



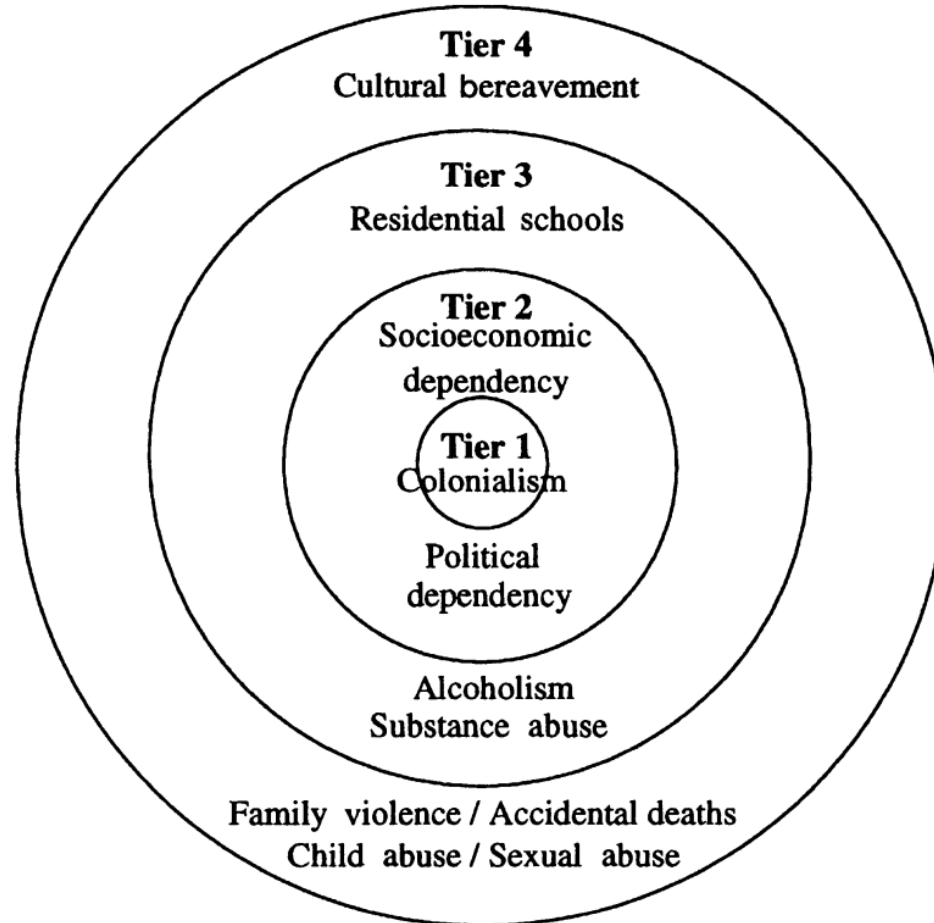
The Role of Colonialism in Creating Dependency and Multigenerational Trauma in First Nations Citizens

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Figure 1 illustrates the process that trauma is passed on, from the seed of colonialism to the outer layer, which represents the current traumatic events being experienced by First Nations citizens.



MARIE-ANIK GAGNE, PHD

*Nation Within Nation:
Dependency and the Cree (1994)*

Figure 1. Cycle of traumatic events.

Dependency

- ▶ Dependency occurs when the economies of one group of countries are subjected to the development and expansion of other economies (DosSantos, 1973).
- ▶ This dependency alters the internal structures of less developed countries.
- ▶ Economic (e.g., employment opportunities) and political dependency (e.g., policies supporting extraction and assimilation/cultural genocide)

Gagne, 1994

Economic and Cultural Policies Created Dependency

- ▶ Unequal relationships
- ▶ Introduction of debt (trading posts)
- ▶ Laws to assimilate

U.S. Civilization Act March 1819 <http://www.stateoftheunionhistory.com/2017/04/1818-james-monroe-indian-civilization.html>;

Canada, Gradual Civilization Act 1857 <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/gradual-civilization-act>

- ▶ Residential schools 1869-1960s
- ▶ Recent commissions report on residential schools documenting abuses and deaths

Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada, December 2015 and May 2021 <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/05/world/canada/Indigenous-residential-schools-photos.html>

Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, May 2022 <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/department-interior-releases-investigative-report-outlines-next-steps-federal-indian>

- ▶ Extraction policies without consent April/May 2022 United Nations Forum on Indigenous Issues <https://www.un.org/press/en/2022/hr5467.doc.htm>
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1116902>

Colonialism leads to Dependency

- ▶ Land resources and rights
- ▶ Residential schools
- ▶ Alcohol and substance use/abuse
- ▶ Child abuse/Sexual abuse
- ▶ Family Violence/Accidental deaths
- ▶ Cultural bereavement

Exposure to traumatic events and mental illness

- ▶ Colonialism is a social determinant of health
- ▶ Historical/Colonial trauma
- ▶ Ongoing traumatic events in families and communities such as: interpersonal and domestic violence, shootings, stabbings, beatings, accidents, suicides, murders, disappearances, drowning, and auto-pedestrian accidents.
- ▶ High incidence of PTSD, depression, anxiety, suicide, substance abuse, soul wounds, frozen grief
- ▶ Impact of COVID

Mitchell (2019); Czyzewski (2011); Kirmayer, et al (2000); Duran, et al (In Danieli 1998); Manson, et al (1996, 1990); O'Neil (1989); Danieli (In Figley, 1985)

Multigenerational Trauma of Colonialism

- ▶ In the case of First Nation citizens, multiple generations have been continuously exposed to the traumatic experiences of displacement, discrimination, poor health, physical and sexual abuse, family and community violence, child abuse, accidental death, and suicide.
- ▶ Colonial trauma is multidimensional in that economic, social, cultural, and political dependence are experienced across multiple generations.