

sweetness through the cold winter months. Herbs, including peppermint, were also picked and dried. They were then mixed with pounded meat, to keep it fresh in the stores.

In the river valleys, women picked rushes to weave baskets and mats. They also peeled willow twigs and dried the bark to make a harsh-tasting substitute for tobacco. They collected shells to make jewelry, and used digging sticks made of buffalo bone to uproot wild turnip which grew all over the Plains.

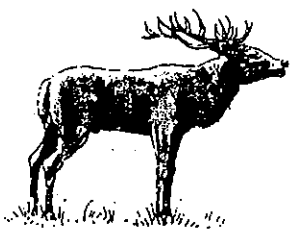
Prized animal

Men killed more than buffalo. They also went hunting eagles, owls, hawks, foxes, beavers, deer, porcupines, and ermine. Then they used the feathers and skins from these beautiful creatures to decorate their clothes. Eagle feathers were rare and very valuable. In many tribes, only the bravest warriors were allowed to wear them. Bones from the elk (a large kind of deer) were highly prized, and young men made whistles from them. They played tunes, copying the sounds elks make during the mating season. After dark, they sent secret messages to their girlfriends in musical code.

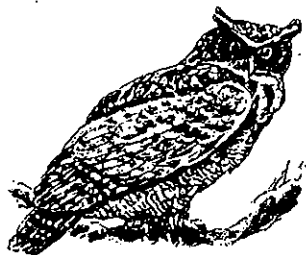
DEATH TRAP

Plains Indians hunted birds and animals by using decoy traps. The hunter dug a pit big enough to hide inside, and covered the surface with twigs, leaves, and dried grass. He made peepholes to spy through.

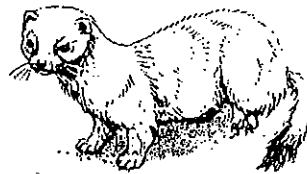
Then he placed his decoy animal—often a stuffed wolf—at one edge of the pit, and waited for hungry birds and animals to investigate. As they came close to the decoy, the hunter speared them, or tried to catch them with his bare hands.



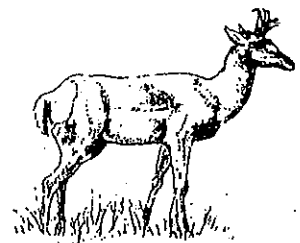
▲ The elk was admired for its bravery. Its horns and bones were used as tools or musical instruments.



▲ Plains tribes watched owls to learn about night wisdom and gentle ways. They used its feathers.



▲ The ermine was highly prized for its fine pelt or skin. It was used as trimmings on clothes.



▲ Indians caught the pronghorn antelope by running it into exhaustion.

Appendix 23

The Land

(PREVIOUS PAGE) Milk River Valley, Alberta; *The Stampede* by Frederick Verner (1883) (inset).

Harvesting the plants and animals meant that the Blackfoot traveled continuously throughout their territory. Although the prairies appear flat, they include many rolling hills. Tipis and other luggage were loaded on travois, which were pulled by dogs and, later, horses. These loads were unstable and would easily tip. Therefore, the Blackfoot trails wove among the undulations and coulees, leading to river crossings.

THIS IS THE PLACE where we have always lived. The foothills, the plains, the rivers, the lakes, are the places where our ceremonies and sacred bundles were given to us. The plants and the animals provided our people with food and with the raw materials for clothing, shelter and tools.

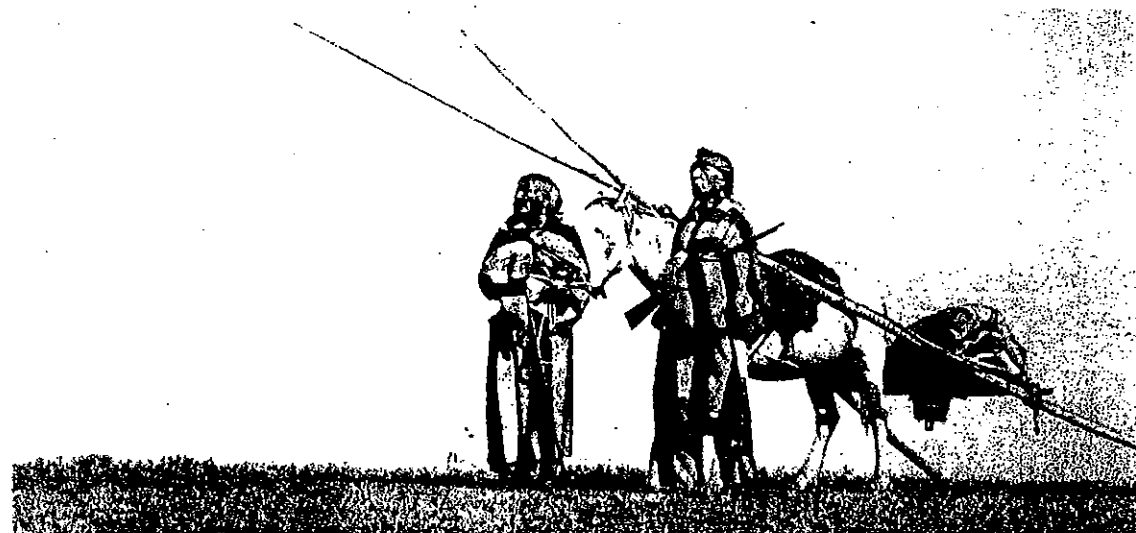
This is our home and our land.

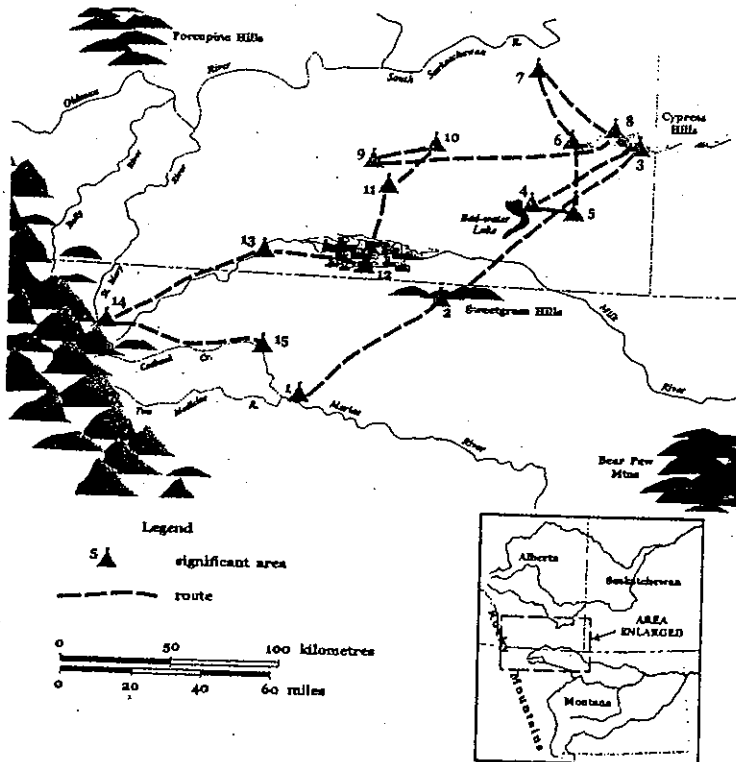
This is *Nitawahsin-nanni*.

Moving Camp

In the past, our people moved their camps as needed, to be close to wood or water, to take advantage of ripening berries and roots, and to follow the migrating herds of buffalo and other animals. During the year the attitude of our people also changed as their concerns with food meshed with the annual cycle of ceremonies.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Motoyi (Spring) | A time of beginnings and new life. The new year of ceremonies began as our people opened Thunder Medicine Pipe Bundles and Beaver Bundles. Our people began to look forward to <i>ako-katssinn</i> and plan for the <i>ookaan</i> . |
| Niipo (Summer) | Our people attended the <i>ookaan</i> and saw all of their relatives at the |





Although Blackfoot territory includes a number of large rivers, water navigation was not an important means of transportation. When large rivers needed to be crossed, people sometimes constructed circular "bull boats" from bull buffalo robes lashed to willow frames. At other times impromptu rafts were made. Many rivers had shallow ridges running across them. Ancient Blackfoot trails linked these ridges in a complex pattern across the landscape.

In the old days the Blackfoot moved constantly to harvest the plant and animal resources of their territory. These moves were not random but were directed towards places where the resources were known to exist. This map shows one

year's travels of a clan of Amsskaapipikani in the last decade of the nineteenth century. 1. Marias River; 2. Sweet Grass Hills; 3. Cypress Hills; 4. Pakoki Lake; 5. Manyberries; 6. Buffalo Head; 7. Seven Persons; 8. Cypress Hills; 9. Long Lake; 10. Where-The-Women-Left-Their-Lodgepole; 11. Green Lake; 12. Writing-On-Stone; 13. Milk River; 14. Cutbank Creek in the foothills; 15. Cutbank Creek. In 1900 an Amsskaapipikani described one year's travel of his clan as they sought buffalo, harvested berries, and collected tipi poles.

"How did the Native people relate to the land? They practiced co-existence with nature and everything. We did not rule over the land."

ALLAN PARD,
APATOHSIPIKANI

ako-katssinn. We moved across the open plains, harvesting the ripening berries and plentiful game.

Mokoyi (Autumn) Work intensified as our people prepared for winter. Hunters brought in more game. Our people drove buffalo into *pis-skaan* (buffalo jumps) and made plenty of "dry meat" and *moki-maani*. Beaver bundles were opened again and our people asked for help during the coming winter.

Sstoyii (Winter) Our people moved to coulees, river bottoms and the foothills to be near plenty of wood and to be sheltered from winter storms. They were less active outside. The long nights were a time for storytelling and teaching values to the children. This was the time for all-night ceremonies.

In the old days our people could not drive to a local supermarket or hardware store to buy food and tools. Our people understood how to survive with the resources at hand. This required in-depth knowledge of ecology:

Where do important plants grow? When is the best time to harvest them? Where are the best tipi poles? Where is the best place to hunt various animals? What are the best traveling routes?

"In late spring, towards summer, we would get syrup cans and string and go berry picking. This is where we learned that everything has a meaning, a benefit and a purpose. If we take it for granted, it won't be there. We need to appreciate that those things are there for our benefit - that was what motivated us to pick as much as possible. The other thing I learned was ... if you take something, always give something back. The children would take berries, but also put some back on the ground."

ANDY BLACK WATER, KAINAI

The environment was the classroom; it taught our people how to live. Through the stories that the adults told of the places they had traveled, children learned where to camp, hunt and find plants.

Dogs and, later, horses helped our people as they traveled.

Imitaa: Dogs

We respect and care for imitaa. They have always been with us. Dogs understood the old people when they talked to them. Dogs guarded the camps and helped our people hunt.

Before our people had horses, dogs carried everything. We lashed two lodgepole pine poles together, crossing them above the dog's shoulders. A platform of willow was made between the poles, behind the animal's tail. Tipi covers and other heavy gear were lashed onto this circular platform. We call these platforms *manistsi-staan*. A dog could carry a heavier load this way than with a pack.

Ponokaomitai-ksi: Horses

We have an ancient story about how horses came out of a lake and began to live among us. They were smaller than modern horses and we did not ride them or use them as pack animals.

When the horses came back to us, our people called them *Ponokaomitai-ksi* (Elk Dogs). They were as big as elk and worked for our people in the same way as dogs.

When horses appeared among the Blackfoot in the early 1700s, they were immediately incorporated into the culture. People became expert equestrians, trainers and breeders. The Blackfoot connected on a spiritual level with their powerful buffalo chasers and warhorses, and often kept these animals tied close to their tipis.





Horses were superb beasts of burden. When the Blackfoot adapted their dog travois to this larger animal, they could transport heavier loads over longer distances. This enabled people to increase the size of their tipis and accumulate more material goods. As some families acquired more horses than other families, different social classes began to emerge.

Our people first saw these big horses when the Shoshoni, our southern neighbors, rode them into battle against the Aapatohsiikani in the early 1700s. At that time our people suffered a great defeat. Soon after, they began to trade and raid for horses with their southern and western neighbors. Before long our people had large horse herds and had become great equestrians.

Horses changed the lives of our people. They made it easier to move camp. Our people could carry larger tipis and more things. A man with a large herd of horses had great prestige.

We have a special relationship with horses. We recognize their unique nature and power. Our people have medicines to keep our horses healthy and strong.

Horses – when we break horses we take them into deep water and then ride them. When we were kids we used to collect round rocks to play with, each one represented a horse. We even had spotted rocks for pintos! They used to train horse to walk fancy, not just for fun but because they were not easy targets that way.

ALLAN PARD, APATOHSIPIKANI

We honor our horses with elaborately decorated tack. When moving camp, people dressed in their finest clothes and outfitted their horses in bright displays. Today we continue this tradition in parades for rodeos and Indian Days.

Iiniiksi: Buffalo

They are called buffalo, or bison, and were the most important animals to our people. The large herds covered the land.



Buffalo, or plains bison, covered the Plains in countless numbers and were the most important animal in the Blackfoot world. Food, clothing, shelter and tools all came from the buffalo. The behavior of bison was never recorded in detail by the European explorers. It seems, however, that the animals came together in vast herds during the summer. In the fall and winter they split into smaller groups and drifted north into the parkland, west into the foothills, or into the larger river valleys. *The Stampede* (1883) by Frederick Verner (top); *The Stampede* (1862) by Jakob Hays (bottom).

In the summer the animals congregated in large herds on the open plains. In the winter they broke into smaller groups and sought shelter in the coulees and river bottoms. Their movements left deep tracks across the grassland. Our people followed these tracks as they moved their camps.

Thick hair on the shoulders protects the animals from freezing blizzard winds. Bison walk face-forward into storms and thus emerge from them sooner. This example teaches us to meet our challenges head-on.

The sharp horns and hoofs discourage attacks by wolves. Buffalo's legs are powerful, and they are swift and agile runners. Few of our horses could match them. Often our horses were gored when our people chased the buffalo.

Sometimes, buffalo were killed singly by lone hunters. At other times hundreds of animals were run over a cliff face such as this one at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. These *pis-skaan* required the coordinated efforts of many people. Once the animals were killed, it became important to skin them and process the meat quickly, before it spoiled.

Pis-skaan: Buffalo Jump

In the old days, before the horse returned, *pis-skaan* was very important to us. During the late summer, the winter and the spring we would lure *iiniiksi* towards steep cliffs. At these *pis-skaan*, or buffalo jumps, we could kill hundreds of animals at one time.



Using a *pis-skaan* was complicated, difficult and dangerous. People from many clans worked together. Early in the morning, as the sun came up, we sent our young men to bring the buffalo from their grazing grounds. Sometimes several small herds were driven together. As the animals began to move towards the cliff, they were funneled between converging lines of low stone mounds. We stuck branches with bits of hide in the of these mounds. Bison have poor eyesight and these sentinels kept the animals running towards the edge.

While our young men worked among the animals, our ceremonial leaders called on the spirit of *iiniiksi* to pity us and make our *pis-skaan* successful. Men who had the rights to the buffalo-design tipis, *iinisskimm* (buffalo calling stones) and Beaver Bundles gathered together to pray for success and sing their buffalo songs. The *pis-skaan* succeeded only if the ceremony was properly conducted.

The Importance of *iiniiskii*

iiniiskii gave our people almost everything they needed. Our people used the buffalo's strong hide to make tipi covers, containers, shields, and soles for our moccasins. Heavy fur robes served as blankets and overcoats during the coldest weather. Sinew from the backbone was strong thread. The bladders made good containers for water and soup. Hoofs were our tipi "doorbells" and rattles. Our people boiled hoofs for glue and for fixatives for paint on our tipis, shields and containers.

Bison meat was very important to our people's diet. Much of the meat was cut into thin strips and hung to dry

in the sun. This natural processing was much healthier than our modern use of chemicals. The raw kidneys were a real treat. For a balanced diet our people made blood soup and blood sausage, which provided iron and other base elements.

Today, many of our ceremonies to honor the *iiniiksi* continue to help us. Our ceremonies with *inisskimm* (buffalo calling stones) and buffalo-design tipis are still passed on. Dried buffalo tongues given out by the Holy Woman at the *ookaan* bring us good health throughout the year.

Our split horn headdress with the eagle feather trailer honors *iiniiksi*. The horns and *apaiai* (white weasel) make up the head. The eagle feathers are the spine. A man who owns a headdress such as this can call on the strength and power of the buffalo.

We owed our entire way of life to *iiniiksi*.

Plants

Our world is filled with plants. Our ancestors knew all the plants that grew here and had uses for almost every one of them. Some were used for tools, some for food, others for medicine. Often we moved camp to be near a spot where an important plant had ripened and was ready to be collected.

Our tipi poles, tripods, backrests, bowls, bows and arrows were all made from different kinds of wood. Lodgepole pine makes the best tipi poles; it grows in the foothills of the Rockies, the Cypress Hills and the Porcupine Hills. Bow wood (chokecherry) was collected only when the sap was running. Saskatoon branches were

our arrow shafts. Bowls were made from burls growing on cottonwood trees.

Plants were a key part of our diet. Berries and roots supplied us with the vitamins and minerals that kept us healthy. Some plants provided important enzymes to help our people digest meat and make optimal use of fats and proteins. Berries were especially important, providing many vitamins and nutrients. Different berries ripen at different times, and we often moved camp to be near a berry as it was ready for harvesting.

We also make medicine from plants. Some of these medicines are common knowledge. Others are gifts from the Spirit Beings, and we need special rights transferred to us before we can use them.

We do not use as many native plants today. Our environment has changed greatly; many plants are now more rare or have completely disappeared. Our knowledge of medicines may be disappearing as the old people depart without teaching the young people. Our health is suffering as a result.

Our Sacred Places

Our sacred sites are places where significant things happened to our ancestors. This is where the ancient stories took place. These sites are uniquely important to us. They tell us that our ancient stories are true. They tell us that we belong to this place in a way that no other human being can.

Our sacred geography shows us our path through life. By following this path, our people will live long and productive lives.

Economic Organization

AS YOU READ

In general, traditional First Nations and Inuit worldviews led to economic systems that stressed self-reliance, thoughtful use of resources, and sharing through family networks. Everyone contributed and was in turn taken care of in a system of mutual support. As you read pages 116–119, compare how European economic models differ from traditional First Nations and Inuit models.

IN ORDER FOR ANY SOCIETY TO MAINTAIN THE WELL-BEING OF ITS PEOPLE, IT MUST HAVE SOME SORT OF ECONOMIC SYSTEM IN PLACE — AN AGREED-UPON SET OF RULES OR CONVENTIONS THAT ALLOWS FOR THE SATISFACTION OF BASIC

human needs. All economic systems address the same fundamental questions. What is to be produced (food, material goods, clothing, shelter)? How are goods to be produced (human labour, machines, animal power)? Who gets what has been produced (those who can afford it, those who need it most, shared among all)?

All over the contemporary world, the European model of supply and demand — also known as capitalism, the market system, or private enterprise — is increasingly becoming the dominant economic system.

What goods or services are produced (supply) is determined by what people want (demand). Who gets those goods and services (distribution) is based on who can afford them. Price is established by the available supply of the product. The greater the demand and lower the supply, the higher the price. For example, only some people can afford to buy gold or diamonds or

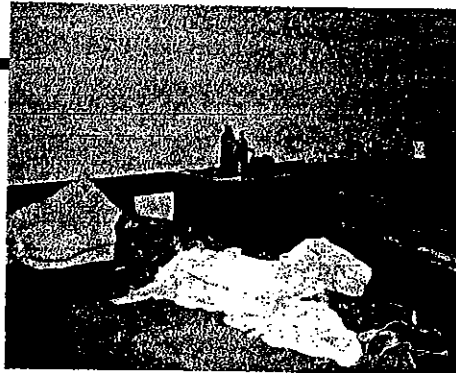
a private jet because these things are expensive and not many are available. However, T-shirts are cheap and plentiful. Many people therefore own one or more.

In capitalist systems, people generally work in one part of the economy and purchase everything else they need. Complete self-sufficiency or independence from goods and services provided by other people is rare.

Many people in today's industrialized nations work hard to accumulate wealth. With this wealth, they consume more goods. This kind of consumption has more to do with status and desire than need.

Many people are concerned that the natural world cannot replenish itself in the face of such exploitation. In this sense, **exploitation** is the unethical use of the planet's natural resources to satisfy short-term desires at the expense of future generations. Keep in mind, however, that there are more people in the world today than in centuries past. Some people argue that the world is running out of certain resources because more people need more food, homes, and material comforts. Others maintain that more moderate use and consumption habits would ensure enough for future generations.

In communism, another economic model that is used by a few countries in the world, the society also exploits the planet's resources to achieve comfort and security for the human population, but the



The capitalist system can mean a great standard of living, as shown in the photograph on the left of a kitchen from an affluent home. However, it can also mean enormous differences in lifestyle between the wealthy and poor. Compare the photograph of the kitchen to the photograph on the right of the homeless shelter in Edmonton, Alberta. How did traditional institutions such as the give-away help deal with such economic differences between people?

distribution of these resources is more equitable. Everyone shares what is produced according to need rather than ability to pay. In reality, however, many inequalities persist, even in societies with communist ideals.

Traditional First Nations and Inuit peoples' economic systems are distinctly different from capitalist and communist systems because their worldviews see a fundamentally different relationship between humans and the planet.

Through the oral tradition, First Nations and Inuit peoples learn that the Creator and the natural world supply everything needed for life. This provision is not, however, without restriction. All things in nature — plants, animals, mountains, and streams — are equal to humans and must be respected as such. Demand for Earth's resources must therefore be modest and according to need.

Traditional First Nations and Inuit ways of consuming resources also differed markedly from those of capitalist systems. People took from the land only as much as they needed. In part, this practice reflected practicality. It did not make sense to possess an abundance of goods that had to be moved from

place to place each season. More importantly, collecting more than was needed would be wasteful and show a lack of respect for Mother Earth's gifts.

To be sure, a hunt might be very successful and the community might enjoy an abundance of food, hides, or fur, but no one would have hunted extra animals just for fun. Strict rules governing the use of resources meant that plants and animals could replenish themselves regularly.

Traditional First Nations and Inuit economic systems were based on harmony with nature, but also on equality and sharing within the community. As you learned on page 75, the method of food distribution after a large game hunt illustrates principles of sharing and equality. If group of ten hunters went out in search of deer, even if only three actually participated in the kill, all the families of the ten hunters received equal portions of meat. This arrangement meant that the whole group ate, regardless of luck or circumstance.

Theoretically, a single hunter might get lazy or choose not to work hard, knowing that he would benefit from the hunt anyway. This tended not to happen because pride and status were important incentives.

Other *Ni-tsi-ta-pi-ksi*

OUR TERRITORY had almost everything our people needed. However, there were some resources that were not present. Our people were part of a continent-wide trading network that existed thousands of years before the Europeans arrived. The stone here is not very good for making tools, so we obtained better materials from our neighbors across the Rocky Mountains, south to the Teton Mountains, and east to the middle Missouri River area. Our ancestors also traded shell ornaments. Dentalium (a small shellfish from the Pacific coast) and cowrie shells (from the Gulf of Mexico) were traded throughout the continent.

Our people were not interested in dominating others or forcing our way of life on them. They coexisted with their neighbors just as they coexisted with the rest of Creation.

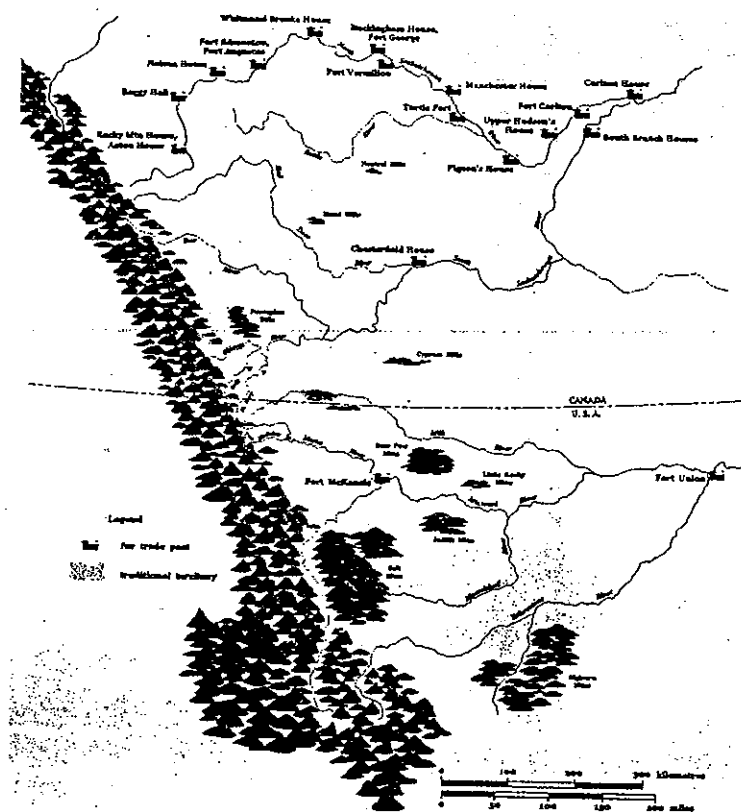
Peace treaties were made before trading took place. These treaties ensured that the exchange was done in a spirit of goodwill. It was our custom to exchange gifts as a sign of friendship. Everyone also smoked a pipe and asked *Ihtsi-pai-tapi-yopa* to witness the treaty and help everyone live up to their obligations.

Although our people traded with their neighbors, they did not tolerate others living or hunting in their homeland. Our men were known as fierce warriors who were fearless in battle as they kept other people out of *Nitawahsin-nanni*.

(PREVIOUS PAGE) Siksika parading through Calgary, 1912; trade goods used by the Blackfoot (inset).

"The white people thought they were coming into empty land. We had a life and a system going here and it's still ongoing."

PAT PROVOST,
APATOHSIPIKANI

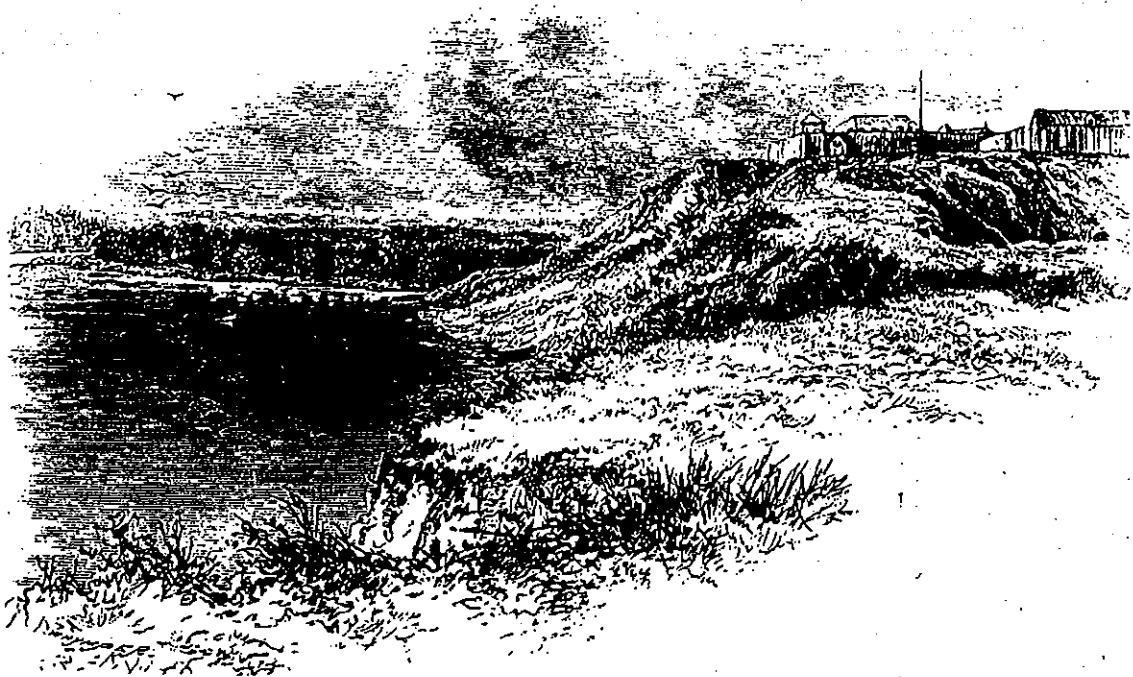


The northwestern Plains was the last part of North America in which fur trading posts were established. The Blackfoot welcomed the presence of traders but ensured that no long-term trading posts were built in their territory. Consequently, these posts were situated along the periphery of the territory. Traders were also inhibited from crossing the mountains westward to trade with the Ktunaxa and other Native groups. Thus, firearms were kept away from the Blackfoot's traditional enemies, resulting in a strategic advantage in battle and trade.

Napikowann: The Fur Trade: 1740—1830

When the first fur traders came to our territory, their behavior seemed strange and inappropriate. We did not understand them; they reminded our people of the *Napi* (Old Man) stories. We called them *Napikowann*.

The *Napikowann* came from the north, east and south. They competed with one another for business. They wanted buffalo meat, *moki-maani* and furs. In return they gave our people tobacco, guns, steel knives and arrowheads, blankets, cloth and many ornaments. They also gave our people liquor.



Fort Edmonton was the largest fur trade post built near the Blackfoot territory. Situated on a promontory on the north bank of the North Saskatchewan River, this post commanded an excellent view of the river valley and the river crossing places. Moreover, the river linked the fort with the rest of the Hudson's Bay Company's trading network to the north and east. From an 1872 engraving by Edward Whymper, *View of Fort Edmonton*.

The Trading Ceremony

Our traditional protocol has always been important to us. When our people met to trade with *Napikowann*, they always made a treaty first. A pipe was smoked in friendship and *Ihtsi-pai-tapi-yopa* was called on to help us work well together. Then our people gave the *Napikowann* leader some of our best furs. In return, their leader gave gifts to our leaders. Often, alcohol too was given.

We had no tradition of making or using alcohol, so our people easily became drunk. They often fought and killed one another while intoxicated. The alcohol was a mixture of rum, gunpowder and other toxic ingredients

that slowly killed or blinded those who drank it. But the alcohol was addictive and many of our people were caught in its snare.

Leaders

Some of our men were more willing to trade than others. They visited the traders often, sometimes bringing many people with them. The traders believed that these men were leaders of all our people and gave them many gifts.

Napikowann did not understand our system of leadership. They expected us to have a single leader who acted on everyone's behalf. The *Napikowann* could not grasp our flexible leadership style and the need for consensus in decision-making.

Over time, the *Napikowann's* approach to our leaders greatly affected our society. Men who regularly traded at the posts became wealthy in new goods and controlled access to the traders. Some began making arrangements with foreign governments. Our people's traditional authority was undermined and the authority of a single spokesman was enhanced.

Furs

Our people had always coexisted with the Spirit Beings who had shown them how to live and had given our people food and shelter. With their help, we quickly adapted our hunting strategies to the new demand for furs and hides.

Our people did not depend on the new goods obtained through trade. Rather, we incorporated and

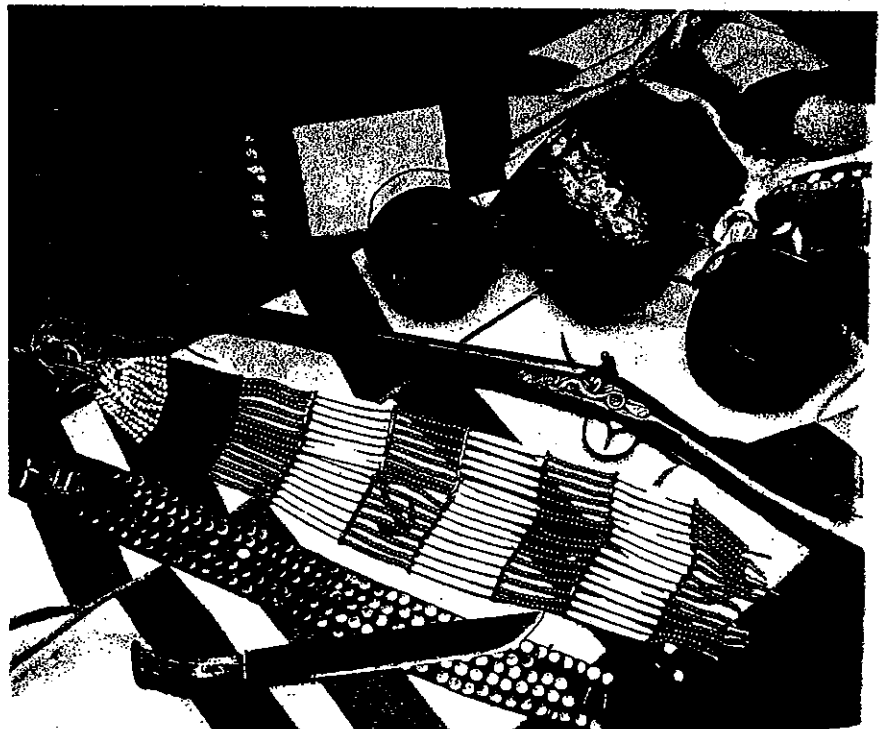
adapted those we found useful. Steel knives and metal arrowheads lasted longer than those made of stone. The copper and iron pots made cooking easier. Blankets and cloth were brighter and easier to sew than hides. Beads and other ornaments were a novelty.

Firearms

Firearms were one of the most important things *Napikowann* brought to our people. Muskets made hunting easier, although the early ones were fragile and the firing mechanisms often broke. Eventually, the firearms were made sturdier and became more important in our hunting. Our people shortened the barrel so they could hunt from horseback.

Guns also changed the way our people fought. Before *Napikowann* came, our people faced their enemies using large, heavy shields for protection. They could

The Blackfoot modified many trade goods to make them more usable in a mobile, equestrian culture. Blankets were sewn into hooded coats called capotes. Musket barrels were sawed off for easier manipulation while on horseback. The barrels were also flattened into hide scrapers with serrated blades. Pieces of copper were flattened and rolled into small cones; when these cones were hung on shirt and dress fringes, they tinkled with a musical tone.



shoot arrows at one another all day with few casualties. Firearms made the conflicts riskier. More young men died in battle.

After our enemies the Shoshone rode horses into battle and defeated us, we were eager for revenge. We visited some Cree, who were then our allies, and asked for their help. They readily joined us, and brought muskets they had obtained from the English traders. When we met the Shoshone, we had a great victory.

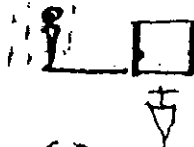
Disease

Napikowann also brought disease:

- smallpox (Sika-piksinn)
- measles (Aapikssinn)
- whooping cough
- tuberculosis (Isttsikssaa-isskinaan)
- influenza



Year of Small Pox



When the children died with measles



Cough disease

The newcomers brought more than trade goods; they also carried disease. Blackfoot Winter Counts record the important events of each year with pictographs. The Count kept by Bull Plume, an Apatohsipikani, began several generations before he was born. It records devastating epidemics of smallpox, measles, tuberculosis and other diseases. These ravaged almost every generation.

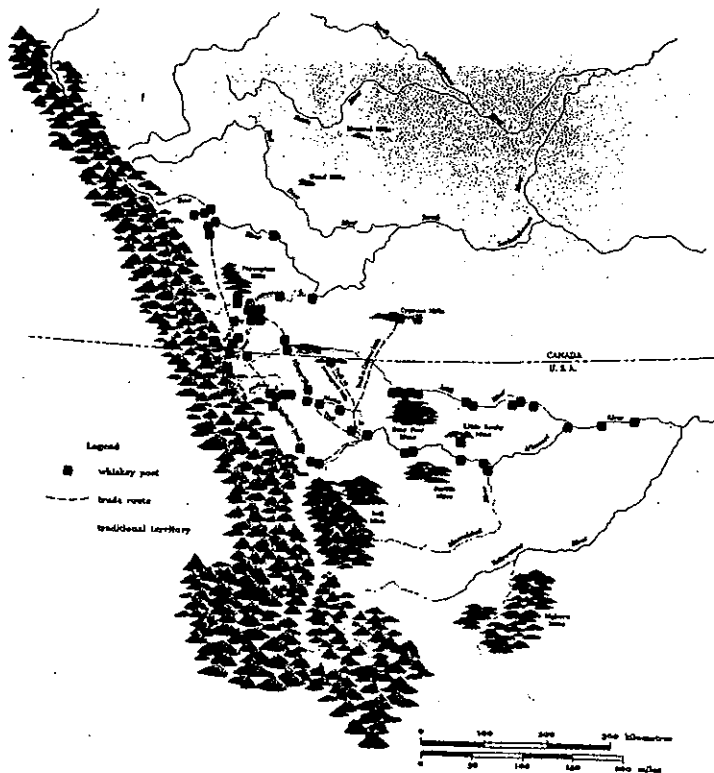
Every fifteen to twenty years — each generation, in other words — a new epidemic spread through our people's camps. Each time, a half to three-quarters of our people died: infants, children, adults, our old people. Families were devastated. The knowledge of our ceremonial leaders and old people began to disappear.

Our people had traditional ways of curing diseases, with herbs and prayers, but these were powerless against the new diseases. Our people had no way to fight these new, invisible enemies.

Whiskey Trade: 1830—1880

As more *Napikowann* came into our territory, changes happened that our people could not control or resist. These newcomers did not want furs, dry meat, or *moki-maani*; all they wanted was tanned buffalo hides. These

By the 1830s the European and American demand for buffalo robes surpassed that for beaver and other fur. It was impractical to ship these heavy robes by canoe and boat to Montreal or Hudson Bay. It was more efficient to transport them by cart to Fort Benton, Montana, where they were loaded onto riverboats. The routes from Fort Benton followed the old Blackfoot trails.



Appendix 26

THE MÉTIS BUFFALO HUNT

The buffalo hunt helped shape the Métis people into a cohesive nation. It took military precision to organize hundreds of men, women, children, horses, oxen, and Red River carts for a trek hundreds of kilometres to where the buffalo herds were. The hunt was a prominent feature of life at Red River by 1820. It contributed to the development of the distinct Métis way of life and sense of nationhood.

The hunting technique used by the Métis differed from that of their First Nations ancestors. Instead of driving buffalo over cliffs or into enclosures, and killing them with spears and arrows, the Métis used



guns and horses called buffalo runners in a technique called “running the herd.”

At the beginning of the hunt, scouts were sent to locate the herd. When it was spotted, the hunting group rode forward in single-line formation. At a signal from the captain of the hunt, the riders charged the buffalo, causing them to stampede. The riders would then gallop into the herd, select an animal, and fire at point-blank range from their galloping horses.

An experienced hunter on a trained horse could kill ten to twelve buffalo in a two-hour period. When the hunters were finished, the women and children moved in to skin and butcher the carcasses.

THE 1840 BUFFALO HUNT

The 1840 buffalo hunt occurred at the peak of the buffalo trade. The hunting party left its organization camp near the Red River in early June. It included:

- 620 men
- 650 women
- 360 children
- 586 oxen
- 503 horses
- 1240 Red River carts

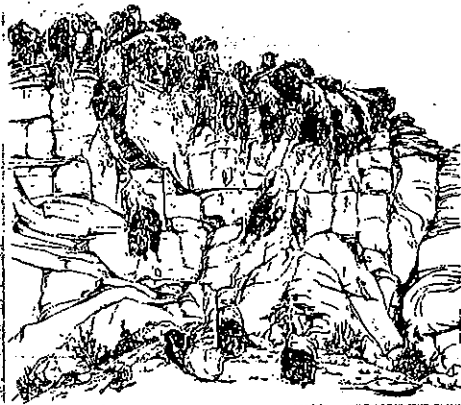
They travelled 402 kilometres in nineteen days before the first buffalo were spotted. When the hunt ended on August 17, the party had over 454,000 kilograms of meat and hides to transport back to Red River.

Indigenous Knowledge

The buffalo hunt was a significant part of both Métis and Plains First Nations cultures. Using instructions from your teacher, create a shield that celebrates the buffalo hunt. Select a specific First Nations or Métis group and research appropriate symbols and colour to use on your shield. Use traditional symbols and techniques for your shield or be creative in devising your own approach. — turn back to page 133 to look at Ron Noganosh's shield for ideas.

Appendix 27

THE BUFFALO JUMP



A low rumble, like approaching thunder, rolls across the prairie. The buffalo are stampeding. Tightly packed together, the massive, shaggy beasts move as one, united in their frantic flight. Hundreds of huge hooves, the largest bearing as much as one tonne in weight, pummel the tall grasses, and the earth begins to shake.

Suddenly the leader spots the precipice where the land abruptly drops. Bellowing her anger and distress, she desperately attempts to turn, but it's impossible to stop the momentum of the panicked animals behind. Like a roaring freight train, they slam into her at 50 kilometres per hour. Hundreds of animals spill over the cliff, crashing down to their deaths.

For thousands of years, Plains First Nations had hunted buffalo, their primary food source. The buffalo also provided clothing, tools, and shelter. First Nations used various hunting methods, the most sophisticated being the buffalo jump.

First Nations hunters took advantage of the buffalo's instinct to stampede when faced with danger. They searched for sites where cliffs occurred without warning, and they devised a way to channel the stampeding herd over the cliff.

Buffalo jump sites exist in Canada and the United States, but the oldest and best-preserved site is Head-Smashed-In, in southern Alberta. The name arose after a curious young man, who wanted a close-up look at the stampede, had his skull crushed by falling buffalo.

The enormous site has four distinct components. The gathering basin, 40 square kilometres of grazing area, attracted herds late into fall. Hunters disguised in buffalo robes lured the herd, imitating bleating calves, towards the drive lanes. As the herd moved closer, the hunters circled behind, shouting and waving robes to frighten the herd into a stampede. Thirty different lanes, lined with 20 000 cairns, directed stampeding herds towards the cliff site.

Below the cliff site was the processing area, where groups camped while butchering the buffalo, sun-drying the meat for pemmican, and cleaning the skins. Every part of the buffalo was used. Such a huge operation required the cooperation of many groups that separated again after the hunt.

REFLECTION

In this unit, you have learned about the importance of the buffalo to the First Nations people. You have also learned about the buffalo jump, a unique hunting method. In this reflection, you will have a chance to think about what you have learned and how you can apply it to your own life. You will also have a chance to share your thoughts and feelings with your classmates. This is a great opportunity to learn from each other and to have fun!

Write a story about the hunt told from the perspective of a young person joining the hunt for the first time.

Write a poem that evokes the emotions of the site or the hunt.

Perform a dance, song, play, or skit highlighting some aspect of the hunt or culture of the people who used the jump.

Create a drawing, picture, sculpture, video, or diorama that portrays the drama of the hunt.

If you can, visit the site before you begin your project. To learn more about Head-Smashed-In, visit the Web site at www.head-smashed-in.com.

Appendix 28

Saskatchewan and Aboriginal Peoples in the 21st Century: Social Economic and Political Changes and Challenges

TABLE 3.56
The Aboriginal Education Gap in 1991 - Population % Age 15 and over

High School	Did Not Complete School Diploma	Received High After High School,	Some Education Including Trade Certificates
Aboriginal People	60.4%	6.6%	41.7%
Non-Aboriginal People	44.5%	11.5%	55.3%
Education Gap	15.9%	-4.9%	-13.6%

Source: Aboriginal Peoples Survey (percentages do not add to 100% due to overlap)

In the Aboriginal community, 60.4% of the population 15 and over have not completed high school; people who have not completed high school have difficulty finding jobs and are paid at a lower rate if they are employed. Less than half of Aboriginal people 15 and over have any education after high school; people with some education after high school have a far better chance of finding a job and are paid at a higher rate when they are employed.

The problem of the education gap is compounded by the fact that the population is growing at a significant rate. Consequently, enrolments in educational programs must increase at a rate to match the emerging population rate and an additional increase is required to close the education gap.

3.6.7 Aboriginal Education Levels

The 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey reported that in Saskatchewan, 28% of Aboriginal adults were taking post-secondary education or training for a certificate, diploma or degree in 1990/91. There were 10.1% of adults pursuing upgrading in high school equivalency and another 17.9% reported that they had taken a training course of some sort.¹⁹ A comparison of education levels at the trade certificate, diploma, non-university and university indicates that 38.4% of Aboriginal people are enrolled compared to 49.7% of the non-Aboriginal population.

Table 3.57 shows the enrolment levels of Aboriginal students in selected Saskatchewan educational institutions. In 1996, there were 7,838 Aboriginal students enrolled in post-secondary programs including certificate, diploma and degree programs. This does not include adults who are pursuing elementary and secondary upgrading programs such as Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education and Grade Twelve Equivalency programs.²⁰

TABLE 3.57
Aboriginal Student Enrolment in Saskatchewan

	1996
First Nations	
Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology	809
Saskatchewan Indian Federated College	1,542
Teacher Education: ITEP, NORTEP,	504
Metis	
Gabriel Dumont Institute	120
Dumont Technical Institute	136
Teacher Education: SUNTEP	144
Non-Aboriginal Institutions	
Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Applied Technology	2,321
University of Saskatchewan: All Colleges	651
College of Education	1,611
TOTAL NUMBER ENROLLED	7,838

Table 3.58 shows the positive enrolment trend and increasing enrolment in Aboriginal post-secondary institutions. In 1996 there were 2,855 students enrolled in First Nation Institutions and 400 students enrolled in Metis Institutions. There has been tremendous growth in programs such as the Certificate in Indigenous Business Management which doubled in size from 41 to 92 between 1995 and 1996.

¹⁹ 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey; Schooling, Work and Related Activities, Income, Expenses and Mobility, Cat. No. 89-534.

²⁰ For example, in Adult Basic Education programs at SIAT, over 26% of students identified as Aboriginal people. SIAT reported 118 Aboriginal students enrolled in 1996.

First Nation institutions have been expanding their program offerings and experiencing increased enrolment in all program areas. For example, the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC) was successful in locating the National Native Dental Therapy School to Saskatchewan. SIFC and the College of Commerce are jointly offering business education in the Certificate in Indigenous Business Management and MBA Aboriginal Business Program. Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) has added new program areas in Gaming and Communications. Gabriel Dumont Institute has an excellent teacher education program and has provided leadership in the design of Aboriginal educational materials over the past ten years. The University of Saskatchewan and Metis Nation have recently established the Gabriel Dumont College to expand additional post-secondary opportunities.

TABLE 3.58
Enrolment in Saskatchewan Aboriginal Institutions

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
First Nations Institutions						
Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology			1,030	750	850	809
Saskatchewan Indian Federated College	1,121	1,038	1,170	1,262	1,582	1,542
Teacher Education: ITEP, NORTEP,				250	512	504
Metis Institutions						
Gabriel Dumont Institute	168	135	28	106	25	120
Dumont Technical Institute				25	57	136
Teacher Education: SUNTEP				160	160	144

Enrolment levels are reported by each institution. Programs such as secretarial schools, police training and pilot training are not included. There may be some double counting of students due to joint programming initiatives and strategies. For example, some students may be enrolled in two or more institutions. University of Regina Aboriginal student enrolment is included in SIFC enrolment figures. Figure 3.22 illustrates the trend in enrolment levels of First Nations people.

FIGURE 3.22
First Nations Institutions Student Enrolment

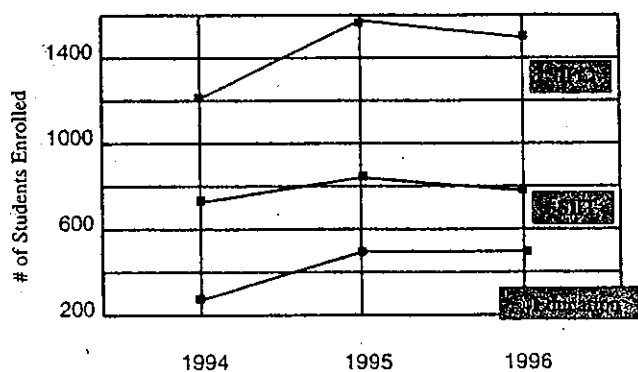


FIGURE 3.23
Metis Student Enrolment

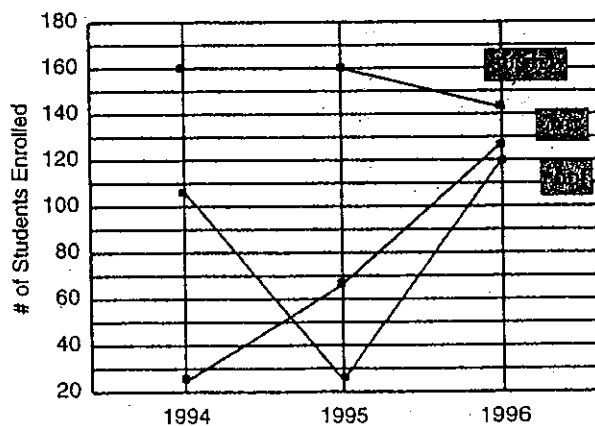


Figure 3.23 shows the number of students enrolled in Metis Institutions. The number of students is considerably less in comparison to First Nation student enrolment. As a proportion of the total population, Metis enrolment is less as well. However, enrolment records between 1991 and 1993-94 indicate higher enrolments in a variety of programs. Funding cuts have decreased the number of program offerings and subsequently, enrolments have declined.

The APS reported the post-secondary qualifications of Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan. It is interesting to note that with the exception of Applied Sciences, women attained higher post-secondary qualifications compared to men. In the area of commerce, administration and management, 1,810 women reported post-secondary qualifications compared to only 465 men. The results are summarized in Table 3.59.

Appendix 29

3.2.5 Population Projections

Three primary sources were used to determine the population of Aboriginal people. Two sources were from Statistics Canada: the 1991 Census Reports and the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS). The third source of population data was the Federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). The APS was directed at people who identified themselves as being of Aboriginal ancestry. Population figures are presented in Table 3.1.⁴

TABLE 3.1
1991 Saskatchewan Population of Aboriginal People
According to the Aboriginal Peoples Survey, Cat. 89-533.

First Nations	60,010
Metis	27,000
Inuit	155
Total	86,695

The APS also provides data on Aboriginal origins in a report "Population Showing Aboriginal Origins/Indian Registration On and Off Reserves and Detailed Aboriginal Groups, for Saskatchewan".⁵ (See Appendix 1 for a complete summary of the data). The number of the people reporting Aboriginal origins in the Aboriginal Peoples Survey is 102,765 and is summarized in Table 3.2:

TABLE 3.2
Population Showing Aboriginal Origins/Indian Registration On and Off Reserves
and Detailed Aboriginal Groups, for Saskatchewan (1991)

First Nations	69,385
Metis	32,840
Inuit	540
Total	102,765

3.2.7 Aboriginal Population of Labour-Force Age

DIAND's forecast identifies the proportion of First Nations People who are labour-force age. (Labour-force age is defined by Statistics Canada as being fifteen or older.) That proportion is shown in Table 3.5.

TABLE 3.5:
The Proportion (%) of the First Nations Population of Saskatchewan that is Labour-Force Age⁶

Year	1991	2001	2011	2021	2031	2041
Proportion that is labour-force age	59.69%	62.97%	66.40%	68.08%	69.68%	71.18%

The proportions from Table 3.5 are applied to the Aboriginal population to calculate the population of labour-force age, shown in Table 3.6.

TABLE 3.6:
The Aboriginal Population of Saskatchewan of Labour-Force Age

Year	1991	2001	2011	2021	2031	2041
Aboriginal Population of Labour-Force Age	69,675	101,463	135,427	173,392	221,560	282,606
Annual growth rate		3.8%	3.3%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%

3.2.8 Employment

Saskatchewan employment grew 1.4% per year in the 25 years spanning 1966 through 1991. Between 1991 and 1996, Saskatchewan employment grew only 0.1% per year. An employment growth rate of 0.5% was used for the study, which was between the two figures above, but a better match to the current growth rate of 0.5%. Hence, if we suppose that Saskatchewan's employment grows by 0.5%, the result is presented in Table 3.7.

TABLE 3.7:
Total Saskatchewan Employment

Year	1991	2001	2011	2021	2031	2041
Saskatchewan Employment	458,000	499,100	516,900	538,900	573,700	619,500
Annual growth rate		0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%

The Aboriginal Peoples Survey showed that only 35.2% of the Aboriginal people surveyed who were of labour-force age were employed. (The corresponding percentage for non-Aboriginal people is in excess of 60%.) If we assume that the same proportion applies to all Aboriginal people, then 24,564 Aboriginal people of labour-force age were employed. Thus, Aboriginal people held 5.4% of all jobs in Saskatchewan.

Although there are reasons to suppose that the proportion of jobs held by Aboriginal people will rise (due to, for example, the emphasis on post secondary education)¹⁰, there are also reasons to suppose that it will fall (the emerging Post-Industrial Era has not been favourable to North Americans who lack education, and education levels for the Aboriginal people are much lower than for Non-Aboriginal people). Assuming the proportion of jobs held by Aboriginal people stays constant at 5.4%, Aboriginal employment projections, are shown in Table 3.8. Table 3.8 also shows the percent of Aboriginal people of labour-force age who are employed.

TABLE 3.8:
Percentage of Aboriginal People of Labour-Force Age Who Are Employed

Year	1991	2001	2011	2021	2031	2041
Aboriginal Employment (000's)	25	27	28	29	31	33
Percent of Aboriginal People of Labour-Force Age Who Are Employed	35.2%	25.4%	20%	16.4%	13.5%	11.1%

Resource List

Books

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- Bopp, Judie [et al], *The Sacred Tree*. Lethbridge: Lotus Press, 1984.
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- Christensen, Deanna, *Ahtakakoop: The Epic Account of Plains Cree Head Chief, his People and their Struggle for Survival*. Shell Lake: Shell Lake, 2000.
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- MacDonald, Fiona, *Plains Indians*. New York: Quarto Publishing, 1993.
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- Saskatchewan Learning, *Native Studies 10 Curriculum Guide*. Regina: Saskatchewan Learning, 2002.
- University of Saskatchewan, *Knots in a String: an Introduction to Native Studies in Canada*. Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 1993.

Videos

A Solemn Undertaking: 5 Treaties of Saskatchewan: Videorecording. Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2002.

Age of the Buffalo: Videocassette. National Film Board of Canada, 1991.

As Long as the Sun Shines: Videorecording. Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2002.

Blockade: it's about the land and who owns it: Videorecording. National Film Board of Canada, 1993.

For Angela. Videorecording. National Film Board of Canada, 1993.

Partners in Trade: Videocassette. Origins: A History of Canada, 1986.

Residential Schools. Videorecording. CBC The National.

Residential Schools: Moving Beyond Survival. Videorecording. Magic Lantern Communications Ltd, 2001.

Time Immemorial: First Nations, The Circle Unbroken: Videorecording. Face to Face Media & National Film Board of Canada, 1993.

Words to Lead by. Videorecording. Sondra Thiederman, 2002.

Community Organizations

Gabriel Housing

Silver Sage