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HISTORICAL TRAUMA:

A CASE STUDY ON THE PHENOMENON WITHIN THE NEZ PERCE

By

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Introduction

Have you ever wondered why there is an overabundance of Native American children in foster care? Or, why a disproportionate number of Indian children are in residential centers, treatment centers and group homes? Did it ever cross your mind why so many Indian people struggle with issues such as alcoholism, abuse and violence? Or why rates for suicide, school drop out, depression and incarceration are so high for American Indians? The Native American population makes up 1.5 percent of the United States population and they are the smallest and most rural of all U.S. minorities (Whitbeck et. al 2002). However, as a group, American Indians have a high prevalence of alcohol and drug use as well as dependency (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2005). A recent study on National Household Drug Abuse found Native Americans are more likely than any other ethnic group to be dependant on alcohol or illicit drugs (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2005). The study found Native Americans and Alaskan Natives had a higher prevalence of alcohol use than that of African Americans and Asians, yet similar to that of Hispanics. In addition to alcohol abuse Native Americans also experience high rates of suicide, homicide, accidental deaths, domestic violence, child abuse, and other social ills (Brave Heart and DeBruyn 1998).

Native Americans, as an ethnic minority, suffer a disproportionately high percentage of social problems. The context of colonialism contains explanatory power. Colonialism is the political, social, economic and cultural domination of a people by a

foreign power for an extended time (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). By the turn of the 18th century contact with Europeans brought diseases that Native American traditional medical practices had never encountered and the people could not over come (Esquimaux and Smolewski 2004; Donald 1982). The smallpox disease, for example, spread throughout North America and claimed whole families and entire villages. The disease epidemics, such as smallpox, left Native Americans searching for explanations for what had happened. For many, the pain was too great to even speak about. Many American Indians substituted Christianity for their traditional ceremonies and beliefs in an attempt to facilitate answers for their loss. However, numerous people of the Christian faith mistreated Native Americans. For example, when the Puritans arrived in Connecticut they claimed the land as their own, even though the land belonged to Native Americans. The Puritans, in time, declared war on the Pequot Indians in order to obtain their prosperous gardens and crops. They began to wipe out the Pequot Indians so they could claim the fertile land as their own (Redstar et. al 2006). This policy of extermination and land dispossession set the stage for future treaty negotiations and governmental policies that continued the legacy of dispossession (Churchill 1995).

Termination policy is an example of U.S. policy enacted to end the sovereign status of Native Americans as well as the federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes. The "Relocation Program," promoted by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, beginning in the 1950's, moved Native Americans from their tribal homeland to urban areas. These policies were intended to assimilate American Indians into mainstream America. The policies failed, along with the violation of nearly "600 treaties" that were negotiated between the United States and Indian tribes to provide annuities for the land they ceded

to the government during the 19th century (Duran et. al 1998). All of this provided the initial foundation for historical trauma experienced by many, but not all, American Indian tribes today.

It is important to note that Native American people have experienced a revival of strength and fortitude in their identity across the United States. This seems to have manifested itself within the last four decades. This revival of culture includes, but is not limited to, the restoration of traditional systems of beliefs and practices; the resurgence of reclamation of languages; and the growth of a national indigenous identity (Wesley-Esquimaux and Smolewski 2004).

Native Americans have entered an era of self-determination. They analyze and define concepts of loss on their own terms. They are addressing issues such as pain and suffering from colonization that has lain dormant in their collective memory. They are redefining themselves in the context of the dominant society. The revitalization has caused a shift from a sense of cultural demise to a sense of communal healing and well being.

Objectives

My work on the interpretation of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail (NPNHT), or Nee-Me-Poo Trail, in Yellowstone National Park was the catalyst for this paper. The Nez Perce hold a legacy of trauma that transcends generations. I became aware of the concept of "historical trauma" suffered by Nez Perce descendents of the war of 1877. I wanted to understand the trauma that certain Nez Perce individuals describe in their oral histories. Yellowstone Park obtained these oral documentaries to help visitors interpret and understand the conflict of the 1877 war between the Nez Perce and United States

Army. These oral history transcripts make it apparent the War of 1877 is an important source of their trauma, although the context of prewar (epidemics and relocation) and postwar (boarding school, failed policies, and forced assimilation) events also play a role.

Historical trauma is defined as the "cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences" (Brave-Heart 2003:7). This paper examines how, through these oral histories, historical trauma and its associated effect of unresolved grief have affected contemporary Nez Perce. Specifically, this study attempts to examine why alcoholism, drug abuse, depression, and violence seem to be pervasive among the Nez Perce people and their communities. Finally, I conclude by making some recommendations to Yellowstone Park on how they might discuss the concept of historical trauma to visitors.

Background

At the turn of the 19th century an influx of settlers to the West challenged the Nez Perce way of life. In 1855, as the number of settlers increased, the U.S. government set up treaty negotiations with the Nez Perce to relinquish part of their land. The Nez Perce agreed to the treaty because it allowed them to keep a large amount of their original land base. Gold was discovered five years after the 1855 treaty and the government once again sought to reduce the Nez Perce land to less than one-fourth of the originally reserved territory (White et. al 2007). The bands of Nez Perce whose lands were within the boundary signed the treaty of 1863; however, the five bands whose lands lay outside of the treaty refused to sign and dropped out of the negotiations.

The five bands, now known as the non-treaty Nez Perce, remained on their land. The government considered the land open to white settlers, even though the non-treaty

Nez Perce had not signed the treaty or sold their lands. In time, tension between settlers and the non-treaty Nez Perce became common. In June 1877 the U.S. government ordered the non-treaty Nez Perce onto the reservation after deadly encounters with surrounding settlers. Following this order, a few young Nez Perce warriors killed several settlers in retribution for the deaths of their people. This prompted the U.S. Army to harshly pursue all those who were not on the reservation before they could escape punishment (White et. al 2007). That summer, 800 Nez Perce men, women, children, and approximately 2,000 horses traveled east in search of freedom.

Their journey to freedom became a 1,100 mile trail with frequent battles and deadly encounters along the way. The U.S. Army pursued the non-treaty Nez Perce through the Rocky Mountains and into Yellowstone National Park. During their time in Yellowstone, the Nez Perce had several encounters with tourists that resulted in at least two deaths that sensationalized the journey in the minds of the public (White et. al 2007). As they entered Yellowstone Park from the west, the Nez Perce traveled along the Madison River, across the Hayden Valley, forded the Yellowstone River, and made their way out of the park through what is now Sunlight Basin on the east side of the park (White et. al 2007).

In October 1877 the Nez Perce surrendered 40 miles from the Montana-Canadian boarder under the leadership of Chief Joseph. Their number had dwindled from 800 non-treaty Nez Perce to 250 cold, hungry, and wounded survivors (White et. al 2007). These 250 Nez Perce individuals were sent into exile on a reservation in northeastern Oklahoma, where many died from the malaria contracted and wounds received during the

war. Eight years later they were allowed to return to the Columbia Plateau and live on either the Lapwai reservation in Idaho or the reservation in Nespelem, Washington.

Methodology

My qualitative research took place during January 29, 2007 through April 23, 2007 at the Ethnography Office in Yellowstone National Park. Nez Perce narratives from oral history transcripts were coded by topical themes related to the War of 1877 in the qualitative database system NVivo7. These topics included meanings of stories, language, songs, and the many dimensions of the Nez Perce culture (Appendix). Previously recorded group and semi-structured interviews by staff at Yellowstone National Park were the main source of information for my research. Individuals from the interviews included Nez Perce elders and adult descendants from the non-treaty Nez Perce. Another source for my research included a video presentation to park visitors by Roberta Conner and Albert Andrews Redstar discussing their personal and family experience with historical trauma (see Conner and Redstar 2002). In watching the video, I was able to observe strong emotion and body language, which helped me to understand the experiential component of historical trauma.

This project follows a case study approach. Case study research is used to conduct in-depth investigation of an issue at a specific instance and location: a case. In this case study, the issue is historical trauma and the case(s) are the Nez Perce individual's narratives in oral history transcripts. This research will provide a window into the lives of the Nez Perce. With this setting I am better able to assess the affect that historical trauma has had on the Nez Perce today. In a sense, this case study will allow me to re-connect the past with the present.

Case study analysis also involves a particular method in regard to research. Rather than using large samples and following a rigid set of rules to examine a limited number of variables, case study methods involve an in-depth examination of a case (Stake 1995). In this study I examine the issue of historical trauma within the Nez Perce with a limited sample of 15 individuals. This sample was composed of 12 elders and 3 adults. Although the sample does not represent the entire Nez Perce population (elders, adults, sub-adults, and children), in-depth analysis of the oral histories from individuals in my sample allow for generalizations about historical trauma and its effect upon the Nez Perce. My interest is a sharpened understanding of why historical trauma manifests within contemporary Nez Perce. In doing so, I also want to provide recommendations to Yellowstone National Park for interpretation.

Theoretical Perspectives on Trauma

Traumatic events, loss, and grief occur world wide and repeatedly throughout time. Humans have dealt with many different forms of trauma such as war, natural disasters and disease, rendering some people helpless (Murray 2001). Only in the last two centuries have scholars paid attention to the deleterious effects of trauma manifested in humans.

How each individual and community experiences trauma and ingests the traumatic event is variable and dependent upon "the nature of the trauma, its duration, its meaning; and by the individual's personality, experience, support, and personal role in society and family" (O'Brien 1998:47). As O'Brien (1998) notes, not every person develops deleterious symptoms following a traumatic event. Many people experience trauma and manage to cope satisfactorily and move on in life. Yet there are a number of

people and communities that do not return to normal everyday life unaffected. They can neither move forward nor back. In a sense the individual is trapped, and functional impairment and steady mourning become their sense of reality. Simply stated, they are stuck. Neria and Litz (2003:74) identified emotional trauma as "when the normal resolution of the emotional toll of loss is avoided or blocked, the necessary 'grief work' (i.e., the 'working-through processes') is thwarted and grief becomes chronic, enduring, and disabling." Thus, the abnormal becomes normal.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

The concept of traumatic grief and loss is not a new concept to many people throughout the world. In North America, the term Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), received wide spread attention during the 1980's when the Vietnam War ended (Maviglia 2007; Young 1995). As a result, PTSD was incorporated in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Third Edition (DSM-III). PTSD is a result of a traumatic event that provokes intense fear, helplessness, or horror in an individual. PTSD manifests itself as hyper-arousal, flashbacks, and amnesia (Herman 1997). During hyper-arousal the individual keeps unusually busy as a way to avoid remembering or dealing with the traumatic memory. Flashbacks of the traumatic event can occur at anytime, rendering the victim unable to distinguish between the traumatic event and present reality. Amnesia of the traumatic event increases as the victim blocks vivid memories of losing loved ones or tries to block feelings of vulnerability or helplessness, which ultimately leads to numbing of the psyche.

PTSD focuses on the individual manifestation but does not take into account trauma experienced by a community. As a result, PTSD fails to encompass the many other complex problems trauma fosters. This very point has lead researchers to question and criticize the validity of PTSD in cross-cultural studies of trauma and loss (Bracken et. al 1995; Rousseau and Drapeau 1998, Ewing 1990). Bracken et. al (1995:1073) recognize that the main flaw of PTSD lies in the concept's "western biomedical approach to illness and distress," which looks solely at the individual's reaction to trauma and disregards the social and cultural contexts that also define an individual. In the Native American community PTSD classification insufficiently represents their trauma, specifically historical trauma (Brave-Heart 2003). The heterogeneity of American Indian culture makes it difficult to treat the population as a whole. There are approximately 510 federally recognized Native American entities (Bureau of Indian Affairs 1991) and more than 365 state-recognized groups in the United States, with at least 200 different traditional languages (Whitbeck et. al 2002). The different cultures and languages are considerably different from one another in their spiritual beliefs, kinship patterns, economies, and levels of acculturation. The cultural differences may impact symptom appearance among Native Americans and skew the number of American Indians meeting the PTSD criteria, despite the commonness of trauma exposure in their history due to Native high mortality rates, alcoholism, substance abuse, and discrimination (Manson et. al 1996; Whitbeck et. al 2002; Whitbeck et. al 2004).

In-depth examination of PTSD has focused on the consequences of war, violence, disasters, and, recently, genocide on the individual victims. However, current research has found "trauma destroys the social system of care, protection, and meaning, which

surrounds an individual…impaired social relations are the result" (Kleber et. al 1995:299).

Trauma, then, moves beyond the individual and into the collective memory of social and ethnic groups. The theoretical framework for historical trauma grew out of research into the explanation of the suffering of many cultures. The following historical events and communities have been central to developing an understanding of historical trauma: descendants of the Jewish Holocaust (Auerhahn and Laub 1998; Felsen 1998; Solomon 1998); aboriginal people in Australia subjected to colonialism (Raphael et al. 1998); survivors of ethnic conflict in Africa (Odejide et. al 1998); and descendants of the Japanese-American internment camps during WWII (Nagata 1998). It is from these studies that the theory of historical trauma emerged.

Historical trauma occurs when a culture experiences a form of dissolvement and appropriate grieving methods are lost to the individual and community. Survivors are left without the appropriate cultural rituals to structure their suffering and live their lives. Victims who survive transfer the existing trauma to their child, either directly or indirectly, which is then internalized and/or externalized. The trauma submerges, festers and begins to emerge in the next generation. The dynamics of the individual and community relationship are essential to understanding the concept of historical trauma in Native American peoples.

Historical Trauma among Native Americans

Nearly 500 years after Europeans began to invade and conquer North America Native Americans have undergone repeated traumatic events (e.g. epidemics, warfare,

exile, and colonial subjugation). Although Native Americans today do not directly experience these events, the detrimental effects, many believe, are being felt in the collective memory of American Indians today. Researchers have argued that historical trauma among Native Americans originates from the combination of colonialism, acculturative stress, cultural and group genocide[1], as well as the racism that has been internalized and externalized over many decades (Brave-Heart 1998, 1999, 2003; Brave-Heart and DeBruyn 1998; Duran et. al 1998; Duran and Duran 1995; Gagane 1998; Legters 1988). The genocide of North American Indians is still not acknowledged to this day. European colonization brought about devastating effects and the collapse of a way of life for American Indians.

Historical trauma extends beyond the life of an individual, thus becoming multigenerational. Brave-Heart (2003:7) defines historical trauma as the "cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences." As a collection of hidden memories of the event(s), or a collective non-remembering, the trauma is passed down from generation to generation (Auerhahan and Luab 1998). Descendants, then, carry within them a representation of generational trauma, which becomes the central focus in their

[1]Legters (1988:769) defines genocide, among American Indians, according to the United Nations General Assembly's Convention on Genocide from 1948:

> "Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious, group, and includes five types of criminal actions: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

Legters (1988:769) defines cultural genocide as a less murderous form of genocide "that is taken to cover actions that are threatening to the integrity and continuing viability of peoples and social groups."

lives and perpetuates the transfer of trauma to successive generations (Danieli 1998; Nagata 1998).

Maladaptive social and behavioral patterns result. There is no one single historical trauma response (Wesley-Esquimaux and Smolewski 2004). Instead, different manifestations of problems associated with social disorders develop. In Native American communities manifestations exist in the forms of alcoholism (to numb the pain), suicide, depression, violence, anxiety, low-self esteem, and difficulties recognizing and expressing emotions (Brave-Heart 2003; Moncher and Holden 1990; Whitbeck et. al 2002; Whitbeck et. al 2004).

Historical trauma also causes a deep breakdown in the cultural norms of the community, which can last for years, decades, or generations (Alexander 2004). For Native Americans, as with all people, mourning is a key step in the normal process of healing from loss. In the dominant United States culture Native Americans are viewed, by many, as stoic, savage, and incapable of showing emotion. Therefore, the rituals of grieving and participating in ceremonies to release the grief over the years have been denied them (Brave-Heart and DeBruyn 1998). Continual mourning causes a feeling of unresolved grief to develop when there is no sense of closure, end or process to follow. The next generation is faced with the daunting task of sorting through the grief and often times exhibiting outbursts of frustration or rage that are referred back into the community, which further complicates the healing process and perpetuating the cycle of unresolved grief. With each new generation a frustrating world unfolds as there is a lack of understanding as to why these feelings are emerging.

The Jewish Holocaust as an Example

Research on the persistent transmission of the Jewish Holocaust experience (Auerham and Laub 1998; Bender 2004; Kellermann 2001a, 2001b; Kidron 2004; Fogleman 1988a; Solomon 1998; Weiss and Weiss 2000; Weiss et. al 1986) provides a body of knowledge that gives insight into the process of historical trauma and can inform the study of genocide of Native Americans. Holocaust survivors struggle with the "difficulty in mourning a mass grave, the dynamics of collective grief, and the importance of community memorialization" (Duran et. al 1998:345).

Many challenges still exist for the Jewish communities living in Europe (Fogelman 1988a). One of the prominent challenges survivors of the Holocaust face today is living among the perpetrators of their Holocaust. Jews in Europe still face hardship in coping, integrating, and adapting to the Holocaust traumatic stress (Auerhahn and Laub 1998; Solomon 1998). Many survivors and their children are in denial of past events and experience delayed mourning of their losses. Some feel a need to suppress their emotions, which results in a form of "psychic numbing" that leads to self medication in the form of alcohol and/or drugs, amnesia, and fragmentation of what really happened during the traumatic event (Auerhahn and Laub 1998). However, a comparison to Jewish Americans suggests that Holocaust trauma can be overcome (Weiss et. al 1986). Jewish Americans show a healthier grief process, which can be attributed to the distance from the Holocaust perpetrators and the delayed grief Jews in Europe exhibit.

Considerable evidence has also emerged to suggest that Holocaust survivors and their children experience depressive and emotional breakdowns, linked to their Holocaust experience known as survivor syndrome (Kellermann 2001a, 2001b). The children of

survivors and their offspring also display their own set of emotional problems, which is called survivor's child-complex (Kestenberg 1990). However, both complexes have received criticism in their application to holocaust survivors as a whole, because not everyone exhibits emotional trauma from the Holocaust (Felsen 1998; van IJzendoorn and Bakermans-Kranenbury 2003).

Trauma transmission in either complex is accomplished by direct and indirect interaction between family members (Auerhahn and Laub 1998; Kellermann 2001; Weiss and Weiss 2000). Direct transmission occurs when a child learns to think and act in troubled ways by absorbing parent's verbal and nonverbal cues. This usually occurs when parents try to rid themselves of horrifying memories and the child (un)consciously absorbs the actions and lives their parents' life as their own. Eventually, the child begins to associate themselves with the Holocaust and impress upon themselves, and others, that they experienced the traumatic event. Indirect transmission of trauma is a result of parental difficulties in rearing children because of the parent's own adolescent experiences. Symptoms from direct and indirect transmission can involve depression; withdrawal and isolation; elevated mortality rates from suicide, violence, and health issues; an obligation to share in ancestors' pain and identify with them; and unresolved grief.

In her seminal work with the Lakota, Brave-Heart (1998, 1999, 2003) found that the Lakota Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 confirmed a correlation between the Lakota Holocaust and the Jewish Holocaust. In this case study, the Nez Perce War of 1877 also bears resemblance to the Jewish Holocaust in that 1) it was fueled by religious persecution of the Nez Perce Dreamers/Seven Drums religion and by federal policies of

termination; 2) victims of the Nez Perce war were hunted down, killed, and moved into exile in Oklahoma where they were imprisoned onto a bounded territory and separated from family; 3) the suffering of the Nez Perce survivors and their descendants face the challenge of mourning a massive group trauma stemming from the War of 1877. The Lakota Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 and the Nez Perce War of 1877 both confirm the existence of a Native American Holocaust in North America.

For Native Americans, the government of the United States was and in some ways still is their perpetrator. In other parts of the world survivors were able to flee their homeland in order to escape on-going genocide, but Native Americans have never had this opportunity (Kehoe 1989). Similar to Jewish survivors in Europe, American Indians still live among their perpetrators.

Similar to the transfer of trauma in Holocaust survivors, the trauma from the genocide of Native Americans is promulgated across generations. The survivor-child complex symptoms and the direct and indirect transmission of trauma can be seen in several Native American communities (Brave-Heart and DeBruyn 1998).

Setting the Stage for Historical Trauma

Thorough explanation of the American Indian Holocaust (Brave-Heart and DeBruyn 1998) and national policies of extermination have been covered extensively (Brave-Heart 1998, 1999, 2003; Duran et. al 1998; Duran and Duran 1995; Gagne 1998). American Indians experienced one of the world's most systematic processes of genocide (Duran and Duran 1995) in this hemisphere in the forms of government-sanctioned physical onslaughts and confrontations, murder, land theft, forced removal and relocation, discrimination, and limited tribal sovereignty. Once they were overpowered

by the military, Native Americans were moved to reservations. On the reservations people were starved, neglected, and forbidden to practice their religious beliefs. For Native Americans, there was no safe place to turn or immigrate (Kehoe 1989).

As a whole, and at different times, Native Americans were forced to relocate to areas of economic desolation, or in other words, places that held no economic value to colonial America (Duran et. al 1998). Many tribes were forced to relocate by means of marches, such as the Navajo "Long Walk," the Cherokee "Walk of Tears," or they were loaded onto trains and moved to completely foreign areas of North America. For example, the Nez Perce were loaded onto trains and moved to Indian Territory in Oklahoma, a place vastly different from the beautiful, temperate, green valleys of the Wallowas in Oregon. The reservations were similar to concentration camps, and the Native Americans, who had lived on the land for thousands of years, were now treated as second class citizens by the newly-settled Europeans living around them. No one could leave the reservation without permission. The government feared that Native Americans might band together and kill white people. Native Americans also became dependent upon the US government for food, shelter, education and health care. Native American dependency developed because the government 1) inconsistently upheld their end of treaty negotiations that promised annuities, of food and shelter, in exchange for the land they ceded; 2) forced them to educate their children in schools not on the reservations; and 3) inconsistently provided funds for health care.

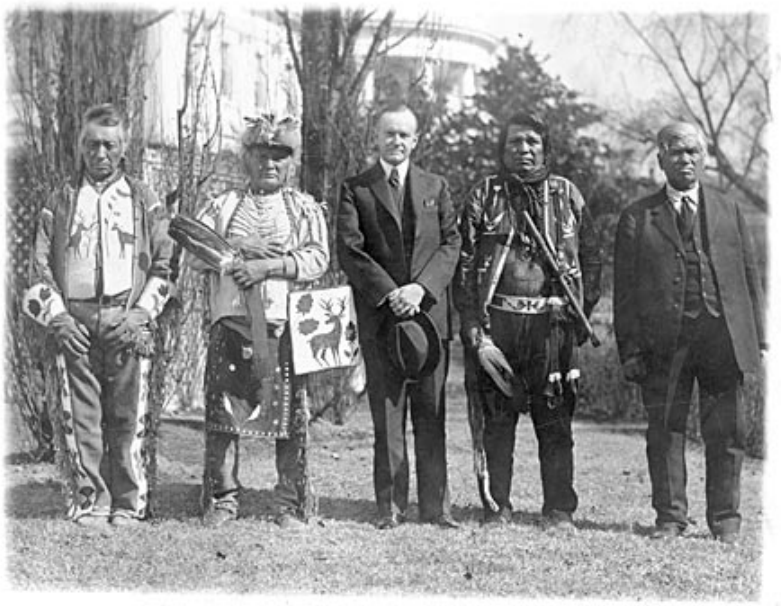
Traditional and cultural ways of survival were altered and many were forced to take up farming as a means to live. For the Nez Perce, farming was an occupation that went against the belief of their very existence. Smohalla, a Nez Perce prophet during the

19th and 20th centuries, under much distress stated: "I cannot break the ground of my mother…I cannot cut the hair of my mother to make a crop" (Wilson et. a l2000:55). The Nez Perce religion and ways of life were so intertwined that they could not give up one without violating the other.

For Native Americans there has been little reconciliation to their cultural and group genocide. The process has occurred for 150 years with the support of the U.S. government. The very act of practicing traditional religion became illegal, hunting off the reservations was illegal, and young children were removed from their families from the late 1880s to 1920s and sent to boarding schools to extinguish their native language, culture, and kinship patterns. In the schools, children were stripped of personal identity, given new names, and forced to wear different clothing (Brave-Heart and DeBruyn 1998; Robertson 2006). Eventually, the essence of who they were ethnically was nearly lost to the children of the boarding school era, the aftermath of which we see today.

In addition to the break-down of traditional life ways that ensued from boarding schools, Native Americans also faced cultural and personal oppression from government sanctioned policies that were enacted through the 1960s (Deloria 1995). The Dawes Severalty Act was enacted to breakup tribes and promotes the assimilation of American Indians into American society. The initial goal of the Dawes Act was to create independent farmers out of Indians by giving them the land and tools for "citizenship." However the act was less than satisfactory in its intent and implementation. The head of each family was given 160 acres of farmland or 320 acres of grazing land (Deloria 1985). The remaining tribal lands were declared "excess" and opened up for settlers. Ultimately

the government hoped tribal ownership and the tribes themselves would simply fade away.



President Calvin Coolidge with four Osage Indians after Coolidge signed the bill granting Indians full citizenship. Source - LOC, LC-USZ62-111409 DLC

Following the Dawes Act of 1887, the government attempted to assimilate Native Americans into mainstream society with the creation of the Indian Citizen Act of 1924, and the Relocation and Termination policies of the 1950s (Edmunds 1995). Native Americans faired poorly from the governments attempt to make them full "citizens." They often faced discrimination and racism while working in urban cities, and, more often than not, many could not find employment and often turned to drinking and other forms of self-medication. Others remained away from their families for extended periods of time as they tried to earn enough financially to support their families on the reservation (Brave-Heart and DeBruyn 1998).

The devastation resulting from cultural and group genocide, the constant reminder through assimilation policies that Native Americans were not capable of taking care of

themselves, and the policies that made them dependant on the U.S. government, brought severe consequences to the American Indian consciousness. As Native Americans lost their autonomy and power to make decisions for the welfare of their family and community they became prone to despair (Kasee 1995). Many began to internalize what was the "power of the oppressor" (Duran and Duran 1995:29); which was a catalyst for a sense of hopelessness and self-hatred. Native Americans often express pain, grief, and rage internally toward themselves and externally within their families and communities. Turned upon themselves, these emotions manifest as depression, anxiety, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and suicide (Kersting 2005). Self-destructive behaviors, such as alcohol, are an attempt to alleviate the depression and pain felt from internalized aggression and oppression (Kasee 1995).

In addition, Native Americans sometimes express internalized oppression outwardly upon their families and other Indian people in physical assaults, homicide, and violence against women and children. In a discussion of domestic violence in American Indian families, Duran and Duran (1995:29) explain that "The root of anger is at the oppressor, but any attempts at catharting anger to its root results in swift retaliation by the oppressor…it is safer to cathart anger on a family member," an individual who is usually helpless and serves as a reminder of the oppressor. The outward expression of violence towards family members' is a twofold process. The perpetrator can temporarily relieve their pain on one hand by lashing out, and on the other hand they destroy the part of themselves that they hate and see in their family members.

The process of internalized and externalized oppression does not occur over night. The oppression has been incorporated into the structure of Native American families for

generations. With the significant impact to traditional thinking and ways of life, Native Americans were hindered in the reproduction of their culture. The boarding schools and government assimilation policies left a detrimental mark in the collective memory of Native Americans. Children developed maladaptive behaviors from their time at school, often extending into physical, sexual, and emotional areas of their lives. Theses deleterious behaviors were often transferred onto their children and perpetuated the ongoing trauma. In the last twenty years, American Indians have tried to re-establish the meaning of family in the Native American community. However, the impact of 150 years of governmental policy has created a hurdle for many (Duran and Duran 1995). The essential fact that the genocide of Native Americans is still rarely acknowledged in the United States today serves to perpetuate their often unrecognized cultural mourning and the legacy of historical trauma.

Summary

The theory of historical trauma brings the genocide of American Indians out of the dark and into the light. For 500 years Native Americans have endured one traumatic event after the other as they tried to adapt to the colonizers and their government policies. For decades the social problems of alcoholism, violence, depression, and drug abuse have been pushed under the carpet, and attributed to personal flaws. However, by moving trauma, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and other social problems beyond the individual and to the phenomenon of Native American communities, we can offer a significant explanation for their suffering. Their suffering is not a result of strictly PTSD. Instead, their suffering is a combination of historical traumas that resulted from colonialism, genocidal actions, racism, discrimination, economic marginalization, and

boarding schools which caused maladaptive social behaviors to develop in each generation.

Genocidal actions enforced by any group of people, at any point in time, are never easy to acknowledge. However, the theoretical framework developed in the study of the Jewish Holocaust and the Native American genocide allows us to explain the suffering in Native Americans and thereby allow them to grieve for their loses.

Nez Perce Illustration of Historical Trauma

This section illustrates how the experience, transmission, and manifestation of historical trauma, through narrative vignettes gathered from oral historical transcripts in Yellowstone National Park, has affected the Nez Perce. The following is not a comprehensive analysis of the historical trauma that everyone faces in the Nez Perce community. Rather the discussion is meant to illustrate some of the hardships and traumatic experiences the War of 1877 left in its wake.

Before The War of 1877

These first people of the Columbia Plateau live today on the Colville Reservation, Nez Perce reservation, and Umatilla Reservation. Present day Nez Perce, or Nee Me Poo, are the descendants of the men and women whom Lewis and Clark encountered on their pioneering journey of exploration beginning in the nineteenth century. The Nez Perce greeted *soyapo***,** as whites are known in Nez Perce (Pinkham 2001:10), peaceably, but with a mix of fear and anticipation. They helped these first explorers in many ways. Without the Indians' tolerance and the generous gifts of fish, root-cakes, advice and information about the road ahead, the explorers would likely not have returned to the East

to tell their tales (Nez Perce Tribe 2003) which we now rely on for a partial glimpse into the lives of the Columbia Plateau people.

There are many cultural groups of the Columbia Plateau: Nez Perce (Nee Me Poo), Cayuse, Wailetpoo, Umatilla, Palouse, and Yakama, to name but a few. However, these are the names that fur traders, settlers, and government treaty negotiators applied to the people of the Plateau (Conner and Redstar 2002). Their native identities were composed by many factors. For one, individuals had a first name and not a last name. Their identities came from their village, their accomplishments, their families, and a lifetime of work (Nez Perce Tribe 2003). They were not composed of nations; for instance, there was not a Sahaptian nation, or a Nez Perce nation (Conner and Redstar 2002). They were composed of villages and families, a social structure that had a very different order than European "nations." This structure had norms and laws that they lived by since time immemorial, long before Europeans began to invade the Columbia Plateau (Conner and Redstar 2002; Nez Perce Tribe 2003).

The Columbia Plateau people spoke Salishan, Sahaptian, and Chinookan languages, languages as disparate as English, Spanish, and Japanese. These languages conveyed power in the speech of leaders and the sacred storytelling of Coyote's great doings at the close of the Myth Age (Pinkham 2001). Without writing, the Nez Perce successfully transmitted accumulated knowledge and insight, from the beginning of time, through the generations. Some elders still tell these stories to a new generation of Nez Perce children. Their lives are not easy, and they feel a heavy sense of loss when they speak of how things used to be when the Wallowa Mountains and Columbia Plateau was theirs alone (Wilson et. al 2000; Miles, Allen and Pinkham 2001; Miles, Pinkham and

Allen 2001; Greene et. al 2001; Conner and Redstar 2002; Davis et. al 2003; Redstar et. al 2006). They insist that the Wallowas and Plateau, beyond their reservations, are still theirs to this day.

The Nez Perce trauma began 125 years ago with the War of 1877, specifically on June 11, 1877. Before the pivotal war of 1877, the Nez Perce had received medals from Lewis and Clark. Upon receiving these medals they believed that this was their first treaty with incoming whites, a treaty to be at peace with them (Josephy 1965; Redstar et. al 2006). The Nez Perce culture required justice among all members of the society, and violence was strongly looked down upon (Nez Perce Tribe 2003). One can only imagine how they struggled to maintain peace with incoming fur traders, settlers, missionaries, and the military, all from a European culture that regularly included violence as part of intersocietal interactions.

The Nez Perce lived in permanent and semi-permanent villages with bands composed of extended family members (Greene 2000). All of the people in the Plateau intermarried, so a single identity, such as Nez Perce or Cayuse was rarely seen (Conner and Redstar 2002). Generally, during the year each band knew their boundaries and how to live on the land without crowding onto each others territory or depleting the resources (Greene 2000).

Autonomy also formed the very basis of their community for inter-group relations and intra-group relations (Greene 2000; Josephy 1965; Brady 1879). Each member of the community had a valued opinion in matters concerning the group, yet the individual was not coveted above the whole group. Chiefs were not a known figurehead. Instead, there were various individuals whose knowledge and skill in particular areas guided others.

These might include leaders of men who were at war, people who took horses, hunting parties or perhaps experts at fishing techniques. Each leader ascended by virtue of their skill and this virtue could be based on the inherited knowledge (Nez Perce Tribe 2003). Ultimately, in each band there was a head leader or elder who was chosen based on their skill, knowledge and wisdom to help guide decisions for the group (Greene 2000). Many leaders would come together in council to make a decision. Each individual could either follow the decision of their group or digress and join with the band or village that closely resembled their belief.

In addition, men and women had clear divisions of labor. Men hunted and provided for their families and the group. Women gathered food and prepared camp, while the elders taught the children their history and correct social behavior.

The collective family is the foundation for Nez Perce community. In this collective family a collective memory exists, which consists of the connection of individual memories or impressions to the thoughts of their greater social background (Halbwachs 1992; Alexander 2004). For example, the Nez Perce extended family holds the values, customs, traditions, and memories that guide a person's actions throughout their lives. This nucleus, as well as the greater community, transmits cultural identity and collective memories to their children, who in turn transmit memories to future generations. Each person in the community becomes a multilayered product of many generations of transmitted memory.

For the many cultural groups within the Columbia Plateau, this transmission of cultural knowledge is often accomplished through Sweat Ceremonies, hunting traditions, root gathering, recounting of oral history, and other activities (Redstar 2006). The

collective memory is vital to understanding the transmission of identity between family members. Specific individual memories are influenced by the larger collective memory, which in turn is embellished by the individual. Thus individual memories would not exist without the framework and influence of collective memory (Halbwachs 1992; Alexander 2004). Personal and collective memories would be lost if society did not play a role in the process of keeping the memories alive, as each collective act of remembrance increases the likelihood that individuals will remember their history and tell their personal stories.

The Nez Perce and Significant Culture Loss

Christian missionaries in the 1830s introduced not only their Catholic religious system but basic farming techniques as well. Their intent was to shift the Nez Perce lifestyle from hunting and gathering to a sedentary existence, as their seasonal round made it difficult for the missionaries to "educate" and convert the Nez Perce people (Conner and Redstar 2002). This change in subsistence strategy altered the very identity that was so woven into their existence (Nez Perce Tribe 2003). The drastic changes that occurred to their landscape distorted their connection and relationship with it; it was no longer the same connection as it had been for their ancestors.

The missionaries required the Nez Perce people to follow their requests or suffer the consequences of corporal punishment, including hanging (Nez Perce Tribe 2003). The children were forced to attend residential schools, cut their hair, and speak only English. The loss of a traditional name helped transfer each person's identity away from family ancestry to the isolated individual. The loss of their native language altered their cultural identity and the social cohesiveness that came from speaking their language.

During this transition a schism developed between the Nez Perce people. Many became Christians in order to uphold the peace treaty cemented by the Lewis and Clark medals. Ultimately this factionalism helped lead to the War of 1877, because the Nez Perce were no longer standing as a unified people. The Nez Perce, today, still deal with the repercussions of this factionalism:

> We have lots of factionalism on our reservation. And if you ever read a tribal newspaper, anywhere, people wonder why we fight amongst ourselves so much, why it's so hard to make a decision. Well, there are a couple of reasons, one of which is, in our culture everybody has a right to speak. We don't all speak in public, we don't all speak about the same things, but everybody has a right to have an opinion, and everybody has a right to have that heard. So that's a process that takes along time. But it also takes along time, because these wounds –treaty and non-treaty – Christian and non-Christian – literate and illiterate –those lines that have carved us into factions have kind of crippled our decision-making process. Because the people who came here, the missionaries and the agents, knew one thing about us that was pivotal to changing our lives. And that was they had to teach us to be individuals and not think as a collective. They wrote if they could break down the power of the chiefs, they could break down that structure, and then we could become civilized and educated and agrarian. If they could break that system down, we would be individuals who cared about what was in our pocket, not about how the whole was affected (Conner and Redstar 2002:17).

When gold was discovered in the 1860s on the Nez Perce reservation, miners and settlers began to blatantly ignore the boundaries set in place from the treaty negotiations of 1855 (see Greene 2000 for in-depth discussion; Kearns 1935; Wood 1884) and live on the Nez Perce territory. Skirmishes began to develop between the Nez Perce and incoming settlers as their numbers grew from "twenty to thirty new settlers a year to 800 to 1,000 [a year]" (Nez Perce Tribe 2003: 23). To rectify the fighting and growing pressure from incoming settlers to acquire Nez Perce land, the United States government entered into another treaty negotiation with the Nez Perce in 1863 (Greene 2000; Kearns 1935; Wood 1884). During the 1863 treaty negotiations, however, a group of Nez Perce leaders that included Chief Joseph, Chief White Bird, Chief Looking Glass and others

realized they were giving up the very essence of what made them who they were and decided to renounce Christianity and not sign further treaties relinquishing their land.

The non-treaty Nez Perce realized incoming settlers and the US government wanted their land in the Wallowas (Miles et. al 2001). Rather than risk conflict with the US military by continuing to resist relocation, the non-treaty Nez Perce gathered their livestock and belongings and began a painful and difficult journey to the new reservation. During their move three young warriors, fueled by their anger at past atrocities and injustices, lashed out at the white settlers and left a number of them dead. This incident lead the non-treaty Nez Perce, which totaled around 800 men, women, elderly, and children, along with twice as many horses, to flee to the east for asylum with friends (Nez Perce Tribe 2003), thus the War of 1877 began. Strong feelings still emerge when the topic of the Wallowas comes into discussion as Miles states:

> [A]s they went, the soldiers would take their horses away, and kill the Indians. And for what?! Because they wanted the country, they wanted the land. And the president at that time said, "Kill off the Indians so we can take their land." So that put a burning feeling in my heart, even as a Christian. I remember how they treated our people. (Nez Perce Elders Visit Yellowstone National Park 2001:10).

The non-treaty Nez Perce traveled 1,100 miles from the Wallowas in Oregon, across Idaho, Montana, through Yellowstone National Park, and eventually back through eastern Montana in an attempt to gain freedom (Buck 1925; Cowan 1904; Fisher 1877; Greene 2000; Guie 1935; Howard 1904; McWhorter 1952; Wood 1884). Along the way, they were ambushed by the military and never allowed to bury their dead. In addition to deaths caused by severe September cold, many family members were murdered; during battle heads of babies were crushed, mothers were forced to destroy their babies to protect the group (Wilson et. al 2000), and the elderly that stayed behind were scalped and murdered by the military and enemies of the Nez Perce assisting the army (Redstar

et. al 2006). At the end of the war, the Nez Perce suffered severe causalities to an important segment of their population. They lost a large amount of their elders and their leaders. The Nez Perce elders were a repository for their history and traditions since time immemorial, and their leaders contained the valuable knowledge about where to hunt and fish. The loss of their elders and their leaders fragmented their oral history and knowledge.

During their final battle by Bear's Paw, Montana on September 30, 1877 many families were separated. Many escaped to Canada or died as they hid in the mountains trying to survive the bitter cold. Of the 800 fleeing non-treaty Nez Perce only 250 survived the five months battle from June 11, 1877 through October 5, 1877 (Nez Perce Tribe 2003). Upon their surrender the Nez Perce believed they were going to be allowed back to their country in the Wallowas. Instead, they were loaded onto train cars and sent into exile in Indian Territory. First they were sent to Bismarck, South Dakota, then to Leavenworth, and eventually to Oklahoma (Greene 2000). In Oklahoma many died from wounds received during the war, from disease, or from despair. In addition to the severe traumas they had endured, their children were taken from them and sent to boarding schools. All of these memories are still passed from generation to generation. The anger at being forced from their country and the sadness at leaving their people unburied or lost is remembered.

> With Gatling guns they shot from the hill and destroyed the Indians. And after that, they [Nez Perce] were real mad. I heard about this when I was 10 years old and people would come to our house and talk about the war and who got killed and what happened to so-and-so, and how they had to leave their bodies behind-they didn't have time to bury them…they made the Indians leave their dead behind, and took 'em down in cattle boats, after they surrendered, down to Oklahoma. And we lost a lot of people down there. They called it 'ieyq'ispe, "hot place." Mosquitoes bit them, and they got so sick, and a lot of our people died down there. All I heard this when I was a child (Miles et. al 2001:16).

Many Nez Perce today point out that it was in Oklahoma that an agreement was made not to discuss the traumatic event of 1877, which makes it hard to discuss the pain, anger, and sadness that was and still is felt (Wilson et. al 2000; Miles et. al 2001; Miles et. al 2001; Conner and Redstar 2002; Davis et. al 2003). Compounding the covenant was the lack of survivors putting together the events of 1877 (Redstar et. al 2006). Without an agreement among their people about the directions they took or the leaders of the time has caused the facts of the Nez Perce account to become unclear or lost to them. Many adults who try to learn find it very difficult to confront the truth and atrocities behind their history. Diane Mallickan illustrates her learning experience:

> My Nez Perce grandparents didn't talk about the war. They didn't talk about those things. I had to learn them as an adult. And so I feel like a little child, still learning. It took me until I was about thirty-three before I could deal with our tribal history. I've avoided it, it hurt too much. I thought, "Okay, I've dealt with it all." I've grieved, I've shed tears. But I've realized it's not over. I know that my children and my grandchildren will also have to go through this and learn. I try to teach my grandchildren as much as I can (Davis et. al 2003:36).

The non-treaty Nez Perce were forced to stay in exile for eight years. In 1885 they were finally allowed back to the Columbia Plateau, but not to the Wallowas. They were given either the choice to go to Lapwai, Idaho or Nespelem, Washington. Neither location was remotely close to the Wallowas in Oregon.

> When the people who were exiled…when they came back, they were divided up. They went to Lapwai, if they were going to not make trouble and be good Christians. And if they were going to stay with Joseph and live by the old religion, they had to go to Nespelem. They were promised when they surrendered they could go home. Joseph went home twice to the Wallowas. That is it. They never got to go home [Emotional] (Davis et. al 2001).

Although the Wallowas are not theirs, they still hold an annual memorial, which they call Joseph Days. The strong feelings (the hurt, sadness, and anger) are felt during this commemorative day.

> When we go back there and look at it, and we see so many people living there, and when we go there for Joseph's Days, they put us in a field where they pastured cattle, where they peed and shit and everything, and the Indians have to put their camp there. And I said [Emotionally], "They should give us a better place. This was our own country." That's the way I feel sometimes, how they discriminate [against] us in Lewiston [Idaho] (Miles et. al 2001:16).

Discrimination not only exists outside of their community but also within the community. The non-treaty Nez Perce have carried around the shame of being the "ones" who went against the Lewis and Clark Peace treaty in 1805 and became the problem people. For many years the non-treaty people hid their identity from society. Many registered as Cayuse, Umatilla, or under other tribal identities to avoid the negative stigma and retaliation for being a descendent of the non-treaty Nez Perce. Today, they experience discrimination intra-tribally and inter-tribally. On the Colville Reservation Agnes, a Nez Perce elder, points out the intra-tribal hardship and shame they face for being descendants from the non-treaty people today:

> It is really hard on us on the reservation, among the Colville Indians. They can be our friends, talk to us to our face, but behind us, they call us dumb, we don't' belong there. So that makes you feel like, "Well, where do we belong?" They didn't want the Joseph Band in Wallowa. Then they put us on the Colville Reservation, and the Colvilles' don't want us. Where do we belong? Where can we go? (Davis et. al 2003:74).

Moreover, inter-tribal relations are strained as many see the Nez Perce as sellouts for their surrender at Bear's Paw. Diane illustrates her youth in an inter-married tribal family:

> I don't tell many people how we were taught. It's very-the Paiute-Shoshone people have a very hard history- they didn't spare for words. And we were taught that the Nez Perce were sell outs and that they sold out Chief Joseph, and they sold out other people. And so we were just told it very plain like that… [Emotional] so I grew up with this, almost like a –called bipolar or something. I can jump from one extreme to the other all the time. That's how I was raised (Davis et. al 2003:35).

Many families unconsciously transmitted trauma from the 1877 war to their children and grandchildren by recounting actions and lessons passed down from family

members who survived the war. Roberta recounts a lesson learned from her grandmother:

> My brother and I would come home to my grandmother's house. And of course, like children everywhere, start throwing stuff off. And back in those days, you had school clothes and then play clothes. We would take off our clothes and leave a trail as we went. My grandma would say, "The soldiers will find us in a heartbeat because you left a trail a mile wide!"[Emotional]…It was no different than anything else she said-until I was sitting there [in college] and I realized she didn't grow up with fort soldier chasing her. Where'd that come from? It wasn't her generation. She was whipped in boarding school; she was punished in boarding school, like her husband had been, if they spoke in Indian. They had their own set of traumas, they were removed from their families at six or seven, and carted off a few hundred miles to go to school…she didn't have fort soldiers chasing her-where did it come from? It came form her mother. Without realizing that she was explaining trauma, she was explaining trauma (Conner and Redstar 2002:14).

Not one family has been untouched by the hurt, sadness, and shame of being non-treaty Nez Perce, or the anger that the War of 1877 left in its aftermath. As stated earlier in this paper, many Native Americans turned to alcohol, drugs, and violence as a way to numb and alleviate the pain they felt. This pain is handed down to each generation and exacerbated with the deleterious effects of substance abuse and violence. Families have different stories, but in every one of them they have been touched by the effects of alcoholism, violence, tragedy or depression.

> We talked about the brutality of growing up in home where alcoholism is practiced, about the brutality of the sexual abuse, the physical abuse, and the emotional abuse of being abandoned by an alcoholic parent. And the interesting thing about that is that that's a common story, not just in my family. But it's a common story, shared with my sisters, with my cousins. So much so, that it has become normal to us. We had no idea that the pain that we're carrying isn't just from the self destructiveness of the disease itself, but the effect kicked into gear in [the War of] 1877. This is our response to trauma (Conner and Redstar 2002:24).

Why do they experience such ongoing trauma? Following the war of 1877, each generation was exposed to a new set of traumas, and never given the opportunity to cope with the previous tragedy in their lives. For example, following the war and exile the non-treaty were put onto reservations and watched as their new homeland was divided up

into “40, 80, and 160-acre parcels” during the Allotment Era (Conner and Redstar 2002:10). Their children were sent to boarding schools which, as discussed earlier, broke-down their culture and traditions. Albert, an advocate for the healing of historical trauma, states:

> These things that were experienced by our people in 1877 manifest today in a painful way, by these little things that were handed down, the sorrow, the pain. So much so, that today the young ones don’t really understand why the pain exists, why they carry this little lump inside themselves. Sometimes it’s a feeling of “I’m not worth anything; I’m a worthless human being, for this is how I am treated. See my uncle? He drinks every day. See my father? He’s doing the same thing (Conner and Redstar 2002:22).

However, by retelling their story and their traumatic experiences fully the Nez Perce are enabling their children to live in the present with what happened in their past. Recounting narratives can provide order, place, and meaning for troubling experiences. Thus, past and present narratives allow the Nez Perce to form an historical perspective that allows for the control and incorporation of past events into the present. Moreover, the simple act of speaking of ones own experience, or of those of an ancestor, permits the understanding of the self as located within the context of a larger family and community narrative. As Roberta notes:

> My grandfather never talked about the sad things. I think as a young man his involvement with a lot of elderly people, remnants of the band – they were strong people that survived. They were against incredible odds. And it’s amazing that they had that strength. But I think that strength came from their religion, and from faith, and a lot of young people don’t have the knowledge and the teaching to be able to deal with this history. I hope that some of the things that we can do is better equip them to deal with some of this stuff, because I don’t like my nieces and nephews being racist and unkind to one another. It doesn’t do them any good. It’s interesting when they know more, how much better they handle things (Davis et. al 2003:41).

The fight is still the same, but the enemy has changed (Conner and Redstar 2002). The war is now defined to the self-destructive behaviors that are undermining the Nez Perce culture from within. By educating the youth and community the Nez Perce will alleviate the pain and sorrow that has been passed down from previous generations.

Summary

Originally the Nez Perce were distinguished by their friendship toward the settlers. However, the arrival of European culture began to splinter the Nez Perce culture as they were forced to adapt to a way of life that was drastically different from their own. During the war of 1877 the loss of Nez Perce elders and leaders fragmented their collective memory and group cohesion that came from transmitted memory. The disruption significantly altered the Nez Perce culture.

Discussion and Conclusions

There is strong evidence in the case of the Nez Perce Indians that this group experienced—and continues to experience—historical trauma. Although the theory of historical trauma is still in need of deeper theoretical analysis, this case study illustrates the validity of the construct of historical trauma in the explanation of alcoholism, suicide, depression, and other maladaptive disorders among American Indian communities.

The concept of historical trauma is an extension of previously existing concepts of trauma in psychology. The major difference between historical trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is that the latter is analyzed in terms of events having an effect on individuals. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder is an excellent example of this kind of trauma analysis—the individual experiences of the battlefield can produce or provoke intense feelings of fear, helplessness, and horror. The psychological trauma manifests itself in the form of flashbacks, anxiety, and other maladaptive behaviors.

However, trauma analysis based on concepts like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is ill-suited to the analysis of larger historical events that are cumulative and that affect groups of people over longer periods of time. We can say that usual trauma is based on the effects of events on an individual. In other words, distinct events affect individuals

and have distinct behavioral consequences. However, this kind of analysis does not have sufficient explanatory power in the case of the experiences of larger groups of people such as the Nez Perce. The Nez Perce faced systematic, persistent traumas throughout the 19th century, which culminated in the War of 1877 and its particularly traumatic after effects. In this case—and with other historical examples such as the Jewish Holocaust—it is not only appropriate but also entirely necessary to approach the question of trauma from a more generalized, historical perspective.

While the trauma of the Nez Perce is better understood in this paper, in association with the War of 1877, the traumas faced by this group of people had deeper roots than a single conflict and forced relocation. Like other Native American societies, the Nez Perce had their own social conventions, own internal and external social relationships, and own ways of dealing with events in the world. The particular worldview and cultural context of the Nez Perce was largely unique to that group of people. While the Nez Perce were able to carve out a place for their way of life amongst the various other Native American societies that surrounded them, the arrival of European settlers by the early 19th century presented a socio-historical trauma from which the group would struggle to recover.

What is most important to understand about historical trauma, especially when applied to the Nez Perce, is that it is not a matter of revealing a discrete traumatic event that had discrete effects on the group. If this were the case, it would be feasible—if exceedingly difficult—to develop strategies for helping the modern Nez Perce overcome the lingering effects of the trauma. However, historical trauma does not occur in such singular terms. In fact, truly functional societies should be able to absorb and adapt to the

introduction of historical traumas, such as the arrival of European settlers. In the case of the Nez Perce, the trauma inflicted occurred over the course of decades and consisted of a series of punctuated events and historical changes that would unhinge the stability of the Nez Perce society.

The trauma, as identified by this case study, began with the first contact between the Nez Perce and Europeans when the former helped the Lewis and Clark expedition pass successfully through the area. The introduction of a new group of people in the world required some changes in the communities understanding. The trauma intensified with the arrival of Catholic missionaries in the 1830s who forcibly required the Nez Perce to give up their traditional semi-nomadic ways, settle down into sedentary communities, adopt a new religion, learn a new language, and give up many of their cultural practices. This was a significant part of the trauma the Nez Perce experienced because it represents the first concerted effort by outsiders to fragment the cultural lineage of the community by creating a linguistic, religious, and behavioral schism between generations. However, the Nez Perce could have overcome even this, if they had had time to adapt to these new social requirements and appropriately coordinate the transmission of cultural knowledge between generations, which had previously been accomplished orally.

When gold was discovered in Nez Perce territory in the 1860s, however, the intense influx of settlers to the area and the forced relocation of many of the Nez Perce to a new reservation would precipitate the trauma to follow. The War of 1877 began when a few young warriors reacted to the relocation and building atrocities from incoming settlers. As a result 800 Nez Perce began a 1,100 mile journey east to look for asylum with friends. Pursued by the military, the group's numbers dwindled dramatically and—

most significantly—the elders and leaders of the group died during the campaign. In the end, 250 survivors were forced onto a reservation in Oklahoma so different from their home in the mountains and valleys of the north that it represents a trauma unto itself. Without many of their elders in the community, the line of cultural and social cohesion across generations became disrupted, worsened by a general consensus in the community to never speak of the War of 1877. Thus, when the group was permitted after eight years to return to the general area they originally lived in—though nowhere near their original home—the historical trauma was compounded. The Nez Perce culture was significantly altered through systematic traumatic events that broke the lines of cultural stability of generational communication. The Nez Perce who survived were left with fragmented knowledge of their heritage and identity, which cemented their isolation and trauma.

This trauma can only be understood in historical terms because it occurred over such a large span of time and affected such a large group of people. Nonetheless, its effects are not dissimilar to those described by traditional trauma analysis. Maladaptive behaviors and social patterns become transmitted from generation to generation, even into the modern era, because the group that directly experienced the trauma is limited on their ability to pass on positive cultural knowledge to their children. In many cases, the negative and deleterious behaviors are passed on, directly or indirectly, until this is nearly all that is left in the culture and society. The modern maladaptive behaviors of Native American groups and the Nez Perce descendents in particular, can be traced back to historical traumas that have seeded themselves into their cultural consciousness. The behaviors and attitudes expressed by the modern Nez Perce are a function of a history of colonialism and genocide experienced by their forebears. If there can be any hope of

helping to break this social cycle of maladaptive behaviors, it is important that we first understand the historical roots of the trauma that was experienced and that continues to form a core part of the Nez Perce social experience.

Recommendations for Historical Trauma Interpretation in Yellowstone National Park

Yellowstone National Park is a "keeper of memories" (Common Ground 2007:18)**,** a sentinel, similar to other Parks in the United States. In this role visitors can learn the campaign of the Nez Perce in 1877 as they fled from oppression in search of freedom. Because Yellowstone National Park receives around three million visitors a year, the Park has the opportunity to interpret Nez Perce historical trauma within the 1877 story.

However, historical trauma is a complicated phenomenon with many facets. In the case of the Nez Perce, many different versions exist about what occurred during the War of 1877 and how historical trauma has affected them exist. Each family has their own truth of what happened, what is remembered, and what is told within their family. Some families may experience historical trauma, others may share a story of resiliency, and other families may experience nothing of historical trauma.

In addition to the many versions of historical trauma in families, we have to be conscious about the controversy this concept carries with it. The interpretation should not convey that American Indians are permanent dependants or victims incapable of taking care of themselves. In fact, the Nez Perce have an epilogue to their historical trauma. In the last couple of years they have developed cultural programs to renew their cultural identities (Redstar et. al 2006). I would suggest impressing upon visitors that the Nez Perce, along with other Native American groups, are still here today fighting

alcoholism, drug abuse, and suicide by engaging their youth in traditional cultural practices to alleviate their pain and anger at past injustices. Also, genocide is a loaded term that may encounter resistance among visitors. As an underlying theme of historical trauma, genocide may have an unintended consequence of making Euro-Americans feel responsible for the acts that cumulatively resulted in historical trauma. During interpretation of historical trauma in the park, I would recommend using phrases such as "severely devastated" or "death in massive numbers" rather than the term genocide.

Furthermore, before interpretation of historical trauma begins, the context of the visitor should be taken into account. Visitors may have little knowledge about American Indian culture, specifically the Nez Perce culture. The visitor should know that they may have learned stereotypes and myths about Native American culture. For example, the myth that American Indians are stoic, emotionless people is widespread. This process will help the visitor clear their palate for the learning experience of historical trauma.

Finally, how do we pull all of the different stories and the controversy of historical trauma together so the concept makes sense to visitors from California to Germany? Each historic site allows us, in interpretation, to reconnect the past with the present. Historic sites are far better understood when visitors can stand on the actual terrain and then "see" the landscape through past experiences by hearing the words of those who lived the experience. Going to the Nez Perce National Historic Trail brings the War of 1877 to life for the visitor and allows them to connect, on a personal level, to the phenomenon of historical trauma. For this reason, Indian Pond is an ideal site to introduce historical trauma on an interpretive tour. The interpretation can begin with a discussion about the elderly woman that was scalped and murdered at the site during the

War. From here, discussion can develop from the topic of why elders and leaders are important in Nez Perce culture. I recommend this discussion stresses how elders were a repository for Nez Perce historical knowledge and oral tradition. Without their teaching and guidance, cultural knowledge about their past became fragmented and served to compound historical trauma. I also suggest a commemorative monument with a wayside sign and brochure at Indian Pond. This allows the visitor(s) to read the wayside sign for an overview of historical trauma and take the brochure with them for a more detailed discussion of historical trauma on their own time. The commemorative monument should be a place of silence for the Nez Perce to honor their ancestors. It should also be a place for visitors to see, feel, and understand historical trauma and how the phenomenon has affected the Nez Perce today.

Understanding of the past and listening to the many voices of which comprise the park's past influences the visitor's understanding of historical trauma. In this sense, the park becomes a place of learning that allows the visitor to confront the issues of historical trauma with a deeper awareness of the past and present. The story of the Nez Perce is one of colonialism and genocide, but the story also demonstrates endurance, strength, and fortitude in the face of cultural and social upheaval. The phenomenon of historical trauma presented in interpretation can give people an explanation for the prevalence of alcoholism, drug abuse, and suicide in American Indian communities.

Conclusions

In this case study, I believe historical trauma was prevalent in oral history transcripts, because the individuals in the study had personal experience, in one way or another, with alcoholism, suicide, depression and other deleterious ills. They also

demonstrated a collective memory fragmented and personalized about the loss and dislocation associated with the 1877 War. For this reason, the case study does prove the existence of the historical trauma phenomenon in the Nez Perce community today. The Nez Perce narratives point out that historical trauma is not a result of a single event that results in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. Rather historical trauma is cumulative and occurs from a series of punctuated traumatic events over the course of decades, which supports previous work with historical trauma theory. The case study demonstrates that historical trauma in the Nez Perce community began with the arrival of Lewis and Clark in 1805 and culminated in loss of homeland, war, boarding school, and assimilation policy.

However, the limited number of individuals in this case study allows only for generalizations about historical trauma in the Nez Perce community. I believe a year-long case study among the Nez Perce is needed to detail the effect of historical trauma in their everyday lives. This case study will provide an in-depth look at the way historical trauma has manifested or not manifested itself in the Nez Perce. With this future research, we will be better informed to write interpretive media for the visitors of Yellowstone National Park.

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Tree Nodes

Name	Sources	References	Created	Mo
Nez Perce National Historic Trail in YNP	0	0	1/26/200	1/2
Administrative History	4	9	2	5/16/200
Animals-General	6	16	2	6/7/2007
Communications	6	37	1	6/7/2007
Culture - Nez Perce	8	41	1	6/18/200
Animals	8	1	2/6/2007 11:38 AM	
Autonomy	5	2	1/26/2007 2:18 PM	
Buffalo Country, going to Buffalo Country	7	3	1/26/2007 2:19 PM	
Dogs	1	1	6/7/2007 4:09 PM	
Family	7	4	1/26/2007 2:19 PM	
Fire	1	1	3/21/2007 8:25 AM	
Genealogy	6	3	1/26/2007 2:19 PM	
Horses	9	6	2/2/2007 9:24 AM	
Humor	3	1	1/26/2007 3:58 PM	
Hunting (in general)	4	1	1/26/2007 2:20 PM	
Individuals	2	2	1/26/2007 3:40 PM	
Inter-tribal Relations	10	7	2/1/2007 2:33 PM	
Intertribal Warfare	6	2	1/26/2007 2:32 PM	
Intra-tribal Relations	4	1	3/27/2007 10:06 AM	
Knowing	8	3	1/26/2007 2:20 PM	
Oral Tradition	7	32	2/14/2007 8:59	
Prophecy	3	6	2/14/2007 8:57	
Stories	8	60	1/26/2007 2:28	
Language	7	4	1/26/2007 2:20 PM	
Leadership	4	2	1/26/2007 2:21 PM	
Legendary Accounts	6	1	1/26/2007 2:21 PM	
Long House	5	2	1/26/2007 2:21 PM	
Naming	7	1	1/26/2007 2:22 PM	
Old age-dying-rites	3	8	2/14/2007 9:03 AM	
Policy	3	2	3/7/2007 3:31 PM	
Powwow	5	9	1/26/2007 2:27 PM	
Relationship with Natural Resources	8	3	1/26/2007 2:18 PM	
Religion	5	3	2/5/2007 3:30 PM	
Christianity	8	52	3/8/2007 11:24	
Dreamer Religion	3	6	1/26/2007 2:19	
Smohalla	3	3	3/8/2007 11:25 A	
Wovoka	2	2	3/8/2007 11:25 A	
Seven Drums	7	33	2/5/2007 3:31 I	
Reunion	4	1	1/26/2007 2:27 PM	
Songs	5	2	1/26/2007 2:28 PM	

Tree Nodes

Name	Sources	References	Created	Mo
Sovereignty	3	1	1/26/2007 2:29 PM	
Survival	5	2	1/26/2007 2:29 PM	
Trails	5	1	1/26/2007 2:29 PM	
Travel	3	1	3/14/2007 11:03 AM	
Women	4	2	2/12/2007 1:02 PM	
Youth	6	4	1/26/2007 2:30 PM	
Education	6	28	2	6/7/2007
Euro-American	1	2	2	3/30/200
Individuals	0	0	2/14/2007 8:59 AM	
Aubrey Haines	2	2	3/19/2007 1:10	
Frank Walker	1	2	6/4/2007 8:52	
Gerry Mernin	1	1	3/16/2007 12:4	
Hiram Chittenden	1	1	3/27/2007 9:50	
Jerome Greene	1	1	2/12/2007 2:36	
John Lounsbury	2	2	3/16/2007 12:4	
Lee Whitlesey	2	2	3/27/2007 9:02	
Philetus Norris	2	4	2/22/2007 9:24	
Spaulding(s)	1	2	4/19/2007 8:57	
Stan Hoggatt	0	0	3/16/2007 10:5	
Health Issues	4	11	2	6/4/2007
Indian Country	2	6	3	6/5/2007
Interpreting the 1877 Story	2	2	1	3/30/200
Constraints, Sensitivities	4	2	1/26/2007 2:16 PM	
Intellectual Property Rights	5	1	1/26/2007 2:43 PM	
Methods	7	1	1/26/2007 2:16 PM	
Research	2	10	3/16/2007 9:26	
Miscellaneous	2	2	1	4/17/200
Iraq	2	4	1/26/2007 2:44 PM	
Myths	3	16	1	6/7/2007
Afraid of Geysers	4	1	1/26/2007 2:10 PM	
Aimless Nomads	3	4	1/26/2007 2:11 PM	
General Perceptions of Nez Perce	7	3	1/26/2007 1:54 PM	
Joseph Myth	3	4	3/21/2007 8:26 AM	
Lost	6	1	1/26/2007 2:11 PM	
Nez Perce after 1877 War	0	0	7	7/17/200
Nez Perce in 1877 War	8	18	1	6/18/200
Babies that died	4	5	1/26/2007 2:32 PM	
Chief Joseph and other leaders	6	2	1/26/2007 2:43 PM	

Tree Nodes

Name		Sources	References	Created	Mo
Black Eagle	1	1		2/6/2007 8:03	
Chief Eagle from the Light	1	1		3/20/2007 3:06	
Chief Joseph	7	39		2/5/2007 3:49	
Chief Utsinmalikan	1	1		2/6/2007 8:12	
Looking Glass	6	16		2/5/2007 3:49	
Old Chief Joseph	3	6		2/6/2007 8:09	
Ollokot	3	5		2/5/2007 3:49	
Toohoolhoolzote	2	4		2/6/2007 8:03	
White Bird	4	10		2/6/2007 8:03	
Wottolen	1	2		2/6/2007 8:03	
Yellow Bull	1	1		2/6/2007 8:03	
Yellow Wolf - Charley	4	12		2/6/2007 8:14	
Elderly in War		4	1	1/26/2007 2:31 PM	
Historical Context		5	1	2/5/2007 8:13 AM	
Civil War	3	6		3/15/2007 10:1	
Lewis & Clark	5	14		3/8/2007 11:25	
Little Bighorn	1	1		2/12/2007 3:22	
Inter-tribal relations		1	4	6/4/2007 2:52 PM	
Intra-tribal Relations		0	0	3/29/2007 8:49 AM	
Religion in War		2	4	2/5/2007 3:32 PM	
Strategy		0	0	7/10/2007 8:14 AM	
Warriors		6	2	1/26/2007 2:31 PM	
Women in War		8	3	1/26/2007 2:31 PM	
Youth in War		4	9	1/26/2007 2:31 PM	
Nez Perce Legacy	8	47	1	6/18/200	
Alcohol		3	1	3/26/2007 10:39 AM	
Boarding School ERA		2	9	3/19/2007 3:24 PM	
Discrimination		4	7	2/14/2007 9:00 AM	
Trauma		9	8	1/26/2007 2:29 PM	
Violence		1	1	4/4/2007 3:23 PM	
Wallowa		1	2	6/4/2007 12:52 PM	
Nez Perce Weapons	4	5	2	6/18/200	
Policy	1	1	1	6/5/2007	
Hunting in the park		1	2	1/26/2007 2:37 PM	
Indian Policy		6	1	1/26/2007 2:37 PM	
Lewis and Clark		5	1	1/26/2007 2:38 PM	
National Policy		7	4	1/26/2007 2:38 PM	
NPS		3	1	1/26/2007 2:38 PM	
Treaties		5	3	1/26/2007 2:38 PM	
Proprietary Issues	7	27	1	6/7/2007	

Tree Nodes

Name		Sources	References	Created	Mo
Route of Nez Perce through YNP	7	41	2	6/7/2007	
Sacredness	6	17	1	6/18/200	
Tourist Parties in 1877 War	2	10	1	6/7/2007	
General treatment of tourists		7	3	1/26/2007 2:42 PM	
Helena Party		5	1	1/26/2007 2:41 PM	
Prospector Shrively		4	5	2/5/2007 8:48 AM	
Radersburg Party		5	1	1/26/2007 2:41 PM	
Mr. Cowan	1		3	3/27/2007 10:0	
Mrs. Cowan	1		2	3/27/2007 10:0	
U.S. Army in 1877 War	10	80	1	6/18/200	
Crow		0	0	7/11/2007 8:27 AM	
Fisher & Bannock Scouts		2	3	3/28/2007 10:35 AM	
Henry Buck		1	3	3/27/2007 10:01 AM	
Individuals		0	0	7/9/2007 5:08 PM	
Doane	0		0	7/9/2007 5:09 I	
Gibbon	0		0	7/9/2007 5:07 I	
Howard	0		0	7/9/2007 5:07 I	
Miles	0		0	7/9/2007 5:07 I	
Sherman	0		0	7/9/2007 5:42 I	
Spurgin	0		0	7/9/2007 5:08 I	
Sturgis	0		0	7/9/2007 5:08 I	
Wood	0		0	7/9/2007 5:07 I	
Route thru YNP		3	3	3/27/2007 10:03 AM	
Strategy		0	0	7/10/2007 8:15 AM	
War Sites in YNP	1	1	1	6/7/2007	
Barronett's Bridge		2	2	1/26/2007 2:04 PM	
Cascade Creek		0	0	3/29/2007 8:39 AM	
East Side of Park		0	0	7/2/2007 4:30 PM	
Cache Creek	0		0	7/2/2007 4:32 I	
Lamar Valley	1		1	2/14/2007 11:5	
Saddle Mountain	0		0	7/2/2007 4:33 I	
Soda Butte	0		0	7/2/2007 4:31 I	
Spurgin's Beaver Slide	1		1	3/28/2007 3:22	
Firehole River		2	2	1/26/2007 2:04 PM	
Henderson's Ranch		3	4	1/26/2007 2:04 PM	
Indian Pond		6	1	1/26/2007 2:05 PM	
Mary Mountain		3	5	2/2/2007 10:19 AM	
McCartney's Cabin-Hotel		3	3	1/26/2007 2:08 PM	
Mud Volcano		4	9	2/14/2007 1:20 PM	

Tree Nodes

Name		Sources		References		Created	Mo
Nez Perce Creek		3		1		1/26/2007 1:52 PM	
Nez Perce Ford		3		7		1/26/2007 2:05 PM	
Otter Creek		6		1		1/26/2007 2:05 PM	
Pelican Creek		1		1		3/19/2007 10:10 AM	
War Sites outside of YNP	0	0			1	4/5/2007	
Battle of Clearwater		2		3		2/13/2007 10:56 AM	
Bear Paw Battlefield		6		2		1/26/2007 2:09 PM	
Big Hole Battlefield		9		5		1/26/2007 2:09 PM	
Camas Meadows Battlefield		2		2		1/26/2007 2:09 PM	
Canada		6		2		1/26/2007 2:44 PM	
Bismark, SD	0		0			7/9/2007 1:34 I	
Leavenworth, KS	0		0			7/9/2007 1:35 I	
Tongue River	0		0			7/16/2007 10:3	
Canyon Creek		2		2		2/12/2007 3:46 PM	
Clear Creek		1		1		2/12/2007 3:18 PM	
Cow Island		1		1		3/30/2007 12:56 PM	
Dead Indian Hill		2		2		3/16/2007 12:44 PM	
Fort Fizzle		3		7		1/26/2007 2:10 PM	
Oklahoma		5		1		3/16/2007 9:49 AM	
White Bird Canyon		5		1		2/13/2007 10:56 AM	
White Settlers in 1877 War	2	9			2	6/7/2007	
Wilderness Issues	3	3			1	6/7/2007	
EuroAmerican Perceptions		3		3		2/22/2007 12:26 PM	
Nez Perce Perceptions		3		4		2/22/2007 12:27 PM	
Yellowstone National Park	8	29			1	6/7/2007	
Archaeology		3		7		2/6/2007 11:14 AM	
Resources in YNP		3		7		1/26/2007 1:59 PM	
Bears	6		13			1/26/2007 2:02	
Buffalo	7		30			1/26/2007 2:14	
Coyote	0		0			1/26/2007 2:02	
Geysers	3		5			1/26/2007 2:03	
Roads	1		1			3/28/2007 9:40	
Wolves	1		1			1/26/2007 2:03	
Shrine at Park		2		7		1/26/2007 2:40 PM	
Significance of		8		1		1/26/2007 2:41 PM	
Why they came here		6		2		1/26/2007 2:41 PM	