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# The Problem of Imported Culture: The Construction of Contemporary Stó:lo Identity

THOMAS MCILWRAITH

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*When I was going to high school I wasn't taught anything about my own [Stó:lo] history. But I was taught that there were Prairie Indians, and that to be Indian you lived in a tipi and had a long flowing head dress. . . . I wasn't taught about local native culture. And of course watching TV, and watching movies, and everything that was to be Indian was exactly what we were taught in school. Pan-Indianism . . . you take that one culture and one people and apply it to everyone.<sup>1</sup>*

## INTRODUCTION

Children in the Stó:lo community of southwestern of British Columbia, Canada, face a confusing cultural paradox at school in the 1990s. In both B.C.'s public schools and in native-run classrooms, Stó:lo children learn more native history and heritage than ever before. Ironically, much of the native curriculum presents local native people as Plains Indians, and pan-Indian iconography dominates these classroom lessons. These mixed identity messages reflect a community distress caused by the increasing prevalence of Plains Indian cultural traits and activities in the Stó:lo's Fraser Valley territory. This influx of nontraditional cultural expression into Stó:lo society is one aspect of a more general

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debate concerning shifting claims on identity within the Stó:lo community. This paper describes local perspectives on the competing versions of Stó:lo identity. The most widely accepted identity is, however, neither that of a unique Stó:lo past nor fully pan-Indian. It is a blend.

The Stó:lo today are reasserting a flexible and adaptive identity suitable to fit into the contemporary British Columbia political and economic environment. The Stó:lo rely on multiple expressions of their identity as they work to implement a new governmental structure and respond to the intrusion of other First Nations or Pan-Indian culture and the mainstream society. Some Stó:lo people are working to integrate pan-Indian practices within what they view as a unique Stó:lo tradition. There is contention within the community about these stresses, and they are evident in conversations with Stó:lo people.

At heart, Stó:lo people are maneuvering between expressions of pan-Indianism and an alternative retribalism. The Stó:lo do distinguish between cultural imagery that originates locally and that which appears from other places. How is it, then, that pan-Indian activities and images remain so pervasive when the rhetoric used in Stó:lo cultural revival and educational programming is focused on what is claimed to be a historical Stó:lo tradition? If the Stó:lo are promoting or selling a purported native tradition to nonnatives for strategic political or economic advantage, then Plains Indian images are an obvious choice because they are easily recognized by nonnative people. But among some Stó:lo, reviving a traditional Stó:lo culture has come to be foremost in importance for asserting a unique cultural persona. Pan-Indian images are confusing to community members, just as the local symbols, such as the Stó:lo pithouse,<sup>2</sup> are unrecognizable to the general public.

The issue is compounded by the fact that Coast Salish images and customs, including stories, songs, and dances, are seldom discussed publicly; they are incorporeal, private property, owned by individuals and families. Plains Indian activities, including the right to powwow dance or sweat, are, however, located in the public domain. A greater number of Stó:lo people can participate in these events, and there is more chance of non-Stó:lo people, both native and nonnative, accessing these cultural presentations. The magnitude of these issues varies among individuals and age groups, but ultimately Stó:lo people decide for themselves how they will participate in the various aspects and presentations of their culture. For many Stó:lo people, it seems, identities are not

mutually exclusive; they are created by employing elements of Stó:lo culture, pan-Indianism, and the nonnative world.

### Political Sketch of the Stó:lo Nation

The Stó:lo people live in the area surrounding Chilliwack, British Columbia, a territory that stretches east and west along the Fraser River between Langley and Yale. They are a Coast Salish people who spoke the Halq'eméylem language; only a handful of speakers remain today. The Stó:lo have maintained ties with neighboring groups throughout southwestern British Columbia, Washington State, Vancouver Island, and the B.C. interior. Although the network of winter ceremonial dances went into decline during the middle decades of the twentieth century, the return of spirit and *sxwey'xwey* dancing<sup>3</sup> since 1970 has ensured that past traditions will continue. These dance complexes also encourage community and social ties to be maintained, and facilitate the ongoing process of cultural rejuvenation in the wake of substantial population decline.<sup>4</sup>

On 21 October 1994, twenty-one of twenty-three Stó:lo bands united into a single political body. Immediately prior to this, Stó:lo administration had been divided into two major organizations, the Stó:lo Tribal Council and the Stó:lo Nation Canada; this system duplicated programs and is said to have wasted resources. Today, the Stó:lo Nation structure includes representation from the people, the elders, and the chiefs, and utilizes three major policy divisions of aboriginal rights and title, health and social development, and community development, which incorporates education. The organization has a publicly stated commitment to accessible services and cultural development,<sup>5</sup> as reflected in community programming. The formation of this political organization is also recognized as a step toward political and cultural healing,<sup>6</sup> although the potential divisiveness of cultural revival causes some Stó:lo people to see the unification of bands as a nonhistorical alliance that is prone to collapse.<sup>7</sup>

The research for this paper stems from community interest in the topic. The work is a collaborative effort based on fieldwork and interviews with three members of the Stó:lo Nation in 1994 and 1995. Sonny McHalsie, Gwen Point, and Darwin Douglas are paid cultural experts employed by the Stó:lo Nation, and interviews with them give a general perspective on identity issues and the concerns surrounding the diffusion of Plains cultural content

into Stó:lo communities. These people teach Stó:lo heritage to native and nonnative people by coordinating or overseeing cultural programs of the Stó:lo Nation. Although the scope of this work is limited by the small number of people with whom I spoke, these people are respected community leaders, and they represent some of the common Stó:lo views of identity issues. Also, these three informants expressed personal interest in the topic. Chief Sonny McHalsie is a tribal lands and title researcher and is particularly interested in cultural tourism. Tribal education manager Gwen Point provided her views about educational concerns and identity formation through youth programming. Darwin Douglas, Jr., is a young Stó:lo person who has recently completed the Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Programme in Victoria, B.C., and is working at the Xá:ytem Longhouse near Mission, B.C., as a cultural interpreter. Two interviews with Darwin Douglas, one in 1994 and the other in 1995, offered the perspectives of a younger cultural curator on the role of educational programming in heritage maintenance and a chance to see one young person's experience living and working within a traditional Stó:lo ideology.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Rhetoric of Cultural Healing**

The specific words and phrases used by Stó:lo people concerning identity issues, and particularly the way in which they discuss how their culture is asserted today, complement the interview analysis. Of interest is the rhetoric of Stó:lo cultural healing and the words used by the Stó:lo people to identify and talk about local identity problems. The rhetoric of cultural healing is a recognizable pannative idiom in the Stó:lo community, which shows up in Stó:lo publications such as the *Sqwélqwel Te Stó:lo* newsletter<sup>9</sup> and in the spoken word of the cultural professionals. This rhetoric includes the concepts of pride, survival, healing, struggle, and voyage of discovery, and these words provide some Stó:lo people a way of expressing their new native identity, whether it is clearly Stó:lo, pan-Indian, or a mixture of both.

Four main areas of healing rhetoric are used by the Stó:lo: political, educational, heritage, and physical/emotional healing. Like the effort to promote a recognizable Stó:lo identity, the healing rhetoric is said to encourage a positive self-image of being native and to offer the hope of a healed community through cultural strengthening. The use of healing rhetoric is a means of

promoting solidarity against those held to be the perpetrators of the community sickness: European immigrants. But the use of the rhetoric of cultural healing is a major avenue for the intrusion of current pan-Indian metaphors into Stó:lo usage.

The sources of the rhetoric of healing lie within Stó:lo Nation government programming activities, and they reflect the effort that Stó:lo educators have made toward informing natives and nonnatives about local heritage. The cross-cultural program in which local native and nonnative grade four school children are engaged with Stó:lo artisans in the Coqualeetza Longhouse at Sardis, B.C., illustrates this. During the Longhouse program, the children observe craft production such as cedar basketry and cedar carving, they witness Fraser Valley dance styles, and they eat a salmon lunch. One of the intended results of this program is that children will see Stó:lo culture as different from the Hollywood depictions of native life and will become aware that it is flourishing in their community. Similarly, a cultural tourism program teaches young Stó:lo people to guide visitors on tours through traditional Stó:lo territory. These tours include a boat excursion on the Harrison River to view native pictograph sites and a road trip visiting places of cultural importance such as pithouse or fishing sites, with stops for viewing native art and totem poles.

Healing rhetoric also finds sources in community interaction with other tribes and in the need to secure money from nonnative sources, such as the government. The alcohol rehabilitation center at Round Lake, B.C., for example, attracts Stó:lo people and uses a Plains Indian healing circle as part of its program; Stó:lo participants return from the center with this foreign notion of physical and emotional healing. Cross-cultural and intertribal gatherings, such as powwows or native dance, craft, and canoe racing festivals,<sup>10</sup> help to reinforce this idiom in the Fraser Valley by uniting native communities with common experiences. Skills programs, such as the *Tsu'ts'lwatil* Life Skills and Teen Mom programs, use a therapeutic idiom as their models. With relation to nonnative audiences, the rhetoric of healing forms the basis of grant and project proposal writing; again, the language has a therapeutic slant and is central to the winning of money. Although different people use the terminology and rhetoric to differing extents, it is clear that this language has permeated most, if not all, of the daily spoken activities, written work, and community programs. Similarities of healing rhetoric and common political goals indicate, in

fact, that the Stó:lo cultural experts represent different facets of similar issues. The rhetoric of healing is a pannaive vernacular that grips the Stó:lo voice at a less-than-conscious level, and it echoes in people's perceptions of the place of pan-Indianism in traditional lifeways.

### CONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITY

The social and cultural changes that have occurred recently in the Stó:lo Nation show Stó:lo people asserting their native ancestry in ways that affirm community and personal identity. The demonstration of those changes through local events and cultural displays is, in fact, evidence of conscious decisions meant to emphasize a renewed Stó:lo identity. Community members disagree about who the Stó:lo people are and what constitutes traditional geography and lifeways. Several sources, however, denote two common themes in the history of the Stó:lo: the Fraser River and salmon. In a draft of the *Stó:lo Heritage Policy*, the Stó:lo Nation political group is described as follows:

Stó:lo . . . is a collective name for all Halq'eméylem-speaking people living along the lower 170km of the Fraser River in southwestern British Columbia. Today, the Stó:lo Nation (as a First Nation government organization) includes 21 of 30 First Nations Bands. . . . Stó:lo traditional lifeways, past and present, have centred on the Fraser River and fishing, a pattern that has persisted for millennia. Not surprisingly, the Fraser River and fishing are the core of Stó:lo culture.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond this, the value of the salmon resource is asserted as an aboriginal right based on the idea that, "[f]rom time immemorial, salmon have provided a significant contribution—if not the major contribution—to the Stó:lo economy."<sup>12</sup> Finally, when asked who the Stó:lo people are and where they live, Chief Sonny McHalsie explains,

Look at the word for what we call our people: Stó:lo. Look at that meaning, The River, The River People. The salmon, all the land adjacent to the River; you certainly can [hear] the language, Halq'eméylem. What is the extent of Halq'eméylem? Yale, all the way down to the mouth, extending across to the [Vancouver] Island. So you got an idea of who are the Stó:lo, who are the River People.<sup>13</sup>

Ethnographic and historical sources reinforce the notion that the Stó:lo, however constituted, were in close contact with neighboring tribes and communities as a result of their position on the Fraser River. Suttles suggests that the entire lower Fraser Valley area was intimately connected through social networks, just as it was linked to communities in Washington and on Vancouver Island.<sup>14</sup> Suttles stresses that marriages and village ties formed the basis of important economic arrangements that solidified contact and exchange throughout much of southwestern British Columbia.<sup>15</sup>

Not all Stó:lo cultural features derive from these social networks. Many of the features that are prominent in Stó:lo lifeways are attributable to the movement of people in and through the Stó:lo territory. *The Fort Langley Journal* is replete with descriptions from the 1820s and 1830s of native groups traveling up the river past the fort in the summer to fish or raid, and then returning down the river to home territories.<sup>16</sup> Suttles argues that the arrival of the Prophet Dance in Coast Salish territory during the middle of the nineteenth century was via the Fraser River from the Plateau region to the east;<sup>17</sup> this influx provides an early example of the importation of non-Coast Salish customs. Similarly, Duff emphasizes that the Fraser River played an important role in the diffusion of basket designs and other items of material culture that came from the interior,<sup>18</sup> and that marriages, trading,<sup>19</sup> and games,<sup>20</sup> all had links to the Plateau regions. In brief, the Stó:lo have a history of welcoming and accepting foreign ideas and people into their area.<sup>21</sup> The richness of the Stó:lo lands encouraged many families to move to Stó:lo territory or cross through the area in order to reach other owned resource sites. The Fraser River is a symbol of the long history of Stó:lo interaction with outsiders as much as an enduring symbol of local life.

The idea of being Stó:lo is far more than geographical association, and community members articulate several themes when describing contemporary Stó:lo identity. It is noted repeatedly that Stó:lo people have lived in the Fraser Valley for thousands of years and that one of the objectives of educational centers such as the Xá:ytem Longhouse at the Iyá:gtem site near Hatzic, B.C., is to teach Stó:lo and nonnative visitors about the continuity of Stó:lo presence in the area. Darwin Douglas states,

There are certain things here about this [Iyá:gtem] site, and the archaeology that took place that proves some points



about continuity. I always talk [to visitors] about how our people always lived here. . . . Our people lived here for thousands of years. . . .<sup>22</sup>

Douglas also mentions the continuity of cultural traditions and skills, such as fishing: "I talk to them about Stó:lo people, a bit about Stó:lo culture, and important things to us like fishing, and how our lives went traditionally, and the same thing today. We still fish—we're avid fishermen. . . ."<sup>23</sup>

The rejuvenation of the Halq'eméylem language is understood locally as a means of cultural strengthening. Particular problems arise, however, when one person or group within the community tries to assign a particularly relevant Halq'eméylem name to a site or Stó:lo Nation program when, in fact, no word is entirely appropriate or applicable throughout the politically defined Stó:lo territory. Sonny McHalsie comments,

Just within the [Stó:lo] territory there were at least thirteen different tribes. And those tribes had their own dialect of language. When someone spoke, everybody knew exactly where they were from. . . . Even today, trying to revive the Halq'eméylem language, and the elders will say that there is a different way to say every word. . . . The language is spoken differently depending on who you are. They are regional differences. . . . [and class differences].<sup>24</sup>

Sonny McHalsie also articulates the connections that Stó:lo people feel to local places despite the political differences that separate tribal groups.<sup>25</sup> His commentary emphasizes how community divisions are reinforced by dialect conflicts, and, at the same time, how efforts to reform a Stó:lo identity are strengthened by attempts to revive the Halq'eméylem language.

Cultural relevancy is also a focus for reaffirming Stó:lo identity. According to Gwen Point, discussing Stó:lo culture often means guarding against speaking inappropriately about cultural practices with nonnative people or nonspirit dancers. Being culturally relevant depends on one's behaviors and instructing others on the differences that mark one's Stó:lness:

There's a real fine line between what you do and what you don't share [with nonnatives]. When people come into the Longhouse we tell people this is a sacred place—don't throw things in the fire. And we'll share with them the legends and

the songs that belong and the songs that can be shared will be shared. . . . I guess what we've learned is to be culturally appropriate. That's the responsibility of all of us Stó:lo. . . . Our children are very much aware. . . .<sup>26</sup>

Being culturally relevant also includes the efforts made in the community to limit the import and translation of cultural traits from different native experiences into Stó:lo identity. To Sonny McHalsie, Plains Indian stories are irrelevant in Stó:lo territory, because such stories are geographically specific.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, the use of local words for foreign cultural events or symbols, such as calling a powwow a *switlem* (the Halq'eméylem word for winter dance) demonstrates a measure of disrespect for the Stó:lo tradition.<sup>28</sup> Since opinions differ among Stó:lo people, however, consensus regarding the use of foreign ideas will depend on continued respect for the ideas and actions of others.

The connections between identity and place and between the past and the present are acknowledged as part of one's native Stó:lo identity. Sonny McHalsie mentioned this connection:

If you ask me what is Stó:lo, I am not just thinking what we did now. I'd like to think as to what we did in the past and what was the importance of those things in the past. . . . In [my] past they weren't important, but as soon as I learned about them they became important. The continuity of it. . . . It must have been important in the past to our elders, so it has got to be of importance to our future. I have to base a lot of Stó:lo culture, I have to look at it as a tie of the past to the way we live now.<sup>29</sup>

Sonny McHalsie agrees that cultures change, but he is mindful of the history on which those cultural expressions are based. Similarly, Friedman emphasizes the interconnectedness of global processes and social contexts, history and geography. Friedman contends that the way in which historical processes are best framed is by a review of the narratives used by a group that draw the past into the present; it is necessary to acknowledge the reformulation of the past in the present in order to study group identity.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Friedman writes that myth and history are "simultaneously a discourse of identity; [they consist] of attributing a meaningful past to a structured present."<sup>31</sup> Thus, the ways through which the remembered Stó:lo past is reconstituted in the present reflect how identity construction can exploit the resources of history.<sup>32</sup>

### Public versus Private Culture

The displays of cultural symbols that occur throughout the Stó:lo Nation constitute visible signs of being Stó:lo and professing an aboriginal identity; they are, in fact, used as ways of creating boundaries within the native community, and between native and nonnative groups. Educational programming is used as part of identity formation and as a means of reasserting a recognized political image. Ultimately, the forging and maintenance of personal or group identities are at the heart of cultural presentation. The ways in which Stó:lo people choose to present themselves follow a cultural and a real world logic: These identities make sense for the Stó:lo in their navigation of local, provincial, and national politics.

Making sense of the cultural images that are displayed publicly to native and nonnative audiences, and those activities that remain hidden from all but the initiated is not easy.<sup>33</sup> The powwow event, for example, is a flashy dance and song ritual that highlights the place of the dancer in an advertised circuit of public activities. Rynkiewich's analysis of Chippewa powwows describes in detail how powwows can have group integrating properties within a local or a pan-Indian culture. Rynkiewich asserts, however, that it is more likely that powwows will have their own unique formation histories based on their connection to revitalization movements, or their development in isolated areas or urban centers.<sup>34</sup> In fact, says Rynkiewich, powwows can also help native people to find acceptance in American society.<sup>35</sup> Corrigan's study describes three types of powwows, two of which are public events, usually directed toward making money.<sup>36</sup> In the Stó:lo community, the powwow circuit gives more native people the chance to participate in recognized native activities than would otherwise be able if the Longhouse were the only place for such expression.<sup>37</sup> Summer festivals encourage powwow dancing and promote other group demonstrations of nativeness, such as *slahal* playing (a gambling game),<sup>38</sup> by bringing people together.<sup>39</sup> Powwow dress and Plains Indian regalia have been used in the Stó:lo community since at least the 1950s and 1960s; Jilek depicts Stó:lo Chief Richard Malloway wearing Plains Indian dress in conjunction with his role in establishing native summer festivals.<sup>40</sup> Even the Longhouse and the Cultural Tourism programs emphasize an overtly public presentation of the traditions of the Stó:lo people.

*Sxwey'xwey* and *syuwen* dancing have a history of public expression. Interviews with Stó:lo people indicate that in the 1930s *sxwey'xwey* dancing was performed in Vancouver and Victoria for the nonnative public.<sup>41</sup> Entertainment and monetary gain motivated these performances:

[T]he dance appears to have become used for "entertainment", a display which deliberately showed off that part of Indian culture for festivals. . . . By the 1950s, *syuwen* dancing was done in the summertime at festivals, again as "entertainment". Some groups still do this. Stó:lo people are quick to point out that this is "just for fun", and not (and is not intended to be) the real winter dancing, or a spiritual expression.<sup>42</sup>

The Canadian Indian Act of 1876 prohibited native dancing until 1951, and this likely encouraged these presentations of local dance styles as entertainment. Beyond covert dancing, public performances were the only way in which dancing could continue legally, and it is possible that the private religious components of these dances were altered in ways that allowed the Stó:lo to express themselves uniquely to a white public. The public nature of the performances reduced native cultures to a repeated show, thereby diminishing the actuality of a flourishing native culture.<sup>43</sup>

In recent years, Longhouse spirit dances have become more sacred and private. Most often, the dancers belong to established families that have wealth and influence in the community. Bierwert argues, in fact, that at one time the *sxwey'xwey* dances were the family-oriented, status-raising dance, and they were in contrast to the extremely secret spirit dances:

Social prestige, gauged by the giving of wealth items, was the focus of [family rituals] and altogether the rituals were signs of collective solidarity and family status. In contrast to the inner emotional intensity of smokehouse dancing, the occasions were more like today's canoe racing festivals.<sup>44</sup>

Since the 1930s, there has been increasing secrecy surrounding *sxwey'xwey* dancing,<sup>45</sup> and this change has culminated in a private ceremony of cultural significance today:

The *sxwey'xwey* . . . is not public. [A] big gathering down in Vancouver, the signing of [a] treaty, it was brought out then.

It seemed like a public thing but I guess in actual fact it really wasn't. Most of the places I have seen *sxwey'xwey* it was traditional gatherings. People aren't allowed to take pictures; people aren't allowed to record them. So they are fairly private. They are not something that you can just get up and do, you know, if you go out to a school. . . . But you can get up and do a powwow dance, and the same with a smudge and opening prayers.<sup>46</sup>

Amoss writes that social distance within Coast Salish political realms is maintained by the secrecy surrounding the spirit dance complexes and a special relationship with the spirit world.<sup>47</sup> The training for spirit dance initiates is carefully protected, and these dance communities provide tightly formed groups and a specific Coast Salish native identity for its participants. Arguing that spirit dancing and *sxwey'xwey* dancing of the Longhouse are restricted cultural display provides contrast to the public nature of powwow dancing. Coast Salish activities are more guarded, and thus less accessible, than Plains Indian events, and as a result, the Plains or pan-Indian culture is reinforced as a dominant image. Many Stó:lo people do, in fact, participate in both the Longhouse and powwow dancing, and it seems obvious enough that the powwow circuit offers an outlet for pannative expression, while at the same time, Stó:lerness is guarded behind the closed Longhouse doors. The result, then, is to create boundaries between native and nonnative peoples, as well as to separate different groups within the Stó:lo Nation itself; social devices tie Stó:lo people together, just as they create space between them.<sup>48</sup>

## LOCAL REFLECTIONS ON IDENTITY

### Cultural Values and Traditional Ways

The importance of Stó:lo cultural values permeates the words of some community members, and this characterizes the contrast between Stó:lo tradition and pan-Indianism. Sonny McHalsie indicated that respecting others' ways and ideas began among Stó:lo people out of the diversity of cultural expressions that existed within the Fraser Valley:

Because [ours] is an oral history, there are different details of stories, and that's when elders started saying to respect other people's ways and traditions. It doesn't make anyone more

important or anyone right or wrong, especially if it is doing something good. That's where that came from.<sup>49</sup>

The difficult part of that accepting tradition was, however, that Sonny McHalsie's opinions concerning tradition were not always respected in return. He stated, "[I]t wasn't until I talked to the elders that I learned that I was supposed to respect other people's teachings. But how are they respecting my teachings if they just get up and do this smudge? . . . There is a place for respect in that [Plains Indian] culture, too."<sup>50</sup>

Connected to this idea are the traditions of family teachings and the role of the elders in community and family life. It is important for families to be taught what being Stó:lo means and what traditions exist, and there is a need to educate parents so that the family can help prevent children from falling into crises of identity: "The reason [the] children didn't feel good about who they were . . . was because the parents weren't successful or the parents weren't feeling good about who they were. . . . How can I give [Stó:lo traditions] to my children if I don't know them myself?"<sup>51</sup> Often these teachings are veiled in healing rhetoric; Gwen Point indicates that educating her children in First Nations cultural ways generally was crucial to promoting both a positive feeling of personal worth and reviving appropriate Stó:lo values.

The sense that many members of the Stó:lo community require help to heal the emotional and physical scars that remain from years of personal uncertainty about their First Nations identity surfaces in Stó:lo Nation writing and in conversations with Stó:lo people. For example, in Stó:lo Nation pamphlets and in the *Sqwéłqweł Te Stó:lo* newsletter, community healing is discussed and solutions are offered; in just about every case, the need to reaffirm a Stó:lo identity is seen as the foremost goal of healing projects. Political healing is a stated priority:

In order for a strong, healthy and unified Nation, we must reject the form of leadership that [The Indian Act Election Regulations] has . . . imposed upon us. We must return to the form of leadership that is based upon our traditional practices and values. Dear brothers and sisters, please take to heart these words. If we want a Nation strong and healthy we must find our way as Stó:lo and not as Indian Act Indians. I encourage you to learn more about our culture and traditions.<sup>52</sup>

This quotation is supported by numerous other articles and bulletins through which the Stó:lo Nation program managers advertise their projects; the need to increase and individual's sense of worth is addressed repeatedly.

Stó:lo people testify repeatedly to the need to strengthen Stó:lo tradition and cultural ways in order to reaffirm a positive personal Stó:lo identity. The value of spirit camps<sup>53</sup> and of the Longhouse Programme and similar interactive workshops at the Xá:ytem Longhouse are seen as central to demonstrating to Stó:lo people, and particularly youth, something of their heritage. For young people, learning their culture has had a therapeutic effect. Darwin Douglas perceives this change in his community:

I notice a lot of sobriety. . . . I can see that a lot of people are . . . getting away from that drug and alcohol. I think it is just because the Spirit is sort of coming back or something. And I see it; people are getting strong.<sup>54</sup>

Similarly, knowing one's heritage offers hope for identity reformation and renewed community health:

[I]t's really important that our people know the history. They have to know where they've been. They have to know what our people have gone through. Although it's negative, the point is we've survived. . . . [Y]ou could take away all our regalia[,] . . . you could take away our language, you could do these things to our people, but you can't take away the spirit. . . . I think that our people are getting to the point where they realize that; who they are.<sup>55</sup>

It is clear that community healing offers people a positive image of being Stó:lo. Delivered through carefully designed programs, the pan-Indian language of healing is critical to this revival, just as the Stó:lo traditional values of respect, family, community, and pride are fundamental to feelings of worth.

### **The Diversity of Cultural Expression**

The greatest tensions between the varieties of Stó:lo identity come from the use of Plains Indian cultural expressions, such as Cree songs and powwow gatherings, in this Fraser Valley setting.<sup>56</sup> This is a contentious issue, and, importantly, no one in the

community attempts to describe what denotes traditional Stó:lo with any exclusivity. Although some community members are prepared to define Stó:lo people based on the extent of territory—and clearly some traditions are deemed Stó:lo by their use of local resources or demonstrable stories—the boundaries of culture are ambiguous<sup>57</sup>. Stó:lo icons must compete with Plains Indian symbols; when, for example, Stó:lo people wear jackets displaying Plains Indian images of powwow dancers or hang dreamcatchers from the rearview mirrors of their cars, both native and nonnative people receive mixed symbols.

Sonny McHalsie's perspective on this debate suggests that while the practitioners of Plains Indian traditions demand respect, they make difficult the goals of reaffirming traditional Stó:lo practices. Just as Stó:lo stories and dance ceremonies would be out of place on the Plains, the Plains Indian culture is removed from its proper geographical context when powwows, smudges, and sage ceremonies are performed in the Fraser Valley. The same occurs when Plains Indian names are taken by Stó:lo people without personal ties to the regions from which those names originate. The prevalence of pan-Indian influences in the Stó:lo territories, of course, confuses local identity assertions, especially where children are involved as participants or observers.

Gwen Point observes that there is a need for venues other than the exclusive winter dance tradition, in order for people to become spiritually involved in cultural and aboriginal activities, Stó:lo or otherwise. There are alternatives to winter dancing, including many traditions of Plains Indian origin. Gwen Point describes the arrival of powwows in the Stó:lo territory and their place as a means of cultural expression:

And [big drum powwows have] only come to this area in the last twenty-five years. And we've started to promote that, our family, simply because the Longhouse isn't meant for everyone—not everyone can be a part of that. The sweat lodge is available for everyone, but not everyone is comfortable with that. And soccer is a good avenue for our people, but not everyone is part of that. The canoe racing . . . is good for the people, but not everyone is part of that. It is not just one thing. There has to be a lot of different areas that our people can say, "Well, I've tried this and it doesn't work. I'll try this." And the powwow dancing seems to be taking off, and it's exciting.<sup>58</sup>



These areas of community involvement facilitate personal healing, and for Gwen Point that is much more vital than the arguments other community members expound about authenticity; at heart is the opportunity to participate in a positive and affirming aboriginal activity.

Cultural reassertions encourage community interaction. The return to Coast Salish traditional ceremonies after their decline during the period of residential schooling and Indian Act enforcement plays a significant role in identity formation,<sup>59</sup> and in the reinforcement of contemporary community ties.<sup>60</sup> Participation in the Longhouse and *sxwey'xwey* dancing, in Stó:lo Nation government activities, and in various education programs allows many, but not all, Stó:lo people the opportunity to be involved in the community. Gwen Point speaks about other community events that promote interaction between community members and visitors to the region. Native festivals, such as the Seabird Island Festival held annually in May at the Seabird Island Reserve, include soccer tournaments, canoe races, and craft sales. These festivals bring people together from all over the region and permit the practice of pannative activities, including powwows. The festivals also give Stó:lo native artists a chance to sell their works, many of which are Prairie influenced. As a result, more people are aware of Stó:lo culture in all of its many variations. These events are accessible to a large number of people, and for that reason they are employed as viable means of asserting both an aboriginal and a Stó:lo identity.

## NEGOTIATIONS OF IDENTITY

### The Diffusion of Plains Indian Culture

On first glance, it appears odd that a united Stó:lo territorial claim can be structured for presentation before the British Columbia Aboriginal Treaty Commission<sup>61</sup> when many of the cultural symbols visible in the community belong to foreign native groups. For example, how could the cultural assertions of a retribalizing aboriginal group be compatible with the pluralities of pan-Indian expressions? Some Stó:lo people feel that pan-Indianism is dangerous to the political realities of land claim negotiations, and in fact they work actively with programs and policies to stop the influx and use of Prairie culture<sup>62</sup>. Concerning this one political level, however, the provincial government is not always informed

enough about the differences between Stó:lo and Plains Indian culture to recognize the contradictions, although some locals do. Similarly, the powwow circuit is firmly rooted in the community and will not likely disappear. Thus Stó:lo imagery integrates symbols that insiders might recognize as nontraditional but that the public is not always able to distinguish.

Examples of the community issues surrounding the contrasts between Plains and Stó:lo traditions illustrate the problem stated above. Two dominant cultural symbols are the Stó:lo pithouse and the Prairie tipi. In one case, a Stó:lo campground owner advertised his business on the Trans-Canada highway with a large tipi. Nonnatives recognize the image of the tipi, and its connection with the tent and camping make it an ideal lure for tourists. Ironically, the tipi was placed on a pithouse depression, thus negating the marginal Stó:lo image of a pithouse in favor of the stereotypical Indian tipi. The result is the reification of Plains Indian cultural traits in the Stó:lo area, adding to the identity confusion among Stó:lo and non-Stó:lo people.

Different explanations are offered for the pervasiveness of the Plains Indian culture. The formation of large and active tribal groups confirms a stereotypical image of nativeness that transcends traditional and local native affiliations. Similarly, Plains Indian images of nativeness are reified in Hollywood films, and they challenge locally held ideals of both Stó:lo and pan-Indian culture. In this community, there are at least two reasons why cultural icons from the Prairie are in demand. Sonny McHalsie explains that familiarity encourages the continued adoption of Plains Indian activities:

I think a lot of [its arrival here] was pan-Indianism and our own people's struggle with their own identity, their own personal voyage of self-discovery, and trying to learn about themselves and then finding out that they don't have a culture. A lot of it's been lost, so what do we do? Well, let's borrow. Let's borrow this powwow dance until we find out some more about us. At the beginning I heard . . . let's borrow some of this culture, this smudge, this sweat. But after you do it for so long, you get hooked into it, and accept it as something that belongs to you.<sup>63</sup>

Powwow dancing is also said to satisfy a need for an attainable native identity, since there is a local and spiritual connection to the arrival of powwow dancing. Gwen Point comments,

[T]he reason why we promote [the powwow] is because you can dance whether you're fully outfitted with regalia or whether you are carrying your runners, and you can dance whether you are two or three years old, or whether you are seventy or eighty. . . . An elder came up from Yakima, Washington [for our first powwow], . . . and he said, "I want you [Gwen Point] to tell the people that this belongs to them." And any First Nation that wants to pick this up, it will always be there. He said it's a medicine. . . .<sup>64</sup>

Thus the need for a viable native identity, combined with the subjugation of a locally comprehended base of traditions, has encouraged pan-Indianism. A shift in Stó:lo values is not required by powwow dance participants. Many Stó:lo Prairie dancers are also spirit dancers, and in the absence of a stronger Stó:lo identity, the leap to adopt a visible yet foreign alternative is not great. Similarly, Plains Indian dancing, sweating, and smudging are more egalitarian than *sxwey'xwey* or spirit dancing, for, as Gwen Point comments above, people of all ages can participate in powwows, and initiations are not part of these events. By encouraging a greater number of participants, powwow dancing supports itself and encourages its own growth.

### Issues of Political Economy

The literature in the political economy of identity offers some rationale for the diversity of images that pervade the Stó:lo landscape. With the visibility of large land claim settlements, the public perceives the value of a native identity as increasing. As a result, a claim to aboriginal ancestry in North America becomes a powerful resource for First Nations people. Although it is not true that identity assertions by First Nations groups are purely pragmatic means for obtaining money or recognition, overt techniques of cultural revival help to reclaim diminished cultural standing within the dominant nonnative society.<sup>65</sup> Political economy is a useful approach for crediting the Stó:lo with an active and positive involvement, if not resistance, to the nonnative political realm. Political economy also allows an understanding of how assertions of being Stó:lo are translated into economic ventures, such as cultural driving tours of Stó:lo territory. The symbols of local identity must be recognized by the wider public in order to be utilized pragmatically, and thus the Stó:lo face the task of promoting an identity that is, and in recent decades has been,

overshadowed by the images of Plains Indian culture. Despite this difficulty, the politics of identity are used increasingly throughout North America as a means of recovering a viable strength in governmental affairs.<sup>66</sup>

Ethnographic examples of the political economy approach include the tipi sitting on the pithouse. This advertisement for a camping business is metaphoric of the economic domination that objects from the Plains Indian culture hold over those from the Fraser Valley. Using native summer festivals as another example, Dewhurst's study of Coast Salish summer festivals and Jorgensen's *Sun Dance Religion* explore the economic and social relationships between natives and nonnatives in festival organization. Dewhurst reviews how the festivals solidify images of nativeness within the aboriginal community,<sup>67</sup> and this indicates that economics motivate the domination of Plains Indian symbols. Also, the photographs of Stó:lo elders wearing Plains Indian dress in the 1960s is a reminder of the lengthy association the Stó:lo have with these foreign images, particularly when promoting summer gatherings.<sup>68</sup>

Jorgensen's focus is the American Southwest. He offers the idea that festivals give an opportunity for native people to continue traditions of sports, competition, and cultural expression through dancing.<sup>69</sup> His research is applicable to the Stó:lo summer gatherings, for these events are native organized and raise money and awareness of issues in the local community. At the same time, festivals encourage people to meet on a regional scale. In terms of identity, economic motives and political opportunism are two forces behind the desire to participate in public, summertime events or other entrepreneurial projects. In addition, the social boundaries established by pan-Indian iconography are pervasive and affect native political economy. Unlike the more private winter ceremonies, the festivals offer Plains Indian powwows as the dance centerpiece against the sporting backdrop of the Coast Salish canoe racing tradition. Plains Indian symbols are currently more marketable than Coast Salish symbols within the native and nonnative communities, and this strength of foreign icons retards attempts to make Stó:lo images more recognizable and more saleable.

There are several other results of the diffusion of Plains Indian culture into Stó:lo territory, reflecting the importance of this debate within the Stó:lo community and its effect on Stó:lo people. Sonny McHalsie mentions that local involvement with Plains

Indian culture leads people to personal self-discovery.<sup>70</sup> Gwen Point adds that it plays a role in group cultural revival<sup>71</sup>. This means that Plains Indian culture can impose on the teaching of Stó:lo tradition or it can become a means of actively reviving a diminished affinity with any native cultures. Regardless, it is clear that this involvement is an accessible, community-level alternative to the exclusivity of the winter dance complex or the athletic venues of group activities such as soccer, softball, or canoe racing.

The growth in participation in Plains Indian activities, however, confuses the revival of traditional Stó:lo activities. The evidence for this includes the translation of Cree songs into Halq'eméylem, and pan-native educational strategies that teach a mixture of native cultures under the label of simply Indian. The arrival of Plains Indian traits also damages political agendas by sending mixed messages to the public. Funding for Plains Indian-related programs and powwows takes resources from other initiatives, thus compounding the difficulties in asserting more traditional Stó:lo ideals in publicly visible educational or social programming such as cultural tourism or the Longhouse programs.

Plains Indian activities offer a great deal to the community, too. Events such as smudges, sweats, and powwows provide a strength of imagery that allows community members to feel that they are part of an active and viable native presence, one that is shared with native communities throughout British Columbia and much of Canada. Despite efforts to assert a traditional Stó:lo or Coast Salish identity, the established philosophies, prayers, and healing circles of Plains Indian culture provide tangible support for repairing the damage caused by being distanced from Stó:lo ways because of residential schooling or population decline. Prairie activities are said to promote sobriety because they are nonalcoholic functions. They generally include places for artists to sell their work, and they provide an opportunity for the community to come together socially. Economic ventures are encouraged by the public nature of the native festivals, for Plains Indian iconography sells well in both the native and nonnative communities. Thus, through increased regional contacts and greater income, a sense of personal well-being and self-sufficiency occurs.

Pan-Indianism is not a homogeneous alternative to Stó:lo culture, and in fact the range of cultural expressions within the Stó:lo Nation further demonstrates the complexities that surround this issue. Although pan-Indianism implies one native culture, Sonny

McHalsie tells of the confusion the public experiences when trying to identify the Stó:lo differently from Haida or Plains Indian Cree people specifically.<sup>72</sup> This reflects the prevalence of Haida culture in the Canadian imagination and indicates that pan-Indianism is regionally varied and less encompassing than the generalization suggests. Film portrayals of Indians represent generic native people by mixing representative native images to trigger recognition within nonnative theater audiences. For the Stó:lo, then, one singular native culture is not easy to isolate.

In contrast to the use of Plains Indian traits to advertise business, the Stó:lo Nation's effort to promote cultural tourism is a way for Stó:lo people to make money and to assert their dancing traditions. Driving tours through Stó:lo territory give Stó:lo youth an opportunity to learn about Stó:lo culture and to present it to interested natives and nonnatives. These tours parallel the older seasonal rounds of working in local industries such as fish canneries in the summer and dancing during the winter. Darwin Douglas mentioned, in fact, that these tour programs encourage young people to become involved in time-consuming Longhouse activities during the winter, while earning a little money at other times.<sup>73</sup> In this case, the Stó:lo do not rely on Plains Indian culture to generate income or express a connection to a native past.

Neither the positive nor the negative aspects of this debate detract from the fact that the Stó:lo are asserting an identity as an active First Nations community. It is clear that a great deal was achieved politically by uniting the Stó:lo Tribal Council and Stó:lo Nation Canada in the fall of 1994. However, the strategic importance of presenting a singular image of Stó:loness is contradicted by the significant cultural variations in viewpoint that exist within the large and diverse political landscape of the Stó:lo Nation. The current Government House of the Stó:lo Nation is a body that oversees the interests of a majority of Stó:lo people from more than twenty member bands. Also, members of those bands hold a variety of views, including differing opinions concerning the use of pan-Indian and Stó:lo traditional symbols in the community.

There are inherent dangers in the discourse of plural identities. As Friedman warns, "The emergence of cultural identity implies the fragmentation of a larger unity and is always experienced as a threat."<sup>74</sup> Friedman indicates that as identities emerge or are reconstituted in a broader public forum, conflicts between the parties involved will exist. The many cultural ideas that are

expressed within the group itself, however, reveal both the difficulties of acting in unison and the strengths of utilizing a diversity of identity-reviving methods; the multiple cultural icons and traits give choice when expressing nativeness, but also complicate any hope of presenting a solitary group image.

Many Stó:lo people, including Gwen Point, participate in both Plains Indian and Stó:lo traditional dances. When doing so, they mix cultural symbols, and culture becomes difficult to label or categorize. Involvement in both forms of cultural expression allows people to emphasize the distinctions between them, therefore keeping the two domains separate. Barth asserts that people sharing a common culture are sometimes distinguished internally by social boundaries.<sup>75</sup> Importantly, people communicate across these boundaries, while at the same time working to protect the persisting cultural differences;<sup>76</sup> thus similarities within the group and differences outside it are accentuated. In the Stó:lo case, the locally situated cultural revival and pantribal cultural acceptance both reflect the boundedness of culture in the Stó:lo territory. These forms of cultural expression are also bounded against the nonnative society, and each identity demonstration serves a different function at the community level. Thus, the Stó:lo people are asserting flexible boundaries within their community, such as those between community powwow and spirit dancers, just as they are now presenting more rigid boundaries to other First Nations groups.

Conscious shaping and presentation of identity allows Stó:lo people to participate in a diverse number of economic and political realms. Although the notion that one cultural image or expression is necessary to local assertions of autonomy, cultural heterogeneity supports cultural rejuvenation more generally among these marginalized people. The availability of different customs and traditions from both within and outside the community offers the individual an opportunity for needed native expression, and this presents the group with alternatives to solving the problem of their lack of visible identity.

### **Education and Identity**

Educational programming in and out of schools in the Stó:lo Nation contributes to an increased native identity awareness. The programs offered by the Stó:lo Nation include the cultural tourism classes, stay-in-school initiatives, and teen mom support groups; in different ways, each one reinforces both a native and a

Stó:lo identity. Gwen Point reiterates the importance of all of these programs, stressing that if one native child is encouraged about his or her heritage or one nonnative person is made more aware, then the programs have been worthwhile. Much of the educational work in the community requires discussion of Stó:lo tradition in cross-cultural settings. The cross-cultural work with elementary school children at the Coqualeetza and Xá:ytem Longhouses, for example, is demanded by local schools to supplement their lesson plans. Witnessing craft making or the preparation of salmon at these centers gives Stó:lo children a chance to see their heritage as alive and flourishing, and nonnative children learn to view native culture as more than tipis and headdresses. Some educators believe that "it is not enough just to learn about [culture]; you must do it."<sup>77</sup>

The impetus for band-controlled schools is an attempt to bring greater local input into cultural revitalization. The Stó:lo believe that this is necessitated by the legacy of poor-quality and assimilationist education in First Nations communities. Sonny McHalsie comments,

I don't think our people had time to learn enough about our own culture, and that's not their fault neither [sic]. The residential schools, the Oblates trying to teach us Christianity, [The Department of Fisheries and Oceans] and [The Department of Indian Affairs] trying to turn us into farmers . . . all these different things. . . . So a lot of our own teachings and own pride as Stó:lo has [sic] been lost.<sup>78</sup>

At the same time, the mixing of cultural traits that occurs at some of the existing locally controlled schools prevents children from seeing the differences among the First Nations cultures that are presented; instead, the different groups are lumped together. The result is confused children who cannot differentiate between Stó:lo and, for example, Haida or Cree cultural symbols.<sup>79</sup> Regardless, native curriculum "is accepted more readily and can be used more meaningfully in band-controlled schools than in the public school system."<sup>80</sup> Native teachers and the band-controlled schools offer a context in which a sense of personal worth can be developed, especially in response to a student's native ancestry.<sup>81</sup> If there are not enough Stó:lo teachers educating children at Stó:lo schools, however, then the local traditions are not going to receive the treatment they might otherwise command. In addition, English has become a pan-Indian *lingua franca*. The solution to this



dilemma is simple enough: educate more Stó:lo instructors. Of course, that is not necessarily possible, and the dearth of knowledgeable Stó:lo teachers reflects the lack of knowledge in the homes and families, the traditional sources of education for Stó:lo people throughout their lives.

Culturally relevant programming is difficult to establish, just as defining Stó:lo traditions, culture, and identity is problematic. One local story tells of children being taught that bingo is a traditional Stó:lo game. If it is important to describe the pluralities that make up Stó:lo culture today, then identity-affirming curricula and programs for local children should include discussions of pannative and Stó:lo symbols, acknowledging other cultures and their crafts and arts, while distinguishing them from Stó:lo traditions. Darwin Douglas's comments regarding his youthful misunderstandings about his identity enunciate the problem of children's exposure to pannative symbols. Yet the extent of Stó:lo programming is only just reaching the point where the youth are able to participate actively in Stó:lo ways.

Cultural education programming offers many community benefits. Programs such as the cultural tours or the cross-cultural Longhouse programs certainly encourage greater awareness of Stó:lo traditions among nonnative students and tourists by introducing them to the native cultural geography of the Fraser Valley or allowing children to talk with and observe Stó:lo artisans working in the Longhouse setting. These activities emphasize that Stó:lo culture is an active, visible, and viable way of living one's life. The cultural tours train young people to deliver the cultural information on the excursions, and the participants in the Longhouse continue to practice their skills. Importantly, all Stó:lo leaders in these programs have an opportunity to socialize regularly with others who are adept at traditional Stó:lo arts. Finally, community-based programs, such as those emanating from departments of the Stó:lo Nation government, "must be considered . . . as indicators of innovation in community development strategies. . . ." <sup>82</sup> Again, tradition can be used as political currency, and these programs utilize the past as a means of depicting a Stó:loness that is different from the way public schools or other local nonnative historical institutions have viewed it. Educational programs that present Stó:lo identity can disseminate that image more widely than would be possible otherwise; for that reason, education is a political force and an agent for asserting Stó:lo cultural strengths and autonomy.

## CONCLUSIONS

Stó:lo identity is constantly shifting in focus and content, and people negotiate the selection of symbols to be adopted and promoted. Although not everyone agrees with the different ways in which Stó:lo people investigate and incorporate foreign traditions into their lives, an ethic of respect prevails. The outcome of these identity struggles is a multiplicity of adopted images. Clearly, the people who already understand Stó:lo history can distinguish the experiences that are not generated locally. The dilemmas of identity construction, maintenance, and presentation lie most heavily with the Stó:lo people who are displaced or alienated by virtue of geographic removal, educational experiences, or lack of interest, as well as with the children. For this reason, Stó:lo educational leaders are working to make Stó:lo culture more accessible and visible. Spirit dancing revivals have allowed many people to return to the spirituality available in the Longhouse. Extracurricular programs encourage Stó:lo youth to become involved in culture activities, and here the local language of cultural healing prevails. Altogether, the logic of utilizing the past to develop a recognizable Stó:lo image in the present is sensible from personal and cultural healing, political, and economic points of view.

Stó:lo people themselves recognize what it means to be a Stó:lo person, despite the fact that the identity with which they are now feeling comfortable is not that of the culture of, say, 1895 or even 1945. A new government structure exploits the available political and economic resources with numerical strength; it must do so to compete and survive. The management of Stó:lo culture and identity is shifting as, for example, the Stó:lo *sxwey'xwey* ceremonies become more private and the Plains Indian images become even more recognized at public summer festivals. In the absence of a stronger Stó:lo presence, educators use formal programs to teach native heritage to Stó:lo children. To do this, instructors must navigate between older forms of healing and newer, pan-Indian expressions of native revival. There is a constant tension between the desire to connect to a larger pan-Indian political and social consciousness and the need to guard the local Fraser Valley native experience, both past and present. It is this cultural duality, however, that reflects the resiliency of the Stó:lo culture and keeps the attention of the Stó:lo Nation community.

Although political realities in the 1990s demand that the Stó:lo government be able to move within a larger, provincial or na-

tional context while asserting a local and unique autonomy, the full recovery of the past as a tool to do so is not possible. The multiple layers of contemporary Stó:lo identity mean that the Stó:lo people are different from before and that the retrieval of an older Stó:lo culture is beyond possibility. The question, then, of how to accommodate and exploit the virtues of the larger world while resisting the pressures of pan-Indian symbols or nonnative politics is answered by local efforts to front a definable image of Stó:lo people.<sup>83</sup> It appears that despite the challenges of that presentation, an asserted Stó:lo identity exists and that it embraces local history just as it incorporates other ideas. Stó:lo identity, it seems, not only creates boundaries between the nonnative and the Stó:lo, and between the Stó:lo and other aboriginal communities, but it bridges those realms as well.

#### NOTES

1. Interview with Chief Sonny McHalsie, Stó:lo rights and title researcher, 23 March 1995, at Hope, B.C.

2. Pithouses were used as winter dwellings by the Stó:lo people. They were constructed along the Fraser River and its sloughs by digging shallow pits and covering them with roofs of cedar logs, mud, and cedar boughs. The low profile of the pithouse helped the structure retain heat and obscured it from the vision of potential attackers (Ralph Maud, ed., *The Salish People: The Local Contributions of Charles Hill-Tout*, vol. 3 [Vancouver, BC: Talonbooks, 1978], 47).

3. Stó:lo ceremonial dances include spirit and *sxwey'xwey* dance complexes that involved formal initiations and spirit questing. The *sxwey'xwey* dance is characterized by distinctive wooden masks with protruding eyes on pegs. See Maud, *The Salish People*, 63–66, for an account of the *sxwey'xwey* story.

4. Interview conducted with Gwen Point, Stó:lo educational manager, 2 May 1995, at the Stó:lo Nation offices, Sardis, B.C. Also, Wolfgang Jilek, *Salish Indian Mental Health and Culture Change* (North Vancouver, BC: Hancock House, 1982). Cultural revivals that foster regional ties have arisen in response to urbanization and the legacies of colonialism. Revival efforts directed by the Stó:lo people include canoe racing and powwow dance circuits that bring people together from all of southwestern British Columbia and Washington State (John Dewhirst, "Coast Salish Summer Festivals: Rituals for Upgrading Social Identity," *Anthropologica* 7:2 (1976): 231–73). Pantribal symbols from this regional contact are quite common in the Stó:lo territory and include gifts sold in craft shops and the display of a Plains peace pipe in the old Stó:lo Tribal Council Research and Development trailer at Sardis, B.C.

5. Herb Joe, "Strength of New Organization Based on Traditional Structures," *Sqwéłqwel Te Stó:lo* 1:1 (1995): 7.
6. Larry Commodore, "Unity Happens," *Sqwéłqwel Te Stó:lo* 1:1 (1995): 1-2.
7. Doug Kelly, "This Time It's Different," *Sqwéłqwel Te Stó:lo* 1:1 (1995): 3,14.
8. The research for this paper was conducted under the auspices of the University of British Columbia's Ethnographic Fieldschool. This paper could not have been completed without the help and interest of Sonny McHalsie, Gwen Point, and Darwin Douglas, Jr. The fieldschool was directed by Dr. Bruce Miller and Dr. Michael Kew. My thanks go to all of them.
9. Two Stó:lo newsletters are cited in this manuscript. The *Sqwéłqwel* newsletter was the news and information forum of the Stó:lo Tribal Council. With the union of the Stó:lo Tribal Council and Stó:lo Nation Canada in October 1994, the newsletter was renamed *Sqwéłqwel Te Stó:lo*, and the first issue was published in January 1995. *Sqwéłqwel Te Stó:lo* means news or true stories of the Stó:lo.
10. Powwow dancing is a form of native dancing that originated on the Plains. It has a following throughout much of native North America, including in British Columbia and Washington State. The powwow dance is performed by people of all ages at regularly scheduled summer powwow gatherings, many of which are also opportunities for native people to play soccer, race canoes, or sell crafts. Significantly, these gatherings unite people from different regions and cultural influences, thus promoting the spread of healing-type rhetoric.
11. Stó:lo Nation, *Stó:lo Heritage Policy* (Sardis, BC: Draft text prepared by the Aboriginal Rights and Title Department, 1995), 1.
12. Lower Fraser River Fishing Authority, *Rebuilding Stó:lo Fisheries Law: Report of the Community Consultation Process*, parts 1 and 2 (Unpublished document held in the Stó:lo Nation Offices, Sardis, BC, 1993), 1.
13. McHalsie interview, 23 March 1995.
14. Wayne Suttles, "The Persistence of Intervillage Ties among the Coast Salish," *Ethnology* 2 (1963): 513.
15. *Ibid.*, 514.
16. Archibald McDonald, *The Fort Langley Journal* (British Columbia Archives manuscript, copy, 1830).
17. Suttles, "The Plateau Prophet Dance among the Coast Salish," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 13 (1957): 387-88. Suttles describes the Prophet Dance as a revival movement that underlay religious activities on the Plateau. It was referred to as the "religious" or "praying" dance and was held under the direction of a leader who interpreted omens. It moved into the Northwest Coast in the middle of the nineteenth century.
18. Wilson Duff, *The Upper Stalo Indians* (Victoria, BC: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1952), 57.
19. *Ibid.*, 79, 95.
20. *Ibid.*, 127.
21. *Ibid.*, 12.

22. Interview with Darwin Douglas, Stó:lo cultural educator, 11 May 1995, at Xá:ytem Longhouse, Sardis, B.C.

23. Ibid.

24. McHalsie interview, March 1995. Thompson and Kinkade discuss the regional and dialectical differences of the Halq'eméylem language, indicating that Halq'eméylem "is a long continuum of intergrading dialects showing considerable diversity, but with mutual intelligibility throughout (Laurence C. Thompson and M. Dale Kinkade, "Languages," in *The Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 7, ed. Wayne Suttles [Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990], 37).

25. Ibid.

26. Point interview, May 1995.

27. McHalsie interview, March 1995.

28. Ibid.

29. McHalsie interview, March 1995.

30. Jonathan Friedman, "The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity," *American Anthropologist* 94:4 (1992): 837.

31. Friedman, "Myth, History, and Political Identity," *Cultural Anthropology* 7:2 (1992): 194.

32. Hill speaks to the danger common to anthropological literature, that of unconditionally disempowering subject peoples. Without attention to the positions and political agendas that exist within anthropologized communities, writes Hill, the interpretive work of the researcher in the name of good, truthful science can be very destructive (Jonathan D. Hill, "Overview, Contested Pasts and the Practice of Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 94:4 [1992]: 810). The message here is clear: Indigenous peoples must make these choices and decisions regarding the writing and rewriting of their histories. Thus, illuminating various issues and providing an ethnographic context for the cultural changes that are ongoing in the Stó:lo Nation reveal the range of opinions concerning local uses of history.

33. For a detailed and theoretical assessment of identity formation and change, see Ward Hunt Goodenough, *Cooperation in Change* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1963).

34. Michael A. Rynkiewich, "Chippewa Powwows," in *Anishinabe: 6 Studies of Modern Chippewa*, ed. J. Anthony Paredes (Tallahassee: University Press of Florida, 1980), 98–99.

35. Ibid., 100.

36. Samuel W. Corrigan, "The Plains Indian Powwow: Cultural Integration in Manitoba and Saskatchewan," *Anthropologica* 12:2 (1970): 254–55.

37. Point interview, May 1995.

38. *Slahal* is a gambling game in which one person hides two small bones, one of which is marked, behind the back, and another person must guess which bone is in which hand. It is often played in teams at social gatherings. See Lynn Maranda, *Coast Salish Gambling Games* (Ottawa: Canadian Ethnology Service, 1984).

39. Pamela Amoss, *Coast Salish Spirit Dancing* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 38–40.

40. Jilek, *Salish Indian Mental Health and Culture Change*, photo between page 96 and page 97.

41. Crisca Bierwert, "Tracery in the Mistlines: Semiotic Readings in Stó:lo Culture" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1986), 482.

42. *Ibid.*, 482–83. See also W.W. Hill, "Stability in Culture and Pattern," *American Anthropologist* 41 (1939): 258, for an example of Navajo winter ceremonials performed away from the reservations for remuneration.

43. Comparative information is found in Bunny McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 82. In the biography of Molly Spotted Elk, McBride describes how public performances of Indian songs during the urban cabarets of the 1920s "simultaneously destroyed and preserved Indian music." McBride continues by explaining that Native Americans of Molly's generation grew up with mixed and changed cultures and that audiences demanded popularized versions of native culture. The result tended to be native people who could not distinguish the original from the corrupted version (McBride, 82).

44. Bierwert, 492.

45. *Ibid.*, 484.

46. McHalsie interview, March 1995.

47. Amoss, "The Power of Secrecy among the Coast Salish," in *The Anthropology of Power*, ed. Raymond D. Fogelson and Richard N. Adams (San Francisco: The Academic Press, 1977), 139.

48. *Ibid.*, 131. Some Stó:lo people participate in a number of different social domains. Besides the opportunity to dance in two aboriginal dance traditions, spirit and powwow dances, the Stó:lo are actively engaged in both the native and nonnative worlds. These areas of personal involvement are not mutually exclusive, and, in fact, Gwen Point emphasizes that she is a Stó:lo person regardless of the domain in which she physically exists.

49. McHalsie interview, March 1995.

50. *Ibid.*

51. Point interview, May 1995.

52. Doug Kelly, "A Strong, Healthy Nation Based on Traditional Practices," *Sqwéłqwel* 3:1 (1994): 2.

53. The spirit camps are summer gatherings for youth, families, or elders run through the Xolhmi:lh child welfare program. They involve camping for up to a week at a culturally significant site. The camps stress an opportunity to learn about Stó:lo values and provide a chance for families to spend time together away from the reserves or local towns (McHalsie interview, 1994).

54. Douglas interview, May 1995.

55. Point interview, May 1995.

56. The expressions of Plains culture referred to in this paper include elements of material culture such as dreamcatchers, peace pipes, and tipis, activities including smudges, sweat lodges, and powwows, and incorporeal property such as Prairie songs and names.

57. McHalsie interview, March 1995.

58. Point interview, May 1995.

59. Michael Kew, "Central and Southern Coast Salish Ceremonies since 1900," in *The Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 7, 476.
60. See Dewhirst, "Coast Salish Summer Festivals."
61. The B.C. Aboriginal Treaty Commission was appointed and began work as the provincial treaty negotiating body in 1993.
62. McHalsie interview, March 1995.
63. Ibid.
64. Point interview, May 1995.
65. See Rynkiewich, "Chippewa Powwows," 100, for comparative information.
66. Randall H. McGuire, "Archaeology and the First Americans," *American Anthropologist* 94:4 (1992): 827.
67. Dewhirst, "Coast Salish Summer Festivals," 240–41.
68. See Jilek, *Salish Indian Mental Health and Culture Change*.
69. See Joseph G. Jorgensen, *The Sun Dance Religion: Power for the Powerless* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).
70. McHalsie interview, March 1995.
71. Point interview, May 1995.
72. McHalsie interview, March 1995.
73. Interview with Darwin Douglas, 13 May 1994, at Sardis, B.C.
74. Friedman, "The Past in the Future," 854.
75. Frederik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1969), 15.
76. Ibid., 15–16.
77. Point interview, May 1995.
78. Interview with Sonny McHalsie, 11 May 1994, at Sardis, B.C.
79. McHalsie interview, March 1995.
80. Jo-Ann Archibald, "Locally Developed Native Studies Curriculum: An Historical and Philosophical Rationale" (M.Ed. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1984), 108.
81. Ethel B. Gardiner, "Unique Features of a Band-Controlled School: The Seabird Island Community School," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 13:1 (1986): 19.
82. Claudia Haagen, "Strategies for Cultural Maintenance: Aboriginal Cultural Education Programs and Centres in Canada" (M.A. thesis, University British Columbia, 1990), 10.
83. This distinction between pancultures and local cultures, panresearch and local research is from Bright and Geyer: "The central themes of . . . world history cohere around the ever more radical disjuncture between global integration and local autonomy" (Charles Bright and Michael Geyer, "For a Unified History of the World in the Twentieth Century," *Radical History Review* 39 [1987]: 69). The tensions between resistance and accommodation and between integration and autonomy offer a caution to the ethnographer: The investigation of cultural formulation within one society is far more complex than simply a review of the local dynamics of culture.