native eyes, giving voices to those who were once silenced. We never truly lost our culture or what it means to be Southern California Indian. In fact, the boarding school experience, felt through multiple generations, made our family stronger as Native people. It created a stronger desire to know our traditional ways, a lasting familial bond that grows with each new generation, and an endless resiliency.

Throughout this journey, I have maintained a list of former Saint Boniface students, which I have cross-referenced with names of Southern California Indian families – identifying descendants of former students along the way – to create a small database of former students and their descendants. Several of these individuals are co-workers of mine, and were unaware that their grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles and

cousins attended the school. I would like to think that their relatives and my relatives were friends, finding solace in each other as they spent a majority of their youth away from their ancestral homes and families. I know without a shadow of doubt that we are all connected through the shared life experiences of our ancestors, and through their determination to keep our culture alive for us and future generations. Interviews with these families and descendants will provide additional insight to the intergenerational impacts of the Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School experience. Many of these individuals descend from families that returned to their tribal communities and reservations upon leaving Saint Boniface, and can provide a narrative that explores whether or not returning to their tribal communities affected the strength of their familial bonds and their knowledge of culture and traditions.

This research is far from over, as my thesis is just the tip of the iceberg in the (re)writing and (re)righting of Southern California Indian histories. It is one of the many first steps in the reclaiming of our narratives as the descendants of the original inhabitants of Southern California. My research has allowed me to find the descendants of family members that my grandparents lost. It has allowed me to connect with the descendants of other former Saint Boniface students, some who were unaware that their grandparents attended the institution, but share the same experiences of cultural loss and reclamation. It has allowed me to ask my community and my rediscovered family, how we can share our communal histories, and the narratives of our ancestors, through a California Indian lens. It has lit a fire under my colleagues to research their own family and tribal histories to truly discover how their ancestors overcame the same hardships that my ancestors endured.

APPENDIX A: AUTHOR'S FAMILY TREE, 1852 to PRESENT DAY



APPENDIX B: GONZALES FAMILY - SAINT BONIFACE STUDENTS

First Generation

1. Emmanuel Gonzales (1890 to 1893)
2. Daniel Gonzales (1890 to 1899)¹⁷⁷
3. Blasé Gonzales (1890 to 1900)¹⁷⁸
4. Conception Gonzales (1891 to 1898)¹⁷⁹
5. Paul Gonzales (1891 to 1899)
6. Romona Gonzales (1891 to 1896)
7. Raymond Soto (1892 to 1893)
8. John Gonzales (1896)
9. Lorenza Gonzales (1899 to 1901)¹⁸⁰
10. Flora Brown (1899 to 1903)
11. Louisa Gonzales (1896 to 1901)
12. Louis Florian Gonzales (1901 to 1906)
13. Isabel Brown (1905)

Second Generation

1. Josephine Velasquez (1910-1914)

Second Generation (continued)

¹⁷⁷ Daniel Gonzales passed away on January 17, 1901 from tuberculosis, at the age of eighteen, while Saint Boniface.

¹⁷⁸ Blasé Gonzales passed away on February 3, 1901 while attending Saint Boniface. His cause of death is not recorded in Saint Boniface cemetery records, but a note of his passing can be located on Saint Boniface quarterly reports and enrollment records from March 31, 1901.

¹⁷⁹ Conception Gonzales passed away on March 11, 1899 from tuberculosis, at the age of twenty, while Saint Boniface.

¹⁸⁰ Lorenza Gonzales passed away on September 23, 1901 from tuberculosis, at the age of eight, while Saint Boniface.

2. Mary Louisa Velasquez (1910-1914)
3. Martin Velasquez (1913)
4. Jose Velasquez (1913)
5. Josephine Gonzales (1914-1915)
6. Alexander Soto (1914-1920)
7. Carrie Soto (1914-1918)
8. Irene Soto (1914-1918)
9. Leonard O. Gonzales (1916-1928)
10. Gilbert O. Gonzales (1917-1929)
11. Anna Gonzales (1916-1917)
12. Frances Gonzales (1916-1917)
13. Margaret Gonzales (1918)
14. Harold Soto (1921)
15. Robert Gonzales (1926-1934)
16. Raymond Gonzales (1927-1934)
17. Dora Gonzales (1927-1934)
18. Emma Gonzales (1928-1935)
19. Carmelita Gonzales (1929-1935)
20. Carlos Florian Gonzales¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ Carlos Gonzales' attendance at Saint Boniface Indian Industrial School was discovered in May of 2018. Additional research will be conducted to obtain enrollment dates.

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