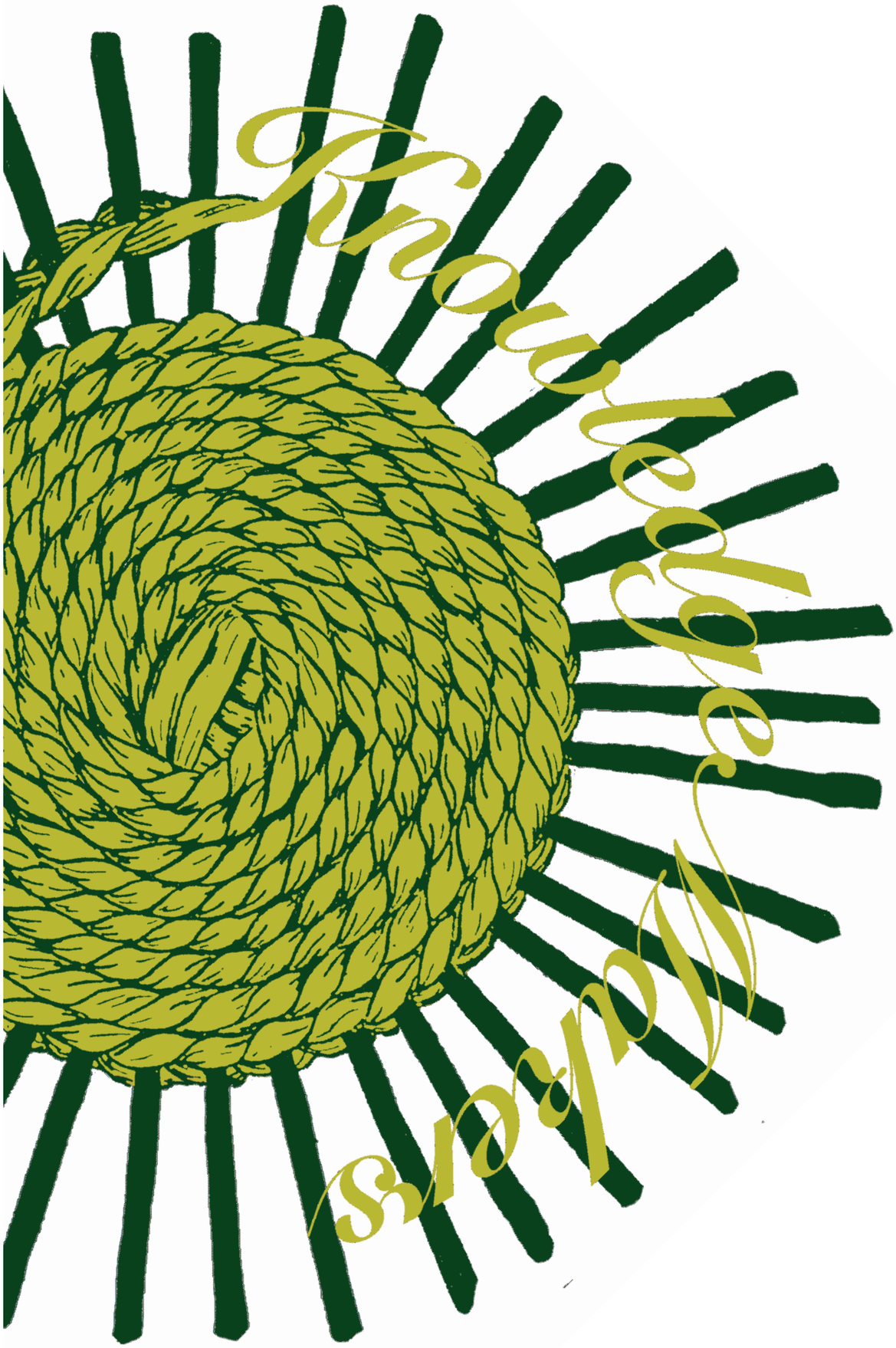

Knowledge Makers
Est. 2016
Vol. 5, 2020

Artist's Statement

My thinking behind the Knowledge Makers design was drawn from a few ideas I read in the Indigenous Storywork article. Archibald (2008) discusses the design of baskets: "I use the basket as one metaphor for learning about stories and storytelling." (p.2). When discussing Holism Archibald explains it "symbolizes wholeness, completeness, and ultimate wellness. The never-ending circle also forms concentric circles to show both synergistic influence of and our responsibility toward the generations of ancestry, the generation of today, and the generation to come" (p.11). My design works off of these two images showing that the Knowledge Makers program is working from the many generations of Indigenous knowledge that came before us and is weaving towards a future generation of Indigenous researchers - Levi Glass

Archibald, J. A. (2008). An Indigenous storywork methodology. Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues, 371-393

"You are taking your first steps like years ago. When we move forward, everyone moves forward. If we are all going in the same direction, let's walk together. I would sure love to walk with you while rebuilding our minds.

-

Uncle Mike Arnose

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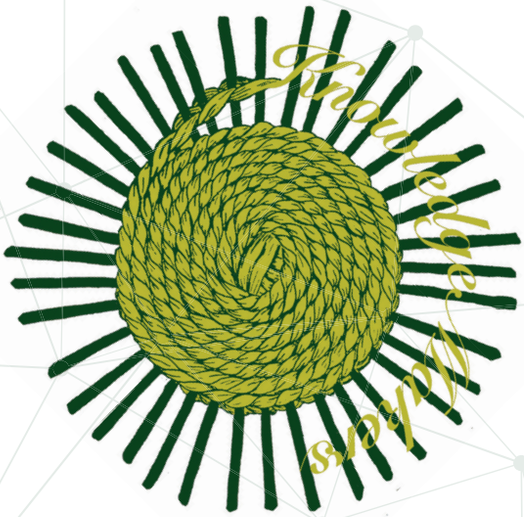

Knowledge Makers 2020
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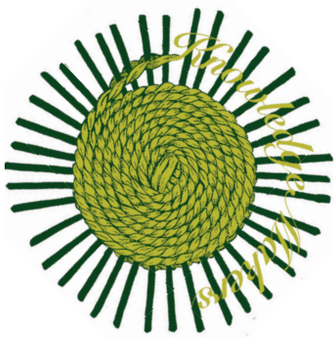
THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

FOREWORD

We begin with the symbol for Knowledge Makers: a pine needle basket in the process of being made. This is Indigenous skill is particular to Secwépemc, with each piece of the weaving adding strength and creating the whole; each distinct yet significant. The Knowledge Makers journal shows us how Indigenous peoples as researchers are indeed full of distinctiveness, distinction, and strength. We see the potential to expand knowledge and to transform the research community within Canadian universities.



Knowledge Makers is an interdisciplinary research mentoring initiative based at Thompson Rivers University that supports Indigenous undergraduate students to become researchers. The selected students participate in creating online portfolios and a two-day workshop exploring Indigenous research. They prepare research action plans and produce papers for the Knowledge Makers publication. A gathering is held with the university, community, and loved ones in attendance to share the moment when the Knowledge Makers, as first-generation Indigenous researchers, receive their first copy of their first publication. And as often happens in Indigenous ways, the first act for each Knowledge Maker is to gift this treasured first publication to their respected ones. We come together throughout the Knowledge Makers journey with the support of our families, Elders, administrators, faculty, staff, and each other, tapping into the potential we have as Indigenous researchers, and the breadth and possibilities of Indigenous research methodologies.

We feel honoured to be in each other's company, and inspired. Since its inception five years ago Knowledge Makers has had 56 participants from more than 30 nations, of whom two have been National Scholarships winners (SSHRC), one has received a SSHRC research grant ($50,000), fifteen have been research assistants, six have received Graduate Research Scholarships, four have continued to Masters, one has completed an International Internship, two have gone onto Post-Baccalaureate Studies, one was awarded an Undergraduate Research Experience Award Grant (TRU), and two have presented at international conferences. In 2019 Knowledge Makers received Canada's teaching excellence award for collaborative teaching: The Alan Blizzard Award, from the Canadian Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (https://www.tru.ca/indigenous/knowledge-makers-tru.html). What began as an undergraduate initiative now includes three Knowledge Makers Circles – undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral; and Knowledge Makers International (a five-country field school for Knowledge Makers to meet with international Indigenous scholars and students).

We cherish the remarkable journey each year for the Knowledge Makers students and team - to go from receiving student applications, to selection, e-portfolios, workshop, and publication. The momentum continues each year as more and more articles draw on published research by Indigenous researchers, and in particular the research in the Knowledge Makers journal. Papers in this journal have contained Indigenous-only references. This is a confirmation of the scope and standing of Indigenous research today.

For each of the first four years Elder Estella Patrick Moller was with Knowledge Makers every step of the journey. She encouraged us to be our 'Real me'. She taught us to breath. She inspired us to go further than we might have believed possible. She saw potential in each of us. We remember her call to not hide our Real Me, and to keep going. This journal is dedicated to Elder Estella.

In recognition that this is our fifth journal, this journal includes the voices of our Elders, as well as past Knowledge Makers. Their words inspire and guide our knowledge makers today and in years to come. You will find a foreword from TRU's Associate Vice President Prof Will Garrett-Petts and articles from TRU Indigenous academics. We recognize also that the Knowledge Makers Editorial Board now includes two Knowledge Makers who have secured university research roles: Sandra Bandura (Assoc Director, All My Relations Research Centre, TRU), and Kelly Therrien (Research Assistant, All My Relations Research Centre).

Knowledge Makers is a profound, dynamic journey with sustainable outcomes. It is always is a privilege to share this journey with everyone involved. In this shared effort we enact research as a form of service.

We look forward to the Knowledge Makers authors and their papers being cited in future publications by others, and used in courses across Thompson Rivers University and other institutions' courses. We look forward to seeing Knowledge Makers participants continuing as researchers – strong in identity and purpose – and recruited to academic roles in Canada's universities. The weaving of this basket of knowledge-making and Knowledge Makers is dynamic and advancing. What a treasured gift we have with this fifth edition of the Knowledge Makers journal.

Airini, Sereana Naepi, Sandra Bandura,
Rod McCormick, and Kelly Therrien

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thompson Rivers University campuses are on the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops campus) and the T'exelc (Williams Lake campus) within Secwépemc'ulucw, the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc. The region TRU serves also extends into the territories of the Stat'imc, Nlaka'pamux, Tsilh'qotin, Nuxalk, and Dakelh, and Métis communities within these territories. We recognize that this territory has always been a place of research, teaching, and learning.

We would like to thank the many people who contributed to Knowledge Makers. Thank you to Thompson Rivers University for the vision and resources that make Knowledge Makers possible. Our Chancellor (Nathan Matthew), Vice-Chancellor and President (Professor Brett Fairburn) and Vice-President Academic and Provost (Professor Christine Bovis-Cnossen) have provided genuine and meaningful support. Our sincere thanks to the TRU Research and Graduate office for providing the idea and resources to make this project possible, and to Professor Will Garett-Petts and Troy Fuller for your continued and exceptional support. We thank the TRU Elders Mike Arnouse, Sandi Hendri, Doreen Kenoras, Dr. Margaret Vickers Hyslop for their time and wisdom for Knowledge Makers. We remember Elder Estella Patrick Moller and her inspiring ways and words. Thank you to Paul Michel (Special Advisor to the President), Tina Matthew (Executive Director, Indigenous Education) and her team for their guidance. Thank you, Garry Gottfriedson for your advice and contributions in your unique academic leadership role as Secwépemc Cultural Advisor to the Dean and Faculty of Education and Social Work. We thank all the Indigenous Student Services team for their guidance and support of the program, in particular Vernie Clement. Thank you to all the Deans, faculty, staff, and Knowledge Makers alumni who were able to join us this year to provide encouragement and insights. We acknowledge Winter 2016 Knowledge Maker Levi Glass for designing the Knowledge Makers' artwork (seen on the cover of this journal and on our hoodies). Thank you to the extraordinary team that brought this publication to print, noting (in alphabetical order) Airini, Sandra Bandura, Jana Chouinard, Rod McCormick, Sereana Naepi, Thomas Sandhoff, Bonnie Scherrer, and Kelly Therrien. We are deeply grateful for the skills, expertise and empathy that Thomas brings to his work as graphics designer for the journal. You show us our potential, Thomas. Thank you to the scholars who are our vitally important independent journal reviewers. The legacy of Crystalyn Lemieux (a visiting Fulbright student scholar), combined with Brian Lamb and TRU-Open Learning, means that the Knowledge Makers e-portfolios continue. Thank you to the support, administration, and catering teams for making sure all that was needed was in place. We acknowledge the support and supplemental funding provided by the Faculty of Education and Social Work. Knowledge Makers is led through the All My Relations Research Centre (https://www.tru.ca/edsw/research/all-my-relations.html), which is based in the Faculty of EDSW. Thank you to the Director Prof Rod McCormick, Assoc Director Sandra Bandura, Research Assistants and support staff. We thank Dr Sereana Naepi, the former Assoc Director of All My Relations for leading Knowledge Makers and her legacy as former head Editor for the journal. Finally, and most importantly, we thank the Indigenous students who committed themselves to the Knowledge Makers program. We look forward to hearing about your research journeys in future years.

~

Kukwstsétselp

HONORING ELDER ESTELLA PATRICK-MOLLER

As Knowledge Makers, we are so grateful to have shared this program with Elder Estella. But grateful does not truly capture our feelings; it does not honor the gifts that Auntie Estella gave all those she touched. We dedicate this journal to Elder Estella, and we have included messages from some of the people Auntie touched here at TRU. We hope that by uniting the voices of Auntie's TRU family, we can begin to communicate the beauty, kindness, humor, and generosity of our dear Auntie, Elder, Knowledge Holder, friend, and partner in reconciliation and in being our real selves.

Thank you to Auntie Estella's sister, Shirley, for her support. Thank you to Elder Margaret, Elder Uncle Mike, Elder Doreen, and Elder Sandi for all their guidance.

Conversations with the Elders

Auntie Estella's voice and spirit was captured in the 2019 KM journal in the ***Conversations with the Elders.*** She shared her adventure with Joanne Brown to smudge the Science Department. They were called in because students sensed an issue with the energy in one of their spaces. It would not surprise those who knew her that she knew exactly where to look for an energy imbalance. Seeing a snake and hearing its rattle before ever entering the space, her ability to connect to energy made it simple to identify the issue: an owl, and somewhere nearby, a snake. Unsurprisingly, she did not ***only*** what was asked (smudge); she did what was required. She cleaned the space, relocated the owl, and lectured the remaining creatures: "***I asked all the animals and stones and wood and rocks, I said, 'You need to get along together. You all belong together. Here, we don't eat anybody.' And Joanne was looking at me and I said, 'It's true—we don't. We cooperate.'"***

Auntie had a gift for both teaching and learning. She learned from the Science Department experience the lessons she needed to teach. Auntie knew that she must share her knowledge. "***When I talk to Science people, biology and environmentalists, so just be aware and do not go mixing up the medicines. And so, they said, 'How do you know that?'"*** This questioning did not sway Auntie from her lessons. She responded directly, ***"Well, you have to know that all predatory birds eat snakes. And no matter how big the snake is they're terrified of the predators."*** Her response was brilliant. No one is going to argue with that statement.

Auntie guided students and others to work through their fear, a well-known companion to Indigenous people in colonial spaces. "***Some of the students had to learn to deal with their nightmares. Because nightmares are depictions of intense fear. The first year I had to deal with students having nightmares of the little animals chasing them. I said, 'Well, ok... let's make those little animals metaphors for something.'"*** She always found unique solutions to issues, elegant solutions born from her ability to deeply connect with the world around us.

This journal is dedicated to Elder Estella. We miss her smile and the joy and laughter that she always brought with her. We miss her guidance and teaching. We will continue to make you proud and we will keep going.

> "I realized a long time ago every human being is the same – we all develop our mind, our body, our spiritual self ... It is okay to be different. It is okay to think differently, to believe differently, and to be The Real Me, and to not hide The Real Me... Keep going."
>
> -
>
> Elder Estella Patrick-Moller

Remembering Elder Estella Patrick-Moller

Elder Doreen: I cherished her soft voice, her sense of calmness, her beautiful smile and she was always willing to share.

Elder Margaret: My life has been deeply enriched by our shared revelations during our walks & talks, reminiscing of the ways our previous generations had to fight for their lives in order to preserve our ways of life that provide healing paths.

Estella called me her 'tribal sister'. She talked about her personal transitional phases. We often treasured moments of silence as we sensed the Creator's presence. During one of these times we looked out her window of her last resting place with a beautiful view of trees, feathered friends & the ever flowing river. On one occasion especially, we were both in awe as we witnessed a long white misty cloud flowing in the air

just above the river so effortlessly yet so deliberately. We shared tears of joy as it seemed to be Creator's way of confirming her personal decision to transition into the next phase of her life.

Uncle Mike: Students in Knowledge Makers wanted to learn from her. They listened. They awakened our stories, rejuvenated our knowledge. She thought our stories were lost. She paved the way for Elders and student to connect. She wasn't formal. She would say to students and Elder looking for a way to connect and fit in "just go for a damn coffee" or take a walk with each other. Connect.

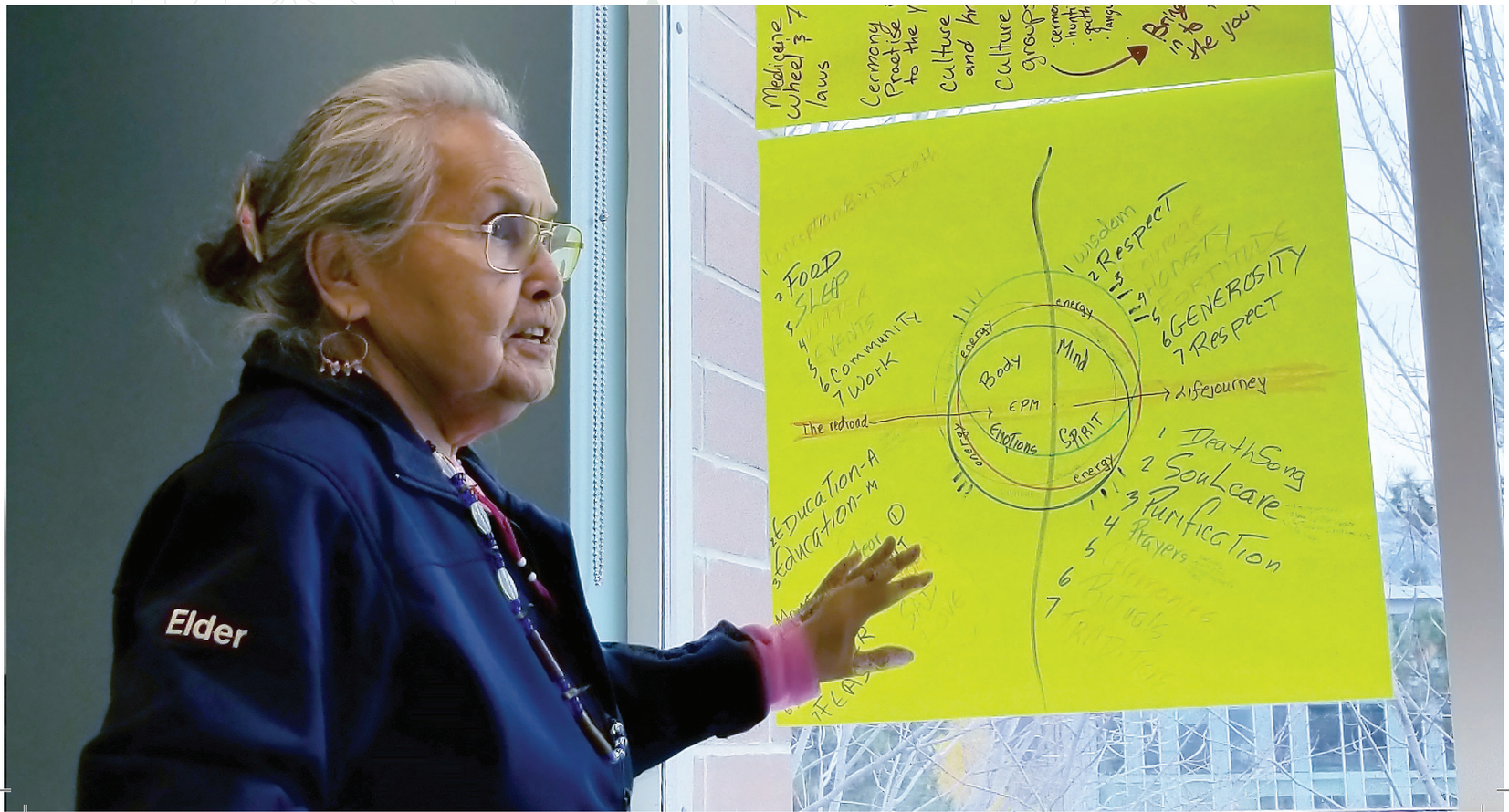
Marie Sandy: Elder Estella came to my girls group to provide advice to my pre-teen girls on entering womanhood. Her gentle presence was a balm to my group, and she gave them advice they took with them and made them reflect not only on their future, but on their cultures.

I will always remember her prayers as she reminded each of us to take a breath first. It always encouraged me to be ***present*** during her prayers.

Emily Dundas Oke: Elder Estella brought her light + love + truth wherever she walked. She taught me to spend time with flowers everyday. When I think of how much she shared with us, my mind can't picture that infinitude. Although we have been in different places, our Elders follow us on our journeys like the mist follows the river. After witnessing this, Elder Margaret Vickers Hyslops reminds us that Water transforms."

Jordan Robinson: Auntie Estella was a very special person in my life, especially when I started to learn about my culture and heritage. She reminded me how to breath and be aware of my breath in any situation of fear and the power of viewing life through a lens of love. She was loved by many and cared deeply for indigenous women, two spirit and youth. During my time at TRU she shared her knowledge of medicine, spirituality, coping skills and lots of laughter with me.

Willa Julius: Elder Estella brought me in when I was feeling scared. I have lost much of my culture, and even though we don't share the same background, she shared a very special gift of Metis weaving with me. It inspired me to research and explore my own lost culture.



Will Garrett-Petts

Associate Vice-President,
Research & Graduate Studies

THE KNOWLEDGE MAKERS AS TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The deep relationship between the Secwépemc people and the traditional lands on which TRU resides is commemorated on campus with an Indigenous territorial marker located on the first floor of the Old Main Building. It was created by Secwépemc artists Rod and Ron Tomma and Mike Peters. Made from a rare form of quartz, communicating through virtue of its physical presence and pictographs, this marker is both an acknowledgement of the territory and an invitation to situate ourselves in relation to this land and its history.

The Knowledge Makers program presents another kind of marker, and another form of invitation to a new generation of scholars. At root, Knowledge Makers constitutes a unique learning community gathering on traditional Secwépemc territory, where we honour the culture, language, and traditions of the Secwepemc people and champion the holding and making of knowledge. The Knowledge Makers gives testimony to the potential for powerful links between educational and research institutions like TRU and this land.

Over the last five years, Knowledge Makers has expanded and given a home to the network of Indigenous undergraduate students who seek engagement in research. The results are significant: more Indigenous student publications, research awards, employment in research assistant roles, scholarships, and admission to graduate studies. We have seen, too, how Knowledge Makers models possibilities for Indigenized mentoring practices, which have attracted national and international interest—including, now, national recognition in the form of the Alan Blizzard Award celebrating excellence in teaching and learning. Led through Indigenous expertise, this whole-of-university initiative has support from more than 40 colleagues across TRU—a holistic effort in teaching, learning, and research that puts students at the centre of knowledge creation and knowledge sharing.

This is part of a coming together with The Coyote Project, our local collective response to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*, with Knowledge Makers making a place for itself alongside the Ch'nook Scholars Program, Orange Shirt Day (remembering the legacy of residential schools), our faculty storytelling series called *Towards Indigenizing Higher Ed*, the work of the All My Relations Research Centre, our Indigenizing Open Learning initiative, Bearing Witness through the School of Nursing, our Library commitment to Digitized Secwépemc Resources, Indigenous Awareness Week, the establishment of the First Nations and Indigenous Affairs Committee of Senate, the Faculty Association's Decolonization, Reconciliation and Indigenization Committee, and the Partnership Agreement between Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and TRU. Most recently,

> "At root, Knowledge Makers constitutes a unique learning community gathering on traditional Secwépemc territory, where we honour the culture, language, and traditions of the Secwepemc people and champion the holding and making of knowledge."
>
> –
>
> Will Garrett-Petts

TRU's *Vision Statement* calls for the nurturing of "a flourishing relationship with the Secwépemc people on whose lands we reside. Members of our community will give exceptional consideration to Secwépemc world view and belief system. We will support thriving Secwépemc culture through respectful actions in research, teaching and service."

These are important markers of respect and understanding that deserve to be celebrated *and built upon* as a context to ground the Knowledge Makers and its accomplishments. Yet we have much work to do. The Knowledge Makers is a key part of what is still very much a work in progress, aiming toward making education and the research enterprise, making TRU, more fully equitable, diverse, and inclusive. Making TRU a better place.

On behalf of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, I thank the students, their teachers, the Elders and the community for their energy, their commitment, their creativity and talents, and their remarkable vision in making knowledge visible. For graduates of the Knowledge Makers program, through sharing their work in this Journal, are embracing their studies as they embrace their culture, giving testimony to the value of research as a vehicle for personal growth, positive community change, and intellectual exchange.

Nikki Fraser

Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc

Bachelor of Arts

"To me, Indigenous research means, methodical analysis conducted by, or engaged with Indigenous intellectuals to expand Indigenous wisdom, culture and knowledge."

TRUST YOUR JOURNEY: DISCOVERING THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE PATH WE WALK

"We all know what needs to be done but we need to have the courage and the conviction to do it (Wilson-Raybould, 2019: 9)

Weyt-kp xwexwéytep, Nikki Fraser ren skwekwst. te Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc ren st'7é7kwen. Ren sqwse7 Trey re skwest.s, ren st'emkélt Aiyana re skwest.s

My name is Nikki Fraser, from Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (TteS). My son's name is Trey, and my daughter's name is Aiyana.

I am the great-granddaughter of the late Joe and Susan Fraser, the granddaughter to the late Ben Paul Sr, and Yvonne Paul (Fraser), daughter to Joyce Fraser (Dave Manuel) and Rob Spence.

My ancestry is traced back to time immemorial.I am proud to identify as Secwépemc, Anishinaabe woman.

Interconnectedness is essential commonality. We know that everything in life is intertwined. This sense of connections has significant meaning for Indigenous peoples. As I reflect on my path in life I recognize how much I have grown: a new path would be there; a new opportunity to grow and to learn or unlearn. This gives me a great sense of interconnectedness in my own life. I know this connection to be true in my own self, and in my research into what helps young Indigenous peoples to grow strong and become advocates for Indigenous advancement. I welcomed all these new opportunities as they challenged me in new ways to ask more questions. By understanding my journey on these paths, I hope to continue to clear a path forward for young Indigenous peoples like myself.

My research is focused on the question: What helps young Indigenous peoples to grow strong in identity and culture, and to become advocates for Indigenous advancement? To help expand understandings, I use an auto-ethnographic research method within a decolonised Indigenous research framework. This form of research method means I am able to use my self-reflection and writing to explore experiences and connect my story to wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings (Maréchal, 2010). Photographs feature in the story building and reflections. Consistent with Tuck and Yang (2012), and Datta (2017) I use the concept of decolonization from an Indigenous lens, with exceptional consideration for Secwepemc world views; a concept that centers Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous ways of thinking and being. Conducting decolonized research in this way means knowledge making with and within Indigenous communities in ways that places Indigenous voices and ways of knowing in the center of the research process (Smith 2019; Datta, 2017).

I never set out to be an advocate for Indigenous peoples. Rather, advocacy found me when as a young woman I was searching for meaning and for a purpose. As an advocate for justice, with a focus on Indigenous Women and girls. I know my role is to add to the path that was paved for me. I recognize my responsibility to do the same for others. I acknowledge all the Indigenous leaders, activists, advocates, and scholars of the past. They have opened doors for generations of young Indigenous peoples that will follow.

This paper is about the connected paths in life, one to the next, that in total lead us to join together in advocacy for young Indigenous peoples. There will be an exploration of three interconnected paths that help young Indigenous peoples to grow strong in identity and culture, and to become advocates for Indigenous advancement. The first is the 'path' of advocacy volunteer work. This is important because it is a response to a call to action. In my case my journey on this path began with an unexpected 'push' from my community to step forward. This was followed by the 'pull' of the national fight for Indigenous girls' and women's rights. The next experience in becoming an advocate for Indigenous advancement was and is on the global stage: at the United Nations. The second path to an advocacy role, which is described in this paper is Indigenous resiliency. This is a path of healing and growth and of being called to action. The final path in this research into growth as an advocate for Indigenous advancement is to honor the lives of advocates for Indigenous rights and advancement.

Throughout this paper I will call forward those with whom I have connected – personally, spiritually, in community, in academia. The interconnectedness is vital to becoming an advocate for Indigenous young peoples. I am reflecting on the interconnectedness of my journey, my advocacy work, and the instruments I learned about during my advocacy work and how I could continue to give back. In total my intention is to encourage more to trust their interconnected journey, as advocates in a time of critical, historic, Indigeneity. Together we advocate so that young Indigenous peoples might grow strong spiritually & culturally, socially, economically and politically.

ADVOCACY VOLUNTEER WORK

THE 'PUSH'

My advocacy volunteer work has led me on a journey of learning, unlearning, growing and sharing. It was in May 2015 that my life changed and my journey began at a BC Native Women's Association (BCNWA) General Meeting held in small boardroom in Kamloops BC with approximately forty local Indigenous Elders, women, and young women. I was at the meeting to support my friend, who was putting her name forward for the position of the Secretary for the Executive Board of BCNWA. I knew she could really shine, and contribute fully to this position. She was the successful candidate by acclamation. What I did not expect was to contemplate stepping up for one of the positions myself. At the bottom of the list of positions we were voting on there was "*Youth Representative*" written in a black sharpie. It took about two hours to get to the final nomination and the vote for the Youth Representative. During that time, I went back and forth with myself wondering whether to put my name forward. I looked to my right and I saw a well-respected Elder from my community. She gave a look that

Images: Left: National regional youth representatives for Board of NWAC Nikki Fraser, Chenisse Lynn, Mya Abotossaway, 2015; and right: Roberta Moses, Francine Joe, Nikki Fraser, 2015.

said, "Do you want to?" Looking to my left, I saw another respected Elder I have known since I was age 12 years. Next thing I know, the Elder on my right said "I nominate Nikki Fraser for the Youth Representative Position", with the Elder to my left immediately following saying "I second that". Although surprised with the turn of events, I accepted the nomination proudly and humbly. With a shaky, nervous voice, I gave my nomination speech, and I shared a personal but important story of what my family had endured and their strength and resilience.

This section begins with two photos. The first on the left of Chenisse, Mya and myself reminds me of the beginning of my path to advocacy. At home I got elected to our local Board thinking it was a very local and grassroots commitment. Within weeks I was on the plane for the first time and on the way to Montreal to the General Assembly of Native Women Association of Canada. I put my name forward to be the regional representative for the Board. This experience elevated me to a learning experience within a group of women across Canada – learning from Indigenous women. That is where I started learning about the inequalities and advocating for indigenous women and girls. I had a sense there wasn't much room for young voices to be heard, but I was not alone.

The second photo is of Roberta Moses, Francine Joe and myself after I was elected to the Board that night in May 2015. I was fortunate that Francine and Roberta had made the spaces for young Indigenous women's voice to be heard. **This was the beginning of my expanded sense of who I am as Secwepemc. This was the beginning of trusting my path to advocacy for**

The experiential journey towards identity is vital to understanding how we grow strong in identity and culture, and become advocates for Indigenous advancement. Sunseri describes a dynamic learning process: "[I]ndigenous identity is not something frozen in the past but is loved daily by…women and is tied to shared experiences and knowledge of cultural practices" (Sunseri, p.109)

The experience of the path of advocacy volunteer work is known by so many strong Indigenous women. I had the opportunity to sit with TRU Elder Margaret Vickers Hyslop (Tsimshian, Heiltsuk). She shared the 'push' she had known at age 19. Her hereditary chief and elected chief offer her the Band Admin position. Her, elected chief had a Chief and Council meeting and went to her grandma's house, where they spoke in the language. He talked to the grandma and poppa Henry Vickers. Her Poppa saw her nervousness and took her out for a walk. "You will read everything and find out" he said. The push to grow as a leader within her community kept going for years, honoring cultural elders, trusting their vision, tapping emotional intelligence They just know and they ask us to stand in our strengths. This is a story of interconnectedness from beginnings to leadership in advocacy for Indigenous advancement. Through Elder Margaret's story I hear encouragement to trust our journey, and the interconnectedness of the path we walk.

THE 'PULL'

In 2019, the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls published the report that shocked the nation. This was not a shock to Indigenous communities. Many of us have first-hand experience of what is revealed in the findings of the Inquiry. My family's experience clearly demonstrated a lack of knowledge in the justice system of on how to provide support in community. Something had to change.

My cousin, Samantha Jane Paul's was reported missing September 2013. Later in June 2014 she was found on the outskirts of Kamloops in a rural area. Her story and her case still remains unsolved. During this experience, the lack of support created in me questions: "Why is Sam's case not urgent like other cases?", "Why is it so difficult to navigate to find support systems?", "Who can my family contact to get advice?". The questions inspired me to get involved and to be proactive. I wanted to see change, I had to learn and to be a part of it.

The 'push' from the Elders had opened a pathway to a newfound passion and purpose. The 'pull' to take action came from the need to help my family receive better supports.

As the new 2015 BCNWA Youth Representative, I knew I had to use this and other platforms to fight for our women. From 2015 – 2017, in my roles as BCNWA and Native

Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) National Youth Representative, and one of seventeen United Nations Young Leader for the Sustainable Development Goals, I had opportunities to engage in National and International in advisory and decision-making capacities. During these engagements I noted the explicit connection and overlap of national and international documents relevant to Indigenous advancement. The United Nations Declarations of Rights for Indigenous Peoples (2015), Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action (2015), the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015), and most recently *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (2019), include cross-references to one another. This interconnectedness created an inner desire for me to learn how these national and international calls and commitments were connected, how they supported each other and how Indigenous advocates can use these interconnections to support their causes, the fights, and their voices. The desire was not an intellectual one. This was about that profound, fierce love for Indigenous peoples and for being Indigenous that author Richard Wagamese best-described:

Something that most do not understand about my people: when we stand up in acts of resistance to things that threaten our spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual well-being, it's not because we hate what's in front of us – it's because we love what's behind us. We love our homes, our families, our communities, our nations our ceremonies, our teachings, our cultural ways, our histories and the land that those things spring from. In that, we are like anyone anywhere throughout the course of human history who has ever stood up to injustice. Stay Brown! (Wagamese, R., 2016).

As a Young Indigenous Leader, it was my responsibility to participate and attend meetings like Native Women's Association of Canada Annual General Assembly, 2015 VII Continental Meeting of Indigenous Women of the Americas, and 2016 National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Outcomes and Priorities for Action to Prevent and Address Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls. During these meeting I continuously heard Indigenous Elders, women, youth, and leadership refer to "UNDRIP". I was new to the political environment, but when I heard Indigenous People using their voices to bring their community, and Nation concerns to the forefront citing an UNDRIP article, it was impactful and powerful hearing their voices and witnessing this interconnectivity in action. I knew it was important to not only cite UNDRIP but to be very familiar with key national and international reports and agreements for Indigenous advancement.

We have to trust that we are on the journey where we can best serve. It is often later on that we discover the interconnections that made the path ahead of us. Little did I know that in 2007 when I was a 16 year-old Indigenous teenager that big things were happening at an International Level that would eventually influence reports and agreements that would have an impact on my life as an Indigenous woman today. My life in 2007 seemed to be about experiencing transitions in a complex family system, needing family support, and finding instability; and barely passing through high school. My life seemed to be about the difficulties before me. I was trying to find my way, and discover my potential. Yet elsewhere deliberations were happening that would lay a path for me to later discover. On the 13th of September 2007 at the United Nations 107th Preliminary Meeting, resolution 61/295 the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was passed. This would one day be a document of vital importance to my life, my activism, and my community. This declaration is the first of its kind, recognizing Indigenous peoples rights, diverse cultures, languages, traditions, customs, trauma and intergenerational trauma from historical injustices, colonization and in the face of dispossession of lands and resources, the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination and more (UNDRIP 2007).

For me the 'pull' to take action came from the need to help my family receive better supports. What I came to later know was that action at this local level was also about action at the global level.

The World

Image: Nikki Fraser, selected member of the inaugural class of 17 Young Leaders for the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals, at the UN Headquarters, UN General Assembly Hall, New York, USA.

Indigenous advocates work across boundaries that are political, cultural and geographical. Common factors include leading by example, helping people, listening, communicating clearly (Stewart and Warn, 2016). We understand that as a call to help our family. For me that was the key – to be there advocating at times of darkness. As Stewart and Warn suggest, helping one's family is a way of helping one's community. I can see that now: my focus began with my family, knowing this was helpful too for Secepwemc. It later happened that this work connected to the global stage as well, contributing in areas such as the UNSDGs. I have learned that our work at home is work for all. The United Nations reminds us of this. The UNSDGs message is: Global goals, local action (https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/).

I first started noticing this interconnection between global and local during my time spent at the UN Headquarters. As a Young Leader for the UNSDGs I recognized familiarities, like reducing inequalities & gender inequalities, calling for climate action and justice, and addressing poverty, health and well-being. Their calls to action at that global stage would refer to the UNDRIP (2007) and the UNSDGs.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (also known as the 2030 Agenda), is made of 17 global goals, with 169 targets[1] with one main principle: 'Leave no one behind'. According to the 2017 briefing note for the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights and the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (based within the Division for Social Policy and Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs), 73 of the SDG targets coincide with the UNDRIP articles (p. 2).

Examples of this interconnection include:

- SDG Goal 5, targets 5.1 - 5.3.2 coincide with UNDRIP article 22.2: Goal 5 addresses Gender inequalities, and UNDRIP Article 22.2 indicates, "States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination".
- SDG Goal 10, targets 10.1 – 10.7.2 intersect with UNDRIP Articles 3,5,7.1, 15.2,17.2,17.3, 20.1, 20.2, 21.1, 21.2[2]. Goal 10 addresses Reducing Inequalities, UNDRIP Article 3 states "Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development." (UNDRIP, p. 8). Article 21 states "Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security." (UNDRIP, p. 17)

1 United Nations, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015

2 Danish Institute for Human Rights (2016) – http://sdg.humanrights.dk

In July 2018, I attended the UN High Level Political Forum, where the Government of Canada presented a *Voluntary National Review: Canada's Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. I was honoured to be invited to speak at the forum's symposium: *Resilient women, resilient societies: Advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls to accelerate transformative change for the Sustainable Development Goals*, a collaboration between the governments of Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, France and Iceland.

Canada's *Voluntary National Review* noted the importance of reconciliation, and that Indigenous People in Canada have a critical role in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda in Canada, stating "For the Government of Canada, the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be achieved without collective action that recognizes and includes the diverse voices and participation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis" (p. 11). That statement echoed the SDGs main principle to "Leave no one behind". Goal one in the Voluntary National Review "Canada's Poverty Reduction" (p. 23), overlaps with UNDRIP Article 21.1 by stating that Indigenous peoples have the right to improve their economic status, in areas like education, employment, housing and social security (UNDRIP, p. 17). Canada's Voluntary National Review also interconnected with Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), stating that the Government of Canada wants to review and ensure that they are meeting their constitutional obligations, and implement the 94 calls to action, also referencing the implementation of UNDIP, and the Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) (p.11-12). The interconnections were explicit and intentional. Would the words of Canada's Voluntary National Review be converted into actions?

The Truth and Reconciliation 94 Calls to Action call on the Federal Government, Provincial Government, Canadians, and Indigenous people to work towards a Nation to Nation relationship (TRC 2015). Over ten of the 94 Calls to Action reference UNDRIP, in particular Call to Action 46.3 states "Full adoption and implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation" (p 5). Call to Action 41.1 references an inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, stating "We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal organizations, to appoint a public inquiry into the causes of, and remedies for, the disproportionate victimization of Aboriginal women and girls. The inquiry's mandate would include: Investigation into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls" (p 4). The Federal Government promised to implement the Calls to Action. In the five years since the Commission, to what extent has government been effective in converting intent into outcomes for Indigenous advancement? How will we advocate for full implementation?

At the beginning of this section is a photo of me at the United Nations headquarters in the General Assembly, as a selected Young Leader for the UNSDG. This reminds me of the growing voice of Indigenous peoples, and the right to have high expectations of Nation members of the UN including Canada. In the photo I am attending for the second time the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. In other meetings at the UN and internationally I find that usually the Indigenous voice is small. When they have this forum in my photo at the UN, it is all Indigenous voices. To sit there and see Indigenous people fill these spaces, dressed in their cultural regalia is so powerful. To listen to their passion for their people back at home makes me like a sponge, absorbing from their experiences, and learning from the changes they are making and their struggles. I am able to connect to these and to them. I have the same struggles and desires. To be able to build relationships with Indigenous peoples around the world is powerful. Now when I go to the UN I recognise people and they recognise me. To be able to do this makes me realise how small the world is and how many people are doing what I am doing. I am not alone. We are connected.

THEIR (OUR) INDIGENOUS RESILIENCY

During 2015, my first year in my role as the UN Youth Representative, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released their report and Calls to Action. I was 24 years

old at the time. I can remember watching the news and seeing my relatives from coast-to-coast-to-coast in ceremony due to the release of the Calls to Action. Here was a formal acknowledgement of their (our) past trauma, and intergenerational trauma. Here too was recognition of their (our) Indigenous resiliency. During the 19th century the Federal Government funded Church-run Indian Residential Schools, the last Residential School closed in 1996, approximately 150,000 Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Métis) Children (students) attended and went through Canada's Indian Residential School System (Eisenburg, 2018).

In 2018 I applied to be a part of the Canadian Roots Exchange 2018/2019 Youth Reconciliation Initiative (YRI). This program brings Indigenous youth and non-Indigenous youth together to develop processes of reconciliation and decolonization. During my time with CRE YRI program I was asked, "What does reconciliation mean to you, and what does it look like?". My first thought as a survivor of the ripple effects from the consequences of Canada's Residential School System was: "Intergenerational trauma." Like so many my generational belief system became distorted from this ripple effect. When I answered that question, I did so with that in mind. My answer continued, "I believe reconciliation starts within, with self, then with family, extended family, community, Nation, and then with other Nation groups including Canada. What that looks like for me is healing, growing, furthering my education to gain more knowledge so that I can uplift Indigenous people and their voices, continuing to learning my language, practicing my traditions, and breaking intergenerational cycles for my children".

What I learned during that discussion was that 'reconciliation' looks and means something different to every individual. The one common thread connecting all the different meanings, is that healing and growth are essential for meaningful reconciliation and restoration of good relations with one another. This is real, transformational, and work.

The photo for this section reminds me of what I learned about interconnections from reading *The Winter We Dance*. This book is about the Idle No More movement. I got the book in 2015. I read it at that time but didn't realise the importance of it until I went back to school. I realised then how this book and its words could strengthen my work at a university level and beyond. I realised that the INM movement was spearheaded by women. They felt a responsibility to create a space for Indigenous people to stand up and have a voice, and use their voice as a powerful instrument that they have to share their truths. INM was advocating for environmental issues and political factors. What inspired me was that these women inspired one another. When I was pushed into my role, I too had a group that supported me and each other in our advocacy work. I was honored to meet Silvia McAdam, lawyer and co-founder of INM. She inspires me to take action.

Image: Silvia McAdam, lawyer and co-founder of Idle No More, with Nikki Fraser. June 5, 2019

TO HONOUR THEIR LIVES

My family was doubly impacted by tragedy. Many years before losing my cousin Samantha, my aunty Dorothy Ann Spence was reported missing. She was last seen in Vancouver B.C in August 1995. I was 4 years-old. I remember my aunty and the time we spent together. As that four year I could not conceive that she was not coming back, I remember asking the question "But why?" I have always done my advocacy work in their name, to honour their lives, to share their stories, so they are not forgotten or left behind.

I walk a path of honoring all the Indigenous Elders, women, young people, youth, and children who fought for over three decades for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Image: Nikki Fraser, United Nations Garden of Roses, UN Headquarters, New York, USA. Photo by XXXXXX

Their efforts, their commitments, activism, and advocacy are why we now have from 2019 the *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* with 231 Calls to Justice.

In my local, national and global advocacy work there are interconnections in which I honor the lives of advocates before me. Some of the 231 calls to actions refer to and reference, UNDRIP and TRC 94 Calls to action, Call to Justice 1.2.v states; "UNDRIP, including recognition, protection, and support of Indigenous self-governance and self-determination, as defined by UNDRIP and by Indigenous Peoples …" (p 177), and Call to Justice 5.21 "We call upon the federal government to fully implement the recommendations in the reports of… the *Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015)…"* (p 186). In the Reclaiming Power and Place report, it reflects back on The National Inquiry's 10 Calls for Immediate Action from the *Interim Report of the National Inquiry into MMIWG s*. The first call for immediate action was:

Implementation of all the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, particularly those that impact Indigenous women and children, including the immediate implementation of Jordan's Principle and the immediate and full implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation, and including a federal action plan, strategies and other concrete measures to achieve the goals. (National Inquiry into MMIWG, 2019, 1: 66)

The photo is of me walking in the rose garden of the United Nations at their headquarters in New York. The garden is immense with hundreds of rose bushes from across the world. This was a year after the global launch of the SDGs. It was 2016 and I was at the UN General Assembly as one of the 17 UN Young Leaders about to be officially recognised. The UN General Assembly is when all the Heads of States gather. In 2016 I had seen whole blocks of traffic were shut down so the Heads could get to the UN.

The photo was taken by a world-renowned photographer. The United Nations commissioned the photo session because they wanted to record my being in the first ever 'class' of the UN Young Leaders. I was shy about the focus being on me. Even so, I saw myself as connecting to something far bigger. Being at the UN and in the rose garden, was documenting that young Indigenous women's voices have made it this far. It was a documented record of fact. It was a proud moment, and also surreal. To be in that space, to hold that space, and to be on those grounds as a young Indigenous woman was bigger than me. In reflecting on my interconnected paths to advocacy, it's clear that the work that I do is always bigger than me. This is so for all those in advocacy roles for Indigenous advancement. I feel like I am one piece of this larger picture. For that picture to be taken in the UN rose garden was a way of showing we have made it this far – Secwepemc, Indigenous young women. A path has been cleared to the United Nations. Our voices are here and they know our voices are important.

I recall that in the photo session I connected my presence at the UN with the people who have advocated for my right to vote as an indigenous woman. I walked that garden path and my own life path because women advocated for my right to further my education. They advocated for safety for myself. I remembered that the National Inquiry wasn't just something that happened overnight. That took decades of Indigenous women advocating for their safety then and the safety of Indigenous women and girls in the future. I thought about how my path in advocacy was for my kids, and for me. I look now at the picture and I can see that I understood then what I understand now: I carry a sense of responsibility. Much was done for me and I have to ensure that it is done for the next generation. A path was cleared and I walked onto it. It is my role to continue to clear that path. I do that by acknowledging what has already been done, and by whom, and advocating for what needs to continue to be done. It is not about me. It is about the collective. We all have gifts to contribute We all are leaders and advocates.

I look at the picture and I remember how when I was talking to the young people in my cohort of UN Young Leaders some didn't know what the word 'Indigenous' meant or the importance of Indigenous peoples in Canada. That showed me that more work had to be done and more voices heard. My picture in that garden at that time was an honor to my role models and a call to be that next advocate so more Indigenous people step into spaces like the UN. I knew then and still do so now that this work can be intimidating yet less so when I help the focus to be not on Nikki Fraser, but on action by and for Indigenous representation. That is how I have been able to say, "I am here and I am going to tell you my voice is not enough. We need more indigenous voices here."

On reflection it is apparent that while the purpose for advocacy work may be very local at first, the example of others, and the scope of the work ahead that they have made possible means that the point of my voice as an advocate is that it should not be the only one. More should experience what I am experiencing. More should share these opportunities. More should advocate on behalf of us all.

The honoring of lives is a reminder of our sustained, respectful connections to one another. In exploring Indigenous leadership development, Stewart and Warn (2016) describe this kind of connection in terms of the collective identity: "Leadership was seen as emerging from a sense of connectedness in that at a deep level, one's self identity was defined in relation to a collective Aboriginal identity" (Stewart and Warn, 2016:11). When I stepped into advocacy, I was able to find myself. I found my purpose and what I wanted to do: uplifting our people in any way that I can. That is why I went back to school so I was able to walk in both worlds. At the end of the day I wanted to be able to give back more than I was given. I feel a sense of responsibility to be successful in my career endeavours so that when I am successful those who I honor for uplifting me are also successful. Just as those who came before me, I will work to leave paths open for those who come after me, especially my children.

THE PATH WE WALK: FINAL WORDS

"...Let us take the opportunities that lie before us and seek to empower – individual by individual, community by community, Nation by Nation – so that no single person, no single community and no single Nation is left out or behind" (Wilson-Raybould, 2019: 28)

The reason why I continue to do this advocacy work is that I want young indigenous children like my son and daughter to grow up appreciated and loved as themselves as Indigenous people. This photo is of me with my children. It is also about the beginnings of the lifepaths they each now walk. They and we walk individually, yet also, always, together.

My own journey has led me to become the first in my family to attend university. It's 2020, and I'm 28 years old in my second year of my Bachelor of Arts Program studying Sociology, and Political Science. I decided to face my fear and apply for post-secondary, so that I can learn more about the interconnectedness of national and international reports and commitments (like UNDRIP, SDG's, TRC, and Reclaiming Power and Place), and my life of connections that have opened doors to advocacy for my people.

In my research I have touched on the surface of what helps young Indigenous peoples to grow strong in identity and culture, and to become advocates for Indigenous advancement. I remain motivated to walk further to explore the overlap of each Goal, Target, Article, Call to Action and Call to Justice, and what I am called to do. We are bound together with the common thread: "Leave no one behind" (SDG 2015).

My research shows the reality and potential of interconnectedness; of how intertwined are the paths of advocacy for Indigenous advancement. From almost five years of learning about the interconnectedness of the reports and commitments, the research, community gatherings, national and international assemblies, the people and myself, I see how together we have been provided with ways to support healing and that I have been provided with the support and strength to develop as an Indigenous woman leader. Three interconnected paths are illuminated in this research that help young Indigenous peoples to grow strong in identity and culture, and to become advocates for Indigenous advancement: advocacy volunteer work, Indigenous resiliency, and honor the lives.

I know I need to continue my own research and lived experience along these three paths. This will deepen my understanding and my ability to mentor others to advocacy and leadership. I also want to understand when there is a complexity of the interconnections, It is not an easy endeavour to take advocacy roles on by myself. I question the process of young indigenous peoples' leadership development. When will we as Indigenous peoples at the grassroots community level have conversations with our own elected leadership, (Chief and Council, or Representative of Member of Parliament) about how to help young Indigenous peoples to grow strong in identity and culture, and to become advocates for Indigenous advancement? Why does the information of commitments at national and international levels to Indigenous advancement goals and actions stop at government level?". At the local level through my education and my advocacy work I share the international pledges with my peers, young people, and youth. Through my life I am see and walk through the doors to advocacy for the rights within these documents, for my Nation, my family, and all my relations.

I never set out to be an advocate, advocacy found me. I know my role is to walk on the path that was paved for me, and to clear the way so more Indigenous people can join this journey. I believe we are called to trust our journey. This is how we discover the interconnectedness of the path we walk.

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Alice George

Piikani

Bachelor of Social Work

"To me, Indigenous research means listening with the heart."

A CONNECTION TO NAAAHSIKSI THROUGH THE EYES OF PONOKAOMITAA

Okii Nikso'kowaiksi Niisto nitaniko Sippiimyniakii Niksissta aannistawa Inukukii Ninna aanistawa Thomas Nitommo'toto Piikani Nitommo'toto Saikuz Hello friends/relatives. I am "Woman who travels by night sky," a Blackfoot/Carrier Mom, Daughter, Sister, Friend, and Student, learning here within the unceded Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc territory.

This article is written in a first-person narrative, recalling memories, dreams, and feelings at moments of uncertainty, which are highlighted in *italics*. Reciprocity grounds my holistic perspective of healing, which guides my connection to the next seven generations. This story requires "patience and trust" in the words that are left unsaid, but felt with the heart (Archibald, 2008, p.8); it is a story which holds many different meanings for many different listeners.

This story is about the role of horses in my healing and how I will share that with others. This is my third year at Thompson Rivers University in the Bachelor of Social Work Program. I have encountered a reluctance to share this profession. In my experience, the lasting effects of Child and Family Services' unwanted presence within our communities contribute to my hesitancy. I explain it to my children as a superhero role, advocating for Indigenous rights to self-determination through "social justice and social action, both of which support a human rights agenda"; we learn how government structures and institutions work so that we can target the inequitable, oppressive policies that prevent people's right to self-determination and autonomy (Connelly & Harms, 2015, p.168-171).

My hope is to bring positive awareness about how a sense of belonging is vital after the genocide that I feel looms over our people. Intergenerational trauma, colonialization, and assimilation have disrupted my family dynamics. Healing is supported by acknowledging those harms of the past to change them for the future.

"Alice… It's okay. You are here with us. Call yourself. Everything is going to be okay." Memories of being left alone, drew on anxiety and a piece of me drifts off into some other consciousness, into star dust. Into whatever comes in the next life. Her voice will always soothe me, reassuring me that I am not going anywhere.

It was a cool, crisp fall morning. A warm startle in the pit of my stomach reminded me of the dangers in what I was about to do. Six years into recovery and I understand those responses differently. The craving for nature and the spontaneous feeling of galloping at top speeds, through an open field, drive the bitter cold away. The feeling of a 1,000-pound animal working in collaboration with you builds confidence, the type that challenges potential. That is how it began; who knew that balance would bring a shift to healing and wholeness?

Looking back in time is a way of healing. Blackfoot methodology uses critical thinking; Little Bear (2009) says we need to analyze information for meaning. Inner conflicts haunt my soul and horseback riding helps put things into perspective: "the challenge of controlling the movement of a 1,000-pound creature requires concentration, creativity, and resourcefulness and that success in doing so improves self-esteem, confidence, communication skills, trust, and boundaries" (Fredrick, Hats & Lanning, 2015, p. 810). Elders say, "You must first understand where you have come from, to know where you are going." In the years to follow I began to explore healing as a journey, like stimulating critical thinking through this story.

Adaptation strategies become a way of survival. Viewing time as cyclical helps a "natural processes of reconfiguration following traumatic loss" (Salzman, 2019, p. 668). Looking back now, the internalization of past historical trauma surfaced when I witnessed a courageous life come to an end.

"Good idea, hey my girl. Fresh spring water..." In agreement, I began to fill my container from the spring, as I watched his feet walk away. Only moments later I heard the beauty of his gratitude silenced by the squealing of hot rubber on stone cold cement. This type of traumatic experience brings unimaginable grief.

Differentiating between grief and trauma does not come easy. I found myself in a dissociative state, watching myself from the outside in. Standing in a small clearing, with a stallion who clearly knew I was invading his space. The slamming of his front hoof woke me up. I felt alive, and only then did I second guess my choice of crossing that fence.

Coping through substance abuse, I "came to" in many strange places, and oddly enough, this was one of those places. The traumatic experience of witnessing the accident that took my dad's life left me numb. Later, I learned that this was a normal psychological adaptation after experiencing a traumatic event (TIP, 2013, p.70). It felt as though I was screaming at the top my lungs and nothing was coming out.

At this time of loss, I questioned my identity and anything that had to do with faith as I understood it then. He always told me the same story, of how I came to be. The story is highlighted in my childhood memories as a place of belonging. This all came crashing down the day his life here on earth ended. Who was I without the affirmation of my dad's story of how I came to be? What did it mean to be an Indigenous woman in a "White settler" world? Little Bear (2000) suggests that understanding the concept of Aboriginal and Western worldviews brings understanding to "the paradoxes that colonialism poses for social control" (p. 77). Conflicted by ingrained values, my soul felt bound by the limitations of Eurocentric beliefs.

Reflecting on my life drove me into a spiral of emotions that were easier suppressed than faced. Growing up, I was blessed with two hard working parents who always reminded us of how much we were loved. They followed a Christian faith and it grounded them in tough times. My siblings and I attended a Christian school; trying to find my place in these spaces always left me unsettled. My parents were challenged with intersecting acts of oppression. They would face it with the faith that they believed in something greater than themselves. My parents struggled to make ends meet and it always confused me, because I saw how hard they worked.

"They came and told my dad that if I didn't go to school, he was going to go to jail." She was five years old. Inukukii is her name.

My mom, Inukukii, comes from a large family and many of her family members have passed on. "In 1894, amendments to the Indian Act empowered the Governor in Council to establish its own residential schools and to make regulations imposing fines or prison sentences on First Nations parents whose children did not attend government-controlled schools" (Anderson, Miller, & Newman, 2018, p. 314). They came for my mom and she attended Indian Residential School for 10 years. Although she feels that her experiences do not reflect others' more serious experiences of abuse, Renate Eigenbrod (2012) writes that, for all involved - the child taken, the parents left behind - the damage of Residential Schools "contribute[s] to upholding the continuance of traditions against the discourses of loss and

vanishing" (p. 278). My mom's and every person's experiences at these schools are valid. Historical trauma is described as a "cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations" originating from vast group experiences (TIP, 2013, p. 6). These definitions validate the experiences of injustice that people live with today.

People who live with survivors of Indian Residential School experience intergenerational trauma. The Trauma Informed Practice Guide (2013) describes it as "psychological and emotional" effects which can influence "coping and adaption patterns" developed in response to experiences (p. 6). Mom would tell me stories of how her mom was a seamstress and how her dad, my grandpa, worked hard as a pickup man and all-around cowboy. These are the stories that she highlights as her childhood memories.

The school influenced a series of cyclical events. My mom carries her Blackfoot language in her heart, never really losing it, just protecting it. When she speaks, she embodies more than just words; the language portrays experiences and actions of those who have gone before us. Language connects us as "one of the most important tenets… our languages guide us in our relationships" (Little Bear, 2009, p. 22). The family dynamics interrupted by these schools are irreplaceable. The way we go forward should be an act of awareness and solidarity for the ones who did not make it home.

Mom likes to share stories with me, and I love to listen. We sit, and she will tell a story as if she is drawing a picture, talking with her hands. The more details she gives, the more colorful it becomes. The stories about her time in Indian Residential School are not very colorful. There are so many stories; I remember these stories and think of all the missing colors. I have always felt like there were missing pieces of me, too. This is how I understand it. We lost our colors in that school, our colors being our spirit, what makes us whole. This part of healing brings great courage to face feelings of the unknown.

My memories of school are not good. After five years in a private school, two years into the public-school system my attendance was minimal to nil. Racist remarks and judgmental behavior prevented me from engaging in academic learning. In grade five, a youth pastor mocked my appearance, as did a seventh-grade elementary peer. Internalization of these types of events can notably be signs of "anxiety guilt" or "reflexive mechanism to cope with oppression" (Mullaly & West, 2018, p. 123). It was easier to simply accept the things for which people looked down upon you. It did not take long for me to become that "careless, drunk Indian" that people pretend not to see, but are quick to judge.

He was calling from across the street, "Penny, Penny Girl!!"and he laughed. Intoxicated and bewildered he followed at a distance. "Leave me alone, and never call me that! She is not my mother…," I yelled back. A week later he passed on, from "an alcohol induced incident?!"

Remorse left me in shock: *"he didn't know."* He spoke of a mother who orphaned her child at birth. "*Was that me?... I didn't want to know, not now.*" The Indian Act continues to retraumatize and assimilate Indigenous people through "cultural imperialism" that perpetually degrades the autonomy to which we struggle to hold on (Mullaly & West, 2018, p. 189). Historical Oppression is passed on through embodiment that comes from internalization, which can be expressed as horizontal violence (Burnette & Figley, 2017, p. 40).

When "I came to" for the last time, I had a beautiful baby boy. His need woke me up out of my numbness. And things changed. I changed. I began to live for tomorrows. Because in his eyes, I was more than all those things I had internalized. I vowed to always do right by him, even if it made me look bad. He was not going to go through as many dark days as I had. So, I began to work on myself, listening to the Elders and learning where I came from.

First I had to recognize that acceptance and gratitude are the foundations to love and life. Believe it or not, I learned this by looking through the eyes of my child, his eyes teaching me my responsibility to make the right choices. The reciprocal nature of life gives me awareness that what I do influences him, and if I cannot take care of myself, I cannot take care of him. This looked different for me over the years; the toughest part was exploring the different feelings of unsettlement.

Caught deep in thought, we came to an abrupt halt. He tilted his head to the side and looked at me out of the corner of his eye, as if to say, "Are you here to ride or shall I take you for a ride!?" He is an Arabian named Sox, the biggest motivator to reach deep for my own potential.

In the beginning, it can be scary. A culturally-based family treatment program helped me explore the roots of Indigenous Knowledge, and what was taken away through cultural assimilation as a result of the Indian Residential Schools. Community is the biggest influence on my connection to culture and balance; the "recognition of a group's collective history is often necessary to make sense of the current health and social conditions" (Bombay, n.d., p. 333). Having a chance to learn our "history provides a context for understanding individuals' present circumstances, and is an essential part of the healing process" (Bombay, n.d., p. 333). Through ceremonial practices that acknowledge the cyclical nature of life, I embrace spirit and a connection to a higher power, bringing back the innocence of faith.

It has been 14.5 years that I have been working through the accident that took my dad's life. The accident was a turning point for me to define my own "way of knowing," by a discovery of my own autonomy. Incorporating the medicine wheel to balance life's obstacles challenges me to strive for potential. With an understanding that healing is a process, I may never fully recover from the grief that trauma holds. What goes into my medicine wheel looks different with time, it is forever evolving, but the foundation is where I find peace.

I caught the twinkle in her eye. She wants me to dream. Because when I dream, she dreams, and we all dream; and we all reach that place of inner peace. "Researchers have reported a significant inverse relationship between hope and depression: as hope increases, depression decreases" (Frederick, K. E., Hatz, J. I., & Lanning, B., 2015, p. 810).

My mom, Inukukii, was always aware of the love I held for horses. As my children grew older, I began to work hard on myself, physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally. Doing yoga and weight training connected me to spirit in a grounding way that increased my self-respect. With a heightened self-awareness I met one great friend, S.R., who continues to help me build on my own potential. We began riding every other day and the first time Mom saw me ride confirmed my connection to the horse. The benefits of riding are obvious as my mood and behaviour change drastically, affecting those around me in a positive way.

When I began riding, I was severely overworking myself. Then I began to have more self-awareness and to recognize my value. I began to focus on my own wellbeing before supporting others effectively. Collaboration went beyond riding. The horse-and-rider relationship is based on reciprocity, as I see it. You learn mutual respect, to make the best decisions for safety in partnership. I learned this at the top of a narrow trail.

Shale rock slid down both sides of the trail as it came to a dead end. Anxiety threatened to control my fate; I had to let Sox take the lead. He turned on a dime and we headed back down the hill to safety.

As much as I loved riding with my good friend, the balance I find in holistically grounding opens my perspective to healing as a journey. As White Plume (2016) shares,

[T]he horse is gifted with a sensitivity that helps us by mirroring our emotions. Our interactions with a horse will reflect what is true in our lives, and help us to rebalance ourselves. At the same time, their way of being, and our interacting with them in nature, makes this process natural and easy. In the Medicine Wheel Model, we recognize this is because when we are working with the horse, we are working spirit to spirit. (p. 3).

I felt I had to challenge myself more as a parent and role model to my children, my nieces, my nephews, and their peers.

Searching my options with my husband's support, we both stepped into post-secondary education. The course I took grounded my knowledge in social justice for Indigenous communities. At the end of my first program I was blessed with a practicum opportunity to be of service in a trauma recovery group that was equine-facilitated. I knew this was the direction I needed to take.

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is an experiential group-learning process; no riding is necessary as the focus is ground activities (Dell, 2008, p. 91). We look at the horse as a teacher. A professional mental health counselor will facilitate reflection on participants' experiences and understanding of their interactions with the horses. The benefits are endless, with plenty of opportunity for participants to build positive relationships. The horses immediate intuitive response support, "an approach aimed at increasing life skills through hands-on doing, and has been identified as useful in building communication, problem-solving, and team building skills, as well as enhancing personal awareness and a sense of self" (Dell, 2008, p.92). When I look into the eyes of a horse I see a reflection of myself looking back at me.

"I feel so angry at him, he sold all the horses…& for what? …alcohol." Powerless, she confessed her frustrations. Offering a reframe, I suggested, "Mom…, maybe Grandpa was just as angry as you. He probably felt just as powerless. How was he supposed to pass on our Blackfoot traditions? How was he supposed to pass on our relationship to the horse?"

With the sharing of stories, our experiences connect us to greater purpose. I could feel that it hurt her to say these words aloud. We all internalize differently. It takes courage to express what lies beneath the surface. I am grateful that she shared her feelings of loss with me. It helped us both to understand. The extreme calling from horses goes deeper than we both comprehended. They were a big part of our family's history, a big part of our way of life before "the schools." This understanding gives me more opportunity to give back.

People tend to look at me in disbelief when they hear the roles I play, leaving me feeling disdained. Babies are a blessing and I was gifted with four beautiful children: Cohen (14), Cierra (10), Patience (9), and Wyatt (5). They all inspire me to leave this world a better place. An Elder once explained "existence as a link, in a chain of many before and many to come."

I grabbed my daughter's hand, just as he had done to mine. I felt a great sense of pride for the responsibility she was showing. Then his words came out of my mouth: "ngessi my girl. I'm happy you are here with me."

We were coming from the barn. She finished hauling hay and mucking out the stall. We got our first horse. His name is Trey. He is a 7-year-old strawberry red roan mustang who has become the foundation of my medicine wheel. The coping adaptations have changed: in the beginning, I was jumping fences to be with horses unconsciously; now, I am more aware of the benefits that I receive from being with a horse in safe spaces.

A grounding of stories and knowledge takes reflection of "Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit" in a natural holistic sense (Archibald, 2008, p.9). Respect, Responsibility, Reciprocity, Reverence, Holism, Interrelatedness, and Synergy guide my reflection in writing this narrative. My dad was the one who always told me the story of how my parents came to pick me up in Jasper, Alberta. The day I lost him, I felt like I lost that story. But I did not; I was given the opportunity to learn more about the days before Jasper and the days before my biological mother's days.

> "First I had to recognize that acceptance and gratitude are the foundations to love and life. Believe it or not, I learned this by looking through the eyes of my child."
>
> –
>
> Alice George

What I learned is that I was not an "orphan" and I am not an "intergenerational survivor." I am not those derogatory labels that are racist and discriminating. I am the best parts of my birth mom Marlene (*Penny*) One Owl, a warrior before her time, in a world that only wanted to diminish her light. I have artistic abilities that have been passed down from my Great Grandpa Mike One Owl. Inukikii states, "He had a creative way of sharing

knowledge." The stories my Inukukii shares with me will soon be the stories that I share with my children. The knowledge that I pass on will be the knowledge of star dust travelling from years before me to years ahead of me.

"It's when you can take all that knowledge… Bring it down ten inches and apply it to your heart, then you will truly understand…"

– In memory of Aba' (Thomas Willie George: May 20, 1933 – August 11, 2004)

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Marshal Kraus

Lower Nicola Indian Band

Bachelor of Tourism Management

"To me, Indigenous research means the opportunity to use and share traditional knowledge to make a positive impact on the world."

PROTECTING WHAT IS LEFT: THE IMPACT OF TOURISM ON INDIGENOUS CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES

Acknowledgement:

I would like to acknowledge that Thompson Rivers University is located, and this research was conducted on, the traditional and unceded territory of the Tk'emlups te Secwépemc within Secwépmecul'ecw.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to my research. A special thank you goes to Elder Madeline Lanaro, Elder Margaret Hyslop, Elder Doreen Kenoras, Aaron Sumexhelta, and Courtney Mason for sharing your knowledge and time. Inspired by the research, "the knowledge given to you by the participants is a gift" and they should be recognized and acknowledged for the teachings (Lavallée, 2009). Thank you!

Abstract

The research addresses the question: how can a business use traditional knowledge and past experiences to enhance the sustainability of the culture and community they use to offer an Indigenous experience? I conducted this research primarily through interviews, using the conversational method. These interviews, along with my personal experience, provide the traditional knowledge needed to determine five of the top values of Indigenous people, later referred to as the first principles. Four case examples analyzed in secondary literature provide context for understanding issues associated with cultural and community sustainability and Indigenous experience. The first case study investigates cruise tours entering the territory of Indigenous people in Kimberly (Australia) without their permission (Scherrer & Doohan, 2013). The second case study explores media representation of the Sámi people, particularly in Sweden (Zhang & Müller, 2018). The third case study concerns lack of consultation with Indigenous stakeholders in Jasper National Park (Youdelis, 2016). The last study involves the loss of meaning in language among the Haida First Nation (Carr et al., 2016). Drawing on traditional knowledge and values, I propose an approach to transform the negative impacts of these case studies to beneficial outcomes for Indigenous tourism. These benefits include sustainable and ethical tourism, which provides the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural contributions to the community, culture, and land. The second benefit is consultation, which is the process of having one's voice and concerns heard. The last benefit is revitalization, the process of "reviving our ancestral journey" (Kenoras, 2019). My goal in this research is to provide businesses that claim to offer an Indigenous experience with the knowledge to develop sustainable and ethical tourism.

Introduction

I identify as an Indigenous First Nations Canadian from the Nlaka'pamux Nation. I have a longstanding interest in Indigenous tourism and development. With the significant

growth of Indigenous tourism, I feel personally connected to my research since it has the potential to have an impact on my culture, family, and community. Through my research, I hope to provide knowledge to those businesses that offer an Indigenous experience in Canada. The research investigates both Canadian and International case studies on Indigenous tourism and includes interviews with five Indigenous Canadians – three Elders, one Indigenous scholar, and one Indigenous leader – to gain their perspective on Indigenous values and tourism. I also incorporate my personal experience and knowledge as an Indigenous person.

My research explores the impacts of tourism on Indigenous cultures and communities and discusses how traditional knowledge can be used to support future or current businesses. Focusing on Indigenous, or cultural, tourism, I address the question of how businesses might use knowledge of the past to enhance the sustainability of the local culture and community through offering an Indigenous experience. I highlight this issue and provide some answers by analyzing cases where tourism has had a negative impact on Indigenous communities and cultures and by fully explicating traditional community values. The latter I gleaned from interviews with Elders. The knowledge derived from this project will help improve the quality of businesses operating in the Indigenous tourism sector.

The following facts provide a context for the impact of tourism activities on the Indigenous peoples of Canada. Canada recognizes three groups of Indigenous peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. More than 1.67 million people identify as Indigenous in Canada and they comprise more than 630 communities in 50 Nations and 50 Indigenous languages (Northern Affairs Canada, 2017). Indigenous people are the fastest-growing population in Canada and grew 42.5% between 2006 and 2016 (Northern Affairs Canada, 2017).

A brief history of the repression of Indigenous peoples in Canada provides further context (Butler & Hinch, 2007). Canada's dominant society committed cultural genocide against the Indigenous peoples (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Successive governments created policies that denied Indigenous peoples the right "to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). For over a century, Canadian policies eliminated Indigenous governments, ignored Indigenous rights, terminated Treaties, established, operated, and forced attendance in residential schools, and asserted control over Indigenous land (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). As a result of these acts, much Indigenous history, knowledge, language, land, and way of life was lost. This history is critical to evaluating current developments and opportunities in Indigenous communities. Much has been taken away from the Indigenous peoples of Canada; consequently, what remains should be fiercely protected.

Butler and Hinch (2007) speak about ignorance and the lack of understanding of differences in dominant colonial societies as one of the main reasons for much of the pain and loss that has been inflicted on Indigenous people. The authors go on to assert that cross-cultural interaction is now integral to building understanding and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. They note that increased positive interaction between the different cultures raises the possibility of creating a better understanding between the two groups and therefore a more just and equitable relationship. Butler and Hinch (2007) argue that tourism can be a facilitator for cross-cultural interaction, allowing cultures to interact in a way which can be planned and managed. Tourism can be an educational tool to increase our understanding of others and the differences between cultures.

Indigenous tourism involves sharing knowledge and culture. It can include a variety of products and cultural attractions such as language, historic sites, monuments, craft workshops, galleries, festivals, and museums (Butler & Hinch, 2007). Indigenous tourism can also include learning about and/or experiencing culture through "local traditions, social customs, religious practices, and cultural celebrations" (Butler & Hinch, 2007, p.42). Indigenous tourism is also referred to as "cultural tourism" that involves the "exchange of information on lifeways, customs, beliefs, values, language, views of environment, and

other cultural resources" (Rothman, 2003, p.169). However, cultural tourism must always include consultation with the local Indigenous people to ensure that the product is appropriate and can be shared.

Indigenous tourism is seen as a form of potential economic growth for communities (Butler & Hinch, 2007). However, it is a tourism business within an underlying capitalist structure that is not necessarily compatible with the preservation of culture and community or with ensuring their sustainability. Sustainability refers to the use of resources to support the socio-cultural, environmental, and economic growth and equity between people without diminishing these resources for future use. Sustainability requires intergenerational equity, and the need to keep resources available to each generation and for new generations to come (Mowforth & Munt, 2009). Fair trade and ethical tourism are platforms that can assist businesses by providing social, cultural, and economic benefits to locals, establishing strong consultation structures, and are ecologically responsible and viable by keeping the environment healthy (Mowforth & Munt, 2009). I believe Indigenous tourism has the potential to be a sustainable and ethical industry.

First Principles

Kovach (2010) speaks about the conversational method, which is what I used to conduct interviews for this research. The author notes that this method is pertinent to Indigenous research and utilizes sharing knowledge through oral teachings and storytelling. The conversational method supports the "Indigenous worldview that honours orality as a means of transmitting knowledge" and "provides a means for sharing remembrances that evoke the spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental" connection and wellbeing (Kovach, 2010, p. 42-43). As the author mentions, it required me, as the interviewer, to be a co-participant and active listener and to fully engage with each interviewee. Like Kovach (2010) I also felt that "my own self-knowledge deepened with each conversation" (p.46).

Each of the five interviewees was gracious in sharing their knowledge about their culture, teachings, and experiences. Aaron Sumexhelta is an Indigenous leader from my home community. Aaron was a Chief for six years and is now a council member for my community. Aaron provided knowledge about Indigenous tourism and the impacts of development from a leadership point of view. Courtney Mason is an Indigenous scholar and researcher; he is an Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair at Thompson Rivers University in the Tourism Management Department. Courtney provided knowledge on tourism impacts. Three Elders shared their knowledge of Indigenous values and tourism: Madeline Lanaro, an Elder from the Nlaka'pamux nation and my home community; Dr. Margaret Vickers Hyslop, an Indigenous Elder at Thompson Rivers University; and Doreen Kenoras, an Indigenous Elder at Thompson Rivers University. All three provided valuable information and taught me that knowledge "is a gift" (Lavallée, 2009, p.35). I am greatly indebted to the Elders for sharing their knowledge with me.

Elders are an essential part of all communities. In Indigenous cultures, Elders hold the knowledge of the culture and community, including "traditional teachings, the ceremonies, and the stories of all our relations" (Lavallée, 2009, p.27). They are the ones who transmit traditional knowledge to the next generations, and without them, cultures would be forgotten and lost (Lavallée, 2009). Elders are also integral advisors in all decision-making processes in a community and should always be consulted with (Lavallée, 2009). In this research, the Elders shared their knowledge of Indigenous values, teachings, and tourism.

> "This research has the potential to provide knowledge to many people that are impacted by businesses offering an Indigenous experience."
>
> -
>
> Marshal Kraus

Based on these interviews, conversations, research, and personal experience, I have identified five values that are integral to the operation and development of Indigenous tourism experiences. The first of these values is acknowledgement. Acknowledgment is the

recognition of the community, land, culture, and history of the Indigenous people. It refers to acknowledging the authority of Indigenous people on their land and with their cultures. Businesses should properly acknowledge the land, culture, and people they plan to work with and utilize to provide an Indigenous experience.

The second value is integrity. Integrity is the value of being honest about intentions, promises, and actions with everyone at all times. Strengthening the integrity and unity of partnerships and relationships with all stakeholders is an important step towards developing any business. Businesses should be honest with Indigenous communities and support the integrity of ethical tourism.

The third value is ceremony. Ceremony is the traditional action that Indigenous people perform for certain occasions. Understanding Indigenous ceremony is necessary to learning the culture and beliefs of the people. For any business wishing to offer an Indigenous experience, learning ceremonies is essential to being respectful. It is also necessary to learn if Indigenous people feel it is appropriate to showcase the ceremony, or if it should be kept out of tourism experiences. When hunting, fishing, gathering, or to honor a person, an offering (in my community it is tobacco) is given as a sign of respect to the person or land. This is an example of a ceremonial practice which many businesses may not understand, but it is important if they want to offer an Indigenous experience since it is the traditional way to offer thanks and respect to the land or a person.

The fourth value is listening, which is the skill of giving your full attention to a person who has something to communicate. When a business consults with an Indigenous community, they must listen to the community's thoughts and concerns and hear everyone who has something to say. Acknowledging that everyone has a voice and should be heard is an important step towards consultation. Most importantly, listening to the Elders and hearing their thoughts, knowledge, experience and stories is invaluable.

Lastly, the most significant value that should be incorporated into all other principles is respect. Having and showing genuine respect for the land you are on, the people you meet, and the knowledge you learn is crucial. A person can show respect by acknowledging the land or by listening to the people. It is important to respect the sacred ceremonies and the wishes of the people. Showing respect by keeping your word and building honest partnerships is an integral part of relationship building.

As described by Lavallée (2009), the medicine wheel is an Indigenous symbol and a tool used to understand phenomena. This symbol, which can be interpreted in many ways and can hold different meanings, is divided into four quadrants that are all interconnected. Each quadrant of the medicine wheel is represented as a colour, usually black, white, yellow, and red (Lavallée, 2009). Typically, the medicine wheel represents health, with the four sections signifying physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being (Lavallée, 2009). Here, I interpret the medicine wheel in a way that represents the five principles: acknowledgement, integrity, ceremony, and listening each represent one quadrant, and respect sits in the middle as the value that connects them all together. The medicine wheel is a powerful symbol and I respectfully acknowledge its importance for representing health and well-being (Lavallée, 2009). However, the values identified can be interpreted as the well-being and sustainability of the culture, land, and people involved in Indigenous tourism.

Figure 1. Indigenous First Principles Medicine Wheel Interpretation

Indigenous Tourism Case Studies:

My four case studies illustrate negative experiences relating to Indigenous tourism. Each case is from a different location, but each shows the ways in which Indigenous

peoples, lands, or cultures have been exploited or ignored. After examining the cases, I analyze the details using the first principles outlined above.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF KIMBERLY, AUSTRALIA

The first case study explores host-visitor interactions between the Indigenous costal people of Kimberly, Australia, and the cruise tourism industry (Scherrer & Doohan, 2013). The issue, according to Scherrer and Doohan (2013), is that "tourists and tour operators access [Indigenous] country without their permission" (p. 160). Tourists enter Indigenous territory and sacred places, which can cause "symbolic cultural representations" damage or physical and spiritual harm (Scherrer & Doohan, 2013, p.162). In addition, Indigenous people have laws and customs that restrict knowledge and meaning of these places to Aboriginal people who are entitled, and senior enough (Scherrer & Doohan, 2013). These sacred symbolic cultural sites, "Wanjina images" and "large-scale stone arrangements," have "inherent power" and "asking permission from the cosmos and from other human beings is a fundamental part of their culture" (Scherrer & Doohan, 2013, p.162). Clearly, Indigenous tourism experiences on the Kimberly coast are impacted by a lack of acknowledgment, respect, and permission. Although the government and tourism operators refuse to listen to their concerns, the Indigenous people recommend acknowledging different views in order to create tolerance and respect (Scherrer & Doohan, 2013).

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF SWEDEN, NORWAY, FINLAND, AND RUSSIA

The second case explores media representations of the Sámi people, the Indigenous people of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Russia (Zhang & Müller, 2018). According to Zhang and Müller (2018), the Sámi people have been represented in "stereotypical ways," especially in Swedish newspapers, to present "the northern destination as exotic" in order to sell these places as tourist sites (p. 164). The Sámi have been objectified as part of campaigns to attract tourists. These campaigns have variously depicted the Sámi as "icons," "as exotic," and in "tourism products and activities" as objects to add value (Zhang & Müller, 2018, p.173). In short, these campaigns demonstrated a lack of understanding and respect for Sámi culture.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF JASPER, CANADA

In the third case study, Youdelis (2016) argues that in the early twentieth century, Métis families, First Nations, and seasonal inhabitants in Jasper National Park were evicted and forced to move and have since had inadequate consultation concerning development of their land for tourism ventures. Youdelis (2016) maintains that unless "Indigenous representatives speak up" and "request" meetings, they are rarely consulted even if the "development" impacts their "Aboriginal or Treaty rights" (p. 1382). The lack of consultation in Indigenous tourism in the Jasper National Park thus has a negative impact.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF HAIDA GWAII, CANADA

The final case study concerns the Haida First Nation people, Indigenous Canadians from Haida Gwaii, British Columbia (Carr et al., 2016). In acknowledging the centrality of language to sustaining "Indigenous communities and culture" and in helping "Indigenous peoples with their collective identities," Carr et al. (2016) suggest that "language-based tourism initiatives," like the developments in Haida Gwaii, can "revitalize community culture" (p. 1072). However, they also warn of the dangers of stripping language of its meaning and using it out of context (Carr et al., 2016). This, Carr et al. (2016) propose, is a particular issue when Indigenous language is appropriated for tourism ventures.

Use of Knowledge:

The Indigenous principles of acknowledgement, integrity, ceremony, listening and respect, and traditional knowledge, as described above, can be used by businesses that want to offer Indigenous experiences to create positive alternatives. While the four case studies provide examples of negative impacts of tourism on Indigenous communities, I propose that the application of Indigenous principles could create a positive alternative that leads to sustainable and ethical tourism grounded in respectful consultation and revitalization.

In Kimberly, Indigenous people are negatively impacted by a lack of acknowledgement and respect when cruise operators and tourists venture onto local land without permission (Scherrer & Doohan, 2013). This case, in fact, conjoins all five traditional values where land,

people, and culture continue to be used without proper acknowledgement. Proper acknowledgement is impossible unless the tour operators meet with the Indigenous groups and listen to their concerns. In meetings, tour operators could improve their integrity through dialogue, and build partnerships with the Indigenous people of the Kimberly coast. By building partnerships, the cruise operators will be able to learn about the local culture, beliefs, and ceremonies behind the sacred sites on which they currently trespass. By incorporating all the values and building relationships, respect is afforded to the business, land, culture, and Indigenous people. Sustainable and ethical tourism and consultation would improve this situation, creating a scenario where the sacred sites are left undisturbed and protected. Through consultation, partnerships could be created to support the growth and development of both the tourism product and the Indigenous community. While the current tourism product is largely limited to visiting sacred sites, a new partnership with Indigenous locals based on consultation and respect could create more sustainable ventures that produce economic, cultural, and environmental benefits.

The main impact of tourism on the Sámi Indigenous peoples has been a lack of understanding and respect for their culture in media representations. Sustainable and ethical tourism could begin to right negative impacts of the past. When the newspapers objectified the Sámi, they did not properly acknowledge the people or culture. In so doing, they lacked integrity and were dishonest in their reporting. The media could create a better situation for the Sámi people; positive reporting would be more ethical and challenge some of the negative stereotypical judgements and exploitations of the past. Respecting the Sámi peoples' identities would have lasting socio-cultural benefits for the sustainability of their community. Reporting on the people in a respectful way would help the community redefine themselves and be more discerning about the type of tourists they receive.

In Jasper National Park, poor consultation, or a lack of consultation, has had an impact on Indigenous tourism. As in Kimberly, consultation could produce sustainable and ethical tourism that has a beneficial outcome instead of a negative impact on Indigenous peoples. If park officials acknowledged the Indigenous stakeholders as equals and listened to their opinions and concerns, a proper form of consultation could occur. Ethical tourism would allow the Indigenous people of Jasper to exercise their rights and allow their voices to be heard. Currently, the Indigenous stakeholders are not being respected by the park government, but if they were given the chance to be acknowledged and respected, they would have the opportunity to create a more sustainable tourism destination for all.

All five values can have a positive influence on tourism among the Haida First Nations. Acknowledging the centrality of language and understanding its power to support culture means looking at tourism as more than just an economic product. By listening to the Elders about the significance of language, one can fully understand its meaning. Using language in ceremony and cultural activities is important to experiencing these ceremonial practices. Through listening and ceremony, cultural integrity is also respected. It is vital to respect a language and all that it provides for a community, from tourism to cultural empowerment (Carr et al., 2016). Supporting language and its teachings, and developing one's language skills, is a form of cultural and community revitalization. Revitalizing a threatened practice and learning that practice is an avenue to rebuilding cultural identity and strength. As Elder Doreen observes, learning and development is the process of "reviving our ancestral journey" (D. Kenoras, personal communication, Oct. 20, 2019). In other words, we continue to build on the knowledge from our ancestors as we learn.

Conclusion

There are many ways that Indigenous tourism can negatively impact people, including "displacement of community residents, disruption of the social structure, diminished local economic opportunity, and exploitation of local arts and culture as well as environmental damage" (Rothman, 2003, p.167). My research explores how businesses that offer an Indigenous experience could use traditional knowledge to enhance and sustain Indigenous culture and community and thus correct some of the detrimental practices that have been used in the past, and are still

being used in some areas. In this research I have offered traditional knowledge as first principles, interviews using the conversational method, and my personal experience. This research has the potential to provide knowledge to many people that are impacted by businesses offering an Indigenous experience. According to the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (2019), "1 in 3 international visitors to Canada are interested in Indigenous tourism experiences." By 2024, the "total Indigenous Tourism Revenues in Annual Canadian GDP" is expected to increase from "$800 million to $2.2 billion" (Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, 2019). Subsequently, the impact of Indigenous tourism in Canada is only going to increase. It is my hope that this research can provide knowledge that businesses can use to offer more sustainable and ethical Indigenous tourism experiences.

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I want to know who I am and how to situate myself. This is the first step and probably the scariest step.

~ Knowledge Makers | Day One

Wynona Edwards

Tskwaylaxw

Human Services Diploma Program

"To me, Indigenous Research means…Resilience for our Indigenous peoples"

HOLDING ONTO TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS WAYS IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES

Ḵalhwá7alap nsnekẇnúḵwa7 Wynona Edwards nskwátsitsa Tsḵwáylacwmeckan. Hello everyone, my name is Wynona Edwards. I am from Pavilion, BC.

I would like to give thanks to all of the many teachers in my life: my ancestors before me, my family, my grandmothers, my grandfathers, my mother, my father, my brothers Alexis and Dallas Edwards, My Grandmother Rita, my Godfather Jack, my 'Mister,' Charlene Cuthbert ("Aunty Chucky") and Rose, my St'at'imc language teacher Bucky, Thomas, Kizzy, all my adopted sisters and brothers, adopted aunties and uncles within the powwow trail, the Elders from Cplul'kw'ten, and, most importantly, my daughter Sunshine. Kukwstum̓ckálap.

Introduction

We were and are a peaceful people. We even welcomed the wasichu [white man]. Only when we saw them building roads, forts, killing off the game, committing buffalo genocide, when we saw them ripping off our land for gold, only then did we realize that what they wanted was our land. They took away our pride, our customs, our MEDICINE. Then we began to fight. For our earth, for our children. That started what the whites call the Great Indian Wars of the West. I call it the Great Indian Holocaust. - Leonard Crow Dog (as cited in Yerlilerinde, 2002, p. 1)

Indigenous culture has changed tremendously over time, but we have fought to save our peaceful nature and culture. Culture is always changing and adapting; Indigenous culture is no different, but it has been damaged by the effects of colonization. Indigenous people have been making many efforts to reclaim their traditional culture and values, I fought hard for the cultural knowledge that I currently have. It is a battle we are still fighting; many of us are trying to keep our culture alive, and that has been a long fight. This paper incorporates my own experience of resilience along with that of my Indigenous family across Turtle Island. With the cultural values and knowledge I hold dear to my heart and spirit, I have been striving to learn. It was not until I was in University that I learned the basics of my language. I grew up off my reserve, away from my "home," my traditional territory. I grew up not knowing where I came from, that is, not knowing the land and my community and distant family. All I know is that I have a laminated card with my picture telling me that I am from Tsḵwáylacw, which includes my tribal number: a status card. I remember when I was little, my mother would take me back "home" to go fishing and that is probably my greatest memory of being there. Strangely, a memory I cherish is the smell of fish guts, snapping the necks of fish after catching them, cutting them, and

making dried salmon. This is why I choose to write this paper: to reclaim some of the culture and community that I missed from living off-reserve.

I am from the St'at'imc Nation. I include my traditional language because our language demonstrates our resilience, the resilience not only of the St'at'imc Nation but of all Indigenous peoples of Canada and the United States. My language, and all Indigenous languages in Canada and the United States, have been targeted for extinction for over the past 152 years. Also, it has been only 69 years since we were lawfully allowed to practice our traditional ceremonies and traditional ways of knowing within Kanata[1]. Using my language is an act of resistance to the genocidal attempts of governments over the past 152 years. I barely know my language but I am striving to learn as much as I can. I could not imagine growing up in a time where it was illegal to speak my language, to attend sweat lodges, sun dances, and different traditional ceremonies. I could not imagine not being allowed to attend powwows or round dances. As I grew up following the "Powwow Trail," I have fallen in love with dancing and singing. I love traveling to powwows and round dances. I love having the opportunity to attend traditional ceremonies without fear of being in trouble with the Government of Canada or without having to hide and be secretive about it. Sixty-nine years wasn't that long ago, but the change in that time has been immense. I have had the opportunity to sit with Elders who have shared stories of how they would sneak and hide from the White man to sweat and attend ceremonies to pray in our traditional ways. It has only been 69 years and here I am today, proudly wearing a ribbon skirt, proudly wearing braids, proudly speaking what little of my language I know. I fight hard to walk a sober life and to find balance between our traditional ways and contemporary times.

This paper is an opportunity to explore how traditional ways have grounded me and guided my actions. I want to ensure future generations have understanding. By sharing my own experience and the words of my teachers, I hope to give others a path forward, especially our children.

1 Huron-Iroquois word meaning "village" or "settlement." The name "Canada" likely came from the word "Kanata". (Canada.ca, 2017).

The Battle of Colonization

Since colonization, it has been a constant battle to be an Indigenous person. We were forced onto Reserve lands, pushed off traditional territories to "meet the perceived needs of the imperial powers" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC henceforth], 2015, p. 49). The TRC (2015) discusses the attempt to assimilate Indigenous people that was justified by forcing "Christianity and civilization," but "it does not stand up to legal, moral, or even logical scrutiny" (p. 49). When the Indian Act was created, it stated who could and could not be an "Indian," using restrictions like blood quantum. The government used laws to decide who could obtain Indian status and who could not. These laws were sexist to Indigenous women; for example, women who married non-Indigenous men lost their status.

As discussed earlier, another element of this battle was stripping Indigenous people of their traditional languages; this is a significant loss, as language is an integral part of any culture. Language is necessary for our songs and storytelling, and for keeping our culture alive. As stated in the TRC final report (2015),

Some Survivors refused to teach their own children their Indigenous languages and cultures because of the negative stigma that had come to be associated with them during their school years. Many of the ninety surviving Indigenous languages in Canada are under serious threat of extinction." (p. 155).

Many of our traditional teachings are communicated through our traditional stories and songs. These teachings, these stories, these ways of knowing that we share as a people are all expressed through our traditional languages. Many of our úcwalmicw words cannot be translated into English, and there are a lot of words in English that are not in our Indigenous languages. As the residential schools took our languages away from us, so did the Sixties Scoop, where our children were placed in non-Indigenous homes where they were not allowed to speak their languages.

Government policies like the Sixties Scoop and residential schools removed Indigenous children from their families and communities (TRC, 2015). This attack on families still affects Indigenous people today. The Sixties Scoop placed Indigenous children into non-Indigenous homes. Adoptions of Indigenous children into non-Indigenous families often took place without the child's birth family's consent. Like the residential schools, this was clearly an attempt by the colonizers to terminate Indigenous culture; as General Richard Harry Pratt, a U.S. cavalry captain, said, "Kill the Indian in him and save the man" (as cited in Little, 2018). These schools stripped Indigenous people of their only ways of knowing by forbidding them from speaking their traditional languages and practicing their cultural ways and values. Howard (2011) speaks of "power imbalances and colonial agendas," and residential, day, and industrial school systems served those agendas and reinforced power imbalances: "[t]he loss of traditional lands, enfranchisement, internalized colonialism, cultural and linguistic genocide, and community divisiveness are but a few of the detrimental consequences of federal education policy" (p. 123). To our Indigenous peoples family is fundamental to our culture and our communities. Family is of huge importance to our people, we not only include our 'immediate family' as family but we also uphold the same love and importance to our vast extended family as well. We often at times have many adopted family members as well. Our Indigenous families are big and extended.

I was raised and taught, like many Indigenous people, that children are our future and they depend on us to teach them our traditional ways. This ensures our Indigenous teachings will live on from generation to generation: "it will be up to [us] to believe in the old stories, even when the world around [us] says they are wrong, they are weak, they are dead… That will be the time when [our] people will come forth with the old stories and offer them up again" (Valente, 2019, p.33). Our ways of knowing require that we take care of and love the land, listen to the heart, and look forward to a better future. The foundation is ensuring that we take care of our children; they are the future generations. Postcolonial times are a time for change, a chance to better ourselves and to educate others to understand and move on from disenfranchisement and colonialism.

The Battle Continues

It is heartbreaking that in 2016, Indigenous people (including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people) made up only 4.9 percent of Canada's population, but the Indigenous population is growing at a higher rate than the non-Indigenous population (Statistics Canada, 2018). My Elders have always taught me that children are our next generation and change starts with them; they are the future. With our ever growing population we are gaining the opportunity to fight for all that was lost from us. We now have the chance to reclaim our traditional cultures and languages. This is not an easy fight but it is a battle that we are going to win.

> "Indigenous culture has changed tremendously over time, but we have fought to save our peaceful nature and culture."
>
> -
>
> Wynona Edwards

First Nations families are investigated more frequently than non-Aboriginal families, which leads to more Aboriginal children and youth being taken away and placed in non-Aboriginal foster homes. They lose their cultural values and the opportunity to practice and learn their languages and traditional ways. "The Sixties Scoop has now given birth to what some call the 'Millennium Scoop,' referring to the high rates of Indigenous children in care today" (Hick & Stokes, 2017, p. 283). It is sad that there are more Aboriginal children and youth in the foster care system than any others; there are more children in care now than there were in the residential Schools. "The doors are closed at the residential schools but the foster homes are still existing and our children are still being taken away" (TRC, 2015, p. 138).

The loss of First Nations culture is still ongoing:

Today, the effects of the residential school experience and the Sixties Scoop have adversely affected parenting skills and the success of many Aboriginal families. These factors, combined with prejudicial attitudes toward Aboriginal parenting skills and a tendency to see Aboriginal poverty as a symptom of neglect, rather than as a consequence of failed government policies, have resulted in grossly disproportionate rates of child apprehension among Aboriginal people. (TRC, 2015, p. 138).

As the Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers who were interviewed for the TRC report indicated, healing can be facilitated by "using spiritual ceremonies and peacemaking practices, and by retelling oral history stories that reveal how their ancestors restored harmony to families and communities" (TRC, 2015, p. 44).We must break the ongoing cycle of assimilation and cultural genocide. Indigenous people believe in holistic ways of healing. Moorehead (2015) states,

Native Americans have increasingly expressed their power to act in their own interests, grounded in a shared belief that healing from historical injustices and continuing inequalities might be found through Indigenous cultural practices. Specifically, participation in traditional healing practices is thought to strengthen cultural identity, bolster community support systems, and promote political empowerment, all of which have been recognized as potential hallmarks of resilience for Indigenous communities. (p. 384)

I have been lucky to have been able to participate in culture practices and build my resilience.

ti wa7 tsunám̓cal

I carry with me the words of many Knowledge Keepers in my life who have shared their stories and teachings with me. I once asked someone I admire, "Why is culture important?" They told me that culture is what grounds us; it is the foundation which holds us together. They once told me that we as Indigenous people strive to find belonging, powerfully stating that "some of us find powwows and some of us find gangs." We are warriors and we are searching for a sense of belonging and a place to call home. But, as all cultures change and adapt to new ways over time, I believe that First Nations culture is on the right track to preservation. To me, this means finding a balance of living in two worlds, holding onto traditional Native ways in contemporary times. As stated in the TRC report (2015),

Indigenous peoples' world views, oral history traditions, and practices have much to teach us about how to establish respectful relationships among peoples and with the land and all living things. Learning how to live together in a good way happens through sharing stories and practising reconciliation in our everyday lives. (p. 18)

It is easy for a First Nations person to get lost in this world, to lose their traditional ways of knowing and their culture. As Lawrence (2004) asserts, "Anyone with a Native background who wants to learn about their culture and who hasn't had access to it - which is most of us, including a lot of people on reserves - there's some sense of loss" (p. 131). Some people may have the opportunity to learn but choose not to, and some people may have been living off-reserve their whole lives and have no knowledge of their culture whatsoever, but wish to learn. Whether it is Aboriginal peoples living in urban areas or those living within a rural community, many do not wish to be culturally knowledgeable. And we are all struggling to live in two worlds, so those wanting traditional ways fight to keep their culture alive. Howard (2011) writes that cities are "rootless, temporary constructs disconnected from a natural world" (p.4). That disconnection leads to Indigenous people searching to find their place, an experience Howard (2011) calls "Culture loss or between-two-worlds syndrome" (p.4). The constant interaction with non-Aboriginal culture and lack of access to land, Elders, Aboriginal languages, and ceremonies are assumed characteristics of Aboriginal urban existence." (Howard, 2011, p. 4). Living in the city away from the land, away from what we now call "home" on our reservations, can be difficult at times when all

we want is to feel connections with mother earth and our ancestors, our communities, families, and extended families.

Our people hold the utmost respect for Indigenous women. They are life-givers and the backbones of their families and their communities. As it is said in the Cheyanne Proverbs, "A nation is not conquered until the hearts of its women are on the ground. Then it is finished, no matter how brave its warriors, or how strong their weapons." This saying is a reminder of why the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) should not be taken lightly. Our people have been fighting to keep our languages and our cultures alive; we have been struggling to overcome the effects of the residential schools and the Sixties Scoop. Even today, we face the highest rates of our Indigenous youth and children in foster care. Amongst all of this in Canada there is the national crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Years ago, I was told a story by one of my many teachers within my travels, someone I met traveling throughout powwow country. They told me the story that on an eagle, the tail feathers represent the women because those tail feathers help the eagle glide through the sky and create balance. Like the tail feathers of an eagle, our women are the backbones of our families and communities; they hold us together.

Our Future

Our children are the future. I have a daughter and I am raising her as traditionally as I can, because I know that she is the next generation and will be a life-giver to future generations. When she was born in 2009, she was born into powwows, round dances, and ceremonies. She lives a life in which she does not know alcohol and drugs in her home. Her identity is strong, even from a young age. She told me when she was two years old that she was an "old-style jingle dress dancer." This remains true as she grows and still chooses to be an "old-style jingle dress dancer"; even though she has earned many eagle feathers and plumes, she does not dance with them. Holding strong to her decision as a toddler, she dances old-style jingle without plumes or feathers, and without an elaborately-designed dress. She wears her hair long because I have taught her the importance of our hair and how our hair holds our power, which includes me teaching her how to take care of it and the importance of wearing braids. I have taught her what I know about traditional medicines and foods, and I will continue to teach her our traditional and spiritual ways. As I learn, I will continue to teach her. I am teaching her to create a balance between contemporary times and holding onto our cultural values and ways; I am raising a warrior, the next generation. As I fight to walk this life in a humble way, with humility and the importance of prayer and giving thanks, I am doing my best to teach her to hold on to these ways and the importance of living this life following our sacred teachings. I hope as she grows she will choose to walk this life in a good way holding onto our old ways as our grandmothers and grandfathers walked before us. I hope my daughter will walk this life with our teachings and I hope she will find a balance between these two worlds we walk.

Conclusion

Like many Indigenous peoples I have struggled to hold onto our traditional languages, culture and beliefs. Since colonization the sáma7 have made it very hard for us Indigenous peoples to hold onto our cultural traditions from the start of Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the Child Welfare system today. I am a decedent of intergenerational trauma survivors, the little cultural knowledge and language that I know today I fought very hard to learn. The traditional teachings that I uphold, and the way of life that I walk, have not been learned in a classroom, from a book, or from academic journal articles. I have learned these teachings from my mother, out on the land, from my grandmothers and grandfathers, aunties and uncles, brothers and sisters, and from my adopted family from all over Turtle Island. I have sat with the Elders many times, I have offered tobacco to hear the stories of the old ways, and I have listened. I have seen a Scwená7em for healing, I have prayed to our skélkla7, and I have prayed to Ku'kwpi7. I am proud to be úcwalmicw. By writing this paper, I am a Knowledge Maker, and I hope to be a teacher for the next generations to come.

Kukwstum̓ckálap for listening,
Tákem nsnek̓wnúkw7a.

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SENSIBILITIES OF LONGING: KRISTY JANVIER'S "HIDE/A SITE OF SACRIFICE"

"And in the belly of this story
the rituals and the ceremony
are still growing"
(Silko, 2006)

I want this to be a circle. Rippled up and down the rocks and ribs pushed open wide. A circle makes space / holds it through a negative. It is the corresponding distance between all sides - my gaze unto you - that holds its form. This circle will be traced and retraced, its size measured by a dancer's arms held with fingers touching. What is the weight of this space? We will not concern ourselves with being exacting. Willfully misled by the practices of sight, we will learn that this gravity can only be learnt by the body.

Kristy Janvier's *Hide/A Site of Sacrifice* bears this rumination. A dance installation developed over a seven-month Made in BC residency, it, too, is cyclical. Marking a break from earlier works, Janvier's performance is an iteration of something continuous that will extend beyond this year: a series of reflections and hauntings, informed by the sensibilities of longing in and out of the studio. In this work, the Dene, English/Irish, and Ukrainian dancer never carries a weight entirely her own, but a weight of relations. She is careful not to divulge the making of these relationships, but rather asks us to feel the presence of their loss.

Site/Cave

"For, to begin with, tell me do you think these men would have seen anything of themselves or of one another except the shadows cast from the fire on the wall of the cave that fronted them?"
(Plato, 360 BC/1963, p.747)

"I am watching the earth speak to us through you."
(K. Janvier, personal communication, 2019)

Kristy's work is inextricably linked to the lands she has traversed, with movements across the forest being research notes, timber as citation material. She has previously used dance to explore the intersections of water, rivers, bloodlines, and healing through opportunities such as the *Young Lungs Dance Exchange* in Winnipeg. Her 2018 videowork *Emerge* connects the dancer directly with a shared breath of the forest. The transformation of water is (a) kin to bodily healing. Much of her practice takes root outdoors, residencies spent on the land working and moving collectively. She reflects that in this Made in BC residency, she often is working alone, more than usual, developing a sense of comfort of investing into an open and intimate project (K. Janvier, personal communication, November 14, 2019).

In *Hide/A Site of Sacrifice*, she is able to construct a site of many places, extending her reach to birch forests and prairie road sides. One of our first encounters is the gathering of wood: a projection shows Janvier gathering the necessary poles to build a hide stretcher in warmer times. With the ability to delineate time, the gathering and the dismantling coexist. The hide stretcher is suspended in space, with its making being shown in the background. She is concerned with the life of things, that which carved space for her being and the potential of those same things being carried without being present.

Hide

The clarity of the gathering is confused as the sightline is filled with numerous shadows. A warm light - embers, fire, sunlight - projects the dancer's form into shadows on a tarp suspended in place of a hide. Unable to see Janvier's body and left to decipher the many images it casts onto the tarp, we are confronted with the multiplicity created by the singular. The semi-transparency of the tarp lends well to this use: as her hands approach the tarp from behind, they cast darker forms, her movements always abstracted by the embers that warm the space. How many rivers would it take to make a hide transparent?

The tarp plays a cunning visual trick. By obscuring Janvier it simultaneously conceals and brings her into fuller view, her pulsating movements growing, projected in shadows larger than her self and echoed numerous times. We have been gathered to witness this weight, which cannot bear the burden of being seen. These formations take inhuman forms, hearkening back to the relations that a single hide can stand for. They too feel circular: continually enlarging, no movement ever rushed. Perhaps this deceit of shadows points more accurately to a certain truth. These interspecies relations and representations, fluid in form and never quite measurable, bring us to a site wherein it is the connection between, our similarity and kinship, that is our constituent matter. It is a move away from objecthood and discreteness, a pleasurable "confusion of boundaries" (Haraway, 1991, p. 150). This earth cries and its echoes are my marrow.

The fact that this thing we call the inhuman is never fully knowable, because of our own stuckness within humanity, makes it a kind of knowing that is incommensurable with the protocols of human knowledge production. Despite the incommensurability, this seeming impossibility, one must persist in thinking in these inhuman directions. (Muñoz, 2015, p.209)

Photos of Kristy Janvier from MiBC's Creative Residency 2019. Photos by: Lula-Belle Jedynak @lulaxbelle

Gathering

Janvier emerges in front of the hide stretcher, reciting the marks. Scraper colliding unto skin, in circle. These violent marks the love letters to the hunt. She holds the bone scraper firmly but it is never directed at a hide. Her arms extend blows cascading towards her sides, propelled towards an other. Her reach extends beyond an imaginable surface. She is protecting this transference, the care for the hunt reoriented and shifted towards our gaze as convulsions toss the scraper further and further from her body. Eventually it recoils, her back arching forward, folded into herself. Care is often hard to discern as the same blows that reach into oneself are hurled at another.

Eventually she grows again, a connection to the ground always sensible. Despite the use of material props, it seems that which is given the most sensible magnitude is that which never appears. It is particularly this longing on which the earth pulls heaviest. Emerging from the ground she does a sort of jig, arms extended softly towards the earth and caressing that which is not present.

I read that *missing* is antithetical to *cherished*, *loved*, *prized*, *protected;* yet it is exactly those terms that tether this grief. I have learnt not to trust dictionaries when dealing with stories. When the rope is cut and weight slips into gravity, there is always a pull. Gravity reminds us it has other subjects beyond matter, the *thingness* of our burdens as a directional force. Janvier is concerned with who authors the cut. Implicated in simultaneous sets of sacrifices and inheritances, this work is set upon the reality that decisions are not made by us, yet we inevitably support their magnetism.

Refuse

Janvier honours the necessity of sacrifice. Each "simple thing or complex event is linked, inextricably, to a near infinite number of others, also demonstrating the possibility of their happenings" (Wilkerson, 2019). In order for one event to happen, another possible event did not. This reality of negation underscores everything that comes into being. Janvier's work confronts our inevitable implication in this order of possibility and negation - brushing up against the sides of what was not realized, running her fingers along the contours of what could have been, just enough to dance its absence into our space.

If, as Sartre (1946/2007) asserted, we are "condemned to be free," Janvier's work makes tangible the eternal lingering

responsibility of choice. It is the ability and constant need to choose our actions that condemns us to this freedom. We inherit the stories of before, but their recurrence is always unique: the next step never determined by a being other than my own. Agency brings with it the sharp tools required to slice open new worlds, but I am tired from carrying them, tired of the incessant reminders of responsibility. What worlds do we make from the earth we have met with these feet? Responsibility often slips its way out of the present, coming at us as a charge for what happened, pushing its way forward as we imagine a more robust future. It is because "the present tends to be too fresh and fluid to hold with any surety" (King, 2013, p. xv) that responsibility is able to sneak by, allowing us to relax into the given moment without recognizing that responsibility is ever-present. With this freedom to choose, to act, comes the burden of being constantly committed to enacting agency. In *Hide/A Site of Sacrifice*, Janvier disposes of surety and makes a room out of the fluidity of the present. She holds the possibility of what *could have been* in one hand, while deliberating in the uncomfortable reality that every choice is both an act of agency and refusal. Each moment is a simultaneous affirmation towards a chosen future and a rejection of a possible alternative.

> "Janvier's performance is an iteration of something continuous that will extend beyond this year."
>
> -
>
> Emily Dundas Oke

This freedom is never removed from context and inheritances. Despite the consistent enactment of agency through an infinite number of choices, we are subject to confronting the very real circumstances which act upon us. Janvier's work comes out of developing an astuteness for recognizing these parameters, and engages directly with their agitation. Is this *missing* the inheritance of another's decision, thrust unto me? Janvier proposes that dissonance spurs action, that there is "a 'thing' feeling that needs to go somewhere" when constraints not our own are made for us (personal communication, November 14, 2019). This work, *Hide/A Site of Sacrifice*, brings clarity to emotions we may carry with us, without even knowing. Yet it does so by reenacting agency. Janvier's ability to work abstractly and to transfer the very precise sacrifices she contemplates (without putting them into view) enables her to retain her story for its protection. It is a piece that ruminates on very particular circumstances within her and her communities' realities, yet she is careful not to divulge, calling to mind the words of Unangax scholar Eve Tuck and artist C. Ree (2013): "I care about you understanding, but I care more about concealing parts of myself from you. I don't trust you very much. You are not always aware of how you can be dangerous to me and this makes me dangerous to you. I am using my arm to determine the length of the gaze" (p. 640)[1].

Circle

One of the final moments in this iteration of *Hide/A Site of Sacrifice* sees Janvier cut the tarp from the stretcher. In a certain sense, we have witnessed the life of the moose from beginning to end: embryonic displays of growth cast in shadows onto the tarp, the violent scraping of the hides, a ceremony surrounding it. Yet, the moose weaves through a larger web of interconnectedness beyond the performance, supporting life

1 Note: Much of my thinking on the generative aspects of refusal has been shaped by the generous work of Jeneen Frei Njootli, Peter Morin, Ayumi Gyoto, Olivia Whetung and Kimberly Phillips.

and community elsewhere. Janvier's practice accomplishes something similar. This work is a solo performance, yet it reflects on the sacrifices of many, demonstrating that community is formed when we direct ourselves to each other.

Acknowledgements:

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First thing is relationships. Research is a service and you have to build relationships with the people, all the people, not just humans.

~ Dr. Sereana Naepi

Elder Sandi Hendry

Métis

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE ELDERS

Thank you, Knowledge Makers participants and students, for letting me share in your journey.

I shake my head. I am the student. They were the teachers.

You see, it was a weekend of learning for me.

The Elder's Procession was the first one I have ever participated in. We were lining up and I did not know what was happening. Elder Doreen kindly directed me behind Uncle Mike. I watched his back and started walking when he did. I followed him with each step he took. I could hear the others behind me and I got the idea we were forming a circle. Once the circle was complete and everyone was in the room, Mike stopped. I did, too.

I had never seen any of the other Elders interact with students before. I had met all of them individually but had not seen them integrate or spend time with students. I looked over at Doreen and she sat down next to a student, turned, and introduced herself. The student responded and before long I could hear laughter coming from their corner. "Ah, that's how it's done," I thought.

I sat next to Elder Margaret. She smiled at me as instructions were given out as to how the binders would be handed out at the front – with an Elder calling the name of the student who would come up, take their precious binder, and hug the Elder or spend a moment with heads bent down together, sharing a private word. I stood up on cue and stumbled to the front of the group and called the name of my first student. She stood up and walked towards me, grinning at me all the way. Her smile was huge. I couldn't help but grin back – she hugged me and I held onto her. Ah, I felt safe.

The program continued. We went around the circle and introduced ourselves. There were some teachings and some discussions. The students were amazing – shy at first, but so willing to open up such personal stories. I was engrossed. At the end of the circle, it was announced the Elders would share back what they had heard. I think I froze. Share back? My thoughts? After Uncle Mike? I looked around the circle and asked for wisdom. I took a deep breath, prayed a little more, and opened my mouth, and my feelings came out in the form of words. The world did not stop. I was not asked to leave. No one said I was wrong. I took another breath and closed my eyes. I am the student.

> "I am humbled and blessed by my Knowledge Makers experience. And now all that is left is for me to answer the question, "Who am I?" I am the student. Maarrsi."
>
> –
>
> Elder Sandi

Over the course of the two days, I was intrigued by a common theme from the students – the question, "Who am I?" was asked in many ways by many people. There were students who were adopted, raised by family members or grandparents, students who grew up in happy homes, some from blended families, some who grew up knowing their culture, others just discovering it, the whole gamut, and yet the question asked was the same: "Who am I?" So much searching, processing, sharing, and laughing.

The second day had us outside in the sunshine, sitting on the grassy knoll. Chairs appeared for the Elders to sit on. Large colorful blankets were laid down on the grass. We formed a loose circle. Children appeared, hugged their parents and played in the center. The discussion was about families and roots and growing up and hopes and dreams. The warm sun, the children's shouts, and the flow of conversation made me feel at home. At home!! – my spirit was content, satisfied, at peace. The afternoon was a perfect gift from the Creator. I am so thankful.

Throughout the weekend the students were especially graceful to me. They engaged me, made me laugh, asked me questions, and encouraged me. I listened, took long walks with them, shared meals together, and sat in small groups, eager to hear the topic. I was the student.

Jade Abounassar

Sami

Human Service Diploma

"To me Indigenous research is…a way to travel from the head to the heart and echo that into the world."

FOOD. IS. EVERYTHING.

Dedication

I say gutii to all of the Elders. Your wisdom and grace shines through your eyes and I appreciate and have so much gratitude for the knowledge and kindness that you keep. Gutii to my friends, and to my family at Cplul'kw'ten for your love and friendship. Gutii to the Olmai for giving me life and helping me through all of the challenges and bathing me in thanks and light. For my friends who have passed in the past year, you are not forgotten. You showed me what grace and hard work looks like. I send prayers to you in the spirit world.

I scoff at the idea of what modern-day industrialization has done to the beautiful simplicity of what food used to be. No matter ethnicity, age, race, sexuality, or gender, food is needed survive. Why is it that the importance of something that is so crucial to overall human development has been cast aside, only to be replaced with what modern-day folks call convenience?

In this paper, I look at what food sovereignty means to me. By tying research and my own story together, my hope is to pave the way for people who have struggled with the same things that I have. By looking at relationships to food and the land and the impact of colonization, I will be able to look at what personal sovereignty is and how that can manifest on a community level. Sharing and vulnerability will be threaded throughout this writing. I share in hopes of being a voice for those who have been silenced for so long; I give a voice to my ancestors as their *joiking* sings through me every day.

What is food sovereignty?

"Food sovereignty is a way to truly practice culture. This is about the right of a community to define its own diet and food system (TEDX Talks, 2014, 1:17).Food sovereignty is about better care of ourselves and our land.

The fight for food sovereignty takes place on multiple fronts: community gardens, growing our groceries, teaching people to eat a traditional meal once a week (TEDX Talks, 2014). Getting away from the corporate food system and eating non-processed healthy foods is key. It is about reclaiming the land and being able to give back to the communities in which we live. This is a way to reclaim power in making decisions around the way our peoples have eaten for thousands of years. We may not need to change.

In different communities today, there are people fighting back against Eurocentric views of what food looks like and how it should be eaten. An example of this is the Nishnawbe Aski Nation in Northern Ontario. They have created a food sovereignty committee that focuses on "traditional practices, local food productions, and imported foods" (Robidoux & Mason, 2018, p.151). With

these areas of focus they seek to bring people together in connection to the way that they prepare, grow, and gather their food. NAN is a great examplew of what food sovereignty can look like when it is done effectively. They have multiple programs in place, such as the Get Growing Project, which provides knowledge-sharing on how to grow foods, which seeds to use, and the right tools to use (Robidioux & Mason, 2018, p.152).

Food begins with community. Food begins with relationship. Food begins with having the courage to say that enough is enough. Food nourishes our souls, our minds, our spirits. Food teaches us about ourselves and where we come from. Food does not have to be bought in a box and put into a microwave. It can be prepared with the people you love, showing you how to cook in a good way.

Food Is Respect.

The Elders in my community at university have taught me more than what I have learned from books. It is because of them that I had the courage to write this paper; it is because of them that my heart is beginning to heal from the impacts of colonization and growing up without any understanding of my culture. To them, I am forever grateful.

One day, when I was at one of the houses for Indigenous students on campus, doing my practicum, I sat down with Elder Mike Arnouse. He told me that when he was growing up, he could go down to the Thompson River and drink. Now, there is nowhere to drink fresh water unless you travel far (personal communication, October, 2019). On another occasion Elder Mike told me that the animals are the ones really suffering from the big industries. They are not migrating properly because of land development, they are unable to eat what they used to, and if they do, they sometimes become sick because it has been polluted (personal communication, October, 2019). What this tells me is that there is a huge issue with our food system. We have fallen away from eating in a good way. There is no emotional preparation before the Olmai in order to have gratitude to eat. There is no aspect of challenge in seeking out and eating food. There is now convenience that spreads its wings across the globe.

Food is political.

How is it that there are so many people in the world going without basic human resources? Why do we have so much waste that could be utilized, but due to our sloth-like behaviour, nothing is being done to combat it?

The north of Canada and the world seem to be the place that is most neglected in the world. It is as if everyone has forgotten about their existence. As Morton and Blanchard (2007) note, “People in rural areas generally have less money to spend on food and they live further from markets where local food producers sell their products”. If there was a water shortage in, for instance, Vancouver, everything would be in disarray. But people who want to change something for a community that is not well-known are seen as being rash. I do not agree with that. I love music, and a song I always think about when it comes to this subject is the Clash’s “Know Your Rights.” The song lyrics describe how, according to the government, all citizens have three rights: the right not to be killed, the right to free speech, and the right to food and money (Jones & Strummer, 1982, track 1). However, if you look back on history, this certainly has not always been the case.

In Canada, there is clearly a systemic issue, as 30% of Indigenous households are experiencing food insecurity (Davie, 2017). Why is that? There are a variety of reasons why this issue is worsening in Canada. When folks are living on reserves, they do not have access to the same resources as people in more urban communities. The higher north a community is located, the worse conditions get. People are not able to drink the water, which is our truest life-giver. There is less access to traditional foods. The animals are moving away because of infrastructure, and the seasons are changing due to global warming. This affects everything. Because of lost knowledge, there are more people growing up in urban settings, disconnected from their culture and how things used to be accessed in the traditional way.

The traditional way of eating is different depending on tradition, community, and where people live. In places where the Sami have lived for thousands of years, there is more of a reliance on berries, roots, and, of course, the beloved reindeer. In Secwepculuw, there are more berries, deer, moose, and different types of birds to eat. Never was there a time, before colonization, when people did not have enough to eat. The community took care of each other. You see, food was so much more than filling up the stomach. It was the prayers said before you went out to hunt, it was the preparation of the mind and soul before going out, it was looking at how you could help your community. The entire animal was used; nothing went to waste. The animal represented survival, provided unique teachings, and showed everyone how to walk in a better way.

Food is medicine.

In a world that sees McDonald's and processed foods as the normal way we are supposed to eat, it is hard to imagine that we ever ate any differently. Before the industrial revolution in the 19th century, we ate traditional diets. We lived off the land in a respectful and nurturing way. We took only what we needed. We did not rely on convenience; rather, we had to rely on the Creator to provide what we needed.

I see how young people today shy away from vegetables and gravitate towards sugar and carbohydrates. This is where the future is heading if we do not try to stop it. When I was younger I was brought up on a standard Western diet, filled with mostly processed foods, heavy on sugars and carbs. The things I have read and witnessed about the food industry are startling. The problem with the industrialization of the foods we eat is that the more they are processed, the more they lose the nutrients that are so important for our bodies.

The food that we put into our bodies is the way of the ancestors before us. We pray with the food in thanks for giving its life so that we can be nourished. Each food teaches us something new about ourselves and the way that we live our lives on this planet. Everything is connected to the root of our earth mother. Every community has different traditional foods to eat and to be nourished by. We need to connect back, with our toes rooted into the earth, and feel the pulsing of our ancestors speaking through us.

The way that my people eat is different from how people eat in other territories. Being Arctic people, there are more limitations on what foods can be enjoyed. Traditional Sami food is referred to as "blodgomba, kvitgomba, klappekak" (Berg, 2014, p.37). Some of the traditional foods include: reindeer, grouse, fish, root vegetables, potatoes, and berries (Berg, 2014). Sami are reindeer herders, and when it is herding season, there is plentiful reindeer meat. The whole animal is used, and certain parts are used in private for ceremonies. The simplicity of their diet is impactful in how the Sami live. The difficulty of living in the Arctic and relying on a small menu does not limit the resilience and beauty of my people.

> "By tying research and my own story together, my hope is to pave the way for people who have struggled with the same things that I have."
>
> -
>
> Jade Abounassar

I write for the ones who are afraid to eat too much or too little. I write for the little girls who see images of models and want to be like them, but whose skin colors or body shapes are not represented. I write for all the people who think that they are not good enough. All these stories say: you are enough. I write for everyone to wake and see that the way we are eating is not sustainable, that it is killing us and our planet. I write to give myself a voice and to heal my relationship with food, Gutii.

Food is Destiny

It is important to tell our own stories of the journey to food sovereignty. We know how many have been impacted by the industrialization of food. Our stories show that there is hope to change and to have a better relationship with food and land.

My own past is one of trauma and of love. I grew up with loving parents, but the outside world was filled with a lot of hurt that I could not process. One of the ways that I coped with

these feelings was through food. I remember as a kid sneaking treats, and then always being focused on when I would eat next. I come from a line of people who have struggled with weight. My family members' weights tend to go up and down, much like life itself.

I always have had an issue with my weight. I was bullied for it at school, and the more that I was bullied, the more I would eat. Food was my comfort when things were scary. It was a friend that I could always count on when I was overwhelmed with my own personal hauntings that came up at night. This journey became worse when I was a teenager. Yes, I was always a chubby kid. I hated the fat on my body. I would fantasize for hours about being skinny. Fat was not beautiful. That is what every one told me, and slowly, I started to believe it myself. I was so mean to myself then. I hated looking at myself in the mirror. I wanted a new life. When I became a teenager, I started becoming serious about losing weight.

I started seriously dieting at the age of nine. I went through a growth spurt. I followed a weight loss program, exercised, and for the first time in my life I actually felt very beautiful. All of the little girls I went to school with no longer bullied me about being bigger than them, jabbing me with jealousy daggers.

By the time I hit my teens, I had developed body dysmorphia. I struggled with my own body image, dieting and binging extremely. I did not feel like a normal kid. I felt like I had to work twice as hard to get where my peers did and I was still made fun of for my weight. Nothing could change it.

I developed anorexia. I would eat only a tiny amount of food each day. My eating disorder then shifted to the opposite end of the spectrum. I could not stop eating for years after that. I thought about food all the time, finding ways to sneak and hide what I was eating.

When I started blooming into adulthood I was leaning on other things that were not good for me. My addiction to food became more and more unmanageable. I began to binge and purge. I was not happy with the way that I was living and felt so gross in my skin. I did not feel healthy; I felt like there was something seriously wrong with me. I was so tired of either binging or restricting, and loving and hating food at the same time. I wanted to have a better relationship with food. But it had developed into a toxic dynamic that I could not escape.

I started trying to do something different. Rather than restricting what I ate, I simply began to eat whatever I wanted. This did not make me feel better either. Rather, I stopped exercising altogether, and rarely even ate a vegetable. I began to sneak food again, eat out way too much, and was only truly happy plopped in front of the TV watching *The Office*, and binging on whatever I could get my hands on.

I gained 50 pounds in one year, which I actually do not think is that bad considering how much I ate and how little activity I did. I started to become more involved with body positivity. Body positivity is essentially taking the standards of beauty pushed by big companies and turning them on their heads. It is about finding the beauty in yourself no matter your size. This concept worked for a while. I was certainly less miserable than I was before, but I could not unsee what I saw in the mirror.

I started to seek out help in little ways. I came to the stunning realization that my binge eating was completely out of control; I was not able to go a day without doing it. I ate way past being full, and then I would mentally beat myself up for it afterwards. I started to access some resources online, ones that are very dear to me; Brain over Binge, in particular, changed my life.

I write this as a call out-to industry and how it is impacting so many lives and the planet in a negative way. Where I am right now is not perfect, but it has been months since I had a bad binge. I have made changes in my life that are helping me to be more comfortable with myself. One of these changes is that I have started exercising again. I started out just going for small walks, and now I go to the gym nearly every day. I still allow myself to eat a bit of junk food, but I now see it as junk that I am putting into my body. I am slowly changing the way that I think about food. That is part of the reason I am writing this paper: to build a loving relationship with the food that I consume, and to get back to where my ancestors want me to be, on the earth, taking only what I need, and giving thanks for everything that is gifted to me.

Sámi soga lávlla

Guhkkin davvin Dávggáid vuolde
sabmá suolggaid Sámieatnan.
Duottar leabbá duoddar duohkin,
jávri seabbá jávrri lahka.
Čohkat čilggiin, čorut čearuin
allánaddet almmi vuostái.
Šávvet jogat, šuvvet vuovddit,
cáhket ceakko stállenjárggat
máraideaddji mearaide.

Far up North 'neath Ursa Major
Gently rises Saamiland.
Mountain upon mountain.
Lake upon lake.
Peaks, ridges and plateaus
Rising up to the skies.
Gurgling rivers, sighing forests.
Iron capes pointing sharp
Out towards the stormy sea

Dálvit dáppe buolašbiekkat,
muohtaborggat meariheamit.
Sámesohka sieluin mielain
eahccá datte eatnamiiddis:
Mátkkálažžii mánoheabit,
giđđudeaddji guovssahasat, –
ruoškkas, ruovggas rođuin gullo,
juhca jávrriin, jalgadasain,
geresskálla máđiid miel.

Winter time with storm and cold
Fierce blizzards.
Saami kin, with hearts and souls
Their lands do love.
Moonlight for the traveller,
Living Aurora flickering,
Grunt of reindeer heard in groves of birch,
Voices over lakes and open grounds,
Swish of sled on winter road

Ja go geassebeaivváš gollut
mehciid, mearaid, mearragáttiid,
golli siste guollebivdit
suilot mearain, suilot jávrriin.
Gollin čuvget čáhcelottit,
silban šovvot sámedeanut,
šelgot čuoimmit, šleđgot áirrut,
luitet albmát lávllodemiin
geavgŋáid, guoikkaid, goatniliid

Summer's sun casts golden hues
On forests, seas and shores.
Fishermen in gold, swaying
With the golden seas, golden lakes.
Silver Saami rivers gurgling
'round sparkling poles, shining oars.
Singing, men float down
Rapids, great and small,
And waters calm

Sámeeatnan sohkagoddi
dat leat gierdan doddjokeahttá
godde čuđiid, garrugávppiid,
viehkes vearre-vearrováldiid.
Dearvva dutnje, sitkes sohka!
Dearvva dutnje, ráfi ruohtas!
Eai leat doarut dorrojuvvon,
eai leat vieljain varat vardán
sámi siivo soga sis.

With unbending strength
Defeated killing enemies, bad trades,
Sly and evil thieves.
Hail thee, tough Saami kin!
Hail thee, root of freedom!
Never was there battle,
Never brother's blood was spilt
Amongst the peaceful Saami kin
Saamiland's people

Máttarádjá mis leat dovle
vuoitán vearredahkkiid badjel.
Vuostálastot, vieljat, miige
sitkatvuođain soardiideamet!
Beaivvi bártniid nana nálli!
Eai du vuoitte vašálaččat,
jos fal gáhttet gollegielat,
muittát máttarmáttuid sáni:
Sámieatnan sámiide!

Our ancestors long ago
Trouble makers did defeat.
Let us, brothers, also resist
Staunchly our oppressors.
Oh, tough kin of the sun's sons,
Never shall you be subdued
If you heed your golden Saami tongue,
Remember the ancestors' word.
The Saamiland for the Saami!)

Attributed to I. Saba, 1906. Translation by Ragnar Müller-Wille and Rauna Kuokkanen. Retrieved from https://beneathnorthernlights.com/sami-soga-lavlla-the-sami-anthem/.

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Thomas James

Tk'emlùps te Secwépemc
BSc: Major in Ecology & Environmental Biology,
Minor in Physics

"To me, Indigenous research is our way of life. It's a way for us to connect with our stsptékwle/tellqelmúcw on a deeper level, understanding and building on our future endeavors."

IMPACT & NATURAL ECOLOGICAL INFLUENCES THAT CLIMATE CHANGE LEFT ON INDIGENOUS WOMEN

"Building a sustainable future entails harnessing the knowledge, skills and leadership of women in climate action.

United Nations Women. Climate action by and for women (https://www.unwomen)

Weyt-kp xwexweytep. Thomas James en skwékwst. Hello. My name is Thomas James. I am a Tk'emlùps te Secwépemc member of the Secwépemc. Our traditional territory stretches from what is called by some as the Columbia River valley along the Rocky Mountains, west to the Fraser River, and south to the Arrow Lakes. Within this vast ecology I represent the Paul/Fraser/Casimir family (three of the 13 Tk'emlùps Families). My community honors the role of women as leaders. We are raised within a matriarchy.

This research recognises those women and family nearest to me; remaining close by, teaching me our traditional ecological knowledge, and guiding me. I thank my sister, Lucinda Paul, for being there for me throughout my educational experiences growing up, watching over me with all the decisions I make to improve myself. I learned the most about my culture through Lucinda and her husband Greg Ferguson. To Knowledge Makers and the Elders at Thompson Rivers University thank you for guiding me and bestowing knowledge.

Indigenous women of North America see climate change as a critical issue in their communities. Our stsptékwle/ tellqelmúcw (ancestors) have known the surrounding environment for such a long time, tending to and delivering the resources they use to accommodate their family and their communities (Dictaan-Bang-Oa, 2009). They know first-hand the devastating consequences of the ecological variation in this modern age: "Mother Earth is no longer in a period of climate change, but in a climate crisis" (Dictaan-Bang-Oa, 2009).

> "Women's traditional ecological knowledge and tribal experience play a role in developing prospective systematic solutions for acclimatizing to the impact of climate change."
>
> -
>
> Thomas James

Throughout North America, a seemingly insignificant variation in temperatures generates negative outcomes in the environment, prompting more issues as the years go past and a powerful impact and the role of Indigenous women in responding to that impact. Plants used to create medicine, food or manufacturing homes have prolonged growing periods.

Deforestation, can create a loss of habitat for not only animals but plant species as well. We lose not only those known to us but also those unknown. In this modern-day, desiccations and heatwaves are creating the inability for crops to develop, impacting small-scale livestock, and relocation by Indigenous people. How will the present climate change issues influence Indigenous women as guardians for future generations? Autumn Peltier said, "One day, I will be an ancestor and I want to leave a legacy for my great-grandchildren so they know I worked hard to ensure they have a future" (Becking, 2019).

Climate-Related Issues

Indigenous women are unique bearers of traditional knowledge systems and the cultural practices and abilities that maintain biodiversity and environmental sustainability (Tovar-Restrepo, 2010, p. 2). Harvesting wild meat, berries, or other plants, Indigenous peoples continue to be contaminated from specific environmental changes and that modify the food supply (Power, 2008). The traditional food gathered gives us the necessary nutrients needed to survive. Major changes in the ecosystem impact our traditional ways including our crop systems we have in place, such as, rotational agriculture or hunting practices. Throughout history, environmental contamination of traditional food systems is one of the impacts global climate change is having on Indigenous peoples (Power, 2008).

The association between nature and Indigenous history is expansive and as yet underdeveloped as Indigenous-led research in general and for Secwépemc in particular. Women's traditional ecological knowledge and tribal experience play a role in developing systemic solutions to the impact of climate change. More needs to known about the different perspectives of Indigenous women activists facing the current environmental and climate issues happening within Canada and Secwépemc.

Autumn Peltier and Ta'Kaiya Blaney are two indigenous youth activists. Blaney, advocates for environmental and Indigenous rights and the preservation of marine and coastal wildlife; and Peltier, advocates for the preservation of water for First Nations in Canada. Peltier and Blaney are examples of Indigenous activists taking a step forward in advocating for environmental and Indigenous rights and the preservation of waterways and coastal wildlife. Climate Change has brought into sharp focus the dire need for the voice of Indigenous women to take action against a damaged ecology. Peltier in advocating for the preservation of water for Indigenous in Canada has stated: "Canada is not a third-world country, but in this country, the Indigenous people here live in third-world conditions" (Peltier, 2019).

The Tiny House Warriors (THW), are group of Secwépemc land and water defenders. THW are asserting collective Secwépemc responsibility and jurisdiction to our lands and water, and the need to protect women and girls from the impact of industry across Secwépemc. THW contends that more researchers should join gendered points of view and that they separate Indigenous history from North America. THW critically examines varying cultural perspectives on assets and nature, and the colonizing impacts of mechanical and extractive practices on Indigenous civilizations. Of concern are climate-related issues for Indigenous women and communities, including the suppression of traditional knowledge, along with forests and ecosystems, food preservation, traditional food, water, permafrost thaw, and relocation.

Our stsptékwle/ tellqelmúcw bestowed upon us the traditional knowledge needed to strengthen our land, using the resources gifted

> "Indigenous activists Autumn Peltier and Ta'Kaiya Blaney are two prime examples of taking a step forward in advocating for the environmental and Indigenous rights and the preservation of marine and coastal wildlife."
>
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> Thomas James

to us. Indigenous women of Secwepemcúlecw created ways to keep our past memories in the present (Ignace & Ignace, 2017). “Many of the old people say this is our land. When the creator placed us on this land, he gave us land to look after, so that the land will look after us forever (Michel, 2005). How will we honor the role of Indigenous women as leaders at a time of Major changes in the ecosystem?

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What could be barriers become the sound waves from drums, the ripples from water that move us forward.

~ Prof. Airini

Jennifer Edwards

Métis and Huron-Wendat
Bachelor of Education, Elementary

"To me, Indigenous research means decolonizing the research process through traditional methods and connecting us to discoveries through a more natural way of knowing."

THE KNOWLEDGE TREE OF HEALING

Dedication

Raoul Breton, Pauline Desgagnes, Ann Czinege, and Tammy Breton - the voices of my maternal family. Families hold the knowledge that takes us closer to healing.

Introduction

We look to healing through traditional practices. Family is my motivation. Through my writing and research I hope to uncover traditional Indigenous healing practices and share my knowledge with the light of my fire, my children, and my mom, sister and brother and all who battle with an imbalance of wellbeing; all those who are searching for a deeper connection to their Indigenous culture to heal, physically, mentally and spiritually.

This is a common theme that I see in my ménage: that of not having the knowledge and connection to our heritage through the loss or separation in our family ties, which bind our souls and fulfills our sense of belonging and Indigenous identity.

My grandfather is my driving force for this research as he is the foundation of where my roots stem from. He was detached from his parents as a child after his father passed away. His daughter, my dear mother also experienced a disconnection. She was raised in and out of the hospital as a young child for years, as she battled rheumatic fever, today her health is still not in perfect balanced, she suffers from physical ailments, along with the mental in an anxiety disorder. Anxiety is a mental health condition that I rapidly see in my family. This is a sign that overall well-being is not in perfect balance.

The traditions about to be discussed provide lessons learned from Indigenous peoples' voices, through learning traditional healing, outside of a Western research approach of deductive qualitative analysis. The voices of those involved in this research are from the most easterly Mohawk tribe of the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois Confederacy, Huron, Secwépemc, Cree, Ojibwaii, Cherokee and Métis people.

For thousands of years our people have learned from our elder's knowledge that has been passed down through oral relationships. These Indigenous ways of knowing were seldom written down. As such there is an absence of sources of published guidance for Indigenous research protocols, methodologies and processes, based on traditions that stringently conform to criteria according to western research methods.

Just like others, I struggle with the disconnection between the demands of research through the western practice and the reality of my own Indigenous traditions that I come to know through life's relationships. Decolonizing research is needed and requires consistent action and reflective attention. The medicine wheel with its

circular shape and equal balance represents the interconnectivity of all aspects of one's being. Through my writing and research we will look at how we can balance our medicine wheel through traditional practices and grow like a healthy tree by examining each of the branches in this research to help us heal. First we will start by an introduction to my grandfather, it is important for you to meet him because he is an authoritative figure in my research. Second we look at Mother Nature and what she reveals as healing. This is followed by shedding light on Body Work forms. Finally we look at connecting with spirituality. All of these branches are important because they are foundations in the healing process. I invite you to see all the branches to this tree as a beginning to healing. Uncovering traditional healing practices and sharing knowledge offers help with the battle of an imbalance of well-being, and those that are searching for a deeper connection to their Indigenous culture to heal, physically, mentally and spiritually.

> "Decolonizing research is needed and requires consistent action and reflective attention."
>
> -
>
> Jennifer Edwards

My grandfather, traditional healing, and myself

Raoul Breton was a bright old man. The sound of his voice is fading from my memory, which makes me very sad to think about. He passed away unexpectedly in the year 2000 from complications of a day surgery which caused him to have a heart attack because he was not stitched up properly, bringing on an infection with poison leaking out into his body that brought on the fatal heart attack. It all happened very quickly and unexpectedly. Shortly after his death I swear, I saw him drive by as I walked down a busy street.

We called him Papa. He was raised by his grandmother who was Indigenous and French. Her father was from the Huron tribe, also called Wyandot; a tribe originally from Quebec. His grandmother raised him because his father died from heart complications when he was a very young boy, leaving his mother with 11 children to raise on her own.

My grandfather was the favorite of his grandmother. She took him in to raise him because his mother struggled to raise all the children independently. My Papa also had six children of his own. Papa told us very little about his background but he would share his traditional healing energy with us, which came from knowledge passed down from his grandmother to him. We believed Papa could read your mind if you allowed him to look into your eyes long enough. I never wanted him to read mine so I wouldn't dare look too long. I could feel his piercing sharp eyes, touching my soul and looking at my intentions.

My grandparents had five daughters and one son. My grandfather told us that his grandmother was Wyandot or Wendat. My grandfather never spoke of our ancestors to me but he shared information with my eldest aunt Lynn who was my godmother. Emotions run through me as I think about the family that I lost. I know that I still need healing myself. I travel through this journey of trying to connect with my roots and culture. Individual knowledge was handed down through the family. My aunt Ann shared generously what she knew. I dig into my background and our family healing practices in hopes to help heal myself and others that I care about, as well as those searching for answers to help them heal for their needed strength.

Searching back to my Indigenous ancestry of the Huron People is important for me to uncover and learn more about my culture to help myself in this process of healing. My family was from Quebec near the St. Lawrence River; the region where my family on the maternal side came from was,

Upon the arrival of Samuel de Champlain in Quebec in 1608, was the region that was once under the control of the Mohawks, Iroquois tribe. Early theories placed Huron origin in the St. Lawrence Valley, with some arguing for a presence near present-day Montreal and former sites of the historic St. Lawrence Iroquoian people. Wendat is an Iroquoian language. Early 21st-century research in linguistics and archaeology confirm an historical connection between the Huron and the St. Lawrence Iroquois. (Steckley, John, Autumn 2012).

The language of the Huron-Wendat is part of the Iroquoian linguistic family and the language of Wyandot is related to Iroquois language, however Huron's were usually enemies of the Iroquois. My great grandmother was a spiritual Indigenous woman who passed along her special healing gift to my grandfather. This gift was an energy form of healing through the mind using strength to take away pain. My grandfather would hold his hand just over the affected area and concentrate while his hand hovered over the spot. You would feel warmth and he would continue to concentrate, as you would no longer feel the pain in the treated area. Knowing more about these practices can help my family, friends, community, all of my relations and all of their relations. I would like to explore alternative practices to healing through nature of indigenous traditions to help revive them and share the traditions with others that are seeking good overall health. My grandfather's practice was passed down to him from our ancestors. I am still putting together the pieces to make sense of it.

Mother Nature and Healing

I have always felt a strong connection to Mother Nature. I reside in Tk'emlups territory and connect my research to this territory as well a more universal approach so we can use and share techniques inclusive of all Indigenous cultures, from the lands that mother earth provides us.

Research shows that nature heals. Looking at nature and the plants that the environment offers us what we need to take care of ourselves and our relationships with people, and for our mental, physical, and spiritual health:

We gather our minds together to send greetings and thanks to all the animal life in the world. They have many things to teach us as people. We see them near our homes and in the deep forests. We are glad they are still here and we hope that it will always be so. Now our minds are one. With one mind, we turn to honor and thank all the plant foods we harvest from the garden. Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans, and berries have helped the people survive. Many other living things draw strength from them, too. We gather all the plant foods together as one and send them a greeting of thanks. Now our minds are one.

Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address (National Museum of the American Indian Education Office, 2009: 10).

Plants from Mother Nature

I feel a connection to the plants that come from the earth we walk on. The flowers, herbs, trees and even the weeds. I remember as a young child picking as many dandelions as I could pick and making a bouquet of the bright yellow-coloured weeds, that always looked so good to me. My grandfather was connected to the land and plants as well. His entire backyard, which was a half an acre, was a giant garden of produce and herbs. He would even use the dandelions in his salads.

Through millennia of trial and error, Indigenous people have gained substantial knowledge of medicinal plants, which has been imparted from generation to generation as part of oral traditions (Marles, Clavelle, Monteleone, Tays, & Burns, 2000). Herbs such as dandelion, tobacco, ginseng, sage, sweetgrass and rosehip have been traditionally used as medicine. We Indigenous people believe they can offer us a holistic approach that treats physical and emotional health, as well as, the wellbeing of people:

Canada's forests have long played an integral role in supporting the lives of Aboriginal people, meeting their physical, cultural, spiritual and material needs. Traditional knowledge related to medicinal plants has been instrumental in the survival and well-being of Aboriginal people for thousands of years (Turner NJ, 2009).

The holistic approach of Indigenous healing systems involves spiritual and intimate connection with the natural environment (Densmore F, 1974). Studies were reviewed and compiled by Meeker et al. who provided detailed information about 384 plants used by the Ojibwa. (Davidson-Hunt IJ, Jack P, Mandamin E, Wapioke B, 2005):

The most common plant parts used to prepare different remedies are: roots, rhizomes, stem, bark, leaves, flowers, fruits, young shoots, and whole plants. The most frequently used plant parts were roots, followed by leaves, whole plants, fruits, and rhizomes. A total of 28 major ailment categories were treated with medicinal plants. Gastro-intestinal disorders, musculo-skeletal disorders, cold, cough and sore throat, injuries, respiratory system disorders, urinary system disorders, and dermatological infections were treated with the highest diversity of medicinal plant species (Uprety, Y., Asselin, H., Dhakal, A. et al. 2012).

Secwépemc elders share stories of the creation time including a time long ago when the animal spirit Coyote helped the Old One create the world and everything in it. Wild onions, carrots, strawberries are just some of the plants that the people then harvested. Bulbs and roots were an important plant food for the Secwépemc. The traditional territories of the Secwépemc covering a large part of the Plateau region were filled with wild sage.

Sage is an antiseptic, anti-bacterial medicine, conferring strength, wisdom and clarity of purpose. It is a powerful purifying medicine and believed to drive away negative energies. Sage tea is a tonic that aids in indigestion and menopausal problems. It has many physical uses and spiritual uses such as to smudge, it is recommended for smudging because all people can smudge with sage at any time. While smudging it is particularly important for women who smudge when they are on their moon time and during this time, use their own individual sage and not share. Another powerful medicinal plant is sweet grass, which is used by First Nations people for spiritual cleansing. The braiding of sweet grass in itself honors the teachings of interconnection between mind, body and spirit.

When sweet grass is walked on, it bends but does not break. Hence, it has been associated with the virtue of kindness. If someone has suffered an injustice, that injustice can be returned with kindness, as does sweet grass, by bending and not breaking when walked upon (KiiskeeNtum, 2008).

Until the advent of pharmaceutical medicine during the start of the 19th century, healing in all cultures relied upon plants, many of which are still used in today's pharmaceuticals. The mackiki database is an electronic searchable version of the list of medicinal plants (Uprety et al.31) and stemming from a review of 49 publications issued between 1881 and 2010 in scientific journals, books, theses, and reports. It is currently the most comprehensive database on medicinal plants used by Indigenous people of the Canadian boreal forest and is named "mackiki" after the Algonquin word for medicine. This offers a wealth of information such as this small example of information from the database on Soapberry, buffalo-berry:

Uses: •Decoction applied externally to treat aching limbs, arthritis, and sore head and face [Cree: 95].•Whole plant :Tea used as a tonic [Dene 100].•Leaves and stem :Decoction drunk as a purgative and emetic [Cree 13, 96]. , to relieve constipation, tuberculosis [Métis 13]. , and used as a wash for cuts, swellings, and skin sores due to impetigo [Métis 13]. Shoots Tea from new shoots drunk to prevent miscarriages and used as a wash for arthritis [Cree 95; Métis 13]. (Uprety, Y., Asselin, H., Dhakal, A. & Julien, N., 2012)

Mother Earth bestows us with materials and plants to help take care of our wellbeing. We have a special relationship with the earth as did our ancestors. There's an understanding that we take only what we need, and must use great care when doing so, aware of how we take, and how much of it is withdrawn so that future generations will be considered and practice reciprocity. Our relationship is based on a spiritual connection with Mother Earth that guides Indigenous peoples to reverence.

Body Work and Touch Healing

Since the earliest times, our hands have been a natural response to emotional pain, with hugs and caresses to comfort. Physical touch

has been used to treat minor ailments in a drug free way. The Cherokee people of North America, for example, were well versed in body therapies and energy healing. They developed a comprehensive, sophisticated bodywork system that encompassed a form of osteopathic massage and manipulation, breath, and energy work. The Cherokee people also used this practice and also crystal scanning and healing for the channeling of spirits a form of energy medicine.

This was a laborious and challenging area to research. Dr. Lewis Mehl-Madrona & Barbara Mainguy, offer workshops on this practice, which is a rare teaching, Dr. Mehl-Madrona who is Cherokee himself, looks at his culture as well as the Cree traditions, and how they intersect with conventional medicine via a social constructionist model. He has been writing about the use of imagery and narrative in healing since the 1980s and is certified in psychiatry, geriatrics, and family medicine. His research collaborations include work on various psychological conditions, issues of psychology during birthing, nutritional approaches to autism and diabetes, and the use of healing circles to improve overall health outcomes. The Cherokee people also used this practice and also crystal scanning and healing for the channeling of spirits a form of energy medicine.

Dr. Mehl-Madrona says individual knowledge was handed down through the family:

It's definitely a more indigenous way of teaching. The Cherokee art of healing touch is rarely encountered today. It is a comprehensive, sophisticated bodywork system that encompassed a form of osteopathic massage and manipulation, breath to reanimate the body and "draw spirit" into affected tissues, and energy work. Central to this technique are the alternation of deep pressure and gentle rocking release. The practice Incorporates Cherokee breath work techniques, as a means of restoring spirit to all parts of the body and incorporation of imagery, dialogue and offers the importance of ceremony, ritual, Osteopathic or "manipulative" medicine as a means of dialogue with the body, the use of acupressure, energy meridians, crystals, and energy medicine and a closing ceremony (Mehl-Madrona, 2014).

The technique my grandfather was taught from his grandmother, which was passed down from her father's Huron traditions was connected to illness:

The Huron Wendat recognized three types of illness: Natural causes, cured by herbs, drugs, poultices or sweating, Un-natural social behaviour thought to be witchcraft, dealt with by a Shaman and Psycho-illness that manifested itself in dreams. The Huron Wendat considered dreams to be the language of the soul. If dreamed desires remained unfulfilled, harm or even death could befall a person. Dreams and desires had to be interpreted by a Shaman (The Life of the Huron Wendat. (n.d.)).

Spiritual Energy is Life

Learning about traditional healing practices helps people, including myself to reclaim our Indigenous identity and make sense of the world around us, and to understand the natural world as well as the spiritual world. I have been searching for ways to connect myself with the spiritual side of healing and strengthen positive mental health. Losing people close to me and not having this outlet has made healing more difficult. Embracing practices with these therapeutic tools reflects the understanding that the spiritual world plays a part in balancing our overall well-being.

In my personal culture a Shaman person is regarded as having access to, and influence in, the world of good and evil spirits, especially among some peoples of northern Asia and North America. Typically such people enter a trance state during a ritual, and practice divination and healing. (Shaman: Definition of Shaman by Lexico. (n.d.)). There is discussion and debate around shamanism and is sometimes viewed in western science as a pseudoscience. A psychoanalyst whose special professional research area is the psychological treatment of schizophrenia, a pursuit which has occupied twenty years of his life stated, "But the researchers who do take this position know relatively little, in terms of actual data, about the mind of the shaman, his world view, and the philosophical premises that form the basis of his healing activities " (Boyer, 1969). The Catholic church viewed a Shaman as a demonic figure. In contrast to this view Boyer

stated "I have stressed that shamans are usually not auto-cultural deviants and have even suggested that in some cultures, shamans are healthier psychologically than their societal mates." (Boyer, 1969). Indeed, modern physicists are beginning to link certain aspects of shamanism to recent findings from quantum mechanics (Lyon, William S., 1998).

Within my culture of the Wendat a Shaman was a healer and there were four kinds:

Those in control of wind, rain and weather, Those able to predict the future, Those able to find lost objects, Those able to heal the sick. Men usually took the position of healer, while women dealt with witchcraft and sorcery. The Shaman used visions and dreams to tell which actions to take. To achieve these visions, the Shaman would fast and remain celibate until an answer was received. The Shaman worked with drugs and herbal remedies and mask or shell rattles. Shaman (men and women) were highly paid and highly respected. (The Life of the Huron Wendat. (n.d.).

In the past decades shamans have gained credibility. There is a growing awareness and body of evidence about the efficacy of certain rituals such as the Sun Dance and Sweat Lodge ceremonies and creating a circle of healing and sharing our gifts. Practicing is about connecting with nature to deeply connect with the natural spirits, the elements and land, the spirits of the land through all the elements of water, and earth and connects our roots and branches and offers us to see our true essence and is irrefutable.

Looking at the evidence from the literature suggests that the wellbeing of Indigenous people is enhanced when they maintain their 'traditional' culture. For First Nation peoples, Sweat Lodge ceremonies are now a common use in drug treatment programs across the United States. The number of Sun Dance participants increases annually, as do the number of dances. Positive associations with engagement with traditional cultures have been shown in research conducted into a link between Indigenous culture and wellbeing for Australian Aboriginal people. Greater attachment to, or engagement with traditional culture is seen to create a stronger sense of self-identity, promote resilience and positive sense of community, a number of studies have presented evidence that individuals from such minorities achieve better life outcomes if they maintain a stronger affinity with traditional culture, drawn primarily on studies of North American populations. Fleming and Ledogar reviewed studies relating to 'Indigenous spirituality', but deem this concept of spirituality to be closely bound up with culture and ways of living in Indigenous communities' (2008:47) The presence of interactive effects between cultural affinity and facts such as self-esteem, and self-efficacy have also been investigated. Some key themes that arise in testing and explaining such relationships are enculturation, self-identity, resilience and sense of community.

The Roots will Continue to Grow

We began this paper with the idea of growing like a healthy tree through traditional practices; a tree with branches to different approaches to healing. Stepping back to look at the tree and reviving our knowledge of traditional practices is important because it connects us to where we belong and helps us to self-identify and offers us guidance in life as well as perspectives of what is important to us. It empowers us and helps us to take back what is ours, our traditional ways.

This reclaiming is important for myself and for my role in making this knowledge available and bringing awareness to these practices that are not as commonly practiced today. My motivation is reviving traditional healing practice through speaking with family and hearing their stories to rebalance, rediscover, repair, redefine, and reclaim our cultural traditions for good overall health that is like the well-balanced circle of the medicine wheel. As a mother, I want my children to be able to know these alternatives without having to put together the pieces, as I have had to do. This sharing of knowledge will help them in their wellbeing throughout their life journeys.

Being healthy overall is all connected to these traditions and with one thing out of place it is not balanced. If spiritual well-being is not satisfied it also affects mental health, which in turn affects physical health. They all need to be full in order for life to be successful. Traditional practices to wellbeing, such as plants from mother nature, body work, and spirituality, offer healing potential when we are connected to them.

Personally the more I learn about my background and the connections to these traditions of healing, the stronger I feel and the more pride I carry with me. I see the metaphor of the knowledge tree of healing as ongoing. Maintaining our 'traditional' culture enhances the wellbeing of ourselves as Indigenous people. Our roots continue to grow. I invite you to research in this space of family and elders' knowledge that can touch lives. I welcome you as my family network in expanding our understanding of healing beyond Western views. My hope is that what is written here provides space for further research. This is a beginning - of my own flourishing tree of knowledge about healing and perhaps yours. This is a beginning of a deeper connection to Indigenous traditional practices that help us grow and heal.

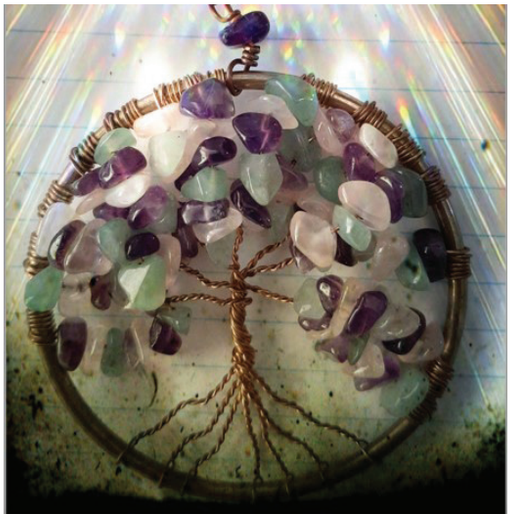

Image: The Knowledge Tree of Healing, crafted by cousin Ammy Hootnick, Métis

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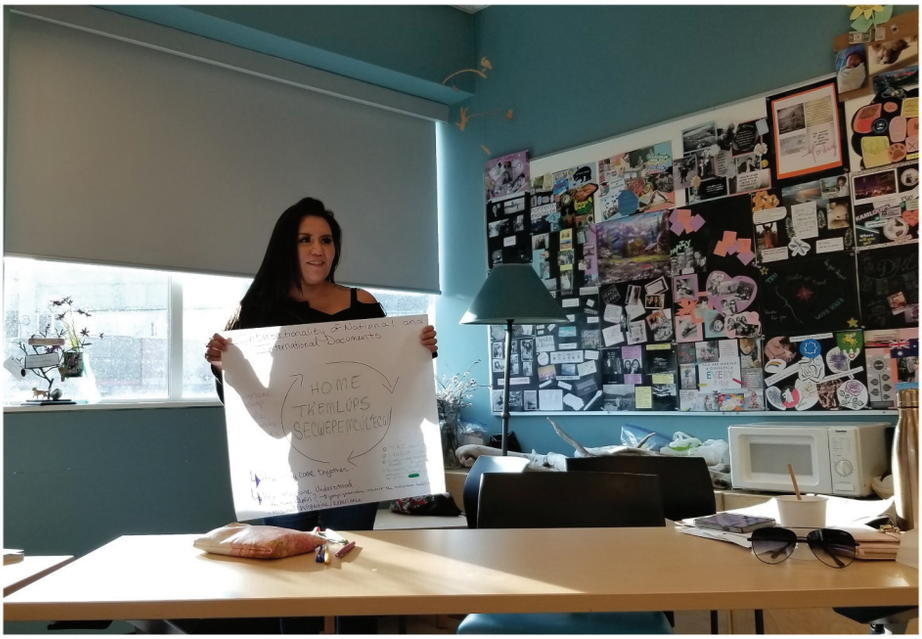
Jen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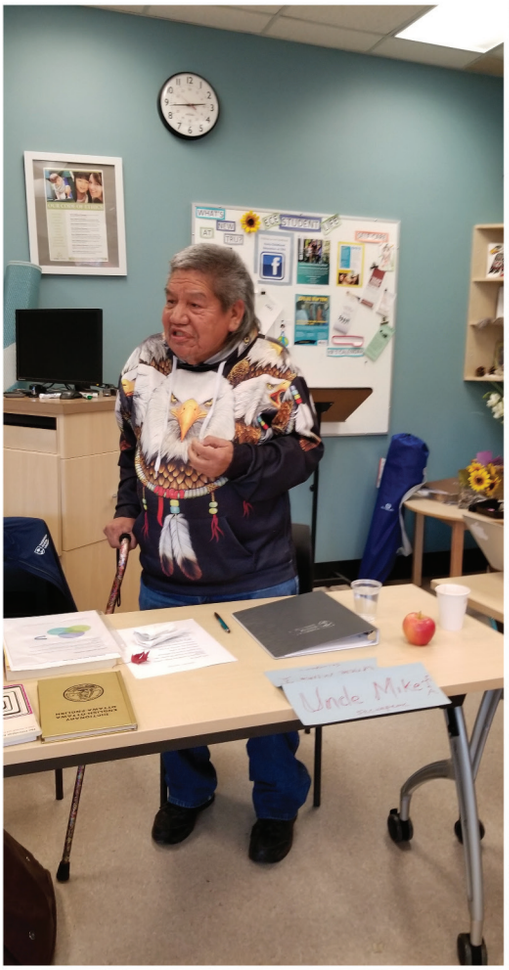
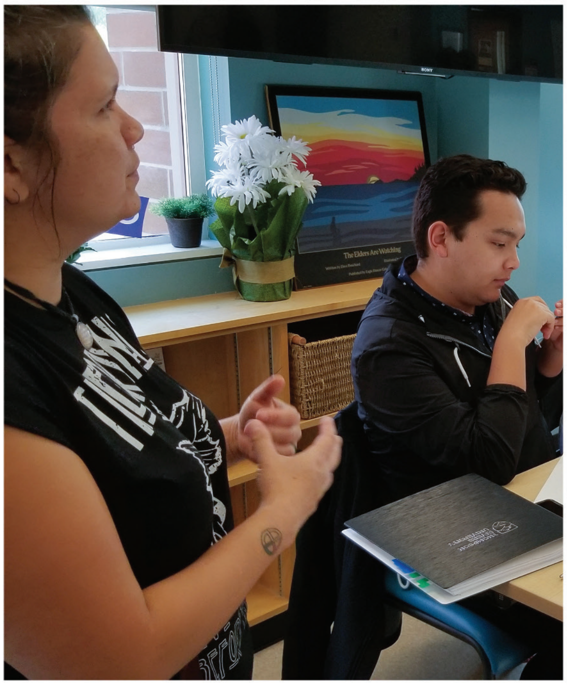
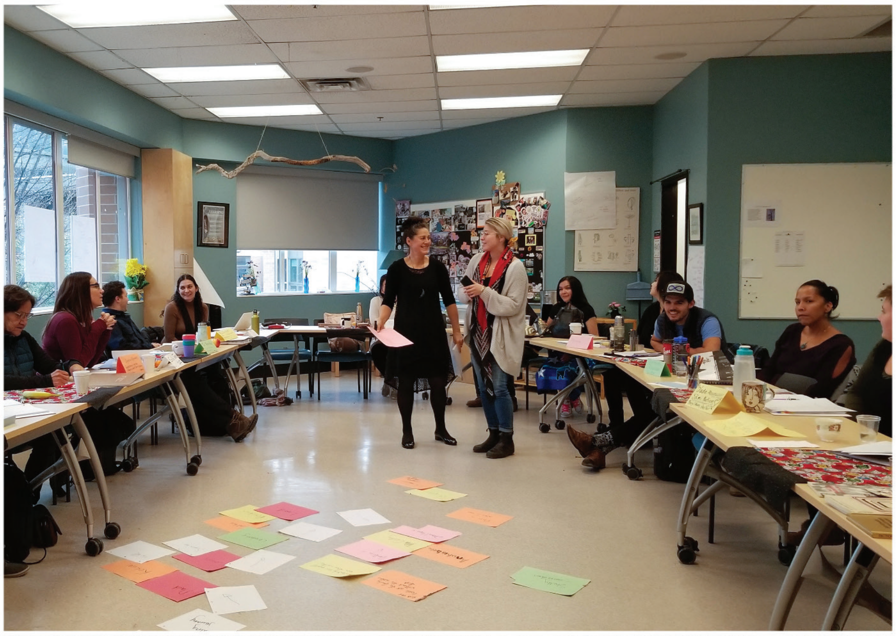

Uncle Mike



Post-it
TABLETOP EASEL PAD
PHYSICAL
EMOTIONAL
Piikani Nation
Carrier Sekani
Patrick
Thomas
Willie
Penny
SPIRITUAL
MENTAL
"Our feelings are the source of our energy...




WYNONA


Thomas, James

Thank you to the elders for sharing your culture and values, my healing process has started.

~ Knowledge Makers | Day Two

Emily Toews

Michif/Métis

Bachelor of Arts

"To me, Indigenous Research means allowing our voices to be heard. It builds strength within the Indigenous community to stand up for what we believe, supports our thoughts and feelings with evidence to solidify our ideas. It has been a gateway to healing, a stepping stone to climb out from the depths of our woes. "It is a guide to understanding and acceptance; of what has happened, what is happening now, and what we hope for the future."

BREAKING THE STIGMA

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I am simply a long-time visitor on the land of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc territory that is situated within the unceded traditional lands of the Secwepemc Nation. With this acknowledgement, I want to recognise that I respect the people of this land, and the land itself, for allowing me to share this story. I will continue to be respectful to this community, and always be grateful that I am allowed to be a student of knowledge on this land. I have felt welcomed by the community, and I will continue to honor the gifts that this beautiful community holds. I want to thank the Elders, who have shared knowledge and special interactions with me: Elder Mike Arnouse, for his stories that exude such strength; Elder Margaret Hyslop, for the words of wisdom, and allowing our spirits to unite; Elder Sandy Hendry, for being a strong, female, Métis leader; Elder Doreen Kenoras, for your guidance through my Knowledge Makers journey, and sharing your love and understanding. I hold the words and lessons that you share with us as a cherished gift that I am humbled to have received.

Thank you to Knowledge Makers facilitators, and the other members who have shared this journey with me. You have all inspired me, and I thank you for allowing me to participate in your adventure. This experience is one that for which I am very grateful. I cannot wait to see the friendships that I have made here flourish.

This paper is written with hopes of empowering Métis community members, like me. The ones who have had their journeys halted by colonial coercion, the ones who have lost their sense of culture for a time, and the ones who find it difficult to establish where they belong. It is written with the feelings of pride, acceptance and contentment.

Lastly, I think it is important to acknowledge my ancestors: ma famii (my family), aunts, uncles, cousins, grandmothers, and grandfathers, and all those who came before them. I spoke with my Elders and family members who have shared their lived truths with me. I thank my father, Roland Mockford; his sister, Alma Leach; my father's cousin, Norman Fleury; and my sister, Hollie Farkas. Your lived experiences have helped me with this paper and I am forever grateful. I will document their stories from memory, with permission from those who shared with me, in hopes of encouraging others who are holding in their truths. The strength I have to write this paper travels through me, from you. Marsii! Thank you!

Introduction

I believe there is a magic that runs through the veins of every Métis person, a magic that is comprised of strength, resilience, fire, and an energy that belongs to all those of mixed blood. Not Indian or European, but a mix of the two cultures; it is important to understand

and accept that we cannot be placed in one cookie cutter definition or another. In this paper, I will use my family's story and literature to highlight strengths, and how the Métis built such strengths through lived experiences. I hope to begin to break the stigma of Métis people feeling like they are not able to check one box or another.

While researching for this project I found a book by the author Marie Campbell, titled *Halfbreed*. In awe, I read her stories of growing up in a Métis home. She highlights her struggles with racism and segregation, and how these moments made her feel. I took inspiration from the way she tells her stories, and this book guided me through the journey of composing this paper. I mention her book in this paper often. I speak about my own experiences, and my family's experiences with finding our place within the Métis culture. I explain the colonial definition of Métis, and the word Michif, what it means, and why I claim it. I outline my suggestions for educating future generations on the cultures of Indigenous people, and why I feel this is important.

This paper is written from a place of forgiveness, and from an unapologetic stance that these are our stories, and that I have the merit to be an avenue through which they travel. I will not conform to the colonial academic standards that have silenced our people's truths for so long (Ahenakew, 2016; Kuokkanen, 2011; Lavallée, 2009). I will use the words,"half-breed" and "Indian," not in a derogatory sense as they are used now, but as a way of acknowledging that while these words were once used to hurt, they also were used in everyday life by many Indigenous people. I have heard my relations use them and have used them in our own household while growing up, only because they had no negative connotation attached to them. It is not my wish to disrespect anyone, but I feel that my story would not be a whole truth without their use. There are also Michif words throughout the paper. I believe it is important to submerge ourselves in our cultures; even though I am still a student of our language, I try to incorporate it into whatever I am doing. I hope to start a revolution, a revolution based in pride for the mix that we are and to celebrate it in hopes that it will empower present and future generations of Métis.

Strength

The word strength comes to mind whenever I think of past generations. One thing we cannot deny is the strength of our ancestors; not just physical strength, but a strength of mind, and spiritual strength. A connection to the energies that flow through everyone and everything. The Métis people have a connection to this strength and although some may be more in tune with it than others, all of us hold this potential, which is why I will be examining their strengths.

We all know someone we would consider strong, someone whose resilience is unimaginable. The coureurs des bois – which translates to "runners of the woods" (Morrow & Wamsley, 2017, p. 16) - were undoubtedly some of the strongest men. They were fur traders who were rebels of sorts, and gained the reputation of being "unruly, wild and uncivilized" (Morrow & Wamsley, 2017, p. 16). They would act as middle-men between the Europeans and the Indians while exchanging furs. They never had commercial permits for these exchanges, so they often would have to live in the bush, and a lot of the time became quite close with the Natives in the areas (Mary-Rousselière, 1984). They were the epitome of strength and endurance. They learned their endurance skills from the Aboriginal people, through subsistence techniques. These types of men mixed with Aboriginal women, due to their close relations with Native people, and this was a base for the robust nature of the Métis people. The coureurs des bois are icons of bush masculinity.

Not only were the men associated with strength, but the women as well. Women were resilient in many ways. They looked after the children, cooked, maintained the home, chopped wood, and butchered game and fish that the men brought home from hunting (Van Kirk, 1984, p. 10). They even accompanied their men on trapping and hunting excursions. They were caregivers and medicine women, and always looked after anyone they were able to. It was not uncommon for all the women to

embody such strength. Morrow and Wamsley (2007) note, "Fur traders and travellers marvelled at the strength of Athapaskan women, who pulled sleds burdened with supplies and other gear or carried heavy packs from camp to camp." (p. 9) Even women as young as 12 years old were able to carry heavy loads for long periods of time. The role of women was, and is, important: "Indian women are the reason Indian cultures have survived" (Hollrah, 2004, p.122). We need to learn from our pasts to be stronger, and to endure today.

Sometimes in order to keep moving forward, not only must you take one step at a time, but you must be willing to look back occasionally and evaluate your past, no matter how painful it is. Looking back lets you know whether or not you are headed in the right direction. (Attributed to G.K. Adams[1])

I am particularly fond of strong women because I stem from them. My grandma, who was a Michif, was one of them. I say "Michif" (or *Michif niiya* – I am Michif) because that is how they identified themselves. I learned of this through my dad's *koozin* (cousin), Norman Fleury. Norman is a Special Lecturer at the College of Education—University of Saskatchewan, a *Li pleu vyeu moond* (the older people, or Elder) of the University, and of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. Norman is a wealth of knowledge and has been very supportive throughout my academic journey. I would also add that I consider him a protector of the Michif language:

The meaning in saying you are a Michif places you as part of a nation, it's a language and its own culture. When we say "Métis," this is how we are recognized as a Nation by our Métis Government, and Canada historically. The "Michif" were of French and Cree ancestry. Our Michif language demonstrates this: nouns associated grammar are in French, and the verbs associated grammar are in Cree. English borrowed words which are old and new words. Our Michif people spoke not only Michif language, but also other languages such as Cree and Assiniboine, Nakota and Saulteau; very little English language was used, if any. The people who called themselves "Halfbreed" were of Cree, Saulteau, Scottish, Irish and English ancestry. They spoke Bungee, which is made up of Cree and Saulteau, Gaelic and English. (N. Fleury, personal communication, 12/8/19)

The colonial definition of Métis is "people of mixed European and Indigenous ancestry" (Gaudry, 2019). The Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples (2013) states that they "acknowledge that the identity of Canada's Aboriginal peoples is a matter for peoples themselves to determine" (p.1).

At 16 years old, my grandma married my grandfather, who was from England. Due to her age she needed her parents' signature to marry; this was difficult because they were not fond of their white, English future son-in-law. But the couple, *mii granpearaant* (my grandparents), were successfully married and had nine children together, six girls and three boys; my father is the youngest. After many years, my grandparents separated. Her parents were Michif, and exposed to torment for being Indians, like so many others; "[Native peoples'] struggle has been one against racism and national oppression" (Bourgeault, 1983, p. 45). Oppressed people often oppress people, as Paulo Freire highlights in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1989): "the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors" (p. 45). This is not an excuse, but is part of what we need to change if we want to break the stigma of the divide. After the separation, my father spent his time with his father. It is possible that the reason we lacked Michif culture in our home is that he was removed from it for a period of his life. This is true for many of my relations, who grew up Michif but gravitated towards

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1 Retrieved from https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/5375398.G_K_Adams

colonial ways. Given that people were being pulled from their homes and put in residential schools, told not to use their language and urged to forget their culture, one can assume that it may have been easier to claim to be white. Now, many do not identify as Michif; I am so grateful to those who still do.

One of my Taants (aunts), the seventh of the nine children, did not lose the spirit of the Michif. She spent a lot of time with her grandmother and grandfather, and for a time, lived in their home. I spoke with her to get an idea of my great-grandma's and great-grandpa's strengths. She explained to me that their household was a Michif household. Like many others, my great-grandpa trapped and brought home furs to trade (Schultz, 2019). He would gather many furs and walk to the next settlement, carrying the heavy load on his back. She spoke of him as a kind and gentle man, who really loved Granny. Granny would ask him to go out and fetch various medicinal ingredients for her to make concoctions. He was very caring of others, and more stoic, but he was a joker and always made everyone laugh. Granny was the "leader" of the household. She was a firecracker, loved to dance, and was a fun lady. She was always baking and making food for anyone who was at her house. As Marie Campbell (1982) observed, "One thing about our people is that they never hoard. If they have something, they share all of it with each other, regardless of good or bad fortune" (p. 55); mii taant, too, described how Granny shared with others, commenting, "Didn't matter who it was, they came in, warmed up, were fed, and took food with them" (A. Leach, personal communication, 12/6/19). She even would extend her kindness to the White people who snubbed her, when they fell upon hard times. She was a pillar of strength.

The characteristic of strength to survive and overcome struggles was, and is, common in female matriarchs. They practiced only what they knew from their past generations.: "we find our strength and our power in our ability to be what our Grandmothers were to us: Keepers of the next generation in every sense of that word – physically, intellectually, and spiritually" (Miller, 1996, p. xi). These women endured living through the most challenging times, very often pregnant and on their own, raising numerous children. They held strong as they were discriminated against and called terrible names. A piece of advice that Marie Campbell's Cheechum gave her is to "always walk with your head up and if anyone says something then put out your chin and hold it higher" (Campbell, 1982, p. 37). This is what my family has passed on to me as well. One thing about mii famii is that we are known as spitfires. Sometimes my mouth gets me in trouble, but I am like my dad, like my taants, like my grandmother and my great-grandmother; I consider it a strength. We have always been told to not let anyone break you, to be resilient, and to stand up for yourself and anyone you believe needs support. I have learned to overcome discrimination like my ancestors, although I would not say I have had the hardest life, or even close. However, I have experienced trauma that damaged my spirit for a long time.

Perseverance

We must build the foundation of strength first, to then persevere through challenges of discouragement. I grew up in a White household, knowing that we had Métis heritage. Every summer as far back as I remember, my parents would pack me and my three siblings up in the family vehicle, and we would drive from BC to Manitoba. My dad's family is from there and we loved to go for visits. Our *tannts* and *noonks* (uncles) were loving people, always singing, dancing, and laughing. They would speak in a mixture of French, Michif, and English, and we would laugh at them when they mixed up sayings and words. I always felt connected to them and the land, but I never knew why. Later in life, once I started to learn more about my culture, I realized that the things I was drawn to in them were all characteristics of Métis culture. I knew that this feeling of "magic," as I called it earlier, was in me. I was Michif.

When I was a little girl, some of my cousins on my mother's side were abusive. I did not recognize it at the time, but they would mentally and emotionally abuse me. They were narcissists. They would build me up to the point where I thought they really liked me, then they would strike me down with damaging blows, the really low blows that hurt deep inside. Then they would proceed to laugh it

off and claim that they were only joking, and start the building up over again. They would call us (my siblings and me) little Indians, or say bad things about my dad, in a poor attempt at an Indian accent. One time in particular I remember one of them having a conversation with me. I was young; I do not remember the exact age, but I was small enough to go crawl under the coffee table after our interaction. I remember him saying to me, with a huge grin on his face, "So you're an Indian, eh? That's so cool. Do you know any words in Indian?" He was being facetious, and his voice was filled with so much sarcasm that even at my young age, I second-guessed if he was making fun of me. I could not tell, but it felt so good when they allowed me to feel that high that I catered to his request. I said, "Yes, I do." Then I mumbled some made-up "word" and he started laughing, the obnoxious laugh that made me instantly know: I had fallen for it. Again, and again. Throughout my entire childhood. This made me hate my White side, and I started to claim Aboriginal at school, and on all documents.

Discrimination comes from both sides, and I experienced it. I was never accepted as either White or Indigenous. I would go to school and there was always a clear division between Natives and Whites. The town I grew up in was surrounded by three reservations. One was situated on the North side of the South Thompson River, and we would have to cross a bridge to get over to "the Darkside," as my peers would call it. I have to admit that I am guilty of calling it that at times, too. I was always liked in school, and could fit in well with different groups, but I never seemed to have best friends. Once I was at a party and I was standing with a group of White girls, and a group of Native girls came in. A remark was made about letting the "Darkside dogs" into the party. I remember wincing because it was so distasteful and it made me mad. I told the girl that it was a rude comment, and she promptly told me I was welcome to go join the "Darkside dogs" if I loved them that much. I just shook my head and went home. I was so disappointed that I was part of something like that.

2006 rolled around and I was about to graduate from high school. I received an invitation to participate in the Aboriginal Graduation and I was thrilled. I went in alone and was a bit shy. I saw other students from my school so I made my way over and stood near them. As we were all lining up to walk across the stage, I heard a woman speaking to the woman beside her: "Geesh, there sure are a lot of whities here, I thought this was supposed to be an Indian graduation." My feelings of happiness and accomplishment instantly were taken over by embarrassment and shame, embarrassment that I had agreed to participate in the event when I surely was not supposed to be there.

The point I hope to make by sharing my personal experiences is that I am clearly not one or the other, and I do not believe that my experiences are unique. Unfortunately, this happened in the past and it happens in the present, but hopefully it will happen less in the future. It took me a long time to be happy and accept that I do not need to fit into one side of the line. But I am constantly overcoming struggles and trying my hardest to persevere. I am proud to be Michif. My hope is to break the stigma that is associated with being in the middle; it needs to be celebrated. The strength and resilience of our ancestors should be celebrated. I will continue to be proud, with an unapologetic attitude. Yes, I am too Native to be White! Yes, I am too White to be Native! Yes, *Michif niiya*!

Education and Celebration

I am currently working towards finishing my post-secondary studies, with hopes of attaining a Bachelor degree in Education and becoming a teacher. I have chosen this occupation because I believe that the education of children is where we can begin to create change. Intergenerational trauma and lateral violence[2] do not have to go on any further. I feel like we are working towards correcting this, but it will not change on its own. We need to connect with children at an impressionable age to teach them coping mechanisms and offer support. All groups should have the right to be proud of who they are. We need to teach them that they are valuable and worthy

2 "Lateral violence (LV) refers to the ways oppressed and powerless people covertly and overtly direct their dissatisfaction inward, toward each other, and those less powerful than themselves." (Clark, Augoustinos, & Malin, 2016, p. 43-44)

of accomplishing something great. We are a culture of sharing, as mentioned before: not just material things, but also stories of strife and success. Indigenous people have passed on their histories through storytelling and shared experiences that are then bestowed on future generations. A great way to continue this tradition is to bring the knowledge of past generations to the forefront by inviting older generations to build up our youth and assist them in believing they have potential. I hope for Elders to become frequent visitors in classrooms, so students can understand respect, absorb knowledge, and be grateful to have Elders come to share their knowledge with the youth so they, in turn, can continue to pass it on in the future.

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Children need to learn life skills, and how to be sustainable. Sustainability is something that is common in recent news. With climate change and the earth warming, we cannot go on depredating the land any longer. The definition of sustainability is "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Flisrand, 2008). Teaching children the ways that Indigenous people once lived and passing on their skills is a goal. Passing on important life lessons and teaching them that we need to be resilient is a goal. We need to help children get in touch with their ancestry and learn about their own families' strengths. I think when they are able to recognize strength in someone to whom they feel personally connected, then they will be better able to cope with hardships they may face in life.

The new BC Government has recently implemented changes to add more Indigenous education into the BC curriculum (Province of British Columbia, 2019). They are equipping teachers with Indigenous education resources and are highlighting lessons that add First Nations knowledge into the learning objectives (Province of British Columbia, 2019). These are steps in the right direction. Relating the stories of Indigenous history could help break down the segregation between the races.

I will teach my own children the importance of accepting their own identities with pride, and respecting others' identities. I will teach them to support ones who are still searching, and help guide them by finding strengths within. I will strive to be encouraging to those who are on their own journey to support them in celebrating our culture. As Elder Mike Arnouse once told me, "If we're all going in the same direction, we might as well walk together" (personal communication, 10/20/19). Together we will be able to stand strong.

Conclusion

Without past family members' experiences we would not know what strength is. Judy Iseke cites Shawn Wilson in her paper "Importance of Métis Ways of Knowing in Healing Communities" (2010) and I feel like these words are very fitting to my Knowledge Makers experience: "If research doesn't change you as a person, then you haven't done it right" (p. 95). The person who is writing this conclusion is a very different person than the one who began. I am thrilled with the person I am, and I have such pride for where I came from. I am continuing to empower others to "take back their culture," and I am teaching the young children the ways of our ancestors. Good or bad, we should share the knowledge of our ancestors with future generations so they can understand how our people once lived, and what they had to overcome for us to stand where we are today. We should celebrate that we are an individual culture. Only when we realize our strengths, will we be able to break the stigma and learn to be proud of who we are.

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We are all researchers, is an argument I make. If you are going on a journey you gather resources before going on the journey. If you don't draw the arrow back you don't go far. To create new knowledge you have to use old knowledge.

~ Prof. Rod McCormick

Professor Rod McCormick

Kanienkehaka (Mohawk)
British Columbia Innovation Chair
in Aboriginal Health & Director of All My Relations

HAS RECONCILIATION BEEN RE-CONCEALED?

At the time of writing this article there are dozens of protests across Canada in support of the Wet'suwet'en hereditary Chiefs who are trying to stop the Coastal GasLink pipeline project on their traditional homelands. Both the Canadian and BC Governments have given the Corporations the greenlight to proceed with construction of the pipeline despite the objections of the Wet'suwet'en hereditary Chiefs, who do not want the pipeline to proceed as planned. Despite the Chiefs' suggestion of an alternative route for the pipeline, the company is proceeding as originally planned with the heavy-handed enforcement of the RCMP. Recent newspaper headlines such as, "The march to reconciliation trips over a pipeline: The rage is spreading - and governments seem to have no good response" (Hall, 2020), and "Horgan's Pipeline Push Betrays His Reconciliation Promise: First Nations expected a new era; instead the government has embraced colonialism and ignored UNDRIP law" (Sayers, 2020), illustrate the contradictory behaviour of the provincial and federal governments, who state that they support reconciliation with Indigenous peoples while at the same time siding with the resource extraction corporations again and again. It was just a few months ago that BC Premier John Horgan said that he counts the passing of legislation to enshrine the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) into law as one of the proudest moments of his life. It was also just a few years ago that Prime Minister Trudeau promised to implement all 94 Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), including implementing UNDRIP. "We need nothing less than a total renewal of the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples," he stated, "I give you my word that we will renew and respect that relationship"(as cited in McSheffrey, McSheffrey, & Garossino, 2015). How can the Premier and Prime Minister rationalize the contradiction between their words and actions? In an effort to understand this phenomenon it may help to examine how people define the word "Reconciliation." Although there exist many different definitions of Reconciliation, the one that I find seems most accurate in this case is: "to cause (a person) to accept or be resigned to something not desired: *He was reconciled to his fate*." (Dictionary.com, n.d.). Reconciliation is also viewed by 1.2 billion Catholics as the Sacrament of Penance (also commonly called the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession). It is one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church (Catholic Online, n.d.). Reconciliation has also been defined as the restoration of friendly relations as well as the

> "One might legitimately ask: What happened to reconciliation? Seen through the lens of psychology, there seem to be a few obstacles in the way of honest reconciliation. The most obvious obstacle is denial."
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>
> Professor Rod McCormick

action of making one view or belief compatible with another (lexico.com, n.d.). Whatever definition is used, it does not seem that the stated desire of Canadians to reconcile with Indigenous peoples is being honoured and/or implemented in a good way. One might legitimately ask: What happened to reconciliation? Seen through the lens of psychology, there seem to be a few obstacles in the way of honest reconciliation. The most obvious obstacle is denial. Many Canadians do not want to accept Canada's history of "cultural genocide," land seizure, and horrific acts of racism and violence towards Indigenous peoples. It simply does not fit with their image of Canada as a country that respects human rights. It was only one year after reading the statement of apology to residential school survivors that then Prime Minister Stephen Harper said to world leaders at the G20 meeting: "We also have no history of colonialism. So we have all the things that many people admire about the great powers but none of the things that threaten or bother them" (as cited in Ljunggren, 2009). After denial, the next obstacle concealing reconciliation is called apathy. Research has demonstrated that you must experience feelings about something if you are to take personally meaningful action on it (Seltzer, 2016). The origin of the word "apathy" stems from the Greek word "apathēs" which means "without feeling." In an effort to help non-Canadians begin to "feel" some of what Indigenous peoples have experienced, activities such as the Circle and Square experiential activity (http://www.4windswellness.ca/workshops-and-training/when-rabbit-met-turtle/) and the Kairos Blanket activity (https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/) were developed. Despite these and other opportunities to feel some of these inconvenient feelings, Canadians possibly avoid taking action due to yet another obstacle, which can be explained by cognitive dissonance theory. Cognitive dissonance theory suggests that we have an inner drive to hold all our attitudes and behavior in harmony and to avoid disharmony (or dissonance). When there is an inconsistency between attitudes or behaviors (dissonance), something must change to eliminate the dissonance (Festinger, 1957). People strive to maintain consistency between attitudes and behaviors, and may not use very rational methods to achieve it (McLeod, 2018). The most obvious way to reduce dissonance is to change one or more of the attitudes, behavior, beliefs, etc., to make the relationship between the two elements a consistent one. This is not always an easy solution as it is often difficult for people to change ingrained behavioral responses. A more logical approach to reduce dissonance is to acquire new information that outweighs the dissonant beliefs. A third and more common strategy to reduce dissonance is to reduce the importance of the dissonant thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Amongst the many ways to conceal the dissonance between beliefs and actions, perhaps the most damaging has been the strategy employed by colonizers throughout history and that is to "dehumanize" their victims. As previously discussed, this leads to apathy or the lack of feelings concerning one's victims. In order to replace apathy with empathy, a process of re-humanization must occur (Halpern and Weinstein, 2004). Perhaps what is most needed is compassion. Compassion goes beyond just having pity for someone (sympathy) or even being able to feel someone else's pain (empathy). Compassion is when we sense such a pain and are motivated to actively alleviate it (Scott, n.d).

I started this story as a reaction to recent incidents illustrating the betrayal of the Reconciliation Promise. I will close this story with the mention of another recent headline: "Senator and ex-judge Murray Sinclair says Indigenous resistance won't respond well to 'pocketful of mumbles'" (Smith, 2020). In the story, Senator Sinclair states that Indigenous people must feel the way that Paul Simon expressed in his song "The Boxer": "I am just a poor boy, though my story's seldom told, I have squandered my resistance for a pocketful of mumbles, such are promises. All lies and jest, still a man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest…" (Simon, 1969). As Indigenous peoples we are no longer willing to exchange our resistance for mumbles, lies, and jests. Perhaps non-Indigenous Canadians will continue to hear what they want to hear and disregard the rest, or perhaps, just maybe, the Dalai Lama was right and compassion will become the radicalism of our times.

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Research is a form of service, reciprocity, and respect.

~ Prof. Airini

Elizabeth Spike

Statimc and Nlakapamux
Knowledge Makers Alumni

WALKING IN TWO WORLDS WITH ART AS MY GUIDE

As an Knowledge Maker Alumni, I feel like I should share my learning path as a student in a undergraduate university and how I had to work on an assignment for my 4th year in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program. This has given me a glimpse on how the Art world for Artists around the world are who gets picked to be in the monthly Magazines. The assignment I was given in my graduating class I had to find artists that were published in the popular art magazines. When I started I had a very hard time looking for Indigenous artists what did similar themes, styles, and even processes. I had to turn away from the Non-native art magazines to look for indigenous artists. I had to turn to a previous class I had taken 'First Nations Art History' this class I had taken brought the artists into our class room we were also able to look at a few text books that just had Indigenous artists in them. I also was able to reach out and talk to some Indigenous artist like Devan. I had to please of knowing Mandy personly during my earlier life. I the art work not much of Indigenous artist get published and I feel its time to change that.

Mandy: Her work was featured in the First Peoples Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa which I was able to go see when I went to Ottawa in 2010 for a program called "In Counters with Canada" and the Museum of Anthropology. She has taught her grand daughter (my cousin) how to harvest and make cedar root baskets.

Devon: He has done many small pieces that are worn and now he is creating larger pieces that can be displayed in your home or at work. He spends a lot of his time drawing up his ideas and designs on paper before he goes into the full work on birch bark. I am beyond thankful that Devan took the time to connect with me to talk about his work and I hope to one day to be able to buy one of his big art pieces as they are truly amazing.

Introduction

For many years, the Indigenous art, artifacts and objects were collected. All over the world, different art galleries and museums gathered materials without consent. Jamie Lyn said "Indigenous material culture was collected, interpreted, displayed and described through a Western colonial ideology" (Issac, 2016) Much of the work was shown in those galleries and museums caused harm; from cultural appropriation to racism. The art community has a responsibility when working with the indigenous people and their work.

It took until 1985 for there to be an indigenous artist gathering which was the Native Indian Inuit Photographers Association (NIIPA) in Hamilton, Ontario. (Agamben, 2005) NIIPA gathered indigenous photographers that were

making expressive photographic work and consciously deconstructing the colonizing outlook; the artists that attended were Larry McNeil, Jessie Cooday, Martin Loft, Steven Loft, Shelley Niro, Brenda Mitten, Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie, Pena Bonita, Tim Johnson, Jeff Thomas, Greg Stevens and Jolene Rickard. This group wanted to be recognized as both, artists and natives; with their work valued with others.

Scholar Joanne Barker's argues, " it is impossible to stabilize what sovereignty means outside the specific historical and cultural conditions of the indigenous peoples who evoke this terms." S" Sovereignty- and its related histories, perspectives, and identities- is embedded within the specific social relations in which it is invoked and given meaning." (Agamben, State of Exception, 2005)

Connecting the idea of Indigenous art serving the Indigenous communities and reinforced the understanding of the sovereignty. A Lakota historian, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn called for "Native writers to create a "nation- centered sovereign" that more accurately captures the possibilities between an ongoing formation of nationhood and expressions from the Indigenous communities. (Lytle, 1984) In 1995, the Osage scholar Robert Allen Warriors caused a cautionary advisory that invited Joanne Backer to the intellectual sovereignty. It was a political shift from the land-based in an attempt to decolonize the theoretical and methodological perspectives; one that provided an analysis of indigenous histories, cultural, and identities from the legacies of interellectual colonialism.

Artist: Mary Thomas
Medium: Pine Needle Baskets

The field in art history was mostly looked at the Medieval Art to Renaissance Art; in my class with Dr. Lloyd Bennett, an author of several books on Indigenous art, he discussed that how there is no acknowledgement of Indigenous art history considered in the classroom settings. With Dr. Bennett only taking it in to account for upper level art history course; a course devoted to only traditional indigenous art forms. Traveling to different communities, Dr. Lloyd Bennett interviewed indigenous artists for his course textbook. This book called "Unique Native Art Forms" included many Indigenous artists from across Canada. In this paper, the work of some of those artists will be highlighted; exploring pine needle baskets with Mary Thomas, cedar baskets with Mandy Brown (Bennett, 2013); he went on to publish a second edition. The artist in the book often used natural materials like pine needles, birch bark, cedar roots, caribou hair, fish scale, hand spun wool, moose hair, porcupine quills, dentalium shells and carvings on cedar. Devan is an Indigenous Quillwork artist who works with birchbark and porcupine quills. He is a current emerging artist himself and bein doing traditional art work for the last few years. He was one people that reached out to give me a hand when I couldn't find any indigenous artist in the art megazines.

Meeting Amazing Indigenous Artists

One of the Indigenous artists interviewed was a Shuswap Elder, Mary Thomas (Bennett, Unique Native Art Forms 2nd Edition, 2013). Mary was environmentalist and a devoted teacher who spent her lifetime educating both the young and old about the need for increased environmental awareness, conservation and preservation. But as an artist, she loved to create baskets with pine needles. Making pine needle baskets is one of the traditional skills, she needed to relearn after she left the Residential School System. She focused on her traditional cultural practices after she had her children. Mary explored the traditional ways of cooking and using that natural earth materials to make usable objects. It was when she was creating her traditional baskets, that she was able to let go of her hate for non-indigenous people that stemed from her experience in the residential school systems. She discovered the best pine needles were from the Ponderosa pine. Interestingly, the "expert" James Teit, an ethnographers that had studied the uses for the pine needle baskets but did not mention any of his research in his papers or logs. (Teit, 1901) Today, the baskets are still used for varied of things from

jewelry boxes, pins, and even coasters. In the book, Mary explains that Shuswap women usually have a personal container to hold her items in and often the container is a pine needle basket. She wanted to preserve and promote traditional practices, to heal both the land and its people. That is what she did when she made her pine needle baskets, it was a way for her to heal herself from the past of residential school using material from the land.

Another artist in Dr. Bennet's book was Mandy Brown, she is an Nlaka'pamux artist from Lytton. In 2013, Mandy won the Lifetime Achievement In 2013, Christy Clark and BC Achievement Foundation Chair Keith Mitchell awarded Mandy Brown from the BC Achievement Foundation for her profound contribution to their First Nations' culture. Mandy Brown's work has kept the cedar root basketry tradition alive for her people and is featured in First Peoples Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa. This Nlaka'pamux art form can be dated back centuries. But her contribution extended beyond baskets; not only teaching women in her community how to make baskets, she shared how to make moccasins. Her teachings passed these traditions on; hopefully, for the next seven generations. Mandy's contribution to her community was not only as an artist but as a social worker, member of the band council, and a trustee of the school board. The patterns on the Cedar Root Baskets keep changing as the years go on, however the link with the tradtional knowledgeis still the same method of doing the cedarr root baskets and the materials will never change.

Artist: Mandy Brown
Medium: cedar roots, buckskin

Artist: Mandy Brown
Cedar Root Baskets

Artist: Devan Kicknosway
Medium: Porcupine Quill work on Birch Bark.
Year: 2019
Photo from artist

Devan Kicknosway is an indigenous artist, orginally from Ottawa that is currently raising his family in Montana. He works with porcupine quills and birch bark; an art that date back to 6th Century CE possibly longer. A self-taught artist, he has been doing quill work on birch bark just over two years now, only having a briefly having a mentor, Brenda Stevens from Shawanage, Ontario (Devan Kicknosway, 2019). Normally, the highly valuable porcupine quill work was usually done by the women. The value of the quills was clear in care given they dyed them different colours with natural dyes back in the day. Quills are seen on the garnishing for the buckskin dresses, shirts, leggings and occassionally they can be seen on other domestic objects as well. According to traditional Cree knowledge the quills were woven with sinew strands without a hide background and then attached to the item were always of angular geometric design (Daven, Video chat call, 2019). Colonialization replace quills with glass trade beads, and geometric designs were replaced by human and animal figures

Elk portrait, quillwork on birch bark.
Artist Devan kicknosway, 2019

and floral designs. Across turtle island, the first people of this land used this traditional art form. “It is not known on where it originated from-Devan Kicknosway”; maybe it was the Micmac, Ojibway, Lakota. Regardless, it was developed right across turtle island.

I am Indigenous Artist

Working as an indigenous artist is challenging from ensuring the work is our own and original to creating functional art, for wearing or use in homes. Indigenous people wear our artwork with pride; showcasing our individuality but also our connection to Indigenous culture. Indigenous art will express what nation and what clan the artist is from. By wearing the work of Indigenous artists, it demonstrates the pride of a creator and the deep pride in both ancient culture and its contemporary renaissance. Indigenous artists must support each other to continue; not only to carry on our traditions, but also to embrace new materials and generate new ideas that are consistent with our traditions and values. Devan demonstrates how to do this, his style changes and he keeps coming up with different unique designs with his original art pieces. As seen in the photo image, which was completely done with dyed porcupine quills on birch bark; this is amazing given his new to this medium and self-taught.

Another challenge for Indigenous Artists is that many non-indigenous people consider our art to be a craft forms. They claim the pieces are made to be used or are purely decorative, so do not include much of Indigenous people’s work. Indigenous artist’s disagree by explain that we are artists since our work is also a creative activity involving the working of the imagination for its own sake; they recognize each step in the creation in indigenous artwork is a type of art form in itself. For example, the long process of preparing smoked buckskin, it requires multiple specific sub-steps to be carefully followed; in the past this work was done by young women but now, men will also do this work. This change in roles demonstate how indigenous art practices that reflect changes in the wider society and how everyone is learning the old ways to broaden the population of culture carriers.

Thankfully, some elders resisted assimilation and have conserved our traditional values, knowledge and skills. Those elders are now teaching younger generations so that our cultural knowledge will be here always to enrich and ground our lives as indigenous people. The work of European anthropologists, such as Franz Boas and Jan van Eijk, who recognized the validity of Indigenous life ways captured and preserved much of our language and material culture. A difficult feat, in the face of sustained campaigns of cultural genocide by Western governments. Not only have Indigenous people not vanished, as Edward Curtis feared (Holm, 1983) but we are growing in numbers and strength as we reclaim our identity.

Afterward

My work has come from playing with designs, or just going with the flow. Often, I just sit and bead allowing the thread and needles to create their own design. Most of my work, like my ancestors, is functional; it has purpose. I create my daughters own regalia, to showcase where she comes from, the St’at’imc, Nlaka’pamux and Dene Nations. I want her to be proud and confidant in using these pieces are artwork. My love for photography comes from wanting capture our culture; pictures showcasing dancers, traditional regalias all while they dance. Dance is an art form as well. Dancers tell their stories; photography allow me to capture it. Indigenous people like myself have always used our art styles to show that we are proud indigenous people. I combine traditional teaching with contemporary items, creating jewelry, pop sockets, beaded hats, key chains, and even bags. Selling these items allow me to fund my photography passion; I plan on growing my image base so I can create an indigenous calendar or indigenous photo art book. I am walking in two worlds with art as my guide.

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"I'm interested in Indigenous policies; what does this mean for my community, my neighbors, how does this look for the everyday Indigenous person."

-

2020 Knowledge Makers

I have already learned more than I have ever learned in my whole life about myself.

~ Knowledge Makers | Day One

Alexis Edwards

Tskwaylaxw

Bachelor of Arts

"To me, Indigenous research means, methodical analysis conducted by, or engaged with Indigenous intellectuals to expand Indigenous wisdom, culture and knowledge."

AESTHETICS OF A CULTURE: A DISCUSSION ON THE PRESERVATION OF A CULTURE THROUGH ART

Introduction

Creativity and self-expression have always been essential to our humanity; through art in its various forms, Indigenous peoples can continue to preserve their cultural identity. It is through their artistic abilities that Indigenous Peoples express their culture, identity, and connection to the land upon which they rely for survival. Indigenous societies have used various forms of Art to keep their culture alive, such as storytelling, architecture, tattoos and face painting, song and dance, even the blankets in which they wrap themselves. Each of these forms can be witnessed at various events held by Indigenous communities across North America. Some of these events are called powwows and are for Indigenous peoples to meet and socialize, and to express themselves through song and dance. Most importantly, they are places to practice culture and to strengthen its elements. This paper addresses the question of how these various forms of creativity and self-expression serve to preserve Indigenous cultural identity. I argue that through these artistic forms, a culture can survive and be strengthened. This paper expands the range of knowledge and understanding we have around the aesthetics of an Indigenous cul- ture. I begin with the art of storytelling. By forming lessons and historical events into a story, Indigenous tribes can continue to pass on their narratives through genera- tions. I then discuss the importance of man-made environmental heritage known as Indigenous architecture. North America's varying cultural regions had distinctive forms of housing that reflected their respective regions, whether it be a land of snow or ice, or a hot climate on the open plains. Indigenous peoples' traditional homes played a promi- nent role in cultural expression. In addition to tattoos and face paint, I discuss the aesthetic value that can be placed on cultural expression through song and dance. Music and dance are other forms of storytelling and are vital to keeping Indigenous culture alive. Finally, I touch upon blanket weaving. Although being a blanket weaver can have its economic advantages, I explore the emotional value that can be placed on a blanket. In each of these sections I argue that Art is not only valuable economically, but for the maintenance and retention of the culture of those who use the forms of expression. Each form also holds value in the sense that it provides Indigenous heritage and reminds us how those who came before us lived their lives. I conclude by suggesting that anybody who does not have knowledge of their own culture or is interested in other cultures can learn a lot through various forms of Art.

Storytelling

Indigenous tribes remembered the past by way of storytelling, before European contact. By word of mouth, stories containing history or valuable lessons are passed on through generations. In addition to the vocalized narrative, stories were expressed through other artistic mediums such as weavings, paintings, and pottery. Today, Indigenous peoples continue to share their stories and include expression through song and even dance. One of the ways of sharing amongst diverse Indigenous nations is with a celebration of Indigenous culture known as a powwow where Indigenous peoples gather to honour the traditions their ancestors fought so hard to keep alive. Such gatherings existed amongst tribal communities preceding the European invasion. These included cultural ceremonies, successful war-party homecoming celebrations, and alliances between tribes, with dancing and singing, sharing of stories, and a feast. By the 1800s the practices and meaning were changing with the influence of Europeans. Using a new meaning derived from a Narragansett word meaning "spiritual leader," powwow came to be used by travelling medicine shows in the 1800s to describe their wares to facilitate the sales of their cure-all tonics. These medicine shows were touring acts that peddled miracle cure medicines between various entertainments, specifically "Indian Performances" (McNamara, 1971, p. 432). In addition the powwow also drew on concepts originating from a well-known entertainment show, Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Cultural ceremony became 'othered' as entertainment and a display of Art among the non-familiar population. Non-Indigenous people would attend powwow. Some would go to hear the loud beating of the drums, some to see the beautiful regalia that the dancers wear, and some to see the performance of the traditional dances. Everyone who goes can witness the display and sharing of culture in the powwow circle. Arguably by sharing their stories and culture through these forms of Art, Indigenous groups can still strengthen cultural identities.

Indigenous Architecture

Another valuable way for people to learn about their culture is by examining the architecture of their past. Architecture is, in a way, human-made environmental heritage. Of course, there are sceptics regarding the aesthetics of architecture. Architecture can be viewed simply as the creation of solid structures built purely for the benefit of a society. In this view, a building is nothing more than a place to sleep, work, or worship. But if you take the buildings used for these acts, and allow them to survive through time and to be viewed beside contemporary architecture built for the same purposes, they can then be seen as historical pieces of culture where tourists flock to visit, giving such buildings emblematic status in the cities in which they stand. When debating the aesthetic appreciation of architecture, philosopher Edward Winters (2018) asserts that "its emblematic status is what concentrates the aesthetic of the city into the everyday experiences to be had" (p. 148)." Enjoying architecture is not about looking at a structure as one would gaze upon a painting. It is about being in the building and contemplating within the same walls as those who have stood before us. Modern people turn old buildings into new living spaces for profit and market them as having heritage flair and historical significance. Our appreciation of the aesthetics of a Victorian era house, "hacked into flats", or New York warehouses converted to "loft-living," or the beauty of a cantina, seen only through the eyes of its inebriated frequenters, is seen not as art, but as "being in the life of the (building) as we immerse ourselves, and in which we are rewarded by aesthetic fulfilment" (Winters, 2018, p. 148).

Apart from the 12th-century cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde, now preserved and protected within the Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado, the Indigenous people of North America do not have very many ancient architecture sites remaining today as tourist destinations. This does not mean that Indigenous people failed to have building traditions that would be considered aesthetic heritage. Before European arrival, the Indigenous peoples of North America's various cultural regions, defined by their climatic, geographical

and ecological characteristics, had distinctive forms of housing that reflected the conditions of their respective regions. There are many different types of Indigenous homes but one of the most well-known is the tipi. Traditionally made of animal skins wrapped around a wooden pole structure, some tipi were even painted to depict noteworthy experiences such as a historical battle, or a dream or vision. Today, tipi also retain cultural significance and are sometimes con- structed for special functions as well as tourist attractions.

The longhouse, pit house, and plank house are examples of more permanent building forms. Of the permanent housing structures of Indigenous People pre-European influence, one of the most visually exquisite is the plank houses, found on the Northwestern Coast. Plank houses employed varying forms of post and beam construc- tion, often made of red cedar due to its large length and dimension. The houses expressed the ancestral heritage and social standing of the owners through elaborate imagery and vastly decorated house fronts with painted facades and brightly painted carved heraldic poles. These totem poles were to represent and commemorate ancestry, through crest animals marking a family's lineage. Such architectural designs can be seen in many museums today, indicating that there is a great deal of aesthetic value to the traditional homes of the Indige- nous peoples. The aesthetic form of Indigenous architecture is seen at powwow across North America. In celebration of heritage, tipi can be seen erected at powwow celebrations through- out North America.

Tattoo and Face Paint

Art, as communication and self-expression, can also involve the use of one's own human body as a canvas. Most tattoo canvases you see walking around your local shopping centre are purely decorative or pictorial. Tattoos can also be used as a form of identification. Sailors had their bodies tattooed so that, in the event of a shipwreck, their bodies could be identified. Tattoos can also be purely symbolic. In a case study, researcher Janet Fedorenko (1999) spoke with a female who had several tattoos on her body, each marking emotional times in her life that she wanted to commemorate; the research participant stated, "The tattoos I have are symbolic of changes and rites of passages, transitions I've outgrown. They represent growth that I arrived at through change, and I see them as scars of that process" (p. 111). In tattoo culture, tattoos, much like paintings on canvas, can provide emotional healing.

The earliest evidence of tattooing dates back to the Neolithic period, by the discovery of a tattooed frozen corpse that was trapped in a melting glacier in the Otztaler Alps in 1991. The earliest proof of tattooing indigenous to North America is in Cape Kialegak, St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, where beach erosion revealed the frozen body of a 1600-year-old woman: "The body ha[d] extensive tattooing on the dorsal aspects of both the right and left forearms, hands and fingers," (Smith & Zimmerman, 1975, p. 433). As one would expect, tattoos held meaning for Indigenous People as well, varying depending on the tribe. Some warriors of a tribe would receive a tattoo upon returning from a battle, where other tribes' warriors would tattoo themselves to mark how many kills they had. Females would often have tattoos signifying defining moments in their life, such as arrival into womanhood. This mobile, symbolic form of self-identifica- tion and expression continues to be a popular art form in modern culture; although tattoos now may hold less meaning than they once did, they still represent expression and iden- tity for the bearer. In a less permanent form of expression, Indigenous People would paint their faces for various reasons. Before engag- ing in battle with an enemy, a warrior would paint their face with protective designs and prayers would be said during application. These prayers would protect the wearer. American anthropologist Frances Densmore (1918) described how the colours were made in the earlier years:

On the Standing Rock Reservation is found a yellow ocherous substance which, after being reduced to a fine powder, is used by the Indians in making yellow paint. This substance, when treated by means of heat, yields the vermilion used on all ceremonial articles as well as in painting the bodies of the Indians. The baking of this ocherous substance – a process which requires skill – is done by the women. First, the substance

mixed with water is formed into a ball. A hole is dug in the ground in which a fire of oak bark is made. When the ground is baked the coals are removed, the ball is placed in the hole, and a fire is built above it. This fire is maintained at a gentle, even heat for about an hour, which is sufficient for the amount of the substance usually prepared at a time. The action of the heat changes the color of the substance to red. When the ball is cold, it is pounded to powder. In the old days this red powder was mixed with buffalo fat in making the paint, but at present time it is mixed with water. White, black and blue paints were obtained by mixing colored earthy substances with buffalo fat. The blue was found in Southern Minnesota (this required no treatment by heat), and the white and black in Dakota. (p. 116)

Today, powwow dancers paint their faces before dancing. Although some may do it for aesthetics, some dancers use face paint either to protect themselves, to honour a family's or clan's design, or to honour an Elder dancer they look up to by using (with permission) their face paint designs.

Dance

Over the years, artifacts that were illegitimately confiscated by government officials have ended up in museums. Of these objects, sacred dancing masks are easily found in museums. The ceremonial masks of the Northwest Coast depict various beings such as animals, humans, and even supernatural beings. Masks are used at elaborately staged theatrical events, to tell stories of the past while validating the honourable history of the family who owns the mask. Masks across First Nations of the Northwest Coast are all different and vary widely in their purposes and stories.

Cultural anthropologist Jennifer Kramer (2004) shares her research on the repatriation of a specific Nuxalk Echo mask. This case study is drawn from her field work in Bella Coola, British Columbia, home of the Nuxalk Nation. Kramer was fortunate enough to attend a ceremony in which the Nuxalk people shared the dance of the Echo mask, and the story from which it is birthed. It is said that Echo, a supernatural creature, was very clever at learning languages. Imitating the voices of those around him, Echo acted as herald to call people to dance. The dancer representing Echo uses a specific choreography of mouth changes; each mouth exhibits a different facial expression. The family who claimed ownership of Echo held the right to display Echo at ceremonial events as their crest figure. In October of 1995, this brightly painted piece of carved wood was sold by a Nuxalk elder to an Art dealer for $35,000 (Canadian). Without the mask, the family could not perform the dance. The dance being performed without the mask would be like a tap dancer performing without tap shoes; it simply does not work. This mask was so valuable to the family, it is probable that the Elder sold the mask to rid them of their inter-family squabbling. The Art dealer then attempted to sell it to a buyer in Chicago willing to pay approximately $250,000 (U.S.). Fortunately, those plans were suppressed when the Canadian Government "cit[ed] Canada's Cultural Property Export and Import Act (Canadian Stat- utes Chapter C-51). The board has jurisdiction to delay granting export permits to any object: of outstanding significance by reason of its close association with Canadian history or national life, its aesthetic qualities, or its value in the study of the arts or sciences; and is of such degree of national importance that its loss to Canada would significantly diminish the national heri- tage" (Walden, 1995, p. 205). Due to its rare status, the removal of this mask- which, an Art dealer would treat as just another piece of Art - would result in an irreplaceable loss of cultural heritage. With the help of the Canadian Government, and the cooperation of the art dealer, the Nuxalk people ultimately re-claimed ownership of the mask in November of 1997. What was once hidden out of sight and brought out only for winter ceremonials and potlatches is now on 24-hour display, remaining motionless under fixed glass in the foyer of the local Bella Coola bank. With its interchangeable mouths on display simultaneously beside the mask, it can no longer enact its various voices, and thus no longer fulfills its performance capa- bilities and intentions. It can be implied that the Nuxalk, once people of cultural perpetuation, now follow a Western contemporary style of conservation and preservation of valuable and historical objects.

This expression of acting out a story in the form of a dance has carried over into the modern Indigenous world. In powwow gatherings, a men's traditional dance is arguably one of the most popular dances. Due to the size of North America and the vast number of different tribes, the dance itself varies based on region, but most of the dances we see at powwows can trace their roots to established traditions of the Northern Plains. Most closely associated with 19th-century warrior society dances, these warrior dances were even being performed among the people before the forced advent of reservations. After a battle, warriors would return to their village and re-enact their conflict through expressive motions to the elders, women, and children of the village. These dances were not always related to war; sometimes, after a successful hunt, the dancers would act out the story of how they tracked their prey, often imitating an animal, like a buffalo, or a horse, or a bird. These expressive re-enactments were carried over through generational sharing and have become standardized in powwows today.

Music

There can be no dance without song. Powwow dances revolve around the beating of the drum. Traditionally, Indig- enous people used the materials at hand to make their instruments. The drum is made of a carved wooden frame and animal hide. Originally comprised entirely of vocables, or lexically meaningless syllables, the songs are sung without words and have a spiritual mean- ing and are a common part of Indigenous American traditions. A song alone, without the accompaniment of a dance, can mean so much as a form of expression. Philosopher Stephen Davies (2018) expresses that music by itself can facilitate the expression of emotions without the help of words or pictures. Words that accompany a song only help to solidify the emotions being expressed: "In song, it is appropriate to think of the music and words as joined to give expression to the feelings of the character represented by the singer" (Davies, 2018, p. 213). In regard to instrumental music, however, Davies acknowledges that while there are no distinct words being sung, and it may therefore be unclear which emotions are actually being expressed, it is agreed upon by all listeners that "we experience the music as emotionally expressive" (Davies, 2018, p. 213). Of course, the expressiveness is subjective in the sense that we each attribute different emotions to the song; where one listener might hear despair in a song, another might hear loneliness. Of course, this is just a small sample of emotions one can express in a traditional song. Indigenous music includes an array of song meanings including courtship, friendship, songs to celebrate the harvest, planting songs, and songs to honour specific people or events.

Indigenous American music is crucial in Indigenous history and education. It is how they pass stories and customs to new generations. The styles and purposes of music vary greatly between and among Indigenous tribes of America. However, the powwow style of song is one that can be shared amongst tribes across North America, reinforcing important cultural values and teachings. The drum, proclaimed by many as the "heartbeat of a Nation," plays an important role in keeping the culture alive.

Blankets

Anyone who attends a large powwow will marvel at the vast display of Native Arts and crafts. Artists from all over North America travel to powwows to sell and trade their crafts, and to share their expressions of culture. One of the most prominent examples of artistic ability seen at powwow is the blanket. Often enveloped with cultural designs, the blanket remains an integral part of Indigenous life. Today, blankets are associated with important events. They are given as gifts for important events in someone's life, such as graduations and weddings, or given to honour someone or as thank-you ges- tures at cultural events like powwows. They are also presented as gifts to commemorate births and deaths. In a clear illustration of the aesthetic cultural value of Indigenous-made blankets, the Navajo people are so internationally acclaimed for their hand-made and wool-woven blankets and rugs that in 2011, a Navajo blanket that was estimated to be made in the 1840s sold for $1.5 million (U.S.).

Of course, being a blanket or rug weaver can have its economic advantages, but weavers have remarked that the act of weaving offers them a chance to experience what they call "hozho," a

Navajo word typically translated into English as "beauty," or "harmony," a concept that expresses "the intellectual concept of order, the emotional state of happiness, the moral notion of good, the biological condition of health and well-being, and the aesthetic dimensions of balance, harmony, and beauty" (Witherspoon, 1977, p. 154). With a deeper understanding of the value of weaving, an appreciation for a blanket, or perhaps Native art in general, it is now possible to realize that "beauty" extends beyond the autonomous object.

Conclusion

Understanding the origins of a culture and its art can help us understand the arts in modern society. Learning how and why an artistic creation came to be is important in developing a deeper understanding of and respect for the people and their culture. It is worth acknowledging that the forms of expression discussed in this paper are forms we still see in modern Indigenous society. Forms of Art that have been with the Indigenous People before European arrival have survived, despite the hardships endured, in part due to the sharing of culture at a powwow. Anybody who attends a powwow, Indigenous or not, can experience the songs and the dance, the dance regalia, the tipis, and all the other forms of expression discussed herein. Anybody who lacks the knowledge or experience of their own culture would benefit greatly by attending a function where their culture is shared. Anybody who is Indigenous to North America, and is not familiar with their own native culture, could attend a powwow and learn a lot about themselves and their family and their tribe through the stories shared by the people they meet. When we hear the sound of a drum, we are hearing the soul of the drum as it calls to us, inviting us to preserve and celebrate our traditions. It is the drum which joins us all together as a unified Nation. It is through the drum that we can live together and share the land upon which we walk and dance. It is the sound of the drum that is the heartbeat of our Nation.

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Tia Stanley

Cote First Nation

Bachelor of Social Work

"To me, Indigenous research has given me the opportunity to connect with my identity. I found my voice and the strength to show who I am. I am strong, resilient and I honour those who came before me and those who will come after me"

BUILDING MY TIPI

Land Acknowledgement

It is necessary to acknowledge that this paper has been researched, written, and presented upon the traditional and unceded territory of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, within Secwepemcul'ecw. As we share knowledge, teaching, learning, and research here, I recognize that this territory has always been a place of knowledge, teaching, learning, and research.

I acknowledge the many Indigenous peoples from across this land.

Introduction

This paper will explore how I had to unravel European assimilation attempts on my journey to becoming a Knowledge Maker (KM). This is a journey to discover my identity and how I may walk in two worlds: the Indigenous world and the settler-colonial world. A deep and meaningful understanding of who I am has been hindered due to the ongoing colonization of Indigenous people in Canada. Indigenous nations have been self-determing, self-sustaining and self-governing nations since time immemorial (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 26, 2020; Hick & Stokes, 2017). Today, they are oppressed by colonialism. The project of colonialism set about "civilizing" Indigenous people whom European settlers believed could benefit from their western worldview. Colonization is the imposition of another culture upon an Indigenous population, as a way to control and assimilate (Hick & Stokes, 2017; Metcalfe-Chenail, 2016).

Despite being born with Indigenous ancestry, this did not privilege me with understanding of what that meant, nor does it provide access to language, culture, or ceremony. The genocidal tactics the Canadian government employed to disrupt Indigenous cultures in order to assimilate us disconnected us from our identity. The implementation of the *Indian Act*, residential schools, and the child welfare system paved the way for the current crisis many Indigenous communities face (Hick & Stokes, 2017). This left me and others feeling lost; as a past Knowledge Maker said, "I am currently on a journey to reconnect to my past," which she discovered meant "reconnecting to all" (Bandura, 2019, p. 10).

This research will show who I am today, and where I want to go. I want to honour my community and culture: a home I have not seen yet. Colonialism tore us apart; this paper will show how I have walked in one world, and now I want to walk with my people, the Saulteaux people of the Cote First Nation. Other Knowledge Makers have felt the same; Glass (2016) observed that "since childhood I have wanted to be part of a community, especially one I shared an identity within; out of this absence, I have felt a lack of true identity" (p. 14). Remembering his words, this research is

not just for me. It is an act of decolonizing and creating space for Indigenous ways of knowing and being. By becoming a Knowledge Maker, I am creating space for others to come after me, so we can continue "*re*writing and *re*righting the Indigenous position in history and society" (Lavallée, 2009, p.23). By learning who I am, I can participate in "decolonizing the academy by incorporating Indigenous knowledge into the research rather than relying on Western theories" (Lavallée, 2009, p.23).

Circles and Tipis

The circle is in all that is meaningful in this world: mother earth, the moon cycle, the rising of the sun, and the seasons; even our lives move in a circle. There is abundant diversity amongst Indigenous people yet we share an ideology that frames a holistic approach to life and a relationality to the world around us (Royal Saskatchewan Museum, n.d; Lavallée, 2009). Through my journey, circles were present and prevalent and as such, circles occur throughout this paper. Two occurrences worth mentioning are tipis and sharing circles. Like birds with circular nests, the Indigenous people living on the Plains of North America had circular homes called tipis (Royal Saskatchewan Museum, n.d.). Recently, I learned that the tipi is the traditional house of the Saulteaux people, my people. The Creator intended our children to grow within a home that was portable and comfortable. Tipis were more than a shelter, as each pole represented a moral principle held by the family and community (Royal Saskatchewan Museum, n.d). As a tipi was built, what the family valued and honoured was woven in (Verniest, 2006).

Sharing circles have been fundamental to my journey. These sacred circls are healing, creating an energy that allows information to travel freely while healing us emotionally and spiritually. The circle invites the Creator and our ancestors to find us, for them to wrap around us (Lavallée, 2009), creating space for silenced voices.

This research is how I will discover who I am, and I will use the tipi framework to reclaim my Saulteaux identity and reconnect to my people. By reflecting on my past, family, education, and teachers, I can look at the current environment and decide if it is a suitable place to build. These reflections will help me prepare, looking at what I already have and determining what I need. Once I have collected the material, I can begin to build. First, I must reflect on why I want to build a tipi in the first place. The first pole in my tipi creation is my intuition and it must be understood before I begin.

First Pole: Intuition

Can you know something without having the knowledge of it? There is a feeling, a gut-feeling that Davis-Floyd & Arvidson (2016) call intuition and describe as the sense that "we are in the world and the world is in us" (foreword). Intuition is personal and unexplainable but inside we know it is the truth. Grounding us and connecting us to the world around us, intuition implores us to trust ourselves and lean in. Indigenous academics "include intuitive understanding as part of their research method" (Davis-Floyd & Arvidson, 2016, p. 13); I will do the same, recognizing intuition as a valid source of knowledge. Colonial institutions acknowledge intuition but do not value it. Lavallée (2009) reveals that intuition is sometimes known as a blood memory, a spiritual connection to one's ancestors. In this way, ancestors present us with "thoughts, beliefs and actions" through our physical bodies (Lavallée, 2009, p. 22). What they knew, we shall know too. I may not understand the knowledge, yet I have always known there was more of me to discover; perhaps this was my ancestors imploring me to look deeper. While I walk in two worlds, I honour my intuition as a valid source of information and knowledge, acknowledging the past to share with future generations. Airini (2016) personified intuition when she wrote in a previous KM publication that "we use knowledge-making skills to overcome obstacles. It feels like we're called to do so" (p. 34).

Second Pole: Current Environment

Where am I now and how did I get here? The current environment is not ready for me to build, but with hard work, I can create space. The air around me is heavy with fog; I am waiting for the haze to lift. Hopefully, the ground underneath is stable enough. I will build on what I have always known: my environment as shaped by my past.

My mother's father immigrated from China. In Canada, he met her mother. Raised in BC, my mother and her two brothers lived in Vancouver, then Abbotsford. My father's mother, my Kokum, was Indigenous and my father was her only child. Kokum is the term that Saulteaux and Cree people use for Grandmother. My father's father is an unknown to me; a missing piece, just like my Kokum's past was for so long. I know my Kokum married a white man with many children and they were raised in Abbotsford, but her passing into the spirit world left me with more questions than answers. There are also questions about my father. He left when I was a child; I do not know his whereabouts. My relationship with my mother is nearly non-existent; I left our family home at 15 to discover the woman I am meant to be. Through research I found my experience is similar to many other Indigenous people as "many families are dispersed and disconnected" (Linklater, 204 p. 90).

My Indigeneity has been a way to explain my appearance, not my identity. In university, I discovered the beautiful diversity of First Nations people across Canada. Fellow KM Dionne describes this beautifully, saying, "there is great diversity among Aboriginal people, yet there are commonalities woven throughout" (Mohammad, 2016, p. 20). Discovering I am a Saulteaux woman with roots in Saskatchewan should have brought comfort. Instead, I felt more confused and once again, I questioned my identity as an Indigenous woman.

As a Knowledge Maker, we must do research in service to our communities. *Where is my community?* Right now, it is with Knowledge Makers. I am at the beginning of my journey and Knowledge Makers is a safe place for sharing what I know and do not know. As Elder Uncle Mike Arnouse said, "If we are going in the same direction, let's walk together" (personal communication, October 2019). This quest for my identity is with this community. My healing and spiritual journey started long before Knowledge Makers, but it was there that I realised I already had some of the material needed to build my tipi.

Third Pole: Gathering Misplaced Material

Unbeknownst to me, I had material for building my tipi. My recent education gave me space to decolonize myself. Being Indigenous, I believed I had permission to all Indigenous cultures. With no one to ask about our ceremonies or regalia, I learned to name it, recognize it, and highlight it in the only way I knew how. I now understand there are many Indigenous communities that have specific teachings and relationships with the land, yet there is a worldview that many communities value. This worldview takes a holistic approach with an emphasis on family and community; many find strength and unity in this. Each community has its own unique culture that is reflected in "language, ceremonies, governance, clan systems and yes, food" and this includes the Saulteaux people of the Cote First Nation (Baskin, 2016, p.17). During my intial research and material gathering, I was connected to my father's family. A message arrived from a cousin asking if my father was Ryan Stanley and my Kokum was Lorraine. Instantly, I had a connection to family and a community I did not know was mine. Her grandfather was my Kokum's brother, Joseph Whitehawk (P. Whitehawk, personal communication, March 2019); the name Whitehawk always had meaning to my father, but he never said why. Now, I knew.

> "As a Knowledge Maker, we must do research in service to our communities."
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> Tia Stanley

Another significant experience that provided material was a sacred hoop ceremony at a Wellbriety Celebration at Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc. I was there as a student, learning to work alongside the community. I felt

out of place, but Dave Manuel told me to "trust the process" (personal communication, May 2019). So, I went into the circle with an open heart and mind. Like the medicine wheel, it was divided in four sections: emotional, physical, spiritual and mental (Verniest, 2006; Rountree & Smith, 2016). Once in the circle, we were told that some of us sat in special seats. My intuition told me I was in a special seat, meaning I would be asked to share. *Would they care what I had to say?* I felt terrified, as I was an outsider. Yet, when I was given a braid of sweetgrass, I was grounded and I told my story. Surprisingly, I no longer felt like an outsider.

As a social work student, I have dedicated my learning to Indigenous history, knowledge, and ways of being. My education led me to sacred sharing circles which allowed me to find my voice, giving me the strength and desire to move forward. By trusting the process and my intuition, I continued this journey unintentionally and received essential elements for my tipi. Being in circle with the Secwépémc people and my KM community helped connect me to communities and my identity. It is a sentiment former Secwépémc KM Marie Sandy (2017) shares: "we all connect, get tangled, break apart, come together, and are all interwoven to create a greater range of knowledge" (p. 106). Now that I know where I am and have discovered material that I already possessed, I must gather the rest of the supplies needed for my tipi. I need to contine on, looking for ways to learn more while maintaining my relationship with my new and distant cousins and all my new knowledge.

Fourth Pole: Gathering New Material

Along this journey, information has come to me from the most unexpected places. I read Tanya Talaga's (2017) *Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death and Hard Truths in a Northern City*. Talaga is of mixed Polish and Indigenous descent. She is Anishinaabe-Canadian, and I was amazed to learn that the Saulteaux people are part of a larger group of related people called the Anishinaabe. Anishinaabe means person, or the Original Person (S. Johnson, personal communication, October 20, 2019; Talaga, 2017). The Cote First Nation, where my Kokum is from, are Saulteaux people. I have desperately wanted to find an Indigenous name that can be mine. I clung to the way Talaga wrote her identity because I have struggled to locate myself. Talaga's words have given me a foundation to begin my search to identify as a Saulteaux woman of mixed heritage. My biggest struggle of identity is understanding how I can live as a Saulteaux woman while being a visitor on another Nation's land. I hope to better understand how I can be a part of my community while also being part of the community I have made for myself. I need to trust the process, trust myself, and trust the Creator that all of this is according to the plan.

Meeting another Saulteaux woman, Dr. Shelly Johnson, was a gift from the Creator. Her community is Keeseekoose First Nation, less than 10 kilometres from Cote First Nation; she gave me a glimpse into our collective history and demonstrated how to walk in two worlds in academia amd as a visitor on Secwépémc territory. I learned near Sault Ste. Marie, in northern Ontario; near the falls is where our Saulteaux name, "People of the Falls," originates (Saskatchewan Indigneous Cultural Centre, 2020). At first contact, we called ourselves Anishinaabe, the French called us Saulteaux, and the English called us Ojibway; we still use all of these names (Saskatchewan Indigneous Cultural Centre, 2020). She shared stories of the early settlers, like how we ran from them because they brought diseases for which we had no natural immunity. She shared stories about the great westerly migration of our people and our connection with the Cree and Ojibway, the loss of the buffalo, and how settlers pushed our people off our land. I was in awe when Shelly shared that she saw the original treaties signed by our people in September of 1874 and the intense emotion from seeing the marks of our chiefs. Marks of hope. Hope that signing could provide food, clothing, and shelter for our people. That did not happen. Her grandmother said that the treaties were signed at the point of the gun, because winter was coming, and people were starving (S. Johnson, personal communication, November 28, 2019).

That winter and many winters afterwards brought death to many; our people wanted the Treaties respected in the ways in which we believed were agreed to. Instead of reserve-based schools, Canada implemented a system of Indian Residential School and forced children's attendance. These institutions "sought to fulfill assimilationist polices of the federal government" (Hick & Stokes, 2017, p. 281). By taking our children, Canada and the Christian churches destroyed families, communities, culture and took the ability to rebel against injustices and oppression. Fighting to keep their children would have led to jail. Many from Shelly's family and community were sent to The Lebret (Qu'Appelle) Residential school; she believes that people from Cote were sent there or to Elkhorn residential school (S. Johnson, personal communication, November 28, 2019). Indian agents were in our communities controlling and enforcing every aspect of the Indian Act, including food, housing, and passes to leave the reserve. Hick and Stokes (2017) note that Indian Agents "were to displace traditional Indigenous leaders so as to institute a new way of living consistent with the intentions of the Canadian government of the time" (p. 278).

Shelly told me our people are known to be the kindest and most welcoming. She spoke about our strength, even though many are impacted by colonialism. Like me, many people still want to go home; many were separated due to family dynamics or child welfare practices, and some chose to leave (Linklater, 2014). She explained that wanting to reconnect is to be met with precious teachings. She shared that she knows people from Cote, and I come from good people (S. Johnson, personal communication, November 28, 2019). I hope that my research will create a foundation so that when I meet my family, I will have a better understanding of what it means to be Saulteaux. She advised me to not let fear hold me back and trust I will know when I am ready (S. Johnson, personal communication, November 28, 2019). Having cousins who say, "We know you" shows me that people have missed me. *But how do I reach back 30 years and make that connection?* This is not just about me, it is about helping other people, my people, feel whole in their families again. My healing can be a part of the collective healing, as so much trauma and hurt has befallen us; when one can heal, we all may heal.

Recently, I have devoured words written by Terese Marie Mailhot, in order to learn about what it means to be a modern Indigenous woman. Terese Marie Mailhot is from Seabird Island Band, in the Fraser Valley of BC. She graduated with an MFA from the Institute of American Indian Arts. She serves as faculty at the institute of American Indian Arts and she's a Tecumseh Postdoctoral Fellow at Purdue University (H. MacLeod, personal communication, September 17, 2019). Mailhot has given me a glimpse of what it means to be a modern Indigenous woman who is walking in the academic world. Recently, I have written academic papers using Indigenous epistemologies and relationality in order to decolonize higher education. All of my learning was valuable but speaking with Shelly helped me to assess if I was ready to build. There is much more for me to discover before I can call my tipi home, but I have enough to start. The area has been cleared away, the material is gathered; now it is time to prepare to build.

Fifth Pole: Preparing to Build

The most important thing to know before starting anything is intention. My ancestors built their tipis to create shelter from what Mother Earth offered them and to create a safe, warm space for children to grow (Royal Saskatchewan Museum, n.d.). This is my intention when building my tipi, but this tipi will mean so much more. I learned about colonization as the destruction of culture, language, communities, families, and ways of being (Hick & Stokes, 2017). I saw this as an outsider looking in, not realizing colonization was happening to me. In this way, I am a product of colonization; I am what the federal government wanted. This helped and hurt me. Being on the outside, I have been able to dissociate myself from the cultural genocide that Canada has inflicted upon its Indigenous people. I wanted to help, and I saw education as the way. However, being an outsider meant that I was not a part of anything; I did not know my ancestors, I did not know myself. I was alone, but that was fine because the destruction of land and communities was not happening to me. But it was. It is. I

hope my search for my identity will heal me, so that I can help others to heal. Erin Chillihitzia (2016), a former KM, speaks of our collective trauma: "Indigenous people hurt together, as brothers and sisters, so I cannot sit in the chair and pretend your story doesn't impact me as we work together in the journey" (p. 64). Now that I have learned about our collective trauma, I cannot be an outsider any longer.

As I prepare to build my tipi, I must acknowledge where I am today. I am a grateful, yet uninvited guest here on the traditional and unceded territory of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, within Secwepemcul'ecw. Many have welcomed me onto this land, including and especially Dave Manuel. Dave was the first person to welcome me here, but he also told me that learning Secwépemc ways was not the way to discover who I am. He said I could sit in ceremony, learn the language, and explore the land, but they were not mine (D. Manuel, personal communication, May 2019). I struggled to sit with this new piece of information; I thought, "*Was I not welcome here"?* As a Knowledge Maker before me aptly put it, "it can be difficult for Indigenous students not already very involved in their communities to become part of one, even making connections with other Indigenous students" (Dirksen, 2016, p. 77). I have never been to my community, the Cote First Nation, and took an opportunity to begin exploring my Indigenous identity where I currently live. Dave knew what I was looking for and he also knew that I was not going to find it here. I knew the diversity of First Nations across these lands, yet I thought I could find who I was on another Nation's land. While I am honoured to learn the language and customs of the Secwépemc people, I need to engage in a relationship with the land we Saulteaux people call home. I need to learn the language and how the land was used for medicine, for ceremony and survival. Another former KM knew this when she said "working with the spiritual and cultural traditions of the Aboriginal women's heritage, women can heal the whole person" (Casey, 2016, p. 53).

> "My healing can be a part of the collective healing, as so much trauma and hurt has befallen us; when one can heal, we all may heal."
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> Tia Stanley

The Next Poles

As I honour where I am in the process of tipi building, I honour where I came from. I have struggled to find my identity because no one told me who I was. The social worker I am becoming understands that people are shaped by lived experiences and trauma. Perhaps not talking about being Chinese or Indigenous was easier for my parents. Perhaps they did not know either. Maybe they have gone through a similar identity quest as mine, but never quite found the answer. A previous KM Alma Charlene Casey (2016) said it best when she stated, "how tragic, to take away what was rightfully the Aboriginal woman's birthright, her own heritage. Young Aboriginal women need to find their voices and speak up to change this cycle of abuse that has taken place" (p. 53). I want to find my voice so that I can tell my children one day: this is who I am, this who came before you, and this is who you are. I want to be the last one in my family to question her identity. I want to walk confidently in both worlds, not for me, but for the ones who will come after me. We have survived and resisted as a collective and it is up to us to ensure we do not forget who and where we came from. We must ensure that our children know exactly who we are so they can tell their children who they are. We must break the cycle. These are the next poles that I need to put up, but I need to go back out on the land and gather more material.

Conclusion

Indigenous research is like beadwork. You start big, break it apart, and see what is missing. You look for what is missing and that becomes the important research. This is what Knowledge Makers is about: looking at something that is not there, a voice or story, and weaving it into what is known (S. Naepi, personal communication, October 19, 2019). That is how we create

knowledge and power and that is how we walk in two worlds. Airini (2016) speaks to the importance of knowledge creation when she said that "research is a form of service; in a brave kind of way" (p. 34). It is a way to give back. Saulteaux teachings include respect and reciprocity as foundational pieces (S. Johnson, personal communication, Febuary 26, 2020) My research is how I will attempt to give back to my Saulteaux people; a way to adhere to our principles of repsect and reciprocity. Indigenous research must be defined by our Elders and children. I do not have the privilege of knowing an Elder from Cote First Nation, nor do I have children of my own, yet. However, this research helped me discover more of who I am as an Indigenous woman in preperations for my return to the land of my ancestors, and the teaching for my children. It may have also cleared space for my healing and reconnection to my relatives and all my relations. Sereana Naepi (2016) said that "research is a way that I can serve my community" and that "it is my ancestors whose call I answer when I sit down at a computer and write" (p. 55). I have kept this in my mind throughout this entire process. The knowledge I have created is my resistance; it is how I will walk in two worlds and how I will come to know myself. One Knowledge Maker helped me feel safe in my journey when she wrote,

Indigenous people are everywhere. We are social workers, nurses, doctors, lawyers, politicians, teachers, anything and everything. We are everywhere and we want better for our land, and all people. We know that the path of the colonizers is destruction, and we may be the only ones to lead this world out. Our journey will be led by those of us who are exploring our identity. There is safety in numbers. (Bandura, 2019, p. 11)

I wanted to know who I was so that I could see myself inside of something, but I did not know the way in. With this research, I have started to build my tipi, my way in. This is how I am healing. If I can know myself better, I will be better able to serve others. I have the privilege of gaining knowledge, so I must be able to give it away. Knowledge belongs to everyone and it is up to us, the Knowledge Makers, to ensure it is shared. Airini (2016) tells us that "Indigenous peoples are knowledge-makers who take action, transcend, and imagine. We are researchers who are strong, intelligent and bold. We were this way generations ago; we are still today. We are being who we were called to be" (p. 35).

So, who am I? I am many things: Saulteaux woman, Chinese woman, sister, best friend, survivor, Arthur's fur-mom, Mimi, social worker, community member, guest on this land, forever student, and Knowledge Maker. I walk in two worlds as a form of resistance and acceptance. This is who I am. I am building my tipi, but it is not finished yet. But I have started, and that is the most important step. I have learned that the tipi in Saulteaux communities belonged to the women so that the children would always have a place to sleep if their parents were to separate (Anaquod, n.d.). I want to build my tipi so that the child in me knows that I will always have somewhere that is home. I want to build my tipi so that my children will always know what home is.

All My Relations.

Miigwech. Kukwstsétsemc. Maarsii. Thank you.

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FORGING A PATH, GOING BACK INTO THE FOREST AND INTO OUR HEARTS

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise" (Aldo Leopold, n.d.).

Elders say we need to get back in our hearts from our heads as academics to ensure that we are truly doing things in a good way… with the best intentions (Thelma Blackstock, personal communication, n.d.). At times when there is a break in teaching or research responsibilities, I reflect on my Elder's guidance. For me this means spending time in the bush, or by the water-in nature. In truth, as academics we attempt to do our best to reconcile the honor of teaching and research with the responsibilities associated with each, to strive towards student-centered learning, and the advancement of knowledge in a good way. Inherent within our respective teaching philosophies and research areas of foci are our authentic selves - who we are as human beings, constituted with worldviews as a result of our situated upbringings, educational pedigrees, and guidance from sage teaching and research mentors. Within the academic context, the progression of an Indigenous academic's career is built on the solid foundation of contributions from wise Indigenous leaders and allies within the academy and in community, locally, provincially, and nationally.

I began my journey as an Indigenous academic while attempting to find balance between the opportunity for a tenure-track position and being a PhD student. In the spirit of coming to a common fire from our nations, I share an ember of my journey within the academy, so that perhaps others might feel the warm glow of the fire and perhaps realize they are not alone, while they too are finding their way. I use the metaphor of forging a path, as being in nature is where I long to be ~ amongst the lush evergreen canopy of the forest, walking softy on moss laden ground, my senses being showered by natures' essence. I have learnt a great deal from those with a common respect for nature, consequently I contextualize my journey in their honor as well. I refer to a process of being on a personal journey as an academic embracing a two-eyed seeing methodology, and sharing my perceptions of the academy as we approach the coveted, academically-created, widely-embraced reading break. A two-eyed seeing approach uses the best of western ways of knowing and being alongside the best of Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Marshall, Marshall & Bartlett, 2018). I intentionally use the pronoun "we" to reflect that though at times I feel I am alone on the pathway within the academy, our ancestors teach us we are forever guided by those whom have gone before us, and to trust those who respect their teachings.

. . . I am reminded of how I have chosen to live - an in that is the power of greeting each day with reverence and prayer. That is how I learn to direct my humanity toward peace, equality and harmony: one day, one person, one circumstance at a time. (Wagamese, 2016, p.47)

As we progress in our journey to achieve teaching and scholarly research expertise, we begin as one might attempt to walk through a dense forest without using a pathway. Arguably a sage Indigenous soul familiar with their territory would intuitively sense a perspective point, a horizon, open areas in the tree tops indicating a clearing below, or the sound of distant rushing water from a river; however, in unfamiliar lands we are lost, trekking

through unfamiliar territory. At times we begin by cutting a trail through dense underbrush laden with sharp tendrils that can, if one is not careful, pierce the skin in spite of wearing a thick layer of protection as advised by an astute mentor. The forces that appear to be barriers to our progression at times build our inner strength, test our limits, and expand our knowledge. As we progress we may lose sight of the notion that we are only here resting and being for a short time as earthly beings. Often, far too often, this understanding becomes clouded through shifting priorities to focus on our academic and scholarly horizons. We navigate the forest resting and absorbing energy like dry sponges immersed in water, sources of crystal clear water, refreshing our senses, waiting for guidance from all our relations, and savoring a heart-warming story heard, felt, and sensed from sitting by the glowing embers of a sacred home fire.

We are nourished by lessons learnt through the voices of others shared at conferences, teaching symposiums, and workshops, and we are commended when we return home to our communities for our progress. We set rest stops along our path in the moot forest; we see evidence of others at intersecting pathways-abandoned game trails, overgrown and deactivated roadways that may serve as lessons to inform our next navigational choices and contribute to our repertoire of survival skills. Survival behaviors are evidenced by self-imposed timelines, goals, and notes-lots of them of varying types, sizes, and colors, like sticky post-it notes that transform the serene forest into pixels of "to do."

I glance at the computer monitor in my office… the perimeter is painted with colored post-it notes of key information, contacts and, next steps for promotion… in my day timer similar notes are used in varying sizes, shapes, and colors to "theme" my tasks for my PhD and work. Similarly, on my phone I have post it-notes, too, and in my vehicle and my desk at home. Have I created a post-it note forest? Have I replaced the sanctity of a nature retreat? The very same one I envision when I need to escape to reflect on my journey in the academy, or perhaps another to feel like I am the master of my journey, my success? I strive to achieve key goals along my journey as an academic and a PhD student, and at times guard my supplies of post-it notes. I use the notes for scribing important information or key words and pasting them like leaves on the pages of texts. How did this become a normal routine in my life?

> "As we progress in our journey to achieve teaching and scholarly research expertise, we begin as one might attempt to walk through a dense forest without using a pathway."
>
> -
>
> Sheila Blackstock

As I watch my peers at a coffee shop just off campus, I see the same survival behaviors. How did we develop these behaviors? I surmise the behaviors are a result of our intense focus on the bindings of written scholarly prose, data, words, or themes within numerical or words gathered, information grounded, constructed, deconstructed, or generated from being within and among others transposed, triangulated, and KT'd (i.e., knowledge transmission), relayed … in theory or theoretical pathways to guide the ultimate adventurer, scholar, and researcher. We are all surviving and thriving, yet there are moments to celebrate as we reach pivotal

achievements along our journey as academics: the achievements of tenure, promotion, and soon, very soon, the end of the doctoral studies journey to scratch off the "to do" lists, the timelines our self-imposed goals. Maybe, just maybe, it will be time "to be." We are thankful for the wise guidance of those we meet along the path, but find pure unrelenting comfort in going back home, being comforted as we share anecdotes of our journey to willing family members, friends, and the family dog. Maybe, finding moments in time to be in nature, by a fire, is the key to this journey. Time to access the forest, waters, and walk the trails that others have wandered, soaking in the knowledge of their journey and the blessing of Elders.

The scrim of cloud beyond the lake is purple, moving into pearl grey, and I feel drawn to music, poetry and quiet idyll by the fire. Writing begins there, where the spirit moves and I'm working, even when I'm not. (Wagamese, 2016, p.87)

We yearn to go home to be in the company of our family and friends, reflecting our past ways of knowing and being, bridging time and space to enjoy gentle comforts of stories, essences of home. Sweet savory essence of the home lands, forests, and waters bring comfort; a similar moot academic forest that we navigate, but nonetheless a warmth embrace of a familiar territory with historical waters, trees, and land from time immemorial. Our stressors are calmed as we remember the importance of engaging in ceremony, traditions, gathering medicines, berries and salmon, while we embrace everything with our senses. Listening to the beat of drums, songs of our Elders… getting back into our hearts.

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I have deep hope, trust, and faith in each one of us. Just like the rivers flowing, the knowledge will come.

~ Dr. Elder Margaret Vickers Hyslop

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"To me Indigenous research is recovering culture and decolonizing by incorporating indigenous beliefs traditions knowledge into western methodology"

IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLNESS USING ABORIGINAL TRADITIONAL HEALTHCARE PRACTICES: HEALTH CIRCLES

Introduction

Aboriginal traditional healing has been used by Aboriginal peoples for thousands of years. Many traditional healers are elders. They know the traditions and values, and guide and teach the next generation. Traditional healing is "holistic" in that it does not focus on symptoms and disease but rather deals with the total individual. Healing focuses on the person not the disease. There are critical distinctions between traditional Aboriginal and Western Science of how health, wellness, illness are defined. According to Webster's New Dictionary College Edition health is: physical and mental wellbeing; soundness; freedom from defect or pain or disease; normality of mental and physical function. Also condition of body or mind as good or bad health. An aboriginal definition of health: the overall well-being of an animate object that includes not only the physical and mental aspects but also the spiritual and emotional. Well-being is associated with high self-esteem, a feeling of being at peace and being happy; it also includes education, employment, land claims, resource management. All of which lead back to wellness and well-being (Rhea Joseph, 1996). Cultural recovery, reconnection to community, its land base and traditions is understood as a form of healing among Aboriginal peoples. At the root of this is decolonization, a means to resist and counter the negative effects of colonization and promote resiliency and recovery (George et al, 2018). The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized traditional healthcare practices as being important for providing health care that is accessible, affordable, and culturally acceptable. According to the WHO, traditional medicine is: the sum total of knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnoses, improvement of treatment of physical and mental illness. While there are many different types of traditional healthcare practices, this study focuses on the qualitative evidence regarding the use of traditional healers and health circles. This research investigates the questions: Does restoring the traditional healthcare practice of health circles based on traditional knowledge and teachings of the medicine wheel provide a more meaningful way of addressing health strategies for Aboriginal people? And how does participation in health circles impact the health of Aboriginals living in urban areas?

Context Before and After

Before the arrival of the Europeans the Indigenous people used their methods of health knowledge that were practiced in their traditional ways of knowing and being. The diseases and conflicts of colonization

devastated indigenous populations and systems of their health knowledge. First Nations, Inuit, and Metis continue to show a disproportionate burden of disease and health differences rooted in inequality. These health disparities have manifested from colonization, a long history of oppression, systemic racism, discrimination, displacement, loss of land, culture, identity and language, forced assimilations - Indian Residential School system, the Reserve system, and intergenerational trauma; these are linked to unequal access to resources of education, training, and employment, social and healthcare facilities and limited access to and control over lands and resources (Frolich et al, 2006). Intergenerational trauma happens when the psychological effects of trauma are not resolved in one generation. When trauma is ignored and there is no support for dealing with it, trauma will be passed on one generation to the next. This also includes lack of action on the hundreds of murdered and missing indigenous women. Unresolved historic trauma will continue to impact individuals, families, communities until the trauma has been addressed mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually.

Globally, Indigenous people have higher rates of suicide, depression, substance abuse, domestic violence, illness and death compared with non-Indigenous people (McCormick, 1996). Statistics indicate that the suicide rate among Aboriginal people is twice that of Canadian population. Health problems among aboriginal people are continuing to progress at an alarming rate however recovery from these problems are inconsistent. These health disparities are multi-faceted. Life expectancy, infant mortality, birth weights, infectious disease, malnutrition and stunted growth, environmental contamination are just some of the indicators of health inequalities in Canada (Health Council of Canada, 2005). Chronic disease, diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, renal disease, mental health issues, suicide, addiction and violence against aboriginal women is increasing significantly and neglected as a nationwide problem and should be prioritized. Aboriginal people living in urban settings lack access to finding mentors, elders, cultural services that are all important for health. Statistics show that health inequities continue between aboriginal people and white people (Adelson, 2005). Despite these substantial health issues Aboriginals strive for wellness and approach health in a holistic way involving the medicine wheel.

The Western biomedical aspect of health concentrates on disease and infirmity, western science-based health care methodologies are minimally effective and need new innovation to improve Aboriginal health care. The biomedical model of treating disease or mental illness focuses on biological aspects. The biomedical model hypothesizes that mental disorders are brain diseases and stresses pharmacological treatment to target presumed biological abnormalities. The medicine wheel framework is holistic. You treat the whole person in achieving balance in their emotional, physical, spiritual and mental health.

The Medicine Wheel

Different tribes interpret the medicine wheel. The medicine wheel is a circle which represents infinite life; with four quadrants that are separate but equal, with you in the center (See Figure 1). The number four is sacred to aboriginal cultures. It is also the process of healing, a ceremony, and teachings - a code for living (McCabe 2008). The parts of the medicine wheel represent the four directions: east south, west, north that are represented by the four colors black, red, yellow, white, which to some stand for the human races. There are four seasons known to some as: spring, summer, fall, and winter. The four sacred herbs used in traditional healing: tobacco, sweet grass, cedar, and sage. The four stages of life are present in the medicine wheel too are: birth, growth, maturity, death. The elements of nature: air, earth, fire, water. The four animals are brought to mind: eagle, wolf, buffalo, and bear. Most importantly the medicine wheel represents the four aspects of health: spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional. Health and wellness in a person's life are seen as outcomes of the balance and integration of these aspects. Strength and balance in all quadrants of the medicine wheel is essential to create a strong positive sense of wellbeing, but imbalance in

one or more quadrants can cause symptoms of illness.. Without the integration of the mind, body, emotions, and spirit the qualities to create significant experiences would be missing, therefore these essential components for a healing process are also missing.

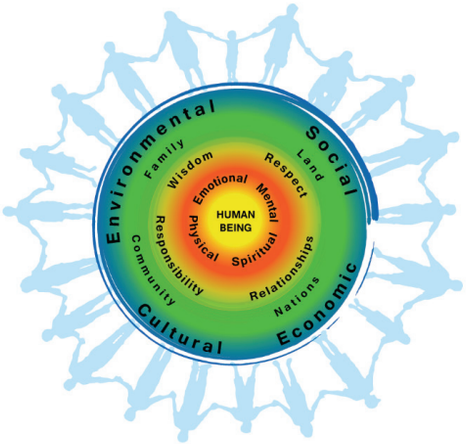

Figure 1. First Nations Health Authority

The Indigenous have long recognized that the health of the environment and the health of the individual are interconnected. The knowledge of the natural world (environment) - the land, plants, animals, seasons and cycles of nature play an important role in beliefs and worldviews of the indigenous (Indigenous Corporate Training, 2016). The natural world is viewed as an interconnectedness that implies a moral responsibility to care for, live in harmony with, and respect the natural world. Mother Earth nurtures and sustains life, provides us with food, clean water resources, materials for homes, food, clothes. She is considered the basis of who we are as human beings that include our languages, cultures, knowledge and wisdom to know how to carry ourselves in a good way. The Indigenous have a special relationship with the earth and all living things in it, a relationship based on spiritual connections to Mother Earth that guided them to practice respect, humility, take and give back. It is also based on the needs and values going back thousands of years - hunting, gathering, fishing, harvesting. Everything is taken and used with the understanding that we take only what we need and also make use of it all. Environmental degradation, pollutants, contaminants have negative consequences on not only Mother Earth but the Indigenous peoples culture, language, and spiritual health and well-being (Assembly of First Nations). Ties to the land in one's home community are powerful for health and wellness "when your soul is sick, what you need is not a pill, it's to go back into that place of connection to family, homeland, to knowing who you are" (Elder Kyoon-Achan, 2019). Animals have great spiritual significance and have an interconnected relationship with the people as well. There are seven Sacred Laws or Teachings that act as a foundation for the relationship with the land. It is believed that these seven animals act as holders of these laws and deliver them to the people. The animal nation was given the responsibility from the Creator to give us these teachings (Elder Nii Gaani Aki Inini 2018). Each sacred teaching honors the seven basic virtues to help us to live good and healthy lives - love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility and truth. Each of these virtues is represented by a different animal: eagle (love), buffalo (respect), bigfoot (honesty), wolf (humility), beaver (wisdom), bear (courage), and turtle (truth). Living these virtues or gifts will define your identity and purpose in life. These gifts were given to help build a world connected to the laws they have brought, to bring peace and balance (Elder Nii Gaani Aki Inini). If you don't use these virtues it will affect your health and wellness. When you live in opposition to these sacred teachings you will be out of balance. Illness or disease is caused by ignoring sacred, natural laws.

Traditional knowledge is passed down through storytelling, ceremonies, dances, arts and crafts, hunting, trapping, food gathering, spirituality, innovations, medicines, and beliefs, ideologies, and teachings. Healing is derived from our ancestors through our spiritual connection to them (McCabe 2017). Traditional healing practices include sweat ceremonies, a cultural practice in a heated dome shaped lodge that uses heat and steam to cleanse toxins from the body, mind, spirit. Smudging and burning of the four sacred herbs in a small bowl helps to purify people and places and rid negativity. The use of ceremonial drums and songs as a way to connect with the Creator and spirit; sharing circles are a healing method where all participants are equal in information, stories, spirituality and emotionality are shared. The renewal and recovery of Aboriginal culture

and traditions of ways of knowing is essential for accomplishing major restorative impacts on health and well-being in an individual and in the community (Kirmayer et al, 2003).

Researchers and most aboriginals not only agree that the Canadian medical healthcare system reflects a colonial perspective but it creates culturally unsafe and unwelcoming environments for aboriginals, these healthcare services are enforced without considering or respecting indigenous knowledge of healing and wellness. Traditional healthcare practices are often disregarded in the Canadian medical system though research repeatedly supports their value (Hill 2009, McCabe 2007, McCormick, 1995). Colonization has caused a negative effect on aboriginal peoples health and deteriorations of traditional aboriginal health care systems. It is important to acknowledge the consequences of colonization and encourage the healing and wellness of Aboriginals.

Studies have demonstrated that Aboriginal communities and organizations want to integrate traditional healthcare practices into the larger healthcare system. The aboriginal perspective implies that a more inclusive holistic understanding is essential to acknowledge the four dimensions of one's being, extending beyond the individual to include family and community as well. Integrating a traditional approach to healthcare that includes the medicine wheel, and proactive commitment in wellness can significantly improve quality of life, reduce the risk of chronic disease, improve health results, and reduce healthcare costs (Howell et al, 2016). The medicine wheel is seen to be necessary for healing the damaged self due to colonization and oppression, as well as providing a respectful indigenous model for guiding and shaping people and communities in living good lives.

A Study of Healing

This research paper focused on understanding and describing Aboriginal healing methods of the medicine wheel to improve health care outcomes in the urban aboriginal community. The study investigated the questions: Do traditional Aboriginal health practices provide a more meaningful way of addressing health strategies for Aboriginal people? How does participating in health circles based on aboriginal traditional knowledge impact the health of urban Aboriginal people? The goal was to create and provide a series of holistic health circles to Aboriginal community members to encourage learning about Aboriginal healthcare practices, facilitate a healthier life style, and work towards the prevention of risk factors for health issues (Howell et al, 2016).

Seven holistic health circles were developed, grounded in traditional teachings and practices. Elders were approached and experts would present each of the topics, created a schedule for the program, and recruited participants. The study used a seven-health-circle program twice, 6 months apart. The Musqueam Elders used the context of research in the Musqueam worldview of nə́c̓aʔmat tə šxʷqʷeləwən ct (one heart, one mind) and learning ways of respectful listening x^wna:mstəm (witness) tə slaχen (medicines) (listen to the medicine). The principles of coming together as one heart, one mind, by listening to the medicine and ancestors through the cultural teachings, to each other and to all our relations would begin a return to being of good mind, good heart, good spirit, and good body. These principles provided the other topics introduced through the program and determined the order of the 7 health circles workshops and activities:

1. Protocols and Place (respect) - cleansing ceremonies, brushing activity, place names, relationship to water, cedar and wellness
2. Identity and Health (relationships, building identity, and health) - history of health review, importance of names, cultural concepts of wellness
3. Traditional Foods (food as medicine, relationships) - connection to land and holistic health, food and performance and energy, feast
4. Emotional Competence (emotional health, responsibility) - interactive and interpersonal activities, incorporating teachings into health and wellness strategies
5. Medicine Making (traditional medicines, relevance) - gathering at the UBC farm, medicine walks, learning about indigenous medicines, feast

6. Drumming Circle (smudging, singing, drumming, relevance)
7. Spirit and Ceremony (spiritual health and wellness, reciprocity) - witnessing, pipe ceremony, closing feast, honouring the participants

The teachings were based on land and procedures as the foundation, then cultural identity as crucial to healing (First Nations Health Society, 2010). The need for nurturing the body (food and medicines), heart (emotional competence), spirit (ceremony), and mind (knowledge of how to do the practices) are all necessary parts for providing a holistic knowledge experience. The aspects and goals are provided in Table 1.

Method

A different Elder facilitated each of the health circles. Some of the health circles were centred on talking circles, and some were experiential such as medicinal walk, using medicinal plants and making tea blends for different health concerns (eg diabetes). The community members were recruited through various organizations, email contacts, and newsletters and were asked to contact the lead researcher. The criteria to participate included: those who self-identified as aboriginal, were interested in attending the holistic health circles, were over the age of 19, were able to communicate in English; and committed to participating in all stages of the research, including the health circles and follow up talking circles (example statements see in table 2 and table 3). Once the community members made contact, they were invited to a pre- workshop interview in which they were given information, details, and schedules of the project and were asked to sign the consent form. The health circles were presented in a workshop style, lasting four hours, on a weekly basis for seven weeks. During each session there were meals and time to socialize before and after the health circle. Locations may have changed with different topics (e.g. in a garden or health center). The participants were given transportation costs to

Table 1.
Holistic Health Circle Approach

Aspect	Health circle goals
Mental components	› Increasing health knowledge › Knowledge dissemination in key disease areas, such as cancer arthritis, diabetes, cardiovascular disease › Validation of Aboriginal knowledge
Emotional components	› Creating emotional competency in our communities › Learning how to identify, manage, and express emotions in a healthy manner › Connecting emotions to health issues › Developing emotional skills essential to health › Creating the emotional foundation to physical, mental, and spiritual health
Physical component	› Nutrition/diet knowledge of Indigenous foods, herbs, and medicines (learning about healthy eating, diet, nutrition, and food preparation) › Garden project (sacred uses of tobacco and other medicines) › Importance of physical activity and exercise programs
Spiritual component	› Creating spiritual, cultural awareness › Role of spirit in health › Importance of traditional teachings and ceremony in health › Knowledge transference with Elders

and from the circles and gift cards to honor their time. Across the two cohorts (male and female) that attended the health circles, there were thirty-five participants in this study which included age's adult to senior. Twenty were First Nations status, seven were First Nations non-status, six were Metis, and two identified as First Nations and Metis. Research methods included weekly feedback forms to assess new knowledge, skills, and areas for improvement; and a talking circle to discuss short term teachings (one week after the programs). There was also a talking circle to discuss intermediate outcomes (six months after the programs). At each of the talking circles, participants completed written surveys to measure changes in self-reported health and healthcare practices. The data from these talking circles were transcribed and thematically organized using the aspects in the Holistic Health Circle approach (shown in Table 1). The results were presented to the Aboriginal Health Working Group and in a community presentation for validation.

Results

The research resulted in participants speaking about the short term and longer term impacts that the health circles had on their approaches to their healthcare plans and ways. An immense amount of data was obtained, analysis of the qualitative data for both short term and intermediate outcomes, the themes that developed across the different age groups the youth, adults, seniors were similar; the findings presented below represent voices across the entire range of participants.

Short Term results

At the 1 week follow up after each program eleven major topics arose from the two talking circles (Table 2). Most commonly people spoke about traditional foods and medicines. They spoke about understanding their eating habits and the need to eat healthy foods. Participants discussed drinking more water, using traditional teas, learning about traditional medicine and sharing this knowledge along with learning about medicines in their traditional territory. A second theme involved emotional and mental health and wellness. Participants spoke about new communication skills, the ability to control and release anger, along with being able to identify and address emotional health needs. Participants also spoke about the importance of evaluating the impact of their social networks on their emotional and mental wellness. A third theme included spiritual health and wellness. Participants spoke about the ceremony and spiritual teachings they gained from the health circles and the impacts on their health. The participants also commented on the connection between water, ceremony, and health; new interest in drumming groups for spiritual wellness, and the importance of connecting to spiritual leaders in their community. Community was a fourth theme. The importance of community healing, connecting with Aboriginal healers and Elders and having sense of community was also discussed. Participants also agreed that connection and belonging are important in an urban context. Other themes included were empowerment and identity, colonization, physical health and wellness, new knowledge, substance use, general health improvements, and language (See table 2).

Intermediate Results

Data on the intermediate outcomes from the six month follow up talking circles revealed ten major themes (See Table 3). As with the short-term outcomes, participants spoke about changes in their healthcare practices in relation to traditional foods and medicinal teas, continued healthy eating, and a better understanding of the link between food and wellness and disease. Participants also spoke about increased efforts to find traditional medicine in the city. Spiritual health and wellness came up as a significant theme for the intermediate findings. Participants spoke about making time for ceremonies and participating in cultural activities. They noted that they were being gentle with themselves, less stressed, being present and grounded, and removing themselves from negativity and gossip. Some even noted that they experienced improved mental health outcomes of reduced depression and had less reliance on antidepressants. The fourth theme, empowerment and identity were significant in intermediate outcomes. Participants discussed having increased confidence, empowerments, and a stronger sense of identity as Aboriginal people. They also learned that they are not alone in their struggles with identity. One participant comprehended the connection between the

Table 2.
Changes in personal healthcare strategies and practices 1 week after health circle programs

Theme	N =	Example of statements
Traditional foods and medicines	30	Increased awareness of eating habits and importance of healthy foods; having positive intention when preparing food; drinking more water; changed eating habits to include more nutrition-whole foods; cooking and eating more traditional foods; eating for your spirit
Emotional and mental health and wellness	27	Learning how to communicate with others-listening but not feeding into negativity; releasing or learning to control anger; paying more attention to emotional wellness – branching out from the focus on physical health; learning how to identify and address emotional health concerns; journaling emotions and dreams
Spiritual health and wellness	19	Awareness about the spiritual connection to water and health, and practicing ceremony; joined or would like to join a drumming group to address spiritual health; exploring spirituality, connecting with ceremonial leaders, and experiencing increased spiritual health; praying more and noticing positive benefits; generally applying spiritual practices in life
Community	19	The importance of community healing; being connected to first nations healers and elders – knowing that you can ask them questions and they will guide you; forming community through the weekly groups, sharing a journey of gaining knowledge and strengthening identities; understanding that connection and belonging are really important in an urban context
Empowerment and identity	14	Increased empowerment over health and choices in healthcare; evaluating and taking control over own social environment, removing negativity from life; empowerment through strengthened identity; paying more attention to self-care
Physical health and wellness	8	Feeling more in touch with their bodies; increased physical activity
Colonization	5	Awareness of the impacts of colonization on language, health, and culture; healing form impacts of attending residential school; lacking success to culture when living in an urban environment
New knowledge	5	Workshops were a reminder of past knowledge, teachings form childhood; bringing it forward; understanding the importance of traditional healing; importance of experiential learning
Substance use	4	Quit drinking alcohol completely; drinking less alcohol, understanding its impacts on health, making choices to spend money on other things; stopped smoking marijuana
General health improvement	3	More balanced – emotionally, spiritually, physically, and mentally; a lot of health issues cleared up over the process of taking the workshops
Language	1	Learning new words from the Elders and finding these words in own language
Total	N = 135	The 32 participants at the 1 week follow up talking circles reported a total of 125 ways in which their healthcare strategies and practices have changed.

Table 3.
Changes in personal healthcare strategies and practices 6 months after the health circle programs

Theme	N =	Example of statements
Traditional foods and medicines	18	Using traditional teas for health; more conscious of eating food as medicine (links between food and diabetes/cancer); increased knowledge about value of traditional medicine; more knowledge of plants as medicines, finding places to access traditional medicines in the city
Spiritual health and wellness	16	Making time for ceremony, attending more ceremonies; smudging more (for reducing stress); participating in cultural activities (drum-making, drumming, beading, dancing)
Emotional and mental health and wellness	11	Being more gentle with myself; being more present, grounded – following the lead of Elders and traditional healers; mental health outcomes have improved (reduced depression, less reliance on anti-depressants); doing art more as therapy, removing self from negativity and gossip
Empowerment and identity	6	More confidence in self, wellness, and Aboriginal identity; revitalizing teachings and traditions from community, feeling powered to do this, overcoming the history of community relocation and ceremonial bans; not feeling alone in struggles with identity
Community	4	Noticed that people around me take care of themselves better too; understanding that people are medicine
Colonization	4	Understanding the impacts of colonization on health and ways of fighting back through revitalizing culture; understanding the general impacts of colonial mentalities – workshops were inspiring, but it is hard to continually find opportunity to uphold this
Access to traditional healthcare	4	Frustrations trying to get traditional healthcare – there is not enough out there/ not aligned with the system; circles were amazing but need more opportunities to practice culture as healing (more venues, programs); made more of an effort to seek out a traditional healer in the community to learn more about medicines and plants
Physical health and wellness	4	More physical activity – walking early morning, strength training
Elders and traditional healers	2	Have reached out to find Elders to learn from
Protocols	1	Increased knowledge of protocols for cultural activities (hunting and fishing in others' territory)
Total	N = 70	The 23 participants at the 6 months follow up talking circles reported a total 70 ways in which their healthcare practices have changed

Elders teachings, identity, and future generations and the connection to health. Other themes were community, colonization, access to traditional healthcare, physical health and wellness, working with Elders and traditional healers, and understanding protocols (See table 3).

Limitations

The program being offered for only 7 weeks and using self-reported data were the limitations of this study, but the research is a good introduction to Aboriginal health care, and most of the participants agreed that they would have benefited more from a longer program and continue progress to get the most for each of their health and healing processes. We also do not know whether these results would generalize to nonindigenous populations, which could be a study in future research.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to understand how traditional healthcare practices can improve health outcomes in Aboriginal communities. The findings covered a range of themes and outcomes. Participants discussed the short term and intermediate impacts that the health circles had on their personal approaches to health care strategies and practices. Participants also spoke about how participating in the health circles improved their health from a holistic perspective. Most of what the participants shared was interconnected and does not point to just one thing that was effective, it was the combination of being able to have access to Elders and traditional teachers, being able to learn and participate in a holistic health care system, and being able to gain aboriginal knowledge that contributed to the positive results. By including Aboriginal knowledge and practices, programs like this are culturally meaningful and give a sense of community that could change some of the barriers and health inequities experienced by the Aboriginals in the urban community (Howell et al, 2016). Many participants expressed that they wanted to access more traditional health care practices, therefore more connections between primary health centers and traditional healers are needed. These findings indicate that participants benefited from attending the health circles and have incorporated these lessons into their daily lives.

Canada's Indigenous people have been profoundly affected by the adverse consequences of colonization having caused almost complete loss of traditional medicine. We have not only endured, run down and overcrowded housing, polluted water, inadequate schools, poverty and family breakdown at rates found in third world countries; but also the struggle to survive in a Western world while experiencing continual assimilation, residential schools, the reserves, and cultural oppression (Howell et al, 2016).

Integrating a traditional approach to healthcare that includes the medicine wheel, and consistent positive engagement in wellness; can significantly improve quality of life, reduce the risk of chronic disease, improve healthcare results, and reduce overall healthcare costs (Howell et al. 2016). Holistic healthcare programs developed with principles of Aboriginal guidance, traditional knowledge, and decolonizing relationships with Aboriginal people could start to repair the health inequalities that have incurred by colonial structures.

Health is seen as a balance and harmony within your mind, body, spirit, along with your community and environment. The medicine wheel has been used by generations of aboriginal tribes for health and healing. It represents the four directions, along with father sky, mother earth, and spirit tree, all which show the dimensions of health and the cycles of life.

Conclusion

The medicine wheel is a circle of awareness of the individual self, the circle of knowledge that provides the power we each have over our lives. These research results suggest that the traditional healing practice of using a health circle based on the teachings of the medicine wheel is beneficial to healing and wellness. There is evidence of a need to incorporate the health circle with Western healthcare and increased funding for culturally appropriate interventions (Auger et al, 2016). Further research is now needed on more specific practices of aboriginal traditional healing such as: healing drumming practice, sweat lodge ceremony, traditional plant use, and healing through nature and physical activity. Healing is a journey with as much focus on spiritual and emotional healing as there is on mental and physical healing.

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CONTEMPORARY INDIGENOUS ARTIST IN 2019: HOW COLONIALISM STILL IMPACTS US

Abstract

My artistic process is developed by re-evaluating my relationship with my surroundings: culture, nature, death, and where I belong in relation to these things. I create an artistic process to explore my Indigenous identity and express it through a contemporary style, all while following Indigenous traditional protocol I have learned through family, loved ones, and personal research. Crystallizing the bones of animals that have passed is my way of recognizing a spiritual connection with these beings, a practice done in hunting. I acknowledge the importance of creatures in the lives of communities who survived by hunting them. My art generates conversation between the viewer and the artwork: How did the animal pass? Where and why? Was it necessary? Finally, why does one care about this particular animal and not others that have shared a similar fate? Why is it that when they are deemed precious, they finally have value? Why is their life valued less than our own? Expressing practices and thoughts through my artwork begins to familiarize Aboriginal artists in colonial spaces. I began to think about what was truly impactful on my life and how I impact living things around me, and where I belong in relation to these things. The expressions and thoughts provoked through these artworks illustrate what spirituality and best practices mean for me.

Introduction

Indigenous culture has always been an influence in my life, but over the past two years my beliefs have become more and more incorporated into my art. As I explore my Indigenous identity, I document my learning process and express it through my art. I am inspired by themes, materials, and a working practice based around my upbringing and cultural views. As an Indigenous child, my family taught me how to hunt and survive on what we could get from the land. I learned ceremony, songs, and our history through family, friends, and experiences. My moral decisions and choice of materials with which to work are influenced by what I have learned from family, loved ones, and personal research. They are based loosely on hunting ceremonies and their disciplines and, ultimately, on having respect for mother nature and the relationship I have with the living things in it. As an emerging artist, I am beginning to re-evaluate my moral perspective. I consider the history of the generations before ours, participating in intergenerational learning that our communities can offer. These practices influence how I think of my relationship with nature, learning not to see it as one being greater than the other, or that I have the dominion to decide what life has lesser value than my own. My relationship with nature is one of equals rather than deeming myself greater than the living things that surround me. I see my relationship

with nature as a direct connection to my soul. Going through this journey, the words of an Elder stay with me: *"how do you expect someone to treat a person with respect if they can't show that same respect to an animal?"* (Anonymous). With the awareness that my audience may not share my perspective, I choose to focus my art in such a way as to start a conversation about my place in the world: how I affect it, and how I choose to leave it when I am gone. In explaining my morality and priorities, it is my hope that others will adopt these in their own lifestyles and therefore make a positive influence on how we treat living things and what the future holds.

Personal Practice and Process

By being conscious of my relationship with my surroundings, culture, nature, and death, and how they affect my lifestyle, I began to think about what was truly impactful on my life, how I impact the living things around me, and where I belong in relation with these things. I developed a process to draw attention to the importance of the materials I use. By crystallizing the bones of animals that have passed, my art generates conversation between the viewer and the piece. How did it pass? Where and why? Was it necessary? Why do you care about this animal and not the others that have shared a similar fate? Why is it that only when they are deemed precious do they finally have value? Why is their life valued less than our own? Cree beliefs stress the value of respect, sharing, love, and kinship (Ferrara, 2014). As Nadia Ferrara (2014) points out, "They showed their readiness and willingness to adopt the new ritual forms of values that they were already familiar with" (p. 16). Cree people have adapted their ritual forms of value in the past, while still considering the moral values they held at their core (Ferrara, 2014). *Respect*, *sharing*, *love*, *and kinship*… I take these beliefs into consideration when I create art, expressing them in a form of language that I have developed, similar to the one of which Kent Monkman speaks of, (as referenced in Lauren Crazybull's *Seeing Through* [2019]). While considering the moral view of our ancestors, I explore my personal, spiritual connection and expand on what my Indigenous identity means to me, and how I express it through a contemporary artistic practice. I use my art as an outlet to bring attention to mistreated animals and other living things on this earth, in the hope of communicating with my audience the perspective I have gained by thinking about the relationship I have with my surroundings. Acknowledging that not everybody will share my perspective, my questions of relationship are meant to explain why I hold the moral views I do when it comes to living animals. Taking the protocols Indigenous communities have for animals that have died of natural causes or been killed respectfully, I express my interpretation of spiritual recognition by crystallizing the animal's remains.

Returning parts of animals' bodies to the earth as a means of spiritual recognition is custom, as pointed out by Thomas Fiddler in *Legends From The Forest* (1999); adorning them with crystals has been my interpretation of returning their bodies to the earth. For this process I use $^{5}Na_2[B_4O_5(OH)_4]\cdot 8H_2O$, also known as Borax, a natural compound that can be recreated and recycled, as affirmed by William Haynes in *CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics* (2011). Its physical form of crystal growth on the remains is reminiscent of diamonds. The juxtaposition of the bones and borax symbolizes the value perspective can give. The need to buy luxurious items drives the middle class (Harlow, 1998), and I hope to develop in my audience an infatuation with the deceased after it has been decorated with my interpretation of a diamond; I seek to seduce my audience with the symbolic beauty of crystals, as described by George Harlow in *The Nature of Diamonds* (1998). The diamond only has democratic value, meaning that it is a controlled market designed to feed consumerism. Being conscious of my impact, I choose to use Borax crystals as they are more sustainable. The crystals make the subject upon which I grow them "luxurious," capturing the audience's interest and thereby drawing their attention to the topics I address, demanding the same attention diamonds achieve. Why do we value something more when it is adorned with false luxury? Building upon Crazybull's ideas, Kent Monkman states: "I use the vocabulary of painting. That's my chosen language. It's something that's accessible to everybody. The elderly, the young, people of whatever

cultural background - they can all read a representational image" (Crazybull, 2019, p 96.). The sculpting of these crystallized forms is my chosen language; it is my way of not only sharing and normalizing the conversation of spiritual protocol in what writers such as Jamie Isaac (2019) have termed "colonial spaces," but confirming that there are Aboriginal artists in colonial spaces. As explained by Stevens (1999), "respect for creatures by killing them properly and returning parts of their bodies to the earth is a strong custom among clansmen in the forest" (p. 32). Out of respect for the animals, I ensure they were killed properly. They did not suffer, thanks were given for their sacrifice, and every part of the animal was used. I see crystallizing them as my own form of spiritual recognition.

How Traditional Ceremony Affects My Work

As I expand my artistic practice, as well as my confidence in my spiritual beliefs, the concept of identity brings me inspiration and comfort. As Crazybull (2019) states, "I have chosen my subjects because they matter to me. I don't deny our relationships. By centring my relationship to the sitter, I not only create a representation of them, but also a portrait of myself" (p. 96). I wish to achieve the same thing Crazybull does with her portraits.

Lauren Crazybull, Seth, 2019. [Acrylic on canvas.]

I build a relationship with the viewer and my work, giving representation for the lack of presence of Indigenous artists. Practicing artists like Crazybull show that there is an Indigenous community present to fill the gaps that are created by the lack of equal representation in galleries, as Jaimie Isaac (2019) notes. Though our art styles may not always distinctly fall under traditional protocol, Crazybull and I are contemporary artists.

Lauren Crazybull, Seth, 2019. [Acrylic on canvas.]

Our goal to familiarize ourselves with these spaces is achievable in 2019. Indigenous artists inspired me to familiarize myself with traditional background and protocols; the goal of my art is to do the same for others.

Learning about traditional protocols in hunting, I developed my own form of spiritual recognition in my art. This act is a spiritual recognition of the importance of creatures in the lives of men who survived by hunting them. "What is uncanny is the ability of native clansmen to communicate with the creatures by speaking and visualizing them in the mind" (Stevens, 1999, p. 32). "Disturbing as this might be for persons of western European origin, it is natural for clansmen since it is already known from boreal mythology that even in ancient Weesakayjac, the spirit being of humanity, could talk with all the animals. In the four legends that follow, boreal people communicate with moose, bears and crows" (Stevens, 1999, p. 32). They understood that they were taking a life so that theirs could continue. Aboriginal survival was dependent on hunting as a resource, but respect was always maintained for the animals that lived

inside the people who hunted them. This is an example of the traditional protocol that inspires my artistic process, because of the closeness that Aboriginal people have with the animals in their environment. This closeness encourages me to develop the relationship I have with the animals that surround me, and by exploring the possibilities of our environmental connection we push ourselves to be more conscious of how we connect with animals, the environment, and other living things.

Tenessa Gagnon, Hybrid #2, 2019, courtesy of the artist.

Representation and Its Beneficial Significance

While my creation of crystallized remains is a spiritual recognition, it is also an opportunity to create and control my own narrative (Crazybull, 2019). Crazybull (2019) also does this with her works; she explains, "I was brought up in a place where self-determined images of Indigenous peoples weren't around, which made for a destructive idea of Indigeneity for my younger self" (p. 96). As a young Indigenous artist I relate to her experiences, and though our mediums may differ, the drive to create and control our own narratives with our artistic development is something I find relatable in her work. Indigenous individuals can get caught in a paradox of two conflicting identities; the pre-contact Cree identity and the post-contact "Whiteman-Cree" (Ferrara, 2014, p. 38). It is a struggle to achieve personal identity, while your nationality "is not only a culture of lifeways and values but has become a political category in opposition to the 'White' or Euro-Canadian" (Ferrara, 2014, p. 38). In addition, Ferrara (2014) points out that "many Crees feel they cannot use indigenous definitions of self against Euro-Canadian definitions because Euro- Canadians cannot or do not care to understand them, and also perhaps they are too distant from new realities" (p. 38) . By normalizing traditional practices, like the hunting ceremonies that inspire my interpretation of spiritual recognition, we normalize Indigenous cultural representation in colonial spaces. By having relatable contemporary Indigenous artists properly represented in places where Indigenous people were not before, we normalize our existence in these spaces. A successful example of this is Jaimie Isaac (2019) holding the Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG) accountable for considering and responding to Treaty 1 Territory to holistically reflect the population around it. Whiteman-Cree, as Ferrara (2014) points out, "are not so much revisiting the past as they are negotiating and constructing a new sense of themselves as Aboriginal Canadians" (p. 39). The WAG has the world's largest collection of Inuit art, but in an analysis by Isaac (2019), works by First Nations or Métis made up only 1% of their entire collection, which includes over 24,000 works. As of 2019, Indigenous people make up 11% of Winnipeg's population of over 800,000. As contemporary artists, both Isaac and Crazybull are "standing on the shoulders of activators before them who pushed to make such positions available in Canadian institutions," holding colonial galleries like WAG responsible for equal representation within colonial space (Isaac, 2019, p. 34). After the report of curator Lee-Ann Martin, *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Contemporary Native Art and Public Art Museums in Canada*, the issue of misrepresentation was brought to the attention of the Canadian Museum Association and the Assembly of First Nations in 1992, who jointly issued the *Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples*, which Martin authored (Isaac, 2019). A quarter century after the publication of these reports, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) echoes their demands, urging the re-examination of museum policies and practices concerning Indigenous artists and curators, and seeking

input from the community in the cultural sector. They challenge art institutions to hire Indigenous curators and staff and develop fair representation of Indigenous artists. Having Indigenous artists in colonial spaces normalizes their appearances where they were never present before. Normalizing the representation of young Aboriginal artists exposes ideas to an audience that may have conflicted identities (Ferrara, 2014). I wish to achieve this goal as well by representing a contemporary narrative of spirituality, expressing it through my interpretation of spiritual recognition.

Conclusion

As my beliefs become more incorporated in my work, the themes, materials, and working practice help me to explore my Indigeneity. Learning more about my cultural background and family history, I expand on the knowledge I held before my process began. This has influenced my personal experience developing as an artist, and the similarities I find in the stories of other emerging Indigenous artists in 2019. The teachings affect not only my physical art; they are a representation of my values and beliefs. Respect, sharing, love, and kinship are influences I consider when picking my materials, paying my respects and giving animals spiritual recognition in the way I communicate through art. I continue to learn about my family history, culture, and background by participating in the intergenerational learning that our communities can offer. While reconsidering my relationship with my surroundings, culture, nature, and death and how they affect my lifestyle, I began to think about what was truly impactful on my life, how I impact the living things around me, and where I belong in correlation with these things. *"How do you expect someone to treat a person with respect if they can't show that same respect to an animal?"*(Anonymous). Being aware that my audience may not share my perspective, I choose to focus my art in such a way as to start a conversation about my place in the world: how I affect it, and how I choose to leave it when I am gone. My goal is to explain my morality and my priorities in the hope that others will adopt them in their own lives, thereby making a positive influence on how we treat living things and what the future holds. By revisiting and continuing to learn the history of my indigeneity, I have learned and continue to learn the steps I can take to create a positive influence on myself and my surroundings.

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We have 1000's of years of knowledge, it's about reclaiming what is already in us.

~ Prof. Rod McCormick

Dr. Sereana Naepi

The University of Auckland, New Zealand

Fiji, Pākeha

Professor Airini

Thompson Rivers University, Canada

Samoa, Pākeha

FIVE IDEAS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS THAT ADVANCE INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

"Indigenous research means using Indigenous research methods, about Indigenous-centred topics, to make a difference for Pacific communities."

We are Indigenous Pacific academics who came from an ocean of water and voyaged to an 'ocean of land' in the Interior of British Columbia. While living here we have been welcomed by all and experienced the generosity of Secwépemc, the first people of the lands where Thompson Rivers University is located. Our campuses honour our First House: Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, respect our Second House: Téxelc, acknowledge the many Nations on and near these lands, and support the fulfillment and recognition of Indigenous rights (TRU, 2020).

In reflecting on these intentions, we are prompted to ask the question: how might scholars from other lands best serve those of the land where they work and live? Based on findings and outcomes from five years of the Knowledge Makers researcher mentoring program we propose a five-point framework for the advancement of Indigenous research and researchers. At the core are relationships: why relationships matter for Indigenous research advancement, how these relationships are about politics and being researchers, relationships for the work needed to advance Indigenous research, relationships for recruitment of Indigenous researchers from Here, and relationships for rights-based leadership to advance Indigenous research.

Relationships (that) matter

For us, as Pacific researchers being welcome here has meant an act of reciprocity is needed (Naepi, 2019a, 2019b); and for us, the Knowledge Makers project provides an opportunity for such action. We are guided by two principles here: that being and knowing "always occur in community" (Vaai & Nabobo-Baba, 2017, p.4), and that research is "a form of service" (Airini, 2014:34). Knowledge Makers is profoundly and respectfully cultural for us. This project is a way to actively tend the pan-Pacific understanding of Va/ Vä / Va'a/Wa/Ma by being of service to a community that has given us so much (Mila,n.d; Anae, 2016; Airini 2010).

Vä traverses many Pacific languages and beyond Pacific nations to Pacific rim countries (Mila, n.d.). As Tongan scholar Ka'ili (2005) writes, in his comprehensive article about vä, this is a fundamental cultural value of Tongan society (Ka'ili, 2005). Similarly, as Wendt indicates, the concept of the Vä is important to the Samoan view of reality, as to Maori (wa) and Japanese (ma):

Vä is the space between, the between-ness, not empty space, not space that separates but space that relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the unity-in-all, the space that is context, giving meaning to things. A well-known Samoan expression is 'la teu le vä', cherish/nurse/care for the vä, the relationships.

This is crucial in communal cultures that value group, unity, more than the individual person / creature / thing in terms of group, in terms of vä, relationships (Wendt, cited Refiti, 2002: 209).

Vä is the norm when we view of society as being about relationships. To understand the importance of vä, relationships must be seen as "the most influential dynamic in shaping both individual identity and the nature of the social world" (Mila, n.d., p. 2). This means that we are always in a relational space with others, and from those relations comes learning and development. From a Samoan perspective, Mary Autagavaia writes, "It is in relation to others that the integrity of the self is shaped and realised; the self does not exist alone…" (Autagavaia, 2001: 59).

For us, our understanding of Va is our code of conduct as researchers coming here to work and live in Secwepemc. There is a responsibility to be active in tending the Va. To 'Vä Fealoaloa'i' means to 'mutually respect and maintain the sacred space within relationships' (Autagavaia, 2001: 77). In Tongan 'Tauhi vä ', refers to the act of maintaining the vä between people (Mila, n,d). This requires effort to make sure that there is respect for one another and balanced reciprocity of giving and taking.

Relationships about politics and being

As scholars of equity in Higher Education, the practices of Va are as much political as pedagogical or fiscal. We are intentional in bringing Indigenous peoples together, and being respectful of relations with First peoples so that more Indigenous researchers might choose to be excellent in research and advocates for the rights of Indigenous peoples. This is part of the quest for decolonisation: setting aside non-relational understandings of self that are the legacy of colonisation. We re-set an individualistic academic culture by choosing instead to work together for the advancement of Indigenous research. We see this as an Indigenous "relational renaissance" (Vaai & Nabobo-Baba, 2017, p.2).

Knowledge Makers has given us all so much in the last five years, as students, Elders, faculty across our university, and families. Within 88 articles over four journals we have heard tomorrow's Indigenous researcher voices today: visions of a future schooling system (Fredborg, 2018), calls to reshape the university (Aird, 2016; Melnyk 2017) ,unpacking of identities (Robinson, 2016; Shorson, 2016; Therrien, 2019) understood the impact of seeing research from an Indigenous perspective (Bandura, 2019; Scherer, 2016), considered our own Indigenous knowledges and what they have to offer this world (Archie, 2018; Chillihitzia, 2017, Garant, 2018; Paul, 2018, Peal, 2018; Sandy, 2017), considered the impact of intergenerational trauma (Charley, 2018; Manuel, 2017; Mattice, 2018, Spike, 2019), seen art as a form of resistance (Dundas Oke, 2018), unpacked decolonisation in its many forms (Daniels 2016; Defant, 2018; Oliverius, 2016; Sellars-Sarnowski & Gray, 2019), addressed missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (Paul, 2019; Stanley, 2019) and so much more.

Each year the journals have grown and they are a prized possession for many of us, a concrete artefact of our time together in a community of researchers, and an insight into our achievements today and tomorrow. We learn from Knowledge Makers that relationships are not an intellectual academic activity. They are about how we are as humans *being* in the academy.

Relationships for the work needed

The journal is only a small part of the Knowledge Makers story. The workshop is where the heart is and the journal simply records these journeys. When we sit in circle, aware of those who have been before us as researchers and those who are yet to come, something powerful happens in that relational space. We are open to learning about how to be an Indigenous researcher. We are en-couraged to think differently, to believe differently, and to be "The Real Me" (Elder Estella, 2016, p.i). The Knowledge Makers are called to action:

We all come with a sacred Creator within us. You all created who you are and being in this Knowledge Makers circle today that was your own effort. When you think about your ancestors and what built your bones and values and you put upon that what you are doing here in university, you create a trajectory that is totally unique in the world You have the ability to make

changes. That is honoring the Chief in you. You have permission to be stubborn against systems that humans made, to make your own way up this system. Be stubborn and do not be bowled over…We have to work together. Think about our traditional roots. Think about traditional knowledge. We have got lots of work to do. (Joanne Brown, Knowledge Makers, 2017, p.i).

The conversations and journeys that occur over those two days of the workshop are transformational within the four-month Knowledge Makers program. It is clear that these kinds of relationships are not intellectual and not and academic activity. We believe we will always carry with us the laughter, tears and insights from each year's circle. This year in 2019-20 we were gifted with a song from Lex Edwards. It is a song that moved us to tears and captures the power of being in circle every year. It is these sorts of moments that journal articles cannot fully capture. They are the moments that make Knowledge Makers real.

Relationships for recruitment from Here

We remain respectful that we are here and in relation to the First Peoples of this land. Within a renaissance of relationship, we necessarily remain distinct as our real selves, while also interconnected. We resist, as others have, the idea of "the global self" (Vaai & Nabobo-Baba, 2017, p.5). We consider how critics of colonisation pay attention to the form (and persons) of leadership in projects aimed at closing gaps and reconciliation. Spivak, 2003) calls our attention to the "abstractness of globalism" (Spivak, 2003, p.72).

Now more than ever before, universities across Canada can recruit new faculty from the Nations where their institutions are located. This is key to supporting the fulfilment and recognition of Indigenous rights to lead knowledge making and dissemination. By mentoring new Indigenous researchers at undergraduate and graduate levels, Knowledge Makers is part of that kind of future.

Relationships for rights-based Indigenous leadership

As we look at the past five years of Knowledge Makers, we must also consider the next five. We ask how might scholars from other lands best serve those of this land? In practical terms we believe this means always planning to 'give way' to those who are the First Peoples. In Knowledge Makers this means planning for Indigenous leadership from here. Knowledge Makers will transition from Pacific Indigenous scholars leading research mentoring **for** Indigenous peoples of this land, to research mentoring being led **by** the Indigenous peoples of this land. It's a transition for many courses and programs across universities. The renaissance of relationships means asking: How does my leadership of this course/program/unit make possible the fulfilment and recognition of Indigenous expertise and rights?

> "We believe we will always carry with us the laughter, tears and insights from each year's circle."

This then is how the practices of Va illuminate the politics of Knowledge Makers, and indeed in courses and programs across universities. When there is a renaissance of relationships we must examine where power is held and where expertise and rights will be recognized in the leadership of initiatives for Indigenous advancement. The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) is a guide, including:

- Article 25: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.
- Article 15: Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.

- Article 31: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.
- Article 13: Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop, and transmit to future generations their histories, languages and oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures…
- Article 21: Indigenous peoples have the rights, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including inter alia, in the areas of education…"

Conclusion

Prof Rod McCormick (2017) describes the growth in Indigenous research and researchers with a story of a backswing:

The backswing is needed to generate the power to move an object forward (e.g. hammer, broom, golf club, baseball bat). Without a backswing it is like we are playing 18 holes of golf with just a putter…Before we can address a problem we must re-search what we know, what we need to know, what resources are available to us and generally to gather the strength needed to move forward. Traditional creation stories tell us that what we needed to know to lead a good life was provided by nature. Re-search might mean that we need to search again for what we once knew (McCormick, 2017, p.18).

A five-point framework for the advancement of Indigenous research and researchers has been explored in this paper. During the next five years we believe that the re-search made possible by Knowledge Makers will see an increase in Indigenous faculty from here, recruited for positions, for here and across Canada. This includes leading Knowledge Makers, and leading academic courses, programs, and research projects. Of vital importance will be the attention paid to meaningful, respectful, reciprocal relationships.

Knowledge Makers teaches us about relationships, place and service through research. We are moved by the learning we receive in this journey. We see our interconnectedness. We are called to action. "We have got lots of work to do" (Joanne Brown, 2017).

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The word for
Great Grandparent and
Great Grandchild are
the same, like the circle
of life the best leaders
are the best followers.

~ Knowledge Makers | Day Two

Michael Daniel Broadfoot

Blackfoot, Métis

Health Science at Mount Royal University

"To me, Indigenous research means to be in a transformational state that honours my ancestors, myself, and those around me."

HEALING, TREE-BARK, AND A WALKING STICK FOR YOU

Abstract

My partner and I often go for walks in Weasel Head Park close to the Tsuut'ina reservation where we will pick up a stick from the path and ask each other how we see ourselves in the stick. In this intimate relationship between sticks and walking in the forest, I think about the natural appeal of a walking stick in the bush. In life, our spirit is always walking a path, and while sometimes we walk in untraversed land, most of the time we are walking paths that relate to the paths our ancestors walked. Depending on the terrain, a walking stick can serve as a conversation piece and/or a sturdy life-saver. A walking stick's spirit is happiest when it is fulfilling its purpose, to aid in all ways in walking the path of life, and especially when we go for walks through forests of knowledge. Our walking stick represents the growing relationship with the forest as the two of us, you and I, grow together, and I pass this stick to you.

Healing as a Cultural Process

What began as a journey for justice and good mental health, has become a quest for decolonization and *Healing*. Mental health, while justified in its crusade, is a Western concept of health and therefore limited to the thinking of objectivity and noun-ness. In an effort to decolonize, and eventually master the English language (Wilson, 2001, p. 179), I choose to substitute the idea of mental health for *Healing* or *something that creates Healing*. To leave the Western ontological space and enter an Indigenous space we will use "Healing" as our focus; "Healing" with a capital H respects the ontological and epistemic significance of the relational methodology used to write this paper. "Indigenous languages are verb based; in the Cree language, the literal translation into English for a chair would be 'the thing that you sit on'" (Wilson, 2008, p. 73). Therefore, Healing means the relationships with our four realities: emotion, mind, physical, and spirit (personal communication, Miksika'am, Nov. 8, 2019).

Healing acts to dismantle hierarchies between people, because Healing-people do not try to fill holes in themselves with power; however, if I claim to be a *Healed* person, a person whose Healing lives in the past, I might feel *entitled* to power. Culture is how we build relationships with each other, and a culture of Healing relationships is a culture that perpetuates balanced human beings. Healing, with respect to all of our realities, acts to remove *unneeded* power dynamics that erode relationships. While I believe this form of health is beneficial for all humans of Mother Earth, my focus is pragmatically for Urban Indigenous peoples as this would best describe my experience as an Indigenous person, and the placement of my family in the ongoing wake of colonialism.

As I speak a little Blackfoot, and less Mechif (Metis Language), English is the language that I am closest to mastering, and I am comforted by the words of Wilson (2001): "I don't think it is helpful to make people who cannot speak an Indigenous language feel bad about it. But I do think that it is important that everyone masters the language that they do speak" (p. 179). It is also worth noting that mental health is a noun, and, as a social movement towards self-care and other mental health-related initiatives, mental health ultimately carries the state-of-being in-animate that goes with being a noun. Healing is the way we renew ourselves; as Miksika'am has said to me, we must do the things that maintain our spirit (personal communication, Sept. 21, 2019), and it is impossible to be *inanimate* and a *being* at the same time.

Therefore, we should make steps towards normalizing Healing, not as a response to acute injuries to our realities, but as contributing to the ongoing process of reclaiming our humanity through decolonization. If all of our realities - mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual - were constantly maintained, we would not need to overcompensate our social image, compare our material selves to others, force our emotional state on others, or question another's source of faith. We would have the capacity not to pour our anger out on another person when they cut us off in rush-hour traffic. We would have the courage to tell the people we love how we truly feel, and, simultaneously, they would have the courage to hear you. So, what are the things that get in the way?

Relationship with the Land

It has been through my relationships with other spirits that I have come to understand the world around me. I often talk to Tree Spirits as they often talk to me. I can remember trees holding my weight as a child, as each tree, large enough to climb, seemed to offer a playground of its own. On a working retreat to Thompson Rivers University, one of the Trees in the landscape courtyard was telling me about its magnificent bark. As my fingers ran through the crevasses created by the bark growing into a larger circumference, I started to think of bark for its protective qualities, and then I thought of the relationship between the bark and the insides of the tree. There is a trust that is created by the bark's dedication to protection, and in the bark's absence, this trust might be broken.

The Bark Protects the Tree's Insides

The bark of a tree protects the insides of the tree, and as Niitsitapi, or human beings, our relatives are the trees. They teach us, as many of the plant peoples do. My experience with the Tree described above made me think of the bark we grow, as Niitsitapi, to protect ourselves from the outside world. We all have bark, and we grow it to protect ourselves from different forces: "[s]ome [trees], like ponderosa pine or Scots pine, put a lot of energy into creating thick outer bark to protect themselves from fire. Others put more effort into protecting against insects: balsam firs have bark studded with resin ducts that serve as bug traps" (Rankin, 2017).

My family is of both Indigenous and settler origin; the customs, celebrations, and collaborations held by my family are carried out through Western culture. I feel like this is a sign that my family has been assimilated, yet my ancestors are not all Indigenous; some are settlers, which is something that I feel requires reconciliation. When we come together we do not seem to fit into these Western ways: we stand out, and I take this to be a sign of our family's story.

Challenges to the assumptions of my family's culture have been met with resistance and defensiveness, and bark has seemingly grown to mitigate further intrusions; it becomes clear in these moments who holds the power. On my mother's side, those who yell the loudest are the ones who create the family narrative to which everyone uncomfortably adheres. On my father's side it feels like a remnant of consensus thinking that dive-bombs into inaction. As described by DeAngelo (2018), "The idea of racial inferiority was created to justify unequal treatment" and to describe my experience, as related to Indigenous identity, triggers both sides of my family to show their bark (p. 16).

Wilson tells us that "[a]s a researcher you are answering to *all your relations* when you are doing research" (2001, p. 177). When I think about positioning myself in my research and being accountable to *all my relations* I get a *sticky* feeling of being accountable to my

family, the people who are the closest thing I have to a home community. One of the most significant moments in my life was when my parents were no longer living together and the transition period, which was characterized by violent words and actions between my parents, leading up to life in separate homes. As kids we did not have a say in what was happening, but what was happening had a dramatic effect on us. In the name of my own decolonization and Healing, I have granted myself permission to have a say in how I respond to this information and period of my life.

As we decolonize ourselves, we are removing weapons (Thomas, 2001, p. 204), such as racism, patriarchy, and homophobia, that have been plunged deeply into our being. After removing a traumatic weapon (a weapon of intergenerational trauma [IGT]) we must Heal the wound. My racialization is as a mixed-race person, and my Elder and adopted Mum has told me that I "must learn how to honour both my White side and my Native side" (personal communication, Betty CrazyBoy, July 8, 2019). While I feel that connecting myself to Indigenous culture, in general, has been Healing, I also feel that the reality is that I now must make peace with both my settler and Indigenous ancestors. Feeling caught between the settler world and the Indigenous world is the experience of most Indigenous people living on Turtle Island today, and is not necessarily bound only to mixed-race Indigenous people.

As a White-passing Indigenous person, I do not receive the belligerent racism and oppression that non-White Indigenous people experience. When I was first presented with this information, I found myself defensive. What were the insides my bark was protecting?

We grow bark to protect ourselves. Our mind determines what is threatening and we grow our bark as a reaction to that fear. I say reaction because we often do not question the bark we grow. Pushing the metaphor further to relate to a tree's life: if the insides of the tree do not trust that their bark protects them, their insides cannot be at peace.

Insides We Are Protecting

When White people get defensive, there can be what is called "white fragility" (DiAngelo, p. 2). This is linked to their undealt-with trauma inherited from their ancestors. In Western culture, it is normal to disregard your ancestry as if the impact of our ancestors' experiences is something you can selectively turn off. Being in a racial position as White-passing, I get to spend a lot of time experiencing the world from a White perspective as well as from an Indigenous perspective. In White circles, I have observed that the closest thing to Healing is consideration for mental health, and this is fairly new, not something that has been around for generations. I also find it interesting to ask why White settlers have moved to Turtle Island, and almost unanimously, it has been because of difficult conditions back at home. Most settlers were fleeing poverty or war, and were suffering traumas while they fled. All of these people, when they first arrived, did not have any Indigenous Knowledges of Turtle Island, making them aliens to this land. At this point in ourstory ("history" superficially decolonized), not having this knowledge could have led to their demise, but the East Coast Indigenous peoples tended to the newcomers, and they responded by using ecological colonialism in an attempt to reverse the roles of who is alien to this land.

While at the Decolonizing Health Care Congress (Appendix 1), a conversation in one of the breakout rooms led me to a narrative of European history that I had not considered: "the White people had Indigenous relationships with the land until they all started conquering each other" (July 22, 2019). What an interesting thought, that settlers come from conquered peoples, and that they have not yet healed from this. This narrative also informs White fragility of settler Canadians. They have not yet dealt with their traumas, and as a result, cling to their identity as Canadians, and this extends to the culture in which we find ourselves; this is perhaps why settlers, and White settlers in particular, are so resistant to ontological and epistemic changes, as their systems are based on the assumptions of Eurocentrism (Oliveira Andreotti et al, 2015, p. 33) and domination.

As a reflective exercise, I encourage settlers to think of how they came to possess the power to say which traditions are allowable (Christmas, as an example), and which are

prohibited on Turtle Island. I have heard Elders say rhetorically to settlers, "Where are your stories? If you have a relationship with this land, what stories demonstrate the relationship you claim?"

Many progressive settlers, and this is not meant to be mean, focus on inclusion. They see the lack of inclusion in their institutions as a "problem," but are actually participating in soft reforms not meant to make ontological or epistemological changes (Oliveira Andreotti, Stein, Akenhaw, & Hunt, 2015, p. 25). I believe DiAngelo (2016) when she states "[t]hough white fragility is triggered by discomfort and anxiety, it is born of superiority and entitlement. White fragility is … is a powerful means of white racial control and the protection of white advantage" (p. 2); therefore, if we are meant to decolonize our relationships in such a way that trust can be established, we must be able to recognize the hierarchies to which we all are conditioned and speak to each other in a way where power dynamics are equalized. With this awareness I take a stance in stating that while Indigenous people do need to Heal from genocide, the most significant changes to institutional and state power would come from the Healing of settlers, and that it is a racist position to expect that Indigenous people are the only ones who need to Heal.

Violence is Normal

A book by Lee Maracle, *My conversations with Canadians* (2016, p. 88), has led me to understand that those who hold racist beliefs are likely to be people who come from generations of unhealed trauma. If we could imagine generations living without colonial violence, and then generations filled with apocalyptic violence, we get a sense of the experience of the conquering of our peoples. Ancestors who endured many generations of oppression have had their identity progressively stripped, have been displaced from homelands, and have found residence in a colonial state where they do not make the rules (laws). This story, while viscerally real for Indigenous people, is also the ourstory of the settlers in power right now, except they get to make the rules. Those who have been oppressed, become the oppressor (Freire, 2004, p. 62). Those in power, set the culture of those subject to that power.

I believe this is the reason for the entitlement that White people carry with them today, and the normalization of the violence carried out. It is a bark that protects them in lands far from their ancestors. Settlers assert nationalistic rights with the utmost expectation of having them increasingly filled by the colonial state. They stand on a folded blanket of colonialism that stretches over and suffocates Indigenous peoples, the land of Turtle Island, and all other beings of this land. And this 'They' is also 'Me' and my own 'We.' We, settlers and Indigenous peoples, are granted a lifetime of existence, and a collective request for Healing to begin, on wounds long inflicted by and upon our ancestors, is of the most human possible.

Different People at Different Emotional Levels Cannot Be in a Relationship

Emotional maturity plays a big role in how people communicate with each other; in fact, people who are on different emotional levels do not have much to talk about as they are "practically speaking different languages" (Greenspan, 1997, p. 248). When I consider the Indigenous and non-Indigenous composition of my family, it is common for the Indigenous person to partner with a White person, and while from a colonial perspective, these folks are together due to assimilative forces, they are also together due to their similar emotional maturity levels. What does this say about our humanness and need to Heal collectively?

Healing through Ceremony

Our spirituality is the core of our cultures as Indigenous peoples. In our Indigenous ceremonies, we communicate with spirits, we listen for the guidance of Creator, and we do it together with other Human Beings. In my own experience of ceremonies, we sit together not as Indians and Whites, not as settlers and Indigenous people, not as different peoples, but as one people. This poses a real challenge to contemporary decolonizing society as White people can avoid addressing their whiteness by saying they were raised to see all people as human beings and are therefore not racist. While this may be confirmed by other Whites of this generation and the generation before,

this sentiment negates the prejudice that is passed on, regardless of the intent of the family members. Whites, like myself, are constantly reminded and encouraged to see non-Whites as somehow less-than, and not see ourselves in that less-than category. When Whites speak of people, the experiences and standards they are describing are white, but they, and myself at times, will speak about this reality as if all people have the same reality available to them, which is also an example of post-positivism that characterizes White culture.

In attempts to see the humanness in myself, I am working on my own whiteness and racial conditioning, which is to say, being conscious of my violence towards others. Inside, I feel from my White side, that I am innocent because I do not know any better; at the same time, I carry the hurt from the genocide of my ancestors. My humanness is deeper-rooted than these socially constructed categories, but it is hard to speak from this place. My humanness is my spirit-ness, and I am a spirit experiencing a life within the existence Creation has given me.

By placing my spirit first, I can then see why it is important to consider the spirits of others. How does one spirit ask another spirit how to stop their participation in structural racism? I think one way might be to bring White people into ceremony so as to Heal them and give them perspective; however, this then places the burden on Indigenous people to heal White people in order for them to get to a place of understanding. This is problematic as the burden of decolonization should not be on Indigenous peoples but decolonization cannot happen without the participation of Indigenous peoples.

The question of Indigenous and settler relationships is one of Healing, and the answer *is* Healing; however, the answers that are more tangible only come from the *process* of Healing. In Western ways of thinking this is problematic because the outcome cannot be guaranteed ahead of time and the tangible answers are only guaranteed by participation in our *own* Healing. However, we never get to know ahead of time what that Healing will give us.

"The ancient ones taught us that the life of the Tree is the life of the people. If the people wander far away from the protective shadow of the Tree, if they forget to seek the nourishment of its fruit, or if they should turn against the Tree … great sorrow will fall upon the people" (Bopp, Bopp, Brown, & Lane, 1985, p. 7). Spirituality, in the metaphor of a tree, can help us understand the question of what is truly human between us, and how we validate that humanity as genuine when we have been socialized to be divided. This is the power in Indigenous paradigms because we are accountable to our kin, and to our intuition (Wilson, 2001, p. 178), not to dominant White-settler culture or institutions.

Things Have Spirit

When I was a little boy I would walk through parks on dirt paths made from people walking on grass, and I would find garbage. I would pick the garbage up, things like cigarette butts and chip bags, and carry them to the garbage can. It is the colonizers who teach us that the material world does not have spirit. The spirits of Western synthetics do not belong with spirits of the forest. Everything that relates has spirit, and we must think of how these spirits relate to each other.

Healing Through the Dominant System

Oliveira Andreotti et al. (2015) have mapped out different levels of decolonization (Appendix 2) and rather than being a continuum, the regions are ongoing areas of decolonization that co-exist, and are even in opposition to one another at times (p. 25). Many who begin to wake up to the oppressive hierarchies that exist in Western culture eventually get bogged down in the epistemic fight for reform in Western institutions. In the final region, the "Beyond-Reform Space," it is recognized that oppression comes from ontological dominance, what is real, not simply which epistemic systems matter (Oliveira Andreotti et al, 2015, p. 25). "While affirming the importance of both radical-reform and beyond-reform [participation], we note the risk of vanguardist heroism that some of these critiques potentially inspire," which are real issues for an activist to face if they do not want their whole identity to be built off the anti-system thinking (Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 25).

Racism is a colonial mechanism of favoritism that benefits those who think and look in a White way. "To speak of the coloniality of knowledge is to recognize that colonial domination has an epistemic dimension and that epistemic violence is an integral part of the colonial relations of power that characterize the world since 1492" (Burman, 2012, p. 105). As the social systems around us reward White thinking, as they have for 500 years, they also do not allow for people of non-White cultures to be their whole selves. Therefore, an example of institutional racism is to have White expectations of the student body; in other words, to assume the whiteness of the student body. Students who either choose not to fit this mold, or who attempt to for the sake of getting their education but have trouble thinking in this way, are systematically punished. This can be demonstrated by the expectations that are sometimes placed on graduate students by White thinking supervisors.

I have found myself, in my research process, subject to epistemic violence where I was employing Indigenous methodologies, but my supervisors, both White, were not capable of validating these methodologies; for all of us, it was our first experience in using Indigenous methodologies. This has led me to consider that we, as a settler-Indigenous society, need to find ways to Heal, maybe together, but always without romanticizing what an Indigenous-settler relationship is supposed to be. This also recognizes that IGT is something that my family is working on Healing, but also that, as mentioned previously, IGT is something that settlers need to deal with as well.

While this work is hard, the difficulty should be used as a compass to direct us to the work we need to do with ourselves. As White people, myself included, it is uncomfortable to come down to a level where we are not protected by our whiteness; however, doing so gives those not born into that privilege an opportunity to trust you and to see you are not wearing your bark to protect yourself from their excess of suffering and lack of privilege.

Walking Stick

Walking through the bush is a great way to connect with your body. I find spending time on Mother Earth, not covered in concrete, to be very therapeutic to my mind. As we find ourselves on this path of growth, it is my honour to offer you this gift: a walking stick, made out of 100% metaphor, that you can call on at any moment in your life.

Words Can Be Good Medicine

As you, the reader, have been attentively listening to my experiences and thoughts, I want to offer you a carving in your walking stick. While all of the systems of oppression I have been talking about perpetuate hate and violence, I want to remind you that words can be good medicine. Every time I introduce myself, I always introduce my Hip Hop name, MC GoodMedicine, and I usually follow my introduction with "because I believe words can be good medicine." All of the words used in oppressive systems are words given the spiritual power to be hurtful; I would like to offer you the thought that you do not have to use those words, in any oppressive system, and the same language can be put to work to carry out love and compassion.

Relational Research Methods

When Wilson (2008) asked rhetorically, "how can I find out more about this other being, or idea … ?" and responded with, "the answer … is [Indigenous] methodology … the more relationships between yourself and the other thing, … the greater your understanding becomes (p. 79), I was powerfully struck with the synergy of my own sense of relationality, an intuition that feels normal. "So the methodology [Indigenous methodology] is simply the building of more relationships" (Wilson, 2008, p. 79). We make things so complicated and get away from relationships. To the Western mind, this may seem questionable, but my research method must respect my relationships in a way that addresses the power dynamics that exist today, as a result of the ourstory that settlers and Indigenous people share. To do otherwise would be to go against Indigenous culture, and against natural law of relationality.

As an Indigenous researcher, I have been engaged in a relational research method for approximately two years. I have been building new relationships and fostering the ones I have already built. However, I think that the challenge with this methodology goes way deeper

than it seems, as I have had to recognize my own shortsightedness with the challenges of settler and Indigenous relationships, especially in the context of a research team. To dedicate oneself to a relational methodology is to resist judging my own shortsightedness, and that of others. As we all live in Western culture, which does not encourage self-liberation from hateful character, we need to be prepared to know what the commitment is when we commit ourselves to this process.

Someone Can Take It upon Themselves to Heal

There was an Elder from the Navaho Nation, Robert Curly, who taught me that in Healing others we move people, then put them back where they were. In that moment he gave me a tool for navigating the Healing world on which I have been so focused (personal communication, Jan. 26, 2018). In this way, I feel that the reader should feel that I have given them something they may use. I imagine a walking stick. When navigating the social cartography of the land, a walking stick can make the best of companions, especially when such journeys bring up pain; it is nice to have someone to lean on. I say "someone" because this walking stick I have handed you has a spirit. It is a mental walking stick, one that you can build your own relationship with as you walk the terrain that I have, with some of the thoughts I have shared; you will indeed have your own thoughts and realizations.

I hand you this walking stick as a way to encourage you to walk. The trail gets challenging at times, and one must rise to the occasion. Doing so in companionship, in relationship, is how we can move through our life in a good way.

Having your own tools empowers you to use them for your own influences, and your own Healing. Like the seemingly infinite number of little birds flying together and all turning as a unit, we must turn towards Healing as a culture, altogether, such that we can restore balance with ourselves and all of our relations.

While I struggle to approve of myself speaking English while simultaneously preaching decolonization, I recognize this is the post-apocalypse for myself and other Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island, and nothing is fair or simple. I am again encouraged by Wilson (2001) who asserts, "I don't think it is helpful to make people who cannot speak an Indigenous language feel bad about it. But I do think that it is important that everyone masters the language that they do speak" (p. 179).

When an individual becomes ready to pursue their own Healing, their motivations are naturally to encourage Healing in the people around them. It is our current cultural lack of understanding of the value in Healing that keeps us from our health and, ultimately, our connection to our spirit and Mother Earth. Walk powerfully.

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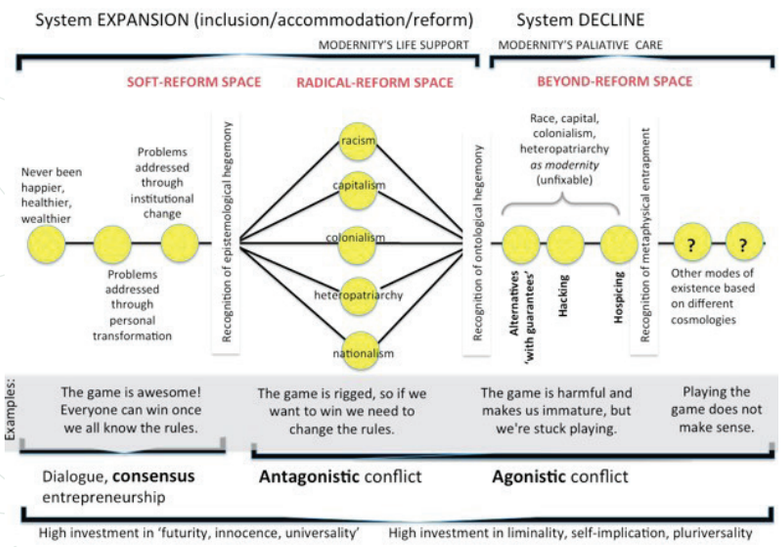
Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix 2 (Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 25)



Appendices

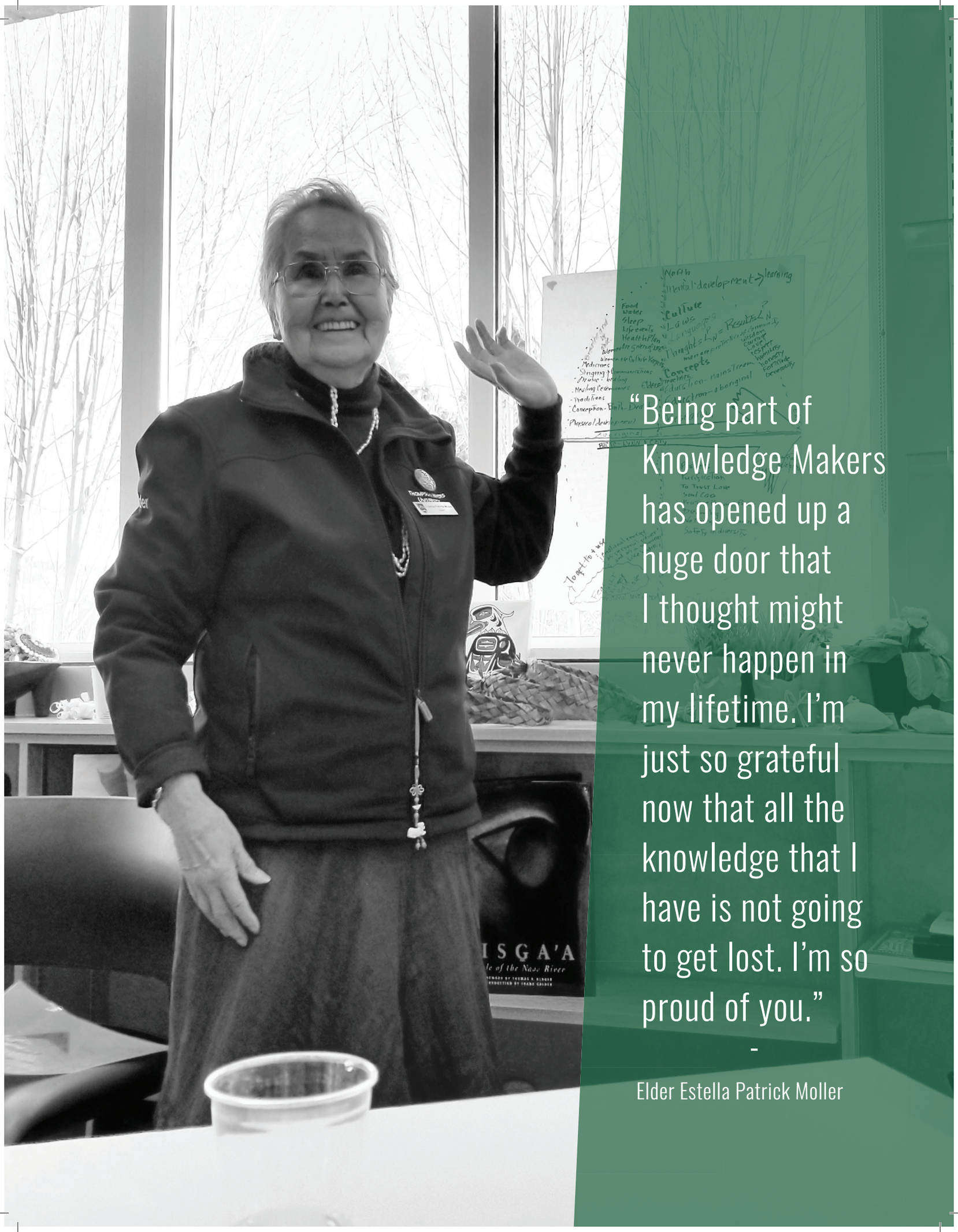
Appendix 3 (Mind Map for Planning This Paper)

Appendix 4 – AIM-HI Network (the original funders of my research)

The Alberta Indigenous Mentorship in Health Innovation (AIM-HI) Network

Healing our families starts with Mother Earth, she is our greatest matriarch. Love her as much as she loves us.

~ Elder Mike Arnouse



“Being part of Knowledge Makers has opened up a huge door that I thought might never happen in my lifetime. I’m just so grateful now that all the knowledge that I have is not going to get lost. I’m so proud of you.”

-

Elder Estella Patrick Moller

THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY