

the general operation of the school. The fact that Catholic and Protestant church leaders continued to disparage one another's religions throughout this period meant that conflicts between students could also take on religious overtones, particularly in communities with more than one residential school, such as Inuvik in the Northwest Territories.

Student victimization of students was an element of the broader abusive and coercive nature of the residential school system. Underfed, poorly housed, and starved for affection, students often formed groups based on age, community of origin, or First Nation. Such groups gave students a measure of identity and status, but also provided protection to their members and dominated more vulnerable students.

William Garson recalled that at the Elkhorn, Manitoba, school, "we were always like hiding in the corners; you know away from any abusement. From other, older, from older, elder boys, students."<sup>482</sup> Percy Thompson said that at the Hobbema school, "one bully used to come at me and he'd pretend he was going to talk to me and all of sudden hit me in the belly. And of course I gag, gag, and he'd laugh his head off and, you know, to see me in such a predicament."<sup>483</sup> Alice Ruperthouse spoke of "the cruelty of the other children" at the Amos, Québec, school. "It was, you know, like in a jungle. Like in a jungle, you don't know what's going to come out but you know you had to watch out."<sup>484</sup> Albert Elias felt that the classroom at the Anglican school in Aklavik "was the safest place to be in 'cause that's where nobody could beat me up. I dreaded recesses and lunches and after school, I dreaded those times."<sup>485</sup>

Bullying might start shortly after arrival. In some schools, all new male students were put through a hazing. Denis Morrison said that each new arrival at the Fort Frances school underwent a beating. "They used to initiate you, like, they would beat the hell out of you, the other kids would. It wasn't anybody else, it was the other kids, the older ones, eh."<sup>486</sup> Bob Baxter recalled that there were student gangs at the Sioux Lookout school. He was beaten up and knifed on one occasion. He had a vivid memory of people tying him to his bed and throwing hot water over him.<sup>487</sup> Clara Quisess said that at the Fort Albany school in Ontario, older girls would threaten the younger ones with knives.<sup>488</sup> Louisa Birote recalled that the girls at the La Tuque, Québec, school all formed themselves into hostile groups. "We hated each other. So, this little gang didn't like the other gang. That's the way at the school, that's what we were taught, fears, and we were scared, and I went to hide in what we called the junk room, the junk closet."<sup>489</sup>

A lack of adequate supervision in the schools and residences meant that such domination could give rise to physical and sexual abuse. The assaults ranged from being forced to kiss someone, to being forced to simulate a sex act, to being raped. In some cases, victims were given small treats to encourage them to be silent; in other cases, they were told they would be killed if they reported the assault.<sup>490</sup> Agnes Moses recalled being molested by older girls at a hostel in northern Canada. "I never quite understood it, and it really wrecked my life, it wrecked my life as a mother, a wife, a woman, and sexuality was a real, it was a dirty word for us."<sup>491</sup> The experience of being abused at a British Columbia school